

Welcome to Mongolia!

Since EurAuPair has a new partner office in Mongolia and is starting to receive Mongolian au pair applicants, we would like to introduce the country and its culture to you.

Mongolia is a landlocked country located between China and Russia. It is a vast country that links land and sky and is one of the last few places on the planet where nomadic life is still a living tradition. Mongolia's nickname is the "Land of Blue Skies" and with good reason: there are said to be about 250 sunny days throughout each year.

Mongolia is the sixth-largest country in Asia and 19th in the world, but the population is only 2,727,966, which makes Mongolia one of the least densely populated areas in Asia. The geography of Mongolia is varied, with the Gobi Desert to the south and with cold and mountainous regions to the north and west. Much of Mongolia consists of steppes, with forested areas comprising 11.2% of the total land area. Almost half of the population lives in Ulaanbaatar, the



Ulaanbaatar, the capital of Mongolia.

Mongolia is mutton or sheep. The boodog or goat/marmot barbecue is particularly worth experiencing. There is a theory that Mongolian horseman may have invented ice cream, when they took cream on long journeys across the Gobi desert in winter. As they galloped, the cream was vigorously shaken, while the sub-zero temperature caused it to freeze. The expansion of the Mongol Empire spread ice cream through China, from where Marco Polo reputedly brought the idea to Italy when he returned from his travels in 1295.

As an Asian culture, Mongolians can be expected to be punctual and respectful of schedules and family rules. However, contrary to popular belief, the young generation is quite out-going and you can expect your Mongolian au pair to have an open communication with you.

Mongolian couples have an average of three children per family. It is very common to live in close communities with relatives. Family is very important and relatives rely on each other in times of need. Grandparents and relatives will care

for children until at least the age of 3 years old. After that, children usually go to day care. It will be common for Mongolian au pair applicants to have experience in caring for relatives



Mongolian nomads.

(nephews & nieces, cousins). They will usually have experience with fewer children but for a longer period of time.

It is quite common for Mongolians to pursue post-secondary education near their home and continue living with their parents while completing their studies, unless from the countryside. Mongolians may even continue to live at home when getting a job, and only to move out when getting married.

The official language of Mongolia is Mongolian which is spoken by 95% of the population. A variety of dialects of Oirat and Buryat are spoken across the country. Starting in 4th grade, Mongolians must choose a second language, usually English, Chinese, Russian, German or French.

Are you interested in finding out more about this fascinating country? Why not welcome a Mongolian au pair to your family? What better way to continue learning about this beautiful country and culture.



The Yurt is a portable, round tent used by nomads.

capital of Mongolia. Due to its high elevation, high latitude, landlocked location and the effects of the Siberian anticyclone, Ulaanbaatar is the coldest national capital in the world, where the average temperature is -1 degree Celsius.

The extreme continental climate has affected the traditional diet, so Mongolian cuisine primarily consists of dairy products and meat. Use of vegetables and spices is limited. Due to geographic proximity and deep historic ties, Mongolian cuisine is influenced by Chinese and Russian cuisine. The main diet in rural



Out in the wide open.

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About Us...

EurAuPair Intercultural Child Care Programs is a non-profit, public benefit organization designated by the U.S. Department of State to conduct the Au Pair cultural exchange program under the Fulbright Hays Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961 and is intended "to promote mutual understanding between the people of the United States and other countries by means of educational and cultural exchanges".

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How do you entertain a 20-year-old when you've forgotten what it's like to be 20?

By Wichita, KS Community Counselor Pamela Porvaznik

I ask this question since I find myself at the age of 72 in an interesting situation:

A good 15 years ago, an old high school friend asked if I'd be interested in becoming a community counselor for an international au pair program.



Crossing the suspension bridge in Wichita, KS.

Community counselor? What's that? Well, my friend explained, you help qualify the host family who applies for an au pair through EurAupair, an intercultural child care program, and then you check in with both parents throughout the year and meet the au pair once a month in person to ensure things are going well with her host family as well as enjoying cultural activities.

That sounded easy enough, so I signed up. Now years later, I finally have my first assignment.

The whole idea of having a foreign girl come into one's home to take care of their child or children while they work sounds ideal to me. Learning about people, their experiences, tastes and culture as well as having your child become acquainted with the outside world through a caregiver's eyes just delights me to no end.

