



# LIVING IN NIAGARA



The Niagara region has a thriving culinary scene with award-winning restaurants and internationally-recognized chefs. Fruit orchards and vineyards flourish in its unique microclimate, while its wineries are considered among the world's finest. We're proud of our "small-town" atmosphere, friendly people and safe communities, nestled among the region's historic towns and hamlets. And, we're equally proud of being at the centre of one of the most populated areas of North America where ten million people live within a two-hour drive of Niagara College.

## HOMESTAY

Sometimes the best way to introduce yourself to a new country is to experience it through the warmth of a family home. We believe that your homestay family is as important to your experience as your classes.

## HOME AWAY FROM HOME

The international housing coordinator carefully selects each family to match your needs, ensuring you will have a comfortable and enjoyable stay. The monthly fee includes three meals a day, your own fully furnished private room and study area, and access to the entire house.

**Homestay** is a fantastic way to be introduced to **Canadian culture and the Niagara community**. Wonderful local families provide support and assistance while students adapt to the lifestyle and demands of Canadian student life. Homestay families are as diverse as the international students who attend Niagara College, but what our homestay families all have in common is a desire to contribute to the lives of others.

Living with a Canadian family will be a very rewarding experience that you will never forget. Once you have your confirmation of who your homestay family is, you will be able to contact them and begin to develop a lifelong friendship. You will have many questions to ask and having these questions answered will help you to adjust more quickly to your life as a student at Niagara College.

**Meals:** All of your meals are provided by your homestay. You may be expected to prepare your own breakfast and lunch. If so, your family will show you what you can make or take for these meals. The evening meal is a family time with all household members sitting down together to eat and discuss the day's events. Although meals are included in your homestay fee, you may want to purchase food, drinks or snacks that the family does not regularly use. Some of the best experiences in a homestay are learning Canadian culture and spending time together while eating meals.

**Computer and Internet Access:** We recommend that you talk to your homestay family about your computer needs, and that you bring or purchase your own computer if you want computer access at home. Basic internet will be available in homestays and included in the cost per month. Internet use in Canada is more limited and costly than many other countries. We recommend that you discuss your internet use with your homestay family after you arrive. Please remember that the college has computer labs that are available for student use for many hours each day and are free of charge.





**Pets:** Many families have pets, usually dogs and cats. In Canada, dogs are very clean and friendly; cats are well cared for and make good companions. You may be surprised by how much you enjoy them as you get used to their presence

**Phone:** You will be able to use the family phone for local calls; however, you will be expected to use a long distance phone card for all long distance calls. It is wise to limit the number and length of your calls as there are others in the home who share the phone.

**Household Help:** Everyone in the family will have some household duties. You should volunteer to help with making meals, cleaning up afterwards or doing other household chores. The homestay parents are not servants and will be pleased if you help with chores, along with the other family members. You will also find that both males and females are expected to share the workload of the household.

**Personal Care:** In Canadian culture it is important for people to use deodorant, brush their teeth often and shower daily. Showers should not last more than 10 minutes, and it is important to be sure the curtain is inside the bathtub and water is not on the floor. Tissue is flushed down the toilet, but sanitary napkins are wrapped and placed in a garbage container. Your homestay family will help you get used to living in their home. It is very important to talk together about their family habits.

**Guests:** You will need to ask your homestay family before inviting guests to their home. Some families may have room to accommodate guests, but they should not be expected to. If you have family visiting, they should arrange to stay at a nearby hotel. If your host family offers to house them, they should expect to be reimbursed a minimum of \$23 per day per person. Families will not have your boyfriend or girlfriend stay overnight. It is best to talk openly to your host family about your relationships and their household guidelines.



## TRANSPORTATION

The U-Pass gives students unlimited ridership on ALL Welland, Niagara Falls and St. Catharines transit systems regular routes for one fare while attending Niagara College.

## HEALTH CARE

Canada has one of the finest health care systems in the world and Canadian residents enjoy a high quality of living because of it. Canada has one of the finest health care systems in the world and Canadian residents enjoy a high quality of living because of it. Canadians typically pay for their health care through the tax system however because international students do not pay taxes, they must have private health insurance.

Students are registered automatically into a health insurance policy through StudentGuard Health Insurance. While some medical providers will bill StudentGuard directly, you may have to pay for the services you receive and then file a claim to be reimbursed for your expenses.

Each campus has a Health Centre staffed by a Registered Nurse. Niagara College also provide doctor's clinics at the Welland and Niagara-on-the-Lake campuses during the week.

