

Winter Wonderland Delight: A First Snow Experience for Our Au Pairs!

Last week, Maryland was hit with a winter wonderland! For many of our au pairs, it was their first time ever seeing snow! They couldn't believe the magic unfolding outside their windows. The excitement was palpable as they bundled up and stepped into the winter wonderland. Snowflakes danced in the air as they laughed, played, and made snow angels. It was a moment of pure joy and wonder shared with Host Families and kids. Seeing the world through their eyes reminded us of the simple pleasures in life. Snow may be ordinary for some, but for these au pairs, it was an unforgettable adventure!

-Community Counselor
Anna Klymovska, Maryland



Rocio from Argentina with her host kid Meggi.

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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".

About Au Pair of the Year 2024

At EurAuPair, we believe in recognizing and celebrating the outstanding contributions of our dedicated au pairs. Each year, we host the **Au Pair of the Year competition**, a heartwarming tradition that allows host families to nominate exceptional au pairs who have gone above and beyond in their roles. The competition not only showcases the incredible talent within our community but also fosters a sense of appreciation for the hard work and dedication of these remarkable individuals.



Finalist Au Pair of the Year
Megan with her host family.

How we select The Au Pair of the Year

The journey to becoming **Au Pair of the Year** begins with host families sending in their heartfelt nominations. These nominations highlight the qualities that make their au pairs stand out. After that, we select the **top three nominees** who have demonstrated exceptional dedication and passion in their roles as au pairs. These finalists are then invited to participate in the next phase of the competition – the **essay writing challenge**.

2024 Finalists

Selecting only 3 finalists is a very challenging task as each au pair demonstrated exceptional qualities.

The following three au pairs were nominated: Agustina Antuna from Argentina, Tharanya Wongkaew from Thailand and Megan Foulds from South Africa.

2024 Au Pair of The Year Winner

After careful consideration, we proudly announce the **Au Pair of the Year 2024 - Agustina Antuna from Argentina!**

Now, we invite you to read Agustina's essay that beautifully captures the essence of her journey, highlighting the joy, challenges, and transformative moments she's experienced as an au pair.

Agustina's Essay on next page...



Finalist Au Pair of the Year
Tharanya with her twin host kids.



Finalist Au Pair of the Year
Agustina with her host family.

Would You Like to Contribute?

If you would like to contribute to the EurAuPair Gazette, please email info@euraupair.com. We would love to hear from our Host Families, Au Pairs, Community Counselors, Area Coordinators and Partners.

Au Pair of the Year 2024

Agustina Antuna, Argentina



Au Pair of the Year Agustina with her host kid Carter.

I'm in shock and with tears in my eyes. I just received an email saying that I am nominated by my host family to be THE AU PAIR OF THE YEAR! I didn't expect it, I can't believe it. This recognition is very rewarding for me, my work, and my love for this family.

I learned about the AU PAIR program from a friend in 2020/2021, yes, in the midst of a pandemic when much couldn't be done, but I did something. I researched, searched, and had interviews with many agencies until one day I found Ale on Instagram (EurAupair representative in Argentina). He gave me all the information I needed. He tells me about other girls' experiences and explaining in detail how to become an Au Pair. But something happened.

When I went for the medical check-up, they informed me that I needed treatment, and there I felt that my American dream had ended in that hospital bed. But it wasn't like that. I did everything my doctors recommended, and in 9 months, all my medical tests came out perfect, I could do it! In April 2022, I wrote to Ale - I'm ready! And that's where it all began.

I like the phrase "things happen when they have to happen". At first, I was very angry and sad about this inconvenience that made this process take a year longer than expected. But when I met the HORNES, I understood that in 2021, I wasn't supposed to be an Au Pair because a beautiful family was waiting for me much later. My destiny was for them

and their baby Carter to be my host family. Today, I can say that the delay in my life was a blessing as my experience with them is more than wonderful.

