

My Trip to America

By Sureeporn (Nam Whan) Inmeuang

April 2007

Introduction



My name is Sureeporn Inmeuang, call me Nam Whan for short name. I live in Uttaradit province in a small village called Pah Leurat. We have five members in my family, my parents, my grandmother, and my younger sister. My home is next to the Nan River. My parents are farmers, they plant rice and corn. I help my parents plant corn too.

I'm studying in Uttaradit Darunie School in grade 11. It is an all girls' school and the most popular in Uttaradit.

I think I cannot go to USA if I don't know Mac Bakewell his wife Boosaba Nualhing. Boosaba is my relative, Mac and Boosaba have summer program called Inside Thailand. They bring foreigner students to Pah Leurat to teach at

the school in Pah Leurat. That help me to meet Rachel (Coco) Ko who came on one Inside Thailand group. Coco helps me to pay for my school and she helped me to meet the best English teacher.

In 2006 Mac and Boosaba introduced me to the Rotary Club of Bangkok South. The Rotary Club helped me to go to USA for the month of April in 2007 and I was very very excited. I had to practice my English a lot and be ready to go because it's a first time for me to travel by myself and on a plane. In the beginning I felt scared but so excited to go to America. But I know that it would be ok and fun.

Now after I come back from America I have many new experiences and it make me know more about the world. I got to know many good things and meet a lot of nice people. I want to thank you for give me opportunity to go to America and tell you all about my experience.



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My First Host Family

I stayed with Gary Pierce's family at Cate School in Carpenteria, California. There are four members in the family, Gary is the father, Sandi is the mother, Cydney is 11 years old and Morgan is 10 years old. Gary is a math teacher in Cate School and Sandi works in the office at Cate School too.



This American family is very kind, friendly and warm. They taught me to play many kinds of sports, for example, cricket, softball. They gave the first Chinese, Japanese, and Thai restaurant to me, it was exciting to do it so I have had the best experiences. They took me to see my first movie in the theaters "Meet the Robinsons" and after that we walked around the beach. I'm really glad to know them, it's the best thing in my life.

The last day that I stayed with them we went bowling, I was excited because it was my first bowling. Before we went bowling we went to eat hamburger, it's my first hamburger too. I had seen it on TV and now I was eating hamburger!! After that we

went bowling, the first game Cydney won, and the second game I won!!

After bowling, they took me to Mac's home and then we said goodbye. I didn't want to leave from the Pierce's home but they're coming to Thailand. I'll meet them again.

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My Second Host Family

I stayed with Malcom William's family in Santa Barbara. Malcom's wife is Thai. Her name's Tip and Ray is Tip's daughter. Ray is studying in Santa Barbara High School in grade 10, she is very smart and generous. I went to school by bus with them everyday and after school we walked to home.



For breakfast, I had bread, milk, or Thai noodle, for at noon, I had pizza that I bought in school and dinner, Tip made Thai food for everyone in the family. I like Tip's Thai food, it was delicious.

Last Saturday that I stayed with them, I went to the town, saw the movies and had a lunch in a rush time, it was fun.

Ray is coming to Thailand in 6 June by herself.

On Sunday, we went to Thai Temple in Santa Barbara because it was Shongkran Day and Boosaba picked me up there.

I was really happy when I stayed with this family because they're very easygoing and not serious.

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My Third Host Family

I stayed with John Boswell's family in Montecito. John's wife is Jennifer and they have three children. Megan is studying in LA now, Rozy is seventeen years old, and Dylan is fourteen years old. I really love them because they are a fun family.



In their yard, they have many kinds of flowers and I saw an amazing thing in their home, they have chickens! I have never seen chickens while staying in the USA. Around their home is really calm and quiet, Rozy told me that no one had locked their home because it doesn't have thieves. But at night they have to lock it because it is safe.

For my breakfast, I have bread, milk and eggs because in the morning it's a rush time. For lunch I went to the town with Rozy and her friends, we had lunch in a restaurant. For dinner, Jennifer made food by herself. Sometimes we went to Thai restaurant or Italian restaurant. After dinner, we played magic and card games, it was fun because everyone in the family made it funny.

Rozy made USA songs for me and taught me to apply in MySpace.com. I really happy when I stay with them.

