



Press Release – July 11, 2013

UNIVERSITY OF BERGAMO STUDY FINDS

OVER 75% OF HOME EXCHANGERS AGREE "MOST PEOPLE TRUSTWORTHY"

"My House is Yours" is the first in-depth study of the travelers behind the growing trend in home exchange, surveying HomeExchange.com's 46,000 members worldwide.

LOS ANGELES, CALIF. – For the first time, a detailed profile is available of the expanding demographic of home exchange travelers. The survey finds that the industry itself is making a deep impact on society. According to the researchers, *"people are turning more and more to models of consumption that emphasize community over selfishness,"* and home exchange *"may help to make our societies work better towards a sustainable future."*

With 93% of respondents satisfied with their experience and 81% having swapped homes more than once, the future also looks bright for home exchange. No longer just looking for an inexpensive travel option, home exchangers possess a deep cultural curiosity (98% declare an interest in cultural heritage and 84% visit museums and nature parks).

While a savvy breed of traveler (with 62% stating a high level of education), home exchangers also represent a wide cross-section of the traveling public. For example, the typical home exchange participant travels as a family (49% of them with children) and comes from across five continents, with the USA, France, Spain, Canada and Italy being the top five countries of residency.

Fair trade food (63%) and organic food (73%) are important to home exchangers, and 69% prepare their own meals while traveling, taking advantage of their access to a fully equipped kitchen. When not on the road, they are active contributors to their communities, with 59% reporting that they participate in community services, wildlife preservation, youth services, cultural preservation or animal welfare.

Given the strong sense of trust found among respondents (75% agree that "most people are trustworthy"), collaborative consumption and home exchange should continue to grow in popularity. As stated in the survey:

"Swapping houses is one of the most significant boundaries of modern tourism, because it incorporates some of the dynamics that characterize the tourist of the new millennium: the increasingly felt desire to travel several times a year, even with limited budgets, the need to organize tailor-made trips as personalized as possible and the desire to make the trip an authentic experience... not only to know a new country with all its attractions, but also to immerse yourself in a new culture"

About the Researchers at the University of Bergamo

Francesca Forno, Assistant Professor of Sociology and Sociology of Consumption, is also Director of the CORES LAB (Research Group on Consumption, Networks and Practices of Sustainable Economies).

Roberta Garibaldi, Assistant Professor of Marketing and Tourism Marketing, is also a member of CeSTIT (Centro studi per il turismo e l'interpretazione del territorio).

The study was conducted from April to May 2013, surveying 46,000 HomeExchange.com members with an unprecedented answer rate of 16% (7,000 respondents).

About HomeExchange.com

Started in 1992 by Ed Kushins, HomeExchange.com has evolved into the largest and fastest growing online home exchange travel company in the world. This year their 46,000+ Members will make over 75,000 home swaps across 154 countries. HomeExchange.com makes it easy to plan and enjoy a home exchange vacation in almost any country, city or area of interest and offers travelers a memorable, authentic 'live like a local' experience. The site is available in 16 different languages. HomeExchangeGold.com, serving the luxury market, launched in 2012.

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MY HOUSE IS YOURS

AN IN-DEPTH STUDY OF THE HOME EXCHANGE TREND

CONDUCTED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF BERGAMO ON THE HOMEEXCHANGE.COM COMMUNITY



WHO IS THE HOME EXCHANGER?



6 OUT OF 10 ARE HIGHLY EDUCATED



98%

ARE INTERESTED IN CULTURAL HERITAGE



84%

VISIT PARKS AND MUSEUMS



DINING PREFERENCES WHILE HOME EXCHANGING



3/4

SAY ORGANIC FOOD IS A MUST



69%

PREPARE THEIR OWN MEALS



31%

TRY LOCAL RESTAURANTS

HOME EXCHANGE = HAPPY VACATION



75%

SAY PEOPLE ARE TRUSTWORTHY



93%

ARE SATISFIED WITH EXCHANGES



4/5

EXCHANGED AT LEAST TWICE



1/2

TRAVEL WITH CHILDREN