

Come into the Garden at the V&A Waterfront

 By [Sindy Peters](#)

3 Sep 2013

This year's Kirstenbosch Gardens Chelsea Flower Show entry added yet another medal to its awards tally after scooping top prize for its Come into the Garden exhibition. The display, featured at the Royal Botanic Garden in Kew, London, has been recreated and is currently available for public viewing at the V&A Waterfront's Clocktower area until 24 September.



Kirstenbosch Gardens has won 33 gold medals at the annual Chelsea Flower Show, but this year's entry was extra special as both Kirstenbosch and the Chelsea Flower Show celebrated their centenaries. A year of milestones, it was also David Davidson and Ray Hudson's 20th year at the design helm for the exhibition. Davidson explains that their aim with this year's effort was to create a sensory experience: "We had to try and create a sense of beauty and diversity of being in the garden as a visitor and provide a sensory experience, and it definitely worked. The feedback at the show from people who had been here said, 'This is exactly how I remember it, this is precisely what it felt like.' Or better still, they would say, 'If this is really how beautiful it is, we definitely coming to visit,' and this is what we want to hear," says Davidson.

Beautiful is a bit of an understatement; the diversity, exuberance and vitality of a walk through Kirstenbosch Gardens is really captured in the exhibition. Davidson explains how they consistently manage to bag gold: "I think its the flowers and the plants themselves really... We've been responsible for designing them for 20 years, trying to put together the ingredients for a successful show, with a view to promoting South Africa as a desirable tourist destination - that's really why we do it. We always try and evoke something exciting about the South African experience."

Outperforming other exhibitors

The circular walk through the exhibit features the Dell and Cycad Amphitheatre on one side and the Protea Garden and mountain skyline on the other. There is also a strong focus on South Africa's indigenous fynbos such as the protea and Mandela's gold strelitzia. This year's exhibition also showcases the oldest plants in the garden; plants which were introduced from 1913, when Kirstenbosch gardens was established to 1917.

"I think my favourite part is probably visualising the idea; actually trying to realise it can be problematic, because for one thing it is a difficult time of the year. We're going to the most prestigious Spring flower show in the world... and we're coming along at the end of Autumn, in the threshold of Winter with very little to offer in the way of flora. If it were in September, we would blow them away with the spectacular Spring flowers, but we are still able to compete and outperform most of the other exhibitors, because of the beauty and diversity of what we display," explains Davidson.

Also in attendance at the launch of the exhibition were; Dr Tanya Abrahamse, CEO of SANBI; Enver Duminy, CEO of Cape Town Tourism; Marthinus Van Schalkwyk, Minister of Tourism; and Alex Kabalin, V&A Waterfront executive manager: retail.

The exhibition is open from 9am to 6pm and entry is free.

ABOUT SINDY PETERS

Sindy Peters (@sindy_hullaba_lou) is a group editor at Bizcommunity.com on the Construction & Engineering, Energy & Mining, and Property portals. She can be reached at sindy@bizcommunity.com

■ #TourismMonth: Fall in love at the Drakensberg - 9 Sep 2019

■ #TourismMonth: SA's got tourism talent - 29 Aug 2019

■ #SharetheBay with Craig Duffield of Mosaic Tourism - 1 Dec 2016

■ #SharetheBay: There's a rich history behind SA's 'diamond fibre' industry - 24 Nov 2016

■ #SharetheBay: Nelson Mandela Bay Tourism launches revamped travel app - 23 Nov 2016

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>