



The "new" Cathedral in Salamanca, Spain, begun in 1513 and completed in 1733.

AmeriSpan, Number One in Latin America Expands To Spain!

Spain, the land of bullfights, Picasso, Don Quixote, Flamenco Dancing and Columbus, is among the most passionately diverse countries of Europe. Home to Catalonians, Galicians, Andalusians and Basques, Spain is a blend of many different cultures, art, geography, languages and food.

The people of Spain are widely considered to be fun-loving, cordial, welcoming and multi-cultural. Spain's capital, Madrid, is home to some of the world's best museums, theaters, restaurants, nightlife, architecture and scenery. Travelers to Madrid can be guaranteed a night full of song, dance and very little sleep.

AmeriSpan now offers Spanish language programs spanning the country's landscape with schools in Barcelona, Granada, Madrid, Málaga and Salamanca. We have chosen to work with all four don Quijote schools in Spain, as well as Enforex in

Madrid. Both don Quijote & Enforex share the same commitment to excellence as AmeriSpan. They limit class size to 8 students (small compared to many other class sizes in Spain), offer top-notch language programs approved by the University of Southern Mississippi for transferable academic credit and provide a variety of activities and extra services.

Other locations are under review so if you have any suggestions, we would love to hear them.

Spain

The Cultural Capital of Europe

Tourism to Spain has increased in recent years, because of a publicity campaign telling foreigners about the beautiful landscape, historic architecture and lively national pastimes. As part of the European Union, Spain enjoyed a rise in economic prosperity in the mid-1990s. 1992 brought the Summer Olympic Games to Barcelona, The World Expo to Seville and earned Spain the title of Cultural Capital of Europe.

Art - The untamed side of the Spanish people is reflected in their artistic expressions. Spanish painting is a carefully orchestrated mix of primitive and modern, historical and lyrical. One is able to put together the pieces of Spanish history and Spanish contemporary culture by visiting any one of Spain's beautifully-constructed museums. Indeed, the work of Spanish artists Picasso, Goya, Velázquez, Dalí and Miró represent some of the finest masterpieces in the world.

Dance - The subtle influence of Spain's North African neighbor is detected in Flamenco dancing and music. Flamenco represents emotional extremes — life and death, love and heartbreak, ecstasy and pain. While still uniquely Spanish, the dancing embraces the style, spirit and raw energy of African rhythms and melodies.

Food - Spain is the land of *tapas*, *paella*, red wine and 2-hour lunches. "The first meal in Spain is always a shock," said Ernest Hemingway in his famous novel of expatriates in Spain, *The Sun Also Rises*, "with the hors d'oeuvres, an egg course, two meat courses, vegetables, salad, dessert and fruit." No wonder the Spanish take *siestas* every afternoon, they can't move after eating!

In This Issue

Letter from the Editors	2
AmeriSpan Top 13 Traveling Tips	3
Educational Travel Calendar	3
International Living Discovery Tour	3
Country Close-up: Spain	4
Arriving & Departing	5
AmeriSpan Sponsored Teacher's Workshop	6
Program Profile: Heredia, Costa Rica	7
AmeriSpan: Off the Wire	8



Letter From The Editors:



Hello Friends,

For the last two years AmeriSpan has engaged in a continued debate over whether we should offer programs in Spain. Well, we are finally doing it! However, we are still offering the majority of our programs in Latin America and will continue to do so. We firmly believe that those living in the United States and Canada need to learn the culture of Latin America. The obvious reasons are: our proximity; our contact with Latin America through economic and political exchange; immigration; the presence of "things" Latin — food, music, crafts; and, remember, the Spanish spoken in Latin America is slightly different from that spoken in Spain (similar to the way that English spoken in the United States/Canada is different than English spoken in England).

Why are we adding Spain? For a variety of reasons:

- YOU, our customers, keep asking for programs in Spain.
- AmeriSpan's clients are increasingly diverse and include many Europeans, who for many practical reasons, seek to learn Spanish in Spain.
- The rainy season in Latin America occurs during Spain's summer which allows you to learn Spanish in the sun year-round.
- In less than a year, the countries in the European Union will have a standardized currency. This is creating many business opportunities in Spain for our "professional" clients.
- Knowing Spain as well as Latin America helps one understand the history and culture of Latin America.
- Spain is compelling, culturally rich and geographically varied.

We believe that we have done an excellent job of choosing diverse locations from big cities to small towns, from beaches to Moorish fortresses, from discos to cafés - our programs cover the spectrum.

Enjoy this issue of the newsletter and hasta pronto!

