

Tour Director and Event Planner

Name: **Maricar R. Donato, MTA**

Profession: **Tour Director and Event Planner**

Number of years in this line of work: **25**

Native Language: **Filipino**

Other Language(s): **English, Spanish, French, Italian, German**

1) What languages do you know? How did you learn them? (At home, At school, etc.)
Spanish- since birth, Mom spoke it at home in Manila; English- in private school in Manila and Institut Catholic; Italian- Casa Italiana in Washington, D.C.; German- Goethe Institute in Manila

2) What is your profession?

I am a Tour Director and Event Planner.

3) Describe a "typical" day as a Tour Director and Event Planner. How do you manage them?

I manage and direct tour groups in French, Spanish, Italian and German. Many of the times I guide them for the DC component of their journey or I direct and manage the travel arrangements for them. This requires a lot of preparation and details to be on the lookout for. I also guide school groups from the United States. As an event planner I plan conventions with foreign languages and or for their spouses.

4) What do you enjoy about it?

I like the dynamism of the work. It brings me plenty of new energy. I also like to see the work pass it on to the next wave of tours that come my way.

5) What language do you think in?

When I am with the French, I think in French or with the Italians in Italian, but then when I work online in English, but when I dream, it is non verbal and plenty of imagination.

6) What do you think helped you the most in mastering the foreign/second language?

Practice, Practice, Practice...there is nothing like practice to master a skill.

7) What opportunities have knowing another language provided in your career and otherwise?

It has been truly a growing experience and has advanced me forward. It has opened doors. Knowing another language has helped me design other tour programs in the language which highlights the Spanish heritage and influence in DC and "The French Connect" program. These are the influences.

8) If you had the time to learn another language now, what language would you choose?

Mandarin.. I plan to work in Beijing for the 2008 Olympic Games.

9) How do you think your life would have turned out if you had never learned a second language?

I would have had limited opportunities, that's for sure.

10) In your opinion, are there more career opportunities for people who speak multiple languages?

Without a doubt.

11) What do you think you would be doing if you weren't a Tour Director and Event Planner?

I'd be working in an office doing boring administrative work.

12) What advice would you give to somebody who wants to be a Tour Director and Event Planner? Which specific languages they should learn?

They should take training courses which I provide. I teach tour guides how to sit for the exam and techniques for being a good guide. The languages to learn would be Spanish, French and Italian.

13) Anything else you'd like to add?

I am conducting ongoing training classes in how to be a licensed professional DC Tour Director. I do tours for school groups in DC. [Visit my website: http://www.washtour.com](http://www.washtour.com)