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## YOU SHOULD KNOW, DANELLE KENSBOCK: Ponte Vedra's classy concierge

Danelle Kensbock's ties to an elite concierge society ensures her guests go home smiling.

By CHRIS LAUDERMAN, The Times-Union

Danelle Kensbock, a concierge at The Lodge and Beach Club at Ponte Vedra Beach, is a member of *Les Clefs d'Or* (pronounced lay clay door). The society has 450 members in the United States and is the highest distinction a professional concierge can attain. Kensbock, 57, is the only *Les Clefs d'Or* concierge in North Florida and has worked at The Lodge for seven years.

### Q: What do you do as a concierge?

I make the guests happy during their vacation. And if I don't, I'm not very happy with myself.



Danelle Kensbock of the Lodge and Beach Club at Ponte Vedra Beach specializes in concierge services, which include arranging such events as business trips or romantic getaways.  
BRUCE LIPSKY/The Times-Union

In this day in age with the Internet, a lot of people can do their own planning for their vacation. But there's some aspects they don't know about the area and they rely on us to give them directions, make plans for tee times, make reservations for dinner; going to a spa nowadays is a very relaxing thing people do during their vacation. Basically we want them to feel at home, to feel like family.

### Q: What are some of the most interesting special requests you have received?

Most of them are romantic in nature. We are considered one of the romantic spots here on the ocean, and we will arrange to put candles, tea lights, rose pedals spread around their rooms. It's very exciting that we can pull it off.

### Q: How did you end up in Ponte Vedra Beach?

My father lived at Vicars Landing and it goes way back before that. His father came here in the '20s. I grew up on Long Island and during the summer we were living on the water. The water is a big draw for me. I've lived in the mountains, but this is it.

### Q: What is the *Les Clefs d'Or* association?

The big draw with *Les Clefs d'Or* is that if I have a guest here who says they're going to a different city, I can call upon my network of *Les Clefs d'Or* other members and they will treat my guests as well or better than their own guests, and we do it for no gain other than to make sure our guests are happy and fulfilled in their mission in coming for vacation or business, or whatever reason they're here.

**Q: What types of questions were on the *Les Clefs d'Or* test?**

They asked us time zones, terminology of food, wine, different entertainers - they give you the name of a show and they ask you to explain the show and where it was playing. They also had hypothetical ... [a] guest comes up to you and says 'I'm going to propose to my future wife, where can we go, what can we do?' and how you go about planning the airplanes and the limousine and the dinners and no stops barred.

**Q: How did you get into this business?**

When I was about 12 years old, my family had gone to the Boca Raton Club and I was walking through the lobby looking at the grandiose furniture and the architecture and it just made me realize that this was something I may want to do someday. I've always followed a lot of resorts up and down the East Coast. When my husband and I were in Yosemite from 1984 to 1991, my husband got a job as the executive sous chef and there I was saying, 'Oh my gosh, what am I going to do?' They had an opening for the front desk as a manager and I took it and I became full manager after that. I did study interior design, but I did not pursue that.