John Slocum & Dorioara Pinku
Co-Directors

Scholarships Available

The prestigious Johns Hopkins University will be conducting a research study in Antigua, Guatemala during late spring and summer. Students who participate in this medical study will earn \$200 - \$400 in financial assistance toward the cost of their language program. Eligible candidates can not have traveled to a less developed country during the last five years and should plan on staying for at least three weeks in Antigua. Contact Janet Shimko, Tel: 410 955-0053, Email: jshimko@jhsp.edu

Public Safety
Health
Travel Costs
and more...
Covers 17 Countries
Published Quarterly
Free Sample
**"Sound Advice
for Safe Travel"**
P.O. Box 17-17-908, Quito, Ecuador
Fax: +593-2-562-565 Internet: ruu@gl.pro.ec

Association of Residents of Costa Rica
Asociación de Residentes de Costa Rica

- Assistance within Costa Rica before and after arrival; advice, contacts, information (moving, Real estate, etc.)
- Services to establish your residency, starting before your arrival
- Assistance with Government agencies and departments, and an explanation of local rule & regulations
- Full insurance through our office, including group plans for health, home, and vehicles

ARCR • P.O. Box 232-1007
Centro Colón • San José • Costa Rica

Tel: (506) 233-8068 or (506) 221-2053
Fax: (506) 233-1152
E-Mail: arcrsacc@sol.racsa.co.cr
WWW: <http://www.amerispan.com/arcr>

Latin America
Travel Specialists

- Special Airfare: student tickets, air passes & other discounted tickets
- Experts on finding the best value and itinerary
- All-inclusive tours throughout México, Central & South America
- Staff speaks English, German, French & Spanish
- Customized itineraries

Tel: 800-655-4053 Address: 5699 Miles Avenue
510-655-2154 Oakland, CA
Fax: 510-655-4566 94618
USA: 800-655-4053 E-mail: exito@wonderlink.com

<http://www.wonderlink.com/exitotravel>

Avoid taking home more than souvenirs!! AmeriSpan's 13 tips on staying healthy

Let's face it, the last place that you want to get sick or injured is in a foreign country. You waste precious vacation time, have to deal with an unfamiliar doctor, stumble over the language barrier, and worse, your comfy bed and home are far away. You can minimize this unpleasant experience by following these health tips.

CDC – Crazy's Don't Call

Plain and simple, if you don't take advantage of all the great, up-to-date information that the Centers for Disease Control offers for free, you are crazy! (tel: 404-332-4559, web: www.cdc.gov)

Don't Bring The Kitchen Sink, but...

Do bring prescription medicine, copies of your prescriptions, contact lens solution & cleaner, sunscreen, insect repellent with DEET and other personal items.

Trust "Reliable Sources"

When in doubt about something (i.e. is the water safe to drink), ask a reliable source. Reliable sources include guidebooks, expatriates, your country's embassy, your school's administration

and your host family. AmeriSpan clients are enrolled in a travel assistance plan, your 24-hour "reliable source". *Please note that Presidential interns, advisers or appointees regardless of political affiliation are never to be confused as "reliable sources", except in the news media.*

Don't Judge A Book by Its Cover

Often, fancy restaurants in lesser-developed countries have the same problems as other restaurants. Follow the same rules about eating (i.e. avoid under-cooked meats, salads, seafood, etc.) unless a "reliable source" says it is OK.

Doctor Kevorkian??

Be afraid, be very afraid... of dentists and doctors unless they are recommended by a "reliable source".

Don't Tough It Out

Health is not an iron-man contest. The only thing you'll win for "toughing it out" and not seeing a doctor is the "Dunce Cap". If you feel ill, seek professional help immediately (important: see previous tip!!!).

Don't Party Til You Drop

Sure, you just have to experience some all-night discos in Spain and Argentina but not every night. Get your beauty sleep.

Beware of Outdoor Food Vendors

If this comes as a surprise - "Go directly to jail, do not pass go and do not collect \$200"!

