

# The inaugural Women to Watch in HTL Index highlights exceptional industry female talent pool

Submitted by: WiH2020

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London, UK - In partnership with The MBS Group, WiH2020 launches the 'Women to Watch in Hospitality, Travel & Leisure Index 2019' highlighting an incredible line up of talented female role models with vastly broad experiences and achievements whilst also revealing the industry still sees female under-representation at board level

At a launch event hosted by 1762 from Brewin Dolphin and in partnership with the MBS Group, WiH2020, shared a new barometer for the hospitality, travel and leisure (HTL) industry called the 'Women to Watch in Hospitality, Travel & Leisure Index 2019' highlighting the real-life stories from women who are seen to be up and coming in the industry, including those who have recently or who are ready to step into ExCo and Board positions.

The Index highlights that whilst 36% of direct reports to Board across the Hospitality, Travel and Leisure industry are female, less than 11% of CEOs are women - despite a record year for promotions to senior roles for female talent. The Index features case studies from 90 women currently achieving leadership, entrepreneurial, and commercial success along with those who have made a wider contribution to the sector.

Tea Colaianni, Founder and Chair of WiH2020, said "The Index has unearthed a monumental wealth of personal and professional stories, successes, tips and lessons learnt. These women are inspiring role models with diverse backgrounds, nationalities, education, race/ethnicities, experiences and ages."

"I feel proud to share the stories of so many talented women who can inspire the next generation of leaders. The Index highlights that the talent is there and opens up deeper questions as to why more female talent in the HTL industry hasn't reached the top."

The launch event saw Dominic Blakemore, Group Chief Executive, Compass Group, Keith Barr, CEO, InterContinental Hotels Group, and Sophie Dekkers, Director of Scheduling, easyJet share why they believe profiling female role models in the industry is important.

Dominic Blakemore, Group Chief Executive Officer said "I believe that it is important for companies to encourage and nurture women in leadership roles, as this will attract more talented women to join our sector. It's so important that women can look around our industry and see authentic role models from all backgrounds and with a variety of experience they can aspire to follow."

Keith Barr, CEO, InterContinental Hotels Group said "At IHG, we know that D&I is critical for companies to be successful – it makes you a better employer, makes your business stronger and creates a sense of belonging among colleagues. We also believe that there is strength in numbers and if we collectively set the right tone and create an inclusive environment we lay a great foundation for emerging talent."

"The Women to Watch in HTL Index 2019 is an embodiment of what can be achieved if the industry comes together to recognise that diversity is good for business – socially and economically. Congratulations

to all of those been recognised.”

Sophie Dekkers, Director of Scheduling, easyJet, who is one of the women featured in the Index, said “When our former CEO Carolyn McCall joined in 2010, she was a real figurehead. A visible female role model was critical in opening my eyes and making me think, “that is something I can achieve”.”

Sam Seigler, Director - Hospitality, Travel & Leisure at the MBS Group commented, “We set out not to find the “top” women in the sector, but to demonstrate that there are inspirational female leaders in all areas of HTL. The Index is not exhaustive, and nor is it ranked in any way. The women profiled here are truly inspiring and we’ve been fascinated to hear more about their stories and what’s motivated them.”

“By highlighting these phenomenal role models, we hope that the Women to Watch in HTL Index will play a part in inspiring ambitious women to pursue a career in the sector – whether that’s joining from outside it or continuing to progress within it.”

Nominations for the Women to Watch in Hospitality, Travel & Leisure Index 2019 were sought for women who stand out from their peer groups and excel in the following areas:

- Leadership
- Commercial impact
- Entrepreneurialism and innovation
- Wider contribution to the sector
- Wider contribution to society

The full version of the Women to Watch in Hospitality, Travel & Leisure Index 2019 can be downloaded here (<https://www.wih2020.com/research>)

The Women to Watch in Hospitality, Travel & Leisure Index 2019 was launched by WiH2020 and The MBS Group at 8 Waterloo Place, London, SW1Y 4BE where the audience was kindly hosted by 1762 from Brewin Dolphin.

#### About WiH2020

WiH2020 is the most influential collaboration platform of leaders across the hospitality, travel and leisure sector and is devoted to increasing women’s representation and diversity as a whole in leadership positions across the HTL sector. We believe that through collaboration we can amplify the impact of individual diversity initiatives, together we can have a bigger, louder voice for the good of the industry.

For more information, please visit [www.wih2020.com](http://www.wih2020.com)

Email: [info@wih2020.com](mailto:info@wih2020.com)

#### About the MBS Group

Founded by Moira Benigson 30 years ago, The MBS Group is a leading sector-specialist executive search firm covering all consumer-facing industries. Our clients consider us trusted advisors, partnering with them on critical leadership roles that make a difference. We work at board level and on executive positions across all functions of strategic importance to our clients.

For more information, visit [www.thembsgroup.co.uk](http://www.thembsgroup.co.uk)

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