

Excursion Boat Captain

Location: Vista Fleet – Duluth, Minnesota

Seasonal Position: May – October (Full-Time or Part-Time)

Compensation: \$30–\$35/hour depending on experience

At Vista Fleet, we foster the spirit of adventure on Lake Superior and the Duluth harbor. We are seeking an experienced and safety-focused Excursion Boat Captain to lead vessel operations while delivering an exceptional guest experience. This role blends maritime leadership, safety management, and hospitality, ensuring every cruise operates smoothly, safely, and professionally.

Our Captains are responsible not only for the safe navigation of the vessel, but also for setting the tone onboard—leading crew, engaging guests, and representing Vista Fleet’s commitment to hospitality and adventure.

Our Core Values

Commitment – Understanding the value of reputation.

Passion – For hospitality, outdoor recreation, adventure, and innovation.

Effective Communication – Clear, professional interactions with passengers, fellow crew and management.

Empathetic Leadership – Supportive teamwork and respect for others.

Community & Environmental Stewardship – Caring for the places we explore and the people we serve.

Key Responsibilities

Vessel Operations & Navigation

- Safely operate Vista Fleet vessels in accordance with all U.S. Coast Guard, Federal, State, and Local regulations.
- Execute docking, undocking, and vessel maneuvering in the Duluth–Superior harbor and Lake Superior.
- Maintain full awareness of weather, harbor traffic, and navigational hazards.
- Conduct pre-departure safety checks and ensure vessel readiness prior to every cruise.

Safety & Regulatory Compliance

- Serve as the ultimate authority for safety onboard the vessel.
- Conduct passenger safety briefings and enforce all safety procedures.
- Lead emergency response procedures and drills with crew members.

- Ensure compliance with USCG, Homeland Security, and company safety protocols.
- Maintain required logs, reports, and safety documentation.

Crew Leadership & Training

- Supervise and support onboard crew.
- Train staff in docking procedures, safety protocols, and guest service expectations.
- Provide clear direction during vessel operations and cruising events.
- Foster a positive, professional, and collaborative team environment.

Guest Experience & Hospitality

- Greet passengers during boarding and departure.
- Deliver safety announcements, cruise narration, and event announcements when appropriate.
- Ensure a welcoming and engaging onboard atmosphere for all guests.
- Address guest questions, concerns, or service issues professionally.

Vessel Maintenance & Readiness

- Ensure vessels remain clean, organized, and operationally ready.
 - Monitor vessel systems and report maintenance needs to management.
 - Work with the operations team to ensure compliance with maintenance schedules.
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Qualifications

- Valid U.S. Coast Guard 100 Ton Master License appropriate for operating area.
 - Valid TWIC Card
 - FCC Marine Radio License (or proof of application)
 - CPR & First Aid Certification (or willingness to obtain)
 - Previous vessel command or excursion vessel experience preferred.
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Skills, Leadership Attributes, Physical Requirements

- Strong maritime decision-making and situational awareness.
 - Excellent leadership and crew management abilities.
 - Professional communication with guests and team members.
 - Ability to remain calm and decisive under pressure.
 - Commitment to safety, service, and operational excellence.
 - Must be 21 years of age or older
 - Ability to stand and move about the vessel for extended periods (up to 12 hours)
 - Ability to lift and carry up to 30 pounds
 - Adequate vision and hearing for safe vessel operation
 - Ability to maneuver in tight spaces and perform physical vessel tasks
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Why Join Vista Fleet

- Work on Lake Superior and the Duluth harbor
 - Lead a team in a dynamic maritime tourism environment
 - Potential year-round opportunities with vessel maintenance and operations
 - Health insurance, PTO, and Sick & Safe Time depending on employment status
 - Employee cruise and merchandise discounts
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How to Apply

Interested candidates should submit a resume and cover letter to:

Colleen Smith
General Manager, Vista Fleet
csmith@vistafleet.com

Join us in creating unforgettable maritime adventures! Apply today!