



News Release

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A NEW ERA DAWNS FOR SPECIAL NEEDS TRAVELLERS

Roll out the red carpet, listen to the sound of the drum-roll and make way for the wheelchairs, as a Cape Town initiative for special needs travellers is launched. CapeAble Travel founder, Russell Vollmer, has lived most of his life as a quadriplegic after a diving accident. However, limitation never stopped Russell who has travelled extensively both nationally and internationally and represented South Africa at the Para-Olympics in Sydney 2000.

"The greatest challenge for a special needs traveller is to be able to trust that the access signage is used responsibly and is in deed true. I have found myself in some hair-raising situations which would send the most hardened traveller packing", advises Vollmer. "My vision is to educate the hospitality industry to understand special needs travellers, to be comfortable with them and be able to comfortably accommodate them. Secondly, I am committed to my fellow special needs travellers for whom I want to establish a database of establishments and places of interest that have been specifically tested by a person with special needs for others in similar situations."

Cape Town Routes Unlimited is CapeAble Travel's first client and all their staff are currently being trained in 'Basic Etiquette' to ably assist special needs persons. Says Nokhuthula Dube, CEO of Cape Town Routes Unlimited: "We are pleased that CapeAble Travel has taken the initiative to educate and advise our staff. As a result we can confidently extend our hospitality to all special needs travellers."

An annual guide and website will host the database of information and will be available later this year. These will be freely available to travel consultants, conference organisers and travellers.