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My Fourth Host Family



I stayed with my fourth host family in Santa Barbara, near the Pacific Ocean. Mac Bakewell's wife's name is Boosaba who is my relative in Pah Leurat, Benyapa is fourteen years old and is my best friend. I went to Disneyland with them. Their home is only one story because they have a small yard and want to have privacy. At the yard, Boosaba has many kinds of flowers, for example, Thai flowers, California Poppy, I like California Poppy because it is the symbol of California.



I went to Santa Barbara Middle School with Benyapa by a car. For my breakfast, I had a Thai food or bread and milk, for my lunch I brought lunch from home and for dinner Boosaba made Thai food for me. Sometimes Mac and Benyapa took me to a Mexican restaurant. It was strange, but delicious. I tried to eat burrito, the most popular Mexican food.

I stayed in Benyapa's room, it's really comfortable. While we were in bed, we had talk about the young life.

I stayed with them until I came back to Thailand.

From four host families, they spent time differently but they all spend a lot of time with their family. I got a lot of experiences from them.



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Cate School

Cate School is a private school in Carpentaria. Gary's family lives at Cate School. In the morning, I walked to school with Sandi. Around Cate School, they have mountains and it is quiet. They have two hundred students in school, many students come from different nationalities but they are very good students.



In each classroom, they have only ten to fifteen students, it is different from my school. I took Japanese class, they have only three students!! They use technology in studying, for example in the math room, everyone has to use their own calculator and the teacher use the biggest calculator on the blackboard, it's an automatic calculator.



For their mealtime, they eat in school, they never had junk food.

The students are punctual and they pay attention in each subject, after school they have to play sports for their health. Something that surprised me about Cate School students was if they had any questions in class they can just ask the teacher, not like in Thailand. I think that Thai students are too shy to ask.

They have meetings almost everyday, the students can talk about their opinion.

Some of students went to Thailand with Inside Thailand group, I met them and talked to them. I love Cate School because the students are polite and friendly.

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Santa Barbara High School

Santa Barbara High School is a public school, they have three thousand students with the biggest school in Santa Barbara. I went to school with Ray by bus. In each classroom, they have thirty to forty students. I had classroom with Ray, and she has the same subjects every day. I like health subject because a teacher open video to students.



For lunch, Ray and I brought lunch from home, and sometimes I bought pizza in school. Some of the students, they went out of school to have lunch in a restaurant or their home.

On Wednesday to Friday, Ray has classes at 7:00 A.M., so we had to get up very early. She has studied English grammar with Mrs. Fischer who took care of me when I was in Santa Barbara High School. She took me to see orchestra from the University, it is my first time.

In this school, they made me feel strange because they admit students who have had children to study in school!! In the school they had a day care center for the student's babies. It's really different from Thai School.

The colors of Santa Barbara High School are white and green, in P.E. class, they have to wear a green shirt and white shorts.

The students are very punctual and they pay attention in studying. Their library is changing.

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Anacapa School

Anacapa School is a private school in the town of Santa Barbara. They are sixty students, ten teachers, they are very friendly, warm, and easy going. I went to school with Rozy and Dylan. I had classes with Rozy in grade 10, they study only three to four periods in each day and it isn't the same subject in each week.

Before we were having classes, we have had the meeting. For the meeting, we can talk everything that we want to. For lunch I went to the town with Rozy's friends. I have a lot of friends, Rachel, Victoria, Lily, Heather, Jordan, Trevor, and Simon. They are my best friends. They like to ask me about Thailand and I like to answer their questions too.



In the afternoon, they have no class but they have to do anything that they want, for example, kickboxing, basketball, music or art. I was in art, I made Thai buffalo and Thai elephants for them.

Sometimes, I did yearbook for them, for example I made Adobe Photoshop program for them. I made Italian food in Italian class and it was fun because they had open Italian movie in sub-English while they were making an Italian food. I helped them to make Italian food.

I love this school because they gave the friendly and warm to me.

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Santa Barbara Middle School

Santa Barbara Middle School is a private school, they start in sixth grade and finish in the ninth grade. They are 160 students in school. I went to school with Benyapa, it isn't far from her home.

