

01. How Do People Avoid Picking a Terrible Flatmate?

Being able to afford to rent your own place is something that most people would like to do. However, skyrocketing rent prices in London and around the UK mean that this is not possible for most people. In 2011, a national census found that 1,850,137 households were made up of either more than one person or more than one family.

So what is the reality for today's house- and flat-sharers? How easy is it to find a decent flatmate?

Some people will stick with what they already know and share with people who are their friends. Others will look elsewhere to find a flatmate by placing an advert online or in a shop window. Some others may even organize a 'speedflatmating' event - a bit like speed dating but instead of trying to find a partner, many people are interviewed to decide if they are the right person to move in.

Finding a good person to fill a vacant room can be difficult. How do you know if a stranger can be trusted? Can they pay the rent? Will they nick your food?

Will they cross the line by doing something unacceptable? Imagine if your new flatmate showed up without any socks. You might feel charitable and lend

them a few pairs, which would be a kind thing to do. But what if you found out later that they had gone into your room and taken more socks? What if that person was actually one of your friends? That would probably be going a step too far for most people.

Perhaps it is better to live with strangers than it is to live with friends. You might avoid falling into a false sense of security and avoid odd clothes-sharing or food-related incidents. Some people would say that living with random strangers is ok when you are younger – but not so easy to do when you get older.

The amount of house sharing is rising, for both younger and older people. And this means that the dilemma of choosing who to live with is not going away any time soon.

02. Would You Go to Antarctica?

If you were looking for adventure and could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go? Would you run with the bulls in Pamplona, or go bungee jumping in New Zealand? Perhaps you would prefer to go diving in the Indian Ocean, or go hiking in the Himalayas.

But if you'd done all that, and you had the time and money, would you go to Antarctica? Considered the last great wilderness on Earth, it's becoming the destination of choice for adventurous tourists. Just a few scientists in research stations share the icy landscape with penguins and other animals which can cope with the low temperatures.

Tourism began in Antarctica in the 1950s and it's still small scale. About 37,000 tourists are expected there this season, and many won't even leave the boat.

But when Juliet Rix visited the frozen continent, she asked herself if she should be there at all. Tourists can cause problems to such a sensitive environment. Her tour guide admitted that all visitors leave a footprint and they all go to the same places, the accessible coastline, which is also where the penguins and seals go to breed.

However, some people believe that if carefully controlled, tourism could be

good for Antarctica. It has no native population and it needs advocates. Visitors to the icy continent might be ready to support and even to fund its preservation. And they're likely to join the discussion about global warming, which has led to the melting of glaciers.

According to Rix, guidelines are followed when you're about to set foot in Antarctica and tourists have to disinfect their boots to make sure no alien species are introduced.

And once on land, there's no eating or smoking. Rocks, bones – nothing should be taken as a souvenir and nothing should be left behind.

So if you did go, you would be able to enjoy breathtaking views. You would also have to be very careful not to pollute the environment, and keep your fingers crossed that you were not destroying it for future generations.

03. Hot Spring Fever

Although winter is nearly over, you can still enjoy hot springs. Soaking in a hot spring is just the answer for people who are looking to warm up, relieve tension, or soothe skin.

There are more than 100 hot springs across the island for people to experience and enjoy. As a result, hot spring spas have become some of Taiwan's greatest tourist attractions.

Beitou, Yangmingshan, Guanziling in Tainan, and Sichongxi in Pingtung County are known as the four main hot spring areas in Taiwan. It is not uncommon to see people going for a dip in roadside pools of hot water.

For those more serious about soaking, Green Island is home to one of the world's three seabed hot springs. There, milk-colored water flows out of the ocean floor and blends with the salt seas of the Pacific Ocean.

Taiwan's hot springs offer many health benefits. Soaking in the hot mineral water is believed to increase energy levels as well as help treat exhaustion, skin problems, and sore muscles. It goes without saying it is the ultimate way to relieve stress.

Hot springs have become a big part of Taiwanese culture thanks to the Japanese. It was during Japanese rule that hot spring baths began to boom in

Taiwan.

While people in Taiwan enjoy an occasional mud bath, our neighbors to the north have more creative options. One Japanese resort feels that red wine isn't just for drinking. They believe that it restores the body, so they offer people a chance to soak in it. If you are tempted to taste some of the red water, don't because the spa has a 12-foot bottle of wine for drinking. The resort also offers a green tea bath that is good for your skin and helps your body combat sickness. It even has a sake bath that targets age spots and freckles. Just in case you need to wake yourself up after all that relaxing, a coffee bath will stimulate even the sleepiest of souls. On Valentine's Day, dessert is served to you in a chocolate bath, which attracts a lot of visitors.

Whatever type you fancy, nothing beats warming up with a dip in a hot spring. Moreover, many hot springs are just a stone's throw from Taipei.