



New signs erected in Richtersveld World Heritage Site

By Claire Allison - Marketing Manager of Open Africa

The Department of Tourism is planning on erecting interpretive signage in all eight of South Africa's World Heritage Sites (WHS). The latest of these to receive signage is the Richtersveld World Heritage Site in the Northern Cape. Open Africa was appointed as a service provider to see the project through, due to their vast experience in the region and the role they played in establishing the Richtersveld Route, a self-drive travel route showcasing the culture, history and attractions of the area.

The initiative aims to assist travellers visiting the WHS by interpreting the significance of local cultural and heritage attractions, particularly since the Richtersveld was declared a WHS due to its cultural landscape. The 160 000ha area of dramatic mountainous desert is communally-owned and managed, the only of its kind in South Africa. The area is made up of three key biomes (a large natural occurring community of flora and fauna occupying a major habitat); desert biome, succulent Karoo biome and fynbos biome.

Thirteen signs have been erected throughout the region with eight of these placed at attractions within the site, while five have been placed at key entry points, welcoming visitors to the area. Each one of the signs describing

a feature or attraction provides information about secrets from the past, nature's little secrets and the past, present and future. Each sign also highlights other noteworthy attractions within the WHS.

In addition to the botanic marvel, the site sustains the semi-nomadic pastoral livelihood of the Nama people, reflecting seasonal patterns that may have persisted for as long as two millennia in Southern Africa. It is the only area where the Nama people still construct portable rush-mat houses (haru om) and migrate to new grazing grounds seasonally.

The welcome signs provide vital information to travellers entering the area, as well as alerting them that they need a permit to travel through the site. It is hoped that this will prevent illegal camping, thus helping to maintain and conserve the area for its inhabitants and future visitors.

All thirteen of the signs also feature a Quick Response Code (QR Code) which, when scanned, directs travellers to a page on Open Africa's website, providing more information about the Richtersveld Route as well as other attractions and accommodation in the area.

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Eksteenfontein town sign



Rooiberg Picnic Spot

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