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TOURISM NEWS

Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation—Newsletter



Visit Lesotho Website Launched - www.visitlesotho.travel

The Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation (LTDC) has recognized the importance of the internet as a channel for marketing tourism in Lesotho and hence the designing and development of the visit Lesotho website. LTDC launched the tourism website on the 25th June 2010 at Lesotho Sun Hotel. This is the first website of its kind to promote and market all the tourism products and tourism investment opportunities in the country. This website is the official portal and primary online reference for information on tourism in Lesotho.

The objectives of the website are to promote Lesotho as a tourism destination for leisure and business travelers, to promote Lesotho as a tourism investment opportunity to potential investors and to provide global online visibility of tourism service providers in Lesotho.

The website has two micro sites; travel and investment. The travel micro site contains information on accommodation, tourist attractions and activi-

ties in Lesotho. The investment micro site contains information on tourism investment opportunities and assistance in Lesotho.

The website contains the links that are displayed prominently in the header of the site, such as home, about Lesotho, what to see, where to stay, travel guide and conferences.

The home page serves as the landing page to the rest of the site. Summary information from the various pages is displayed and it allows users to quickly orientate themselves with the function of the website and what they can expect to find therein.

About Lesotho page - this page contains content consisting of background information on Lesotho, with appropriate images and is divided into subsections.

What to see - this page highlights the main tourist attractions in Lesotho and introduces

Visit Lesotho Website Launched - www.visitlesotho.travel

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major cultural events along with appropriate images. It includes links to the main tourist regions and also include links to the information on tourist routes.

What to do - This page is rich in images, with an appealing layout, introducing the top activities available to tourists in Lesotho.

.Where to stay-This page introduces the accommodation available to tourists and includes a search facility allowing users to search accommodation service by type, price and region. This facility could be expanded in the future to include searching by activities offered and accommodation facilities.

Travel guide - this page provides detailed information for tourists on practical matters related to travel in Lesotho.

Lists of service providers that are in the same region were drawn from the database and displayed in the footer, grouped by related categories, for example car hire, medical services and banks.

Conferences - this page gives an overview of the conference facilities available in Lesotho

The following pages are found on the investment site:

Why invest in Lesotho—this page provides detailed benefits on investing in Lesotho.

Investment opportunities—this page displays variety of unique tourism investment opportunities in Lesotho ranging from accommodation facilities & resort development, tour guiding & tour operating to recreational facilities and activities.

Investment Assistance—this page provides information to potential investors on setup of tourism business and professional services that LTDC provides to potential investors both before and after the investment.



Maletsunyane falls



Seforong



Thaba Bosiu Cultural Village



Along Mofiale

A CRAFTER SEES HOPE WHERE HOPE IS NOT SEEN (LITEMA

Mrs. Nkekeletse Anderson is a Mosotho lady who unleashed craftsmanship potential from many Basotho and showed them that they can earn a living from their talent and not necessarily being employed in the formal sector. She saw and made the best out of their untapped talents. Mrs. Anderson is an artist herself and is very talented. She has a keen eye for art. Her passion has always been the creation of authentic African art especially the Sesotho crafts and textiles. In the year 2003 she pioneered and started an art gallery named Litema Designs. She began operating from her home and retains local crafting and bidding artists in order to assist in enhancing their skills. Mrs. Anderson's main objective is to empower local craftsmen and artists by way of training. She has cultivated the culture of ultimate independence and self reliance in her trainees. Mrs. Anderson saw the gallery beyond operating from her home therefore she approached the management of Basotho shield as it is the first port of call for tourists and because she

knew that the crafts would be very appealing to the tourists. Again every last Saturday of the month Maseru Bazaar is held at Basotho shield. Maseru Bazaar is aimed at promoting local crafters and tourism related SMME's and creates a lively atmosphere in Maseru. She realized that this move would not only help her achieve the optimum market share available but would also assist other artists to make their work known. Her wish and desire is to see the increase in market penetration not only in Lesotho but also globally through on line shop. The Maseru bazaar event that takes place at Basotho shield on every last weekend of the month is also helping tremendously and positively to lure the tourists.. This according to Mrs. Anderson enhanced the gallery market extensively. The market is now accessed substantially by the international and domestic tourists.



