

**INNOVATION  
AWARDS 2019**

# **DISCLAIMER**

To keep things fair, all entries included in this judges' pack are shown exactly as they were submitted. We Are Africa has endeavored not to edit for spelling, grammar or readability – as such, please be aware that we take no responsibility for such errors.

# Shape Africa

Recognising those individuals whose tireless passion and dedication to changing perceptions of the continent are shaping Africa's future for the better



# CHOBE GAME LODGE

Albert Ndereki

## THEIR PASSION FOR AFRICA AND THE INDUSTRY

Albert Ndereki is one of the longest serving individuals in Botswana's tourism industry - well over 40 years! He's dedicated his life to tourism in Africa. As a young man he was part of the construction crew building the iconic Chobe Game Lodge in 1971. Putting high-end luxury tourism on the Botswana map for the very first time.

Today, Albert is widely acknowledged with the locals as the encyclopedia of Ecotourism. He manages all elements of the lodge's award-winning ecotourism facilities from the industry's first Bio Gas plant in Botswana to the waste management systems on site that crush cans and turn glass bottles to building bricks.

Albert has led guests on 'back of house eco-tours' since the lodge was amongst the first properties to be fully Botswana eco certified in 2012. He takes immense pride in not just demonstrating the innovative technology like the first solar powered safari boats, but the lessons we've learnt in adapting the way we operate.

Albert's passion has a lasting effect on people. His talks share the history of how far Botswana has come since he first started.

Not just guests, but through his numerous presentations & collaborations with local NGO's and community outreach programs where he speaks about ecotourism and managing our resources.

Albert dedicated his life to mentoring youngsters from the local community to be hard-working and responsible individuals.

This year Albert moves into semi-retirement and we want to recognise a proud man with a legacy to all in tourism.



## THEIR MOST STAND OUT ACCOMPLISHMENT

Albert has been featured in many local newspapers as the driving force behind the numerous Chobe Game Lodge Responsible Tourism awards in 2012, 2015 & 2016.

Most notably, Albert was recognised by Minister of Environment & Tourism and awarded a Certificate of Appreciation for exhibiting exemplary work in the industry at the "Waste to Wealth" conference in October 2016. He's also been a part of leading more than 170 young community members who've been trained and qualified through the Youth Trainee Development Program the lodge initiated in 2006. Albert is a community leader, as well as a tourism leader.

# THE ROYAL PORTFOLIO

Liz Biden

## THEIR PASSION FOR AFRICA AND THE INDUSTRY

Liz Biden moved from the fashion industry into the hospitality in 1999 when she started The Royal Portfolio. She was a natural because she loves nothing more than to share wonderful things with people. Within 17 years she has built up one of the most iconic luxury hotel groups in the world showcasing the very best of South Africa, building incredible relationships around the world with agents and celebrity clients and being featured in the likes of Vanity Fair magazine as a female pioneer of experiential African travel putting South Africa firmly on the international luxury travel map.

While taking The Royal Portfolio from strength to strength she continued to care for her growing family and dedicated her time to preparing the business for the next generation. Uplifting local communities, promoting conservation, and protecting the environment are core values of The Royal Portfolio.

The Royal Portfolio has built a selection of uniquely South African luxury hotels in remarkable locations that offer the very best of South Africa's travel experiences: an authentic African safari, the beauty of our coastline where whales and dolphins can be seen breaching from the deck, the rich epicurean delights of our winelands, and the burgeoning art and culture of Cape Town.

Liz Biden's eye for the exquisite and the passion she puts into each property offer guests a truly unique experience of the diversity and the experiential highlights of a whole nation while maintaining a distinctly local sense of place.



## THEIR MOST STAND OUT ACCOMPLISHMENT

While creating employment for over 600 staff across South Africa, Liz Biden has also ensured that the local communities surrounding each of The Royal Portfolio's properties are fully integrated into the luxury travel industry, and in turn ensuring that the luxury travel industry gives back to the local communities through various upliftment and conservation programmes with which guests are encouraged to get involved, visiting communities and spending time with the counter poaching teams.

