

Santander June 28<sup>th</sup> 2002

Dear Participant:

**WELCOME TO SANTANDER!!!!** We are definitely happy to have you here, and *we are very much looking forward to spending wonderful and fun times together*: dancing the most popular Latin rhythms like salsa and merengue, learning about Spanish culture and customs, visiting ancient towns, hiking up a Roman route, watching a traditional bullfight, discussing current events in Spanish, studying everyday phrases, jogging, shopping, and much more.

*You have just arrived, and you probably need some time to recover from your long trip.* You will have time to rest this week end, if your host family allows you to (usually they are really excited and they want to show you around or take you out...). *Take these two days as a great opportunity to get to know your host family members better, to start testing your Spanish skills and to get adapted to a totally new environment with a new language, new customs, new schedules, new foods*, etc... Don't be shy about asking your family anything that comes to mind. Be willing to participate in every way possible, by interacting with them, going wherever they go, helping them with small household duties, telling them about your family at home and friends... **Use your imagination!!!** Remember that your host family chose to have you and can't wait to spend quality time with you.

We understand that you may want to call your parents back home to let them know you arrived safely and perhaps share with them some of your first impressions of Spain. *You can ask your host family's permission to make a collect call and also to help you make the call.* If you brought a calling card with you, as we suggested you do in our Welcome Letter, you will need to know the access code from Spain, which your calling card company provided you in the U.S. There is no way to find out that code here. If you decide to buy your calling card here, we suggest Eurocity, because it is the best and cheapest company (you can get as many as 105 minutes to the U.S. for only \$ 6. The card is sold at Ciberlope on Lope de Vega Street. I can take you there personally, and at the same time show you where you can access the internet).

*We will be meeting on Monday July 1<sup>st</sup> at 9:30 am at the Post Office (Correos) for our Orientation Meeting and test in Spanish.* Your host family will show you the way and may point out for you some landmarks, so that from then on you will be able to go back and forth on your own. Some of you may need to take public buses, but don't worry, your family will show you how to do it and where to buy the tickets. (Usually they come in a 10-trip package for about 40 cents each way.)

Since you'll have plenty of time to relax and rest this weekend, this may be a good time to read and take a look at this whole and interesting package about our beautiful city Santander, our fun and enriching program, the excursions and activities... so that when you attend our orientation on Monday, you may already have questions for us. You may want to bring paper and pencil for the orientation.

In the meantime, *if there is something important you want to share with me or if you feel overwhelmed... you can call me and I'll be more than happy to speak with you, as well as to help you out in any way possible. My biggest satisfaction is to see you happy, having the time of your life, and enjoying a great experience.* Otherwise we will see each other on Monday at 9:30 am at our usual meeting point, the Post Office.

***Have a wonderful weekend!!! And relax!!!!***

Nuria and Homestay Spain Staff

P.S. My whole staff and I are very much looking forward to enjoying this whole month with you.