

GAZETTE

H o l l y w o o d & W e s t w o o d

WHY DO WE LIKE TO BE SCARED DURING HALLOWEEN?

Halloween is an event when people purposely seek out fear by watching horror movies, visiting haunted houses, or telling ghost stories. But why do we enjoy being scared? Even though fear is usually something we try to avoid, during Halloween it becomes something exciting and fun. This strange attraction to fear says a lot about human nature and our need for thrills.

One reason we like to be scared is that fear releases adrenaline, the same chemical that gives us energy and excitement. When we experience fear in a safe environment, like a haunted house or a scary movie, our bodies react as if we are in danger, but our brain knows that we are safe. This combination of danger and safety creates a rush that can feel thrilling and even addictive. It's a way to face our fears without real risks. Also, sharing scary experiences with friends makes us feel connected, as we laugh and scream together.

In the end, our love for fear during Halloween is about more than just ghosts and monsters. It's about the excitement of the unknown, the challenge of facing what frightens us, and the joy of doing it safely. Fear reminds us that we are alive, and on Halloween night, it becomes a game.

By Nina

HALLOWEEN BUSINESS

Halloween is no longer just an event where you just put on a costume and go ask for candy with your friends. Halloween business is booming: stores, parties, candy, horror movies, fall, etc. This period is amazing, and the brands love it too.

Every year, companies, brands, and stores take advantage of this period. October is crucial for them. It's the moment to show Halloween marketing for customers outside and online.

People use their money more easily when it's Halloween like at big holidays such as Christmas. For example, food companies and most famous coffee shops take the occasion to launch some new special things for Halloween because they know how much people are influenced by this, especially now with social media, the internet and the influencer industry.

Brands can sell more easily just by putting up some Halloween decorations or with sales of something related to Halloween, like Starbucks with their pumpkin coffee or McDonald's with Halloween nuggets. It's become a real business and a great opportunity for each brand to make more money. Halloween is one of the most anticipated events every year!

By Imane



HALLOWEEN SEASON, NOT MY THING



Halloween has never been a part of my life. I grew up in Martinique until I was 20, and where I come from, it's not part of our culture to celebrate Halloween. Even in the cartoons I watched as a child, I don't remember hearing about Halloween. Plus, I grew up in a Christian family, which has always led me to consider certain things more important than others. For example, I prefer to celebrate life and the happy events that really matter to me. And clearly, Halloween is not one of them.

I've always heard about Halloween as something Americans celebrate. A few years ago, the French also incorporated this into their culture, but without making it a big deal. I admit that a year ago I was quite surprised to see how deeply rooted this holiday is in American culture. Why would anyone prefer to celebrate death rather than life? Darkness rather than light? Why would we be more aware of the existence of ghosts, devils, etc. than of the existence of God? Why would we be more concerned with dealing with evil spirits than with our faith in God? Why wouldn't we be asking ourselves real questions instead?

Maybe you'll say that I'm taking things too seriously and that Halloween is just about fun. But I have learned in my journey that when we are struck by death, there is nothing more we can accomplish on Earth, so it is during our lifetime that we must enjoy what is truly essential and work to accomplish the most wonderful things that we will no longer have the opportunity to achieve when we are gone.

In conclusion, Halloween is completely up to us; we are all free to have our own beliefs and actions. Personally, I have chosen what suits me best, which is to focus on the wonderful things that life has brought me, especially during this time of year when I usually celebrate my birthday and the birthdays of people who mean so much to me. That is where I find my joy.

By Deborah

HALLOWEEN IN TAIWAN

Halloween has become popular in Taiwan over the past decade. According to my observation, that is because Taiwan has begun to attach importance to Western culture and English teaching. Halloween is a typical Western festival, so it is very suitable as a teaching topic.

At the beginning, we started to organize Halloween-related activities in kindergarten because dressing up as children's favorite characters and going trick-or-treating is a really exciting activity for them. The children in kindergarten are too young, so they need parents' help in preparing the costumes. With the development of social media, the process of parents preparing Halloween costumes has spread widely on the Internet, making Halloween more and more popular and it is more like a competition between parents.

However, in Taiwan, people are usually more interested in wearing costumes rather than decorating their houses because most of the houses in Taiwan's urban environment are apartments. We don't have a yard or enough outdoor space to put up Halloween decorations. Therefore, Halloween decorations usually only appear in public places or commercial places. After coming to the U.S., I found it very interesting to see so many families putting great efforts into decorating their yards for Halloween. It really creates a strong festive atmosphere!

