

Cape Town cruise economy gets boost with newly launched initiative

Wesgro has launched Cruise Cape Town, a collaborative initiative that endeavours to grow the cruise economy in Cape Town and the Western Cape.

Having been in operation since September 2020, the initiative looks to capitalise on the growing cruise tourism trend. Despite the current lockdown and travel restrictions, the team is hopeful for the cruise season to recommence from October 2021, with 83 confirmed bookings already secured for cruise ships to the V&A Waterfront this year.



Image source: [Gallo/Getty](#)

Culminating as the focal point for domestic and international cruise route development in the province, the project signifies a collaboration between partners in both the public and private sector including Western Cape Department of Economic Development and Tourism (DEDAT); the City of Cape Town (CoCT); V&A Waterfront; Transnet National Ports Authority (TNPA); the South African Maritime Safety Authority (Samsa); and Wesgro.

Positioned alongside Durban as one of South Africa's two home ports, the Port of Cape Town recently underwent a R59m re-development, with a dedicated Cruise Terminal now established at the V&A Waterfront.

Boasting a robust maritime sector, the province is well-positioned to unlock the potential of the lucrative cruise market when travel resumes.

The primary mandate of the Cruise Cape Town Project, which will be housed alongside the Air Access Project in Wesgro's Special Projects Unit, will be to:

- Increase the cruise liner economy in Cape Town and the Western Cape
- Improve the province's competitiveness in the cruise industry
- Drive tourism in order to stimulate economic growth and job creation, particularly for the youth

Leaning in on how the project aims to increase port efficiencies for cruise ships, Mpumi Dweba-Kwetana, port manager, Port of Cape Town, said: "TNPA Port of Cape Town is in support of the Cruise Cape Town initiative, it will result in an increase in the number of vessels calling at the port and in the number of passengers disembarking and embarking at the terminal. Overall this initiative will reduce unemployment and poverty in our country as there will be more industries that will benefit from the increased number of vessel calls."

Tourism sector opportunities

Speaking to the new Makers Landing, and the opportunities that it provides to the tourism sector, David Green, CEO of the V&A Waterfront, said: "We have constructed a world-class terminal that has improved the total experience for cruise passengers and successfully integrated it into our service amenities such as hotels, attractions, and retail offerings.

"Being adjacent to Makers Landing, our new food community that celebrate our culture and heritage through food ensures that we give international visitors a true Cape Town welcome. We feel this will enhance the desirability of the port and Cape Town as a destination for cruise."

Speaking to the economic benefit the initiative has to simultaneously raise the maritime and tourism profile of the province, while providing a much-needed economic boost, Western Cape Minister of finance and economic opportunities, David Maynier said: "We are proud to be partners of Cruise Cape Town, which is an exciting initiative by Wesgro to support the tourism sector and promote Cape Town and the Western Cape as a destination of choice for cruise passengers.

"While cruises have not yet resumed, the pre-Covid trajectory of the sector as well as the continued interest of travellers to book cruises and travel as soon as it is safe to do so, means that rebuilding the cruise sector in the Western Cape is a key opportunity for us now. We are open and ready to safely welcome cruise passengers to Cape Town and the Western Cape."

"The cruise economy offers an additional dimension to Cape Town's world-class offering, enhancing our global tourism links while putting us on the map as a turnaround port where crew and passengers take flights back home or join the cruises. Extended stays in Cape Town mean increased revenue not only for our tourism value chain, but also for local suppliers of the cruise eco-system, I am happy that we are strengthening our economic recovery efforts through this collaboration," added Alderman James Vos, mayoral committee member: economic opportunities and asset management.

Wesgro's official spokesperson for Cruise Cape Town, chief strategy officer, Labeeqah Schuurman, concluded:

"Reflecting on the successes of the Air Access Project, the potential Cruise Cape Town has to increase regional tourism, create jobs in both downstream and upstream industries and boost investment into Cape Town and the Western Cape is insurmountable.

"Our vision remains to not only make the Western Cape the gateway to the rest of Africa, but the easiest place to do business on the continent. We look forward to seeing the fruits that will come from this strategic partnership, with our intent on being creating jobs and driving economic growth in the province."

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