

Profile: Venus Tong

Tell us about where you lived and worked in the USA?

I moved to Los Angeles. I made the move because I already had a bunch of friend's that lived there and I loved the weather it had to offer. It was nice to be able to settle into one place for more then 3 months and being able to live like I was a citizen. During my time in the US I worked as a photographer, make up artist and did a bit of work at a celebrity gifting suite.

What was it like to live and work in Los Angeles?

It was a love and hate. It started off hard because I didnt have a car and I was still getting settling into my new apartment. If you are planning to relocate to LA, you HAVE to have a car as public transport here is pretty much non existence. Unless you live in an area which has your local supermarket spot nearby or if you worked really close and didnt mind walking. I was able to make some really good connections within the entertainment industry and dibble dabble into different type of work. I was luckily enough to photograph many different type of events such as red carpet events, nylon magazine parties as well as many hollywood hills mansion parties. I also worked at a celebrity gifting suite part time designing logos and photographing celebrities that would come in to check out products.

There are many opportunities in Los Angeles but you do really have to fight for it if you want it

You attend and took photos at some pretty cool events in Los Angles; can you tell us about that? What events, how you got invited, people you met ect...

I was working for several PR companies that put on events around LA. When they needed a photographer for redcarpet things they'd get me to document them. Some of the best event's ive ever been to and shot were Nylon Parties and random magazine or fashion launches. My favourites were definitely Hollywood Hills parties. I shot some pics at Bonnie McKees Halloween party whose Katy Perry's songwriter. That was definitely a fun party where everyone dressed up. My camera loved it!

What are your 3 favourite memories of living and working in the USA?

1. I went to Coachella- which was out in Indio. Managed to go for free and shot some of the baddest parties that were on. Tables on tables.
2. Going to Vegas 3 weekends straight just because.....
3. Being able to go out to any party I wanted to go to- going out was not a problem. There was always something to do every night even on a school night. It was nice to always have plans and something to do all the time. It kept me busy and entertained.



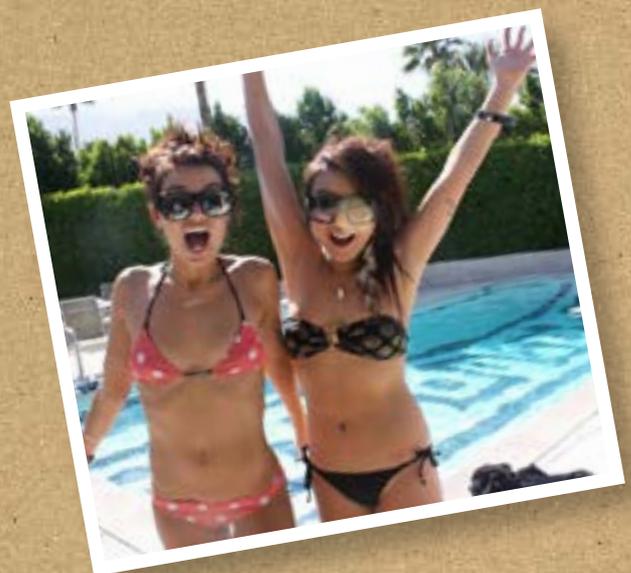
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Were there any times that were hard?

Apartment hunting was hard because I was a little picky with where I lived and job hunting was hard for a while and a lot of waiting around was involved. Also, meeting real genuine people was hard too. A lot of people would ask what you do and use you and befriended you just because of who you knew and what your occupation was. It takes a while to figure it out but I definitely was able to learn from these hard experiences and made me more street smart. "Just because everyone smiles at you doesnt mean they are your friend" - words to live by.

What did you find valuable in going to the USA on an IEP program?

If it wasnt for IEP I wouldn't have been able to live the American dream for a year and gain these life changing experiences.



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