

Cradle of Human Culture launches at 2019 Asia Pacific Roadshow

The Western Cape's Destination Marketing Organisation (DMO) at Wesgro, in partnership with South African Tourism, has launched the Cradle of Human Culture at the Asia Pacific Roadshow 2019 in China. The next media launch will be held in Shanghai on 28 June 2019.



M Ecker via [Wikimedia Commons](#) - The archaeological site of Sibudu, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

The Cradle of Human Culture was launched in South Africa on 11 April 2019 at the World Travel Market Africa, in partnership between Wesgro's DMO, the Western Cape Department of Economic Development and Tourism, the Western Cape Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport and the Cradle of Humankind World Heritage Site.



Cradle of Human Culture launches in the Western Cape

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If the Cradle of Humankind was the biological development that led to the appearance of Homo sapiens, the Cradle of Human Culture captures the behavioural development of Homo sapiens.

The South African sites of Blombos Cave, Pinnacle Point Site Complex, Diepkloof Rock Shelter in the Western Cape; Klasies River in the Eastern Cape and Border Cave and Sibudu Cave in KwaZulu-Natal, have contributed outstanding evidence of palaeo-environmental conditions and the evolution of early humans.

The three sites in the Western Cape are in the process of being nominated World Heritage Sites and form the basis of new routes that allow travellers to experience this incredible journey of early human evolution.



Inge Dykman, head of Wesgro's leisure tourism unit said: "Our research indicates that the Chinese travel market is highly influenced to travel to destinations that have attractive heritage and cultural sites, and even more so, accredited by UNESCO.

"With a direct flight between Hong Kong and Cape Town, and Chinese travellers to the Western Cape increasing by double-digits in 2018, we believe the newly launched Cradle of Human Culture will provide yet another reason for the Chinese traveller to visit our beautiful province and country."

Wesgro's research unit's recent *Tourism Market Insights – China* report indicates that 57,868 Chinese tourists visited the Western Cape in 2018, up from 36,710 in 2017. Moreover, Chinese tourists spent R450m in the Western Cape in 2017, up from R378m in 2016. The average spend of a tourist more than doubled from R6,600 in 2016 to R13,300 in 2017.

Minister David Maynier, Western Cape MEC for finance and economic opportunities said: "This growth is definitely welcomed, but if one considers that China accounts for the most outbound travellers in the world, these numbers are still far too small. We are hopeful that changes to the visa regime, with the introduction of e-visas, will help increase traveller numbers from China even further. Other initiatives, such as the Cradle of Human Culture, which appeals to the Chinese traveller will also help."

Cultural collaboration

Western Cape Minister of cultural affairs and sport, Anroux Marais added: "Considering the increasing number of Chinese visitors to the Western Cape and the expanding relationship between South Africa and the People's Republic of China, there is a growing need to collaborate on a cultural level to highlight the heritage landscapes of both countries.

"This significant launch is one platform used to promote the Cradle of Human Culture as it captures the behavioural

development of Homo sapiens before the global diaspora ensued and speaks to the journey of human expression and humanity itself.

"We have made great strides in establishing meaningful sustainable partnerships that have set the innovative scene rendering the Western Cape the leading cultural destination of South Africa. We trust this launch will advocate a common human ancestry which is much needed in the current global socio-political climate which will undoubtedly ease further collaboration with the Asia Pacific region."

Mansoor Mohamed, hub head of Asia Pacific for South African Tourism concluded: "South Africa is becoming a world-class 'China ready' destination by working closely with South African travel trade partners.

"Trade partners are important to us. South African Tourism is committed to strengthening provincial partnerships to provide tailored experiences to Chinese travellers in South Africa."

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