They make me feel strange again! Because the students can call teachers with their first name, they don't need to call them Mr., Mrs., or Ms., and they can hang out with their teachers, for example, walk together, and have a lunch together. Benyapa and I walked with John who is teaching in sixth and seventh grade. He is very kind, very tall and talkative.

Everyone was excited that I was going to their school. I have a lot of friends, Sophie, Kate, Maika, Danielle, Kendall, Jordan, Susie, and Chris.

For lunch, Benyapa and I brought it, after that they have study hall is a free time for students to do their homework or something and then they have to play sports. I played kickball, it's like baseball but we have to kick the ball. On Friday after meeting, we had Tennis in Santa Barbara City College courts, it was my first time to play tennis.

The students here are very brave, if they have any opinion or question they raise their hand and ask and are curious. I have notice that at every school the students can be free to ask any questions. I think this is good because then we can understand more than if we do not ask.

I went to House of Blues Museum in L.A., it is about music, and I saw the first real boy band in my life!!



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On Friday, I did Thai dance with Benyapa, everyone was excited because they have never seen before.



I love this school so much because the teachers called my nickname correctly.

After school, Benyapa and I went to the fair in the town, they come here every year, it was fun and exciting. Before we were walking into the fair they gave wristbands to us. We went on a rollercoaster, it was dangerous, but I think its safety. We went to the fair at 6:30 P.M., and went back home at 10:00 P.M.



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Disneyland

I went to Disneyland with Mac, Boosaba, and Benyapa. We went to Disneyland at 8:30 A.M., I was excited because I have never seen before. I think I will see many cartoons that I love, for example Toy Story, Snow White, and Sleeping Beauty. Disneyland is in LA, a hot city.

Finally, I was in Disneyland, they have many hotels for customers. At first time we have to find a park for our car, we have to get in a line, it's too long of a line!! After that we waited for the Disneyland car, it's like a train, today was Saturday, so many people came here.

The first place we went to was the Small World, we sat on a boat and toured around the tunnel, I saw many kinds of dolls, and I saw Thai traditional clothes. After that we walked around Disneyland and then we played rollercoaster, it's really exciting because I have never done it. After that we went to Tomorrow Land it's about the future world. The computer took a picture of me and showed me what I would look like in fifty years!! It was fun.

At 3:00 P.M., they have cartoon's parade, I took a lot of photos, it was amazing!

After parade, we went to Disneyland museum and sat on the train to see the view.



At 6:30 P.M., parade again but I had to leave from Disneyland, I really sad, but I hope that I'll be able to go to Disneyland again.

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Thank you



The whole time I was an exchange student in Santa Barbara, California I think I had not this opportunity if I didn't know Inside Thailand group by Mac and Boosaba who are helping me to be the lucky girl and if I didn't know Coco who came with Inside Thailand five years ago she help me to pay for my school which is the most popular school in Uttaradit province, she helped me to know English with the best teachers in my school, also Inside Thailand introduced me to know the Rotary Club of Bangkok South in Bangkok.

Thank you Mr. Rui and Mr. Tom that help and suggest me how to do everything, you are very kind, if I don't have you I cannot go to USA.

Thank you lovely family, Gary, Sandy, Cydney, and Morgan that took care of me, you gave me the best experience, you made me to do the first things, my first softball, Japanese restaurant, Chinese Restaurant, hamburger, bowling. Thank you for your kindness, you taught me how to play many kinds of sports, card games, I have never forgotten it.

Thank you kindest family, Malcolm, Tip, and Ray. Thank you for your friendship, I love to stay in your home, I love your Thai food, you taught me to get on the bus, to know about the way of life, you are very kind. Thank you so much.

Thank you funny family, John, Jennifer, Megan, Rozy, and Dylan. I am glad to meet you in my life, you are easy going, warm and laugh all the time. Thank you for Thai restaurant, Italian Restaurant, thank you for magician card game, and CDs and music. I love your family so much.

Thank you Mac and Boosaba and Benyapa that help me since I was born, made me know Benyapa and foreign friends especially Coco who is helping me, and Gene who is helping in my younger sister. You help me to do the impossible thing in my life, you made my dream come true. If don't have you and the Rotary club I think I didn't have the best opportunity to go to USA.

Thank you everyone, I will always have you all in my heart.

