

THE NINTH ANNUAL TANZANIA TOURISM AWARDS HONORS AFRICAN DREAM SAFARIS, THOMSON SAFARIS, AFRICAN MECCA SAFARIS, SAFARI VENTURES, LION WORLD TOURS, ASANTE SAFARIS, SOUTH AFRICAN AIRWAYS, EGYPTAIR, ANN CURRY, NBC-TV AND ELOISE PARKER, NEW YORK DAILY NEWS



Photo: L- R: Altaf Visram, Sales & Reservations Director, African Mecca Safaris; Gregg Truman, VP in Marketing, South African Airways; Hon. Shamsa Selengia Mwangunga, MP, Minister of Natural Resources & Tourism, the United Republic Of Tanzania; Juliet Kichao, Africa Dream Safaris; and Daniel Yamat, Project Manager for the Enashiva Nature Refuge, Thomson Safaris

2009 Awards Significant as U.S. Remains #1 Market for Tanzania

(Cairo, Egypt – May 27, 2009) Now in its ninth year, the prestigious Tanzania Tourist Board 's (TTB) Annual Tourism Awards were presented by the Hon. Shamsa S. Mwangunga, M.P., Tanzania's Minister for Natural Resources and Tourism, as part of the 34TH Africa Travel Association (ATA) Congress held in Cairo, Egypt.

The 2009 Honorees are: African Dream Safaris, Thomson Safaris, African Mecca Safaris, Safari Ventures, Lion World Tours, Asante Safaris, South African Airways, Egyptair, Ann Curry, NBC-TV And Eloise Parker, New York Daily News. The Gala Tanzania Tourism Awards Dinner, which took place on May 19, has become a cele-

brated tradition of the annual ATA Congress. Present at the Awards Dinner and Ceremony were the Hon. Zohair Garranah, Egypt's Minister of Tourism, Dr. Elham M.A. Ibrahim, African Union Commissioner of Infrastructure and Energy, ATA Executive Director, Eddie Bergman and the Ministers of Tourism and heads of delegations from more than 20 African countries, the ATA International Board of Directors and ATA Chapter representatives as well as more than 300 ATA delegates, mostly American Travel professionals. In addition to the Hon. Mwangunga, the Tanzania delegation included, H.E. Ali Shauri Haji, Tanzania Ambassador to Egypt, representatives of the Tanzania Ministry for Natural Resources & Tourism, the Tanzania Tourist Board, Tanzania National Parks, Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority, Zanzibar Tourist Corporation, the National Museum of Tanzania, the Department of Antiquities and Bobby Tours, a Tanzania-based tour operator.

"We are proud to announce tonight that for the second consecutive year the American market is still the Number One source of visitors to Tanzania worldwide," stated Hon. Shamsa S. Mwangunga, M.P. "The 2008 worldwide tourism arrivals were 770,376, a 7% increase over 2007, with visitors from the U.S. increasing from 58,341 to a record

high of 66,953 to Mainland Tanzania and the Spice Islands of Zanzibar. We attribute this growth to the many aspects of our marketing plan, not least of which is the strong support of our travel industry partners we are honoring here tonight, as well as the great impact of a two year CNN-US TV Ad Campaign and "Ultimate Safari" Sweepstakes – and our first (2008/2009) WABC-TV/NY Ad Campaign. If this trend continues we are confident to reach our goal of one million tourists in 2012."

Peter Mwenguo, Managing Director TTB, said "Every year is special in Tanzania, with its unparalleled national parks, game reserves and seven World Heritage Sites, but this year we are also celebrating the 50th Anniversary of a key archaeological breakthrough: the Louis and Mary Leakey discovery of the first intact hominoid skull in Oldupai Gorge, 'The Cradle of Mankind.' The discovery of the Zinjanthropus skull allowed scientists to date the beginnings of mankind to about two million years ago, and to determine that human evolution began not in Asia as first thought, but in Africa. We expect many visitors this year especially on July 17, 2009, the date of the anniversary. There will also be an "international Conference on Zinjanthropus in Arusha, August 16-22, 2009. In fact, thanks to the support of one of our Honorees tonight, Asante Safaris, as well as Ethiopian Airlines, Tanzania now has its first ever archaeologically-focused tour in honor of this historic event. Tanzania is also proud to be the first African Country to host the Africa Diaspora Heritage Trail Conference (ADHT) Oct 25-30, 2009 in Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar."

