



For more information, check out montanagroup.co.nz

Montana Group, a Waikato-based specialist caterer and events management business, is the largest privately-owned catering business in Aotearoa.

The business is well known throughout the upper North Island for...

- Real cooking, with contemporary, great taste
- A focus on retail operations as a key part of the business
- Value and quality at the centre of delivery
- Strong leadership and training across all levels of service

Key to the success of this iconic and successful business is a crew of passionate, hard-working front-of-house staff who serve customers face-to-face, while focusing on the quality delivery synonymous with Montana.

BECOMING A FRONT OF HOUSE MEMBER



Type of person

- Outgoing and not shy
- Able to make conversation
- Have a positive attitude
- Have great personal skills – be a people person
- Team players

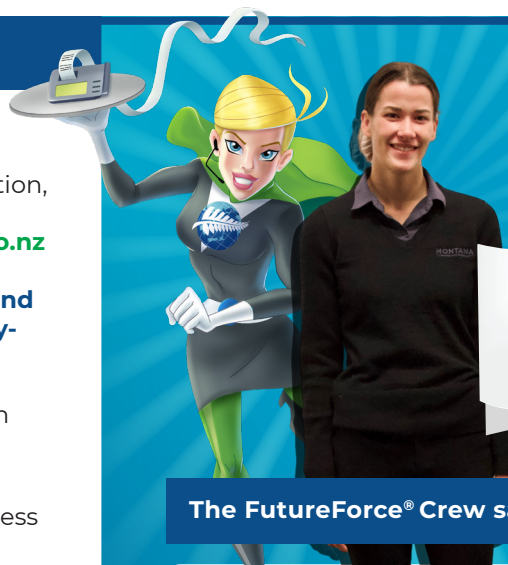


Useful School Subjects

- Tourism and/or Hospitality
- Food Technology
- English

To find out more about this sector, profiles of young people like you in the industry, and career tools and tips...

scan here →



RENEE CROSS
FRONT OF HOUSE TEAM LEADER



The FutureForce® Crew sat down with Renee to chat about her role...

– SO, WHAT IS YOUR JOB?

We are the front of house so we're the ones who serve at events. We do all sorts from buffets to plated meals and canapes to bars.

– HOW DID YOU GET STARTED HERE?

I had a bit of a passion for hospitality and tourism, so I studied tourism at NZST in Hamilton when I left school. It just went from there. When I finished my studies, I wanted to gain as much hospitality experience as I could, so I went around to different hotels and places until Montana gave me an interview. I've been loving it ever since!

– WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNT ON THE JOB?

Montana is the loveliest company I've ever worked for! They take care of us. We have our staff parties and try and get together as much as we can and make sure that everyone's okay. We have weekly meetings to make sure our events are going to go okay, and meetings to make sure the staff is going okay. They really care. I love all the different venues I get to work across! From Claudelands Event Centre to the stadium to the University... we work all over.