Mrs. Anderson (right) with her colleague

According to Mrs. Anderson there is no significant margin in terms of the demographics as far as the buying patterns and pricing are concerned, except the fact that the European tourists in comparison with the Asians, Indians and Africans do not believe in bargaining deals. Mrs. Anderson has a wide range of products available at the gallery. They are divided in to the following sectors;(1)Grass Baskets- All sizes and for all purposes, (2) Paper mach'e products- Fridge magnets Litema has been engaged in training exercises with the department of culture, the villages like Ha Baroana.



Some of the crafts at 'Basotho Shield'

Ramokoatsi Recreation Park is Re-kindled

The Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture seeks to enhance the benefits from tourism for the country and its people by establishing and upgrading tourism facilities in the country. Ramokoatsi Recreation park was established by the then Lesotho Tourism Board In the 1990s. Numerous groups and individuals from different backgrounds frequented the area for picnics and “get together” purposes. Lack of the necessary features and facilities for a proper recreation park called for intervention and support. In 2003 LTDC continued to take charge and further developed the site as well as soliciting a private operator to run the park.

Ramokoatsi recreation park is managed by Ramokoatsi management Consortium and run by a self driven open minded Mosotho entrepreneur Mr. Reentseng Matobako. He says their main objective is to provide Mafeteng district and the Basotho nation at large with the best and excellent service for outdoor entertainment that caters primarily for individuals, families and groups..

The atmosphere is friendly with spectacular breathtaking scenery. Cleanliness and hygiene are top of their priorities. They treat customers like first class citizens and make them feel at home away from home. Facilities and features that are available are lapas, braai stands, bathatorium, running tap water, office trailer, sound and electrified disco jockey stage. Future add-ons will be a hall, self catering kitchen to cater for activities such as weddings and other out door events.

The park plans to become the premier recreational park within two years. They are going to offer the best entertainment, to provide cultural awareness and sell the best hospitality services in -



Mrs. Mathe Matsoso and Mr. Reentseng Matobako

Mafeteng. Hours of operation are as follows; Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday-10; 00am to11; 00pm. Friday/ Saturday-10; 00am to 02; 00am. Sunday10; 00am to -10; 00pm.



During the first year of operation the park plans to serve an average of two thousand customers per month. They project

that this number will increase to ten thousand which they consider to be their maximum capacity. In order for them to attain this goal they will use a combination of printed media advertising: flyers, local newspapers, magazines, direct mail, word of mouth and web based advertising.

As a way of marketing and advertising this place the World Tourism day was celebrated on the 2nd October 2010 at Ramokoatsi Recreational park. The theme of the year is **TOURISM AND BIODIVERSITY**. Besides this celebration, Mr. Matobako is looking forward to hosting major entertainment events for the corporate world, and music shows in the coming summer season.



Ramokoatsi Recreational Park

African Tourism and Cultural Village

Melrose Arch, Johannesburg

The FIFA World Cup event hosted by South Africa in June 2010 held promising opportunities for Lesotho as a country. Being uniquely surrounded by the host and with its central location relative to a number of host cities, Lesotho was well placed to use 2010 as a springboard for accelerated economic development based on tourism. The Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation (LTDC) in partnership with BEDCO represented



Lesotho Stand

Lesotho at the Africa Festival which was held from 11th June to 11st July 2010 at the Melrose Arch, Johannesburg South Africa.

The event was organized by the Regional Tourism of Southern Africa (RETOSA) which is the tourism marketing arm of Southern Africa Development Community (SADAC) that is response-

-ble for the promotion of SADC as a single and regional tourism destination. Lesotho's stall was strategically placed in the isles of the Melrose Arch Mall where it was visible and accessible to the visitors and shoppers to see and seek touristic information.

The stall was well decorated with the colourful Basotho hats, brooms, blankets and the baskets. As it is always the case, the visitors were attracted to those artefacts and bought them.

The Lesotho delegation's main role was to distribute the tourism information in order to create awareness, generate interest and to divert the tourist influx into the country. Lesotho's hotelier's, lodges and Tour operator's promotional materials

were disseminated to the visitors during the event. BEDCO



Some of the LTDC Board members at Lesotho stand

displayed the Basotho traditional attire such as Seshoeshoe and the leather works which were bought in large numbers

Discover Lesotho - TV Episodes to market Lesotho

The Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation in partnership with the Molotsi productions undertook a multifaceted approach to market the country and its beauty by marketing the country as a tourist destination of choice. The project involved, *inter alia*, a TV Show as the main vehicle and radio adverts locally and in South Africa. The first most influential arm of the project involved a TV programme that Molotsi Productions had conceptualised specifically for Lesotho.

