

Western Cape campaign to attract remote workers with Airbnb

The Western Cape Government and Wesgro, in partnership with Airbnb, has launched a campaign to promote remote working domestically, as South African's take advantage of the flexibility that working from anywhere brings.



Stokpic via [Pexels](#)

Welcoming the campaign, Premier Alan Winde comments: "Supporting recovery and protecting jobs in the tourism industry requires us to think innovatively and embrace emerging trends in travel. Digital nomads have the flexibility to stay longer because they can work from anywhere. The Western Cape is ready to welcome these visitors and provide them with a place to explore while they work. We strongly support this initiative."

The value of the digital nomad has also been recognised by the City of Cape Town, and according to Airbnb data, with domestic searches for longer-term stays increasing by almost 50% year-on-year from 1 January-25 February 2021 compared to the same time period last year.

More South Africans are also looking to travel domestically, helping to drive economic and tourism recovery across the country, and this is flowing through to local hosts. Since the start of the pandemic, new Hosts in South Africa with only one listing have already collectively earned more than US\$3m (almost R50m).

Promoting domestic tourism

On Airbnb, hosts are able to offer monthly discounts for reservations of 28 days or longer, and the platform has filters to help guests to find domestic stays easily, whether they want to work in the Cape Winelands, the Garden Route, the Klein Karoo or beyond. Hosts and guests on Airbnb collectively contributed R8,9bn to the local economy in 2018, supporting the equivalent of 22,000 jobs. The majority of hosts are women.

Velma Corcoran, regional lead for Middle East Africa at Airbnb, says: "Remote working vacations are becoming increasingly popular in South Africa, so we are thrilled to partner with Wesgro to promote domestic tourism through longer-term stays, while supporting economic recovery in Cape Town and the Western Cape."

"As people's travel habits change, local Hosts on Airbnb are leading the way, enabling South Africans to book local, affordable longer-term stays in places such as the Western Cape. Guests can live like a local and work remotely from some of South Africa's most beautiful locations, while this new type of travel is also benefiting the local communities and businesses through increased spending. Hosts also keep up to 97% of their earnings," adds Corcoran.

Western Cape economy

Minister of finance and economic opportunities, David Maynier, welcomed the launch of the campaign saying: "This campaign couldn't have come at a better time as more people work from home and as increased digitisation gives flexibility to working locations. The Western Cape is a great place to live, work and play, and our partnership with Airbnb will ensure that those looking for remote working locations will consider Cape Town and the Western Cape.

"Our tourism and hospitality sectors have been hard-hit by the Covid-19 pandemic and this initiative is one of the many ways that we are working hard to support the sector and rebuild our economy in the Western Cape."

"Cape Town and the Western Cape is the ultimate destination for those who want more out of their working environment. There are over 30 co-working spaces and 715 free WiFi spots in the city of Cape Town alone – with many options in the greater Western Cape province. Moreover, we are the most energy secure province in the country, with a well-developed community of local and international entrepreneurs. We are excited about this joint effort to attract domestic audiences to our well-equipped destination," concludes Tim Harris, Wesgro CEO.

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