**What is a Tour Guide?**

Tour guides work in the travel industry, giving guided tours to groups of visitors. They are experts on the history of the location and offer their tour groups interesting or enlightening information about points of interest at nature attractions, historic sites, museums, scenic locations, and other travel destinations. Guides may give walking tours, bus tours, or even lead river tours on a boat. Often hired by visitors' bureaus or travel companies, tour guides are typically residents of the region in which they give tours.

## What does a Tour Guide do?

A tour guide's duties depend on their location and employer. If they are self-employed, they will usually give tours of publicly accessible travel destinations like national parks or nature attractions. Those who are employed by a visitor's bureau or corporation offer tours of cities, industrial locations, or other points of interest. The three main areas of specialization within the guiding industry are historical tour guiding, corporate tour guiding, and nature or eco-tour guiding.

Historical tour guides lead groups of visitors to national monuments, historical sites, historical districts, religious or archaeological sites, and museums. These guides are well-versed in the history of the site or monument. They offer visitors an interesting description of the location, including its history and what effect it has had on modern society. In addition, they answer visitor questions and keep the tour organized, efficient, and safe.

Corporate tour guides are employed by large companies that are usually a well-known corporation or travel destination, though non-profit organizations often require guides as well. They lead groups through factories, describing the manufacturing process or history and mission of the business. Theme parks often employ tour guides who lead visitors on tours of a museum within the park that documents the company's history of accomplishments. Guides may also work in zoos, wildlife refuges, safari parks, or animal reserves, enlightening visitors on animal behaviour and the goals of the company.

Nature tour guides lead groups to natural attractions, national parks, and other outdoor locations where wildlife and scenic locations are the focus of the tour. These guides are experts in the natural sciences and have the ability to engage visitors with their knowledge of biology, geology, and the history of the location. An increasingly popular area of the industry is eco-touring. The goal of the eco-tour guide is to lead a small group of individuals to an often protected but scenic natural area while having little or no impact on the environment. Visitors are offered insight on the environmental impact of human actions as guides attempt to foster a general appreciation of the natural habitat

### Tour Guide Responsibilities:

* Greeting and welcoming customers to the tour.
* Informing customers about the itinerary for each tour.
* Planning itineraries in accordance with weather forecasts and the length of each tour.
* Scheduling visits and purchasing tickets to museums, galleries, protected parks, and other attractions ahead of time, if required.
* Planning alternate activities in the event that cancellations, closures, or weather prohibit you from attending scheduled events.
* Gathering and maintaining the requisite equipment for each tour.
* Familiarizing yourself with the layout and history of the region or establishment in which you will be working.
* Familiarizing customers with each region or establishment.
* Encouraging guests to apply sunscreen regularly and to remain hydrated, if applicable.
* Directing customers to other, non-competing services that might be of interest to them.

### Tour Guide Requirements:

* High school diploma or equivalent.
* Prior experience as a Tour Guide is advantageous.
* Capacity to stand and walk for extended periods.
* Adherence to prescribed safety codes.
* Excellent conversational skills with a knack for storytelling.
* Personable, humorous disposition.
* Outstanding organizational, time management, and improvisational skills.
* Passionate about traveling.
* Ability to work during evenings and on weeken