The Programme was research driven with input from the tourism industry, Government, other stakeholders and industry experts. It profiled the country's known facts about its beauty and majestic landscape and also highlighted some ideas on how best to lure tourists into Lesotho, during their stay in South Africa.

The TV episodes were done so that they would attract many visitors who were coming in large numbers to South Africa to visit our country.

The episodes were aired on DSTV giving our country exposure to the visitors who were willing to travel to other African countries during their stay in South Africa.

That vast number of foreign arrivals comprised largely football followers who normally would not have considered travelling to the region. The hope therefore was that they would also visit many of Southern Africa's attractions and spend large amounts of money as estimates put figures of expected visitors at nearly half a million.

The purpose of the Lesotho TV episodes was as follows:

- **To profile Lesotho as a tourist destination for many tourists, create awareness of Lesotho, generate interest and divert football followers into Lesotho during the World Cup.**
- **To position Lesotho as accessible, cost effective and**

Discover Lesotho - TV Episodes to market Lesotho

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- **To encourage tourists to make use of the country to visit Lesotho as part of their African experience.**

Episode 1: – Introduction: Khotso, Pula, Nala

“It is often said that in order to know where one is going, it is important to know where one comes from”

So true is this analogy, that it applies to many tourists. The Mountain Kingdom is home to the Basotho nation, the people of king Moshoeshoe. This country has a rich heritage and interesting history, which needs to be shared in order for people to understand the dynamics of the culture. This episode explores the history of Lesotho and the Basotho nation, with a lot of black and white photographic imagery. We are guided by experts and the current king himself, His Majesty King Letsie III.



Boating at Mofale

Episode 2: - The Mountain Kingdom

This episode looks at the rich culture of the Basotho nation. It brings us to the year 2010 and introduces us to the cosmopolitan Mosotho. All the facts one needs to know about Lesotho are packed in this episode. Where Lesotho is situated on the map, How one can get there, How long it take and how much it cost.

What are the entry point requirements (Visas etc)? How are the seasons layed out in the year (when are the Winters and when are the Summers), what is the currency? What is the backbone of the economy? How does one get around in Lesotho? What are the Sesotho language basics?



Kome Caves

Episode 3: - Maseru

290 kilometres from Maseru is Mokhotlong, a ski lover’s paradise. Mokhotlong

borders KZN via Sani Pass. In winter (and the World Cup will be at the height of winter), snow falls, making this an ideal spot for skiing. The ascend to the highest mountain in southern Africa, Thabana-Ntlenyana starts here. What does this region have to offer? This episode explores all there is about Mokhotlong.

LESOTHO - A WINNER IN GERMANY

The International Tourism Bourse (ITB) is the biggest tourism fair in the world, drawing close to 32,000 exhibitors from the global tourism sector, including: tour operators, airline companies, hotels, and national tourism authorities. Lesotho was represented by the Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation (LTDC) and a delegate of the Lesotho Embassy in Germany. The delegation from Lesotho was led by Ms. Nthabiseng Monoko, the Acting Chief Executive of Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation.

Lesotho was rated among the top 9 exhibitors in the African Continent at the world renowned tourism exhibition held annually in Berlin, Germany. The award is based on evaluation of exhibitors’ design, service, creativity, and overall impression.

This award augurs well for the country, as Lesotho now has potential to draw greater tourist numbers, not only from Germany, but also from other European markets and globally.

The Lesotho stand was located in the centre of Africa Hall 20, in close proximity to popular destinations like South Africa and Botswana. The allocation of a corner stand also meant Lesotho was visible from two aisles which ensured a steady flow of visitors.

The traditional artifacts in the form of colorful Basotho blankets, brooms, Basotho hats, baskets and pop-up banners with pictures of Lesotho attractions were decorated on the stand which made it very unique and eye-catching. This was done to

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reflect and highlight the cultural and scenic, adventure attributes of Lesotho as a destination.



