



## Getting to Know: Katie Blatcher, general manager, Purple Summer's Château de Candie



By **Richard Alvin**

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**Perched above the rooftops of Chambéry and framed by the majestic Chartreuse mountains, Château de Candie is a storybook escape—a 14th-century château reinvented as a refined boutique retreat.**

At its heart is Katie Blatcher, a British-born hotelier whose journey from seasonal work to general management has been defined by intuition, resilience, and a true passion for France.

Katie has been General Manager of Château de Candie since 2022, after serving as both Events Manager and Operations Manager. She first moved to France following graduation with a degree in French from the University of Nottingham, turning what was meant to be a seasonal stint into a permanent home and career. Today, she leads with empathy, hands-on leadership, and a deep understanding of how even the smallest detail can elevate a guest experience.

With a career spanning both summer and winter properties in the Purple Summer luxury villa group—including Hôtel Mottaret in MÉRIBEL—Katie's vision is clear: to position Château de Candie as the premier boutique wedding and event venue in the region, all while preserving the authenticity and magic that makes the property truly unforgettable.

### **What inspired you to pursue a career in hotel management?**

Holidays are such an important part of life. I love being the person responsible for making those moments truly memorable. That feeling of knowing a guest had a perfect stay because of your team's attention to detail—it's incredibly fulfilling.

Leading the team at Château de Candie allows me to shape that experience from start to finish. It's not just about rooms and reservations—it's about emotions, connection, and crafting something unforgettable. That's what inspires me.

### **How do you balance emerging trends and evolving guests' preferences?**

It's about keeping one foot in the present and one in the future. Guest feedback is our most valuable tool—it tells us what's working and where we can improve. We're open to innovation, but it has to feel right for the property.

At a historic château like ours, we're careful to preserve the character while still meeting modern expectations. That could mean upgrading tech, rethinking dining formats, or adding flexibility in how we host weddings and events. Every decision must serve both the guest and the story we're trying to tell.

Looking back, is there anything you would have done differently?

I don't have regrets—every experience has shaped the manager I am today. If anything, I would have transitioned to working in boutique hotels sooner. That's where I feel most at home. But the years I spent in larger operations gave me the structure and discipline I rely on now.

What defines your management style?

Hands-on, supportive, and collaborative. I lead by example because you can't expect high standards without understanding the detail yourself.

My team know they're supported and that their ideas matter. We operate on mutual respect—and it shows. Guests can sense when a team is happy and connected. It creates a genuine atmosphere, and that's something you can't fake.

What are your strategic goals and vision for the hotel, and how does that integrate into the hotel group's aims?

We've seen exciting growth in our wedding and event bookings, and my goal is to establish Château de Candie as the leading wedding venue in the region. We're perfectly positioned—just an hour from Geneva and Lyon airports, yet tucked away in serene countryside.

Our 25-room property offers tailored experiences, and the intimacy of the setting allows us to make every event unique. Strategically, this also aligns with the broader goals of Purple Summer—to grow our presence in the bespoke villa and boutique hotel market while maintaining a high standard of personalised service.


What advice would you give to someone starting out?

No job is beneath you—understand every department. You'll lead better when you've walked in those shoes.

Travel. Learn. Absorb everything. Be curious about how other people do things, and take those lessons with you.

And finally, never forget that it's the people—your team and your guests—who make this industry so special. Look after them, and the rest will follow.



 **Getting to Know: Anne Golden, general manager, Pan Pacific London**

**Getting to Know: Isaya, manager of Aasanja Sri Bustani, Grumeti** 