

Media Kit

A welcome note from Zakumi



Hello !

I know you've all been anxiously waiting to meet me ... So allow me to quickly introduce myself ...

My name is Zakumi and I am the Official Mascot of the 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa™.

I came into the world in the year 1994 at the same time that our beloved country was newly born.

I know, I'm a cute and handsome fella so I don't think I need to say any more about that. You know, us leopards are beautiful animals to start with but my green hairdo gives me the edge over my fellow cats. I'm sure I don't have to explain to you why I dyed my hair green ... it's the perfect camouflage on the football pitch!

Speaking of football, the FIFA World Cup™ is coming to South Africa!!

I can't tell you how much I am looking forward to this spectacular event in my beloved home country. All fans from around the world travelling to South Africa for the event will have an unforgettable time! I will try to play my part in welcoming them with open arms and showing them around before and during the event. Apart from all the other important things I am being asked to do of course ... What an incredible honour that is for me!

So, what else is there for me to say other than ...

Have fun and I will see you around!

ZAKUMI



Zakumi – a mascot with attitude

So what can we say about him? One thing is for sure, this mascot will be first on the dance floor and last off at the biggest party in the world that is the 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa™. He wants to dance and play with as many people as he can. His boundless energy will infect fans, players and officials, school kids, teenagers and grown-up kids alike. Needless to say, he is extremely proud to be the Official Mascot and determined to be the best possible host for all fans visiting his beloved country of South Africa. He symbolises South Africa and the rest of the African continent through his self-confidence, pride, hospitality, sociability and warm-heartedness.

He is a jolly, self-confident, adventurous, spontaneous, and actually quite shrewd little fellow. He loves to perform and always follows his instinct and intuition yet sometimes has the tendency to exaggerate a bit. You will often find him fooling about and teasing people but definitely never in a mean way. He is genuinely warm-hearted and caring and wants to make as many friends as possible. He loves to play football as it is a great way to connect with others and resolves any language barriers. He therefore always carries around his football, which he uses to invite people to play with him, and at one time decided to dye his hair green as he felt it would be the perfect camouflage against the green of the football pitch. Just like his rosette spots are when hunting in the wilderness.

He does have one striking weakness though ... With all his agility, he needs frequent rests. Occasionally, in between energetic performances on stage, he may suddenly fall asleep on the spot on the most random occasions. But rest assured, a leopard of his calibre needs only short breaks ... Over the last years he has travelled the whole of Africa (pretty much everywhere from open savannahs, forests, jungles to mountainous areas, even deserts). In the process he has learned to adapt easily to new environments and therefore very much enjoys the diversity in nature and people to be found across the African continent. The name "Zakumi" is a composition of "ZA" standing for South Africa, and "kumi" translating into "10" in various languages across Africa.

Zakumi's main priority is to turn the 2010 FIFA World Cup South Africa™ into one huge, joyful and unforgettable party and show the thousands of international guests the vibes and colours of African culture. "He wants to create a good mood for the fans and raise the excitement for the 2010 FIFA World Cup™, the first on African soil. He is a proud South African and wants to ensure that the world will be part of it in South Africa," explains Lucas Radebe, South Africa's football icon and a close friend of Zakumi.

The mascot has been designed and produced exclusively in the host country. The original creator of the design is Andries Odendaal, an independent, Cape Town-based creative working primarily but not exclusively as a designer and developer of interactive media. As a creative in this field, he has received widespread recognition for his work, and been featured in and contributed to a number of printed and digital industry-related publications.

The mascot costume was produced by Cora Simpson of Cora's Costumes cc in Boksburg. After more than 20 years in the business, Cora's Costumes have made many thousands of costumes for people and events across the globe, including numerous well-loved walkabout characters like Simba the Lion and Dazzler, the mascot of the 2003 Cricket World Cup.



History of Official Mascots

What do an orange, a lion, a cockerel and Zakumi the leopard have in common?? More than you might think ... because all of them were once Official FIFA World Cup™ Mascots.

The FIFA World Cup Mascot has a tradition of more than 40 years. World Cup Willie was the first-ever FIFA World Cup Mascot, invented for the 1966 tournament in England. Not only was the mascot a tremendous success but it also brought England victory over their opponents. Official Mascots have come to play a more and more important role in the FIFA World Cup™ as they represent the fun side of the event but also serve as ambassadors of FIFA and the host country. Cast as a variety of animals, a fruit, a vegetable, children and a few abstract characters, the mascots' infectious positive attitude have over the years added to the atmosphere of each competition in their own unique way.

Zakumi's predecessors since 1966:

1966 England, World Cup Willie (lion)
1970 Mexico, Juanito (boy)
1974 West Germany, Tip and Tap (two boys)
1978 Argentina, Gauchito (footballer)
1982 Spain, Naranjito (orange)
1986 Mexico, Pique (hot pepper)

1990 Italy, Ciao (stick figure player)
1994 United States, Striker (dog)
1998 France, Footix (cockerel)
2002 Korea/Japan, Spheriks (energy)
2006 Germany, GOLEO VI (lion)

