



United States Servas, Inc.

1125 16th Street, Suite 201 Arcata, CA 95521-5585

Tel: (707) 825-1714 ♦ Fax: (707) 825-1749

E-mail: info@usServas.org ♦ www.usServas.org

Open Doors for Travelers to Homes and Hearts in More Than 130 Countries

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Grant Barnes, Board Chair
Robert Allekotte
Carlos Bailey
Daryl Ngee Chinn
Darleana Mc Henry
Nancy Mitchell
Nancy Wilson

LEGAL COUNSEL

Grant Barnes

PEACE SECRETARY

Mary Jane Mikuriya

ARCATA OFFICE STAFF

Judy Sears
Nelson Lee
Xande Zublin-Meyer

International Student/Camp Counselor

Dear International Student/Camp Counselor,

Thank you for expressing an interest in becoming a Servas Domestic Traveler. Our **International Student/Camp Counselor** program offers all non-US citizens who are currently enrolled in a US college, language, or trade school or serving as camp counselors in a US camp the opportunity to travel within the United States for a reduced membership fee. Please apply at least three weeks before your departure date.

The one-year International Student/Camp Counselor membership fee is \$25 (compared to the \$85 fee for international travel), plus a \$15 deposit for the loan of the US host list. Your deposit is refunded when you return the borrowed host lists and travel report.

Please read the enclosed **Responsibilities of Servas Travelers** carefully. If you would like to become a part of Servas' worldwide homestay network, please apply as follows:

1. Each adult (age 18 or over) who wishes to have Servas visits must complete a **Domestic Letter of Introduction**.
2. Attach a small, passport-style photograph to the upper right-hand corner of your completed Domestic Letter of Introduction and make two photocopies, one for your interviewer and one for the office files.
3. Collect two brief character references, prepared by people who know you well (friends, employers – not family members, please). Your references may choose to write a free-style letter or they may complete the attached form (in this case, print an extra copy). References should be signed and include their address and telephone number.
4. Contact one of our volunteer interviewers to schedule a meeting, usually lasting up to two hours. Please refer to the enclosed list to find the US Servas interviewer closest to you.
5. Take to the interview:
 - (a) Your completed Domestic Letter of Introduction with photos attached and two copies
 - (b) Your two free-hand letters of reference or two completed reference forms
 - (c) One check or money order for the total membership fee plus deposit. No cash, please.

Once you have met with one of our volunteer interviewers and he or she feels that your travel plans are compatible with Servas membership, that both you and Servas hosts will benefit from your participation, and that you understand the goals and philosophy of Servas, your Letter of Introductions will be approved and signed. You or your interviewer will then send your materials and payment to the national office for processing.

If you have any questions or difficulty reaching an interviewer, please do not hesitate to contact us. You may begin writing to hosts and arranging your visits once you receive your validated Domestic Letter of Introduction and requested host lists.

Wishing you many discoveries on your Servas journey!

The Servas Staff

US Servas fosters a more just and peaceful world by promoting appreciation of cultural differences through home stays and experiences in hosts' communities.



UNITED STATES SERVAS

1125 16th Street, Suite 201
Arcata, CA 95521-5585

**DOMESTIC
LETTER OF INTRODUCTION**
for travel in the United States only

Attach
Photograph(s)
Here

*☞ Present this to your host **upon arrival** without being asked.*

First Name(s): _____ Surname: _____

Passport Number: _____ Country of Issue: _____ Year of Birth: _____ Gender: _____

Email: _____ Occupation: _____ Home Country: _____

PERMANENT ADDRESS:

Street address: _____

City State Zip: _____

phone: () _____

CURRENT MAILING ADDRESS (if different):

Street address: _____

City State Zip: _____

phone: () _____

Dates of travel: _____ to _____ Languages Spoken: _____

States where you will seek Servas visits: _____

How did you learn about Servas? _____ Who else is traveling with you? _____

Are you a Servas host? _____ Have you ever been a Servas traveler? _____ When? _____

☞ In an emergency please contact: Name: _____ Phone: () _____

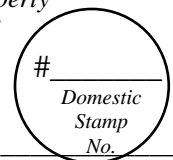
Please describe yourself and your trip to potential hosts. Please describe in plain words: 1) background and previous travel; 2) learning goals for your travels and how they relate to the purposes of Servas; 3) interests and hobbies; 4) your previous Servas experiences, if any, and 5) your involvement with any other peace movements. Type or print neatly. Use space on the back if necessary.