TOP CAREER TIP

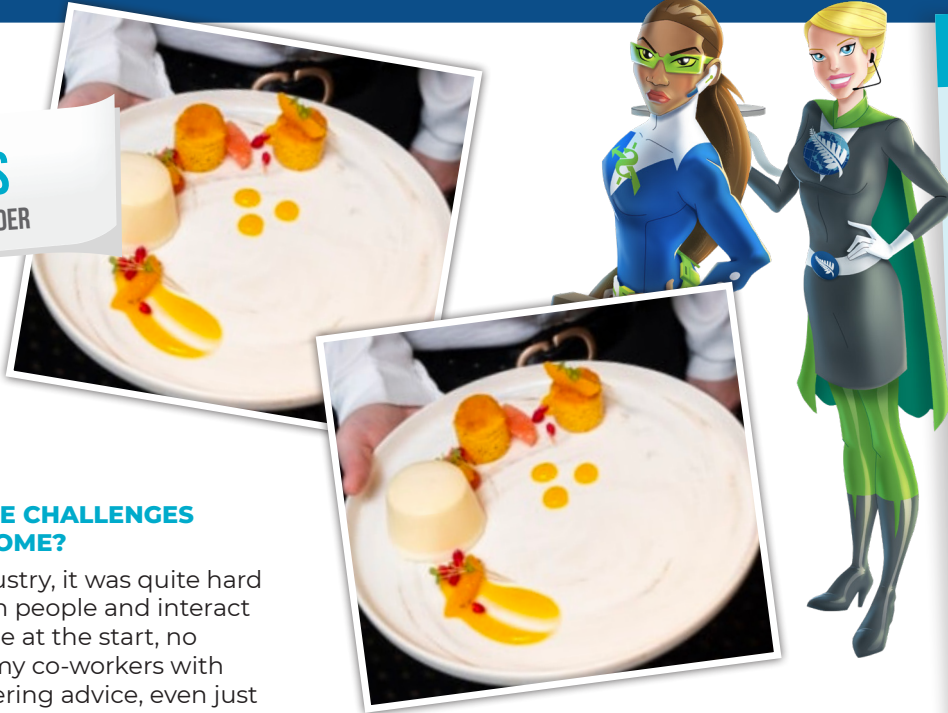
MAKE SURE HAVE SOMETHING LINED UP BEFORE YOU LEAVE SCHOOL, SO YOU DON'T FEEL STUCK. SO LONG AS YOU ARE DOING SOMETHING, YOU WILL BE OKAY.

– WHAT ARE SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF YOUR JOB?

- A definite highlight is the people I work with. They are amazing, funny and really good workers – you just have a good time with them. You know that you can do your job well and still have a bit of fun with them afterwards.
- I also really like meeting new people, so it's all about the people for me. They show a lot of appreciation too which is nice to hear. You're working hard and when you get a nice "thank you so much!" it is lovely to have that appreciation.
- We have companies that work with us quite regularly so you'll see the same people often and we can make connections with them.

RENEE CROSS
FRONT OF HOUSE TEAM LEADER

MONTANA
FOOD AND EVENTS



- WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CHALLENGES YOU'VE HAD TO OVERCOME?

Before coming into this industry, it was quite hard for me to communicate with people and interact with them. It was a challenge at the start, no doubt about it. But having my co-workers with me, helping me out and offering advice, even just little things you can say to break to the ice, it really helped! My people skills have really improved and what was a challenge for me before is really a highlight for me now.

- WHAT'S YOUR ADVICE FOR STARTING OUT IN THIS INDUSTRY?

I mean I could tell you how to polish silverware! There's lots of little tricks and tips you pick up when you're on the job. My advice would just be to watch what others are doing around you. Get to know your co-workers fast because they're the ones who will help you learn.

We definitely do things "the Montana way" so get to know your co-workers, watch how they do things, and you'll pick it up quickly. We also need to keep events running smoothly so having some initiative is key.

- WHAT'S YOUR ADVICE FOR SOMEONE THINKING ABOUT THEIR CAREER?

It is good to study but it's not the only option. You don't always need qualifications to start working. You won't be starting at the top so don't expect that, but you will learn so much on the job and they'll help you build your way up and get to a higher place in the future.

Montana has helped me get my Duty Management License for the bar... I could even go for my forklift license! It's good to study and have a bit of grounding but you can really get stuck in straight away. If school's not working out for you, have a think about your options. You will be able to work your way up and get higher in a company if you have the right attitude.

A DAY ON THE JOB

It really changes because we're not in the same spot all the time!

When we're running an event, we...

- Arrive early for set up.
- Have a health and safety meeting before the event begins to make sure we're all on the same page and everyone knows what they need to be aware of for the event.
- Get into our job lines just before guests arrive. This could be serving drinks, running the buffet, working the bar... it depends on the size of the event. We all get job descriptions for the event.
- Get out on the floor! We're always out on the floor talking to guests, serving food and drink, and making sure everyone is safe and having a good time!"



Qualifications could include:

- Licence Controller Qualification (LCQ)
- Duty Managers License
- ServiceIQ papers in;
 - Health and Safety
 - Food safety
 - Bars
- Forklift License
- New Zealand Certificate in Food & Beverage Level 4
- New Zealand Certificate in Hospitality & Event Management Level 5