



Your Les Clefs d'Or Key Updates

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**the lobby of the Majestic Hotel Kuala Lumpur*

From the President's Desk

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the latest edition of our Concierge Newsletter! It brings me immense joy to witness the dedication and hard work each of us is putting into ensuring our guests have unforgettable stays in our remarkable hotels. Their experiences continue to be our greatest teacher, and I'm thrilled to see how they shape our profession.

The UICH is buzzing with excitement as our Education Committee fine-tunes the theme and guest speakers for an upcoming learning initiative. Our dynamic CSR team is passionately engaging in nature-oriented activities like tree planting, exemplifying our commitment to a greener world.

Anticipation builds for the prestigious Les Clefs d'Or Award, as we prepare to celebrate the champions who embody excellence. Stay tuned for more announcements as we gather and showcase outstanding candidates from around the globe.

Mark your calendars for our 61st UICH International Congress in Bali, April 21-26, 2024 – registration will open soon! Secure your spot with an early bird's registration, available for a limited time.

In closing, I extend my best wishes for a healthy and safe life. Remember, your well-being is paramount.

Viva Les Clefs d'Or!

Warm regards,
Randy

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Randy Santos
President,
Les Clefs d'Or International

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Award Committee

It is our great pleasure to announce that your Award Committee has been diligently preparing the **2024 Les Clefs d'Or Award** program which this time will proudly honour the founding father of our international organization, **Ferdinand Gillet**, through whom we will be able to celebrate the genesis of Les Clefs d'Or in remembrance of everything this great leader worked towards the development of our incredible organization.

This year we have updated the exam process with brand new and reworked projects which we know the candidates will enjoy working on. Many of



these projects will be able to be shared with our membership on the Virtual Paris Office and our social media accounts. This will allow our members and our guests to get to know the candidates and perhaps learn something new!

We are excited to inform you that applications to participate in the next Les Clefs d'Or Young Leaders Award will open in October. We encourage every member who meets the requirements to be in touch with their section president to apply to be considered as the nominee for their section.

**APPLICATIONS
OPEN IN OCTOBER**

**YOUNG
LEADER
AWARD
2024**

**STAY TUNED FOR
UPDATES**

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The Corporate Social Responsibility Committee



With the support of the UICH ExCo, we have launched the “Keys for Trees” project which consists of an initiative that involves all willing sections of UICH to plant a tree(s) each year, on your native soil in honor of our beloved association. This initiative aims to: Create a greening of the environment; Offer carbon offset; Help fight climate change; Help improve air quality, Fight deforestation, offer a location of beauty and peace in the name of Les Clefs d’Or, provide a lasting, living tribute and honor to individuals and/or our association; and Showcase Les Clefs d’Or and our commitment to the environment.

India was the first section to plant a tree during their AGM. They planted 6 trees in honor of: Ferdinand Gillet, David Aaron, Denis O'Brien, Edwin Saldanha, Randy Santos and Stephen Fernandes.



In addition to that the CSR Family would like to invite you to join the **Terry Fox Run**.

The Terry Fox Run is a National event for Les Clefs d’Or Canada and it is one of the most reputable charities in Canada. The Concierges have participated for 17 years in a row and this year will be our 19th year and have raised \$300,000! Terry Fox was a Canadian who discovered he had a malignant tumor in his right leg which needed to be amputated. After 2 years, he began training for his Marathon of Hope; a cross-Canada run to raise money for cancer research and awareness. Terry’s hope of raising \$1 from every Canadian to fight cancer was realized. In 1981 the first Terry Fox Run was held at more than 760 sites in Canada and around the world. The event attracted 300,000 participants and raised \$3.5 million. Today the marathon is run all over the world and we would like to encourage our members to participate. Find out when it will be in your country via the website: <https://terryfox.org/international-runs/>

In Caring through Friendship ,

CSR Family

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Les Clefs d'Or Australia

G'day from Down Under!