I understand that the purposes of Servas are to promote peace, the unity of humankind, and mutual understanding of the cultures, outlooks, and problems of the people of the world and I will do my part to further these purposes in my visits. ***I also understand*** that all host information provided to me is to be used by approved Servas members only and remains the property of Servas. Using the host lists for any purpose other than that for which they are intended will result in the immediate revocation of Servas membership(s) and possible litigation. ***I understand*** that they should be returned within two weeks after the completion of my trip. If all host lists are not returned by one month after the expiration date of this letter, I understand that any deposits paid for these lists will be deemed to be forfeited.

Traveler's Signature(s): _____ Date: _____

Approved by: _____ () _____ Interview date: _____
Interviewer's signature Telephone

Interviewer's Name & Address: _____
Street, P.O. Box, Apt. No. City, State Zip+4



RENEWAL INSTRUCTIONS: About six (6) weeks before your Letter expires, fill out a new Letter of Introduction and contact your interviewer.

for office use only:
Expires on:

**LETTER of RECOMMENDATION
IN SUPPORT of an APPLICATION FOR SERVAS MEMBERSHIP**

To the Traveler: If you opt to use this form, please also give a copy of 'A Brief History of Servas' to your reference.
Two references are required. Please make a copy of this form.

Name of Traveler: _____ Home Telephone: (____) _____

Traveler's Address: _____ Work Telephone: (____) _____

Dear Friend: After reading "A Brief History of Servas" on the reverse, please help us in evaluating this applicant's potential for benefiting from and contributing to a Servas exchange by providing the following information. Please sign the form and include your name and a telephone number where you can be reached. Feel free to call the US Servas office with any questions.

Name of Reference: _____ **Occupation:** _____

Home Address: _____ **Home Telephone:** (____) _____
Street, PO Box, Apt. # City, State Zip

Work Address: _____ **Work Telephone:** (____) _____
Street, PO Box, Apt. # City, State Zip

***** RECOMMENDATION LETTER *****

1. What is your relationship to the applicant? When and how did you first meet this person?

2. How reliable is s/he in meeting commitments?

3. How sociable is this person upon meeting people for the first time? What is her/his attitude toward new experiences?

4. Under what circumstances is s/he helpful as a house guest?

5. How does s/he handle disagreements?

6. What other information should we consider in evaluating her/his application?

7. Do you have any hesitation about recommending the applicant as a Servas Traveler? If "yes," please explain in detail on a separate piece of paper.

***** THANKS VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP *****

Please complete and sign this form and return it to the applying traveler.

Your Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____

RESPONSIBILITIES OF SERVAS TRAVELERS

Over the past fifty years, our members around the world have enjoyed the art of hosting visitors in the Servas way. The system works remarkably well, but only when travelers remember to do the following:

1. AVOID MISUNDERSTANDINGS BY LEARNING SERVAS PROTOCOL...

Host lists provided by US Servas are in English and are prefaced with important local rules for visiting Servas hosts. Your interviewer can provide more details but, as a minimum, Servas protocol includes the following “DOs” and “DON’Ts:”

- DO contact hosts well in advance and include a copy of your Letter of Introduction.
- DON’T call before 8 am or after 10 pm, call hosts collect, or expect hosts to return your long-distance call at their expense.
- DO confirm arrangements before arriving and notify your hosts if your schedule or your arrival time has changed.
- DON’T request more than a 2-night stay; the visit may be extended later at the host’s express invitation (EVP or LS codes).
- DO make sure all your travel companions (18 and older) are valid Servas members, each with their own Letter of Introduction.
- DO take seriously your responsibility for getting to the host’s home...and getting there on time.
- DON’T assume your hosts will feed you. While some hosts will invite you to share meals with them, they are not obligated to do so.
- DO present your original Letter of Introduction to your hosts at the door when you arrive...before being asked.
- DO be polite and gracious, follow the rules of the house, and accept whatever sleeping and eating arrangements that are offered.
- DON’T make calls from your host’s telephone without first asking for permission...even local calls.
- DO consider carrying your own sheets or a sleep sack, in order to save hosts the trouble of doing extra laundry.
- DO spend time with your hosts—this is the central purpose of the visit! Make time to get involved and share your ideas.

2. LEARN ABOUT THE REGION...

Learning new things about other cultures is a driving force behind Servas. A prerequisite to any trip is familiarization with the customs and cultures, history and governance of the places you will visit. Consider seriously what you hope to learn on your trip. One idea is to read a novel set in the country you will be visiting or one that is written by a native author.

3. GIVE BACK TO YOUR HOSTS...

Take every opportunity to thank Servas hosts for their hospitality in whatever ways you can: help prepare a meal, treat your hosts to a meal out, or bring a small souvenir from home. Find out what household chores you can help with. After returning home, send your hosts a thank you note; add special hosts to your holiday card list.