I was given the opportunity as a 17-year-old to delay going to college a year in exchange for living in Europe. I lived six months in Paris and six months in Rome with a month-long holiday in England in between. I attended classes at the Institute Catholique in Paris and at the Trinita Dei Monti in Rome, which at that time was an international girls' school located at the top of the Spanish Steps. I studied French and Italian, Art and Art History. I never had so much fun in my young life and the experience honed my love of art and architecture, fine food and

travel forever. This was in 1960 when it was relatively inexpensive to travel to and live in Europe. Today, it would be a different story altogether. That's why bringing Europe into one's home would be the next best thing for a host family's child, and that's why I think the whole EurAupair experience is terrific.

So, here I am with my first au pair. Her name is Kim, from Germany, and she's a darling girl. So bright, speaks English without an accent, can even find her way on an American computer, typing English like a pro (remember at her home her keyboard is entirely in German). I'm in awe of her poise and diligence, her willingness to learn and please. She's an excellent caregiver to three adorable children. And I love her host family. They are terrific and have welcomed Kim into their home as both an au pair and as a daughter. I'm just completely impressed with the whole situation.

Our first outing was to a store opening – I'm a writer for a family-owned chain of health food stores – where Kim got to take pictures of the event and post them to Facebook. From there we went to lunch at my favorite restaurant, shopped at an outrageous boutique and then went to a movie theater to see "The Intern."

Kim is so appreciative and joyful; it was difficult knowing if she really had fun. Cognizant of the age gap, I want to make her experience in Wichita interesting. I just wish I knew other young people that would make our outings more meaningful for her.

Our next meeting was a cultural one. We started out

having breakfast and then toured College Hill where Wichitans go all out with Halloween decorations. We then travelled to our new Pop-Up park downtown, took photos, and then on to the Keeper of the Plains where we walked the suspension bridge over the Arkansas River and studied the American Indian wall writings at the other end.

What's Wichita without its past? Some refer to our city as "encased in the '50s". There is so much history here, but not much physical beauty. The wheels of government move slowly, but it is a great family town. I want Kim to get to know her new city intimately and take back a little western-leaning romance from the "Peerless Princess of the Plains" when she returns to Germany next year.

So off to the Sedgwick County Historical Museum to see an exhibit on prohibition, rooms devoted to the early days



Kim with her host siblings – what an adorable photo!

I've been a Friends Board member for a dozen years. But do these things really interest a 20 year old?

I know Kim likes to shop, go to basketball games and eat. Basketball is a way off, shopping is a given, and eating...well, we both like to eat. But the addition of more young people would be ever so welcomed.

I guess I'm writing this to spread the word. We want more au pair families in Wichita. I can personally vouch for the excellence of EurAupair. Both the families and au pairs are screened within an inch of their lives. The company has been at this a long time and has a stellar reputation. It gives the company, families and au pairs reassurance that their placements will be successful, everyone will be safe and well cared for and the whole experience worth the money and effort.

Now, what to do with a 20-year-old on our next outing!

Thank you so much, Pam, for sharing your Community Counselor experience and your enthusiasm about the EurAupair program! It sounds like you and Kim have a lot of fun during your monthly meetings.



Community Counselor Pam and Au Pair Kim admiring Halloween decorations during one of their monthly meetings.

of aviation and an entire house memorialized on a floor unto its own, complete with zinc-lined bathtub, wood stove, Prairie-Victorian furniture and clothing worn by the gentry of the day.

There are still tons of things that interest me in my home city: Old Cowtown, Exploration Place, the Wichita Art Museum where

EurAupair Photos



No pumpkin carving or eating for this crowd. San Francisco Community Counselor Jeanette Schoonman and her group of Au Pairs sweated it out with a Zumba class! In the picture, from left to right: Anaïs (France), Miriam (Germany), Amina (France), Satu (Finland), Jeanette, the Zumba teacher and Alejandra (Colombia).



Once again the Chicagoland Au Pairs, Community Counselors and Area Coordinator enjoyed a boat tour. This year they did the Shoreline Architecture River Cruise. The buildings along the river looked beautiful and a lot of photos were taken by all the Au Pairs. The guide did a great job of explaining the history of the buildings. Luca, an Italian exchange student with our sister company World Heritage, was also along for the ride.



Milwaukee Community Counselor Tracy Adams and her Au Pairs from Colombia, Germany and France enjoyed carving pumpkins for their October cultural event. For many girls, this was the first time they carved a pumpkin!



