

African Responsible Tourism Awards 2018 winners announced

The winners of the [African Responsible Tourism Awards](#) 2018, sponsored by Wesgro, has been announced at WTM Africa 2018 on 18 April 2018, with Wilderness Safaris - operator of safari camps, lodges and experiences in seven Africa countries - taking the title of Overall Winner.



Kwetsani Camp, Wilderness Safaris - the Overall Winner (Image Supplied)

Heidi van der Watt, managing director of Better Tourism Africa pinpointed what makes the Award winners the leaders in responsible tourism in Africa: “Our winners have an ethos that extends beyond the commercial – linking thriving business with the wellbeing of local people and the longevity of their environments. They want to make profits with principles, communicate bottom lines that balance people, planet and profit, and won’t undermine sustainability in the pursuit of superior product quality. They are resilient, determined, humanising advocates for their destinations. They provide hope and inspiration for the future of tourism in Africa.”

The winners are:

- **Overall Winner:** Wilderness Safaris Botswana
- **Best for Global Goals:** Wilderness Safaris Botswana (Gold), Spier (Silver), Basecamp Explorer (Highly commended)

- **Best for Decent Work and Inclusion:** Spier (Silver), PEAK East Africa (Silver)
- **Best Responsible Cultural Experience:** Basecamp Explorer (Silver)
- **Best for Innovation in Water Management:** Wilderness Safaris Southern Africa (Silver)
- **Best for Aquatic Species and Habitat Conservation:** North Island Seychelles (Gold), Marine Dynamics (Silver), All Out Africa (Highly commended)



The Winners, Sponsors and Judges of the Africa Responsible Tourism Awards 2018 (Image Supplied)

Harold Goodwin, Chair of the Judging Panel, said: “All of those longlisted should be recognised as having made a significant contribution and be proud of what they have achieved. As in the World Responsible Tourism Awards, the judges looked for winners who might educate and inspire others, challenging the industry to achieve more by demonstrating what can be done by businesses and organisations to realise the ambition of responsible tourism. That ambition is simply put: to use tourism to make better places for people to live in. This also benefits the industry: great places to live are great places to visit.

The Global Sustainable Development Goals are now the touchstone for both governments and private sector; action by businesses will be critical to attaining the targets set for 2030. The tourism industry needs to recognise that we must be a lot more transparent about credibly reporting the positive impacts that businesses in the tourism sector have on peoples’ livelihoods and well-being – we need to up our game and prove the claims we make.

The judges were mindful of the awards made in previous years in Africa and in the World Responsible Tourism Awards, of which these African Awards are a part. The Gold and Silver award winners should be particularly proud of what they have achieved; they have been recognised as being leaders in a responsible tourism movement where more is expected each year.

If when reflecting on the winners of these and the World Responsible Tourism Awards you know of others you feel should be recognised then please encourage them to enter, the judges can only choose from amongst those who enter and complete the application process. We encourage them, and other businesses, to continue to take responsibility for increasing the positive and reducing the negative, impacts of tourism; to communicate what they are doing to use tourism to make better places and to consider entering the Responsible Tourism Awards when there is an appropriate category for their business or organisation.”

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