

NEWS RELEASE

2010 ACCOMMODATION AWARDS OPEN

The 2010 AA Travel Guides American Express Accommodation Awards programme is open for entries.

Now in its seventeenth year, this programme is based on consumer opinion and is often used by guests as a benchmark when deciding where to stay.

More than 47 000 consumers commented on some 1 300 establishments across the country this year.

Convenor Vanessa Sand says the spotlight on the standard of tourist accommodation in South Africa is now stronger than ever. "Next year's Soccer World Cup is undoubtedly the biggest test in the history of the industry and we have to pull out all stops to ensure a quality experience for our visitors."

She says the awards are open to any type of establishment that is AA Quality Assured or star graded, including different types of hotels, resorts, game lodges, guesthouses, bed and breakfasts and township accommodation.

"Entering the awards holds real benefits for an establishment. Each participating establishment receives a thorough summary of all consumer comments received, whether positive or negative. Finalists and winners receive widespread exposure, giving them a huge marketing advantage."

Guests have the opportunity to comment on aspects such as service levels, facilities, friendliness and ambience.

They can either complete the AA guest critique form, an establishment's own in-house questionnaire that was approved by AA Travel Guides or comment electronically through either Rate-it.co.za or eGuestSurv.

Feedback received is then processed independently, after which potential semi-finalists and finalists are visited by experienced assessors.

Establishments have until the end of September to enter the awards.

Sand says now is the ideal time to enter since it provides six months for consumer feedback to be gathered. Feedback about establishments will be accepted until 31 January 2010 and the winners will receive their awards at a ceremony in Durban on 9 May 2010.

Establishments that wish to enter or obtain more information can contact Vanessa Weltman at AA Travel Guides on tel 011 713 2117 or vweltman@aatravel.co.za , or visit www.aatravel.co.za.

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Released by:	Martin van Niekerk, Junxion Communications Tel 012 804 8812
On behalf of:	Vanessa Sand, AA Travel Guides Tel 011 713 2000
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