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Pigeon Forge man says swapping homes great way to vacation

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By **HARLOW SUMERFORD**
6 News Reporter

KNOXVILLE (WATE) - Since discovering the website [homeexchange.com](#) a few years ago, Marc Newman, of Pigeon Forge, says he rarely vacations any other way.

Usually the Newmans travel outside the U.S. As part of the program, they've visited Scotland, Ireland and England.

His home, a three bedroom in Pigeon Forge, is currently listed on the site. The idea is to swap his home with a family living somewhere he'd like to visit, anywhere in the world.

Newman says plenty of people are interested in coming to East Tennessee.

"There are all kinds of reasons people want to come here. Sometimes they have family in the area. Sometimes they just want to hike in the mountains. The family we swapped with last summer was from Carlsbad, California and very close to the beach. We didn't know them. They didn't know us," Newman says.

Aside from the flight, he says nearly everything else is paid for including pet care, sometimes.

"Sometimes you swap that responsibility so you will take care of their cat, they will take care of your cat while you are gone. Then with car rental, you don't have to rent a car because you swap vehicles. You just have to make sure you have valid proof of insurance and a driver's license with a relatively clean record," Newman says.

That means trust is a huge part of the program. Some people are uncomfortable with the idea of strangers living in their home.

Newman says he plans vacations a year in advance so he can get to know the homeowner. He requests information and references from the family.

Newman says he's never had a bad experience and is planning his next vacation. "We are trying to go to Ireland, back there again, also looking at Italy and Switzerland."

Representatives with the [www.homeexchange.com](#) site say they've never received any complaints of theft or vandalism from anyone using the service.

The cost of the service is roughly \$10 per month.



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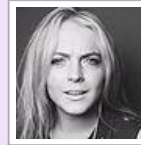
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