

# DR CAM O'BEIRNE

OWNER AND OPERATOR,  
MARGARET RIVER ADVENTURE CO.

**“Do something you love and you’ll never work another day. Life is too short to be stuck doing something you don’t like.”**



THIS SELF-CONFESSED 'OCEAN BOY' LOVES LIFE ON THE WILD SIDE. CAM HOLDS SEVERAL DEGREES AND RAN A WINE MARKETING COMPANY BEFORE JOINING HELICOPTER RESCUE. NOW HE SHARES MARINE THRILLS WITH OTHERS, WHETHER COASTEERING - CLIMBING UP ROCKS AND JUMPING INTO THE SEA - OR INTRODUCING THEM TO GIANT STINGRAYS.

## HOW DID YOU GET INTO YOUR JOB?

I did phys ed at university but I didn't want to be a phys ed teacher. I did my master's degree in sports science and worked in government policy for sport and recreation, at ministerial level. When we moved down to Margaret River, I started a wine marketing company while doing a PhD in e-commerce.

This was just as the rise of the internet was happening. I used the skills I learned in my PhD to help wineries sell wine using e-commerce. That was exciting in the first few years. And then I felt restless.

I became a helicopter rescue crewman - a very different left-field turn! I did all the training and patrolled the coast in Margaret River and Busselton for five years. I thought I'd get a bit too old to jump out of helicopters, so I decided to jump off rocks and show other people how to do that instead.

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

Working in adventure tourism one of the best experiences is to see people who may be scared or anxious doing something they thought they could never do. I've had people shaking putting a wet suit, helmet and life jacket on, and I've got to hold their hand and coax them into the water. By the end of it they don't want to leave.

We try to get people to reframe how they think about their lives. And for some people it's a cathartic moment. They think they're coming to jump off rocks, and they go home with a new perspective on life.

I love being outside. I think a lot of people these days are questioning the value of a 40-hour work week. COVID has really made people reassess their life values. And there's a lot of opportunity for people in tourism to work smart, not hard.

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

You have to be able to converse with a wide range of people. If you're working in the adventure area, you've got to be on the ball and be really engaged with your clients on a minute-to-minute basis, especially in some of the environments we take people into.

I would suggest they try working outside and see if they're resilient enough. It doesn't have to be tourism; it might be gardening or doing vineyard work - just get outside and be in the elements. And stop doom scrolling through your feed. Go and live your feed.

## STEPPING STONES

