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An Employees Life Aboard A Cruise Line

I recently traveled on a river cruise sailing down the Rhine Main and Danube with 250 guests. With over 15 ports, numerous land excursion and 4 different countries, it was an experience I will always remember.

I was able to speak with some of the staff who represented various countries: Croatia, Philippines, Russia, Austria, Indonesia and much, much more.

As a young tourism professional entering into the work force, this may be a job to consider. One may experience traveling and getting paid at the same time. It is a great way to start a tourism profession, build your resume along with tourism connections.

One would think the travel opportunities, pay and experience is wonderful, but what is it really like to live onboard a cruise ship? Maritime laws, regulations and a history of powerful traditions, working on a cruise ship has regulations and routines one must follow. Based on your employee status, translates into your social and living environment. Of course, the captain, is the highest ranking officer onboard. Other staff members are Concierge, Program Director, Housekeeping Director, Dining Director and other positions. One thing I found out, is that employees enjoy the structure and organization life on a cruise ship. The life style does take time to get used to. Some of the staff work 15 days straight with 1 day off. Their morning starts at 6am and ends at 11pm. This all depends on what employee level they are hired at. Being employed on a river cruise versus a sea cruise has different experiences. An ocean cruise can experience a myriad of lifestyle differences including weather, larger guests to manage. Storms at sea, high winds and rough waters come with ocean cruises. Needless to say, it can be an exciting and exhilarating way of life and see other parts of the world.

Some countries negotiated as part of their employee package – free roundtrip airfare. I found that to be true with the European countries.

Have you ever stepped into a Tiny House? Well, it is so true, the living conditions for employees can be cramped and be similar to a tiny house. One must be prepared to have a roommate or two. Some high ranking officers have single cabins and married

couples can apply to live together. These circumstances are few and far between. Potential employees must consider the length of time on a cruise ship. Sometimes the work assignment can be 6-10 weeks which depends on the cruise routes. Cruise line employees normally room away from the passenger's cabin. Typically, they are grouped together by department. This creates friendships and tight knit relationships among employees within the same department which helps with team atmosphere bounding. It can be very difficult at times if you are not use to different cultures, living arrangements or your room mates habits. Most employees are able to acclimate and adjust to their living environment.

The work schedule of a cruise employee is another area which requires some adjustment. Most employees are required to perform some duties each day. Your work day may never be the same task. Some days require more work than others and each schedule really depends on your job position. The cruise employees interact with guests, 24 hours a day. Although, the cruise staff may be on their day off, a guest may ask them a question. Employees who want some down time during their hours off would avoid being in public places. It is so difficult to always being "on". Most ships have employee-only dining halls, lounges and bars, to there are venues specifically designed for them. When a ship docks at a port, employees have the time to venture off the ship and enjoy their new surroundings and get away from the feeling of cabin fever. For the most part, cruise ship employees are happy to be employees by a reputable cruise ship which affords them such great benefits, travel and earning potential.

This is a great way to continue your traveling adventures and getting paid.