"These Boots Were Made For Walkin"

Those boots Nancy Sinatra wore sure weren't, but your footwear should be "made for walkin". Cool-looking,

continued on page 5

Educational Travel Calendar

AmeriSpan offers a variety of special Educational Travel Programs & Conferences. Below is a calendar of what is scheduled:

Tour/Conference	Dates	Cost
Mysteries of Mount Roraima and the Orinoco Delta, Venezuela	4/14/98 - 5/2/98	\$2,910
Limited OPI Workshop, Cuernavaca, México	6/21/98 - 6/30/98	\$975
Yucatán Summer Spanish Institute	6/28/98 - 7/24/98	\$1,199
World-Class Trekking & Archaeology in Perú	7/6/98 - 7/25/98	\$2,600
6th Annual Teachers Conference in Costa Rica, OPI Workshop	7/7/98 - 7/11/98	\$1,035
Popular Folk Art of México	7/22/98 - 8/2/98	\$1,584
The Highlands of Guatemala	8/2/98 - 8/13/98	\$1,782
Discovery Tour/Int'l Living, San Miguel de Allende, México	8/9/98 - 8/23/98	TBA
Spanish In The Galapagos	Late Summer 1998	\$2,650
The Galapagos, Andes & Amazon, Ecuador	10/26/98 - 11/14/98	\$3,590

Int'l Living Discovery Tour San Miguel de Allende, México

Were you thinking of relocating or investing in Mexico? Are you interested in the culture of Mexico? This program in beautiful colonial San Miguel de Allende will combine language classes, cultural activities, special tours and valuable workshops. You will be able to meet people who live in the area, both locals and expatriates, visit real estate, learn about available medical facilities and volunteer activities. In addition, we have scheduled a cooking (and eating) class, dance class and tours to charming sites of local interest. Contact Int'l Living for more info at (800) 926-6575.

Country Close-up: Spain



Health Risk: low.

Weather & Natural Phenomena:

Temperate: colder in northern regions; hotter in central regions; moderate and cloudy along the coast.

Spain's varied geography gives rise to many subtle changes of climate. Northern Spain (Basque country, Cantabria, Asturias & Galicia) is where "the rain in Spain" falls. Temperatures are more moderate than in southern regions. Summer is the best time to visit this region. Southern Spain is considered "dry Spain," with a more varied climate than in the north, scarce rainfall, and cloudless skies, only occasionally punctuated by local thunderstorms.

Fall is the best time of year for visiting all parts of Spain; the climate is superior with sunny days and mostly blue skies.

Average temperatures (Fahrenheit):

Winter:	high 59°	low 42°
Spring:	high 70°	low 50°
Summer:	high 84°	low 64°
Fall:	high 72°	low 56°

The Economy: Very Stable
GDP \$565 billion; GDP Growth Rate 3%; Inflation rate 4.3%; Unemployment Rate 23%

Monetary Unit: Peseta; exchange rate: 150 pesetas=1 dollar

Public Safety: safe.

Political Situation: Very Stable Parliamentary Monarchy. Juan Carlos I is the Chief of State.

Spain, a member of the European Union, is made up of 17 autonomous communities – Andalusia, Aragon, Asturias, Canarias, Cantabria, Castilla-La Mancha, Castilla y Leon, Cataluña, Comunidad Valencia, Extremadura, Galicia, Islas Baleares, La Rioja, Madrid, Murcia, Navarra y País Vasco. To Spain's south is the Island of Gibraltar, which is still controlled by the United Kingdom and a point of contention.

The Basque Separatist movement (ETA) in Spain is a political and ethnic group that desires complete independence from Spain and uses terrorism to oppose the government. Flare-ups of Basque activity in the north and the capital are rare but significant.

Festivals:

Spain's most popular annual *fiestas* include *Semana Santa* (Easter Week) in Seville, the *Fiesta de San Fermin* (Running of the Bulls) through the streets of Pamplona in July and the grape harvest in the wine region of Rioja.

Facts on Spain

- **Population:** 40,060,000
- **Location:** Southwestern Europe, bordering Bay of Biscay, Mediterranean Sea, North Atlantic Ocean, Southwest of France, East of Portugal.
- **Area:** 405,750 sq. km including 4,964 km of coastline
- **Languages:** Castillian Spanish, Catalan 17%, Galician 7%, Basque 2%
- **Capital:** Madrid
- **Religion:** 99% Roman Catholic

Above facts courtesy of the CIA World Factbook on Spain

Spanish-Speakers Around The World

It is estimated that more than 350 million people speak Spanish around the world, making it one of the most important languages to know. The following table looks at the top 20 countries where Spanish is spoken.