We've successfully completed our 41st Annual General Meeting, this was held at our president Rhett Constantine's hotel, The Pullman Albert Park Melbourne. This was combined with a tourism expo which was a great event for our suppliers and concierge alike. The fraternal bond between New Zealand and Australia has always been and continues to remain strong. Each country sends representatives to each other's respective AGMs, this year we saw a return to this format in person. We were happy to welcome the Les Clefs d'Or New Zealand President Kris Mosch.

We have over 30 members expressing interest in attending the Bali congress which is just a stones throw away for us Aussies. When you add in our New Zealand brothers who are going to have a strong attendance, it's going to be one hell of a congress!

Our discussions were robust and friendly, ensuring our year ahead is going to be a busy and prosperous one.

I'll leave you with a recent article from Angliss hotel school on our Melbourne members recent visit.

Vive Les Clefs d'Or

Dean McWhinney

SECTION UPDATES

Ever wondered what it would be like to be a concierge in a 5-star hotel?

A concierge is the first point of contact for hotel guests and is responsible for providing information and fulfilling guest requests, no matter how outlandish they may be. They draw on their impeccable knowledge of their city and their vast networks to ensure each guest has a memorable stay.

"The role allows you to channel your inner Tom Cruise and make the impossible possible. It makes you love our great city more and more with every experience and event you attend. We are the original influencers. As a colleague of mine once said, "We know - because we go" said Teacher Hospitality Programs Anthony Szostak

continued in next page



National President Rhett Constantine and members of Les Clefs d'Or Australia (The Golden Keys Australia), the pre-eminent association of hotel concierges, conducted their bi-monthly meeting for Victoria and Tasmania at the Angliss International Hotel School (AIHS) hosted by Angliss Director of Education Chris Harris.

Visiting the Melbourne campus of William Angliss Institute for the first time, Rhett felt like he was back at work seeing the hotel inspired design of the AIHS, which gives students exposure to a five-star standard accommodation. "I'm sure this training environment gives students an encouraging and relaxed feeling while working towards employment within the hotel industry," he said.

Rhett's involvement with hotels started in 1998, as a Porter at the Mercure Resort Surfers Paradise with Accor Hotels & Resorts, while working under former Les Clefs d'Or Member Adam Keast. "Seeing Mr Keast in his role inspired me to pursue a career in the hospitality industry," said Rhett. Having worked for some prestige establishments worldwide such as: Novotel on Collins Melbourne, South Mole Island Whitsundays, Desert Gardens Northern Territory, Sofitel Melbourne, The Grove Estate London, Hayman Island and Qualia, Hamilton Island, it was Qualia that was one of the biggest challenges of Rhett's career when he was invited to be a part of the pre-opening team as the Chief Concierge.

Throughout his eventful years of service, Rhett has assisted in last minute corporate jet bookings, securing front row tickets to the Australian Open, VIP access to Melbourne's hottest bars, and ensured that hotel guests' requests are met at their next destination through Les Clefs d'Or's motto '*In Service Through Friendship*'. "The best insight into a new destination is via your hotel Concierge. Make sure you take a moment to chat with them as it will open up a whole new world," suggested Rhett.

Les Clefs d'Or is a global organisation, founded in France in 1929 and internationally in 1952 with Australia joining as a member section in 1976. Membership requires significant experience as a concierge and the successful completion of a stringent entry process. □ Members can be recognised by a distinctive pin worn on their lapels which depicts two crossed golden keys.

Rhett encourages those seeking a career in the hospitality industry to consider the concierge role and becoming a member of Les Clefs d'Or. "The recognition received in line with the global network connection, opens doors not only for your hotel guests but also to a life of excitement and the ability to make the unachievable, achievable," he said.

Angliss International Hotel School offers a broad range of hotel management training.

Anthony explained, "Provide Porter Services and Provide Visitor Information are two of our subjects equipping students for a career offering exceptional service in the international hotel industry,"

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Les Clefs d'Or Brazil

On behalf of Les Clefs d'Or Brésil, I am very pleased to share some updates about our section.

On June 29th we celebrated Concierge Day. The coincidence with Saint Peter's Day, June 29th, is not a coincidence. If Saint Peter has the keys to heaven, the concierges who are members of Les Clefs d'Or Brésil also have the golden keys on the lapel of their uniforms, they have the “keys to the city”. With these keys they welcome our visitors with open arms, providing

excellent service within renowned hotels, and promoting the culture of the country and the people.