The Hornes became my second family, my American family. Every moment we spend together is an anecdote that often makes me think I'm a Horne. Every day, we practice cultural exchange, whether

it's through food, stories, songs, or words from our languages. Sometimes, I feel very American, but they, many times, are more Argentine than me. My hosts love my meat empanadas, and my host kid loves mate and dulce de leche. During the World Cup, the four of us were cheering for the Argentine team as if the United States weren't playing in this World Cup. For me, this tournament was very important, so much so that my host kid had his jersey, and it was my good luck charm for each game. When I wasn't at home to watch the match, my host parents would put the jersey of my country on their son. That gesture was the greatest demonstration of love and commitment to what this program is, a cultural exchange.



first word in Spanish, the first time we played soccer, every time we danced together, when he said my name for the first time. With Carter, every day is different, as he always does something new, whether it's a word, a gesture, or a new skill. Our adventures in the park or our

attempts to be Taylor Swift's dancers make these days unique; they are never the same. WE NEVER GET BORED. Every moment we spend together, each stage of his life, being there for him when he needs me or just watching him grow, is a blessing for me.

Carter doesn't know it yet, but he changed my



But not only they are my second family, but also grandparents, uncles and family friends. Each one of them makes me feel even more Horne because they invite me to their homes, to their important events, or just to sit with them and talk about life, showing interest in my ideals and my culture. They love me, care for me and worry about my well-being. I am very grateful to them because, from day one, they opened the doors of their home and their hearts to me.

But Carter (my host kid) is the owner of my heart. I arrived here when he was only 5 months old, and I still remember his eyes when he saw me for the first time. He turned my life into a rainbow, where each color represents a moment together. The first time he walked towards me, his first word in English, his

life forever; he makes me a better person and helped me understand that happiness is found in the small moments we share together.

This program made many of my dreams come true. I studied English at a university in the United States, making me feel like I was inside a movie. I traveled extensively across the country, met extraordinary people, and my English improved by 100%!!!

I will be grateful for life to this family, to EurAupair, and to every person who accompanied me in this process. Both my family in Argentina and the friends I made here. Without their unconditional support, perhaps, I wouldn't be living the best experience of my life. Once again, thank you very much!

With love, Agus



What Our Host Families Said About Their Au Pairs



Adams Family and au pair Megan from South Africa.

“From the moment we had our first skype call, we knew she was special. Not only did she check every box on paper, but there was an instant comfort and familiarity that could not be described. We were thrilled she was not only willing – but excited – to live in Mississippi, a not-so-glamorous destination. She quickly became more than an au pair, but truly became a family member after going through the literal trenches of sickness and health with us. I am honestly not sure how our family would have survived those challenging months

without her. Our children love and adore their “Miss Megan.” When she does complete the second year of her program later this year, there will be a gaping hole in our hearts and in our family.”

Adams Family,
Madison, MS

“More important to us than the daily Au Pair tasks, are the behaviors she role models. She is extremely patient, smart, always eager to gain knowledge, and interested in other cultures and languages. In conversations we and the kids have with her, she always has an optimistic and encouraging outlook. She also shows appreciation for what we do, what we have and our values. She truly cares about our family the same way we care for her. She became a true family member and friend to all of us.”

Ziegler Family, Nyack, NY

“Valery has become a true member of our family. This family membership came complete with the responsibility of being a role model for our six children, for which Valery has excelled. Our eldest two



Ziegler Family and au pair Victoria from Argentina.

children are college students with all the life stresses of balancing school, work, and social lives. Valery has been an inspiration to them with her dedication to both her work life and taking care of both her physical and mental wellbeing. For our high school senior, Valery has been the friend she turns to for advice about how to handle various types of school, social and boyfriend drama. Where Valery truly shines is in how

much she loves and cares for our younger children. After the last 16 months with Valery as a part of our family we can't imagine life without her. She is not merely a caretaker for our young children, she is a friend, teacher, boo-boo healer and exploration partner. As a mother, I am confident my kids are learning, growing, and being truly loved by Valery when I am not with them. “

Grassi Family, Reno, NV



Grassi Family and au pair Valeria from Colombia.

