

**FLIGHT CENTRE®**  
INDEPENDENT

## Flight Centre Independent celebrates in style



Photo: Shannon Van Zyl

#livingourbestlives

# FCI Awards – what a celebration!

**F**LIGHT Centre Independent has held its first-ever conference and awards evening at Emperors Palace, with ITCs, support staff and suppliers sharing in the glitz, the glamour and the glee!

MC, the fabulous **Matthew Fubbs** (in a gorgeous red dress and platforms) had the room in gales of laughter.

FCTG Independent Brands GM **Chantal Gouws** thanked her phenomenal team and described 2022/2023 as a record year, the number of ITCs having grown to close to 200 this year.

During the conference part of the day, FC's GM Supply, Pricing and Marketing, **Sue Garrett**, gave an informative presentation on the role of NDC.

Keynote speaker **Robyn Christie** spoke about key issues in running a successful business and of the importance of ITCs embracing AI. She



The magnificent **Matthew Fubbs**, conference MC.

encouraged the ITCs to feel confident about charging fees, as they are offering clients invaluable expertise and services.

**Neil Golding** (owner of DC Coffee) gave a superb motivational presentation outlining his company's journey through adversity. He stressed the value of kindness.

**I can't believe I waited so long to join. Earning more in overrides than I ever was before and I earn from Rand one. Couldn't be happier with my decision to join FCI.**

**Lauren**

The highlight of the day was the awards event and gala dinner with **Christopher Jaftha** as MC. Guests and their partners arrived dressed to kill in their stunning hues of teal, and the air was alive with celebration and excitement as both branded and unbranded FCI ITCs were awarded for their efforts and endurance. The ITCs were super-excited to hear that the very top travel advisers and their partners would go on the Global Flight Centre Independent Icons 2023 Uniworld river cruise from Budapest to Vienna in November this year.

After the awards, everybody let their hair down and had a great party, dancing the night away to the band.

The love and admiration that the ITCs have for the



L-R: The SA National SWOT team – **Euan** (FCTG MD), **Antoinette** (FC Brand GM), **Chantal** (FCI GM), **Bonnie** (FCTG Corporate GM), **Megan** (People & Culture GM) and **Sue** (FCTG GM Supply, Pricing & Marketing).

Flight Centre Independent brand was clear.

ITC **Lee-ann** loves the flexibility she now has. "I've got four kids at home... You have all this background support with airfares, products and complicated itineraries, so you've got that expertise behind you."

Another independent, **Marise** moved over to FCI in 2019. "It's literally a home away from home... Being able to be there for your own family, but working within a family as well – it's perfect!"

**Mariaan** (both an ITC and an Operational Leader within FCI), said: "The door opened at the right time. I could spend some time at home

with the kids, and also still do what I love."

**Rashed**, Product Manager of FCI, said the company provided him with the tools and opportunities to grow

his career path and further his expertise. Rashed recently went to Bali to receive a Global Award for his contribution to the Helio booking platform system.



L-R: **Antoinette**, **Debra**, **Tracey-Anne** (WLH) and **Marga**.



L-R: **Natasha** and **Lauren**, **Shelley** (FCI National Sales Leader), **Emilene** and **Donna**. Photos: Shannon Van Zyl

## A word from our GM, Chantal Gouws

SINCE the establishment of the Flight Centre Independent model in 2013 with just six consultants, it is remarkable to reflect on the journey of our brand. Our vision was to create a model that provided experienced consultants with flexibility, independence, and the ability to flex their entrepreneurial spirit, ensuring they had the support of a global company.

Recognising the rapid growth of our business in 2014, we embarked on a journey of significant growth, expanding our team and

recruiting support staff to accommodate the increased number of consultants joining our brand. By 2017 we had 76 independent consultants.

2018 was a year of immense pride as we were honoured with the Top Independent Brand award on the global stage.

