

Welcome to the program "One year in the United States", my name is Paloma Botas and I am going to tell you all you need to know about going to the US for one academic year and how this year can improve a teenagers view of life.

The first major decision to make is whether you want to leave your country for one year in order to improve your English, when this decision is made you should follow some instructions so your year would be all set up.

We are a company who helps you through all the paper work, we arrange all the papers for you, we look for a nice host family for you to live all year long with them and also sign you up at an American High School so you can merge with the American life completely.

I would like to give you an example from a girl who lived in Carlisle, Iowa for one year so you would be able to understand completely what you can expect about this year.

She arrived to Carlisle, a small town in Iowa state in the middle of August because in the US school starts before than in Spain.

A new life was beginning for her. A new host family welcomed her to their home.

- You should know that Sports at high school are almost as important as the academic Studies, so when you arrive the first thing you have to do is to decide in which sport you would like to be a part of. Sports change every 3 months, so during autumn you can play volleyball, during the winter basketball and maybe in spring you could play soccer.

You have sport trainings everyday, before or after school, and it is surprising how it is possible that Americans are fat with so much healthy things to do during the day!

- School time is really different from Spain, it is just the same as you watch in a High school movie, between classes you go to your locker to change your books, and the people is like you can imagine, there is the Cheerleader Group, all blonde haired and pretty, the football players who wear their football shirts on game days, the smart and weird guys with the pencils in their pockets and whatever you think you will find it there.

- Lunch time is at noon, 12 o'clock and you always sit at the same place, same people.

- Football games are the best part of the High school social life, all the town would go to the football game to cheer our team, it is really difficult to understand but very fun to be there with family and friends.

- The hardest part of going to the United States for one academic year is Christmas time. You are not allowed to go back home because you are supposed to live a real

American life, and that includes Christmas time. It is pretty much the same as here, you celebrate a lot Christmas Eve (Nochebuena) and Christmas Eve, but New Year's Eve (fin de año) is not the same as we celebrate, they don't eat 12 grapes and they don't dress up like us or go to big parties, it is more a family night.

- The fun part and most different and exciting is the Prom dance, this dance is the one that we watch again in movies, there is a King and a Queen, girls have dates who pick them up at home in fancy cars, girls wear princess dresses and flowers matching with their dates' tuxedo flowers and you are like a total princess for one night, it is really a big event for a teenager in the US, their first dance.

- At the end of the academic year the exams begin, a lot of Spanish people go to the US because at the same time you learn about a new culture and a new language, you normally get really good grades because school is much easier than in Spain, so you come back with a good student record.

- The most important day at high school is the Graduation Day, the day you finally finish school and get ready to start college. You must wear a graduation dress, girls one color and boys another one, normally related with the school colors, and you also wear the hat, after the graduation act its graduates senior celebrate an Open House at their homes to invite all their friends to congratulate them.

- After a very exciting 10 month stay in the US, you would become one of them,  
- you would talk like them,  
dress like them,  
and the most important thing, you would think in English, you would become a bilingual person

- You leave Spain as a little young girl and you would become a grown up while you are there. You would learn the huge value of family and friends once they are not around you and at the same time you would enjoy a completely new life that you won't forget in your entire life.

- This is the reason why I encourage everybody to have this experience in their lives, for you or your children.

- I hope I was able this morning to clear you up some details about a young student's life in the US

- And please, if you need further information or want to ask any question don't doubt to do it right now or contact me later

Thank you very much for your attention

Paloma Botas