



Valerie Insignares
Senior Vice President, Chief Restaurant Operations Officer

Valerie Insignares was named Chief Restaurant Operations Officer of Darden Restaurants in February 2011. A member of Darden's Operating Team, she leads strategic Operations initiatives across the enterprise with the goal of accelerating profitable sales growth and building an even stronger bench of future Operations leaders. She partners with brand leadership to identify both brand-specific and enterprise-wide Operations priorities that contribute to meaningful sales growth for the company.



Darden is the world's largest full-service restaurant operating company with annual sales of \$7.5 billion. The company owns and operates 1,900 Red Lobster, Olive Garden, LongHorn Steakhouse, The Capital Grille, Bahama Breeze, Seasons 52 and Eddie V's restaurants in North America, employs 180,000 people and serves more than 400 million meals annually. In 2011, Darden became the first full-service restaurant company ever to be named to the FORTUNE "100 Best Companies to Work For" list.

Valerie is noted for translating a competitively superior guest and team member experience into strong financial results. She previously served as Executive Vice President of Operations for Olive Garden since 2004, where she contributed to the brand's industry leading sales performance. In this role, Valerie led seven division senior vice presidents of operations and ensured that a variety of culinary, beverage, service, training and quality assurance initiatives were aligned with Olive Garden's strategies at the restaurant level, all focused on delighting guests with a genuine Italian dining experience.

Valerie joined Darden Restaurants in January 1997 as Director of Food and Smallwares for the commodities purchasing department. In 1998, she was promoted to Vice President of Distribution, where she was instrumental in the creation of a world-class supply management team and the establishment of Darden's Supplier Diversity initiative. Valerie quickly advanced to Vice President of Operations Improvement in 2000, and then to Senior Vice President of Operations for the Dallas division in June 2001. She led that division to its best-ever guest satisfaction performance before being promoted to her current position.

Recognized for her leadership role, Valerie was the recipient of the 2006 Emerging Leader Award by the Women's Foodservice Forum. In 2006, she was named to the list of the 100 Most Influential Hispanics by *Hispanic Business* magazine. Valerie also serves on the boards of the Darden Restaurants, Inc. Foundation and the Darden Employees Federal Credit Union.

Valerie received a bachelor's degree in Finance and a master's degree in Agricultural Economics from the University of Illinois. She earned an executive MBA from the University of Florida.