

# Crew lured by the ocean blue



**Hard work:** Crew member Katie Jackson and Crew Book director Kate Crulci at Rushcutters Bay

It's not just oil tycoons and celebrities who get the chance to cruise between tropical paradises via super yacht.

A growing number of young Aussies are hitching a ride on these incredible vessels in exchange for a bit of elbow grease.

It almost seems too good to be true.

A quick search on aussiecrew.com turned up a job ad for a cook/stewardess to work on an Egyptian luxury cruise vessel which tours the Mediterranean.

"Crew are required to have an interest in all vessel operations including diving, skiing and kite boarding," it stated.

Other posts offer positions on yachts embarking on world tours, and Pacific Island stints for those who want to be closer to home.

But director of crew recruitment company Crew Book, Kate Crulci, said there is more to the job than pouring champagne for passengers.

She said aside from the obvious traits such as being immune to homesickness as well as seasickness, potential applicants needed to be prepared to put in the hard yards.

"The number one personality trait is certainly hard work," she said, adding that Aussie crew were sought after around the world because of their good work ethics.

"Australians are very highly recognised for that reason in the industry and highly valued, by virtue of the fact that we're quite easygoing and very hard-working," she said.

Ms Crulci added that keen sailors needed qualifications to be considered by most charter companies.

"It's called an STCW95 and that's a safety certificate which incorporates fire fighting, first aid, and general safety on a vessel," she said.

"It's a five-day course and it costs around \$1200 to \$1700."

Despite a recent lull in demand for crew in some countries due to the ailing global economy, Ms Crulci said there could soon be a crew shortage.

"There's somewhere around the vicinity of 27 nautical miles of yachts being built around the world, and that means a lot of new crew will be required," she said.

"But there are certainly jobs out there for people who really do have those personality traits and are pas-

sionate about the sea and travelling."

Katie Jackson recently returned from a working stint in the Whitsundays on a luxury sailing boat.

"The boat I was working on had a world cruising itinerary," she said.

"They've been everywhere and their plan now is to head down the Australian east coast before going up to Japan and Alaska then to the Caribbean next winter."

Ms Jackson, 29, said the long hours and demanding work was worth it for people who were passionate about the water, or those who enjoyed working for tips.

"You get to travel and there's scope to earn a lot of money," she said.

"You've got no outgoings and a lot of the boats provide health insurance and flights home.

"There are also a lot of high-profile guests who come on, which some people find exciting."

But the potential to earn big tips, she said, was the biggest drawcard.

"I've heard stories of 10-day charters where 30,000 euros was given to each crew member."

— ELLE HALLIWELL



**Rewarding:** Pet ambulance vet Nicole McKenzie George

## Paws for applause for the pet ambos

**Name:** Nicole McKenzie George

**Age:** 24

**Official position and company/employer:** Co-owner of PetMedics

**You've worked in the industry for how long?** Almost 11 years. I began as an assistant to a pet groomer at 14.

Two years later, I moved into nursing at the vet clinic next door.

Since then, I've worked in small-animal practices and emergency hospitals.

**What interested you?** I grew up with dogs and cats, and spent my summers on my grandparents' farm looking after a variety of animals.

I've always been interested... and when the opportunity arose to work for a vet, I jumped at the chance.

**Your job entails?** We're on call with the ambulance 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and no day is the same.

We get a wide variety of calls to attend to ill or injured pets.

On arrival, we provide first aid to ensure the pet is stable for transport.

We then take it to a vet hospital. There, we report the history and supportive care provided, and any observations.

We also transport pets in critical condition from hospitals to after-hours facilities for overnight monitoring.

**Your big break?**

As uni students, the biggest hurdle in starting PetMedics was lack of funding.

Luckily, we came across the Micro Enterprise program offered by the Enterprise Network for Young Australians, which gave us the chance to present our business plan to a bank and seek a loan for start-up capital.

Getting the loan was a huge accomplishment,



letting us to take the first steps to make PetMedics a reality.

**Does the job require particular skills or qualifications?** I am qualified as a US licensed veterinary technician. This required four years' on-the-job training, done at St John's Veterinary Clinic in Portland, Oregon, followed by a national board exam.

**Why is it important to have a pet ambulance service in Sydney?** Our service plays a crucial role in raising standards of health care for Sydney pets.

Not only do we provide pet transport when owners are unable to, but we provide critical care that makes a huge difference to pets' comfort, stress levels and chances of survival.

**Pros and cons?** Pros: It's such a rewarding job! Knowing we've made a difference to a pet's well-being and a client's peace of mind is fantastic.

Cons: We see very sad cases, but it helps to know we've provided comfort to both the patient and client.

**Most memorable moment so far?** Our first call-out came almost three weeks after we launched the service. We were so excited when the phone rang! That was definitely one of our proudest moments.

Since then, we have provided emergency or critical care transport to more than 300 patients.

— ELIAS JAHSHAN