

## Tips for Home Hospitality Hosts

### Introduction

As a volunteer Home Host, you are first and foremost a citizen diplomat, who has graciously offered to provide our international visitors insight to American life by inviting them to your home. Below will give you more of an idea on what the exceptions are of a home host and how to maximize the experience for you and your guests.

### Preparation:

- **Learn.** Do a quick search about their countries and cultures, visitors are surprised when you know a little about them and their country, review their biographies. You will receive dietary information, the biographies of your guests, and the local itinerary with contact info, hotel, and pick up time, a week before their arrival to Albuquerque.
- **Feel free to be creative for the setting of your meal.** The experience you offer the guests can be as simple as a pizza party with your family and friends or a formal dinner with guests that are leaders in the community. We encourage you to host your guests in a way that you are most comfortable with.
- **Dress Code.** We encourage volunteers to dress in evening attire or smart-casual. Many of visitors take the time to dress in their best for this occasion and in fact, many wear their traditional clothing. Very casual clothing may seem disrespectful to the visitors.
- **What to serve?** We only ask that you will anticipate and respect the dietary preferences of your guest(s). Other than that, feel free to serve a meal that you enjoy preparing. Here are some helpful tips and suggestions that we have personally experienced:
  - If you provide home hospitality often, many of our volunteers have suggested having a simple, 'go-to' dish in mind for this occasion, like tacos, or lasagna.
  - Visitors typically like when they are served meals that can be found in their home countries; however, we also want them to try new things! We encourage you to get creative but also keep in mind that some visitors may be shy in trying new food. It's helpful to think about a time you were visiting a new and exotic country and someone offered you a dish where you couldn't tell exactly what it was. It can be intimidating, right?

- In some countries, dinner is not a big meal or the main meal of the day. We recommend researching this beforehand if it is a big concern as you prepare.
- Otherwise, please do not feel offended if they are too full to eat the entire plate you have provided or dessert you may have prepared.

## **Your role as a host:**

- **Hotel pick up.** We request that our hosts collect the visitor(s) from the hotel at the specified time and return them at the end of the visit. We understand that you may be very busy with preparations so here are some tips for the logistics:
  - Have your significant other or a friend/invited guest pick the visitors
  - If you have agreed to host an exceptionally large group of people, we can arrange for the chartered transportation to take them to your house. Feel free to invite the driver in! They are super friendly and already have a relationship with the visitors.
  - We also ask that you understand the exposure to risk you undertake by carrying a passenger in your car and have insured yourself to a level you feel comfortable with.
  - If you are unable to pick up the visitors on time or have an emergency situation where you have to cancel, please let the Program Coordinator or the Emergency Contact (contact info found in the program book sent to you about a week before their arrival) know as soon as possible.
- **Conversation topics.** Home hospitality is where the magic of our mission really happens as it allows people to really connect on various levels. Dinner conversation should be light and informal. We recommend the following conversation starters and topics:
  - What they have enjoyed about Albuquerque and the U.S. so far.
  - Family
  - Work
  - Life, in general, in their country
  - Hobbies and interests

Please stay away from the following topics:

- Politics
- Religion
- Controversial issues (LGBT, pro-choice/life, gun control, etc.)

If a visitor brings up these topics on their own, you are free to speak your mind in a ***diplomatic*** manner. Please keep in mind, the group is traveling on a federal program and representing the U.S. State Department and Global Ties ABQ comes with volunteering. All volunteers must abide by our Code of Ethics. Global Ties ABQ is a non-partisan, non-political organization.