

AkadGym Works Abroad student talks about his work placement at 5-star hotel The Randolph in Oxford

The world is a book and those who do not travel read only one page. – St. Augustine



The Concierge Team of The Randolph Hotel with AkadGym Salzburg student Maximilian Nitschke of Class 7a

Indebted to a long standing humanistic educational tradition, the Akademisches Gymnasium Salzburg is widening their already extensive educational offer by yet another facet. Interested students can enrol for the elective module English for Hospitality, which gives them the opportunity to explore the world of tourism. In this module, students can learn the basic hotel reception and restaurant service skills necessary for summer jobs in high-end companies. So, our students can put their extensive general knowledge, their language skills, and their newly-acquired hospitality skills into practice. Working at renowned companies in Salzburg, London, Oxford, and Cambridge, they can gain valuable life experience, a reference for their CVs and, in addition, also earn some extra cash.

This summer Maximilian Nitschke of class 7a was the very first student to go on an AkadGym Works Abroad placement, working at the prestigious 5-star Macdonald Randolph Hotel in Oxford, UK. Read his travel account:

My adventure trip to Oxford started on Monday 22 July 2019 at Munich airport. I was very excited and nervous, because I had never worked at a hotel before and did not know anyone in Oxford. My boss for the summer holidays, Head Concierge William Thomson, met me at Heathrow airport and gave me a lift to The Randolph Hotel in Oxford. He and his team were very friendly, helpful and supportive, and soon my colleagues felt like friends.



The Randolph, a British tradition

The Grade 2 listed Macdonald Randolph Hotel was built in 1865. Among its guests have been Anthony Hopkins, Mikhail Gorbachev, Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton, to name but a few. The Randolph is well-known for its traditional British afternoon tea and the Morse bar, which has been film location for the well-known crime series. If you want to dine at the hotel's own restaurant, the Acanthus, make sure to have a reservation, it is fully booked every day.

Tuesday was my first day of work in the concierge department. I changed into my work uniform: white shirt, black waistcoat, tie, jacket and striped grey trousers, which the hotel provided and cleaned for me. My duty was to deliver or to pick up luggage, show guests to their rooms, explain the rooms to them, answer guests' requests face to face or on the telephone, recommend sights, give directions, and make restaurant or theatre reservations. In all these situations, I could really take

advantage of the sound general knowledge and seven years' English language education I had received at the AkadGym.

The busiest days were Friday, Saturday and Sunday, when occasionally groups of 50 people arrived. Then, the whole concierge team had to work very quickly and accurately, because approximately 70 bags needed to be delivered. Sometimes a VIP stayed at the hotel as well, and everyone needed to give 110 percent. Working in a hotel never gets boring and can sometimes be exhausting, as you have to handle many things simultaneously. Very often it seems quiet, however, from one minute to next, five people need your help at the same time.



Maximilian on his day off in London visiting Tower Bridge

After five days of work, you have two days off. I used my days off to experience Oxford and its surroundings. I did a sightseeing tour of Oxford and its colleges and went to see neighbouring Blenheim Palace in Woodstock, where Winston Churchill was born. On other days, I was just relaxing, enjoyed the city, or went to the cinema with some of my colleagues. One day, I even made a trip to London, which is just one hour away from Oxford by train.

Not only did my work-placement at The Randolph help me to earn some extra cash and incidentally was a non-stop 24/7 intensive language course for free, but it also and foremost gave me the opportunity to meet new people, make new friends, experience the world of work, and gain valuable experience for life. I learned so many things about hospitality, about myself, and what you can achieve with the right attitude. The Randolph has become like a second family to me, and I can proudly say that I have become part of The Randolph family. I really hope that I can come back to this family next summer.

Maximilian Nitschke, 7a,
Dr Christian Lutsch



The Concierge Team of The Randolph Hotel



The Randolph Hotel, a British tradition



Maximilian wearing the Door Man Hat



The Randolph Hotel seen from St Giles



Maximilian on duty at the Concierge Desk