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**Kate:** Hello and welcome to 6 Minute English. I'm Kate Colin and today we're talking about **home swapping**.

**Jackie:** Hi Kate, yes our topic today is about the growing trend of exchanging your house or apartment with someone in a different country for a limited period. So instead of paying for an expensive hotel to go on holiday, you simply swap your house with someone in a place you want to visit and you can get a low-cost holiday anywhere in the world.

**Kate:** What do you think Jackie – would you be willing to swap your house with a stranger rather stay in a hotel?

**Jackie:** Answers

**Kate:** Before we go any further, here's my question for this week. According to a recent survey which is the most of the most popular destination for UK home swaps?

- a) Australia
- b) UK
- c) USA

**Jackie:** Answers

**Kate:** So how does home swapping work exactly? Well, you just think of a country you'd like to go to, register with one of the many companies which deal in home swapping who will list your house on their website, and hopefully you'll find another family or individual who wants to swap their house for yours.

**Kate:** Now we're going to listen to someone who has tried it. She says she's a tremendous fan of home swapping – which means she likes it. Why is she a fan?

Link 1

Well I'm a tremendous fan of home swapping, for all kinds of reasons not least because it's free. But also it's the most marvellous opportunity to become somebody else because you inhabit someone else's life when you swap homes with them.

**Jackie:** She says she's a fan of home swapping because it's free and it's a great opportunity to live someone else's life. I suppose she means it is a unique chance to see how other people live around the world, something you wouldn't experience so much if you stayed in a hotel.

**Kate:** Now she goes on to talk about the cost. She mentions home swapping being part of the **mainstream**.

**Jackie:** If something is in the **mainstream**, it means that some is accepted and known by most people.

**Kate:** So let's listen to the next extract – what makes home swapping a cheap holiday?

Link 2

It's become part of the **mainstream**. Usually they include cars as well, so when you think about it you're not paying for your accommodation or your vehicle. It really makes it a cheap holiday. Basically all you've got to pay for is the airfares.

**Jackie:** She said that many home swaps include a car and this means that you get your accommodation and vehicle for free. All you pay for is your travel and airfare.

**Kate:** Now, let's look at some words for the different types of homes you could end up swapping with:

**Kate:** A **flat** is the equivalent an **apartment**, or you could end up with a **penthouse**, this is a luxurious apartment at the top of a building. A **cottage** is a small self-contained house which is usually in the countryside. A **townhouse** is a house in a town or city, usually a comfortable, expensive one in a fashionable area. A **houseboat** is a special boat which people use as their home, often kept in one place on a river or canal and a **holiday home** or **2<sup>nd</sup> home** is where people don't live full time but visit at the weekends and on holidays.

Let's listen to the next extract – which of these types of accommodation does she mention?

### Clip 3

There's a wide range of options in unexpected locations from a houseboat in Kerala to an apartment in Fairbanks, Alaska and a friend of mine recently spent Christmas in an apartment on Bondi Beach.

**Jackie:** She mentioned a house boat in Kerala, India and an apartment in Alaska and a friend of hers spending Christmas on Bondi Beach in Australia.

**Kate:** Now we're going to hear from some members of a family from London who regularly house swap. What does the first speaker like about it?

### Clip 4

I quite like living in other people's houses. You're not living in a hotel so you don't have to live out of a suitcase. You can unpack and live like you would at home but in somebody else's house.

**Jackie:** She said she likes being to unpack and doesn't have to **live out of a suitcase**. If you live out of a suitcase you don't unpack your things, you have to keep them in your bag, so she says she likes this because she can put all her clothes and things in a cupboard and feel at home. What does her dad think?

#### Clip5

And I think the other thing I quite like is that because you're living in someone's house you can kind of pretend you're not a tourist and you're actually nearly a local so you can feel a bit **smug** about that.

**Jackie:** He said that because you're living in someone else's house, you can feel like a local and not a tourist. That makes him feel **smug** which means pleased with himself because he's done something in quite a clever way.

**Kate:** Yes, I think that's one of the main benefits of home swapping. Often if you stay in a hotel, you get to see very little of the real culture of the country you're visiting. What better way of finding out about how people live than living in someone's house? Before we finish for today, let's have a look at some of the vocabulary we've come across:

**Jackie:** We had **mainstream** which that something that happens often and is known.

**Kate:** And we had various different types of accommodation:

A **flat** is an **apartment**

A **penthouse** is a luxurious apartment or set of rooms at the top of a hotel or tall building.

A **cottage** is a small self-contained house which is usually in the countryside

A **townhouse** is a house in a town or city, usually a comfortable, expensive one in a fashionable area: it can also mean it is joined on to another house.

A **houseboat** is a special boat which people use as their home, often kept in one place on a river or canal and a **holiday home** or **2<sup>nd</sup> home** is where people don't live full time but visit at the weekends and on holidays.

**Jackie:** And we had that term **to live out of a suitcase** which means that you have to keep all your things packed and you can't take them and put them in a cupboard. And we also had the term **smug** which means to feel pleased with yourself.

**Kate:** And finally the answer to the question I asked you earlier. According to a recent survey, which country is the most popular this year for home swapping.

**Jackie:** I think I said Australia.

**Kate:** I'm afraid you were wrong - the answer is USA with 15% of respondents preferring to go there. 12% chose to stay in the UK and 11% chose Australia.

That's all we have time for. Thanks for listening everyone. Goodbye!