



# NEWS

## THE RITZ-CARLTON YACHT COLLECTION

### THE RITZ-CARLTON YACHT COLLECTION ANNOUNCES KEY LEADERSHIP APPOINTMENTS

*The new executive positioning will further bolster operational and strategic initiatives as expansion and growth accelerate*



**Fort Lauderdale, FL – May 2023 – [The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection](#) has announced strategic organizational shifts and appointments to its operations leadership team in preparation for future growth. **Mark Lockwood** moves into the role of **Chief Product Officer** and **Jens Gorka** holds the position of **Senior Vice President, Shipboard Operations**, while the company welcomes **Clayton van Welter** as **Vice President, Marine Operations**.**

“In our endless pursuit of perfecting the ultra-luxury experience for our guests, this new leadership structure will establish a strong foundation for effective collaboration and performance, and unlock our potential for innovation and growth,” said Jim Murren, Executive Chairman and CEO. “Their collective passion and experience will be integral to offering a consistent, unparalleled guest experience at sea as we continue growing our fleet.”

Mark Lockwood joined The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection in 2017 with over 25 years of hospitality and operational experience. Prior to joining the company, Lockwood oversaw operations for Midtown Athletic Clubs as Corporate VP of Operations and held senior positions at



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Royal Caribbean, Celebrity Cruises, and Norwegian Cruise Line. Lockwood has also held a number of key leadership roles in several Leading Hotels of The World. In his most recent roles as Chief Brand Operations Officer and Senior Vice President, Cruise Hotel Operations, Lockwood was instrumental in the launch of the company's first yacht, *Evrima*. The seasoned veteran takes on his new role as Chief Product Officer leading the alignment of product development across the organization to ensure a luxury customer-centric approach throughout all touchpoints of the guest experience.

Bringing with him 30 years of hospitality experience, Jens Gorka holds the role of SVP, Shipboard Operations where he will oversee hotel shipboard operations, shipboard finance, procurement, and logistics across the company's fleet. Jens successfully led the Shipboard Operation team in Spain during the final build phase of *Evrima*. He comes to The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection with 20 years of cruise experience having previously worked for Silversea Cruises where he held various positions in operations and finance, most recently as VP of Hotel Operations. Jens earned his MBA from the prestigious EHL Hospitality Business School.

Maritime veteran Clayton van Welter has been appointed to VP, Marine Operations following his most recent role as Head of Product at Wärtsilä Voyage where he led product strategy and drove innovative tactics to improve high-level product engagement. With over 17 years in roles shoreside and at sea at global cruise and marine technology companies, Clayton will supervise marine and technical operations while maintaining the highest standards of safety and security, environmental sustainability, and vessel efficiency. Previously, Clayton led the safety program and compliance as AVP, Maritime Safety for Royal Caribbean Group where he leveraged his continuous improvement both on board and ashore.

"I am delighted to welcome Clayton and partner closely with Jens and Mark to promote collaboration and excellence across the organization," said Ernesto Fara, President and CFO of The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection. "Improving efficiency and simplifying workflow will allow us to further elevate our distinctive experience and continue to improve operational excellence."

The executive appointments come at an exciting phase of growth for The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection as it expands its fleet with newbuilds *Ilma* and *Luminara*, slated to set sail in 2024 and 2025, respectively.

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### **Press Contact**

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### **About The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection**



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Designed to combine the luxury lifestyle of The Ritz-Carlton® and the casual freedom of a yachting vacation, The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection offers bespoke voyages in the Mediterranean, the Caribbean and Central America. Calling on unique and distinguished destinations alike, most voyages range from seven to ten nights, offering many overnight calls and uniquely curated experiences ashore. The first yacht, *Evrima*, set sail on its maiden voyage in October 2022. Measuring 190-meters in length, *Evrima* features 149 suites, each with its own private terrace, and accommodates up to 298 guests in a relaxed, casually elegant atmosphere. The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection plans to expand its fleet with two newbuild superyachts, *Ilma*, and *Luminara*, slated to set sail in 2024 and 2025, respectively. The specially designed superyachts measure 241-meters in length, feature 224 spacious suites and one of the highest space ratios at sea. As with The Ritz-Carlton on land, our super yachts feature personalized service, elevated dining, and luxury amenities. The super yachts are also available for private charter.

The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection was created in collaboration with Oaktree Capital Management, L.P. For more information, visit [ritzcarltonyachtcollection.com](https://ritzcarltonyachtcollection.com).