The day is celebrated since 2011, was the brainchild of the former concierge of the Sheraton Rio Hotel, Miro Guimarães, and the board of directors of the Brazilian Association of Concierge of Great Hotels.

This year the celebration started in São Paulo with a tasting menu at the restaurant ThaiThai Brasil located in the charming Jardins neighborhood. After the dinner, the entire team went to the Cigar Club, Espaço Quai d'Orsay



to learn and do a cigar tasting.

The celebration continued in Rio de Janeiro with 2 events. With the support of our great partner, Bruna Caldarazzo, our Board of Directors organized a breakfast at the emblematic Classic Urca at the top of Sugarloaf Mountain. That night, also supported by Bruna, we were hosted at a dinner filled with flavors from Brazilian cuisine at the Badalado restaurant in Ipanema.

Vive Les Clefs d'Or!



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Les Clefs d'Or Japan

Field Trip to Toyama Prefecture

On June 5th to 7th, seven of our Les Clefs d'Or members gathered at Toyama prefecture arranged by our affiliate member Ms. Eiko Wada of Gaen Corporation. Thanks to her and Toyama Prefectural Government Tourism Promotion Office, we had the opportunity to discover the gems of Toyama.

Day 1 - Our trip started by visiting Nousaku, who began manufacturing Buddhist ritual Japanese tea sets and vases made of brass and bronze and been in business for more than 100 years. We then moved to Tonami city to visit the Wakatsuru Sake Brewery. It is a traditional sake brewery that began making sake at the end of the Edo period (1862) and started producing whiskey after the war (1952). Then we visited the Takaoka City Foundry Museum, where visitors can learn about the history of Takaoka castings, which have been produced for 400 years. We were amazed at the wide variety of colors available for finishing. We then had the chance to visit Yotsukawa Works. It is located in Kanaya-cho town with its beautiful old townscape, we saw the innovative and modern products, which are highly admired both in Japan and abroad. We were impressed by the sophisticated design of these award-winning products. We then visited the Festive Float Museum This is a facility where festive float, a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, is exhibited throughout the year.

DAY 2 - The Iwase district of Toyama City is characterized by Kitamaebune shipping agents' residences and famous restaurants adjacent to them. At the Takaoka City Museum of Art, we saw the Furusato Gallery, which honors the artwork of Fujiko F. Fujio (born in Takaoka City), creator of the cartoon "Doraemon," and was able to see rare manuscripts from before his debut. At the Toyama City Museum of Glass, we also enjoyed the stylish architecture designed



by Kengo Kuma that extensively uses glass and aluminum, installations by world-renowned glass artists, and delicate and beautiful works by local glass artists. And the most impressive place was Zuiryuji Temple in Takaoka City. The building has a calm atmosphere typical of Zen Buddhism, but the detailed carvings are breathtakingly beautiful. From the priest's talk, we learned that the temple was built as a family temple for the feudal lord of the Kaga domain and was a place of great historical importance.

DAY 3 - Visited Kotokuji Temple. The Temple is related to Shiko Munakata and many of his works remain, including the stunning sliding door paintings that Munakata is said to have painted all at once. The temple is also beautifully decorated with Mingei folk art, giving it a wonderful atmosphere more like a museum than a temple. We have then visited Gokayama Village with Gassho-zukuri-style folk houses are registered as World Heritage Sites.



Simply walking around the village provided an enriching experience. Then we moved to Inami to see the Inami Woodcarving (Inami Carving). A local guide showed us around the woodcarving town. The stunning carvings on the gate of the Zuiryu-ji old temple were truly impressive and worth a visit. We then moved to observe IWA. IWA is a Japanese sake brewery founded by



Richard Geoffroy, the former chief brewer of Dom Pérignon. It is located in the mountains and offers a stunning view of Toyama Bay. The sake-tasting experience was exceptional, with a unique mouthfeel and rich flavor that surpassed expectations. We then came back to Toyama City to the Shusui Museum of Art. The museum is known for its rich collection of Japanese swords, including important cultural properties. The passionate explanations by the director and curators were impressive.