	Spanish Country	Spanish Speakers	Population	AmeriSpan Programs ?
1.	México	86,211,000	97,967,000	Yes
2.	Colombia	34,000,000	34,939,000	No
3.	Argentina	33,000,000	34,264,000	Yes
4.	Spain	28,173,600	40,060,000	Yes
5.	USA	22,400,000	261,000,000	- -
6.	Venezuela	21,480,000	22,213,000	Yes
7.	Perú	20,000,000	25,123,000	Yes
8.	Chile	13,800,000	14, 237,000	Yes
9.	Cuba	10,000,000	10,620,000	No
10.	Ecuador	9,500,000	12, 314,000	Yes
11.	Dom. Rep.	6,886,000	7,915,000	Yes
12.	El Salvador	5,900,000	5,943,000	Yes
13.	Honduras	5,800,000	5,968,000	Yes
14.	Guatemala	4,673,000	10,621,000	Yes
15.	Nicaragua	4,347,000	4, 540,000	Planned 1999
16.	Bolivia	3,483,700	8,421,000	Planned 1998
17.	Costa Rica	3,300,000	3,374,000	Yes
18.	Uruguay	3,000,000	3,246,000	Yes
19.	Puerto Rico	2,690,000	3,958,000	Yes
20.	Panamá	2,100,000	2,659,000	Yes

AmeriSpan Top 13 Traveling Tips *continued from page 3*

uncomfortable shoes will ensure that you never see some tourist sites, never mind looking cool while doing it.

Ahh, you're blushing...a lot

Though you may think differently, lobster red IS NOT considered a healthy tan, and those who aspire to it must be "loco" to ignore all that medical research. So cover up!

Scrub-a-dub-dub

Surprise! Hands are one of the biggest carriers of harmful bacteria. So wash your hands before dinner or NO DESSERT!

Risky Business

If you are an adrenaline junky and insist on high-risk sports (i.e. scuba diving, whitewater-rafting, etc.), beware of unlicensed adventure-sports companies and faulty equipment. Check with a "reliable source" or else.

Just Say No!

Languishing away in a Latin American jail with members of the Colombian Cartel for cellmates is NOT healthy. Stay away from illegal drugs!

Arriving & Departing

Following is some important information for you to consider when planning your trip. For most programs, plan to arrive at your homestay on the day before classes begin and depart the day after classes are completed. Most programs allow you to extend your homestay a few days before or after your program for an additional fee. The following is a list of programs to which you must plan to arrive early:

- **Mazatlán & Oaxaca** - These programs have a placement exam on Saturday morning, so plan to arrive on the Friday before classes begin and depart the Friday classes are completed.
- **Manuel Antonio & La Ceiba** - For these programs, plan to arrive on the Sunday prior to starting classes but you will stay in a local hotel the first night and transferred to your homestay on Monday (your first day of classes).
- **Cuenca or Monteverde** - For these programs, you will need to arrive to your destination country's international airport (Quito or San José) on Saturday. You will be met at the airport, taken to a local hotel near the airport and transferred to your final destination on Sunday (either a flight to Cuenca or a bus to Monteverde). This is all included in the price of your program.
- **Possible Difficulties** - On international flights, it is common that flights arrive late and/or baggage is delayed. If you are participating in a program which requires a long bus ride or a particular connecting flight, consider traveling on Saturday. This will ensure that you arrive at your final destination on Sunday regardless of any unforeseen delays. We recommend that you consider traveling on Saturday for the following programs: Cusco, Huancayo, Mérida (Venezuela), Trujillo and Quetzaltenango.

AmeriSpan-Sponsored Teachers' Workshop

Last October, AmeriSpan invited Spanish school teachers and directors from all over Latin America to Antigua, Guatemala for a three-day professional development workshop.

Over 200 teachers, owners and directors from México, the Caribbean, Central and South America came together in colonial Antigua with the common goal of enhancing the quality of their Spanish language programs.

Representatives from schools in Argentina, Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras,

Guatemala, México, and Puerto Rico attended the workshop. Most were AmeriSpan partner schools who came to harvest new ideas and share their philosophies for improvement; others had never worked with us and came to find out how they could become affiliated with our programs.

It was the first opportunity many directors and teachers had for face-to-face communication with their colleagues. "The conference was stimulating and fun and well-organized. I know what this kind of an event takes and I know AmeriSpan stuck its neck way out. Bravo!" remarked Chloe Pacheco,

director of CIS, an AmeriSpan partner school in Mérida, México and one of the presenters at the workshop.

Among the topics covered: *Key Concepts for the Teaching and Evaluation of Language*, *The Use of Visual Aids*, *Developing Students' Listening and Comprehension Skills*, *Keys to Grammar and Comprehension*, *The Use of Literature as a Learning Tool*, and *Cultural Awareness in the Classroom*.

"It was excellent," exclaimed Laura Ellington, co-director of Intercultura Costa Rica (highlighted on page 7 of this newsletter). "Aside from the informative workshops, the conference offered a unique opportunity to share ideas with peers about improving service, addressing student needs, and ensuring that Spanish programs and teaching techniques are up-to-date."