# LEW ROOD

A highly respected doyen of the travel industry, Lew began his career at the Johannesburg Hotel School, and worked in numerous prestigious hotels locally and internationally. His career has spanned hotels and hospitality, tourism, tour operating and sales. In the seventies, Lew worked for South African Tourism. During this time, there weren't as many choices for tourists as are available today, nor was there the internet to help find new offerings. This meant a great deal of research needed to be done and so Lew developed huge, in-depth knowledge of South Africa. He's worked for the Kerzners and tour operator Springbok-Atlas, the well-respected CC Africa group (now andBeyond) and during the last two decades, headed up Singita's sales and marketing department. 'Africa done right can delight every time,' Lew believes. He's spent a lifetime passionately promoting this remarkable continent and knows it intimately. Lew also helped launch the South African chapter of StreetSmart, in which restaurants and their patrons contribute to charity.





# RELAIS & CHATEAUX

NAME: ANNIE-CLAUDE BERGONZOLI

## WHAT WAS THE OBJECTIVE?

Born in Le Havre, Normandy, Annie-Claude Bergonzoli is all the grace and charm of Catherine Deneuve, a true embodiment of the French joie de vivre and art de vivre, with a heart that found its second home in Africa, since she arrived in South Africa, in 1966, with her late husband Pascal Bergonzoli. In Mother Africa, Annie-Claude became a mother herself. Her love of travel and people saw her become the Station Manager for Air France in Johannesburg for 25 years. A woman of great loyalty, she has since fulfilled a role as Director Member Services for Relais & Châteaux's Africa & Indian Ocean delegation for 17 years. She is one of the hardest working flag-flyers of Africa today. She tirelessly shares her extensive knowledge of and passion for the continent and the values of Relais & Châteaux with the world – whether training people on the ground in lodges in remote parts of Kenya or Madagascar in the ways of hospitality and cuisine, or on sales trips with prominent operators. With an inimitable energy, often flying between Australia and New York, Seychelles and Paris, Cape Town and London, in one year, she carries off a non-stop schedule with an ever-present positivity. Her understanding of and deep care for Africa – the land, animals, people and food – comes from her being so truly in love and engaged with it all. We are proud to call her our Director, our fearless leader and relentless vision of light and love.

## DESCRIPTION:

With Relais & Châteaux for 17 years, she has trained hundreds of people across the continent and islands and positively, tirelessly promoted Africa to the world.

**VIDEO LINK:** <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/7kq8j90ius0sh1c/AADgKRtvxnjTke1HHgpbFfAPa?dl=0>



# THE AFRICAN TRAVEL AND TOURISM ASSOCIATION

NAME: NIGEL VERE NICOLL

## WHAT WAS THE OBJECTIVE?

In 1996, Nigel, a former hotelier and tour operator was elected in a non-executive role to the board of The African Travel & Tourism Association (Atta). At that time Atta was a newly formed trade association with 34 members promoting tourism from UK to 3 countries in East Africa. 21 years on, Nigel has developed Atta, into one of the most successful multinational representative organisations in the tourist sector with 590 corporate members in 42 countries globally, of which, 22 are on the African continent. Through Nigel's inspirational efforts he has earned respect and recognition as the voice of African tourism interests in UK and Europe. His efforts promoting Africa as a credible tourist destination, and his work in crisis management in all matters concerning tourism in Africa have been recognised by many of the leading tourism bodies in East and Southern Africa who now have partnerships with the association he has developed. In times of crisis Atta is usually the first point of contact for international media. Building a trade association with just 34 members in 3 countries to 590 in 42 countries is in itself recognition of the practical achievement that he has made, making this organisation unique, widespread and effective in that it effectively combines the tourist, the tour operator, the governments and the media to ensure quick and clear communication, the building of trade, good practice and safety for all parties involved. His passion drive and determination to promote tourism to Africa is recognised throughout the industry.





**DESCRIPTION:**

Rarely is an industry so fortunate to have such a respected, admired and loved person at it's helm.! Nigel's calm professional character coupled with sublime diplomatic skills and deep knowledge of African Tourism, equipped him to be recognised and applauded by all those who know him including Ministers and senior Govt officials in many countries. His tireless enthusiasm and energy for all matters that positively impact African Tourism are now legendary, and he surely deserves this recognition from the entire industry and membership.

