



All's fair

Sleep easy knowing that your hotel stay is helping to save the planet, uplift the community and empower the people around you

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A FAIR Trade hotel room looks just like any other hotel room – plush pillows, oversized duvet, impossibly stylish decor and all.

The real difference comes in what you don't see – the stories behind the cotton in the linen or the breakfast tea brewing in the background.

The Fair Trade movement is a global movement that looks at achieving a more equal and sustainable trade by tackling poverty and empowering small-scale farmers and farm workers.

The way that this is measured and conveyed to consumers around the world is through the "Fairtrade" label, which is awarded to select farms, traders, organisations and venues after strict audits and certi-

For more information on Fair trade, visit www.fair-tradesa.org.za/www.fair-tourismsa.org.za. For more information on The Peech Hotel in Johannesburg, an eco-boutique hotel that is FT TSA certified, visit www.thepeech.co.za.

fication standards have been met.

As Jennifer Seif, executive director of Fair Trade in Tourism SA (FTT-SA) sums up, the movement is essentially about "matching sustainably produced goods and services with ethically minded consumers".

One can get Fair Trade tea, in other words, that abides by the standards of good trading, working

and living conditions, support of community development projects and guaranteed sustainable production and protection of the environment, but one can also get a fair trade room or venue, such as what The Peech Hotel (among other venues in and around SA) started offering its guests from March this year.

Most of the commodities in the room are certified according to international standards – from the linen, coffee and tea to the chocolates on the beds and the flowers on the dressers.

On top of this, the hotel as a whole has been certified by FT TSA. This means that The Peech has committed to fair wages and working conditions; fair operations, purchasing and distribution of benefits; ethical business practice and respect for human rights, culture and the environment.

The Dorint Hotel in Amsterdam was the first hotel in the world to launch a Fair Trade hotel room. That was in 2010, which means that South Africa is not far behind.

In fact, in many ways South Africa is unique as far as the fair trade movement is concerned for being the first producer and consumer country (Fairtrade Label South Africa was the first organisation in the world to promote Fairtrade labelled products in the 'South').

"Historically Africa has been the producer of commodities; the raw materials, in other words, and not the packaged or retail products," Seif explains.

"We might produce fair trade cotton in Africa, for example, but



not the textiles," she says.

"Africa is losing out in global trade to the extent that we are often consigned to the role of producer of commodities.

"But this is starting to change – SA is breaking this mould and leading the development of Fairtrade supply chains in Africa," Seif says.

The economic development potential for trade between South Africa and Africa is huge, not to mention the fact that South Africa has become a fair trade leader as far as tourism is concerned.

"We have a Fairtrade label for tourism, so the world is looking to us to tell them how to do this on a global scale," says Seif.

"The Peech Hotel and the other hotels that have qualified for the FT TSA label are almost like the prototype. And on top of that we're developing a system to provide certified Fairtrade holiday packages to SA."

There are already three certified Fairtrade holiday packages on sale in Switzerland and Germany, with many other ideas in the pipeline.

As it stands now, a tourist can



walk into a travel agency in Zurich and buy a fair trade holiday to SA.

That's a huge step in the right direction and for once SA is leading, not following.

