

YOUR FAMILY AT SEA ... *the Story Behind the Smiles*



Talented, dedicated employees are the key to exceptional service. Here's why the Holland America staff are so outstanding at establishing that special "family" feeling on board.

On the urban island of Java, Indonesia, a strange phenomenon occurs every eight weeks in a downtown Jakarta office building.

Forty uniformed adults don life preservers in response to an alarm, and then conduct an entire boat drill — in English — with no water in sight.

Why? These are successful candidates for another generation of Holland America dining-room personnel, undergoing extensive practical training on every aspect of ship-board life.

To join Holland America's fabled Indonesian and Filipino staff, candidates first submit their résumés to local employment agencies: one in Jakarta and one in Manila, in the heart of the Philippines. The agencies then forward the top résumés for Holland America's review.

Successful candidates have good educations, plus training in the resort, hotel or food service industries. Most are already well versed in English. Some have earned university degrees — and many have extensive experience working in hotels at home or abroad.



"Rudy is what Holland America is all about!"

— FIRST-PLACE WINNER,
PHOTOGRAPHER'S SHOWCASE:
B.N. Nuyen, of North Vancouver, B.C. —
with her father and Rudy.

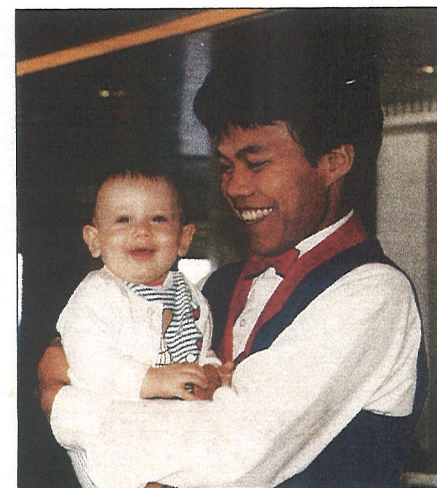
However, education and experience alone are not enough to explain the unique quality of service provided by Holland America staff members. What is the source of their special personal touch?

Cultures that put people first.

The remarkable empathy and personal charm of the Indonesians and Filipinos can be traced to their home cultures, which encourage sensitivity to others almost from birth.

Family life is the heart of both Indonesian and Filipino cultures. Since "family" most often includes both the nuclear family and the extended family, skills that promote getting along with people of all different ages, personalities and backgrounds are cultivated from an early age. Showing concern for other people is reinforced as valuable social behavior.

A closer look at each culture helps



"Murray and the staff not only helped us with the logistics of taking care of a baby, but were delighted with him."

—HONORABLE MENTION,
PHOTOGRAPHER'S SHOWCASE:
Paul and Nancy Krawitz, of Reading,
Pennsylvania — and their infant son, Brian!



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See you aboard!

explain the special characteristics so valued in Holland America employees.

Throughout the Republic of Indonesia, even though there are more than 300 distinct ethnic groups, the people are all known for their friendly, generous, "sunny" temperaments.

Indonesians earned this reputation through their eagerness to take care of visitors, welcome them to the extended family, and look out for their well-being. Visitors have also noted their surprising patience and exceptional skill with handicrafts. (Holland America Alumni will recognize these characteristics without visiting Indonesia!)

Traditionally, the people of Indonesia have encouraged closeness and the open expression of emotion. Conversational skills are prized, and a good conversation is enjoyed for its own sake. Family and group gatherings are generally informal and open to all ... to be "single" or alone at any age is essentially unheard of.

The bonds between generations are strong — built on respect, cooperation, and a well-developed sense of personal responsibility. Care for children, the elderly and the handicapped is seen as a family, not a state, concern. In fact, children are respected as small people with judgment and rights, and the old are revered for their wisdom.

In the Philippines, too, the extended family is the central unit of social life. Social skills that enhance getting along with others are the most valued.

Amor proprio, or self-esteem, is considered a primary virtue — and being insensitive to the *amor proprio* of others (*walang hiya* or “having no shame” in Pilipino) is a most serious accusation.

With their extraordinary empathy for others thus rooted in their home cultures, Indonesians and Filipinos are able to bring an extra graciousness to shipboard service — as well as contributing to the harmonious functioning of the tightly knit shipboard society.

Respect and personal attention create a home at sea.

Cultivating staff loyalty is a high priority at Holland America Line, because it means that many of the same staff members are back year after year — to the delight of guests who look forward to seeing them on their next cruise.



Susilo with Leah Billington
—Robin Billington, Roswell, New Mexico

In part, loyalty is earned by respecting cultural diversity.

There’s a mosque aboard each ship, and religious holidays are honored. Everyone, regardless of nationality, participates in special celebrations such as Indonesia’s Independence Day, August 17th.

Special ethnic meals are prepared for staff by skilled chefs of each nationality, using imported ingredients — special spices, rice and vegetables — to re-create the cuisine at home, where meat is not a regular staple.

Loyalty is also inspired by the large amount of personal attention staff members receive. Aboard each ship, personnel managers regularly conduct face-to-face interviews to learn each individual’s needs. They make special travel and vacation arrangements as required, and help out with family problems and other needs.

