

# Cape Town Tourism launches pioneering blind tour guide

A groundbreaking universal access movement launched by Cape Town Tourism, aims to foster inclusivity, providing equal opportunities and access to Cape Town's tourism for all individuals, irrespective of their abilities.



Source: Supplied.

The movement introduces city-wide braille touch-points and SA's first-ever qualified blind tour guide to create a tourism environment that allows anyone to embark on unforgettable and exhilarating adventures across the Mother City, without facing barriers or discrimination.

Enver Duminy, chief executive officer of Cape Town Tourism, says the movement reflects Cape Town Tourism's commitment to providing accessible and welcoming experiences and inspiring people to explore new horizons, break barriers, and create unforgettable memories.

"We are here to ignite an evolution of universal access. Leading up to Mandela Day this serves as a reminder of Madiba's legacy of committed peace, social justice, and most importantly, equality by shattering barriers, unveiling opportunities, and empowering every visitor.

"That's why our goal with this movement is to drive limitless possibilities for everyone, no matter their abilities, transforming Cape Town into an accessible destination for all," says Duminy.

Accessible tourism is about making it easy for everyone to enjoy tourism experiences, says Alderman James Vos, mayoral committee member for economic growth at the City of Cape Town.

“As we launch this exciting and inspiring movement that will pave the way for universal accessible tourism in Cape Town, we are showing that we care and co-operate to make our city a destination that puts the needs of people first to ensure that our products and places are accessible when it comes to functionality and features,” adds Vos.

Cape Town Tourism installed braille touch-points on street art murals in Salt River and Cape Town’s iconic yellow frames at tourist attractions across the city, as the first phase of the project.

The destination marketing and management organisation (DMO) has also incorporated QR codes that lead to audio content, describing the views and art murals by voice, so all visitors can enjoy the experience.

The locations of the iconic yellow frames include:

- V&A Waterfront
- Signal Hill
- Blouberg – Eden on the Bay
- District Six
- Silo District

Wahida Parker, chairperson of the Cape Town Tourism Board and the managing director of Table Mountain Aerial Cableway adds, “Our new yellow-frame braille touch-points ensure visually impaired guests enjoy every aspect of the Mother City experience. They capture every detail of the scenery through that specific frame, and the awe-inspiring sight of the magnificent flat-topped Table Mountain.”



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Cape Town Tourism plans to develop social media content with audio options, create maps profiling accessible routes, conduct sensitivity and awareness-training workshops, and introduce audio maps of accessible Cape Town routes.

“We’re also looking at developing more enhanced audio guides by means of QR codes for menus in restaurants, artwork in hotels and guesthouses.

“We’re also committed to supporting children with disabilities as our future leaders in tourism activities and programmes, and we challenge all DMOs and industry associations in Africa to also commit to promoting universal access,” says Duminy.

## An embodiment of the campaign’s vision

One of the most remarkable embodiments of the campaign’s vision is the story of Winston Fani, a 35-year-old South African who didn’t allow his glaucoma-related blindness to stand in the way of his passion for tourism.

Earlier this year, after hearing his story, Cape Town Tourism sponsored Fani’s tuition to obtain his tourism qualification and become South Africa’s first-ever qualified blind-tour guide.

Fani offered guests a unique interactive street art tour in Salt River, showcasing the impressive murals, the artists behind them, and the narratives they represent.



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Fani uses an unprecedented technique of counting steps and lampposts to arrive at the appropriate artwork, combining this with his eloquent descriptions of the works and their creators to inspire guests. In addition to these exceptional abilities, he complements the tour with a personal perspective on life as a visually impaired person, demonstrating how features in the environment, such as tactile paving, can be used as guides for visually impaired individuals.

Fani adds, "I had a dream to prove to the world that being blind shouldn't be an obstacle. I didn't let my blindness prevent me from realising my vision of becoming a tourist guide and thanks to the immense support of my family and Cape Town Tourism, that dream has turned into a reality."

Parker says, "Table Mountain Aerial Cableway is committed to supporting the Limitless Cape Town movement vision of promoting universal access, from the city's vibrant streets to the iconic peak of Table Mountain.

"Cape Town Tourism together with Table Mountain can ensure every corner of our breathtaking land is accessible to everyone. To quote Mahatma Gandhi, the true measure of any society lies in how it treats its most vulnerable members. Our movement seeks to embody this wisdom, creating a Cape Town where everyone, regardless of their abilities, feels valued, catered for, and above all, welcomed."

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