



RIDEF Home Exchange

<http://www.exchange-of-homes.com/>

With RIDEF Home Exchange you hit the target

September 2005

## RIDEF HOME EXCHANGE NEWSLETTER

Dear members,

You probably noticed that we have introduced quite a few **new features**. Surely the most important for you is the fact that all our listings are now FREE. We already had free listings as option for quite some time, but they only allowed restricted access to other members and you still had to pay the normal fee in order to be able to seal an exchange agreement.

This is no longer the case: **ALL listings are free** and they come with the full facilities, including up to 3 pictures. You can include your complete address, phone and fax number and private web address, if you so desire. Everybody - members and non-members alike - can contact you by email. This is done by means of a web form. In this way your email address is not visible and you are protected from junk mail. However, if you don't care about this, you can include it in the description of your home.

Most home exchange agencies - including us in the past - only allow exchanges between members. There are some good reasons for this. If a non-member makes you an offer, you don't have a clue who he/she is. Members, however, all have a listing themselves. They provided a fair amount of personal information and have seriously considered an exchange. They have not just contacted you based on a momentary brainwave. So in general member offers are of higher quality, which does not mean that the offer of a non-member should be ignored in all cases. **We leave that choice to you.** If you prefer to ignore non-member offers, do so: they don't know your email address (nor any other contact information unless you have chosen to publish it) and hence are unable to pester you.

Our long experience (next year our service will have existed for 10 years) has taught us that members in most cases treat their listing as if it was a rental offer. This means that once the listing has been published, they sit back and wait. However, if all members do this - and indeed, this is almost the case - then nothing happens at all. **Please remember: submitting your listing is only half the work.** The other half consists of contacting fellow members: up to 10 is our recommendation. If you really insist on sitting back, there is now half a chance that you still get offers, because, as we said above, non-members can also get in touch with you.

**How does one select potential exchange partners?** Click "Listings", choose the country of interest and look at the offers. Flexibility helps a lot. If you are only prepared to exchange during a clearly defined and fixed period, you may not necessarily find a match. Explore! The world is large and beautiful.

On the other hand you may indeed be quite flexible and not care too much where to go. In this case you obviously have a better chance of getting a positive response, if you make offers to somebody who indicated your area as preferred destination. This is now easily possible: **our listings are also grouped by destination.** Click the link "destination" on the home page and choose your own city, area or country. You will find all members

who would like to go to this place.

**Are the RIDEF Home Exchange listings all fresh and valid?** In all listings you find the date it was submitted. Listings are kept for 2 years and are then automatically removed. After one year the listing header in the list for each country changes from black to grey. Hence you see immediately, if it is older than one year. Note that with such listings there is often a fair chance that the owners are still interested in an exchange. Although the period they have indicated is in the past, they may not have been able to make an exchange at that time and would not mind at all doing it now.

On the home page you find a "news ticker" which shows the headlines of the 10 latest listings. If you are specially interested in brand new listings, you can subscribe to our **alerting service**. You then get an email whenever a new listing has been submitted. At present this service is manual and I must admit, it did not always work without fail. However, it is planned to make it automatic, so that you can really rely on it.

We had a **message board** for home exchange and another one for vacation rental for quite some time. Both were operated by external commercial providers. We now developed our own. It can be used for both home exchange and vacation rental and it is ad-free. As is the case with listings, everybody can reply to a message through a web form, without knowing the email address of the message owner. Again this is to protect you from spam.

The final novelty is a page from which you can **download a range of documents** which provide all kind of information in different languages. This is only at its beginning and will be expanded significantly.

Happy exchanging or renting

*Mark Siegrist RIDEF Home Exchange*

*Main Home Exchange website: <http://www.exchange-of-homes.com>*

*Vacation Rental website: <http://www.rent-swiss-chalet.com/vr.php>*