

Hotel NEWS

LEADING
THE WAY

*How the GM Leaders
Conference unfolded*

MIDDLE
EAST



THE BEST OF THE BEST



*The industry's finest celebrate at the Leaders
In Hospitality Awards 2017*

LEADERS IN HOSPITALITY AWARDS

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



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The winners of the 2017 Leaders in Hospitality Awards 2017, presented by Rikan, were announced on Wednesday, 17 May at The St. Regis Dubai, with more than 300 hospitality professionals in attendance.

Sixteen winners took home prestigious Leaders in Hospitality Awards with accolades including Leading Hotel Team, Leading General Manager and the Lifetime Achievement Award.

The awards, which celebrated excellence and

innovation in the hospitality industry across the Middle East, attracted hundreds of nominations and these were whittled down to one winner and two runners-up in each category by our independent team of expert judges.

The Leaders in Hospitality Awards was presented by Rikan in association with Du, Platinum Sponsor; Luxury Fleet Partner, Cadillac; Hotel of Choice, The St. Regis Dubai, Pulsar Foodstuff Trading and The Gourmet Olive Market, and 1765 Gemini.

MEET THE JUDGES



FILIPPO SONA, DIRECTOR/ HEAD OF
HOTELS MENA REGION, COLLIERS



HISHAM FAROUK, CEO, GRANT
THORNTON



HELEN MORRIS, EXECUTIVE CHEF /
SENIOR LECTURER, THE EMIRATES
ACADEMY OF HOSPITALITY
MANAGEMENT



DANIEL DURING, PRINCIPAL AND
MANAGING DIRECTOR, THOMAS
KLEIN INTERNATIONAL
HOSPITALITY SCHOOL



RABIH FEGHALI, DIRECTOR, ROYA
INTERNATIONAL



MARTIN KUBLER, CEO,
SPS AFFINITY



HALA MATA CHOUFANY, PRESIDENT,
HVS MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA

TESTIMONIALS

"It was very uplifting to see some new hotels and individuals being included in this year's awards. A special mention also to Mr. Andy Cuthbert on his Lifetime Achievement Award well-deserved and a great inspiration for our future leaders in Hospitality"

Michael Kitts, director of culinary arts, The Emirates Academy of Hospitality Management

"What a great night with very worthy winners, excellent service it was a real showcase for hospitality in the Middle East. I am already looking forward to next year's event already"

David Allan, cluster general manager Radisson Blu Hotels, Dubai Waterfront & Dubai Canal Views

"What a fantastic night to celebrate the leaders in our industry. 1765 Gemini was proud to be a part of the dazzling evening and for one the greats of hospitality, Andy Cuthbert, to win the Lifetime Achievement, which was sponsored by us, rounded off a superb event!"

Glenn Ewart, commercial director, 1765 Gemini

"Pulsar Foodstuff is delighted to be sponsoring the Leaders in Hospitality Awards once again. It is a great night for the industry and the people involved"

Stephen Bennett, general manager, Pulsar Foodstuff



LEADING NEW HOTEL FAIRMONT FUJAIRAH BEACH RESORT

The 180-key property which soft-opened in December 2016 is nestled in the Hajar mountains and the judges were won over by its authenticity, hip interior design and five creative dining venues. The resort is striving to be a pioneer in the luxury segment, paving the way for more high-end brands to set up in Fujairah.



“It feels just great. It’s definitely a beautiful project in Fujairah. It’s an amazing hotel, it’s really unique – the whole design and concept around the hotel is just great. I feel a lot of happiness and pride at what our team has done”

Omar Souab – Fairmont Fujairah Beach Resort general manager



LEADING SERVICED APARTMENT KEMPINSKI RESIDENCES & SUITES, DOHA

The judges were impressed by the sheer attention to detail of the staff at this property, which opened in 2010, whether it be an extra chamomile tea when you’re not feeling well or a birthday cake waiting for your child when they arrive back from school, the staff are passionate about being hoteliers and catering to the needs of their guests.



“It’s very exciting to win this award. I have been at the property for five years and today we have the residence and Marsa Malaz Kempinski and I oversee both properties. In my opinion, the reason we won the award was because of the staff and the service they provide”

Wissam Suleiman, cluster general manager at Marsa Malaz Kempinski - The Pearl Doha and Kempinski Residences & Suites Doha

LEADING LUXURY HOTEL THE ST. REGIS ABU DHABI

The winner of the category is a hotel that has hosted a number of high-profile events and has attracted the likes of Lewis Hamilton and Diego Maradona as guests. The judges couldn't help but be taken by some of the extravagant F&B options on offer not least the Brunch in the Clouds and the Hellpad Sunset Supper, both of which were sold out within the first 24 hours of being introduced.



"This is awesome, it means a lot to be recognised in the region. We did a lot in the last year in terms of high-profile events, trying to be as creative as possible and it's amazing to be recognised for it"

Annie Turnell, PR and communications manager, The St. Regis Abu Dhabi



LEADING MID-MARKET HOTEL DUSIT D2 KENZ HOTEL, DUBAI

From the hotel's Mediterranean restaurant, Ostro, to the Thai street food concept, Wise Kwai, this is a property that proved very popular with our judges who described it as a "welcome surprise". The hotel has 237 rooms and suites and is located in the Barsha Heights district of Dubai.



