

2007 Chef Concierge of the Year Nominees



MAURICE DANCER



PETER JOHNSON



DAVID MORENO



MICHAEL ROMEI



CHRISTINE SERIO

MAURICE DANCER

The Pierre, a Taj Hotel

Years of Service: 21

Organizational Affiliations: Les Clefs d'Or USA (President), NYCAHC (former Board of Directors and President), University of Austin Black Alumni Association, NAACP

How and when did I become a Concierge?

I began my career at Four Seasons Hotels & Resorts as an overnight bellman. In nine months I was promoted to Assistant Concierge at the Four Seasons Hotel Austin. Destined to make my way to New York City, I climbed up the Concierge ladder from 1990 to 1994. I served as a Concierge supervisor at Four Seasons Hotel Seattle in Washington State (no longer part of the Four Seasons chain) and on the opening team as Assistant Chef Concierge at the Four Seasons Hotel New York. Finally, fulfilling my dream, in July of 1994 I assumed the position of Chef Concierge at The Pierre New York.

What does "being a Concierge" mean to me?

Profession, perfection, protection. Being a professional in demonstrating exemplary efforts and actions while establishing a "benchmark" for providing ultimate service. Reminiscence of a true artisan who constantly changes and adapts to improve their craft which enhances experiences, inspires followers and educates viewers. Maintaining perfection with a constant striving to be the "best of the best" while applying dedication to a vision that encourages discipline, humility, flexibility and attention to detail in an environment of evolving expectations. Providing protection by ensuring integrity in decisions and suggestions through a system of relationships that are deeply rooted in friendship. Being a Concierge is an extraordinary opportunity of growth and exploration and in the words of a song from my youth, "May the work I've done speak for me; May the life I live, speak for me; May the service I give, speak for me."

PETER JOHNSON

The Kimberly Hotel New York

Years of Service: 15

Organizational Affiliations: NYCAHC, Les Clefs d'Or USA, NYC & Company, Screen Actors Guild

How and when did I become a Concierge?

I studied at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts. I began my hotel career at Le Parker Meridien. After being promoted to the Concierge desk, I moved to Germany for a year of language study. I was then asked to come to work for the Kimberly Hotel. I have been an NYCAHC member for nearly 15 years and a Les Clefs d'Or member for nearly 11 years. I have served on the Les Clefs d'Or Eastern Region Committee. 5 years ago, my General Manager, Mujo Perezic, asked me to become Chief Concierge at the Kimberly Hotel. I have been happily doing so ever since.

What does "being a concierge" mean to me?

Being a Concierge is a privilege to me. I live in one of the greatest cities in the world and I am able to enjoy the vast

amount of cultural attractions, entertainment and cuisines available. I therefore can enhance a guest's visit by sharing my knowledge of these venues. It is a joy to see the excitement of hotel guest when you recommend something from your own experience. It is a joy when they come back to you and praise your recommendation. To be able to shape and mold a visitor's time in New York is quite an extraordinary thing. They go home with the memories you have helped to create for them. When we receive letters of praise after someone stays at our property and has called upon the Concierge for services, we have an added bonus. We work very hard, accomplish many things and are very lucky to be able to do so!

DAVID MORENO

The Gramercy Park Hotel

Years of Service: 16

Organizational Affiliations: Les Clefs d'Or USA, NYCAHC, NYC & Co.,

How and when did I become a Concierge?

After working in the international banking profession for seven years I decided to make a career change. In between banking jobs I had some hotel experience as a junior Concierge at The Grand Bay Hotel, working with one of the founders of Les Clefs d'Or USA, Giorgio Finocchiaro. It was in 1992 when I threw myself into the hotel business and became a Concierge at The Macklowe Hotel (now Millennium Broadway). After a few years there I was asked to become a member of the Concierge team at The Mark Hotel where I was once again in the company of Giorgio Finocchiaro who took me under his wing. In 2002, when Giorgio retired, I became Chef Concierge at the Mark Hotel and stayed there for three years. While on vacation in Chile I received a very compelling phone call from Ian Schragger's assistant asking if I would be interested in the opportunity to be a part of the grand reopening of the newly redesigned Gramercy Park Hotel. I was very intrigued and that's why you find me here a year and a half later.

What does "being a Concierge" mean to me?

To me the Concierge is the soul of a hotel. Beautiful paintings, beautiful rooms and grand entrances mean nothing to our guests without the human touch that we as Concierges provide. The human aspect of this profession is really what draws me to it. Being a Concierge to me means never forgetting that no matter how famous, popular or rich someone is, they are still human beings who want to feel welcome and sincerely cared for. At the end of the day, guests will want to return to a hotel because they felt comfortable, they felt at home. Being a really good Concierge means being able to read, in a few seconds, a guest's personality, needs and wants and be able to effectively execute these tasks in a genuinely warm and caring way using our knowledge and talents.

MICHAEL ROMEI

The Waldorf=Astoria

Years of Service: 18

Organizational Affiliations: Les Clefs d'Or USA ; Assistant General Secretary, UIICH (International Executive Board, Les Clefs d'Or); NYCAHC; South Florida Concierge Association (Past President and Honorary Member); Faculty Member, New York University Continuing Education Program; Visiting Professor, Merici College, Quebec, Canada; Frequent Lecturer, Cunard Cruise Lines and Regent Seven Seas Cruise Lines

How and when did I become a Concierge?

After a seven-year career as an analyst for the Royal Dutch/Shell Group companies, I left NYC to live in South Florida. I felt the hospitality industry seemed logical to pursue in Florida, so I entered The Boca Raton Resort & Club and accepted an entry level position at the front office which led me to various management positions. Eventually, I became the Chef Concierge of the hotel.

What does "being a Concierge" mean to me?

Being a Concierge has allowed me to truly express my "real" self. There are many definitions of the word Concierge; we have heard several recitations over the years but the big difference and the real passion of the profession comes from within. I believe it is truly developed and nurtured within us unconsciously, for it is a true passion to care for another human being and to really want to help someone and make a difference – that is something untaught. Therefore, being a Concierge is not really a job nor a profession but a way of life that is everlasting!

CHRISTINE SERIO

Jumeirah Essex House

Years of Service: 14

Organizational Affiliations: Les Clefs d'Or USA, NYCAHC

How and when did I become a Concierge?

I began my hotel career at the front desk of the Essex House in 1987. When the hotel closed in 1990 for a lengthy renovation, I moved to Atlanta to help open another hotel for the same company. I returned to New York in 1993 and was invited to return to the Essex House as Chief Concierge. I was thrilled to return to the hotel that had initially launched my interest in the Concierge profession. I have remained here ever since.

What does "being a Concierge" mean to me?

Being a Concierge means a great deal to me. It defines who I am within the hotel as well as in my personal life. The position has afforded me the opportunity to meet and serve incredible people; to share memorable experiences with valued colleagues, many of whom I count among my closest friends; and to learn from hoteliers who share their knowledge freely. For me, being a Concierge is a blend of diplomacy, graciousness, resourcefulness and a sense of humor—all of which will be called upon each and every