

My career in brief...

Name: Katherine Daines
Industry: Hotels/Restaurants
Company: Kesgrave Hall Ltd
Job title: Bar Manager & Assistant Restaurant Manager



1. Please give a brief overview of your career history – where you started, how you progressed, the companies you have worked for etc

I started working for an outside catering company at the age of 14. Then I started at Milsoms in Dedham on the Essex/Suffolk border as a full time waitress. After 18 months I was promoted to Bar Manager, then moved over to a new hotel property within the group - Milsoms Kesgrave Hall - to set-up and open the new restaurant.

2. Have you always wanted to work within hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism and why? If not, how did you end up where you are now?

As I gained more experience, I realised I enjoyed practical work and working with people, for people and to make a customer's experience great.

3. What sort of qualifications and training have you had and what else would you like to do?

In terms of academic qualifications I've a number of GCSE's, 3 A-levels and I'm currently doing an Open University Bsc in Social Sciences.

More practical training has included NVQ level 3 in restaurant supervision, cellar management and gaining my personal licence. Additionally, I've attended the Wine and Spirit Education Trust Intermediate and Advanced courses.

4. What are the top 5 activities you would typically carry out on a daily basis?

Getting the bar and restaurant ready for service including checking with the Head Chef regarding menu specials. Making sure everything is clean and ready, including checking barrels and programming the till. When times are very busy I'll also help on reception duties by checking in guests.

5. What do you most enjoy about your job?

It's the adrenaline rush of a full busy service when you've prepared everything you can, guests arrive and the service of high quality hospitality is being delivered.

6. What would you say is the biggest challenge you face on a daily basis?

Along with my colleagues, I try to provide very high standards, but unsatisfied customers are the most challenging.

7. What would you say is your biggest achievement to date?

Moving to Milsoms Kesgrave Hall Hotel and planning and opening the bar area of new restaurant.

This historic building has been many things in the past and seeing it redeveloped into a hotel and restaurant was a great experience to be part of.

8. Who has been the greatest influence/role model in your career and why?

My old boss, Judith Curry, is my true inspiration. She opened up an outside catering company and was really successful. She knew everything and showed me a lot, so developed my passion for hospitality from an early age.

9. Where do you see yourself in 5 years time?

I'd like to think that I'd either be in sole management of an establishment or owning a bistro.

10. Do you have a favourite tale or most memorable moment from your career? If so, please tell us about it!

Not a story as such, just the rush and joy of looking back on a full swing service and realising what we've just achieved.

11. What piece of advice would you offer someone who wants to work within our industries?

Expect hard work, but it is equally balanced with a good fun atmosphere and environment; a high level of job satisfaction.

12. What would you say are the essential person characteristics for your job e.g. enthusiastic, team worker, proactive etc?

You've got to be enthusiastic, be a good people person, someone who is not shy, willing to learn a lot and not afraid to ask questions.

Further information

For further information on career opportunities in the hospitality, leisure, travel and tourism industries, please visit www.uksp.co.uk.

