

TOURISM JOBS: FRENCH RECRUITERS PREFER KNOW-HOW AND DEGREES



In France, which remains the world's most visited country, tourism is doing well. The sector represents 7.4% of the GDP and provides tourism jobs to a million people according to the most recent figures from the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE).

Additionally, despite rising unemployment, this is one of the few sectors where jobs have been created over the past decade. **As the amount of tourism jobs provided by hotels, restaurants, and other travel companies grows, so does the number of specialized schools and universities.**

What types of profiles are sought out by the hotel and tourism associations? Which schools will they turn to when recruiting their future senior executives?

Tourism Jobs for Those with Know-How

All surveyed recruiters agreed that the first skill required by any service industry including tourism is the "know-how". A certain talent, one that can't be described in the lines of a CV. It is all about being able to adapt to unexpected situations, to manage special cases without causing discomfort to the parties involved and to deal tactfully with different cultural habits.

"A good manager is one who has "situational" intelligence," says Loïc Delboulbé, human resources director of the Pierre & Vacances-Center Parcs association.

There is no Master's or MBA specializing in the management of the unexpected with courtesy and in multiple languages. "The men and women in charge of a facility might be "self-made" as well as graduates of the best schools," warns the Director of Human Resources (DHR). Thus, there are multiple channels through which one can take charge of a hotel, a restaurant or a tourist center, and the experience counts a lot.

"Having a degree may act as an accelerator, but it is years of dedicated work that will eventually lead to a management position," says Stéphane Pille, recruitment agency manager for H & R.

Best Schools for Tourism Diploma

Among the paths towards the position of dreams which is recommended by professionals is that of rapid professionalization. The most common way is to do "a tourism BTS, followed by a professional license and completed by a Master's" noted Alain Jacob, head hunter and president of AJ Conseil.

Schools and universities offering Master level courses related to tourism are abundant in France. However, the two institutions whose names are repeated by most recruiters are not French, but Swiss - the Lausanne Hotel School and its neighbor, the Glion Institute of Advanced Studies. The School of Savignac comes next.

Among the schools and French universities that stand out according to the recruiters, is the International Hotel Management Institute (IMHI) of Essec, Students graduating from IMHI are

sought after for various tourism jobs including financial positions, project managers and developers, sales manager, and are put in charge of directing profit management.

Leading Business Schools Are Also Popular

Evry University's Master's in Management, has demonstrated its professional capacity to produce cadres for the hotel and service industries. Unrelated, but still in the tourism sector, students from the Estua Research Centre of Tourism and Culture at the University of Angers showed their skills in various types of management ranging from museums to tourist offices and even equestrian centers. In short, a type of all-terrain training.

Professionalization is also embraced by the University Paris-I-Panthéon-Sorbonne, via the Institute for Research and Tourism Studies, which works in symbiosis with a Tourist Activities and Hotel management CFA (apprentice training center).

Finally, the real estate sector, also traditionally associated with the travel industry and an important creator of tourism jobs, has its reference institutions: the School of Real Estate Professionals included.

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