



THE SA COLLEGE FOR TOURISM



BACKGROUND

The SA College for Tourism was established in 2001 under the auspices of Peace Parks Foundation, by the late Dr Anton Rupert with the assistance of the Rupert Family Foundation as a capacity building and economic empowerment program linked to nature-based tourism.

The SA College for Tourism is a non-profit company registered in terms of Section (21) of the Companies Act and enjoys tax exemption status in accordance with Section 10(1)(c)(N) and Section 18A(1) of the Income Tax Act of 1962. The College was also extended Public Benefit and Welfare organization status by the relevant authorities.

The Peace Parks Foundation of which all the Heads of State of the Southern African Development Community serve as Patrons, was established in 1997 by Doctor Nelson Mandela, the late Prince Bernard of the Netherlands and Dr Anton Rupert with the aim of facilitating the formation of Transfrontier Conservation Areas, or peace parks in Southern Africa. Peace parks are large tracts of land crossing international boundaries supporting among others, sustainable economic development in rural areas in or adjacent to these parks.

Concern about the hospitality service needs of visitors to the peace parks led to the formation of SA College for Tourism. The College has grown since its official opening by the former South African First Lady, Mrs Zanele Mbeki, in 2002 from thirty learners per annum to ninety learners per annum in 2008. Since its inception the SA College for Tourism has graduated over three hundred learners maintaining a pass rate of above 98%.

The SA College for Tourism annually trains ninety previously disadvantaged women from rural areas in hospitality services as it pertains to the small accommodation establishment (guesthouses, B&B's, lodges etcetera) industry. All learners receive full bursaries covering all training, training materials and equipment and full training uniform, full board and lodging on campus and return transportation to the College.

Southern Sun MD, Helder Pereira said in Business Day of 28 May 2008: "retaining skills is my biggest concern. Without the necessary skills, growth in the (hospitality) sector is impeded and we soon will not be able to maintain international service standards." This is a critical situation for southern Africa, given the vital part that tourism has to play in the future economy of the region, spring boarded by the influx of tourists to the 2010 World Cup.

The vital importance of the environment and tourism sector's contribution to the future of South Africa was emphasised in the Budget vote speech by Marthinus van Schalkwyk on the 5th June 2008. He said: "A growing environment and tourism sector is, quite simply, the basic requirement for a growing South Africa".

Strong words from leaders of Commerce and Government, who recognise that tourists will only flock to the magnificent rural conservation areas of our continent if proper accommodation facilities and services are provided in these areas. The SA College for Tourism has proven success in training young rural women from areas around the parks, to efficiently and effectively run community-based accommodation establishments – and encourages and trains them to open their own businesses.

As 2010 approaches, the role of the SA College for Tourism becomes even more critical in ensuring tourist satisfaction in rural areas. Africa currently has a mere 1.9% share of the global tourist trade, which, at the beginning of the new millennium, had become the fastest growing industry in the world. 2010 gives southern Africa the one major opportunity to satisfy this growing mass of international tourists and thereby dramatically grow the tourist trade to our region in years to come.

The SA College for Tourism runs entirely on donor funds. It is not subsidised at all by the government.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

To bridge the gap between the impoverished background of unemployed, unskilled rural women and employment opportunities, and to enable these women to secure employment in the hospitality tourism industry, improving their standard of living. To train at least ninety unemployed women from previously disadvantaged background annually providing them with:-



- Hospitality service skills,
- Life skills that will develop self-worth and confidence
- To instil a work ethic advantageous to learners and to the hospitality tourism industry, and
- To impart to learners entrepreneurial skills that will enable them to make efficient use of available resources to eventually develop small hospitality businesses within their local communities.

TARGET MARKET

The training offered by the College affords young, unskilled and unemployed rural women from previously disadvantaged communities with the opportunity to develop the skills to enter the hospitality industry. Training is focused on community-based accommodation establishment operations, such as guest houses, hostels, bed and breakfasts, backpacker's lodges and wilderness camps, which form a core part of the nature-based tourism industry of Southern Africa. No other educational institution focuses exclusively on this sector of the hospitality industry.