Amant Macha, TTB Marketing Director, added "The Karibu Travel and Tourism Fair, celebrating its 10th Anniversary, June 5-7, 2009 in Arusha, has been given a big boost in the American market thanks again to the support of both South African Airways, one of this year's honorees, as well as Ethiopian Airlines. Both Airlines offered special fares for our Tanzania Travel Agent Specialist Program, with more than 1080 graduates." **TANZANIA TOURISM AWARDS 2009 HONOREES TANZANIA TOURISM BOARD TOUR OPERATOR HUMANITARIAN AWARD 2009: AFRICAN DREAM SAFARIS** African Dream Safaris, which has donated over \$5,000 to the Foundation of African Medicine and Education in Karatu expects

to donate more than \$10,000 in 2009. They also support schools and orphanages in Tanzania both through direct donations and community work.

TANZANIA TOURISM BOARD TOUR OPERATOR CONSERVATION AWARD 2009 THOMSON SAFARIS

For almost 30 years, Thomson Safaris has operated award-winning safari adventures, Kilimanjaro treks and cultural experiences in Tanzania. The company has also always been at the forefront of sustainable and community based tourism projects in Tanzania. Since 2006, Thomson Safaris has implemented an innovative habitat restoration program at the Enashiva Nature Refuge in the Serengeti. There they work with the local Maasai to save and care for endangered flora, wildlife and birdlife, and to directly fund community development projects.

Restoring the ecosystem of the Enashiva Nature Refuge is important to critical habitats throughout Northern Tanzania. Thomson Safaris is also active in promoting cultural and educational tourism in Maasai communities.

TANZANIA TOURISM BOARD SOUTHERN/WESTERN CIRCUIT AWARDS 2009

AFRICAN MECCA SAFARIS

African Mecca Safaris offers innovative and stand alone itineraries focusing on the Southern and Western Circuits including the Selous Game Reserve, Ruaha National Park and Mikumi National Park; a Bush & Beach Safari, 9 Day Showcase Tanzania Safari and "10 Day Off the Beaten Track" in Tanzania Safari.

SAFARI VENTURES

Concentration on a well-rounded travel experience, incorporating cultural and heritage elements, defines Safari Ventures itineraries. Their development of stand alone Southern /Western Circuit itineraries focus on meetings with local inhabitants along with the game viewing. Tours include the Mufindi highlands, the town of Mbeya or travel to the shores of Lake Malawi (a.k.a. Lake Nyasa) where they can meet the people of the Wanyakyusa Tribe, and to Saadani, the only wildlife and marine National Park in East Africa, Mikumi National Park, and Ruaha, the second largest National Park in Africa. The Storyteller itineraries upon which the tours are based immerses travelers in the beauty and culture of Southern/Western Tanzania.

TANZANIA TOURISM BOARD TOUR OPERATOR PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

AWARDS 2009 LION WORLD TOURS

For over forty years, Lion World Tours has demonstrated its destination expertise in Southern and East Africa. A member of the TravelCorp group, which also includes Trafalgar Tours, Contiki and Insight Vaca-

tions, Lion World is one of North America's largest agencies for African travel. It now offers six unique Tanzania-only itineraries, A Taste of Tanzania, Chimpanzee Tracking in Mahale, Serengeti Walking Safaris, Tanzania Cultural Bushmen Exploration, Roof of Africa Climbing Kilimanjaro and Dazzling Days in Zanzibar.

ASANTE SAFARIS

Asante Safaris has been supportive of TTB projects in the US showcasing special interest markets for Destination Tanzania by creating and offering Trips for Two Tanzania Safaris and providing them at no cost to be auctioned and raffled at high profile charity events--each one focusing on Special Interest Markets. The first was a Cultural Safari for Afropop Worldwide Gala, March 4, 2009 with Ethiopian Airlines; the second was an Archaeology-focused Safari to promote the 50th Anniversary of the Discovery of "Zinj" for the Archaeology Institute of America's Gala Awards Dinner, April 28, 2009 with Ethiopian Airlines (this barter provided TTB with more than \$30,000 worth of free advertising in the prestigious Archaeology Magazine and web site); and the third is for the Sister Cities International Conference, August 1, 2009, with South African Airways.

