



Speaking Parts 1 and 3

1 In small groups, discuss these questions.

- Do you like meeting new people?
- Do you like meeting people from other countries?
- How do you make guests feel welcome?
- What usually happens when people in your country invite guests to their home?

Reading

2 You are going to read a passage by a British woman who spent most of 2001 staying with a family in a foreign country in order to study everyday life there. In small groups, think about the problems that she may have had and also the things that she may have enjoyed. Then read the passage quickly to check if any of your ideas are mentioned.

⌚ about 700 words

Different forms of hospitality

As a British woman social anthropologist, I once spent a year in Moldova, in eastern Europe, studying everyday life in the country. I stayed with a Moldovan family, to see from the inside how people managed their lives. I had a wonderful time, and made many new friends. What I observed is of course based on my own experience, at a particular place and time.

I often found it surprisingly difficult to see life there through the eyes of a Moldovan. This was because the people I met were extremely hospitable and I was treated as an honoured guest at all times. As my hosts, they wanted me to enjoy myself, and not to get involved in shopping, cooking, or other domestic chores. Most mornings I was encouraged to go out to explore the city, or carry out my research, and I returned later to find that my elderly landlady and her sister had travelled across the city on buses to the central market to bring back heavy loads of potatoes, a whole lamb, or other large quantities of produce.

I was often invited to people's homes, and was always offered food on entering. Most of the adults I met enjoyed inviting friends, family, neighbours, colleagues and even

strangers into their homes, where they treated them to food, drink, and a lively, hospitable atmosphere. Hosts hurried to serve guests as well and as quickly as possible. When a household was expecting guests, large amounts of food were prepared in advance, usually by the women. Wine had already been made, generally by the men, who were also responsible for pouring it. Unexpected visitors were still offered as much food and drink as the household could provide in the circumstances.

At the time of my visit, it was not always easy to buy food. Grocery stores tended to be rather expensive and difficult to find, and so people usually shopped in markets instead. Because few of the people I knew owned cars, most had to make frequent trips to the market on foot or crowded buses. People regularly travelled to several locations to purchase food and other necessities. City inhabitants were also involved in complex food exchanges with their home villages.

There were many similarities to my experience of Russia during visits in the 1990s. Here too, I found that people often put enormous effort into providing very generous meals for guests. In fact, my Russian hosts seemed to

feel that they could only succeed in their role as host if their guests tried all the courses of the meal, and consumed far more than they would normally.

My impression was that there was a clear, generally accepted understanding of how hosts should behave. They were expected to provide large amounts of food, and to ensure that guests ate a great deal. All the chores – the shopping, preparation, washing up – were the responsibility of the hosts, and a guest's offer to help was usually politely refused. Guests were unlikely to be allowed into the kitchen.

In England the roles of host and guest tend to present a different picture, in ways that some might welcome and others regret. The two roles are less strictly defined as the English move towards more casual notions of hospitality than in the past. Perhaps to make guests feel at home, they may be invited into the kitchen to talk, and an offer to help with the cooking may well be accepted. Although traditionally cooking was women's work, nowadays far more men either help with or take charge of the food preparation.

In general, guests are expected to eat as much, or as little, as they like – so many people are on a diet that this is accepted as an adequate reason for not eating much. Hosts usually don't feel that their food, cooking skills or hospitality are being criticised if a guest refuses second helpings. And after the meal, a guest who offers to help with the washing up may be disappointed to find that their offer is accepted! Unexpected visitors will probably be offered a cup of tea or coffee, and perhaps a biscuit, but an offer of food is not regarded as essential.

3 Questions 1–8

Complete the summary below using words from the box.

A year in Moldova

The writer spent a year in Moldova as a member of a local 0 household, and studied the 1 of daily life. As a 2, she was not expected to help with domestic 3 She found that making and serving 4 was seen as men's work, while women were responsible for other aspects of providing 5 Buying 6 generally required long journeys to 7 by 8

bus	car	customs	duties	groceries	guest	homes
host	household	markets	meals	people	problems	
resident	shops	villages	wine			

Question 9

What does the writer say about hospitality in Russia?

- A People see it as their duty to invite guests, even if they do not enjoy being a host.
- B Certain food is kept for special occasions when guests are present.
- C Foreign visitors are likely to be treated differently from Russian guests.
- D Hospitality is seen as an occasion for guests to eat more than usual.

Questions 10–13

Which **FOUR** of the following activities by guests in England are mentioned by the writer?

- A bringing food or drink
- B helping to prepare food
- C eating a small amount
- D praising the host's cooking
- E refusing food
- F helping to wash up
- G inviting hosts to their home

Speaking Part 2

4 Look at this task.

Describe an occasion when you were a guest in someone else's home.

You should say:

why you went to that person's home

what you did while you were there

how that person behaved towards you

and explain how you felt about being a guest.

In small groups, think of as many ideas as possible, for example:

- *why you went to that person's home:*
I visited my grandparents, as I do every week.
I went home with a friend, whose parents invited me to join them for lunch.
- *what you did while you were there:*
I helped my host to cook dinner.
We chatted, then went out for a walk.