Be My Guest

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With so many Outreaches, International Conferences and Regional Equips on the go, where many of you are being hosted and many of you are hosting ‘others’, we wanted to look at what ‘being a good guest’ looks like.

Do’s & Don’ts for Being a Good Guest

Here are some helpful do’s and don’ts from someone who travels a lot amongst our Partnering churches, and who is both a seasoned ‘host’ and ‘hostee’:

- **DO** contact your hosts the week before you arrive to let them know what time you are planning to arrive (and leave) and whether you have any special needs, like food intolerances. **DO NOT** say, ‘We are very easy’ and then arrive and say (for example) that you are gluten intolerant. **DO NOT** be fussy (e.g. Banting lifestyle)! **DO** be prepared to bring your own special supplies (like gluten-free bread) if need be. For example: If you don’t like strong cheese and are being hosted in Switzerland, let your host know, so they can avoid the disappointment of preparing a meal you will refuse. **Do** this in plenty of time.
- **DO** communicate with your hosts if your arrangements change for any reason, as soon as possible (i.e. **do not** just arrive late).

- **DO** pray for your hosts before you arrive and ask God how you can be a blessing to them.
- **DO** always offer to help with meal preparation and/or clear up. Rather have your offer turned down than assume your help is not needed or wanted. **DO NOT** treat the house like a hotel and leave things for 'the cleaning lady' to do (there may not be one)! **DO** take care of other people's property! **DO** make your bed! When you leave, **DO** ask if you can remove the bedding etc.
- **DO** offer to help with buying groceries.
- **DO** show an interest in your hosts **and** their children! 'If you show love for my child, you are greatly blessing and loving me!' Ronaldo Pacheco, one of our leaders from our Four12 Partners in Brazil is excellent at this. He has won many hearts when being hosted by playing football with the kids etc.
- **DO NOT** spend all your time glued to your phone or iPad, Skyping friends etc., or on Facebook.
- **DO** tell your hosts up front if you are really tired and need to head straight to rest after the meal.
- **DO** show appreciation for the town/country they live in (e.g. 'Wow, I love these quaint, narrow roads'). **DO NOT** criticise their town ('Man, you guys don't even have a STARBUCKS!'...said 5 times).
- **DO** rather over communicate than under communicate. **DO** ask if you need clarity on arrangements/meal times etc. If your hosts tell you to make yourself at home, then do so. **DO NOT** assume that the 'Your fridge is my fridge' applies in their home. Most hosts like you to make your own tea and coffee (rather than expecting to be waited upon). If you only drink special coffee etc., then take it with you.
- **DO** stick to any arrangements made with your host, but if you have to change the arrangements, communicate it clearly and timeously.
- **DO NOT** be over polite and not want to communicate your basic needs, e.g. a warmer blanket etc. Your hosts would be very upset if they found out you hadn't spoken up when they could have helped.
- **DO** be sensitive to your hosts needs – some will need space, others will need companionship. **DO NOT** exhaust them by talking too much, but bear in mind that everyone needs encouragement!
- **DO** have an attitude of gratitude. **DO** enjoy the spoils (if there are), but still be grateful if there are not!
- **DO** make sure you are ready on time if you are getting a lift with your host to or from a meeting.
- **DO** relax! Be yourself.

- **DO** leave a thank you note and a little gift.
- **DO** invite their input at the end of the time of hosting (anything you have seen that I could do better). **DO** give input into their lives if they ask for it! **Do** it humbly, though, and **DO NOT** overdo it (especially if you have only been with them for a few days).
- **DO** behave in their home as you would like them to behave in yours.
- **DO** seek to leave a spiritual deposit in the lives of your hosts and their children.
- **DO** offer to pray for them.

We hope these do's and don'ts **DO** encourage you to both volunteer to host 'others' more when the opportunity arises, and also to be a pleasure to host yourself when you are given the opportunity to be hosted!