Lesotho stand at ITB, Germany

The German market is Lesotho's most important tourist market. The exhibition was therefore important to ensure that the German public, tour operators and travel agents were provided with accurate and relevant tourism information about Lesotho, so that the existing market could be expanded. Almost 180,000 people visited the exhibition, which gave -

Lesotho delegation a chance to highlight the natural beauty and friendly people of the region, and to assist the travelers who were planning to attend the 2010 FIFA World Cup to visit Lesotho as an add-on destination. The German tourist market is rated only second to the USA in the world in terms of spending at \$ 46.2 billion ⁽¹⁾, and is second highest in tourist visits to South Africa recorded at 258,990

German arrivals in Lesotho form the 3rd largest segment of the country's tourism market with over 6,000 tourists reported annually at one border post ⁽³⁾. Securing a greater share of this high income market will invariably boost tourism's contribution to the GDP and the economy; an achievement welcomed by all Basotho.

According to Mr. Tebello Thoola, Acting Head Strategic Marketing, the various items of Basotho handicrafts that were used to decorate the stand, like colourful blankets, hats, baskets and brooms, were so popular with the public, and demand was high, that the team decided to sell them .

King Moshoeshoe 1 Day

The Lesotho Embassy in Berlin also celebrated Moshoeshoe's day on the 11th March 2010. His Excellency Ambassador Dr. Nyapisi among other things at this ceremony narrated the life history of Moshoeshoe 1, the founder of Basotho nation, his battles with the nations of Zulus, English and Afrikaners. He also noted that this celebration marked 140 years of his death.

The German parliamentarians' representative gave a formal speech and described how wonderful his trip to Lesotho was.

All Basotho present at the occasion dressed in traditional gear and traditional food was served.



His Excellency Ambassador Dr. Nyapisi



Lesotho delegation

THE WORLD TOURISM DAY AND MONTH IS MARKED

The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) is the umbrella body that governs and monitors the tourism sector worldwide. Its head office is based in Madrid, Spain. The organization has set aside September as the Tourism month with the culmination of the month on the 27 September of each year. The day is celebrated every year and its purpose is to foster awareness among the international community on the importance of tourism and its social, cultural, political and economic values.



Participants from Maseru bridge to Mantlhabiseng Convention Centre where activities of the day were held.

The theme for this year is **Tourism and Biodiversity**. Many Tourist attractions are strongly linked to biodiversity, such as protected areas, beaches, islands, coral reef, wild life etc, hence the word on everyone's lips in the niche market lately is "eco-tourism." Sustainable tourism establishes a suitable balance between environment, socio-economic and cultural aspects of tourism development. It plays an integral -

role in the conservation of biodiversity. Revenues from visitors spending are often channeled back in to nature conservation or capacity building programmes for the local communities.

Biodiversity is a key tourism asset for developing countries and Lesotho is no exception. Given the above mentioned background Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation embarked in many public gatherings in two districts whereby the public was sensitized about the importance of Biodiversity and Tourism. The aim was to change the mindset of the people about veld fires and the impact of stone throwing at the tourists.

The activities of the day were as follows; there were celebrations at Mantlhabiseng Convention Centre with cultural performances and the Principal Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture delivered the message of the day under the theme "**Tourism and Biodiversity**". The Principal Secretary also gave awards to people who have contributed directly and indirectly to promoting tourism in the country. There was also **the welcome with a smile campaign** by the tourism, environment, and culture officials at selected border posts that have high number of tourists entering everyday. The officers gave out pamphlets and tokens to the tourists that came through the Maseru Border gate, Butha Buthe, Sani pass, Qacha, Mafeteng and the Moshoeshoe 1 airport.

As part of the celebrations, the department of Research and Development conducted 6 regional workshops for tourism stakeholders. The aim of the workshop was to sensitize and disseminate information with regard to the activities undertaken by the Corporation in 2009.

'MASERU BAZAAR'

The purpose of the event is to create an innovative, multi-purpose event that serves to entertain the public, promote tourism related SMME's and create a lively atmosphere in Maseru that contributes towards enhancing the touristic appeal of the City and Lesotho. Conducted under the general theme of "bringing life to down town Maseru" the event is held monthly on a small scale, followed by an expanded version every six (6) months. The event provides a platform for commercial activity particularly for tourism related SMME's such as crafters and artists producing works of art.

