

Breaking Bread – NC State Meal Hosting Program
Sponsored by the Office of International Services (OIS)

PARTICIPANT EXPECTATIONS

Thank you for participating in this new, exciting program where cultural learning and exchange occur over a meal!

Please read carefully over these expectations. If you have any questions, please contact the Programs Coordinator at OIS: 919-515-2961.

- 1) Fill out an application and return to OIS at the address/fax at the bottom of the application.
- 2) You have agreed to join an American family/single for only ONE meal (breakfast, lunch, or dinner). You are not expected to continue contact with the host (unless such arrangements are agreed upon between you and the host).
- 3) Respond promptly to your host's invitation, via phone or email. Exact date/time of meal is arranged between the host and the student/scholar, **not** the Programs Coordinator.
- 4) If you can provide your own transportation, be sure to write down detailed directions to the host's home. A good resource for obtaining driving directions is: www.mapquest.com. If you are running more than 15 minutes late, please call your host.
- 5) Confirm any dietary restrictions or food allergies with your host prior to the meal.
- 6) Remember to thank your host for their hospitality, at least within a week following the meal.
- 7) Fill out an evaluation form within TWO WEEKS after the meal. The form will be emailed or mailed to you. Your feedback is crucial for this new program! Thank you.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

This may or may not be the first time you have been invited into an American's home for a meal. However, there are always things to consider beforehand so that neither party is uncomfortable by the end of the meal!

- Americans typically do not expect a gift, but something inexpensive would be appreciated if offered, particularly if it were indicative of your culture. An example might be candy or tea from your country, or flowers. Following the visit, a thank you note is appreciated. You might want to bring pictures from your home country and family to show your hosts. They would find these interesting.
- Many Americans have pets that live either inside or outside the house. If you have a fear of animals (cats, dogs), please share this with your host.
- In some homes, appetizers (small snacks served before the main meal) may be offered. These are typically eaten somewhere other than at the table. There may be served on a small plate or with a napkin. Typically the food is "finger food" so follow the lead of your hosts and feel free to use your fingers if they do!
- Most Americans are understanding and considerate, especially when it comes to food. If you are served something that you are not sure about (be sure to ask what it is and what's in it!) or you don't like, feel free to be honest. Your hosts will not be offended.
- Some people may offer you a tour of their home. Feel free to ask questions and show interest in photos, pieces of furniture, artwork, etc. Take care to "just look" – something could be fragile and valuable!
- Your hosts may not know what interests you or what kind of questions you might have about American life, so feel free to ask questions. Americans tend to be very open and will appreciate any interest you show in them, their work, culture, traditions, etc.

NC STATE UNIVERSITY

Breaking Bread (Meal Hosting Program)

Thank you for your interest in this new and unique program! Below are a few frequently asked questions about Breaking Bread. If you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to call 515-2961.

What is the purpose of the Breaking Bread program?

The *sole purpose* of the program is to offer an international student/scholar/family the opportunity to be a guest in an American's home and to enjoy a meal together. By participating in this program, you are able to experience American culture through food, one of the world's common cultural denominators! There is NO financial obligation to participate in this program –the meal is free to the international guest/family. Participants are requested to *respect* the other's religion, values, culture and beliefs. Single participants will be matched with participants of the same sex.

What commitment do I make if I participate?

Your commitment is simply to accept your American host's invitation for ONE meal. You are not expected to reciprocate a meal invitation or to continue contact with your host unless such arrangements are agreed upon between you and your host. All participants are required to fill out an application and to respond promptly via phone or email to the host's invitation.

What if I don't have transportation?

If you do not have transportation, the host will probably offer to pick you up and drop you off. Perhaps a friend with a car could also provide you transportation. The host indicates on his/her application if they can provide you transportation. If you or a friend can provide your own transportation, please indicate this on your application. If you have a child that requires a child seat in a car, please provide your own.

Can I bring along a friend or family members?

Yes, but please have your friend fill out an application as well. If your spouse/children are also participating, you can indicate such on your application. We don't want hosts to have unexpected guests show up for a meal!! My job is to inform the American host who is coming to the meal, so please indicate to the Programs Coordinator if your friend/spouse wants to participate.

How do Americans hear about this program and apply?

This program is advertised in a variety of ways (emailing current OIS volunteers, contacting churches, community organizations, etc). They must fill out an application to the program, just as you do.

How are participants matched with each other?

It's very important that you fill out your application completely since this information is used in matching. During the matching process, transportation needs, gender, and common interests (in hobbies, activities, etc.) are examined. Again, single participants are matched with hosts of the same sex.

What do I do if I have dietary restrictions or other cultural questions?

Please indicate your dietary restrictions very specifically on your application or other concerns you may have. Contact the Office of International Services (515-2961) for assistance with any concern related to your experience in this program. We're here to help you!

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