The best way to thank your hosts is by being a model guest. Always ask before using a host’s telephone and reimburse them immediately for any calls made. Calling card accounts and prepaid calling cards are excellent ways around this problem.

Whatever you do, don’t be a burden to your hosts. You should always have the means to pay for your own transportation, food, and activities. You should also be prepared to pay for lodging elsewhere (a hotel or hostel) in case plans fall through and because you will occasionally need “down time.” Also be prepared for medical expenses or carry international insurance coverage.

4. GET INVOLVED IN YOUR HOSTS’ LIVES IN THE SPIRIT OF PEACE...

Servas offers you a unique opportunity to find out about a community from an insider’s point of view. Ask to accompany host families to work or to school. Find out if there are any local gatherings or cultural events you could attend with them.

Be sensitive and respectful of your host’s values and custom—especially where there are differences. If something offends you, find out if the root of the problem is cultural or individual and try to resolve things in a peaceful manner.

If Servas helped make your trip worthwhile, the best way to show your appreciation is to remain active in the organization. You could become a host or day host yourself, or volunteer locally for Servas. Tell your friends about Servas if you think they would make good hosts or travelers. If you are already involved with other peace organizations let them know about Servas, too!

5. MORE TIPS FOR THE TRAVELER...

- Make the effort to contact hosts living outside of major cities. Rural hosts typically have more time and want more visitors.
- Assume hosts are not involved with Servas for sexual reasons. Your conduct should be above reproach. In the unlikely event that a Servas member acts inappropriately, please report the incident quickly to that country’s national secretary for action.
- Have realistic expectations about the number of hosts you intend to visit. Why burden yourself with lists you may never use?
- Never divulge host information to non-members you meet on the road. Have them contact a local volunteer coordinator.
- Servas membership does not guarantee anyone the “right” to free hospitality. Servas hosts, on the other hand, do have the right to refuse a home stay request...even without an explanation. Be polite and understanding when a host, who finds it inconvenient to receive you, must say “No.”
- Remember that Servas has just one small office in the US; elsewhere, Servas is a completely volunteer-run organization and local Servas coordinators may not be available the day you call. Remember also that each Servas branch is autonomous.

Please take this set of guidelines along with you and refer to them on your trip.

A Brief History of Servas

Over the past fifty years, dedicated peace-minded people have created the vital worldwide hospitality network known as Servas. Servas was initiated in 1948 by a conscientious objector to war who believed it was possible to build stronger foundations for world peace by helping concerned people to meet and learn from each other and to recognize that we all belong to one world family. For years, many had been cut off by political and military barriers. A devastating war had also created many psychological and economic barriers.

Volunteers were first found in countries of northwestern Europe who gathered lists of people who could offer free hospitality to approved foreign travelers. It was hoped that, by traveling in the open-door style, people would build links between groups and individuals seeking a peaceful and just society.

A group of leaders from several pacifist organizations in England gave sound roots to the hospitality system, which was known by several names: Peacebuilders, Work-Study-Travel, and Open Doors. Meanwhile a dedicated Gandhian and Quaker woman in California, "Grandma" Esther Harlan, created the even more extensive hospitality system in North America—using only correspondence to compile a roster of people identified as potential Peace Builders. Within a few years, the movement had taken root in a number of other countries.

Lists were circulated of those willing to open their doors to travelers within the system. Early US hosts included leaders in race relations, Quaker, Jewish, Protestant and Catholic leaders, leaders of cooperatives, peace leaders and village rehabilitation workers. Though a peace-oriented organization, it has never excluded non-pacifists; it has, in fact, welcomed travelers in uniform. From these humble beginnings Servas has reached out to people all over the world, driven entirely by the efforts of concerned volunteers.

The name **Servas**—meaning "serve" in Esperanto—was later adopted to denote the spirit of international mutual service which characterizes this movement. Today, with hosts in more than 130 countries Servas has become a global program of over 14,000 member hosts and thousands of travelers... and continues to grow. Volunteer national committees have compiled lists of hosts in countries of every form of government and provided bridges of understanding between people of every profession and persuasion.

Though started by pacifists, we have never rejected anyone because of other ideologies: open mindedness and a commitment to cooperation are the only criteria. Since 1973 Servas International has been recognized as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) registered with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

As it has grown Servas has become more inclusive, rather than exclusive, but it has never relinquished its goal of striving for world peace by providing opportunities for people of all cultures, races and backgrounds to meet and share their mutual concerns. *Join us!*

US Servas is a non-profit membership organization fostering understanding and cultural diversity through a global person-to-person network promoting a more just and peaceful world.