

Amerika vs. Nederland



United States of America vs. the Netherlands.

Just a few differences out of (y)our daily life or routines.

First of all: food. Fast food chains like McD, KFC, Burger King and Domino's Pizza are more than common in the US. Like Starbucks is. In the Netherlands we know them too but next to fast food restaurants we know a big variety of independent places to eat. Healthy food containing much vegetables (not cooked or boiled in grease or oil) can be found in most of our restaurants. This is *the* big difference.



Politics. Next to your two party system we know a political pillar system. Multiple political groups are allowed to cooperate in our government. Big advantage: there is always a political party which comes close to your own opinion. The downside of this system: it is hard to make decisions dealing with so many different people (political parties) having all their own opinions. It is less transparent. Conservative or democrats an easy choice from our point of view!

21+ In your country you have to be 21 before you are allowed to use alcohol. In the Netherlands youngsters can't buy alcohol below the age of 16*. No-one talks about using it.



Sometimes we do talk about it.....

Young people leave their parent home in the States to study. A perfect time to go wild. The first opportunity to do whatever they want to do no longer being controlled by parents.

In the Netherlands we are more liberal about using alcohol. By the time student move out of their parental house they don't have to go wild at once. They probably did it a few times before.....

*. Starting 2014 it will be 18.

Drugs. A difficult subject. We always thought we were very liberal towards drugs. And in the past we were, for sure. Unlike the US with their zero tolerance policy. A strange thing is happening these days: we realize we have to change policy because the drug related problems are getting out of control. At the same moment some States in the US legalize drugs. And they are far more tolerant then we used to be!

Friendly people. To meet friendly people you have to be in the States. Even foreigners will be invited into ones house. Teachers, shopkeepers, hotel owners and waitresses will do their utmost best to serve you and to make sure you have a very good time.

In the Netherlands we are more straight forward. We like to go straight towards our goal. We say whatever we think. First we want to know someone before we make the decision to be friends or to invite someone to join us for a meal.



Cars. We drive fuel efficient cars. Little cars. Bi-fuel cars. Cars using lpg (liquid petroleum gas). We can get an extra low tax rate doing this. Our petrol is about € 7.60/gallon (about \$ 12.-/gallon). We are driving these kind of cars for many years now. Just because we can't effort bigger ones like you are driving in the States. And just because we simply haven't enough roads to handle big cars!

Have fun !