Can I hear a Hallelujah? The Chicago girls in Gila Peller's group went to the House of Blues Gospel Brunch in Chicago, IL for their September meeting. This event is a must see for all! The brunch was a meal fit for a king. Just when you thought it couldn't get any better, the music started and the girls were tapping their feet and clapping their hands. The Au Pairs left saying it was a great experience, one they will never forget.



Happy pumpkin patch season!! Here are some shots from Community Counselor Natalie Kratzer-Gushwa's Seattle group of Au Pairs. For their cultural meeting in October they visited the Trinity Tree Farm in Issaquah, WA and also enjoyed a hayride. In the pictures are Lena (Germany), Trecia and Nastelle (South Africa), Angeline (and her friend), Delphine, Lucile and Caroline (all from France).



Long Island Community Counselor Rosey Rivera writes: This month we (my group along with Danny Rivera's group) ventured off to a farm in Queens for our cultural event. Who knew there was a farm in QUEENS?? The Queens County Farm Museum is located on 47 acres of the New York City neighborhoods of Floral Park and Glen Oaks in Queens. This historic farm occupies the city's largest remaining tract of undisturbed farmland, and is still a working farm today. We were able to walk through the Corn Maze... that was fun and a bit confusing as you had to find the pieces to the map... so most of the time we had no idea where we were going but we made it out.

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Area Coordinator Holly Brown as well as Community Counselors Kelley Land and Linda Jimenez took their groups of Au Pairs to do face painting at the Virginia "Mom's Run This Town" fun run for kids. They had a great time!



Chicago Community Counselors Vicki O'Leary and Ashley Ridgley with their group of Au Pairs enjoying fall at the County Line Orchard and Corn Maze and having fun at the roller-skating park.



EurAupair's Network of Support

By Chicago Area Coordinator Vivi Frumkin and German Au Pair Pia Mohr

Nobody wants a placement to fall apart, but it happens. Pia from Germany needed housing when her placement did not work out and luckily community counselor Darcy Voreis from Noblesville, IN – who was not Pia's counselor – and her husband opened their home to house her. Pia arrived unsure of her future. I talked with her several times and found her to be a sweet young au pair

with the mental strength of someone much older. Pia stayed with Darcy and Tom for a couple of weeks until she left to join her new family. As you can see from the photos, Pia had a great time during her transition period.

They say it takes a village and in this case it certainly did. Housing was needed and found. The au pair needed a new family and was placed. EurAupair is that village from community counselors, area

coordinators, regional directors to the executive director.

Sometimes we forget what it truly takes and how many people are involved when we have an au pair in need. So this is my thank you to all.

~ Vivi

A letter from Pia to Vivi

I just wanted to thank you for everything you did for me during the last few weeks! Thanks for giving me the opportunity to stay with Darcy and her husband. I literally found

grandparents in Darcy and Tom that I personally never had! We had so much fun and were laughing a lot. Here are some pictures of what we did during the last two weeks.

~ Pia

EurAupair sends a big Thank You to Darcy and Tom for helping Pia and making her transition period fun and worry-free.



Pia doing a handstand in front of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Hall of Fame.



Pia 'racing' at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

Reunion in Minnesota

By previous Au Pair Waltrun Gleich from Germany

This past summer I had the possibility to fly out and meet my previous host family. I was their second au pair for 1.5 years starting in April 2013. Lucky for me, the Koenig's first au pair Kate also spent two weeks in Minnesota. During my time in

the States Kate and I became very close friends – being from the same country (Germany) it worked out that both of us are now studying in the same city and are actually almost neighbors.

This July we also met the Koenig's newest family member –

au pair Natalie from South Africa.

The Koenig's have always done a great job to make their au pairs feel like family, so it just seemed natural to welcome our new "American sister". Kate, Natalie and I spent great times with our two little boys Tavin (8) and Asher (5). Also, we all went

up North together and so Kate and I got to see our American grandparents, too. Another highlight was the St. Paul Saints baseball game that we visited together.

All in all this has been the best summer of my life – thanks to my amazing and loving host family, my great former host kids and my lovely sisters. I am thankful that we all met and are still continuing to have contact!!!

Thank you for the article and fun photos, Waltrun. Forming strong bonds with your host family and making new friends from all over the world is what the au pair program is all about!!!



The whole Koenig family, including three au pairs!



The previous and current au pairs Waltrun, Katrin and Natalie with their host brother.