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What is it like to be a Guide?

It sounds like the best job in the world, right? Spending your days outdoors, hiking through stunning scenery, meeting interesting people from around the globe. We have the best guides in the business, and we try to make it all look effortless and fun.

So, is it really the best job in the world? I think so – but it is not for everyone. Like any job, it comes with its own set of stresses and joys. This might give you some insight as to whether these are the right stresses and joys for you.

The days at Evergreen Escapes are long but rewarding. We are typically “on” for 12, 14 hours a day. There are breaks in the action, but guides must calmly work hard all day with an audience, problem-solve on the fly, and have enough energy to keep the group engaged throughout the day. The pace of the day can seem like a magic trick to the guests. As the guide you must keep everyone on schedule and herd your group throughout the day without making it feel rushed or too structured.

It follows that you probably won’t get in a good workout every day. Some groups walk much slower than others but occasionally you’ll get an active group who wants to get in as many miles as possible. You are part of the group, yet apart from the group. It’s their vacation, not yours. This means you can’t always say what you think or can’t always kick back with everyone else because you have tasks to do.

But you will meet some great, fun-loving people who are having an absolute blast. They might surprise you – and themselves – by cutting loose, finishing a climb or putting in a higher number of miles than they expected. Their triumphant smiles are priceless. You will find something to celebrate in each guest. Sometimes this takes no effort, sometimes a ton. And sometimes you will discover a kindred spirit who you will stay in touch with forever.

Sometimes on the second day of back-to-back tours when I feel a little tired, I just think to myself, here we are on a gorgeous day, in the Pacific Northwest, having a great adventure – and this is my office, this is my work – to connect people to nature, to snap photos, and make memories.

At Evergreen, storytelling is the method with which we connect our guests to our region. The story begins with the Escape Artist: How did you end up as a guide for Evergreen Escapes? What makes you passionate about your role with Evergreen Escapes? What is the story of our region? However, the whole adventure is part of the Cascadian story and each component of your tour or program connects to this narrative.

Thanks for checking us out. I hope to continue the conversation and learn what kind of adventures you’re looking for!

Tour Guide Job Description

Although it is preferred, you do **not** need to have all of these skills or qualifications in order to apply. If there are any missing, we expect that you will be eager to bridge the gap if you are hired.

Position

Naturalist Hiking Tour Guide in Seattle, WA, with Evergreen Escapes for small, luxury nature adventures and urban tours in the Pacific Northwest region.

General Info

The Evergreen Escapes guides lead small group, public and private, nature day tours that depart from Seattle, WA. Evergreen Escapes seeks guides for the 2023 peak season with the possibility of long-term positions for the right candidate(s). We operate tours year-round; tour volume is highest May through October, during which time we need Full Time Hourly, Part Time Hourly, and On-Call Hourly guides to join our existing veteran staff.

Skills and Qualifications

Required

1. An innate love of the outdoors and sharing experiences with fellow travelers
2. Resident of greater Seattle or willingness to relocate (a must).
2. Experience in environmental, outdoor, and/or adventure education (semi-confident naturalists required).
3. Demonstrated knowledge of and passion for ecology, natural history, and environmental systems
4. Responsible, independent, creative-thinking, self-starting, charismatic individual.
3. Clean driving record and ability to pass a DOT medical exam.
5. Comfortable driving 15-passenger vans in all conditions (city streets under heavy traffic through winter mountain roads requiring chains to be installed/removed).
7. Within first two weeks of hire, must have completed CPR and 1st Aid (WFR is preferred), DOT medical examiner's certificate (minor physical), In-House Driver training, and WA Food Handlers permit
8. Ability to lift 40 lbs/18 kg.
9. Pass a Washington State Patrol background check.
10. Exemplary customer service with guests, fellow guides, and other tour partners
11. Passionate about the outdoors
12. Prioritizes safety

Desired – Not Required

1. 4-year degree or higher
2. Experience in Leadership development, team building, and/or group facilitation
3. Minimum 1 year or experience as an educator and/or interpretive guide
4. Knowledge of naturalist specialties which may include anthropology, birding, botany, geology, glaciology, or volcanology.
5. Pertinent adventure certifications, including: WFR, Leave No Trace, and/or avalanche Level 1.
6. Multilingual.
7. Innate desire to be a more kind, more curious, and more-frequently outdoors human being.