This blend of respect and personal attention creates a “home at sea” atmosphere that keeps staff coming back, year after year. In fact, many staff members encourage their relatives to come aboard, too. Sometimes when a father retires to return home and



Gede Surawan with the Marzes
—Lucy and Albert Marz, Phoenix, Arizona

manage the family business, his son will even come aboard in his stead, establishing a true family tradition.

Careers, not just jobs, aboard “The World’s Best” fleet.

Life at sea can be particularly demanding. But for the ambitious, the rewards and opportunities are there: bonuses, service awards, promotions, even free cruises for the wives and children of staff who reach the level of Petty Officer.

Careers of 30 and 40 years are relatively common at Holland America Line; everyone starts at the bottom and works his way up the ranks to the top positions. So, for example, a dishwasher with ambition and promise can potentially become a head chef or maître d’.

A successful career with Holland America can also lead to improved employment opportunities back home — such as beginning new business ventures with money saved at sea. One man from the Philippines, retiring after 15 years with Holland America, is now even running for mayor of his hometown.

New friendships and high praises.

The sailing life also offers constant opportunities to meet many different people and form new friendships. Staff members sometimes keep in touch with passengers who’ve become friends, sending Christmas and birthday cards or announcing their children’s christenings.

And finally, there’s the satisfaction of hearing happy guests offer their enthusiastic thanks for a job well done! (See below.)

OUR ALUMNI WRITE ...

“We were treated as if we were the most important passengers on the ship ...”

That’s the feedback we’ve received from the hundreds of Holland America Alumni who entered our recent Employee Photo Contest.

Thank you for your many thoughtful and interesting entries! Below is a sampling of what you had to say ...

“While aboard the Rotterdam in 1989, we were treated like royalty — and then when boarding the Noordam in 1990 we were greeted by name one year later!”

— Laura Osmanski
Long Branch, New Jersey

“On September 9th, 1990, my husband was called to active duty with the U.S. Naval Reserves. He was stationed in Saudi Arabia as part of Operation Desert Shield. Our Caribbean Cruise was scheduled for April 20 – 27. By a miracle from God above, his unit returned home on April 17. Having only three days to unpack 7½ months of military life and repack for a civilian vacation left our nerves very frazzled. As soon as our



Agung, the Williams’ hero
—Coralie Williams, Johnstown, Pennsylvania

waiter, Agung, found out what we had just been through, he took extra special care of us. At dinner the first evening, he went out of his way to make it as relaxing as he possibly could. His captivating smile and reassuring personality ... helped make this ‘welcome home cruise’ one that we will treasure forever.”

— Coralie Williams
Johnstown, Pennsylvania

“Newlyweds of four days, we arrived on board totally wrung out from the tension and excitement of planning and surviving a big wedding ... We had barely set foot in our cabin when Johnnie arrived, greeting us like old friends even before we had a chance to introduce

ourselves. His friendliness and sense of humor put us totally at ease. He then proceeded to spoil us rotten by catering to our every need ...”

— Susan Spalding Boranian
Sacramento, California

“My mother is very frail and doesn’t eat much. We are always ‘coaxing’ her to eat — but usually to no avail! Acep took it as a personal challenge to get Mom to eat. He tempted her with many choices from the menu. He coaxed, cajoled and teased Mom. She ate more than she ever does at home, to please him — because he paid so much attention to her. She had so much more energy, stayed up later at night — and got a new lease on



Nandang Adam, origami master
—Holly Mattison, North Vancouver, B.C.

life that carried her through the winter. Acep made this cruise special for all of us ...”

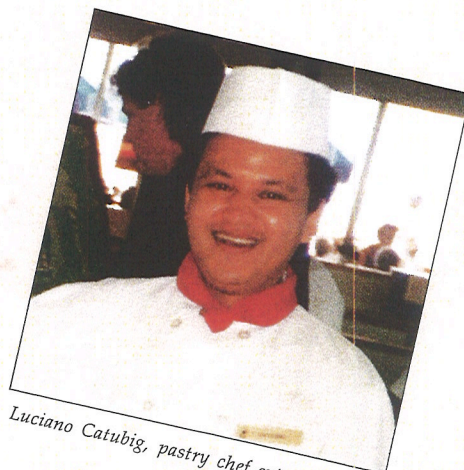
— Jacqueline Vogelmann
Livingston, New Jersey

“The thing that I remember the most was our dinner waiter, Namsen. He lightened our evenings up. He took care of our every need. By the end of the cruise he knew what we wanted for dinner. He acted as one of our family. He laughed at my dad’s bad jokes and acted as if he really got them. We couldn’t have gotten it any better.”

— Mary Davidson (age 12)
Folsom, California

“Thank you!”

All of you asked us to convey your thanks to your favorite staff people ... for their gifts of handmade cards, painted hats, origami animals ... advice on special family remedies when you were feeling under the weather ... and just for the outstanding charm that makes the Holland America Indonesian and Filipino staff “The World’s Best.”



Luciano Catubig, pastry chef extraordinaire
—Mildred Oberg, Lake Wales, Florida