



VALÉRIA HERNANDEZ MEJIA Y ARESTEGUI

Combining high end service and friendliness



It was at the Institut Paul Bocuse's restaurant that we met Valéria Hernandez, 20 years old and a student in her 2nd year of Hotel and Restaurant Management. Energetic and smiling, she answered our questions in an excellent French:

IPB: "Let's begin at the beginning: where were you born?"

V.H.M.A.: *"I was born and raised in Papotla, a neighborhood in Mexico City, until I was 18 years old."*

IPB: "How did you end up coming to the Institut Paul Bocuse?"

V.H.M.A.: *"I wanted to go to CESSA, a culinary and Hotel management school in Mexico. I met two Mexicans who, during an exchange program, studied at the Institut. They helped me discover the school... Once I arrived in front of the "château" I immediately fell under its charm. Learning about Hotel and Restaurant management had always been what I had desired to do, but to learn in this environment really surpassed all of my dreams!"*

IPB: "What do you enjoy about these professions?"

V.H.M.A.: *"I love cooking gratin dauphinois and of course my country's traditional dishes: tacos and tortillas. But above all, I like that things be well done and through this, pleasing people.. This is why I have chosen the orientation towards Hotel and Restaurant Management. I think that I am a little more gifted in my contact with people and supervision than in cooking..."*

IPB: "What does IPB bring to you?"

V.H.M.A.: *"When you arrive from Mexico, the cultural differences are flagrant. And at the Institut, where the international dimension is obvious, the method of learning is really particular. We get to the bottom of things with the professors. I still can't believe that I have entered this school where I have found an adoptive family when it wasn't easy to leave my country."*

IPB: "And the internships..."

V.H.M.A.: *"I did my first year internship from the 15th of May to the 9th of September 2006, almost four months, at the Carlton in Cannes. I worked for two months at the beach restaurant, then two months in room service. The first two months was absolutely crazy with the Cannes festival, we did up to 700 seats in a day. I even served Bruce Willis, Penelope Cruz and Pedro Almodovar.! An exciting experience, difficult, but I learned a lot."*

IPB: "So, what is next?"

V.H.M.A.: *"I would like to multiply my experiences and understand the different jobs within the Hotel and Restaurant business.*

This is indispensable in order to manage efficiently. I would like to do my 2nd year internship in Montreal. I think that I am going to like the environment and the people there. In this profession, it is very important to understand different cultures and the mentalities of people, from where they come. And then, in the 3rd year, I would like to return to Mexico in order to apply all that I have learned and of course, see my family."

IPB: "Is this the basis of a career plan?"

V.H.M.A.: *"I have learned to like change and seeing new things. I will use this in my professional projects. In the long term, I hope to be able to open my own hotels and I have begun to think about a concept. I think that we can combine high end service with friendliness. In any case, this is what I would like to develop..."*



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