



# The 2017 Sustainable Destinations Top 100

## Call for Nominations

For the third time the Sustainable Destinations Top 100 competition is organised by Green Destinations in cooperation with 20 other international organisations for sustainable tourism. The aim of the competition is to highlight success stories in destination management, and to exchange good practices between destinations. Selection involves formal nomination by destination ambassadors and evaluation by a panel of ca. 100 international experts.

The new Top 100 will be unveiled at Global Green Destinations Day, 28-29 September 2017, in the framework of Greenfest Cascais, Portugal. Greenfest is one of the world's largest events on sustainable development, this time one of the topics is: "Green destinations".

The 2017 Sustainable Destinations Top 100 will build upon the results of the 2016 Top 100 competition "Destinations of Future Generations", a follow-up to the 2014 Top 100 and National Geographic Traveler's Destination Stewardship surveys.

Top 100 candidates are destinations that are dedicated to the following GREEN values:

- **Genuine and authentic:** supporting the celebration of local culture and tradition;
- **Responsible:** defending people against exploitation and human rights violation, and enhancing accessibility for people with disabilities;
- **Economically sustainable:** involving the local business community and enhancing local community employment during and beyond the holiday season;
- **Environmentally sustainable:** ensuring public health, safety and sound environmental management;
- **Nature & scenery:** protecting scenic views, habitats and wildlife, and respecting animals that are used in tourism.

**Destinations dedicated to these GREEN values are encouraged to register for the Top 100 competition, before 1 July 2017.**

**Download the forms from <http://greendestinations.org>**

## **Aims of the competition**

By publishing an annual list, the initiators acknowledge excellent initiatives making tourism destinations greener, cleaner, more responsible and better from a perspective of our common GREEN values, and to exchange good practices between destinations. Selection of a destination in the Top 100 does not mean it is fully sustainable. It means that it has made good efforts, and is making progress towards sustainability.

## **Eligibility criteria for admission to the competition**

Cities, towns, islands, and protected areas are eligible if an organisation is formally responsible for tourism destination management and sustainability. Eco-lodges and private parks are eligible if they have a recognised and strong stewardship for a large area (min. 5 sq km) that is otherwise not managed.

Countries and regions are eligible to a size of 60,000 sq km.

Accommodations, single buildings, attractions and theme parks are not eligible.

## **How to nominate a destination?**

Nominations for 2017 can only be made upon submission of:

- the 2017 Top 100 Nomination form: compliance to 15 core sustainability criteria (Annex) will determine 50% of your score;
- the separate 2017 Top 100 Information form: this will determine 50% of your score.

Both forms are available online in <http://greendestinations.org>.

Completed forms should be e-mailed to: [top100@greendestinations.info](mailto:top100@greendestinations.info).

A destination can only be nominated by:

- the destination manager, sustainability coordinator, the DMO or the DMC;
- a member of the Sustainable Destinations Top 100 Panel; or
- a registered Green Destinations Ambassador representing the destination.

## **What if you were selected for the 2016 Top 100?**

2016 Competition participants will only be eligible for 2017 when completing the new Top 100 Sustainability Indicators form. This year, these indicators will determine 50% of your score. 2016 Competition participants are not required to complete the Nomination form again. However, selection in 2017 is not guaranteed, so destinations are strongly advised to clearly mention recent developments in the 2017 Nomination form.

## **2017 Sustainable Destinations Top 100 Selection procedure**

Destination certification is not sufficient to be included in the Top 100. If all certified destinations would be included, the Top 100 would only include destinations in only ten countries.

Therefore, selection of eligible destinations will take place on the basis of a more open and transparent approach, taking account of:

1. Compliance to a GSTC-Recognised destination standard, which can be checked by the Sustainable Destinations Top 100 Panel. Priority will be given to destinations participating in destination assessment with publicly available jury reports, and to destinations providing evidence on the 15 core sustainability criteria (below) that are included in the 2017 Top 100 Nomination form.
2. Attractiveness to visitors dedicated to the previously mentioned GREEN values. Evidence of this attractiveness needs to be specified on the 2017 Top 100 Indicators form.

All available information will be processed in the Green Destinations database.

The selection process will be informed and supported by the Sustainable Destinations Top 100 Panel, consisting of ca. 100 international top experts on tourism and sustainability.