Nowadays in Taiwan, Halloween is not just for children. Adults and children alike enjoy this holiday by dressing up in Halloween costumes. Adults often go to nightclubs, parties, or sing karaoke with friends after dressing up. After all, grown-ups aren't really into trick-or-treating for candy anymore!

By Min

HALLOWEEN TRADITIONS

Halloween is so popular in the USA because it mixes fun traditions and community. It allows people to express themselves through costumes and decorations, while also celebrating with friends and neighbors. It was brought here by Irish immigrants in the 19th century and has evolved into a festive event for all ages. Americans love the playful spooky atmosphere and the chance to celebrate in a unique imaginative way.

Halloween has become a major business, especially in countries like the United States. Every year billions of dollars are spent on costumes, decorations, candy, and parties. Stores take advantage of this season to launch special collections and attract customers with themed promotions. Even food and drink brands create limited edition Halloween products to boost their sales and join the festive spirit.

Halloween is full of fun traditions. One of the most famous is trick-or-treating, where children go from house to house collecting candy. Another is pumpkin carving where families create glowing “jack-o’-lanterns” with spooky faces. People also enjoy costume parties, haunted houses, and scary stories around a fire. These traditions have been passed down through generations, mixing old Celtic customs with modern. They help keep the spirit of Halloween alive every year making it a magical and memorable celebration for all ages.

By Victor



HALLOWEEN AND SOCIAL MEDIA TO BOOST OUR SELF CONFIDENCE

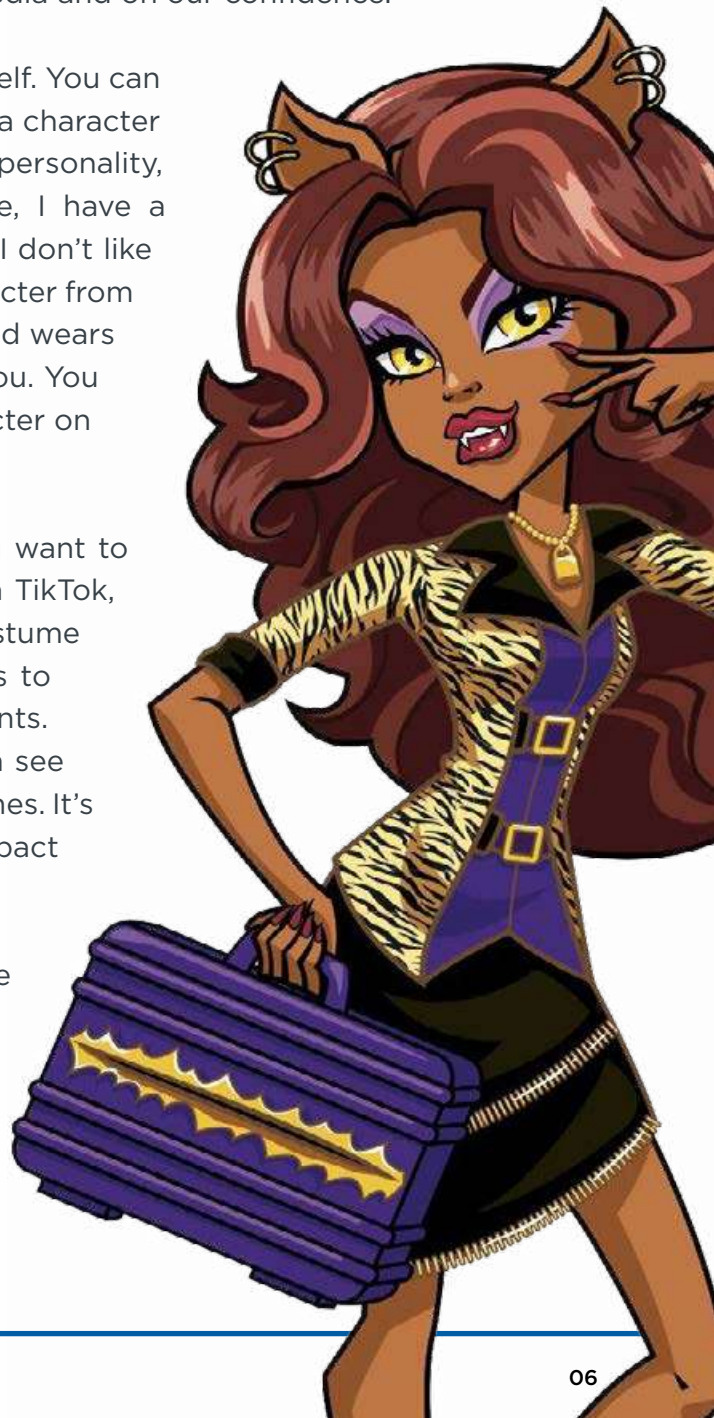
What costume are you going to wear for Halloween this year? This is the most difficult choice for many of us, but let's focus on the impact on social media and on our confidence.

