

# America's east coast

The USA's east coast states possess some of the country's most significant historical sites as well as an abundance of famous cities and spectacular landscape. GILLIAN EVANS reports.

The east coast of the USA is carved up into 15 states that contain a wide variety of landscapes, plenty of history and some of the country's most famous cities and academic institutions. And each state promises something different.

"The east coast states hold attraction for international students due to the great variety of regional differences such as the quaintness and beauty of New England, historical areas such as Boston and Washington DC, the excitement and culture of New York City and the wonderful climate and beautiful beaches of south Florida," says Connie Paladino, President of the Language Exchange International (LEI) in Boca Raton, Florida.

Laurie Thompson, of ELC USA in Boston, adds, "Another appeal of the east coast is that popular destinations are close together and the infrastructure makes them easy to get to. New York, Boston, Philadelphia and Washington

DC are all easily reached by train, bus or plane."

Sandwiched almost in the middle of the east coast is the country's capital city, Washington DC. As well as being the political seat of the country, Washington DC is also home to the International Language Institute (ILI), which has been providing language tuition for over 30 years. "As [Washington DC is] the nation's capital, the sites are endless: the White House, Capital building, Arlington Cemetary, National Art Gallery, numerous other art galleries, Museums of Natural and American History, etc,"

lists Jessica Patterson at ILI, who adds, "Our school is located about 15 minutes from the White House in an urban area with shops and restaurants."

For a tour of the USA's political history, Boston is a good choice. Students can easily discover US revolutionary

history by following the city's Freedom Trail, says Martha Hall from the New Eng-



land School of English (NESE), situated just across the Charles River from Boston, in Cambridge, which is also home to Harvard University and MIT.

Boston, which was the first area to be settled by Europeans and still retains a decidedly European air, has a large student population, meaning there is always plenty going on and lots of opportunities for international students to mix with Americans. "While in Boston you can shop in historic Quincy Market and on Newbury Street, check out the New England Aquarium, and enjoy the lively nightlife," says Karen Nedbal at the American Language Academy, situated in North Andover.

Of their location, Nedbal says, "North Andover is a traditional New England town, just 30 minutes north of downtown Boston, with easy access to the lakes and mountains of New Hampshire and the Atlantic coast."

Outside of Boston, says Thompson at ELC, there is a lot to discover. "You can take a ferry to Provincetown on the tip of Cape Cod for the day, or take the train up to one of the charming New England towns just north of Boston, such as Salem or



**Florida Tidelands**  
Florida's tidelands are home to mangrove forests that flourish in tidal estuaries where freshwater mixes with seawater. The tidelands are now protected by law to preserve these now rare habitats

## Agent viewpoint



"We offer partner schools in Boston, New York and Fort Lauderdale. In Florida, students are looking for beach and sunshine while clients choosing

Boston or New York are attracted by the cosmopolitan atmosphere, culture and architecture. We send a high number of students to Fort Lauderdale but clients tend to stay [there] for short courses [of] two-to-four weeks while Boston is very popular also for long-term students. For New York, we have noticed an increase in bookings after the drop in 2001/2002.

New York is our top seller on the east coast."  
**Michael Eck, STA Travel, Switzerland**



"We send students to Miami, Fort Lauderdale, Boca Raton, New York and Boston. Most of our clients are from Latin America and they have usually have relatives or friends in this area. [Demand] has decreased sharply since September 11 [however]. Besides, it is very hard to get a student visa."  
**Alejandro Acero, Open Hearts International Education, Brazil**



"The clients choose to study in this region [of the USA] because it is a multicultural region; the majority of the students go to New York or Boston.

There, they want to know the city, the atmosphere of such huge cities, meet local people and other nations and cultures. Many students do a language course to get a work placement in a company, because by mentioning work experience in cities like New York or Boston on their CVs they hope to attract future employers."  
**Milena Langer, GLS Sprachzentrum, Germany**



*US Capitol Building, Washington DC (main picture)*

Rockport, and enjoy delicious fresh lobster," she suggests.

