

ATA EGYPT CONGRESS PROFILE

Name: Lisa Simon, CTP

Position: President

Organization: National Tour Association (NTA)

Location: Lexington, KY, USA

Website: ntaonline.com



Why did you come to the Congress?

I came because [NTA] is trying to develop a partnership with ATA, and because I was invited to speak.

What are the biggest challenges you face in bringing people to Africa

I think there's a need for education. The first thing people think about [with Africa] are the safaris, but there are more things to see. They just don't know it.

What do you see as Africa's most valuable tourism asset?

People. I think it's the people. The myriad of culture never ends. The people I've found are very warm and welcoming, and they want to share their culture, but you can't ignore the animals. You can't find anywhere else.

What travel trends are prevalent today and could potentially have the greatest impact on tourism in Africa?

The pent-up demand for international travel when the economy improves; and people will want long-haul destinations because they've been staying closer to home. Certainly there's a trend toward adventure and eco-tourism, and Africa has a lot to offer in that regard. I think there's a trend towards package travel because people want to feel comfortable and safe, so people (in Africa) are very accommodating (when it comes to safety and comfort).

Who do you see as Africa's tourism industry's greatest ally?

ATA!

How would you broaden perspectives among the general public on tourism to Africa beyond safaris and poverty?

Again, education.

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