For me, Halloween is the best period to express yourself. You can choose a costume from a movie or TV show you like, a character you appreciate, or an animal. Depending on your personality, you have the freedom to be yourself. For example, I have a strong personality and I'm not afraid of saying when I don't like something. So, I decided to be Clawdeen Wolf, a character from the show *Monster High*. She is confident, beautiful, and wears extravagant clothes. This is why a costume defines you. You are yourself and you can look like your favorite character on the TV show you have chosen.

Secondly, when you are proud of your costume, you want to show it to your family or friends on social media. On TikTok, you can post a video of how you created your own costume and make up. It's a way to express our artistic sides to others. You can have a lot of views, likes and comments. Halloween is one of my best moments because I can see how other people express their confidence and costumes. It's a form of power because you can have a positive impact on others. They could also have the courage to do it.

To conclude, costumes help people to gain more confidence, and even more when you expose it on social media. The best feeling is when you feel like yourself, and you can choose any costume you like. It's your own power to show it. This is why we don't have to hide our personality.

By Lauryn



TRICK-OR-TREATING IN COLOMBIA



When I was a kid I used to spend my Halloweens in Medellin, Colombia. My first memory of trick-or-treating was wearing a beautiful ballerina costume and going to nice neighborhoods with my mom. People in the city were so generous and gave me so much candy wherever I went and it was the best kind of candy like chocolates, gummies, cookies and lollipops.

Whenever I got back home on Halloween I would have a mountain of candy. My mom would not let me keep all the candy for myself. She made me save most of it to share with my cousins who lived on the farm. There was no trick-or-treating on the farm.

Years later, my mom and I moved outside the city to a small town. The first year on Halloween I went trick-or-treating, but I barely got any candy. People in the town had less money and were less generous than in the city. Each person gave me maybe one piece of candy. I remember feeling disappointed that there was no mountain of candy.

The next year on Halloween my mom asked me if I wanted to go trick-or-treating. I said no thank you. One piece of advice for everyone who visits Colombia on Halloween: if you love candy, trick or treating is much better in the city :)

By Maria



HOW TO CELEBRATE HALLOWEEN

The best thing to do in October is to celebrate Halloween. In this article I will give you two examples.

The first one is, you can choose a scary movie or a kind of Halloween animation movie. I could choose Coraline, and you just have to prepare a dinner and some snacks on the theme of the movie. You choose. For instance with the Coraline movie, you can bake a pie with the mom button face on the top. That can be fun to do with your friends. Afterwards, you can eat the pie during the movie on the couch with a big blanket.

The second one I suggest is a pumpkin carving that can be fun to do and beautiful for your home decoration. And after I suggest cooking it either for a Halloween dinner or a pumpkin cake. To conclude this article I hope you will reproduce these ideas at home because you have no excuses. It's simple and cool to do alone or with friends.

By Axelle

HOW TO GET A MILLION VIEWS ON TIKTOK THIS HALLOWEEN

(WITHOUT SELLING YOUR SOUL TO THE DEVIL)

Once upon a time, Halloween was about ghosts, witches, and spooky stories told around the fire. Today, the scariest thing for a student is not a haunted house — it's missing out on the latest TikTok trend. Every October, the platform becomes a giant virtual costume party where creativity, memes, and pure chaos take over. And if you play your cards right, your pumpkin selfie might just go viral. So, how exactly do you turn a night of candy and costumes into millions of views? Let's break it down.



