

PRESS RELEASE

LONELY PLANET DECLARES BOTSWANA THE TOP COUNTRY IN THE WORLD TO VISIT FOR 2016

London, 27th October 2015 - Botswana has been named the top country in the world for travellers in 2016. The country receives the accolade in LONELY PLANET'S BEST IN TRAVEL 2016, the highly anticipated collection of the world's hottest trends, destinations and experiences for the year ahead. The bestselling, inspirational travel yearbook from the world's leading travel authority highlights the top ten countries, cities and regions to visit in 2016.

Botswana takes the top spot thanks to being "a unique destination: an unusual combination of desert and delta that draws an immense concentration of wildlife".

According to the book, "Botswana is so full of life-changing experiences it would be easier to list the things that aren't remarkable. Here is a real wilderness that puts you in touch with palpable primitive thrills and fears, whether it's being poled by an African gondolier in a mokoro past pods of sunbathing hippos in the Okavango Delta; or feeling the spirit of the first men in the thousand-year- beauty of Kubu Island's ancient baobabs backlit by incandescent constellations in a vast night sky."

LONELY PLANET'S BEST IN TRAVEL 2016 CONTRIBUTOR, TOM HALL, explained, "Botswana has remained off the radar for most people, who believe it's too expensive, too difficult to get to or doesn't cater for families. But that isn't true. Go now! Go in the green season or go in the dry season - at any time of year, this stunning country is just waiting to be explored."

As Botswana, we are very humbled by this award and we would like to inform the public that BTO will receive the award from Lonely Planet at the World Travel Market (WTM) 2015 in London on the 1st November 2015.

Other countries to make the top-ten list for 2016 include Japan - "the country that pays such vivid tribute to manic modernity and hallowed history"- which comes in at number two and the USA, which ranks as the third best country in the world thanks to "some of the most spectacular and surreal landscapes on the planet, "and to "being a road-tripping paradise" where you can "watch the landscape morph from prairie to desert to breath-taking ocean road."

The destinations featured in the book are selected because they meet certain criteria; it could be that something special is going on in the year ahead or there's been recent development and a lot of buzz about the place, that it offers travellers new things to see or do, or that the Lonely Planet team of experts thinks it's been overlooked and underrated and suggests travellers visit before the crowds do.

LONELY PLANET'S BEST IN TRAVEL 2016 also contains 17 inspirational travel-themed lists, from the best value destinations for 2016, to the best animal adventures for families, the best places to seek silence and the best places to elope.

Selecting what to include in LONELY PLANET'S BEST IN TRAVEL annual publication is a considered process involving the whole of Lonely Planet's community: from its authors and editors all the way to its online family of bloggers and tweeters. Each year, they come up with hundreds of places that are not-to-be-missed. These are then whittled down by a panel of in-house travel experts who give each destination in the shortlist a score in line with criteria such as topicality, excitement and wow-factor.

TOP 10 COUNTRIES IN LONELY PLANET'S BEST IN TRAVEL 2016:

- * **Botswana**
- * Japan
- * USA
- * Palau
- * Latvia
- * Australia
- * Poland
- * Uruguay
- * Greenland
- * Fiji

Thabo Brian Dithebe

Chief Executive Officer