Mi Casa es su Casa (My House is your House)

Tony and Lindsay Fiamingo 10 March 2015



Meet Tony and Lindsay Fiamingo (Joshua Generation Church, Cape Town). A couple with a real heart for hosting who have, over the years, opened up their home (from one night to a whole month) to saints from all over the world.

We asked them these questions:

Why do you host?

Having been hosted abroad ourselves, we realised very quickly the depth of love you receive from someone who hosts you. We've therefore experienced first hand what it's like to 'receive' – as a "hosted couple". We are also fairly hospitable by nature and enjoy making our home available to others. Hosting is a brilliant opportunity to "preach" gospel living, without having to lecture 'at' people. We're also fortunate enough to have the living space available to practically open up our home.

How do you host?

I guess the right perspective to have is to try to see hosting (being hosted) from the guests

perspective. A good place to start is asking them questions: – What help do they need, how can we assist them? What will help make their stay a bit more pleasant (food allergy needs etc.?). These answers help to build open communication channels between you and your guests. Bare in mind that there may be a language barrier, that's okay, Google translate is a great tool for this!

Your personal tips?

Keep it simple – you'll never feel ready to host if you put impossible expectations on your home, family or finances. Hosting is 'sharing life together', you do what you can with what you have, and your heart is to 'share' not to 'buy, spend or over extend your budget or home facilities. Ideally your guests should be warned, before they arrive, about what they're expected to contribute towards (if something is required). Things like food, water and electricity (especially if their stay is an extended stay).

Upon arrival it is a good idea to run through your family's routine and norms, when you need 'alone family time', 'how the kitchen and washing runs etc.' It also helps to write and stick notes around the home about how to use some of the appliances (washing machine / dishwasher / alarm etc.). It is really good to explain to them upon arrival what's expected of them. Let them know how 'keeping the kitchen clean' is important, shared living areas tidiness etc. I'm opposed to starting their stay with us with too many rules and regulations. We don't want our home to seem like a "police state" – so I do tend to err on the side of "less information" up front, and then gently add a few pointers as their stay continues.

Bear in mind that hosting young people (generally) requires more communication and 'expressed expectations'. You would be their hosting parents for that time and that may require a bit more 'hands on' interaction than hosting a mature person.

> **"Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it." Hebrews 13:2 (NIV)**