The truth is, expensive costumes rarely work on TikTok. A simple white sheet can turn you into a ghost and a comedian; it just depends on how you use it. Put sunglasses on, and suddenly you're a "cool ghost." Add a cup of coffee, and boom — you're "ghosted but still caffeinated." The golden rule? The funnier and more relatable your costume is, the faster it spreads. Nobody remembers the 10th Harley Quinn of the night, but everyone remembers the guy who dressed up as a "deadline." And let's be honest: deadlines are much scarier than any zombie.

Halloween on TikTok also wouldn't exist without the classic challenges that come back year after year. This year, expect to see the classics come back to life:

- **Pumpkin Head Photoshoot:** Carve a pumpkin, put it on your head, and suddenly you look like the star of a spooky indie film. Warning: it's much harder to breathe in there than it looks.
- **Spooky Dance Routines:** Dancing to a trending sound in full vampire makeup? Instant likes. Bonus points if your fangs fall out mid-video.



- **Creepy Transitions:** One moment you're in pajamas, the next moment you're a witch with glowing eyes. The scarier the jump cut, the better.

Pro tip: don't stress about being perfect. TikTok loves chaos. If your cat walks through the frame or your pumpkin collapses—post it anyway. That's the content people love.

Halloween also works as a free creativity training ground. Want to turn your roommate into Frankenstein with kitchen foil? Go for it. Want to dress your dog as a pumpkin and watch it go viral? Even better. Halloween reminds us that social media isn't just about polished aesthetics — it's about fun. Nobody expects perfection on October 31st; they just want something entertaining. And if you manage to make people laugh while also being a little spooky, the algorithm is already on your side.

So, no — you don't need to sell your soul to the devil to be viral this Halloween. All you need is a costume that makes people laugh, some silly ideas, and the courage to post it. Whether it's a ghost who can't find his Wi-Fi signal or a vampire who prefers oat milk to blood, the internet is waiting for your version of "spooky but funny."

Because at the end of the day, Halloween is less about scaring your neighbors and more about scaring the TikTok algorithm into giving you those precious million views. And if that fails — at least you still have free candy.

By Kateryna





HOW DO JAPANESE ENJOY AUTUMN?

Autum has arrived! When you think of Autum, Halloween is the most popular event all over the world. Of course it is a well-loved event in Japan. However there are several events that are unique to Japan. Since they truly reflect the Japanese culture, I would like to introduce three of them in this article.

The first one is Momijigari, or autumn leaf viewing. This is one of the most traditional ways to enjoy the seasons, like viewing cherry blossoms in spring. People visit mountains or parks to view the trees turning bright yellow and red. Though the word “gari” originally stands for “hunting or collecting,” during the Heian period (794-1185) it was used for describing the appreciation of the autumn leaves. That’s why the word remains in the present day.

Famous spots include Arashiyama in Kyoto, Yoshino in Nara, and Irohazaka in Nikko, which attract huge crowds of tourists every autumn. Furthermore, some temples and gardens hold special illumination events. And It’s common to find seasonal sweets shaped like colorful maple leaves. Japan doesn’t have many overwhelming places like the national parks in the U.S but you can enjoy the small changes of each season.

Next is Tsukimi, or moon viewing. It is a traditional event held on the night of the harvest moon, which falls on the 15th day of the 8th month in the old lunar calendar. On this night, people gazed at the full moon, gave thanks for the harvest, and praised for good health. There was also a custom of offering tsukimi dango (round rice dumplings), pampas grass, and seasonal crops. Pampas grass resembles rice stalks and is believed to symbolize for a good harvest. Today people still enjoy eating tsukimi dango at home or attending local “moon-viewing festivals.” Even fast-food chains, McDonald’s, KFC and so on, offer seasonal items with names like Tsukimi burger! The bright full moon has fascinated people for a long time.





The third event is Shichi-Go-San, which literally means “Seven-Five-Three.” It is a celebration of children’s growth at the ages of three, five, and seven, usually held around November 15. The custom began in the Heian and Muromachi periods, and during the Edo period it spread out from the samurai class to the general class. Today, children dress in kimono, hakama, or even Western-style dresses and visit shrines with their families to pray for healthy growth.

As a fun side note, Japanese supermarkets and convenience stores always stock seasonal items to match these events. Around the time of Tsukimi, shelves are filled with moon-viewing dumplings and rabbit-shaped wagashi, and even fast-food chains release their seasonal Tsukimi Burgers. During Shichi-Go-San, chitose-ame (meaning “thousand-year candy”) and celebratory candy sets appear in stores, attracting many families. Japan has events throughout the year. That’s why you can feel the season simply by stepping into a supermarket or convenience store.

