

FLIGHT CENTRE[®] INDEPENDENT

FCI SA celebrates its African Dream in style



Photo: Shannon Van Zyl

#ElevatingAfricanDreams

FCI honours top achievers

FLIGHT Centre Independent (FCI) has held its most anticipated event of the year.

The awards ceremony took place at Montecasino in Johannesburg, with ITCs, support staff and suppliers all treated to a joyful night of breathtaking glitz and glamour under the theme 'African Dream'.

Flight Centre Travel Group's Global MD of Luxury and Independent Brands, **Danielle Galloway**, said the group honoured the dedication and extraordinary achievements that defined its amazing travel family.

"A heartfelt thank-you to the exceptional Independent team led by **Chantal**. Your hard work and dedication are the backbone of our achievements. Be as proud as I am of the incredible milestones you have achieved this year – your efforts have paved the way for our success and we are excited about the future of Flight Centre Travel Group Independent in South Africa."

Galloway added that South Africa held a very special place in the global travel group, so much so that it had decided to host its second worldwide event at Sun City in September next year, with over 400 FCI travel agents from all over the world attending.

The awards ceremony was a celebration of South Africa's top FCI agents and agencies, with special recognition also going to members who have been with the company for 10, 15 and 20 years.

There were many standing ovations, and the camaraderie

and goodwill between the agents were evident for all to see.

The event's Golden Horizon Sponsors – Beachcomber, Amadeus and World Leisure Holidays – were also honoured.

"It is great to spend the evening with top supporters," said **Carey Haynes** from Delta Air Lines.

"Last year's event was just phenomenal, so I'm so happy to be here for the second ball to celebrate these winners. It's also great to be able to meet the global team. FCI is a powerful team and a strong brand," said **Joanne Visagie**, Beachcomber Sales and Marketing Director.

"It's great to celebrate FCI! We are celebrating a great partnership tonight and we wish FCI one success after another," said **Lucia Tarasconi**, Key Account Manager at Amadeus.

FCI travel agents were full of praise for the brand.

Erika, who has been with FCI for 13 years, recently went unbranded with her partner Gill to form their own business. "FCI has been just amazing to work for. They really look after their people," said Erika.

Fiona, an FCI ITC, said: "FCI is amazing! I joined because I believe there is so much room for growth in the company as an individual."

Candice has been an unbranded agent at FCI for six months but has been in the industry for 20 years. "I'm grateful to FCI that I am able to take what I am passionate about and turn it into my own business."



▲ Global and local meet: Front: **Jodie Burnard** (Global Product Leader Envoyage), **Astrid Richardson** (Global COO Envoyage), **Wendie Lee** (Global PM&E Leader Envoyage), **Mariaan Van De Venter** (FCI Operations Leader), **Prashanta Papia** (FCI Network Support Leader), **Shelley Daniels** (FCI National Sales Leader), **Shaldine Ballabio** (FCI Finance Lead) Back: **Allie Sparr** (Global Head of Brand and Marketing Envoyage), **Tracy Porter** (FCI Marketing Manager) and **Chantal Gouws** (GM FCI SA).



▲ Top third party supplier went to Beachcomber, one of the Golden Horizon Sponsors for the evening. **Ettienne Walters** (Sales Manager Beachcomber), **Kirsty Knott** (Sales Executive Beachcomber), **Chantal Gouws** (GM FCI SA), **Justine Choveaux** (Sales Executive Beachcomber), **Joanne Visagie** (Sales and Marketing Director Beachcomber) and **Gary Mulder** (MD Beachcomber).



▲ **Michelle** (left) and **Ane** (right) received longevity awards for 20 years. **Leanne**, **Sam** and **Tracy-Lee** received the same award but were unfortunately not at the event.



▲ Land award of the year went to **Matthew Fubbs** (right) of The Holiday Factory.



▲ Air award of the year went to **Siphwe Ndaba** (right) of Delta Air Lines.



▲ **Mariaan** was honoured by her peers as she won the GM outstanding leadership award.

A word from our GM, Chantal Gouws

I am filled with immense gratitude and pride as I reflect on the past year. It has been a year of challenges overcome, milestones achieved, and successes celebrated. On behalf of FCI, I extend my heartfelt thanks to our suppliers, partners, staff, and valued customers for contributing to our collective achievements.

Total turnover, finishing the year with double-digit growth, is a true reflection of every individual and business owner that we have on board.