The SA College for Tourism is taking the lead in preparing young black women to develop their skills in this sector and to potentially run their own businesses.

IMPLEMENTATION

The SA College for Tourism offers a combination training program consisting of a one hundred and twenty credits course towards a Certificate in Small Accommodation Establishment Operations (the certificate course) and four National Skills Development courses towards certification by the Tourism, Hospitality Education and Training Authority (THETA) of South Africa.

The qualification structure of the Certificate Course was developed by the Central University of Technology (CUT), Free State, and makes provision for the training of learners in four hospitality service related disciplines, namely:



- Accommodation Services (housekeeping);
- Culinary Art;
- Food and Beverage Services;
- Front of House (hospitality reception)
- Entrepreneurship (covering all aspects of business and financial management, including IT, needed in guesthouse management) and
- Tourism as it relates to the guesthouse industry

The course was constructed from unit standards registered by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and is offered as a so-called further education and training program on NQF Level 4. The course is subject to external examination and moderation by CUT, which lends its certification to learners who have successfully completed it. The Certificate Course enjoys

articulation to higher tourism, hospitality and sport education and training programs offered by the CUT.

The National Skills Development courses are based on unit standards also registered on the NQF, and make provision for training of learners in four hospitality related disciplines, namely:

- Assistant Housekeeper
- Receptionist
- Assistant Chef
- Table Attendant



Certain generic unit standards relating inter alia to occupational health and safety, hygiene, communication, customer service, etc. are included as part of the training program.

Skills Development course training, assessments and moderation of learners by the SA College for Tourism are quality-controlled by an independent, full-service provider accredited with the THETA.

The SA College for Tourism enjoys full accreditation with THETA. The combination training program results in learner, who has successfully completed the training program, leaving the SA College for Tourism with five certificates in hand.

ACTIVITIES

Activity	Who will carry out the activity	Duration of activity	Calendar
Accommodation Services/ House-keeping: Practical & theoretical module	SACT course facilitators/ assessors (all with required THETA accreditation) and external moderator and external examiner under contract with the SACT	Twice a week during one academic year	January – November
Front-Office/Hospitality Reception: Practical & theoretical module	SACT course facilitators/ assessors (all with required THETA accreditation) and external moderator and external examiner under contract with the SACT	Twice a week during one academic year	January – November
Food & Beverage Services (including banqueting and conferencing): Practical & theoretical module	SACT course facilitators/ assessors (all with required THETA accreditation) and external moderator and external examiner under contract with the SACT	Twice a week during one academic year	January – November
Culinary Art: Practical & theoretical module	SACT course facilitators/ assessors (all with required THETA accreditation) and external moderator and external examiner under contract with the SACT	Twice a week during one academic year	January – November
Management & Entrepreneurial skills: Theoretical and Practical, including IT modules	SACT course facilitators/ assessors (all with required THETA accreditation) and external moderator under contract with the SACT	Once a week during one academic year	January – November

Generic Theoretical Modules, including among other, Occupational Health and Safety, Hygiene, Communication, Client Service and Support, and Tourism as it relates to the Guest House Industry	SACT course facilitators/ assessors (all with required THETA accreditation) and external moderator under contract with the SACT	Once a week during one academic year	January – November
Fire Fighting & Fire Prevention	SETA accredited consultant	Once per annum	February
First Aid	Government registered consultant	Once per annum	May/June
HIV/AIDS Awareness & Prevention	Government registered consultant	Twice per annum	February & October

EXPECTED RESULTS

The project is aimed at graduating ninety unemployed and unskilled, previously disadvantaged, rural women with the necessary competency to enter the hospitality industry and to compete within the industry on a level which requires training on at least level 4 of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