TANZANIA TOURISM BOARD AIRLINE

AWARDS 2009 SOUTH AFRICAN AIRWAYS

South African Airways has launched a same-day connection to Dar es Salaam from its New York/JFK gateway, beginning this month, May, 2009. SAA has been actively supporting TTB's promotional activities in the US, including providing tickets for our Sister Cities International Tanzania Trip for Two, as well as providing special fares for travel agents wanting to attend the Karibu Travel and Tourism Fair in Arusha this June.

EGYPTAIR

EgyptAir was the first African-based international airline to provide service to Tanzania. Although the service was interrupted for several years, the Cairo-Dar es Salaam route will be re-launched this June, 2009, opening up more air access for American travelers to Tanzania. EgyptAir is a member of Star Alliance.

TANZANIA TOURISM BOARD MEDIA BROADCAST AWARD 2009

Ann Curry, NBC-TV's Today Show News Anchor. NBC-TV's Today Show sent Ann Curry and her team to climb Mt. Kilimanjaro to illustrate first-hand the effects of climate change on some of the World's major icons. Although they did not make it to the summit, their weeklong, live cover-

age during the climb, and their online blogs stimulated enormous interest across the US on Destination Tanzania and Mt. Kilimanjaro.

TANZANIA TOURISM BOARD MEDIA PRINT AWARD 2009

Eloise Parker/New York Daily News.

This reporter's Kilimanjaro climb on the Machame route was followed by the 2.5 million readers of the Travel Section of the New York Daily News, as well as individuals around the world who followed her daily blogs via Blackberry. Eloise also wrote about her safari to Ngorongoro Crater and to Zanzibar.

About the Tanzania Tourism Awards

The Tanzania Tourist Board announced the establishment of the Tanzania Tourism Awards at the ATA Congress in May, 2000 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and the First Annual Tanzania Tourism Awards were presented at a Gala Dinner at the ATA Congress in Cape Town, South Africa, May 2001.

The Awards were created to support, and show appreciation to, the travel professionals and media who have worked hard promoting and selling Tanzania in the US market as well as to provide an incentive to increase the numbers even more in the coming years. The Awards have taken on more significance as the American market has become the number one source of tourists for Tanzania worldwide for two consecutive years. One of TTB's specific objectives was to promote the Southern Circuit, which until recently was the travel connoisseur's "best kept secret" but now the number of tour operators offering "stand alone" safaris to the South and West of Tanzania has been steadily growing.

TTB selected the Annual Africa Travel Association Congress as the venue for the Gala Awards Dinner to show support for ATA's ever expanding global reach in promoting tourism to the Continent of Africa. The prestigious Awards are presented each year by Tanzania's Minister of Natural Resources and Tourism. The 2009 Awards were presented by the Hon. Shamsa S. Mwangunga, M.P.

In 2004, TTB created the first ever Tour Operator Humanitarian Award. This was a direct result of the Second IIPT African Conference on Peace through Tourism (IIPT) hosted by Tanzania's Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, December 2003. TTB wanted to encourage more tour operators to make a direct contribution to the betterment of the local communities, thereby making them 'stakeholders' in the tourism industry.

In the same year, 2004, TTB also expanded its Awards Program to honor Tanzania's partners at home who have helped to improve the quality and infrastructure of its tourism product recognizing that tourism could not experience fast-paced growth without this private sector investment and support.

About Tanzania

Tanzania, the largest country in East Africa, is focused on wildlife conservation and sustainable tourism, with approximately 28 % of the land protected by the Government. It boasts 15 National Parks and 32 game reserves. It is the home of the tallest mountain in Africa, the legendary Mt. Kilimanjaro; The Serengeti, named in October, 2006, the New 7th Wonder of the World by USA Today and Good Morning America; the world acclaimed Ngorongoro Crater, often called the 8th Wonder of the World; Oldupai Gorge, the cradle of mankind: the Selous, the world's largest game reserve;

Ruaha, now the second largest National Park in Africa; the spice islands of Zanzibar; and seven UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Most important for visitors, the Tanzanian people are warm and friendly, speak English, which together with Kiswahili, are the two official languages; and the country is an oasis of peace and stability with a democratically elected and stable government.

For more information about Tanzania visit www.tanzaniatouristboard.com.

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