

**Innovator**

## JOHN KIDD

CEO and COO, Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group

Starting with the 1962 acquisition of the original Radisson in Minneapolis, the Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group now includes more than 1,440 hotels in operation and under development worldwide under seven brands. In 2016, Beijing-based HNA Tourism Group acquired the Carlson Rezidor portfolio. Carlson Rezidor remains headquartered in Minnesota; hospitality industry veteran John

Kidd became its top executive in 2017.

**You've had a well-traveled life and career. How did you end up in Minnesota?**

My parents were originally from Scotland. I was born in Wellington, New Zealand, and we lived in South Africa, Canada and the United States while [I was] growing up. Most recently, I've been in the Asia Pacific region for

the last 24 years. I was with Hilton Worldwide for 20 years, then joined HNA Hospitality Group at its head office in Beijing. While working in French Polynesia, I was tapped for the CEO and COO position for one of HNA's most recent acquisitions, Carlson Rezidor.

**What's your take on your adopted home state?**

I've fallen in love with Minnesota. One of the reasons why: Minneapolis is so familiar to me. It's so much like New Zealand, particularly Auckland. Like Auckland,

it is surrounded by water, and it has a clear, clean environment and really nice people.

**What are your plans for Carlson Rezidor?**

Carlson Rezidor has an amazing history, and under our new owner we are taking steps to transform our organization to better serve our business now and into the future. Our holistic five-year plan is updating operations and asset management, brands and products, commercial and IT areas, talent and culture. Our vision is to become one of the top three hotel companies in



the world.

**What's distinctive about your newest brand, Radisson Red?**

Originally, it was conceived as a brand for millennials. But that's wrong—because there's a millennial in all

of us. It's more about socializing, the efficiency of the space, the use of technology. We want to offer a strong food and beverage experience and a relaxed, convivial atmosphere. It's trendy, fun, efficient and vibrant. —G. R.