

Homestay for Language Holidays

Most students choose "Homestay" accommodation when they study abroad. Others select Homestay even if they are not on a study visit; statistics show that it's a form of accommodation gaining in popularity all the time.

But what is Homestay - and what makes it so popular?

Homestay means living with a family, or "host family" as we say.

There are three ways of doing it:

1. choose to learn English in a language school near to your Homestay location
2. have your English classes in the house (home tuition) with a member of the family who is a qualified teacher
3. select not to have classes at all when you visit - a popular choice if you want to do the tourist thing for example

Even in their busy summer period (when they are likely to be inundated with enquiries) the organisations that arrange the Homestays will always try to place you with the most suitable host family to match your requirements. Placement organisations take into account location, interests, language level, dietary requirements, allergies and other requests you may have.

Though prices vary according to your needs, good quality homestay accommodation can be relatively economical - and although you may be charged a premium if you want your Homestay in or near the city centre, even if you are situated further out you can expect your journey into the centre not to exceed 30 minutes.

Not only does Homestay accommodation represent value for money, it also gives you an excellent opportunity to practise English with your host family. This is a very important bonus for students who like to speak as much English as possible.

But if it's formal language tuition you want, why not have your English classes in your family home? Naturally, combining the Homestay with your language classes will increase the costs, but there's no better way to learn English than this - the perfect combination of tuition and accommodation combined with the cultural experience! Home ?tuition is a tailor-made product that teaches you the English language you need (where you want, when you want). Remember to look at all the possibilities when making your choice; unlike a few years ago, when home tuition was practised by just a handful of organisations, now you can take your pick from a number of specialists.

Make sure you insist on high standards for your Homestay. Check that the organisation you choose conforms to a Good Practice Code, or better still, has proof that all its host families have been inspected and approved. You should expect good, clean accommodation.

Homestay is a fun way to learn about a country's people, language and culture. Try it and see for yourself!

by Jim Porter

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