Duties/Responsibilities

Pre-Trip

- Before your trip you are responsible for looking up weather conditions, traffic alerts and possible road closures, checking your manifest and getting familiar with guest's names and any relevant medical information. With this information you'll come up with your itinerary for the day.

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- You will pick up the vehicle and equipment from our warehouse. Most gear will be packed, and you'll have to load the vehicle with your drink cooler, food cooler, lunch kit, breakfast kit, extra clothing, sunscreen, etc
- Pick up all guests from their downtown hotels at a predetermined location and time
- You will fulfill your itinerary for the day providing interpretation and sharing your knowledge of the flora, fauna, and park history, and stop for a picnic lunch along the way
- You will then bring your group back to their hotel or car and drive back to the hub.

Post Trip

- After the trip you will head to the office and fill up the tank on the way.
- Once at the hub you will unload the van, load the dishwasher and washing machine, and clear out any trash in the van.
- Your final task is to fill out some administrative paperwork for your tour and then clock out!

Expectations throughout the day

- Promotes safety on all aspects of the tour
- Facilitates a worry-free experience for guests
- The ability to provide 5-star guest service for individuals from various backgrounds, beliefs, and cultures
- Maintain high energy levels throughout a 12–14-hour work day
- Responsive to and anticipates guests' needs, strives to exceed expectations
- Completes tour administration tasks in a timely manner
- Drives smoothly and incredibly safely

This position is flexible and requires a unique knowledge of the National Parks and Outdoor areas you are working in. We give guides a lot of autonomy to alter the itinerary based on client interests and ability level as we may not know these beforehand!



Compensation & Expenses

Let's be honest – guiding is not a way to get rich quick. But it is a great way to get paid for doing something you love.

Your first season is a chance for us to evaluate you – and for you to evaluate us. There's no better way to decide if a job is right for you than to dive in and try it.

The details

Hourly Rate with opportunities for advancement and raises as a first-year guide. You can expect to make about approximately \$2000 - \$4000/month with tips during busy season, depending on time commitment. All guides are paid hourly – this is just an average based on a 13-hour day. Guides are allowed to accept gratuities on tour.

Higher starting rates apply to those with appropriate certifications and experience. Bonuses for leading many of our trips, customer gratuities, corporate gratuities, and potential reimbursements for trainings completed while on staff (i.e. WFR recertification, etc).

Regarding expenses, guides are given a Credit Card at the beginning of each day to cover park entry fees, ferry fees and gas refuel at the end of the tour. When traveling out of the Seattle area for work, Evergreen Escapes will cover your room & board. In order to manage costs, guides do not always stay in the same lodging as guests.

Schedule

Full time guides lead 3 trips per week and part time guides can be very flexible from 2 trips a week to 1-2 a month.

Veteran Guides get first pick of their schedule based on seniority. First year guides will fill in the tours that are left.

We expect guides to commit during the entire busy season and not take any extended vacations from May-October

Hiring & Training

If we are interested in your resume, you will be contacted by one of our staff for an in person or phone interview.

Before you are offered the position, you'll be invited to shadow a tour as a guest – no driving or other responsibilities. One of the best ways to learn the style and procedures of our programs (and the specifics of any itinerary) is to get out and join a trip as a guest. This is unpaid but gives us both an opportunity to see if this is the right fit. Exceptions have been made in the past in the case that you are from out of state and unable to shadow a tour.

If offered the position, new guides are expected to attend training in April and typically shadow 3-4 more tours before leading their own tour.

On your first working tour, you will be paired with a senior guide who will give you feedback on how you're doing and help find areas for improvement. You will not be asked to Head Guide until Evergreen Escapes and you are comfortable doing so.



How to Apply:

Please review the requirements and expectations above. You will want to reflect on the job description and address why you think this job is a good fit for you. Send your resume and a cover letter to: Kenzi@evergreenescapes.com

A few more good things to know:

1. Car: We *highly* recommend that people have their own motor vehicle. Due to the early mornings and late returns, we think it works best for applicants to have a car once they become employees.
2. A basic background check & driving record check will be performed.
3. Age: In order for us to ensure our guides, it is best if you are 23 years old. Occasionally we make an exception, but it constitutes a unique scenario.
4. Experience working with children and families in an outdoor environment a plus.

*Thanks for your interest.
We look forward to meeting you!*