

DCT enriches student education with support from leading industry experts

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Inspiring instructors, hands-on training, real-life simulations and specialised training programmes provide holistic perspectives and industry exposure for students at Dubai College of Tourism

With a commitment to student skills development and enhanced industry exposure via practical learning, the Dubai College of Tourism (DCT), established by Dubai's Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (Dubai Tourism), continues to provide in-depth industry insights and a high calibre of vocational education to students who are keen to pursue a career within Dubai's thriving tourism industry.

DCT's industry focus bridges the gap between hands-on training and a traditional university degree with skills-based, specialised training across five core disciplines – Retail, Tourism, Hospitality, Culinary Arts and Events, contributing towards building a workforce that can deliver world-class tourism and hospitality services. The education includes year-round collaborative initiatives with industry partners, immersive site visits, guest lectures and an active internship programme to help students gain valuable real-world skills and practical applications.

These programmes are led by DCT's experienced and distinguished subject experts, who are committed to empowering students with experiential learning. Their extensive expertise drive active classroom discussions to prepare students for real outcomes in Dubai's ever-changing tourism and hospitality industry.

DCT instructors include Executive Chefs with experience across reputable organisations. Top Chef Cooking Studio serves as the home of DCT's practical culinary experiences where students are trained under the direction of Chef Christian Biesbrouk, who counts more than 26 years of extensive professional experience in the kitchen as the executive chef with leading hotel groups Marriott and Renaissance.

In the hospitality space, students are receiving guidance from Suki Sathish, who has honed her skills by completing 13 years of experience at esteemed hotel groups including The One & Only and Sheraton. The college's other esteemed instructors include; Kylee Haines who has over 20 years in the business events industry; Alexia Doherty, who counts over 16 years of experience with reputable international retailers like Guerlain and Harrods; and Lucy Mousa, who has extensive industry experience in the travel and tourism space in her role as a travel counsellor and sales manager for hotels such as Marriott and Hilton.

Students have also been able to gain first-hand insights with year-round site visits to leading industry establishments and through focused talks and presentations from respected industry players. Key

highlights of the past academic year include visits for Culinary Arts students to Uns Farms to discover sustainable farming, Barakat ME, and the Starbucks training facility, while also taking advantage of DCT's robust partnership with Nestle.

DCT's retail students, meanwhile, received a private tour of the Mall of Emirates from the Mall Director, Hussain Moosa where the students learnt how malls need to be continuously innovating to provide a seamless customer service experience. Students also received a talk from leading brand and retail consultancy agency, Fitch, to understand branding for retail outlets. The college also welcomed Laurant Ricci, an In-Store Excellence Manager from Coty who shared her tips on how to progress their career in the retail sector.

DCT's hospitality students were invited on special guided visits of Burj Al Arab, Bab Al Shams, The One & Only Mirage and Manzil Downtown for insights into hotel operations and guest experiences, while also benefitting from valuable expert commentary at the Hospitality Leadership Forum at Hotel Week. Tourism students got the opportunity to visit Le Meridien Airport Hotel for their Product, Information and Services course and learn about how the hotel sector has evolved with offerings now innovated to cater to diverse global tourists.

Essa Bin Hadher, General Manager of DCT commented: "At the Dubai College of Tourism, we recognise the need to empower aspiring young professionals to stand out among their peers when entering the workplace, and are therefore committed to helping students build resumes with related work experiences and expand their network of industry contacts. We strongly believe in enabling our students with the knowledge and critical thinking skills they need to excel in their chosen fields – and our industry partners play an extremely crucial role in helping us achieve this vision. We are proud to have such a high calibre of instructors on board, particularly as they offer a more grounded perspective on the professional challenges and reality of working in Dubai's thriving tourism and hospitality industries."

To further ensure students are kept abreast of industry developments, trends and scenarios within their chosen fields, through the Dubai Tourism network, DCT students are regularly offered volunteering programmes with citywide events, giving students first-hand experience into the operations and logistics of largescale and successful events being hosted by the city. These skills-enriching experiences provided students with a behind-the-scenes look and professional training opportunities across the city's world-class events, including Dubai Fitness Challenge, the Dubai Food Festival, Arab Fashion Week, Fashion Forward, amongst others.

Chef Christian Biesbrouck, Senior Instructor at DCT's Culinary Programme, said: "I have been a part of the culinary industry for over 25 years, having mentored countless aspiring chefs and culinary professionals across six countries, I can proudly say that the Dubai College of Tourism is preparing its students for the future. Teaching at DCT, I have been able to share my passion for cooking with my students; students who are equally passionate about food and exceptionally eager to learn. In fact, a majority of our time is spent in the kitchen to ensure they develop advanced culinary skills in world-class facilities. By learning, first hand, about the realities of the fast-paced culinary world, we empower them to cook up their own recipe for success."

Kylee Haines, Senior Instructor at DCT's Hospitality Programme, said: "With over 20 years of experience in the business events industry, I have worked very closely with convention bureaus, associations, government bodies, multinational corporations and other industry stakeholders to bid, win, plan and deliver over 300 events across the Middle East – and this is the industry knowledge I most enjoy sharing with my students. Having lived in the UAE since early 2008, I am truly passionate about the business events industry in the Middle East and I am humbled by the opportunity to shape the next generation of event managers in Dubai."

Lucy Mousa, Senior Instructor at DCT's Hospitality Programme, concluded: "During my 16 years of experience in Dubai's hospitality industry, I have seen the city fast emerge into as a thriving global hub for travel and tourism. This rapid development means that we need more and more highly trained hospitality professionals; a gap that the programmes at the Dubai College of Tourism aim to fill. Having worked in diverse departments across leading international hotel chains, I understand employers' needs for a workforce that is not only able to interact with visitors but is also well equipped with the confidence to excel in the industry. Our trainings are therefore designed to help students understand the true essence of Emirati hospitality and ensure customers are provided with high standards of service – particularly as the city looks to set new benchmarks with the opening of the Expo 2020 later this year."

For more information on DCT and the courses, please visit www.dct.ac.ae