CONTENTS

1. A CHANGE OF CULTURE	
America is different	
Culture shock	
Families in America	
A multicultural society	
A new life	
2. WHO ARE THE AMERICANS?	
A potted history	
The people	
Sense of humour	
Children	
The class system	
Attitudes to foreigners	
Icons	
3. GETTING STARTED	
Immigration	
Bureaucracy	
Accommodation	
Buying or hiring a car	
Emergency services	
Health services	
Insurance	
Education	
Council services	
Utilities	
Staying informed	
Banking	
Taxes	
Cost of living	
4. BREAKING THE ICE	
Community life	
Sexual attitudes	
Meeting people	
Invitations	

Respecting privacy	107
Taboos	108
Expat community	110
Confrontation	111
Dealing with officials	112
5. THE LANGUAGE BARRIER	
Learning American English	115
The English language	117
Other languages	119
Slang & swearing	123
Body & sign language	124
Forms of address	126
Greetings	128
Telephone, letters & email	129
6. THE AMERICANS AT WORK	
Work ethic	133
Permits & paperwork	134
Finding a job	135
Contracts	140
Starting or buying a business	140
Black economy	144
Working women	144
Business etiquette	145
Employing people	148
Trade unions	149
Working week	149
7. ON THE MOVE	155
Driving	155
Public transport	162
Hitchhiking	168
Cycling	168
Accommodation	169
8. THE AMERICANS AT PLAY	171
Dress code	171
Eating	173
Drinking	179
Cafes, restaurants & diners	181

Nightlife	183
Family occasions	184
Clubs	190
Popular culture	190
9. RETAIL THERAPY	199
Customer service	199
Opening hours	200
Black market	201
Queuing	201
Sales & discounts	201
Types of shop	203
Markets	204
Paying	205
Food & wine	206
Clothes	208
Collectables	210
Mail-order shopping	211
Returning goods	212
10. ODDS & ENDS	215
Geography	215
Climate	216
Crime	219
Flag & anthem	220
Government	222
International relations	225
Religion	227
Military service	227
Pets	228
Time difference	228
Tipping	229
Toilets	230
APPENDICES	233
Appendix A: Embassies & Consulates	233
Appendix B: Further Reading	235
Appendix C: Useful Websites	239
Appendix D: American Idioms	247
Appendix E: Map of States	254
INDEX	257
1) 11 1 2 2 2 2 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3	300000000000000000000000000000000000000