



World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations
info@wftga.org
In Operational Relations with UNESCO

reg.: Vienna, Austria
www.wftga.org
Affiliate Member of UNWTO

International Tourist Guide Day 2016

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

WFTGA has been in existence for 31 years, and since 1990 we have celebrated the International Tourist Guide Day worldwide. Within that time it has become a major promotion for our profession, for members and supporting partners alike.

Cooperating Partners are the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), who declares the current year as the one to support

SUSTAINABILTY

Whether some call it "green" or "soft" tourism, all want to protect their own area and cultural heritage. The tourist guide is one who supports this wish intensively. We explain our sites and habits, protect nature and traditions, promote local handcraft and help build the infrastructure. Tourist guides, out of professional respect for their cultural heritage, consciously choose never to bite the hand that feeds them.

The wish of UNWTO to reduce visa restrictions has been essentially successful and the growth in travel has increased 4 % all over the world (including overnight stay) since last year.

Another of our congenial partners is the International Institute for Peace and Tourism (IIPT) celebrating 30 years of existence and just recently starting cooperation with Skål International. Tourism is becoming the world's first "global peace industry". What else do tourist guides desire? Travel to connect with friends, new ideas, habits and cultural exchange – the root for **Mutual Understanding**.

Check out some themes already established by a few of our members for this year's celebration, and watch WFTGA's Facebook page for more:

- Germany: "GRÜNderzeit" – discover your own region, www.bvgd.org
- South Africa: Building a Successful and Sustainable Tourist Guiding Sector, www.guidesday2016.co.za
- Austria: The Wealth of Nature. Additionally free tours for refugees to familiarise them to the new country and new conditions; the programme is planned for the full year.
- West Africa: experiences ITGD for the first time with the youth in Ghana, where many know little about the activities of tourist guides. Togo and Benin expressed the wish to replicate in their countries, Sierra Leone might follow.
- New Zealand: Don't forget to like us on Facebook to share messages, trivia and photos.

Let us know about **YOUR** upcoming plans and results at www.wftga.org.

Felicitas Wressnig
WFTGA President