



Otázka: The USA

Jazyk: Angličtina

Přidal(a): 33

I would like to speak about The United States of America. At first I'll tell you something about geography and population. The second part will be about history, political system or interesting places.

Geography

- The United States of America is the third largest country in the world situated in the southern part of North America. Its neighbours are Canada to the North, Mexico to the south and Russia across the Bering Sea. The USA consisting of 50 states and a federal district. 48 states are located in the continental part of the US, which is washed by the Atlantic Ocean from the East and the Pacific Ocean from the West. Other two states – Alaska is located in the North between Canada and Russia and Hawaiian Islands are located in the West in the Pacific.
- The biggest mountains are located in the west: e.g.: Rocky Mountains, Coast Ranges or Sierra Nevada. The highest mountain in the USA is Denali, formerly called Mount McKinley in the Alaska Range. It's over six thousand meters high. The Central plains is located in the middle of the USA and there are also Great plains to the west, Gulf Coastal plains to the south, Appalachian Mountains to the east and The Great Lakes to the north. The largest is the Lake Superior, others are Lake Michigan, Lake Huron, Lake Erie and Lake Ontario. The longest river is Mississippi with right tributary Missouri. Other known rivers are Ohio, Colorado, Snake, Arkansas or Rio Grande, which forming the border between the USA and Mexico.



Population

- The United States has more than 320 million inhabitants. The density is 35 people per sq km. The population is very urbanized – 81 % residing in cities and suburbs. The most populous states are California and Texas. There are many ethnic groups. Five major are: White (78 %), Black (14%), Mexican (3 %), Asian (4 %), Hawaiian and other Pacific islanders (0,5 %). The main language spoken here is American English.

History

- The American Continent was first discovered around the year 1000 by the Icelandic Vikings, but they failed to establish any permanent settlement. Till 1400 Indians were the only inhabitants. In 1492 a navigation error brought Christopher Columbus, an Italian mariner under Spanish monarchs, to the Caribbean Sea instead to Asia. The first English colony was Jamestown, established in 1607. In 1620 the ship named the Mayflower brought English men, women and children to the northeastern region where they founded the colony named Plymouth. They were Puritans, which wanted to reform the Church of England. They called themselves the Pilgrims and wanted to build up a colony based on their own religious ideals. The first winter was cold and about half of them died. In spring they planted corn and other plants with help of Indians. In November 1621 they celebrated good harvest and made a feast. They called this three days as a Thanksgiving.
- Boston tea party – British government started to charge new taxes on sugar, tea, coffee to cover the cost of the war against France. The colonists refused to pay taxes. In 1773 group of patriots, dressed as the Indians, threw a cargo of British tea into the waters of Boston Harbor.
- Declaration of Independence – document by which thirteen colonies declared their independence of Britain. It was written mainly by Thomas Jefferson on July 4th 1776. The new Constitution was adopted in 1787.
- The Civil War – the worst episode in American history lasted four years from 1861-1865. Many northern advanced industrial states abolished slavery, but southern economy was based on large plantations where slaves were used to grow cotton, rice, tobacco and sugar. This difference led to the Civil War between the North and the South. It started after Abraham Lincoln was elected President.

Southern States protested against Lincoln and wanted to leave the Union. Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, which granted freedom to all slaves.

- Alaska - In 1867 The USA purchased the Alaska from Russia.
- World War I - The USA entered to the war in 1917 against Germany and helped France and Britain. US president Woodrow Wilson helped negotiate a peace treaty in 1918.
- Black Friday - „The Roaring Twenties“ brought large economic growth which continued until Great Depression started after the stock market crash in 1929.
- World War II - the war was declared against Japan in 1941 and president Harry Truman ordered atomic bombs to be dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945.
- Cold War - against the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union was the first to send a man into space, the USA had the first man on the Moon. July 20th 1969, astronaut Neil Armstrong: „That’s one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.“

Polititcal system

- The USA is a federation of independent states each with its own right and powers. The capital city is Washington D.C. The power is divided into three branches:
- The legislative branch is made up of Congress. Its seat is in the Capitol. The Congress is divided into two parts - the House of Representatives and the Senate. The House of Representatives consists of 435 lawmakers who are elected according to the population of each state and serve for two years. The Senate has 100 members, 2 members from each state, who serve for six years.
- The executive branch is represented by the President and 15 executive departments. The president together with his Vice-president is chosen in nationwide elections every four years.
- The judicial branch
- The main national parties are **The Republican** and **Democratic Party**.

Places of interest

- National parks - The United States has 58 protected area known as National Parks. The Yellowstone is famous for more than 10k hot spring and geysers, which are created by one of the world’s largest active volcanoes. The other known park is

Sequoia NP or Death Valley NP. It is hottest, driest and lowest point in America.

- Big Cities – On the western coast the known are Los Angeles and San Francisco. In LA we can find the famous film centre Hollywood, where each year Oscars are forwarding for the best films. SF is famous for its hilly relief and cable car going through its streets. Berkley University is here. The biggest centre in the East is Philadelphia. It is the centre of machinery and chemical industry. Chicago lies on the banks of Lake Michigan. It's centre of steel and iron industries and also important transport centre. The second busiest airport in the US O'Hare Airoprt is located here. The first is Atlanta. Detroit is the centre of car industry.