**MEET OUR HOST FAMILY**

My husband and I have hosted eight high school students, mostly from Europe and one from Tanzania but Minh is our first Olympic College student. We initially decided to host because we were contacted by the mother of a former student of mine who was an exchange program coordinator and who thought we might enjoy it.

Some of our favorite activities and memories with our students have been introducing them to American foods, enjoying traditional foods from their countries that they cooked for us and discussing similarities and differences of our cultures with them. Some of our favorite memories with Mina have been choosing and cutting our family Christmas tree, taking her and the other two girls through the Olympic Game Farm, driving her through her Covid-safe OC graduation ceremony, and taking her out to celebrate afterward!

Most challenges we've experienced were figuring out how to cater to a variety of food likes/dislikes, handling health issues that come up, listening to concerns, guiding them in problem-solving, and helping with school assignments when needed. However, our biggest challenge in hosting students has been dealing with the repercussions of the pandemic; we wanted for our students to have a full experience while they were here!

Our best advice to students is to ask lots of questions, get to know your host family and show interest in their activities, share your culture with your host family and new friends, look for ways to help out around the house as a family member, ask for help when you need it, make memories, and most importantly, be yourself! Our advice to potential host families is to make sure that everyone in the family is on board with the plan before you commit. If possible, communicate frequently with your student, even before he/she arrives. Within a couple of days of arrival, sit down as a family with your student to discuss expectations. Students won't be comfortable until they know what is expected of them! But by far, the most important piece of advice we can offer is to truly make your student a member of your family and intentionally make lots of great memories for all of you!

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**Homestay Q & A**

**Q: What is OC’s COVID-19 Safe Start plan?**

**A:** Olympic College will resume limited in-person instruction and services in accordance with Governor Inslee's requirements for Higher Education. All students, employees and visitors must complete a health screening form in advance of coming to campus. As of Aug 16, 2021 masks are required when indoors per the Kitsap Public Health District directive. Visit the link below for more info.

COVID-19 Olympic College Safe Start Plan:
https://tinyurl.com/y3ck3xdt

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- Global Recipe: Japanese Shoga-yaki (Ginger Pork)
Hi! I am Tasuku Meguro and I have been staying with my host family for 10 months now. One of the most rewarding experiences is to live with my family which allows me to learn words and idioms that I never knew existed. Whenever I ask my host family a question, they take it seriously. So, I am very grateful for that. My family and I also do a lot of activities since my host family is very fond of outdoor activities. I remember going on a hike and doing canoeing too. I was not very familiar with these activities, but they supported me and challenged me along the way. One memorable experience is that various guests from different places have visited my house. Some came from Wisconsin, New York, and even Taiwan and Kuwait. We spent time with them as if they were family.

Even though we have had such valuable experiences, I had to face some challenging experiences as well. I am not very good at communicating with others. Furthermore, in order to communicate with others in America, I need to speak English. I am really blessed to have so many guests and party-goers to meet and talk to, but it took me a while to get used to the environment. For a while, I longed to live alone, but I thought, “If I'm going to do this, let's do something I can only do in America.” So, I decided to become a homestay student. Please think about it. When we go back to our own country, we can't easily join an American family as homestay students. I temporarily returned to Japan last September. Even though I was supposed to come back to the same host family, the sadness of leaving my American family made me cry. My host family gave me such great memories and love. If any student is thinking of living in homestay, please try it out. You may find a second, lifelong family for yourself. - Tasuku

**Global Recipe**

Shogayaki is one of the most common homemade pork dishes in Japan. Shoga (生姜) means ginger and Yaki means grill or fry in Japanese.

**Ingredients**
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 tsp grated ginger
- kosher/sea salt (I use Diamond Crystal; use half for table salt)

**Recipe**

1. Gather all the ingredients.
2. To make the sauce, grate onion and ginger in a small bowl. Mince the garlic and add to the bowl.
3. Add the seasonings to the bowl.
4. Sprinkle the meat with salt and pepper.
5. In a large non-stick frying pan, heat oil on medium-high heat. When the pan is hot, cook the meat in a single layer, flipping over once the bottom is golden brown.
6. When both sides are golden brown, add the sauce and chopped scallion. Serve immediately.

**Syogayaki ~Ginger pork~**

- freshly ground black pepper
- 1 Tbsp neutral-flavored oil (vegetable, rice bran, canola, etc.) (for cooking)
- 1 green onion/scallion (finely chopped)
- ½ lb thinly sliced pork loin
- ¼ onion

**For the seasonings**
- 2 Tbsp soy sauce
- 2 Tbsp mirin
- 2 Tbsp sake
- 1 Tsp sugar

Reference: [https://www.justonecookbook.com/ginger-pork-shogayaki/](https://www.justonecookbook.com/ginger-pork-shogayaki/)