



Celebrating International Women's Day with Curator Hotel & Resort Collection's Mavens of Hospitality

[Curator Hotel & Resort Collection](#) celebrates women in hospitality all year round, and in honor of International Women's Day and Women's History Month, we want to continue amplifying female voices in the industry. [Jennifer Barnwell](#), President of Curator, is a true champion of women in hospitality—and especially in the independent hotel sector. In 2023, Jennifer was named Top Women in Travel and Hospitality by the Women Leading Travel & Hospitality network. She celebrates the essence of every hotel within the collection, inviting guests to explore destinations like never before and curating their perfect escape. Within Curator's collection of hotels, there are more than 25 female general managers and department leaders. To celebrate these important women, we have asked Curator members to tell us why these leaders are so special, and how they continue to lead and shape the hospitality industry.

[Le Parc at Melrose](#)

Karla Roque, Hotel Manager

Karla Roque, Hotel Manager at Le Parc at Melrose, has significantly influenced the property and its team with her exceptional leadership qualities. Karla's commitment to excellence is evident in her approachable demeanor and genuine concern for guests and staff. She leads with empathy and understanding, creating a supportive environment where team members feel valued and motivated. Under her guidance, Le Parc at Melrose has thrived, offering outstanding guest experiences while maintaining a cohesive team dynamic. Her leadership plays a pivotal role in the property's success and growth.

[Chamberlain West Hollywood](#)

Desiree Gardea, Hotel Manager

Desiree Gardea consistently demonstrates unwavering dedication to the property and her team. Her leadership style is characterized by a blend of professionalism and approachability, fostering an environment where every team member feels valued and motivated. Desiree's personal touch and



friendly demeanor not only enhance guest experiences but also cultivate a cohesive work culture within the property. Her commitment to excellence shines through in every aspect of her role, making her an invaluable asset to the Chamberlain West Hollywood team.

[Inn On Fifth](#)

Maria Hamilton, General Manager

Nominated by: Ryan Meiteles, Financial Analyst, Pebblebrook Hotel Trust

From the moment I first met Maria, I've found her to be the epitome of inclusive leadership. She embodies a true spirit of team building, while also keeping the drive to bring Inn on Fifth to the next level in luxury hospitality. The leadership team, department heads, and rank and file staff all recognize that Maria not only welcomes our feedback, suggestions, and ideas for success, we see those contributions applauded and implemented. Each day, under Maria's leadership, we all work together as a team for the satisfaction of our guests, as well as the success of the Inn on Fifth, our management company and ownership, while she works tirelessly to bring out the best in each of us.

[The Fontaine](#)

Karla Torres, Housekeeping Manager

Nominated by: Katie Roberts, Marketing Manager of The Fontaine

Karla embodies the perfect blend of passion and drive in a hospitality leader – it's truly a privilege to work alongside her. Her dedication to our hotel along with her inclusive approach towards every department, sets her apart as a truly exceptional leader. She not only takes ownership of our establishment but also ensures that every team member feels valued and heard. She truly stands out and continues to push our team to be better every day.

[Viceroy Santa Monica](#)

Maribel Gutierrez, Front Office Manager

Nominated by: William Frishkorn, Director of Front Office of Viceroy Santa Monica



Maribel started her career with Viceroy Santa Monica in 2018 as a Housekeeping Manager and was later promoted to Assistant Front Office Manager. As an Assistant Front Office Manager, Maribel did an amazing job in supporting her Front Office team which has led her to a secondary promotion to Front Office Manager which she has held for the last year. Maribel's growth and development has been a true testament to her dedication to approaching her work/life balance with a positive attitude and a willingness to learn new skills that will advance her career. We would like to nominate Maribel Gutierrez – Front Office Manager for Viceroy Santa Monica in celebration of International Women's Day and Curator's Mavens of Hospitality.

[Southernmost Beach Resort](#)

Sarka Takovich, Complex General Manager of Southernmost Beach Resort and The Guesthouses at Southernmost Beach Resort

Nominated by: Monica Quincosa Escobedo, Area Director of Revenue Highgate

Sarka Takovich, Complex General Manager of Southernmost Beach Resort and The Guesthouses at Southernmost Beach Resort, has been my GM for the past (nearly) 6 years. Working with Sarka has been an absolute pleasure. She is a great leader who focuses not only on the entire operation but also on the team members. She is not afraid to roll up her sleeves and jump right into any department that needs help (most notably utilizing an insanely large leaf-blower to keep the grounds pristine during COVID closures). She is the ultimate example of a #girlboss and anyone who works with her is fortunate beyond measure.

[Southernmost Beach Resort](#) and [The Marker Key West Harbor Resort](#)

Laurayne Croke, Complex Director of Sales & Marketing at Southernmost Beach Resort and The Marker Key West Harbor Resort

Nominated by: Monica Quincosa Escobedo, Area Director of Revenue Highgate

Laurayne Croke, Complex Director of Sales & Marketing at Southernmost Beach Resort and The Marker Key West Harbor Resort is like no other. In my career in hospitality, I have never worked alongside such a dedicated DOSM. Not only does she motivate her team to be successful, but she chimes in and assists all departments on property without hesitation. Our hotels have grown exponentially under Laurayne's



direction and leadership – she is deserving of any and all recognition.

