

# GCT

GLOBAL CHAMPIONS TOUR 

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## JOHN WHITAKER'S SPANISH TREASURE



*The Road to Doha...*

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# « I AM NOT IMPORTANT, MY WORK IS IMPORTANT », CHRISTINE STIBI

*Christine's love for the UAE, Qatar, GCT, O.D.O's and a little Charity Diamond...*



Christine Stibi with Ludger Beerbaum

*Those who have already been to your website will be surprised, about your references and "bridge building" services between Europe and the United Arab Emirates. You founded your "Office for German UAE Relations" only 4 years ago. How was it founded – what about the years before ?*

**Christine Stibi :** I lived and worked passionately "in my former life" with horses and within the UAE show jumping community for more than 14 years, during a time where the country was far away from the huge media awareness and hype it has now. Committed from the beginning to this dynamic region, and in many ways a pioneer by taking over new challenging and varied projects, while maintaining close relations with Arabic families and the Middle East equestrian scene.

Life changed overnight after a phone call to inform me of my mother's diagnosis of cancer in 2004. After the move back to Germany to stay close with my parents, while other areas of life were sacrificed, I started missing the Middle East. There was also a lack of information and individual net-



Christine Stibi in press conference

working opportunities in Europe between it and the UAE. This is the reason the Office for German and UAE Relations was founded. Services are not limited to only consultancy, new opportunities are also created – which I call O.D.O's (Opportunity Driven Occasions) – Projects to bring interesting people in direct contact via face to face talks, giving UAE Briefings, as well as personal guided business development trips to Abu Dhabi, Doha, Dubai, Sharjah and Ajman.

*So you create, in a way, intensive Business Tourism with lots of travelling and, handling different cultures ?*

**Christine Stibi :** Yes. Due to the long term relationship with the locals, you can feel how they are focused and whom they trust. And the selected strong network is purely built upon trust, good spirit of optimism, memories of previous initiatives and most importantly, friendship.

Everybody, who is not familiar with the mentality has to learn to be very patient, flexible, fair, showing real interest for the people involved, with

respect for different cultures and characters. Nothing happens in a hurry or under pressure. Maybe Europeans or Germans do not have the luxury of time and the issues are more important than the personal relations, but we are not in Germany, we are in the Middle East.

Many times we have multi-cultural round table talks – which I enjoy the most.

All assignments are different. Its really challenging and never boring at all.

*As a former horse show organizer for show jumping in the UAE and previously an active rider what is your impression of the Global Champions Tour ?*

**Christine Stibi :** I have great respect for the whole team ! Now with 400 million viewers reached, the "Formula 1 of equestrian" guarantees today worldwide media exposure and launches brands into the world. Ten years ago Show Jumping only dreamed of such outstanding media exposure and visibility.

*Beside your international relations activities, you have*





Christine Stibi at the prize giving ceremony in UAE

*developed a nice charity to raise money for cancer aid, the so called "Journey of the Horse diamond".*

**Christine Stibi :** Yes, but there is a story and feeling behind it. After a difficult period, but thanks to a creative brain, even in times of crisis, events slowly ended up influencing my business. With the memory of the terrible illness cancer, which affects every third family in Germany, I start doing everything in my own way :

Positive communication and respect for each other are for me the most important values !

I only like to work with people who are also realists and dream together, sharing a spirit of optimism. I avoid working with negative people, creating destructive energy and always seeing the glass half empty rather than half full.

I am a self motivated and focused working person, but trying to take relaxed, sporty even crazy timeouts. Also, thankful more than ever, for the

beautiful kind people which are in my life and many things, such as waking up and being healthy, meeting interesting new people, and for those nice little moments throughout a day. I enjoy a simple, natural life, being in love with my children and close with the special persons in my heart, having fun, taking the rush out of each day – all these are so important to get back in balance.



Christine Stibi with Sheikh Shakboot bin Nahayan Al Mubarak Al Nahayan

The History of the charity : I saw 3 years ago a small group, including Ludger Beerbaum, promoting several times the "Goldfever Horse Diamond", asking for bids for the stone which aids cancer research. From the first moment the idea jumped into my heart and I bid twice in the very last moments of the closing night. Although the little shiny stone did not bring my mother back, it had been such a magic moment and mix of emotions. Receiving the diamond, I gave the promise to raise much more money from that moment on and developed – "The Journey of the Horse Diamond".

*Can you outline how somebody can participate and raise money for your charity by joining the journey :*

**Christine Stibi :** The idea is that since 2007 each year the diamond will be handed over to a new owner, by selling and reselling for the highest bid each year. Last December the stone had been resold to Valkenswaard for 32,500 €. I was more than happy that in the end a prominent stable like Stal Tops with Jan, Fred and Edwina shared the same enthusiasm.

Through the Global Champions Tour we are all convinced that the unique piece will find outstanding people who give new bids till the closing date at the GCT Final in Doha November 2009. Bids can be given from 35.000 € onwards, as there is already an opening offer. The difference between the selling and reselling price will be donated 100 percent to German cancer aid. It's a feeling of hope from all of us, that in the coming years with these funds, there will be a day where somebody in this world will be able to develop a new, revolutionary treatment or better prevention therapies and more people will survive.

*What about your personal dreams ?*

**Christine Stibi :** Love, health for my family, friends and support for the charity are always part of my dream.

To instil a greater understanding, both in Europe and in my beloved Arabic countries, the value these top world class events have in building friendships, business communities and communication opportunities. Both parts of the world and also the host cities will benefit from these collateral events or "Get - Togethers" in many ways, if they are open and ready to "jump" into fresh ideas. A most recent O.D.O is the UAE Friendship Reception to be held in Monaco 2009. An event being held in parallel, complementing, the GCT of Monaco Similar functions I developed and realised like "receptions", "Arabia - Nights", "Marhaba Business - Lounges", which were held in parallel to German horse shows. They are getting results now. So measuring the value of this special kind of event and networking is possible.

Some personal dreams in my heart are still a secret, which cannot be announced right now. Maybe soon. But I am not important, my work is important.

And if people in Europe or in the Middle East with whom I have helped are happy, then I am also happy.