

Tourism award winners 'flying flag for Riviera'

BY STAFF REPORTER

SOUTH Devon tourism businesses are among the best in the West.

Several scooped top awards in this year's South West Tourism Awards in a glittering night of celebration at Torquay's Riviera International Conference Centre last week.

More than 450 finalists from Devon, Cornwall, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Bristol, Bath and Somerset attended.

Bovey Tracey's Contemporary Craft Festival scooped gold in the tourism event/festival category. Then they went one better by being named overall winners of winners.

The English Riviera BID company was proud to lead the applause as the Riviera celebrated with two golds, one silver and three bronze awards.

Torquay's 25 Boutique B&B, founded by Julian and Andy Banner-Price clinched gold in the best B&B category.

Julian said: "We won joint gold last year, so we are absolutely thrilled to win gold outright this year – and against such tough competition too."

The Elephant restaurant in Torquay, also took gold in the restaurant/bistro of the year.

In the best café/tearoom category, Brixham's Alex and Lucy Foley, from the Guardhouse Café at Berry Head, found themselves pitched

against Goodrington's Cantina Kitchen, with Guardhouse talking silver and the newly established Cantina, the bronze.

Alex said: "This award is all down to the fantastic team we have at the Guardhouse Café. It has been a year of change for both Lucy and I, having become parents for the first time to Rosalee.

"Without our staff's dedication and support over the past year, we wouldn't be standing here today – so a huge thank you to all our incredible staff and customers."

Torquay's Cary Arms was also celebrating two bronze awards in the categories of spa and wellbeing experience and small boutique hotel.

Recently appointed chairman of the English Riviera BID company, Tim Godfrey said: "What a great evening for the Bay! I am so proud to see recognition given to so many of the great businesses we have in this beautiful area.

"Against such strong competition from across the South West, they have been flying the flag for the English Riviera."

ERBID CEO Carolyn Custerson said: "We are hugely proud of all our winners.

"We are looking forward to the ERBID Tourism Exhibition at the RICC on March 8 when we can share all the exciting



» Julian and Andy Banner-Price from Torquay's 25 Boutique B&B

destination marketing plans for the coming year. Everyone is welcome, so don't forget to book by emailing angela@englishrivierabid.co.uk."

South Devon was well represented on the winner's stage.

Higher Gitcombe in the South Hams won silver in the B&B of the year category.

Ashburton's River Dart Country Park grabbed bronze awards in the camping and caravanning park and sustainable tourism categories.

Teignbridge-based Cofton was awarded bronze in the holiday park of the year section.

Unique Devon Tours, from Denbury, received bronze for international visitor experience.

The Bovey Castle and Salcombe Harbour hotels picked up joint silver for hotel of the year. The Salcombe Harbour also achieved a bronze in spa and wellbeing experience.

Aish Cross Holiday Cottages, of Stoke Gabriel, was awarded bronze for self catering holiday provider.

And the Kingsbridge Information Centre grabbed silver in the visitor information service category.