

VISIT KNYSNA FOCUSED ON TOURISM RECOVERY FOR THE REGION

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Visit Knysna is working to keeping the jewel of the Garden Route front-of-mind as they head into the recovery phase of their three-phase COVID-19 response strategy.

Aligning with the three step strategy of “containment, adaption and recovery” - to build resilience for now and the future during the nationwide pandemic - Visit Knysna is pleased to announce that recovery is now underway, with an initial focus on the upcoming Virtual Knysna Oyster Festival.

Since the start of lockdown, Visit Knysna implemented the following:

Phase 1 - Containment:

- continued with ‘business unusual’ from their virtual office, replying to emails and phone calls timeously;
- formed part of the Knysna Municipality’s JOC meetings thrice weekly, thus keeping stakeholders informed;
- marketed bucket-list experiences in Knysna and the greater Knysna area, featuring iconic locals and fun facts on Visit Knysna social media and online platforms to stay top of mind and retain awareness of the destination;
- with Wesgro, developed and shared a “stay home” video that depicted photographs shared by our stakeholders, encouraging all to stay home whilst in the initial phase of lockdown.

Phase 2 - Adaption:

- created awareness of the COVID-19 Content Centre (www.supportbusiness.co.za) and directed followers and industry partners to the website for answers to frequently asked questions, best practice stories and support applicable to businesses during the pandemic, through the assistance of the COVID-19 Support Finder Tool;
- supported National Governments #StayHome movement through re-skinning billboards in dense traffic areas to include ‘Stay Home If You Can’ messaging;
- assisted the local hospitality industries to register as isolation and quarantine units;
- directed new funding opportunities to local businesses;
- included messaging from Knysna on the “repatriation farewell” flyer to encourage international visitors to come to Knysna once travel resumes;
- joined Wesgro’s One Day Western Cape tourism campaign, by identifying local guides to form part of the virtual series which monetizes digital with viewers encouraged to tip guides at the end of the tour via Zapper and SnapScan;
- invited local partners to join in industry-relevant conversations by extending invites to webinars and virtual chats hosted by SATSA, TBCSA, WishTrip and Bright Talk;
- adapted the iconic Knysna Oyster Festival to bring to life a digital programme that can be attended virtually – allowing the local community to showcase their products and talents online in place of the physical festival.

Phase 3 – Recovery:

Visit Knysna has actively been lobbying alongside the public and private sector to advocate for an earlier and safe re-opening of leisure tourism from as soon as September 2020. With the TBCSA leading the initiative, the council has been successful to date with corporate travel enabled as of 1 June.

Looking to digitise offerings until such a time that travel can resume, Visit Knysna is excited for the first Virtual Knysna Oyster Festival to take place, giving the local DMO the opportunity to gauge interest and build up a database of potential new visitors for the future.

“Despite the nationwide lockdown, we continued to deliver on our commitment to promoting the town of Knysna and the greater Knysna area,” comments Colleen Durant, General Manager of Visit Knysna.

“We’ve kept our local stakeholders and industry partners updated on our efforts through regular communication via virtual meetings and newsletters, inviting them to partake where possible. We welcome Level 3 which brings with it the opportunity for us to focus our efforts on recovering and re-evaluating how we can bolster our tourism offering to attract domestic travellers once leisure travel resumes,” added Durant.

Wesgro CEO, Tim Harris, concluded: “Tourism has been one of the hardest hit sectors globally however, we see many opportunities for the Western Cape and particularly the Garden Route and Knysna, as travel as we know it will be re-imagined in a COVID-19 world. With Knysna being the capital of adventure experiences, synonymous with wide-open outdoor experiences, Knysna and the Greater Knysna area is well-positioned to provide the socially-distanced travel experiences that will be sought after when leisure travel resumes. As a first step, we look forward to seeing the first virtual Knysna Oyster Festival come to life.”

ENDS



VIRTUAL KNYSNA OYSTER FESTIVAL
27 June - 4 July 2020

Livestream : 27 June - 04 July 2020

f Facebook: @Knysna Oyster Festival

YouTube: Knysna Oyster Festival

For more details www.KnysnaOysterFestival.co.za

Logos: Visit Knysna, Garden Route, Knysna Oyster Festival, CRPS TOURISM & VISITATION