

PCP INDUSTRY NEWS UPDATE

The Producer's Creative Partnership

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WHY CAPE TOWN IS THRIVING WITH INTERNATIONAL PRODUCTIONS

By Malcolm Scerri-Ferrante

I am on a lovely Caribbean beach surrounded by clear water, tall palm trees, smooth white sand, huge boulders, wooden huts and a picturesque village. I would be tempted to take a swim or lie down to sunbathe were it not for the resounding call of "Action".

This quickly brings me back to the reality that I am actually very far from the Caribbean and in fact on the set of a US production 40km inland from the city of Cape Town in South Africa.

Indeed - this is a film set with its own underwater wave machine creating ripples that truly perfect the scenery. Built under the supervision of a world-renowned production designer, the entire art department and construction crew has been recruited locally, as has more than 90% of the full production team.

Crew salaries range from 25% to over 200% cheaper than in Europe so it's easy to understand why Cape Town is stealing the limelight with international shoots. Labour fringes are low at 4.45% even when including a discretionary contribution towards trainee skills development and the F.I.L.M. programme created by the industry to ensure constant growth in the country's local crew base. The cost of these "training fringes" can be offset with payment made to trainees on set.



In Cape Town the sun shines 14 hours a day whilst the Northern hemisphere 'enjoys' winter time.

"Everything is here" - producer Chris Symes

Earlier this week I met a British colleague of mine, executive producer Chris Symes, who has traveled and worked across the globe. I ask if he is enjoying his stay in Cape Town. Chris replies cheerfully "Great! Everything is here. And it's a great place to be stationed for many months."

In a few simple words Chris managed to encompass the very essence of how filming in Cape Town feels to foreign filmmakers. Cape Town has a robust film infrastructure and hardworking crews to support beautiful scenery, excellent cuisine, first class life style and inexpensive living costs. It all combines to make production in the city great fun and filmmakers often come back for more. Last year Cape Town was the common denominator in two box office hits released in America. The city, which is Trip Advisor's Travelers' Choice Best Destination in the World

25% CASH REBATE ON LOCAL SPEND

LA-based producer David Lancestor of Bold Films shot eight times in Cape Town. He fondly recalls how on one shoot there was only 30 minutes of sunlight and a scheduled crane shot. "Any other crew would have said it was not possible. Everyone on the crew stopped what they were doing and we all raced to set up the shot and miraculously got it!" He continues "I love it there, I like the people, the variety of locations, the year round good weather and the great crews. I want to live there!"



Cape Town has a population of nearly four million and is flanked by beautiful mountains including one of the seven wonders of the world, the famous Table Mountain. The Western Cape, which includes Cape Town, offers tropical-looking beaches, skyscrapers, rugged rocky coastlines, rolling wheat fields, forests, mountains, lakes, sand dunes, plains, wildlife, grim poverty of townships, agriculture, industrial cityscapes and buildings ranging from various Colonial styles to Corinthian, Neo Classical all the way to contemporary.

Full article about Cape Town:
<http://www.the-pcp.com/there-is-something-about-cape-town.html>

for 2011, doubled for Seattle in the Josh Trank-helmed sci-fi adventure *Chronicle*, but had a rare starring role as itself in *Safe House*, a CIA-themed action thriller starring Denzel Washington and Ryan Reynolds.

Chronicle was shot on location in and around Cape Town, with the city centre used to film groundbreaking stunt and visual effects sequences where the superheroes 'threw' vehicles into buildings. Josh singled out South African visual effects supervisor Simon Hansen for helping create "flying like you've really never seen in a movie before."

The filmmakers had explored various production centres around the world, including Australia, New Zealand, Vancouver, Michigan and Louisiana. Ultimately, the producers believed it made sense to bring the movie to Cape Town because it offered them a solid infrastructure, a world-class crew and the new, state-of-the-art sound stages at Cape Town Film Studios.

In 2011 South Africa removed the cap on the cash rebate and increased it to 20% on all local spend, and a further increase to 25% if R3 million (about USD350,000) is spent in the country's internationally-renowned post-production houses.

The addition of an exterior water tank last month, built specifically for a foreign production, is a testament to the fast organic growth of this service industry and how local stakeholders are investing in making things happen.

MALTA'S CASH REBATE TO RISE TO 23%

Malta is experiencing a downward trend in international filming. Until recently the tiny island experienced a shooting frenzy where international productions working simultaneously were spreading thinly the limited local crew and equipment. The absence of sound stages and the still very fledgling film infrastructure might not help make this island the most practical or cheapest place to film in. However most past filmmakers will agree that for the right project the island's locations offer great production value and this usually makes going there worth every dollar spent, especially with the rebate.

Salaries for European crews working in Malta are eligible for the cash rebate, though unfortunately HODs and ATL personnel have the eligible spend capped to one "group total" of 200,000 Euros. In March Malta will stretch incentives on "eligible spend" from its current maximum 20% to 23% with an additional 2% if a film portrays Malta as itself. The incentive will be voted in by parliament immediately after national elections. The opposition party vowed to keep all incentives in place if elected. **More on Malta:** <http://www.the-pcp.com/about-malta.html>

Many argue that Colombia has the widest variety of locations in South America



COLOMBIA SIGNS NEW FILM LAW FOR 20% and 40% REBATE

This month Colombia launched its new 40% location filming incentive, available for features and TV moves that spend 500,000 USD locally. The incentive is capped at 600,000 USD per project. Food, accommodation and transport costs incurred locally are only eligible for a 20% rebate. TV series and commercials cannot tap into this incentive scheme which has a fund of USD14 million.

The PCP strongly advocates Colombia as a friendly country offering filmmakers a memorable experience. Safety is far better than that depicted in the mainstream media and the solid home-based film industry provides a good starting infrastructure for international film shoots. Contact the PCP for all your budget requirements for Colombia.

A must watch video: <http://www.the-pcp.com/why-colombia.html>

More on Colombia: <http://www.thelocationguide.com/blog/2012/05/colombia-makes-plans-to-boost-location-filming-appeal/>

Cartagena, where "Love in the Time of Cholera" was filmed, is the most popular city amongst foreign filmmakers



PCP & FILM AFRIKA ALIGNMENT

The PCP proudly announces its association with the leading South African production service company FILM AFRIKA.

It is obvious that South Africa has a lot to offer, especially between the months of November and April when the Northern hemisphere is dealing with cold winters or less than ideal weather that render some shoots quite difficult or impossible. Moreover Cape Town offers some unique locations difficult to find in Europe, as well as a strong infrastructure and very affordable and professional crews. All this, together with a 20-25% cash rebate, makes Cape Town a very attractive filming destination.

The PCP's new stronghold in Cape Town and aligning with what is undoubtedly one of the most experienced, innovative and reputable filmmakers in town means that the PCP can truly offer the best service to its clients in terms of cost-efficiency, a personalized and hands-on approach and a focus on creating on screen a high production value.

“GREAT JOB! IT’S A RELIEF TO SEE WHERE WE ENDED UP ON THIS ONE. THANKS AGAIN FOR CONTROLLING THINGS SO CAREFULLY EACH AND EVERY DAY”

**- ROGUE FILMS (UK)
PRODUCER JAMES HOWLAND
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