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## CAPELLA HOTEL GROUP ANNOUNCES GENERAL MANAGER APPOINTMENTS TO HELM THE BRAND'S 2025 JAPANESE OPENINGS

**John Blanco, appointed Cluster General Manager Capella Kyoto and Patina Osaka, will lead the brand in its expansion into Japan, and Ellen Franke will be General Manager at Patina Osaka.**

**Singapore – 22 July 2024** - Capella Hotel Group is excited to announce two new executive appointments to spearhead the brand's foray into Japan with Capella Kyoto and Patina Osaka, both scheduled to open in 2025.

Formerly General Manager of Capella Bangkok, John Blanco will bring his long-standing hospitality leadership experience and distinguished track record of excellence to his new role of Cluster General Manager for both Capella Kyoto and Patina Osaka, while Ellen Franke brings over 25 years of experience leading luxury hotels across Europe, the USA, China, and Malaysia to the role of General Manager of Patina Osaka.

As Cluster General Manager, John Blanco will helm this debut property and work strategically with Ellen Franke as she takes command of Patina Osaka, the first urban property of Patina Hotels & Resorts. An American with roots in Venezuela, John has an illustrious career in luxury hospitality with an impressive track record at The Ritz-Carlton, Four Seasons and many award-winning independent hotels around the world. Tasked with the debut of Capella Bangkok, which received multiple awards within the first year of its opening in 2020, John is known for his broad worldview and expertise in curating exceptional experiences that cater to an international and diverse clientele, attributable to his proficiency in six languages.

"As Capella Hotel Group enters this exciting new phase of growth into Japan, I am thrilled to be taking this leading role across two new properties that will further the group's pursuit of innovation and excellence in the hospitality sector," shares John Blanco. "A celebration of the exquisite style and culture of an extraordinary city, Capella Kyoto promises to immerse guests in the location's rich heritage. From the interior design and architecture showcasing Higashiyama's aesthetic heritage, to the curated cultural enrichment programme of events and activities, I am committed to ensuring our guests enjoy new levels of excellence which have become synonymous with the Capella brand."





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Ellen Franke joins Capella Hotel Group from The Ritz-Carlton, having worked for the group since 2006 across several global locations, before assuming the General Manager role at their Langkawi property in 2018. Ellen now brings this vibrancy to her new role as General Manager of Patina Osaka, leveraging her dynamic leadership and dedication to exceptional service. Aligning her innate talents with the needs of today's conscious modern traveller, she seamlessly balances the nuances defining the brand pillars of Patina to the forefront, with the aim of inspiring positive connections.

"Patina Osaka represents a homage to the city's effortless beauty and vibrancy. I am excited and proud to be commencing my new role now as General Manager of this urban sanctuary, as we prepare for opening in 2025. As Patina Hotels & Resort's first Japanese property, as well as its first within a city location, it's my great privilege to dedicate the next phase of my career to the brand's modern luxury lifestyle approach to hospitality," says Ellen.

Cristiano Rinaldi, President of Capella Hotel Group, states, "John and Ellen both bring impeccable credentials, commensurate achievements and longstanding expertise to these instrumental new appointments, and we are confident in their abilities to lead Capella Hotel Group into its next phase in these exciting new destinations."

Capella Hotels and Resorts will be making its debut in Japan with Capella Kyoto. Designed by world-acclaimed architect firm, Kengo Kuma and Associates together with Singapore-based interior designer Brewin Design Office, the luxurious four-storey, 89-room hotel will be located in the Miyagawa-chō district, an important geiko (geisha) and maiko (apprentice geisha) neighbourhood and cultural treasure. A city flourishing with arts and culture, Kyoto serves as the ideal place to establish the first Capella Hotels & Resorts' property in Japan, as it aligns perfectly with the group's visionary curation of culture and experience.

Opening in tandem is Patina Osaka, the first urban property of Patina Hotels & Resorts, the modern luxury lifestyle brand by Capella Hotel Group. The 221-key hotel is located opposite Osaka Castle and next to the noteworthy Naniwanomiya-Ato Park. The modern 21-storey building is a collaboration between two award-winning Japanese architects and designers: Jun Mitsui & Associates for the exterior and Strickland for the interiors.

For images, click [here](#).

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CAPELLA

HOTELS AND RESORTS

#### ABOUT CAPELLA HOTEL GROUP

Capella Hotel Group is a leading hospitality management company specialising in luxury hotels, resorts, and serviced residence. Based in Singapore, the rapidly-expanding group has two brands under its portfolio and properties across eight destinations. The award-winning Capella Hotels and Resorts is renowned for its service excellence, crafted luxury design and immersive experiences celebrating the locale, while Patina Hotels & Resorts is the group's modern luxury lifestyle brand, designed for progressive travellers with a creative mindset and penchant for sustainability.

Capella Hotels and Resorts was named the #1 Best Hotel Brand in the world in Travel + Leisure's 2023 and 2024 World's Best Awards.

For more information visit [www.capellahotelgroup.com](http://www.capellahotelgroup.com)

#### ABOUT CAPELLA HOTELS AND RESORTS

The Capella Hotels and Resorts constellation consists of properties located in Singapore, Sydney, Ubud, Bangkok, Hanoi, Shanghai, and Hainan. Future openings include exciting destinations such as Taipei, Kyoto, Riyadh, Nanjing, Shenzhen and South Korea. The exceptional hospitality brand, taking its name from the brightest star of the Auriga constellation, shines a spotlight on local heritage, culture and community whilst crafting authentic guest' experiences with the highest level of personalised service and combining a legacy of thoughtful design.

Capella was named the Best Hotel Brand in the Travel + Leisure 'World's Best Awards' for 2023 and 2024. Capella Bangkok and Capella Singapore earned the distinction of being included in the debut lineup of The World's 50 Best Hotels in 2023. Capella Hotels and Resorts is a member of DISCOVERY, a multi-brand loyalty programme representing a collection of 40 independent hotel brands over 100 countries worldwide.

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

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#### **ABOUT PATINA HOTELS & RESORTS**

Patina Hotels & Resorts is the latest hospitality concept from Capella Hotel Group. Born out of guests' desire to honour individuality, Patina appeals to a new generation of travellers who seek meaningful connections with themselves and the world around them. The human-centred design flows with the natural modes people are in, gently and intuitively providing for each guest's individual needs, ensuring that no two stays are exactly the same.

Following Patina Maldives, Fari Islands, Patina Osaka will be the second launch and the first urban hotel under this modern luxury lifestyle brand.

For more information visit [www.patinahotels.com](http://www.patinahotels.com) | Instagram [@patinahotels](https://www.instagram.com/patinahotels)