

SPOTLIGHT ON PARIS ATKINS

GRADUATE OFFICER AT
TOURISM WESTERN AUSTRALIA



For Paris, her career is just taking off. Having just completed a Bachelor of Commerce at Curtin, majoring in Tourism and Hospitality, she's landed a place on Tourism Western Australia's graduate program. We caught up with Paris after the first six months in her 'home area' of Brand and Marketing, working on content development. Now she's kicking off the first of three four-month rotations with the Partnerships team, getting stuck in to some deep-dive statistics on the regions, before heading over to Domestic Markets and, finally, an external rotation. Where it will take her, she doesn't know yet. But she's learning heaps and loving it.

I want to see where this takes me, learn everything I can and grab every opportunity that comes my way.

Did you always plan to work in this industry?

If you'd asked me where I wanted to be in ten years back when I was in year nine, I'd have said marine science! By the end of year 10, I'd made up my mind that I wanted to do marketing. Maths and English were my top subjects, so I studied a Bachelor of Commerce and chose tourism as a fun thing on the side, because I love travel. But I found it so interesting and exciting, it soon became my real focus. I also got to do a couple of core units for my major in Tourism and Hospitality over in Canada.

How would you describe yourself?

I'm a very outgoing, glass-half-full kind of person. I'm not shy about meeting new people and enjoy all the networking, which is really essential in our industry. I love being part of a team, collaborating on projects, bouncing ideas around and learning from others. I'd say I'm creative, but not in an artistic way – I can't draw or paint! But more creative in solving problems, bringing ideas together and pivoting in response to curveballs.

What do you love most about the industry?

I love inspiring people to visit and explore our state and knowing that, when they do, it's going to really benefit and boost local communities. For example, when I was working in the Brand and Marketing division, we were posting pictures from the whale watching tours and seeing all these people comment and get excited about exploring WA, "This looks incredible! I can't wait to come!" It's a great feeling.

What's the best part of your job?

The people are amazing. They've all been so supportive and welcoming. And I'd have to say the experiences too. So far, I've been lucky enough to work at the Caravan and Camping Show, and had site visits at the Ritz Calton, QT and DoubleTree.

What's your best advice for anyone starting out?

If you've got a passion for tourism and hospitality, go for it. But go with the flow, find an entry-level role and get a real feel for it. I worked in the Riverside Rooms at Crown Perth while studying, just serving drinks. That wasn't my passion, but it was a good introduction to the industry and a great way to make connections and build up my customer service skills.

There are so many entry-level opportunities like this that you can get into and get a real understanding of how the sector works before you choose an area of study. Then you can really start learning more and following your passion. And if you're a bit shy, I say fake your confidence until you make it!

And where do you see yourself after finishing your grad post?

I don't have my sights set on a particular role right now. I want to see where this takes me, learn everything I can and grab every opportunity that comes my way.

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