"It's a great achievement especially after only opening six months ago. We worked very hard on the opening and the whole team is here to join me in celebrating and it's wonderful"

Bruno Guilloux general manager at Dusit D2 Kenz Hotel



LEADING HOTEL F&B OUTLET ASEELAH, RADISSON BLU HOTEL DUBAI DEIRA CREEK

"One belonging to a great heritage and family" is Aseelah's Arabic meaning. This is exactly what the restaurant does – continuing the local heritage and inviting new members to the family to enjoy the Emirati menu. Aseelah, which has drawn rave reviews for its designs alone, opened its doors in June 2016.



"There are so many great restaurants in Dubai so the competition is super tough. I think Aseelah is unique in the sense that it's a real authentic heritage restaurant. We're continuously evolving. We've just started serving Emirati breakfast, and we're always looking to develop the concept"

Maria Tullberg, general manager, Radisson Blu Hotel, Dubai Deira Creek



LEADING HOTEL SPA PALAZZO VERSACE DUBAI

The spa opened in November 2016 and focuses on holistic treatments, wellness and lifestyle. This stunningly designed spa has been a huge hit with guests offering seven luxurious treatment rooms and an exquisite spa suite complete with a private Jacuzzi, monsoon rain shower, nail studio and full changing facilities.



"It's an amazing recognition for all of the hard work from the team so it's fantastic"

Nadia Bartolomeo, director of spa, Palazzo Versace Dubai



SUSTAINABLE HOTEL AWARD PARK INN BY RADISSON MUSCAT

The property has just been awarded with the Green Key for the sixth year. The four-star hotel in Muscat, which has 175 rooms, has also been actively participating in the Box Appeal – an annual charity initiative aimed at filling boxes with a predetermined list of daily essential items with the support of participating schools and companies.



"It's amazing, this is the first time we have won an award for sustainability and I really thank *Hotel News Middle East* and *Leaders in Hospitality Awards* for making us part of this event"

Vianney Antonio, PR & marketing manager,
Park Inn by Radisson Muscat and Park Inn by
Radisson Hotel & Residence Duqm, Oman



LEADING EXECUTIVE HOUSEKEEPER HELGA FISCHER, W DOHA HOTEL & RESIDENCES

The judges were swayed after hearing how Helga, who started at the hotel over three years ago, works tirelessly around-the-clock to ensure her team stays on top of their tasks. The hotel's 100% room cleanliness and guest satisfaction scores from last year are also standing testimony to her dedication.



"It feels very strange for me, I didn't expect it at all. Maybe I won because of my experience, maybe my staff are happy, maybe the hotel and the owners are happy. I've been doing it for a long time, over 20 years. The main thing is that I like my job but I'm nothing without my team – they make it for me"



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LEADING F&B MANAGER SARIN MONISH, MILLENNIUM AIRPORT HOTEL DUBAI

Sarin's colleagues say since starting at the hotel, in February 2015, he has changed the way colleagues look at their jobs and changed their perspective thanks to his innovative training methods.



It feels really great. It is amazing to win an award here in Dubai where you have so much competition. There were some really big names on the shortlist so it really feels great to win"

LEADING HOTEL CHEF SUDQI NADDAF, KEMPINSKI HOTEL MALL OF THE EMIRATES

As well as developing creative and innovative concepts that have helped cement Kempinski Hotel Mall of the Emirates' reputation as a dining hub in Dubai, in his five years with the company, Chef Sudqi has worked to improve the F&B experience for hotel guests – encouraging his team to join him in being part of the front of house experience and personally presenting food to guests.



"It's amazing. I didn't expect to win at all – I have a lot of respect for my competitors. I have worked in Dubai for over five years, I've done a lot in my hotel and I feel most proud of the team succession – I work a lot on talent and I think that in the end is what made me win this award. It means a lot to me"





RISING STAR AWARD

SARAH NOURY, MEDIA ONE HOTEL

Sarah's key achievements at Media One have involved building relationships with local business councils to drive growth. Sarah Noury is 26 years of age, and joined the company 18 months ago. She has already demonstrated significant results: the Media One guest loyalty card subscriptions have increased in numbers by 15% since she arrived, and she has the potential to make an even bigger impact in the near future according to her team.



"It feels absolutely amazing. I can't thank the team enough at Media One for this. As a team we work so hard and at Media One there is the opportunity to develop, be independent and they really push for that – everything I've achieved, everything I've done is down to the team as a whole"



LEADING PROCUREMENT MANAGER

ARUN KUMAR, LE MERIDIEN AL AQAH BEACH RESORT FUJAIRAH & AL MAHA, A LUXURY COLLECTION DESERT RESORT & SPA

Arun has worked at the property for over 14 years, displaying tremendous loyalty and dedication, not to mention excellent performance that sees him constantly delivering the best deals with suppliers and vendors and cementing a reputation for integrity and innovation.