These traditions have been passed on by people for centuries, yet they continue to be present in modern life and still be cherished today. If you have the chance to visit Japan in autumn, you can experience these seasonal traditions not only at famous sightseeing spots but also through the seasonal products lined up in supermarkets and convenience stores. It’s another charming way to enjoy Japan’s autumn culture.

By Isshin

HALLOWEEN IN THE US

Halloween was originally created by Irish people back in the day and then brought to America during migration in the 1800s. This holiday became popular very quickly in the US especially between kids, and in early 1900s it became even more important.

Timeline:

'20s - '30s: First costumes and neighborhood parties

'50s: The tradition of "trick or treat" was born

'70s - '80s: Halloween became a national holiday and the business around this day exploded.

The thing that many people don't realize is how this day is impacting the economy of many companies and businesses. Here are some examples:

In 2024 the estimated turnover was about \$12 billion and it reached a new high in just the past 4 years, since in 2020, the turnover was "only" \$8 billion. So almost +50% in the last few years.

What does this mean?

If you divide 12 billion by 340 million citizens of the USA we have an average spending for every US resident of about \$35 for something related to Halloween.

Some analysis categorized the revenues in the following way:

\$3.9 billion on costumes

\$3.6 billion on candy

\$3.2 billion on home decorations

\$1.5 billion on events and parties

Big companies like Walmart, Target, and Spirit Halloween during this period are expecting a big increase in sales on related products as well as chocolate companies like Mars, Hershey and so on for the famous Trick or Threat request.



Even for entertainment companies the expectations are high, every year Netflix, AMC and Universal Studios are releasing horror movies and other theme related films that are watched by millions of people.

And what about Halloween in Los Angeles?

In Los Angeles Halloween it's not just a holiday. Thanks to the importance of the city to worldwide entertainment, the city becomes a real life show.

The blend of Hollywood culture, the different types of ethnicities and the artistic scene present in the city makes LA probably the best place in which you can celebrate this holiday.

The biggest event in the city every year is the West Hollywood Halloween Carnival that takes place on Santa Monica Blvd, but you can find more activities in places like Griffith Park (the Haunted Hayride) and Universal Studios (Universal Horror Nights).

Los Angeles is also influenced by the Mexican culture of the "Día de los Muertos" (Day of the Dead) which is not the "Mexican version" of Halloween but it's an important day where people meet to remember their deceased with honor and affection.

By Matteo



THE ART OF STOPPING: SABBATICAL

Have you ever heard about a sabbatical? No?

Have you ever had that feeling — to stop or even step away?

What if doing nothing is exactly what you need?



Life is pretty tight. We are always rushing to achieve or complete something — school, college, university, finding the first job, building a career... Some of us don't even have time to think about what we want and who we are. Society pushes us to be productive and successful, to be competitive. So it's not surprising that one day you wake up feeling total frustration or even disappointment with your life.

We try to replace this feeling by creating emotions, seeking new experiences. But in the end, nothing helps to cover the emptiness and indifference inside. This is called burnout. It's common to think that employees of big corporations struggle with it, but I believe anyone can face this problem.

Employees lose their ambition, enthusiasm, and passion. This not only affects their work but also influences the atmosphere in the team. So what should the company do? Lose a good worker just because they're going through that phase — or try to help them feel better and return recharged?

This is how a new strategy was created — called a sabbatical. It's a long break, usually about a year, that a company provides to an employee while keeping their job position. The leave can be unpaid or partially paid. This option is available for employees who have worked for the company for more than five years, and it's most common in Europe and the USA, especially in the IT and financial industries.

What should you do during that time?

People usually take this opportunity in their 30s, and the most common way to spend it is to go on a long journey — visit rural places, volunteer in developing countries, focus on hobbies, or try something completely new. The idea is to rest, stop rushing, and stop doing what others expect from you — to tune in to your personal feelings and wishes.

People usually experience a few stages during that period.

First, they feel joy and euphoria — freedom, excitement, big plans.

The second stage is disorientation. The rush and daily routine are gone, but your identity was tied to those things, so you start feeling confused.

The third stage is reflection — you slow down and finally feel okay with it. You begin to think about who you are and what you truly want.

Next comes renewal — you start to learn, try, create.

And the final stage is integration, when you think about what's next — what you want to bring into your new life and what you wish to leave behind.

