

# Staying the course of passion in hospitality

 By [Robin Fredericks](#)

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For Youth Month, we chat to Isabelle Boast, hospitality student at Ecole Hoteliere de Lausanne (EHL) to find out more about the growing hospitality opportunity, participation in the industry and the importance of being challenged as a youth...



Isabelle Boast

Boast joined the school in 2018 and has already had an operational internship in the Victoria-Jungfrau Grand Hotel und Spa in Interlaken as a guest relations intern.

## ■ ***Tell us about yourself - Why did you decide to study a degree in international hospitality management, and why at EHL?***

I was born in South Africa to a Swiss mother and a South African father. I attended the Deutsche Internationale Schule Johannesburg where I finished with a Deutsches Abitur and a South African IEB certificate. After attending a career fair at school in grade 10, I discovered the world of hospitality and I found it very interesting. Mainly for the reason of how broad an education it is because I didn't know what I wanted to become, but also because how interactive the hospitality industry is.

I knew from the beginning that I wanted to do my studies overseas so that's when I began my research in Switzerland and because I have a Swiss passport, it was the first place I looked. When you type in Google: best hospitality management school in Switzerland, the first school on the list is EHL. After clicking on the link and looking at the school, I knew exactly what I wanted to study there. What convinced me about the school was the professionalism and the EHL community and spirit.

Furthermore, the international environment was something that I found very interesting as I love travelling and discovering different cultures. The committees and networking opportunities that exist are what play a big role in the unique EHL experience.

## ■ ***Why is it important to incorporate practical learning skills during one's studies?***

Putting the theory that you learn in class into real life application is crucial for life lessons and personal development. This is one of the reasons that makes EHL graduates so sought after and employable after completing the bachelor programme.

Knowing how operations work is essential to become a good manager. This is important because you can place yourself into your employee's shoes and understand them better.



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### ▀ ***What has it taught you?***

Having practical experience in the industry has shown me how the hospitality industry is both physically and mentally demanding. During practical skill workshops, we always worked in teams which has shown me how important teamwork is to achieve your goals. Furthermore, we have learnt how to deal with customers that are highly demanding.

### ▀ ***What has your internship meant to you? What did you do as an intern?***

Spending six months in Interlaken, Switzerland as a guest relations intern has taught me a lot about different cultures. I have had contact with people from all over the world which was very special and new to me.

As an intern, I was at the concierge desk and assisted in advising guests on daily activities. I was very social and demanding but I enjoyed the contact with the guests.

### ▀ ***Why is it important to have these sorts of internships available?***

It is important for students to see how the industry works and get hands-on experience. Many students at EHL have visited hotels but they have never seen behind the scenes. It is important to understand how the operations work which will help us with our courses at EHL. We have courses like food and beverage cost control and to have a deeper understanding of this course it is essential to know how a restaurant operates.

### ▀ ***Why is it important for youth within the industry to be challenged?***

A challenge creates motivation and drive, that is why it is important. It is important for the youth to discover where their passions lie because it will help you improve yourself and grow. Doing something you are passionate about will give your work more meaning.

### ▀ ***How will this help them in the future? How has it helped you?***

If you follow your passion, you will be intrinsically motivated which gives you the drive to work your way up in the industry. If someone is passionate about what they do, they will perform better at work and therefore they will also improve the guest experience.

I have come to realise over the past two years that I have a real passion for hospitality as I love the social environment and making others happy.

Discovering this passion has helped me work my way up to being accepted at EHL. I worked very hard during the year before coming to EHL in a gastronomic restaurant, which grew my passion for the industry and helped me get accepted to the school that I really wanted to attend.

### ▣ ***Who do you look up to, and why?***

I look up to my mother who has contributed to my passion for hospitality. She is a travel agent, so from a young age, we were travelling, especially within Africa. I am grateful to her for introducing this industry to me at a young age. I look up to her because she left her country (Switzerland) to come to South Africa to follow her passion. It is not easy to leave your home and go to a place like South Africa that is completely different.

### ▣ ***What is the most valuable lesson you've learned from her***

She has shown me that through hard work comes rewards. For her (and us) the reward was to be able to go to places and have experiences that many others have not had. I have learnt from her to follow your heart and to take risks. I have done this by moving to Switzerland on my own, to a place where I did not speak the language. It is because of her that I have also had this opportunity and I will forever be grateful.

### ▣ ***What are your plans for the future?***

To be honest, I do not know what I want to do after graduating EHL. There are so many industries that I can go into after completing my Bachelor degree. One thing that really speaks to me though is being more involved in the promotion of the hospitality industry on the continent of Africa as I see so much potential. I would like to get local communities more involved and promote the potential in Southern Africa.

### ▣ ***What are your thoughts on youth participation in the industry?***

The youth should be more involved in the industry as it is an industry that benefits the world now as well as in the future. The industry provides opportunities to communities which is crucial to help their development.

Furthermore, the youth has grown up in a world where a lot of emphases has been put on going green and sustainability. This has influenced the way they think, which will generate new and innovative ideas to go green.

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Editor at Bizcommunity.

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