Undoubtedly, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic posed unprecedented challenges for the travel industry. We witnessed the resilience of our brand as we welcomed another 53 consultants during this

challenging period, fast-tracking various projects, and implementing essential tools and processes to support our consultants and adapt to the evolving landscape.

Today, we proudly stand as a team of close to 200 consultants, bolstered by a dedicated support team across critical areas of our business such as finance, marketing, training and development.

As we reflect on our achievements, we remain committed to our consultants who are the success story of



L-R: **Chantal** (FCI GM), **Robyn** and **Joanne** (Beachcomber).

our brand, and look forward to the future opportunities that lie ahead as we

continue to evolve, adapt and excel as the Flight Centre Independent brand.



L-R: Emilene, Cathrine, Leoni, Lizette, Suzanne, Liana, Chris-Marie and Chantal (FCI GM). Front: Deanne and Pieter.

“Joining Flight Centre as an Unbranded Agent has brought immense happiness to my life. As a Flight Centre Unbranded Agent, I now have access to a multitude of tools that enable me to provide my clients with superior service and competitive rates.”

Paula



L-R: Euan (FCTG MD), Andrea, Galatia, Michelle, Michelle, Bianca and Chantal (FCI GM).



L-R: Chantal (FCI GM), Shelley (FCI National Sales Leader) and Mariaan (FCI Operational Leader).



Chantal (FCI GM) and Mariaan (FCI Operational Leader).

L-R: Ettienne, Kirsty, Joanne and Samantha, all of Beachcomber.



L-R: Euan (FCTG MD), Chantal (FCI GM) and Odette.



L-R: Chantal (FCI GM), Michelle (FCI Operations Accountant) and Mariaan (FCI Operational Leader).



L-R: Marilyn, Paula, Ane, Bernice, Leigh, Samuel, Gary and Chantal (FCI GM).



L-R: Chantal (FCI GM), Michelle (Qantas), Mariaan (FCI Operational Leader) and Carmen (Qantas).



Magical table settings.



L-R: Chantal (FCI GM), Kirsty (Beachcomber) and Mariaan (FCI Operational Leader). Photos: Shannon Van Zyl



Azura Benguerra Island, Mozambique.

## The big Mozambique incentive

Flight Centre Independent Unbranded Companies can look forward to a marvellous incentive. The five top-contributing companies (the ITC and their partner) are going to

Azura Benguerra Island, Mozambique.

It's going to be nothing but luxury for three days, all expenses paid.

Right now, the competition is fully

underway with one month down and the excitement is mounting.

In addition our branded agents wait patiently for the reveal of the Global ICONS 2024 destination!

## Top achievers make memories at Vic Falls

Flight Centre Independent Unbranded agents and their partners were hosted by FCI at the first-ever top achievers' trip for unbranded agents at the Old Drift Lodge at Vic Falls in June.

"Our top achievers and their partners were treated to a bucket-list-ticking, memory-making adventure weekend of helicopter flips, bungee jumping, and zip-lining, surrounded

by wonderful laughs, campfires, and dreamy sunsets along the banks of the majestic Victoria Falls," said **Chantal Gouws**, GM Flight Centre Independent SA.



The delighted agents and partners were pictured enjoying the Zambezi sunset along with **Chantal** (FCI GM) and **Euan** (MD Flight Centre Travel Group SA).

“ FCI has been life-changing for me personally. I have three young children, so flexibility is the absolute key driving factor for me. ”

Michelle



SS Beatrice.

## Top performers win river cruise

FCI's top-selling independent agency owners of 2023 are going on a four-day luxury incentive experience on the Danube, with their partners, from November 1-5 this year.

It's a Uniworld river cruise from Budapest to Vienna,

on board SS Beatrice, and it promises to be an incredible, luxurious experience like no other, in the company of the other FCI incentive winners from the US, Australia, New Zealand and Canada. ■

“ I have all the benefits of a great team with enough flexibility to take care of my young family. I really love that I am not alone in the business and have a backup as well as the cameraderie of my team. ”

Anneri

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