By providing specially designed incentives to the public to buy the crafts and pieces of art in the form of prizes to be won in return for purchases, the event nudges the public to support local SMME's. September 2009 event was an extended version carrying the current year's tourism theme:

Maseru Bazaar is an event that is colourful, vibrant and entertaining, a platform for spontaneous innovation and a place to be. The entertainment provided at the event is effective in attracting people to the event and also creates an

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MASERU BAZAAR

opportunity for local musicians to showcase their talent. This event also caters for the children as jumping castles and other games are provided while the adults go around shopping for crafts and enjoying the activities.



Some of the crafts displayed



Entertainment for the children

LESOTHO PARTICIPATES AT THE WORLD TRAVEL MARKET

World Trade Market (WTM) is the World's second biggest Tourism Fair after the International Tourism Borse (ITB) IN Berlin, Germany. The World Travel Market is held annually in London, United Kingdom. The event is aimed at the global travel industry such as Tour Operators, Travel Agents, National Tourism Authorities, Destination Marketing Organization, National Airlines, International media and Accommodation establishments owners around the world.

The WTM takes 5 days and the first three days are dedicated to the travel trade and the last two days to consumers. This year's WTM attracted 45,571 travel industry, 2,839 international media, 141 Government Ministers and 1,399 students around the world. Lesotho Tourism Development Corporation through the office of Strategic Marketing participated at this event.

LTDC is mandated to market Lesotho as a preferred tourism destination for travel and investment therefore the objective of its participation were to :

- Raise Lesotho's image and create awareness about the outdoor adventure activities available
- Consolidate the existing relationships with travel trade,

especially the international tour operators and international media that already include Lesotho in their travel packages.

- Identify and establish new travel trade especially that organize tours to Southern Africa and South Africa to include Lesotho in their programmes
- Distribute Lesotho's tourism information to the consumers with the aim of influencing them to visit Lesotho. Market and promote tourism investment opportunities in the United Kingdom's market.

These objectives were achieved. Planned appointments were also attended to but most importantly appropriate information was distributed in the form of promotional materials.

South Africa attracts huge numbers of tourists from all over the world because of its developed tourism products such as wildlife experiences, seaside experiences etc. As an add on destination this gives Lesotho an advantage to offer different experiences such as:

Culture and Heritage—Kome caves, Thaba Bosiu fortress and

LESOTHO PARTICIPATES AT THE WORLD TRAVEL MARKET

Adventure—Hiking, horseback riding, quad biking, 4x4 enthusiasts, camping and abseiling

Water sports—Canoing, white rafting and boating

Dinosaur footprints—Natural history documenting of dinosaur footprints that could lead to archaeological excursions

High altitude activities—Health spas and high altitude marathon training

Rare plant life—Fauna and Flora, rare animal species.

The Lesotho stand was visited by the travel agents, tour operators and media from the European countries and mostly from United Kingdom who were keen to form partnerships with LTDC in terms of marketing and promoting Lesotho in the European countries. Travel and Tourism Research conducted by Euromonitor International showed that South Africa's tourism has grown tremendously over the past ten years therefore this puts Lesotho at an



Lesotho stand at WTM

advantage as it is entirely landlocked by South Africa. The tourist's traffic will be easily diverted into the country. The consumers came to the stand and expressed their love for Lesotho and its beautiful terrain and landscapes, friendly people and unspoilt air. Most of them were people who had been to Lesotho either by employment or were on holiday in South Africa and then visited Lesotho.

The Basotho handicrafts which decorated the stand were very popular especially the Basotho hats and the brooms. It was even decided to sell them as most of the visitors wanted to have them.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Month	Event	Date	Host	Contacts
monthly	Semonkong traditional Horse Racing	Every last Saturday	Semonkong Lodge	+26627006037
Monthly	Maseru Bazaar	Every last Saturday	LTDC	+26622312427
Oct	Morija Arts & Cultural Festival	30/10/2010	Morija Museum (Steven Gill)	+26622360308
	Mohokare Golf Classic	23/10/2010	Maseru Sun	+26622312434
Nov	Roof of Africa Durham Link Canoe		Durham Link	+26663069469
	LCMA	6/11/2010	Mr. Matsoele	+26658428324
Dec	Annual Tourism Jazz	26/12/2010	Event. Adz (Montoeli Moleli)	+26662005559

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