In order to ensure a truly global Top 100, a maximum amount of selected destinations will be set for each continent.

## **The Sustainable Destinations Top 100 Panel**

The members of the Top 100 Panel are involved in the evaluation of nominations. Members include ca. 100 experts in the field of responsible and sustainable tourism.

## **The Sustainable Destinations Top 100 Committee**

The Top 100 Committee are responsible for the selection process. Members include:

Albert Salman, President, Green Destinations, the Netherlands

Zainab Turay, InHolland University for Applied Science; Green Destinations, the Netherlands

Valere Tjolle, TravelMole's VISION on Sustainable Tourism, UK / Italy

Jonathan Tourtellot, Destination Stewardship Center, USA

Brian Mullis, Founder, Sustainable Travel International, USA

Geoff Bolan, CEO, Sustainable Travel International, USA

Hugo de Jong, QualityCoast and QualityTourism Awards, the Netherlands

Glenn Jampol, Costa Rica. President, Global Ecotourism Network (GEN, tbc)

Masaru Takayama, Japan. President, Asian Ecotourism Network (AEN)

**Table: The 15 Top 100 Core criteria (from the GSTC Recognised Green Destinations Standard)**

<b>Top 100 Core Criteria</b>	
<b>Sustainability coordinator</b>	A person has been assigned the responsibility and authority for the adequate implementation and reporting of sustainable destination management.
<b>Tourism policy</b>	The destination has an up-to-date, publicly available, multi-year tourism policy or strategy addressing all important issues.
<b>Nature protection</b>	The protection of natural sites, habitats, species, and ecosystems is effectively addressed and enforced. Nature degradation is addressed.
<b>Animal Ethics</b>	The use of animals in tourism is effectively controlled in order to decrease the risk of unnecessary suffering, disease, and death.
<b>Landscape &amp; Scenery</b>	Natural and rural scenic views are protected and the sense of place is maintained; landscape degradation and urban sprawl is avoided.
<b>Waste water treatment</b>	Waste water treatment is adequately organised and relevant regulations are enforced, aimed to minimise impacts to people and the environment.
<b>Solid waste reduction</b>	Any solid waste is monitored, reduced, separated and recycled, and quantitative goals are set, especially regarding the reduction of plastic waste.
<b>Reduction of fossil fuel dependency</b>	Adequate measures and incentives exist to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and to encourage renewable energy technologies.
<b>Cultural heritage conservation</b>	The conservation, authenticity and aesthetic presentation of cultural resources, sites and built heritage, is adequately organised and enforced.
<b>Intangible heritage</b>	Intangible cultural heritage and local life and culture, are adequately protected and respected.
<b>Protection of people</b>	The destination takes adequate measures to protect all people legally and effectively against commercial, sexual, or any other form of exploitation.
<b>Inhabitants involved in tourism</b>	Inhabitants are regularly involved in discussions on opportunities, challenges and sustainability of tourism development.
<b>Promoting local products</b>	The inclusion of local artisans, producers and service providers in the tourism value chain is supported; local and sustainable products are promoted.
<b>Health &amp; safety prevention</b>	Crime, safety, and health hazards are adequately prevented and addressed.
<b>Accessibility</b>	Access to tourism sites is supported for individuals with disabilities, where appropriate, whilst not harming the sites and their sense of place.

## **Top 100 - Message to the media**

*In media messages the following should be stressed:*

### **Tips how to select a sustainable holiday**

It should be stressed that visiting a Top 100 destination does not make a holiday sustainable. This would require at least the following main elements:

- Choose a destination making serious efforts for sustainability; avoid destinations with self-claims on sustainability that cannot be proven.
- Choose a destination that is accessible by train, bus, ferry or a short flight. And in any case, compensate the CO2 emission of your travel. However, be aware that compensation is shifting the climate mitigation burden to someone else.
- If you really want to visit a country at a longer distance, than make it a long stay and choose the most sustainable destinations and accommodations in the area.
- Select an accommodation with a low ecological and carbon footprint, or with a GSTC-Recognised hotel eco-label.

15 May 2017  
Version 2.1

Albert Salman  
Zainab Turay  
Green Destinations, the Netherlands