The 3-day visit showed us many different charms of Toyama. We wish to introduce the experiences to our guests.

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Les Clefs d'Or Singapore

On behalf of the Les Clefs d'Or Singapore Section, we are very pleased to share what's been going on in our section with you.

Introducing our new members



Kari Kalan
Head Concierge
The Fullerton Hotel Singapore



Jimmy Gan
Chef Concierge
Pan Pacific Hotel Singapore



Haffidz Kamarulzaman
Chef Concierge
Fairmont Singapore



Mohamed Yusoff Bin Abdullah
Chef Concierge
The Westin Singapore



Ismail Basir
Concierge
Carlton City Hotel Singapore



Newest Attraction in Singapore – Bird Paradise

On 11 July 2023, Les Clefs d'Or Singapore was invited to Singapore's brand new attraction called bird paradise. Immerse yourself in a symphony of colors at Asia's largest bird park.

They gave two presentations, Wings of the World, which showcased the innate talent, incredible plumage and IQ like sharp claws, and Predators on Wings, which showcased the ferocious and terrifying side of the stars. next to

their prey, majestic creatures at the top of their food chain.

There are interactive activities with birds, visitors have the opportunity to interact with some of the birds in special interactive sessions. These interactions often include feeding, photography, and close encounters with the birds.

There's also a Bird Discovery Tour, where wildlife guides share valuable information about the most charismatic feathered friends in this intimate experience.

Bird Paradise is actively involved in bird conservation efforts. The park participates in various breeding programs for endangered birds and conducts research to better understand and protect avian wildlife.

Your Les Clefs d'Or Key Updates is a periodical newsletter published independently by the Communications Committee of UICH Les Clefs d'Or, highlighting the activities carried by members across the globe. Should you wish to share your respective section news or activities or be featured in future publications, kindly forward them via email to: assistantsecretary@lesclefsdor.org

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Les Clefs d'Or Malaysia

We recently had our AGM in the expansive Movenpick Hotel and Convention Centre KLIA on the 25th of July 2023 – where we witnessed the pinning ceremony of 6 new Les Clefs d'Or Members and 8 new Malaysia Hotel Concierge (MHC) Members. The newly inducted members were recommended and selected based on their years of service, good reputation and qualifications after sitting in for their membership exams and interviews that were held a month earlier. It was during this momentous event too that the Society of the Golden Keys Malaysia made history by welcoming their first female MHC member, **Ms Sara Afiqah** of the Majestic Hotel Kuala Lumpur!

The joyous affair was witnessed by General Managers and management representatives from member hotels, vendors and observers from within the industry.

Please join us in congratulating and welcoming our new members as follows:

Les Clefs d'Or Members:

Farouk Irwan Hasmi – Pullman KLCC Hotel and Residences

Mohd Shahrom Masa'an - Mandarin Oriental Kuala Lumpur

Anthony John Sahesh Pillay – Intercontinental Kuala Lumpur

Ronald Ragas – Hilton KL SENTRAL

Ali Saifuddin – Hilton Petaling Jaya

Kevin Rajkumar – Le Meridien Kuala Lumpur



Malaysian Hotel Concierge (MHC)

Muhammad Hafiz – Traders Hotel Kuala Lumpur

Gary Tan – Traders Hotel Kuala Lumpur

Tun Muhammad Shahrul – Capri by Fraser Bukit Bintang

Muhammad Izzam Adha – St Regis Kuala Lumpur

Sara Afiqah – Majestic Hotel Kuala Lumpur

Mohd Azlan – Movenpick Hotel and Conventions Centre KLIA

Remi Mohd Noh Ahmad – Avante Bandar Utama

Vikneskumaran – Four Seasons Hotel Kuala Lumpur



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Les Clefs d'Or Argentina

We start the middle of the year with the new Les Clefs d'Or term of 2023 – 2025 with an abundance of energy that we are eager to harness and translate into new members, affiliates, and friends. The journey ahead holds promise, as we embark on a mission to build upon this energy and nurture relationships.

