



## Homestay Meeting, held at Rotorua English Language Academy 5.15-6.15 pm, Tuesday 25 June 2019

**Present: 5 RELA Homestay staff and representatives of 15 homestay families**

**The invitation to attend this meeting was publicised in the RELA Homestay Newsletter sent out on 19 June 2019. Occasionally, people are finding our messages in their Junk Mail. Please check if you haven't read that newsletter.**

### Topics covered by RELA staff

- Our homestay operation is a team effort.
- Introduction to Gina Cicolini who will be taking over placements and monitoring visits from August
- Currently Jan is in charge of homestay compliance, Chris is doing placements, Paula is doing all visits, and Teri is managing all profiles, homestay databases, payments, airport transport
- Jan went over a number of items raised in the last newsletter:
  - Links to where important information can be found on the website. Most things can be found on the *Homestaying for RELA* link. This sits under the *Accommodation* link in the main menu. The website is currently being redeveloped so there may be some changes to this. We will send out an email advising of new links when the website is up and running. Whenever we make changes to our documents, the latest version can be found at these links.
  - Some of the most important links are
    - The contract
    - The Homestay Manual. Homestays were encouraged to read this again as it answers most questions they will have.
    - The back of the Handbook also has a new section on Understanding Cultural differences which is especially good for those new to hosting for RELA.
    - Our weekly school notices and the 1-3 Activity timetable. These will tell you what is happening for the students each week.
  - Buses – we explained that our students can get cheap bus fares. They just need to show the driver their RELA ID and pay using a SMARTride card. It is helpful if hosts can assist the students, on the first morning they take the bus, to buy a SMARTride card. We also suggested that it would be a good idea for hosts to become familiar with their own bus route so they can properly teach students about the most convenient places to get on and off the bus
  - Rules which RELA has developed recently for Under 18s including Shopping and the Night Market. These will be put on our revamped website. For now they are in the Student Handbook which all students are given on their first day. If hosts would like to see a copy of the handbook, you can find one on the website at <http://rela.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Student-Handbook-10.06.19.pdf> We have also attached a copy of the rules to this email for you.

## Homestay survey

A huge thank you was given to those who had completed the survey. We explained the rationale for doing the survey (Code compliance) and that the feedback we got from it was very useful for us and has helped us develop a number of new policies. It has also helped to give feedback to our hosts and answer questions they may have. Items raised included:

- The student feedback process we undertake at the school. Some homestays may feel that students don't have an opportunity to tell us how they are feeling. Rest assured this is not the case. At the end of a student's first week with us, they have a one-to-one talk with one of our senior staff. They are asked about their class and also about their homestay. We ask them how comfortable they feel, is the family interacting with them, do they have enough food, are they warm enough. Any problems from this, we talk directly to you. Every 6 weeks, we test all our students and at this time, they also fill in another questionnaire about living in the homestay. During the test week, those students who are with us long-term also have a face-to-face meeting with one of our staff to make sure everything is going okay. Again, if any problems come up, we talk directly to you. Lastly all students are asked about their homestay experience when they leave the school.
- Student Safety – see below for more information on this
- Information about your student. When we email you with a new student placement request, if we have an accommodation form for the student we send this to you in an attachment. Sometimes we only receive a short message telling us the students likes, dislikes and allergies, and sometimes we simply receive only the enrolment form. In short, we send you all the information we get about a student.

## Other Topics Discussed

- Amendments to the Code of Practice for the Care of International Students, which mean there is even more compliance which RELA has to address. Our homestay operation is governed by the Code, and it is especially strict for students aged under 18. These amendments will mean that from July 1, we will need to carry out an *"appropriate safety check"* on all people aged over 18 in your house. This includes any person aged over 18 who is staying with you for 5 or more consecutive nights in any month. Please help us out with this by advising us if you have guests coming to stay.
- Lunches – we explained the lunches available for students to buy from the school office and ways to make preparing lunches easier for you.
- Trade Central. A lot of our students are going to K Mart, St Pierres Sushi and Pita Pit. RELA asks them to walk to the pedestrian crossing at the Amohau St/Trade Central lights, and not cross Amohau St or anywhere else. We take all new students to the corner to discuss this each Monday morning. We also have a sign about it at the RELA gate.
- ID cards – some homestays were unaware that their student have an ID card. This ID card has the school contact details and the emergency 111 number. All students are given this card on their first morning, and the various things on it are explained to them. The ID card also has your address on it. This will help the students if they ever need to take a bus/taxi or if they are lost. It is also good for you to use if you have another students with you and you need to contact their host family.

