

Bring the Charleston Symphony Orchestra into your home — Literally!

Join the many members of the CSO family
who already provide housing for visiting guest musicians

Get to know some of the wonderful musicians
that come to Charleston to bring you great music

Host only when it is convenient for you;
all you need to provide is a private bedroom

Looking for hosts in all areas of greater Charleston

for more information on this program, please contact

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Hosting a CSO Guest Musician

Dear CSO Supporter,

Do you have a guest room that often sits empty? Do you enjoy well-educated, articulate houseguests from across the country and the world? Do you like Classical music or would you like to learn more about it? Would you like to get the 'inside scoop' about performing from a professional musician? If your answer to any of these questions is 'yes', then I invite you to consider joining the many CSO supporters who house visiting guest musicians.

The CSO brings the Lowcountry the highest level of music-making, not only in the concert hall, but in our schools, places of worship, and civic functions. You can help the CSO bring the best-quality musicians to Charleston by hosting a visiting musician in your home. The only requirement is a private room for the musician to sleep in (a private bathroom is a bonus but not a necessity).

If you are interested in possibly joining the hosting program, I will ask you to take a brief on-line survey that will help me place appropriate musicians with you. In the fall and winter, I will email a list of dates for the next few months, and the hosts will indicate which dates they might be available. As we approach each concert series, I will get in touch with the hosts who previously indicated their availability and ask if your schedule still permits hosting. If for any reason it is not convenient, it is just fine for you to tell me "not this time." I promise I will keep asking! (As I have told many of my hosts, I am happy to ask you 20 times and have you say 'yes' just once.)

We ask only that you provide a place to sleep; some hosts also offer breakfast, but the guest musicians know this is not a requirement. Use of the kitchen and a little fridge space can also be a great help to the musicians, but is also not necessary. Hosts do not need to provide transportation, and if you live in an outlying area, the musician I place with you will definitely have a car or will have rides to/from other musicians in the area.

Lengths of stay vary from 1 night to 5 nights (the average is about 3 nights) – the host tells me what they are comfortable with, and I place musicians with them accordingly. Some hosts 'test the waters' by just hosting one or two nights to see how they like the experience. Usually once they get to know the musician, they extend the stay in future trips.

After the stay, I will be in touch to thank you and ask if you have any feedback – we definitely want to make sure the musician was both a good guest and a good fit for the host; if not, I will make note of it and not place that musician with that host (or perhaps not at all!) again. I try to get to know my hosts so that I can make good musician matches.

A wonderful aspect of this program is that it lets you get to know our guest musicians, some of whom come from all around the Southeast for a majority of our concerts. I cannot tell you how many times I have heard from hosts that they were delighted by having their guests; some musicians will play mini-concerts in the evenings for the host family and friends, some will cook for/with their hosts, etc. As one host said, "I love all the musicians you send me – they are all intelligent, well-spoken, wonderful people who are a delight to have in the home." Lasting friendships have developed quickly in many instances. And ultimately, both audience and musicians enjoy the music more when we have personal connections with those on the 'other side' of the podium.

I often tell people I have the easiest Personnel Manager job in the business, as getting people to come to such a beautiful city as Charleston is pretty easy. When I can add in a home-stay with a wonderful CSO supporter, it is hard for anyone to say 'no'! I do hope you will consider joining the Host-a-Musician program.

Thank you for your consideration, and please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Tom Joyce

Personnel Manager & Bass Trombone, Charleston Symphony Orchestra
personnel@charlestonsymphony.org

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