The biggest misconception is that after a sabbatical you'll be completely confident about what to do next or where to go. Sometimes it happens, but for most people, it's simply about realizing one thing: whether you are okay with where you are now and ready to continue, or you choose a different direction and start moving toward it. One thing is certain — a sabbatical will definitely change something in you.

Why do companies benefit from this strategy? You might think they lose time and money since many employees might not return. But actually, both outcomes can be positive. Those who come back are the ones who truly want to be there and are ready to invest their energy into the company — they often become more loyal. Those who leave would probably have left anyway, or their performance would have continued to decline.

So even though this strategy might look like a waste of time and money, it's actually beneficial for both employees and companies.

My personal belief is that it's something most people should try once they feel burnout or a loss of interest in life. I took a sabbatical after eight years of building my career in the financial sector. It was the scariest decision and an emotionally hard period — but it led to real change. My life now is completely different from what it was, and I definitely feel happier.

Don't be afraid to change something you don't like or disagree with. We have only one life, and the most important thing is to make it truly yours — the best it can be for you.



By Evgenia

THE ACTING PROCESS

Acting isn't just a simple job — it's a deep form of art that mixes emotion, discipline, and imagination. Most people only see the final movie or performance, but they don't realize how much inner work stands behind it. The process of acting is a journey that helps the actor understand both the character and themselves. Every role opens a new world, a new way of feeling and thinking. Through that, the actor doesn't just play someone — they become someone.



RESEARCHING THE CHARACTER

Everything starts with the script. The actor reads it again and again, trying to find the character's true intentions and hidden emotions. They ask questions like "What does this person want?" or "Why do they act this way?" Sometimes, actors even study the time period or profession of the character to make everything more believable. Some like to write a journal from the character's point of view, so they can really live inside that person's head.

EMOTIONAL CONNECTION

Once the character is understood, the next step is to connect emotionally. The actor looks inside their own memories to find something that feels similar to what the character goes through. It's not about pretending — it's about feeling. This part can be really hard because it requires honesty and vulnerability. A good actor must let their emotions flow, even when it hurts a bit.



PHYSICAL AND VOCAL WORK

To bring everything together, the actor shapes their body and voice to fit the character. They practice tone, movement, posture, and even breathing. Sometimes, they train for months just to walk or talk like the person they play. The body becomes the bridge between imagination and reality.

REHEARSAL AND DISCOVERY

During rehearsals, the actor experiments, changes ideas, and keeps improving. There's never only one right way to do a scene, because every actor has their own truth and perspective. In the end, acting is a way of giving. Through each role, the actor shares a part of their soul with the audience, turning simple words into real emotion.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

For me, acting is more than just performing — it's a way to understand people and emotions on a deeper level. Every role teaches something new about life, about fear, or even about myself. That's why I believe acting will always stay one of the most powerful forms of human expression.

By Mario

CHINA VS. AMERICA

Living between Chinese and American culture has taught me that the biggest differences are not always about festivals or food—they're often hidden in small daily habits. Three things that I find both funny and fascinating are how people handle silence, say "no," and give gifts.

First, let's talk about silence. In China, silence can be comfortable. When friends or colleagues sit quietly, it's not awkward—it simply means people are thinking or resting. But in the U.S., silence feels like an emergency! Americans often try to fill quiet moments with "small talk," saying things like "Nice weather today!" or "How's your weekend?" Even strangers in elevators or waiting rooms may start chatting. For a Chinese person, this can feel surprising at first, but over time, I learned that small talk is just a friendly way to make people feel at ease.

The second difference is how people say "no." Chinese people rarely say a direct "no," because it might sound too strong or impolite. Instead, we say things like "Let me think about it," or "Maybe next time." But in the U.S., people usually give a clear answer. If they can't come, they just say "Sorry, I can't." At first, I thought this sounded cold, but now I see it as honest and efficient.

Finally, gift-giving culture shows another interesting contrast. In China, every detail matters—the color of the wrapping paper, the number of items, and even the way you hand it over. Gifts must be given with careful thought and meaning. In America, gifts are more casual and about surprise or fun. My American friends open presents right away and say "Wow, thank you!" while Chinese people often wait until later to open them to show politeness.

These small differences might seem minor, but they show how people express kindness and respect in different ways. Learning to understand them has helped me not only communicate better, but also appreciate both cultures more deeply!

By Weikun