Recipe Corner

By Community Counselor Doina Plop from Michigan
Valentine's Day Tiramisu Recipe

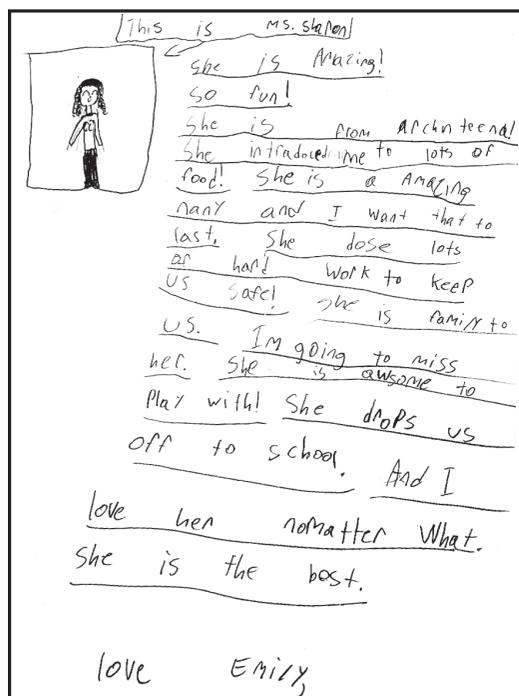
Ingredients:

1 shot of Coffee	8 oz of Mascarpone
3 Eggs	7 oz of Lady Fingers
½ cup of Sugar	3 Chocolate Graham Crackers
1 shot of Baileys or non-alcoholic substitution	Water
	Unsweetened Cocoa Powder

Directions:

- Make a shot of coffee and let it cool down.
- Separate the eggs, placing the yolks in one bowl and the whites in another. Beat the egg whites with sugar until stiff peaks form. Set aside.
- In another bowl, combine the egg yolks, remaining sugar, Baileys, and a tablespoon of the cooled coffee. Mix until well combined. Add the mascarpone cheese and beat until smooth.
- Gently fold the beaten egg whites into the mascarpone mixture.
- Now, it's time to assemble the tiramisu. Begin by layering chocolate graham crackers on the bottom of a dish. Then, dip ladyfingers into a mixture of water and coffee, and layer them on top of the graham crackers.
- Add a layer of the mascarpone mixture on top of the ladyfingers. Repeat the layers of ladyfingers and mascarpone mixture until you've used all the ingredients.
- Finish by sprinkling unsweetened cocoa powder over the top.
- Refrigerate the tiramisu for a few hours before serving to allow the flavors to meld together.
- Enjoy this delightful dessert with your loved ones on Valentine's Day!

A Heartwarming Letter from Host Child to School



It's a letter that au pair Sharon's host kid wrote for a school assignment. It's really cute. This is why we do what we do. Couple of words hard to read in the first two sentences but it says “She is from Argentina” and “She introduced me to lots of food”

EurAupair Photos

Monthly Activities



Back left to right: Sofia (Spain), Citla (former au pair, Mexico), CC Erika Williams, Ozlem (Turkey), Gizem (Turkey), Sindy (Colombia).
Front left to right: Sio (Argentina), Karen (Mexico), Cande (Argentina) at a painting class in Michigan.



Emily from Brazil, Andile from South Africa, CC Margaret, Luisa from Mexico at a pumpkin patch in Los Angeles.



Left to right Area Coordinator Sabine, Neoy from Thailand, Julianne from Argentina, Mariela, Lucia from Argentina, Bubbles from South Africa at a secret Santa meeting in Denver.



From the left top row Camilla (Venezuela), Aleyna (Turkey), Victoria (Argentina), Agus (Argentina), Swantje (CC).
Bottom row, Gissel (Mexico), Irel (Mexico), Paola (Venezuela), Monica (Colombia) at a Christmas event in Chicago.



Mariana (Mexico), AC Gisella, Tiziana (Mexico) at NYC Marathon.