

# KURTIS MCGLENNON

SKIPPER,  
LIVE NINGALOO

“This is my third season here and it still doesn’t feel like work - it still feels like I am living in a David Attenborough documentary.”



KURTIS DIDN'T KNOW WHAT HE WANTED TO DO WHEN HE LEFT SCHOOL IN ADELAIDE. NOW HE RECKONS HE'S FOUND THE BEST JOB IN THE WORLD - TAKING PEOPLE INTO THE UNSPOILT BEAUTY OF NINGALOO REEF (NYINGGULU) AND SHOWING THEM WHY THE MARINE WONDERLAND NEED TO BE PROTECTED.

## HOW DID YOU GET INTO YOUR JOB?

I went to a trade school and thought I cannot do this for the rest of my life. I jumped in my car and went up to Port Douglas. I'd go to the marina every morning and afternoon and ask "hello, got any jobs going?" After four days, I got my first deckie (deckhand) role.

I started working on a diving boat and got my tickets and diving qualifications. I worked five days a week on the dive boat and worked on my days off on a sailboat. I totally immersed myself in it. After seeing people drive boats, that's where I wanted to be.

My name was put forward to come to WA. I worked in the Arolhos and then up to the Kimberley during the dry season. Then the tour guiding started to get incorporated into my role. I acquired my Master 5 ticket and Live Ningaloo gave me a massive opportunity to get behind the wheel and start driving boats.

## WHAT'S THE BEST PART OF YOUR JOB?

It's the smiles in the morning when you get all the crew together because we are like family here. And I enjoy meeting people; you get to interact with people from all walks of life. I've learned a lot of cool life lessons from them.

The wildlife is second to none out here. I don't know if I'll ever work in another place that would offer as much biodiversity as the Ningaloo Reef. You never know what you're going to see when you set off. It could be anything from a blue whale to a massive school of fish inside the lagoon. We're privileged enough to see them for a brief moment and they continue on, unaffected by humans.

## WHAT'S YOUR ADVICE FOR ANYONE CONSIDERING A CAREER IN TOURISM OR HOSPITALITY?

I went old school - face-to-face persistence with a smile. There's now plenty of pages on Facebook where you can find crew opportunities. There are also websites. But for me, I like face-to-face contact. And if you want to get into marine tourism, you are going to have to do your marine tickets.

It's about attitude and being able to be knocked back and take what you've learned from the day before and do it better the next day. This is exactly the type of career where if I had seen it in high school, I might have saved a few years, but at least I get to sit here today. It's absolutely awesome.

## STEPPING STONES