"I am very happy to receive this award. I am almost finished 15 years in my hospitality career and this is the first time I have won one of the big awards and I am so happy to receive it. It will give me more energy and responsibility also"

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LEADING IT MANAGER RUSHDY MUBARAK, RADISSON BLU HOTEL, DUBAI WATERFRONT

Rushdy's colleagues commented: "The combination of a 'Yes I can' attitude in whatever he does and his first-class technical knowledge makes Rushdy a great asset to our business". Rushdy has made quite an impression in his 10 years with the company, playing key roles in the pre-opening of the Radisson Blu Residence Dubai Marina, Radisson Blu Hotel & Park Inn by Radisson Yas Island, Abu Dhabi, the former Radisson Royal Dubai and the Park Inn by Radisson, Al Barsha.

“

"It's so exciting, I'm so happy to win this award. I get a lot of support and freedom from my management and this is really important for me to be successful. We have plans to make the hotel a paperless hotel over the next year and we're hoping to do that also in our hotels in Dubai"



“

"This is the icing on the cake – it's just wonderful to have been part of the team for the past seven years. I've been working with Mark for five and it's been brilliant, it's been great doing all the awards, but this is really special"

Sally Meech, director of marketing & communications, Media One Hotel

“

"It's absolutely fantastic, I'm elated – I'm very happy for Sally and for the team"

Mark Lee, general manager, Media One Hotel



LEADING HOTEL TEAM MEDIA ONE HOTEL

This is a team, which during Euro 2016, came up with the idea to create terraces and a mock football pitch for customers to enjoy the tournament in France with the moniker It's Not Nice – Toulouse! The team has also seen its F&B profit increase by 11.3%.

LEADING GENERAL MANAGER STEPHEN MEREDITH, STEIGENBERGER HOTEL BUSINESS BAY

With 26 years of hospitality and F&B experience behind him, Stephen has worked for many respected international brands across Africa, Europe, the Middle East and South East Asia. It's that experience he has used to make a difference at the Steigenberger Hotel. In his previous role as executive assistant manager at the hotel, he was responsible for establishing and expanding the property's operational departments. With 26 years of experience he is one of the most respected general managers in the region.

“It feels amazing. My background is food and beverage and that's where I spent most of my career, it's where I did a whole lot of really good things but I never won an award for it like I hoped. This is my first foray into being a general manager in the Middle East and it's really great to get the award. Throughout my career I've had some really great mentors including my current CEO. If you want to be successful in this market you have to remain humble”



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• Email: info@pulsarfoodstuff.com • P.O. Box: 450258 - Dubai- U.A.E
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LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

**ANDY CUTHBERT, GENERAL MANAGER,
MINA A SALAM HOTEL & C & I, JUMEIRAH
HOSPITALITY AT MADINAT JUMEIRAH**

Andy has been in his current role since January 2011 and has been a titan of local hospitality for decades. The judges heard how he was still an upbeat, jovial gentleman with a real passion for the industry. It is that passion that has seen him become respected, not just across the region, but across the entire world as president of the Young Chefs' Association.



“When you get a lifetime achievement award it feels like you’re either getting old or it’s time to leave! It’s such an honour to have lived here for over 25 years and worked in the hospitality industry, the kitchens, the service, to what I do now at Madinat Jumeirah as general manager and still looking after the events. I thank my peers and the people that voted for me and put me forward for this award. It’s just a super feeling – thank you!”

WINNERS IN FULL

LEADING NEW HOTEL

Fairmont Fujairah Beach Resort

LEADING SERVICED APARTMENT

Kempinski Residences & Suites, Doha

LEADING LUXURY HOTEL

The St. Regis Abu Dhabi

LEADING MID-MARKET HOTEL

Dusit D2 Kenz Hotel, Dubai

LEADING HOTEL F&B OUTLET

Aseelah, Radisson Blu Hotel Dubai Deira Creek

LEADING HOTEL SPA

Palazzo Versace Dubai

SUSTAINABLE HOTEL AWARD

Park Inn by Radisson Muscat

LEADING EXECUTIVE HOUSEKEEPER

Helga Fischer, W Doha Hotel & Residences

LEADING IT MANAGER

Rushdy Mubarak, Radisson Blu Hotel, Dubai Waterfront

RISING STAR AWARD

Sarah Noury, Media One Hotel

LEADING F&B MANAGER

Sarin Monish, Millennium Airport Hotel Dubai

LEADING PROCUREMENT MANAGER

Arun Kumar, Le Méridien Al Aqah Beach Resort Fujairah & Al Maha, a Luxury Collection Desert Resort & Spa

LEADING HOTEL CHEF

Sudqi Naddaf, Kempinski Hotel Mall of the Emirates

LEADING HOTEL TEAM

Media One Hotel

LEADING GENERAL MANAGER

Stephen Meredith, Steigenberger Hotel Business Bay Dubai

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Andy Cuthbert, Mina A Salam Hotel & C & I, Jumeirah Hospitality at Madinat Jumeirah