## Questions from homestay families which were discussed

- Transporting to and from town at the weekends. Some homestays were concerned that some students under 16 are asked to catch a bus to town at the weekends, and that some are not being picked up at a reasonable time (now 6.30pm at the latest) from the Night Market.
  - We also talked about the fact that students should not be walking from the night market back to RELA in the dark to be picked up. Hosts suggested using Starbucks as a meeting point. It's warm, has free Wi-Fi and is reasonably easy to access for everyone.
- Safety in Rotorua. Students under 18 should not be meeting at RELA at the weekends. Their meeting place should be in town, so they are not walking down Pukuatua St in the early evening
  - We also reiterated the 24 hour number (07 349 0473) and if they have any problems to please call.
- One homestay asked about having a list of one another's contact details, so they can contact others in their vicinity to carpool etc. We have been doing this for students in a tour group but, we have not found it necessary to circulate all students' homestays as our lists change every week. If you ever do need to find out if there are others with students near you, just email us and we'll let you know.
  - The RELA person who is on 24/7 call has a list of all students and their mobile numbers and also their host's contact details. If you ever have an emergency and need to urgently contact someone out of our school hours, please just give us a call.
  - This clause is in the homestay contract we are currently using. If you are a longer serving homestay, and you are not happy with this, please email.

*30. **Releasing details.** We give permission for our contact details to be given to students' families and agents. We also give permission for our contact details to be published for tour groups, to enable car-pooling and contact between families hosting students in the same group.*

- Payment
  - Chris explained that we review our homestay payments to you regularly. We have increased the transport per week to \$40 this year. We believe that our homestay fees are in line with other regional language schools and with most of the local high schools. We will continue to review our homestay fees regularly and let you know if there is any change.

Thanks for your support for us and our students. We have a pool of awesome host families to draw from!

The RELA team

## Rules for Under 18s

### Alcohol

Students aged under 18 are not allowed to drink alcohol. It is the law in New Zealand that no-one under the age of 18 can be served alcohol in licensed premises.

### Cars

No student aged under 18 may purchase or drive any motorized vehicle (this includes mopeds/motorized scooters). No student under 18 may be a passenger in a car driven by another RELA student without the school's permission.

### Curfew

All students aged under 18 must have permission to go out in the evening. If you do not have permission from your homestay and/or the school you must stay home. Students aged 16 and 17 must be home by 10pm, or earlier if your homestay says, and may not walk home. If students are aged under 16, they need to be home before dark.

### Overnight Stays

If you wish to stay overnight or for a weekend with a friend, you must first get the permission of the school and your homestay. No student aged under 18, may spend the night with a member of the opposite sex.

### Smoking and Vaping

It is illegal for cigarettes and vaping gear to be sold to anyone under the age of 18. No student under the age of 18 is allowed to smoke or vape at RELA or in their homestay.

### School Flats

Students aged under 18 are not allowed at the RELA flats after 5pm in the evening.

### Shopping and the Night Market

**Students aged 14-17** may go shopping or to the night market if your homestay agrees. You must make these plans with your homestay the day before, or in the morning before coming to school, and not annoy your homestay by texting and changing your plan often.

Your pick-up time from the night market should be no later than 6.30pm.

If the night market is cancelled you need to make arrangements to be picked up from RELA no later than 5pm.

**Students under 14** may go shopping and to the night market with your homestay. If your homestay is not with you, you may go **ONLY** if you are with a student aged 14 or over who is willing to look after you. You must also have permission from the school and from your homestay.

If the night market is cancelled you need to make arrangements to be picked up from RELA no later than 5pm.

### ***All RELA Students under 18:***

*At all times you must tell your homestay parents or caregiver where you are, who you are with and how you are getting home.*

*You must take your mobile phone with you and have it switched on and answer it at all times unless you are in a place where mobile phones are not allowed, such as the cinema. Your phone must have the number of your homestay parents in its memory and the school number.*

If you fail to follow any of these rules, you may be asked to leave the school.

## **RELA Rules for Shopping and the Night Market**

**Students over 18** may do what you wish. If you are living in a RELA homestay, always make sure your homestay knows your plans, especially for meals.

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### **For your safety**

- Stay in pairs or in a group
- Keep your money hidden
- Don't try shop-lifting
- Don't talk to people you do not know
- Don't draw attention to yourselves by behaving loudly or inconsiderately

**ALL STUDENTS** make sure you are waiting for your homestay in the correct place and at the correct time. Your homestays should not have to wait for you or go looking for you!