[Hotel Zelos](#), [Hotel Zeppelin](#), and [Hotel Zetta](#)

Jasmin Enriquez-Serrano, Area Hotel Manager

One of Jasmin's most notable achievements in her career includes spearheading the operational execution of the Serrano Hotel to Hotel Spero full renovation and hotel/restaurant repositioning. Notably, this transformation pays homage to Lizzie Glide, a pioneering figure in San Francisco who championed opportunities for women. Jasmin's commitment to honoring the legacy of female trailblazers through her work is truly commendable. Jasmin became the first female General Manager of Hotel Spero, becoming a trailblazer herself and providing a great source of pride for the female employees.

In addition to her operational acumen, Jasmin has a proven track record of nurturing new and emerging leaders, fostering a culture of growth within her teams. Investing time and training with her team, internal promotions are a source of pride for Jasmin. One of her team members recently said to me “Jasmin makes us better”. I believe that she makes us all better.

[Viceroy DC](#) and [Hotel Zena](#)

Sherry Abedi, General Manager

Sherry is a visionary with genuine concern for her teams on a personal and professional level. She is determined, yet approachable; creating a culture of motivated and engaged colleagues who thrive in a fast-paced and fun work environment. Sherry is focused on strengthening the hotels' awareness in the marketplace as well as the Viceroy brand's culture for our colleagues. She is a high-energy motivator who manages execution and generates above-expected results for both hotels.

[The Hotel Zags](#)

Daryn Cyrus, General Manager

Since assuming the role of General Manager at the start of the year, Daryn has brought a fresh energy to



The Hotel Zags! With her years of experience, she has brought new and innovative ideas to the property and has been integral in our strategic planning as we move through 2024. Through effective team collaboration, she has streamlined operations, enhancing guest experiences along the way. The Zags team is excited for what's to come!

[1 Hotel San Francisco](#)

Ashley Gochnauer, General Manager

Ashley Gochnauer brings incredible depth of expertise to her role as General Manager at 1 Hotel San Francisco and leads her close-knit team with empathy and inspiration. Her attention to detail, focus on delivering exceptional service, and operational efficiency all contribute to setting the hotel and her team up for success. This, combined with her passion for sustainability and pay-it-forward initiatives, fosters an authentic connection with the property and the 1 Hotels brand ethos.

[1 Hotel San Francisco](#)

Kendall Hanson, Director of Operations

Nominated by: David Craig SVP, Asset Management, Pebblebrook Hotel Trust

As Director of Operations at 1 Hotel San Francisco, Kendall Hanson has been critical to launching and furthering the success of on-property restaurant Terrene as well as the hotel's overall food & beverage program. She ensures that her many team members feel supported and can seamlessly provide an excellent guest experience. Overseeing everything from day-to-day restaurant and spa operations to the execution of strategic initiatives and sustainability efforts, she brings a decade of experience in the hospitality industry to her role, making a significant impact at the mission-driven property.

[Hotel Zephyr](#)

Joyce Yun, General Manager

Nominated by: Trista Ma, Senior Manager, Integrated Marketing

As an inspiring and motivational leader with extensive International Boutique Hotel Operations experience, Joyce is a skilled communicator, influencer, and networker, who is passionate about people



and prides herself on effectively building rapport across stakeholders. Joyce's approach to innovative solutions led her through increasingly pivotal roles with JDV, Virgin Hotels, and Hyatt, leading her to the role of General Manager at Hotel Zephyr. As the hotel leader, Joyce continues to demonstrate excellent analytical, business planning, and project management skills.

[LaPlaya Beach and Golf Resort](#)

Darlene Delfino, Assistant Director of Finance

Nominated by: Steve Coe, Senior Vice President Asset Management, Pebblebrook Hotel Trust

Darlene joined the team in June 2018. Darlene is a thirty-year veteran of the hospitality industry. Darlene works tirelessly to ensure all departments run smoothly and are prepared for months on end. Keeping organized, training the finance team, staying up to date on new systems and working with our various team members to constantly improve controls and reporting. Darlene effortlessly manages multiple tasks, deadlines, banking, as well as various reporting duties as they occur on a daily and weekly basis. Having a tireless work ethic and never compromising in her work, Darlene is the consummate professional and a tireless leader for La Playa. "Darlene's strength is her ability to get along with everyone and work to get the task done no matter what. She has always demonstrated her knowledge and strength in making all the areas of the Resort operate more effectively and efficiently" says Jack Shelton, La Playa's Director of Finance. Outside of work, Darlene likes spending time with her granddaughter Kira, Classic Car Shows, and going to Disney.

[LaPlaya Beach and Golf Resort](#)

Sandy Cotter, Director of Club Membership

Nominated by: Steve Coe, Senior Vice President Asset Management, Pebblebrook Hotel Trust

Sandy joined the La Playa team in February 2001 as Resort Director of Marketing and Sales. After two years in that role, Sandy transitioned to her current role of Director of Club Membership. Sandy's creative approach to enhancing the member relationship has resulted in a thriving club atmosphere, establishing La Playa as the preeminent private club in Naples, Florida. Sandy believes in giving back to



the community and is personally involved with local charities, particularly St. Mathew's House. Sandy's attitude is encapsulated by one of her favorite sayings: "Life is a new adventure everyday!"