

## Drive South Africa partners with Google to capture SA in 360-degree

Drive South Africa, a Cape Town-based travel company, has partnered with Google through the [Google Street View camera loan programme](#) to capture South Africa's top wilderness, cultural and historic sites in 360-degree Street View imagery for Google Maps.

Each “off-road” location will be captured with [Google's Street View Trekker](#), a wearable backpack topped with a camera system designed by Google. The Street View Trekker backpack is walked through pedestrian walkways or trails on foot, and automatically gathers images as it goes.



Behind the scenes: #TrekSouthAfrica project lead Andre Van Kets helps Devon Krantz load-up the 22kg Google Trekker backpack as Carte Blanche cameraman Greg Nelson captures the moment with Hout Bay in the background, June 2016. - Photo: Liz Fish

Google Street View gives internet users a “virtual tour” of an area using 360-degree panoramic photographs. South Africa roads were added to Google Street View in 2010 ahead of the FIFA World Cup.

### 33 Western Cape trails mapped in the first phase

The first phase of the project has seen 22 volunteer trekkers cover 33 trails across the Cape Peninsula, including seven routes up Table Mountain, five beaches and three urban trails such as the Sea Point promenade.

The team has explored more than 150 kilometres on foot over a six week period and will cover nature reserves across the country over the next few months.



26 Volunteer trekkers and two dogs joined for a trek up Noordhoek Peak in the Table Mountain National Park in June 2016, part of the #TrekSouthAfrica project. - Photo: Rudolph De Girardier

The project has gained support from various tourism stakeholders: Wesgro - the official tourism, trade and investment promotion agency for Cape Town and the Western Cape, SANParks, Cape Nature, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife and lead project partner South African Tourism. "We are very excited to back this opportunity to deliver the real South Africa to people all over the world via Google's widely used platforms," said Margie Whitehouse, chief marketing officer of SA Tourism.

The project comes in the wake of Google's launch of South Africa: Mzansi Experience in March 2016, which helped the world explore South Africa's iconic destinations such as the Kruger National Park, Table Mountain, and Cape of Good Hope via 360-degree imagery from the comfort of their armchairs.

## Help trek South Africa's trails

Andre Van Kets, co-founder of [Drive South Africa](#), is heading up the [#TrekSouthAfrica](#) campaign. Van Kets hopes to get locals from across the country to assist in mapping out Mzansi's trails and tourist attractions. "We have an epic six-month plan planned, with over 20 national parks, eight UNESCO World and many other wonderful destinations in all nine provinces on our schedule," said Van Kets.



Volunteer trekker Rendani Mudau of SANParks glances back at Lion's Head during a #TrekSouthAfrica hike in Cape Town in May 2016. - Photo: Grant Clark

"We want to engage with individuals and local communities along the way so that we can bring Mzansi's best attractions to Google Street View. We're looking for people to suggest highlights in their areas, help us trek their neck of the woods and ultimately be a part of this exciting project. We want this to be a campaign by South Africans from all walks of life."

To learn more or apply to volunteer as a local trekker visit the [#TrekSouthAfrica website](#).

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>