### **Shoplifting**

Don't try shoplifting. If you steal something from a shop, you will probably be caught. Shops have cameras and TVs watching you all the time. Anyone caught shoplifting and referred to the police will most likely be sent home to their own country on the first available flight. You will need to call your parents, in the presence of a RELA staff member, to explain what has happened.

## Sour Cream and Lemon Cake Recipe

### Fanforte

This dense, spiced cake originated in the Tuscan city of Siena. The version below has brandy and apricots added to the traditional recipe.

140g blanched almonds  
 140g hazelnuts  
 200g dried apricots, chopped  
 150g raisins (*Lexia* if possible), chopped  
 zest of 1 orange and 1 lemon  
 125g flour  
 2 tablespoons cocoa  
 1 tablespoon cinnamon  
 1 tablespoon mixed spice  
 1/4 cup brandy (optional)  
 155g sugar  
 about 1/3 - 1/2 cup honey

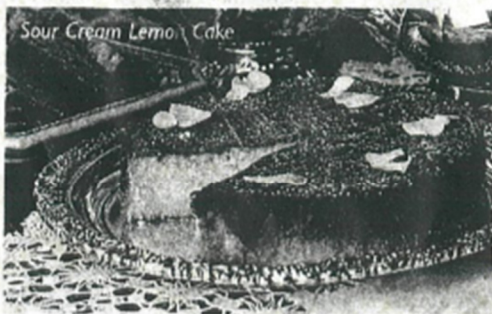
Line a 24cm-round tin with baking paper. Roast almonds and hazelnuts in separate containers in either a 180 degrees C oven for a few minutes or in the microwave on high for 3 minutes. When the hazelnuts are roasted, rub in a paper towel to remove most of the skins.

In a bowl mix together roasted nuts, apricots and raisins, orange and lemon zest, flour, cocoa and spices. Mix well, adding brandy if used.

In a small saucepan heat the sugar and the honey. (Warming the honey in the microwave will make measuring easier, or use a heated spoon). Boil till "soft ball" stage, about 1 to 2 minutes — a drop in a small glass of water forms a bead (116 degrees C on a candy thermometer).

While sugar is cooking, warm the nut/flour mixture in the microwave for 40 seconds on high. Quickly add the hot sugar mixture.

Press into the tin, dipping your fingers in milk to make the process easier. Bake at 150 degrees C (fan bake) or 160 to 170 degrees C for 40 to 50 minutes. Cool completely before taking out of the tin. Dust with icing sugar and serve sliced into thin wedges. This cake keeps well and even improves over time wrapped in foil and stored in a cool place.



### Divine Chocolate Cake

Don't try to halve this recipe — it doesn't work. It makes one large very rich cake. Dust with icing sugar and serve with whipped cream and a fruit purée or fresh fruit. Raspberry always works well with chocolate.

1kg cooking chocolate  
 500g unsalted butter  
 20 eggs  
 100g sugar  
 70g flour

Melt cooking chocolate and unsalted butter. Mix together. Separate eggs and beat whites until stiff. In another bowl, beat the yolks and sugar together well. Add flour to yolks.

Fold yolk mixture into chocolate and add one third of the egg whites and blend in.

Gently fold in the remaining egg whites. Pour into prepared cake tin. Bake at 205 degrees C for 15 minutes. Put a lid on the cake tin and bake for a further 15 minutes.

The total cooking time is 30 minutes. The cake will feel wet when it comes out of the oven. Allow to stand for at least 4 hours before serving.

### Sour Cream Lemon Cake

125g softened butter — 1 melt the butter 250  
 1 cup sugar 2 cups  
 3 eggs 6 eggs  
 2 teaspoons finely grated lemon rind — 1 grate the whole lemon  
 1 cup flour 2 c. flour  
 1 teaspoon baking powder 2t. bp.  
 1/2 cup light sour cream 1c. sour  
 GLAZE:  
 juice of 1 lemon  
 1/4 cup sugar to glaze

Beat the butter, sugar, eggs and lemon rind together with an electric mixer for a few minutes until the mixture is light and creamy.

Sift flour and baking powder and fold in alternately with the sour cream. Mix gently till smooth and pour into a well-greased 20cm springform tin.

Bake at 160 degrees C for 45 minutes or until cake springs back when tested.

Leave this cake in the tin for a few minutes. Mix the lemon juice and sugar together and pour over hot cake to glaze. Leave for a few minutes more and remove from the pan.