Our journey has been paved by the remarkable work of past Les Clefs d'Or members, with special mention to the invaluable contributions, dedication, leadership, and vision of our friends Fernando Penachino and Martin Rey. Over the years, they have borne the beautiful responsibility with grace and passion. However, as we move forward, our aspirations are higher. We aim for Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, and Uruguay to wield even greater influence within their hotels, cities, and on the global stage of Les Clefs d'Or International.

Being at the helm of this team of friends and professionals is an immense privilege. Allow us to introduce the individuals who will be steering this ship:

President: **Martin Rodriguez Temporetti** - *Diplomatic Hotel Mendoza*

Vice President: **Magalí Brandariz** - *Palacio Duhau Park Hyatt Buenos Aires*

Treasurer: **Julian Bertola** - *Alvear Palace Hotel*

Secretary: **Belén Dubra** - *Sofitel Recoleta*

Director of Memberships: **Juan Cruz Lencinas** - *Esplendor by Wyndham Buenos Aires Tango*

Community Manager: **Armando Romero** - *Westin Lima*

Web Master: **Octavio Bravo** - *Four Seasons*

Event Planner: **Sebastian Fernandez** - *Madero Hotel*

We couldn't be more thrilled to have such a capable and enthusiastic team driving our shared vision. Let's embrace the journey ahead, united by our passion for hospitality, camaraderie, and the pursuit of excellence.



Punta del Este Congress

As August drew to a close, we had the privilege of hosting the *Third National Congress of Argentina* on Uruguayan soil, specifically in the vibrant city of Punta del Este. This event was nothing short of remarkable, as it brought together not only our Argentinean colleagues but also esteemed peers from Chile, Peru, and Ecuador. Among us were our gracious host, Carolina Iribarne, and the presence of Renata Cury Farha, Zone Director of the Americas.



For two unforgettable days at the stunning Enjoy Punta del Este, we immersed ourselves in an exceptional event, thanks to the incredible efforts of Carolina Iribarne Talento. Her unwavering support, exceptional hospitality, and impeccable organization were truly commendable.

In addition, we want to extend special recognition to our Zone Director for the Americas, Renata Cury Farha, who traveled all the way from Sao Paulo to join us. Her presence and leadership were instrumental in making this congress a resounding success.

As I reflect on this event, we also take this moment to extend our heartfelt well wishes, positive energy, and unwavering support to our dear friend Fernando Penachino. We are confident that life has remarkable rewards in store for him.

Here's to the spirit of collaboration, inspiration, and shared successes.



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Les Clefs d'Or USA

Dear Friends,

We are delighted to report the successful conclusion of the first North American Congress we've had in this millennia. Canada and the USA joined forces to share education, wonderful food and entertainment, in Las Vegas, at the end of May. The turnout was great, with more first time attendees than we've ever had at a congress. We were honored that President Santos made the long trip to be with us and were delighted that Secretary Ipekci and Zone Director Farha also made the trip to be with us.

For the first time ever, the topic of our educational symposium focused on how stress and regulation impact the ways we perform. Educators taught us about brain development and offered stress reducing strategies that we could put into practice immediately. Recognizing how stressful concierge positions are, it was wonderful to focus on mental well-being and how that affects our ability to do our jobs well.

We are extremely grateful to Jeanne Mills, of the Aria Resort & Casino, and the many volunteers that contributed their time and energy creating an amazing program. In less than eight months, the Las Vegas community successfully raised over \$250K in donations and in-kind services, allowing us to break even after paying our bills. We understand how expensive everything has gotten and how much more challenging it is to get vendor support. Sharing education and other expenses made great sense this year. As it gets more difficult to affordably host congresses, we need to come up with sensible solutions to handle rising costs. There is a lot to be said for sharing education and meeting colleagues from around North America.

During the congress, four new board members were elected, Evan Baker (Dallas), Regena Falling (NYC), David Gonzales (Chicago) and William Hawkins (NYC). We're sure they'll make great contributions during their tenures.