Another place famous for its lobster is Rockland, Maine. "Rockland is the lobster capital of the world!" exclaims David Clough, Executive Director and CEO of Penobscot School, situated in this small seaside town of 8,000 people. "I believe students come here to experience a more traditional style of American life and to enjoy the essence of New England," he continues. Rockland is situated on the coast, with mountains and lakes around it, making it an ideal base for students wanting to make the most of the outdoors. Clough mentions opportunities for sailing, kayaking, canoeing, fishing and hiking as some of the favourite activities among their students.

Outdoor activities are never far away wherever a student decides to study on the east coast, as Hall points out. "From Maine to Florida, the east coast offers a variety of beautiful natural terrain, from beaches to forests to mountains, and therefore, many opportunities to enjoy outdoor activities such as boating, skiing, hiking and swimming."

All these activities are within an hour's drive of Hartford, Connecticut, according to Martha Cane, Director of the English Language Institute at Hartford University. Hartford is also within driving distance of New York and Boston, although



**Cape Cod, Massachusetts**  
Cape Cod was so named because of the volume of fish caught off the coast here. Cape Cod and its nearby islands are popular vacation retreats for Americans who enjoy the dunes and sea air

students do not have to venture that far to find entertainment. "Hartford has a major symphony, theatre and museums," says Cane, adding, "There is great cultural and ethnic diversity in Hartford that allows students to experience [many] different cultural activities."

Some students choose to study right in the centre of the east coast's cultural and nightlife hub, New York City. "Whether [students] want to spend a day in an art museum, watching a show on Broadway, seeing a sporting event, or walking around Central Park, New York has it all," asserts Marcie Williams, Activities Coordinator at the English Language Institute at Pace University in New York.

Being the Activities Coordinator, Williams ensures they organise plenty to do both in the city and outside it. "We organise many exciting field trips," she says. "In the summer we go to baseball games and to the beach. In fall, we go upstate for apple picking and pumpkin carving – a traditional Halloween activity."

For the ultimate east coast beach experience, many students head for Florida. "Florida has a laid-back attitude," comments Paladino of LEI. "The ambience is friendly and casual, and students are made to feel comfortable and at home right from the start." LEI is



**Old Lobster Buoys, Maine**  
Wooden lobster buoys were traditionally used in Maine to mark where a fisherman's trap was located. They are now available to buy as souvenirs while modern day fishermen use foam buoys

situated in Boca Raton, on the Atlantic Ocean, close to Fort Lauderdale and Palm Beach. According to Paladino, it is a safe, friendly place with all the amenities of a big city.

Being close to the beach means that "students often wear bathing attire under their clothes and walk to the beach after class", she

says. Swimming, sailing, snorkelling and dolphin watching are popular activities among their students.

Gainesville offers a different Florida experience. It is equidistant from both the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean, and is home to Florida's oldest university, the University of Florida. "Gainesville is considered by many to be part of old Florida," says Valentina Komaniecka at the university's English Language Institute. According to Komaniecka, it is an "easy drive" from Orlando, Jacksonville and Tampa as well as being close to central Florida's natural beauty. "North central Florida has an abundance of bubbling freshwater springs that form the rapid flowing rivers that feed into the oceans. These deep natural springs with

their cool clear waters create the perfect environment for snorkelling and cave diving."

Another less obvious beach location is North Carolina. "We have

several beaches in our area that are famous for surfing," says Maike Walbrecht, ESL Coordinator at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. "Even during the winter months, you can see the 'hard core' surfers out in the water waiting for a good wave."

Wilmington itself is situated just five miles from the beach and has many historical sites of interest, such as Fort Fisher, where one of the first battles of the Civil War took place, and the historic riverfront district of Cape Fear River, which is today lined with restaurants, shops and music venues. Students can also look forward to a healthy dose of Southern hospitality in the city. "You can learn so much about the history of the south and the famous Southern way of life," claims Walbrecht. She adds, "The subtropical climate makes it very pleasant [here] all year long." □