

Experienced Grannies Caring for Your Child

GABRIELE MIGHT BE a Granny Aupair, but she is definitely not your typical Granny.

The 65-year-old from Baden-Baden in South Germany was on the lookout for a new challenge in 2014. Surfing the net looking for an occupation for middle-aged ladies and interested in working on another continent, she came across the website www.granny-aupair.com, applied as a member, and a few e-mails and phone calls later, was able to be welcomed as a Granny Aupair for a family in Kuala Lumpur with two children. Gabriele has now just completed her six-month stay in Malaysia where she quickly became involved in her host's family's life: "I spent six beautiful, eventful months there. Even though the climate took a bit of getting used to, I savoured every minute and was especially fascinated by the variety of people living there." Gabriele enjoyed living at the family's house with free board and lodging and was part of many aspects of her host's family's life. She also accompanied the family on several trips for instance to Borneo, which was one of the highlights of her stay.

Her host family already has had several Granny Aupairs and is currently looking for a new one, as Gabriele left for Germany in December: "Like last time we have been really lucky with our Granny. And I hope she is as pleased as we are. We are now on the Granny-lookout for January and I am certain that we will find a very nice lady once again!" says host mother Christina.

These positive experiences are also echoed by another Granny, Gisela, from Leichlingen, who also spent time in Malaysia: "I worked in various European capitals and also six years in Kenya as I come from the hotel business so I still had itchy feet before leaving it too late. At Granny Aupair, I searched for the then-furthest away family – which happened to be in Kuala Lumpur. After a process of 'getting warm' the children took me into their hearts and didn't want to let me go, when I flew back to Germany." Her words of advice to other Grannies, wanting to spend time abroad as an Au Pair: "You must not forget that you are a guest in the family – even though I felt totally at home there – ultimately you are a guest. Naturally there are different opinions – for instance regarding the upbringing – but I personally was welcomed



as a member of the family. One has to be interested in other people, not be anxious, and have the guts to jump in at the deep end, one has to be independent and then you can experience a fantastic time – like I did!"

Every year families around the world hire young women aged 20-or-so to take care of their children and housework, tasks that experienced 50-plus women like Gabriele and Gisela can do easily. Why not rely on this kind of know-how and invite a Granny as an au-pair to your home? In 2010, Michaela Hansen, 53, launched the initiative to send young-at-heart "Grandmas", initially from German-speaking countries, all over the world. Today, more than 1,000 Grannies of various nationalities have travelled to over 40 countries.

The Granny helps with housekeeping and children, and gets free board and lodging in return. Becoming part of a family makes it easier to immerse oneself into life in a foreign country. It's a win-win situation for both sides, as the idea of au-pair is based on mutual help.

Families and single parents looking for a "Granny" are encouraged to contact Granny Aupair at info@granny-aupair.com. More about the service can be found at www.granny-aupair.com/es.