Since the last newsletter, Les Clefs d'Or USA has approved more provisional members. Please join us in welcoming: **Matthew McKenna**, from Boston Harbor Hotel, **Michael Printy** from Circa Resort, **Desiree Reyes**, from Four Seasons Las Vegas and **Luis Torres**, from Trump International Hotel Chicago.

In friendship,

Leigh Anne Dolecki,
President, Les Clefs d'Or USA

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Les Clefs d'Or New Zealand

Les Clefs d'Or New Zealand had their 29th Annual General Meeting on Friday, June 2nd, with their traditional Opening Reception.

The event took place at the JW Marriott Auckland and was attended by Hotel Managers, Honorary Members, Les Clefs d'Or Australia and esteemed guests. It served as an excellent platform for reconnecting and sharing exciting plans for the weekend.

At our Opening Reception, we are thrilled to announce that **Mr Nick Steele** [Past President] has been awarded the International Honorary Membership Diploma by Les Clefs d'Or New Zealand and the Union Internationale des Concierges d'Hotels. This prestigious honour recognises his outstanding service and unwavering commitment during his active membership. Our Congratulations to Nick, on this esteemed achievement.



On June 3rd, our 29th Annual General Meeting took place at JW Marriot Auckland, with members from Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch in attendance. We were honoured to have Mr Dean McWhinney, Secretary of Les Clefs d'Or Australia, representing our colleagues from Australia. The meeting served as an excellent opportunity to plan for the next two years and conduct elections. Here are the committee members for the 2023-2025 term:

President: **Mr Kris Mosch**, *The Grand by SKYCITY, Auckland*

Secretary: **Mr Manish Baungally**, *JW Marriot Auckland*

Assistant Secretary: **Mr Rick Karsten**, *The Hotel Britomart, Auckland*

Treasurer: **Mr Luciano Borneana**, *Sudima Auckland*

Director of Public Relations: **Mr Gustavo Concha**, *Hilton Auckland*

Director of Social Media: **Mr Harry Anderson**, *Four Points by Sheraton Auckland*

Director of Memberships: **Mr Sam Williams**, *Sudima Central City Christchurch*

South Island Delegate: **Mr Quintin McLeod**, *Fable Christchurch*

Webmaster: **Mr. Leonid Lisichkin**, *So Auckland*

Our congratulations to all the elected committee members, and we express our gratitude for your dedication to Les Clefs d'Or New Zealand and your professionalism in performing your duties at your respective hotel lobbies.



Les Clefs d'Or New Zealand's Educational Symposium was successfully held on Sunday, June 4th, 2023, at the JW Marriott Auckland, with the presence of Active and Prospective members. The educational segment of the event proved to be both informative and well-received, providing valuable updates on the New Zealand International Convention Centre [NZICC] and

the upcoming FIFA Women's World Cup, commencing on July 20th, 2023.

One of the highlights of the symposium as well as a panel discussion featuring esteemed leaders from various Auckland hotels. These individuals graciously shared their time and expertise, enlightening the audience on the hospitality industry's current state and future prospects.

Les Clefs d'Or New Zealand extends heartfelt gratitude to all the participants, whose contributions exemplify our motto: "In Service Through Friendship."

We concluded our 29th Annual General Meeting of Les Clefs d'Or New Zealand over a week ago. We would like to take this moment to express our gratitude to our dedicated national and international members who journeyed from afar to be part of this event. It is through your collective presence that our society's future appears brighter and more promising.



We extend our heartfelt thanks to President Mr Kris Mosch and the organizing committee for their relentless efforts in meticulously planning each day, from the AGM's daily agenda to the presenter at our Educational Symposium. Additionally, we express our appreciation to all the esteemed honorary members, guests, spouses/partners, and sponsors who joined us for the opening reception and our dinner, graciously hosted at the @jwmarriottauckland.

Lastly, on behalf of Les Clefs d'Or New Zealand, we wish each and every one of you the very best for the year ahead and until we meet again, may your paths be filled with success and fulfilment.

In Service Through Friendship, and long live Les Clefs d'Or!

Gustavo Concha
Chief Concierge, Hilton Auckland
Director of Public Relations, Les Clefs d'Or New Zealand