The bar has been set in a number

of ways and from here it's only upwards. It's going to be the year of aligning, articulating, and amplifying as well as resetting and laying the foundation for what is to come.

Today is a testament to the power of collaboration and shared goals. We have not only met our goals but have exceeded expectations.

Together, we have achieved remarkable milestones, and I am confident that the future holds even greater things for us. Your feedback and trust inspire us to continually improve and innovate.

Let us continue to work hand in



Euan McNeil, MD FCTG SA (left) and **Chantal Gouws**, GM FCI SA (right).

hand, navigating challenges, seizing opportunities, and creating a brighter tomorrow.

As we look ahead, let us carry forward the spirit of collaboration, determination, and excellence that has defined this successful year. Let us continue learning from each other, and striving for even greater achievements.

2025 is going to be nothing less than spectacular. With the launch of our new Global Independent Brand Envoyage, there has never been a better time than now to be part of this community.



▲ Guests were treated to cocktails upon arrival.



▲ FCI SWOT and support team.



▲ L-R: Astrid Richardson (Global COO Envoyage), Jodie Burnard (Global Product Leader Envoyage), Wendie Lee (Global PM&E Leader Envoyage), Allie Sparr (Global Head of Brand and Marketing Envoyage) and Chantal Gouws (GM FCI SA).



▲ South Africa's National SWOT team. Bonnie Smith (GM FCTG Corporate), Sue Garrett (GM, Supply, Pricing and Marketing FCTG SA), Euan McNeil (MD FCTG SA), Antoinette Turner (GM Flight Centre), Roxy Gonsalves (GM People and Culture FCTG SA) and Chantal Gouws (GM FCI SA).



▲ Fun on the dance floor.



▲ Golden Horizon Sponsor, Amadeus' Lucia Tarasconi (left) and Mannish Prayag with Chantal Gouws (GM FCI SA).



▲ Golden Horizon Sponsor, World Leisure Holidays' Kagiso Matlakala and Shirley Arrow (right) with Chantal Gouws (GM FCI SA).



▲ Chantal Gouws (GM FCI SA), Odette, winner of top agent of the year, and Euan McNeil (MD FCTG SA).



▲ Galatia celebrating her company's award.



▲ Marga (left) and Melinda (right) received longevity awards for 15 years. Janine and Tanya received the same award but were unfortunately not at the event.



▲ Chantal Gouws (GM FCI SA) (left) and Euan McNeil (MD FCTG SA) (far right) with Galatia (second left) and her team who won top unbranded company of the year.

FCI treats top agents

FLIGHT Centre Independent (FCI) pulls out all the stops when it comes to rewarding its top-performing agents.

The top-five FCI unbranded companies and their partners embarked on an unforgettable journey to Azura Benguerra Island Retreat in Mozambique in June.

The retreat offered an immersive experience of the beauty and culture of Mozambique, allowing everyone to indulge in the island's natural beauty, from its turquoise waters to its lush, green landscapes.

The highlight of the journey was the sense of achievement and celebration that it symbolised. It was a testament to hard work, dedication and success and taking a moment to pause, reflect, and revel in the achievements that had brought everyone to this point.

Apart from showcasing the beauty of Azura Benguerra Island and the luxury of the retreat, FCI consultants shared the joy, the celebration, and some unforgettable moments.

But that's not all. FCI will send its

top individual branded agents to the Maldives for its much-anticipated global rewards event, Icons, in November.

They will be treated to the ultimate luxury as they celebrate the year's success at the Heritance Aarah Maldives Resort.

The Icons, along with a guest of their choice, will be flown to the resort via private seaplane and greeted with spa vouchers and champagne. Over four nights, they'll enjoy magnificent evening celebrations and ample time to explore the stunning locale.

More than a reward, Icons is FCI's acknowledgment of excellence and an opportunity for an impressive collection of members to forge lasting connections in an intimate and luxurious setting.

They will join other travel advisers from the FCI network across the US, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada.

"We're incredibly proud to host Icons in such an incredible destination," said **Chantal Gouws**, GM of FCI South Africa.



The top five FCI unbranded companies and their partners at Azura Benguerra Island Retreat in Mozambique.

"It's a fantastic way to recognise the hard work and dedication of our members. Being recognised

as an Icon and experiencing the Maldives with fellow industry leaders is a true honour." ■