

## **October of my exchange year in the USA**

In general, looking back on the time I've already been here is insane and absolutely surreal but especially October was so much fun. It was also the month where I stopped being the "new one" in school, sport clubs or this city and I actually became a part of it. Which is so beautiful to realize and it truly changes so much in me and my decisions. Of course I still tried to say yes to as much as possible but I also got to choose more and really realize with who and how I want to spend my time here: During the week I hung out with friends a lot, went shopping or on walks (which is and will forever be my favourite thing to do here because this city is so so beautiful!!) and of course also had to study what I most of the time did with friends in cute coffee shops :). October also means early nights, so I got to spend fun dinner and board game or movie nights with my host family. Speaking of movies, we primarily watched scary movies to get the spooky Halloween mood!!! Seeing all those fun decorated houses and the little kids in all kinds of costumes trick or treating was so cool and exciting. Besides the "Halloweekend", I spent the end of the week at pumpkin patches or apple archers, at Valley Scare!!!, baking and cooking with my host mum or having burnfires with my friends! I experienced the fall in America in the best way possible and am more than grateful for all the things I got to do!

Besides that I think that after almost two months here you start to remind yourself again that you're also just a sixteen year old teenager on the other side of the world trying to have a good time. So what I try to say is that it is more than normal and even good to feel bad, sad, overwhelmed, lonely or homesick sometimes and that it is part of the experience! To accept those feelings is so important and being okay with not being perfectly fine all the time!!

What I've realized is that when you stop putting that pressure on yourself that you have to be good all the time and that this exchange year has to be the best time of your life is when you really start to enjoy and love your time here! Some people found their friends within the first week and for some it takes till Christmas. EVERY experience is different and there is no timeline for anything. As long as you give your best you are doing the best you can!!!

Thank you October for all the things I got to experience and learned about myself through the highs and lows. Can't wait for November!!!!!!



