

# The Drakensberg Boys Choir are ready for their Mauritius tour

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The Drakensberg Boys Choir School is excited to announce that they will showcase their talents to an international audience for their upcoming tour to Mauritius from 17 to 24 September 2023. The Drakensberg Boys Choir is a South African treasure and brings diverse music lovers the most beautiful music across classic choral, contemporary African and entertaining afro-pop genres.

"The Drakensberg Boys Choir is delighted to be travelling and performing for international audiences again. The choir is excited and looks forward to experiencing the rich heritage and cultural diversity of Mauritius, also known as the pearl of the Indian Ocean," states DBCS executive head Dave Cato.

**The Drakensberg Boys Choir Mauritius Tour** promises to be a true island highlight for local Mauritian audiences and the many international visitors. The tour highlights will include performances at the Caudan Arts Centre on 19 and 20 September, the South African Chamber of Commerce in Mauritius Gala Event on 21 September, and the Mahatma Gandhi Institute on 22 and 23 September. Brand South Africa, the national flagship marketing organisation of the Republic of South Africa, proudly supports the tour.



The Drakensberg Boys' Choir, also fondly known as Drakies, is blessed and fortunate to bring choral and music lovers across the globe the most beautiful and entertaining music, either through live performances, streaming or recordings of their outstanding work. "Music is the ministry of the Drakensberg Boys Choir," states Cato.

He highlights that the school's internationally acclaimed programme combines the art of choral singing and performance with rigorous academic training. The boys who leave DBCS do so as well-adjusted young men who are adequately equipped to face the challenges of their late high school years and beyond. One of the highlights of the choir's proud 57-year history was an invitation from Pope John Paul II to perform in St Peter's Square in 1983. The choir also performed for the first president of democratic South Africa, Mr Nelson Mandela, on top of a unique location in the majestic Drakensberg, a South African world heritage site. The choir was the first South African cultural group to perform behind the Iron Curtain in 1985. Drakensberg Boys Choir also performed at the American Choral Directors' Association Congress 2007.

"We are very excited to go on tour and to extend our concert programme after our recent successful concerts. The recent Johannesburg Music in the City 2023 at the Joburg Theatre was a resounding success and included a special performance at the invitation of the Thabo Mbeki Foundation to celebrate the former president's 81st birthday," says Vaughan Van Zyl, artistic director, Drakensberg Boys Choir School. "We have a diversified programme catering for many tastes with a range from classical choral work to popular contemporary and energetic afro-pop works," he adds.



It was an honour for the Drakensberg Boys Choir to be welcomed by the South African High Commissioner Her Excellency Dr Hamalani Nelly Manzini at the airport

The tour programme's first half includes classic choral works like Mozart's first movement from Regina Coeli in B flat major, Eric Whitacre's Fly to Paradise and Amigos Para Siempre, the official song of the 1992 Summer Olympics. After the interval, the Afro Pop second half tells the story of South Africa's journey through music. A lively, authentically South African set comprises the second half, where they perform unique arrangements of well-known hits by, among others, Miriam Makeba, Mango Groove, Johnny Clegg and songs from Ipi Ntombi and The Lion King. The audience is encouraged to sing along, get out of their seats and enjoy the spirit and vibe of South African music with us.

Since its establishment, the Drakensberg Boys Choir School has seen many different conductors and delivered many successful musicians from the boys who have passed through its doors. The school consists of approximately eighty boys, from Grade 4 to Grade 9, selected through auditions held across South Africa. Each day, the boys have a full range of academic lessons, various music subjects, and two hours of choir rehearsals.

"The Drakensberg Boys Choir School (DBCS) builds character and develops boys to harness the gift of music to bring hope, impact and positive change in South Africa and beyond. We offer a unique, complete and diverse schooling experience that will forever change every Drakie boy's life by being part of this centre of excellence," Cato adds. "DBCS builds resilience, grows relationships, and fosters global ambassadors with music as the tool to spread its message of hope," he says. "We are proud of the young men the school produces, and the benefits of choral music as part of the educational curriculum are well known. As evidence of this, our boys regularly win scholarships and are sought after by high-calibre schools when they leave after grade nine," concludes Cato.

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