

7th of March the day of senior prom

-

You have seen it in movies, heard about it in songs, and read about it in books.

Prom: who has not heard of it?

The United States of America is a country of contrasts, extremes, chances, and celebrations. Since I was little, I enjoyed watching YouTubers from the US, going to school, doing fun stuff like senior sunset, attending sports games, and of course homecoming or prom. Making unforgettable memories with their friends or more specifically as a community with their peers.

No matter what show you are watching, whether it is 'modern family', 'Gilmore girls' or 'the fresh prince of Bel-Air', the graduation episode or prom episode always marks a special milestone in the show. Moreover, it most likely is an episode in which tears fall, memories are shared and hopes and dreams for the future are expressed.

While I obviously can't speak for all exchange students wanting to visit the United States, I can speak for myself and say that my fascination or interest in the US didn't primarily start with politics or their significance in our economy and world. My interest and fascination were sparked right there, with my younger self watching Gilmore Girls or young kids like me, going to school at the same time as me in a country so far away with different traditions than mine. Having been in contact with other exchange students, the keyword always dropped when talking about the events they look forward to the most was 'the real American high school experience', including prom. I wasn't much different, having had prom far up my bucket list, and just when I thought I would have to scratch it off my list, an opportunity rolled around or shall I say an invite.

**Senior Prom 5-7-2022
Alexandria Monroe High School, IN
8pm-11pm**

**After prom
11:30pm - 2am**

Upon my arrival, I didn't know what to expect. However, the subject of prom was inevitable as from students to staff, everyone talked about it. The hype and mystery about prom took over me, especially as by the beginning of may its spell had the majority of students at Alex high school under its ban.

As you might have already noticed, I like using hyperboles in my writing. However, this time I am not even exaggerating that much. Prom night for both students and parents is something very special, a sign of growing up, a moment to take a breath and see the result of another year passing by. While one from overseas might lean towards having a biased attitude towards such traditions, indicating that they are a little 'over the top', I feel like it fascinates us. The spirit, the mindset, and the attitude are like rare animals, which seem both familiar as well as strange at the same time.

Why would someone spend hundreds of dollars on one night? Why would people dress up and go through tremendous ways to make this night special, something unique, something to remember? For what? An escape?

Aren't the smell of perfume and aftershave, the sound of dresses and tuxedos, and the sight of cars and lights just one of the many attempts of humans to escape reality for a little - to my mind, yes that is the case. For some, it might seem shallow, but exactly through its insignificance, it holds significance. I myself was looking forward to this day with curiosity and the willingness to let the high wave on which prom approached me, sweep over me and carry me to wherever it takes me.

In the end, that was chick fil a, a white mustang, parks, and a bowling alley, but let's start at the beginning, the morning of the 7th of March, on which I met up with my two prom dates Neida and Laura (her cousin) to get ready together at Neida's house. Meaning that until 3 pm the three of us spend a great time together getting ready and listening to some music, to get in the mood of the celebrations ahead.

After having hyped ourselves up and feeling comfortable in our skin, our friend Maddi arrived with her date and boyfriend Jorge, Neida's brother. Typically people take their partners as a prom date, however, some like me just go with their friends or in a bigger group. I had the best time going with not only my beautiful friends Neida and Laura but also as part of a bigger friend group, consisting of seven people. Additionally, some might get their hair or makeup professionally done, while some do it by themselves. Thus, it is your choice.

At 4 pm our group was complete and heading to a park, to take pictures. Afterward, due to our lack of trust in the school's cooking skills, we decided to play it safe and go eat out before prom would officially start at 8 pm. Initially, we planned on eating at a more 'fancier' place called ford's garage, however, upon our arrival, the waiting time for a table was scratching the two-hour mark - too much for our full schedule and empty stomach. Before, one of you is saying *'that was to be expected, why didn't they call and reserve a table beforehand'*. Valid point, however, this particular restaurant didn't take reservations. Meaning that we seven had to come up with an alternative quickly, which we did; Chick fil a was the final choice. Who would have thought that we would end up at a fast-food chain (comparable to burger king or subway) for our prom dinner, but there we were.. all dressed up, in tuxedos and ball gowns, sharing waffle fries and burgers over napkins and to-go containers. The food was immaculate though. The fries and my favorite, the chick-fil-a sauce never disappoint.

Happy and full, we slowly made our way to the actual prom location and reception.

Something I didn't know was a thing, was the prom entrance... Each of the couples got their own little 'red carpet celebrity' moment. Only instead of loud paparazzi, it was admiring parents and friends waiting for their not-so-little kids to walk down the carpet. Seeing all of the parents and the emotions in their eyes was very touching.

After having entered the venue, it was just juniors and seniors, celebrating, dancing, and singing. I was very surprised by the effort the school administration put into making this day special for us. They, for example, organized a snack bar, and a decent DJ. My highlight, however, was a photo booth with accessories for us to take pictures with, which my friends and I made great use of. Before having reached 11 pm, the crowns for this year's prom queen and king were awarded. The nominees were already announced two weeks prior. Therefore, one got to vote upon entering the venue. This year's prom queen Chloe and prom king Caleb won by a big majority. Next year they will be the once rewarding and passing on the crowns. The naming of prom queen and king marked the end of the prom, but wait - the party was not over yet. Our school organized a so-called post-prom, which as the name already gives away, is a little chill hang out after prom. Starting at 11:30 pm we had a few minutes to refresh and change into some much-needed comfy cloth. Therefore, as soon as we could, we rushed home, took a moment to catch a breath, and got going again as soon

as we could. Fashionably late and already kind of exhausted we arrived at our last stop for that day, the bowling alley, where besides free food and bowling alleys (wow; what a surprise) games and rewards waited for us. Yes, you heard right, awards as in prizes...from 'only' candy or silly little things to mini-fridges, AirPods, and an iPad. Every 10 minutes four names were drawn out of a big jar. Waiting to reward the bigger prizes at the very end, the attention was held up high and lasted until the very end. Unfortunately, I did not win anything. However, in the end, and looking back I won something way more valuable than TVs or AirPods...

I won an abundance of great memories and moments spent and created with my dear friends. Hopefully, this blog was able to give you a little glimpse into them.

(wow, that last line does sound like every possible ending of a high school drama - Netflix should hire me at this point)

Until next time, Anna







Descriptions

1. Our prom group
2. at chick fil a; perfectly blending in with establishment
3. Taking photos clearly was a group effort.. shout out to Jorge for being a top photographer