We have heard positive reports from schools since the workshop. Many directors have already begun implementing new strategies they developed in Guatemala — redesigning curricula and forming cooperative ventures with other schools. Most important, the directors want to establish an Association of Latin American Spanish Language Schools that will continue the work of the conference and structure the first international Spanish school accreditation system.

Comparison Table: Spain vs Latin America

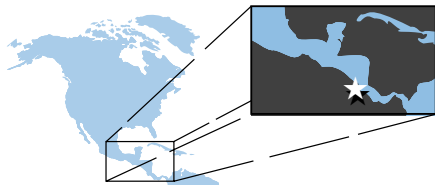
Now that AmeriSpan offers programs in Spain, you're going to have to decide where to study. The following are some comparisons we have made between the two countries. **Warning:** The following are sweeping generalizations, but should help to decide on which continent to study.

Spain	vs	Latin America
28,000,000 Spaniards speak Spanish	vs	268,000,000 Latin Americans speak Spanish
European Culture	vs	Latin American Culture
Standard of living (on average): high	vs	Standard of living: moderate to low
Old Spain	vs	New Spain
Developed country	vs	Mostly developing countries
"Original" Castillian Spanish	vs	More commonly-used Spanish
More Spanish verb tenses (ie. the 3rd person plural)	vs	Less complicated Spanish usage
Member of EU	vs	Member of NAFTA
Castillian lisp	vs	Latin American slang
Higher average cost for Spanish language classes	vs	Lower average cost for Spanish language classes
One country in which to learn the language	vs	Several countries in which to learn different styles and expressions
Moorish influences	vs	Mayan, Aztec, Incan influences
Running of the Bulls	vs	Day of the Dead
Flamenco Dancing	vs	Salsa, Merengue Dancing
Easy access to Europe	vs	Easy access to other Spanish speaking countries
Ruins of Roman churches & castles	vs	Ruins of Mayan Pyramids and cities
The Mediterranean & Atlantic	vs	The Caribbean, Pacific & Atlantic
Trekking through the Pyrenees	vs	Hiking the Inca Trail in the Andes
Canary Islands	vs	Galapagos Islands
Pablo Picasso	vs	Diego Rivera
Federico Garcia Lorca	vs	Isabel Allende
Conquered by the Romans	vs	Conquered by the Spanish



Dorioara Pinku, AmeriSpan's Co-Director, chats with Gabriel Cortés and Juan Martínez, directors of partner schools in Morelia, México and Cuenca, Ecuador at cocktails following the conference.

Program Profile



Heredia, Costa Rica

School

Intercultura Costa Rica

Location

Heredia (population 50,000) is known as the “City of Flowers”. Due to the presence of the National University, the town has a youthful and active feel despite its small size. The town is surrounded by many of Costa Rica’s famous coffee plantations. A 15-20 minute bus ride brings you into San José, located only 6 miles south of Heredia. This way you can enjoy all the cultural and social benefits of city-life, while living in a safer, quieter and cleaner environment. In the high season, some students study at the school’s smaller, quieter Barva campus, which is a 10 minute bus ride from downtown Heredia.

Atmosphere

The school’s centralized location (only a few blocks from the main square) helps make it a center of activity. Since the building is a remodeled colonial-style house, the atmosphere is very comfortable and homey. Many students spend extracurricular hours hanging out at the school. In the evenings, Intercultura is filled with Costa Rican students studying English.

Language Program

Over the last 18 months, the school’s directors have invested heavily in

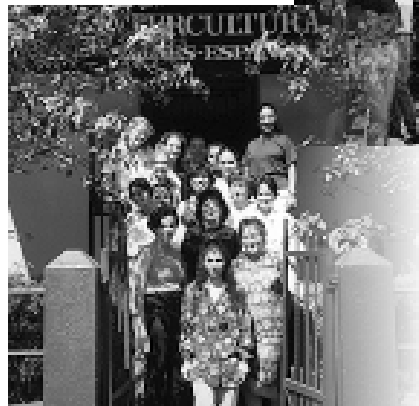
teacher training, new materials and infrastructure, making Heredia’s program among AmeriSpan’s best. The principal textbook used in this 4-hour per day program is called *Nueva Gramática Comunicativa* but teachers draw on a variety of outside sources such as newspapers, films, menus, and visual aides. While there is a focus on grammar, the methods of teaching and learning are highly conversational. Writing and reading exercises are assigned as nightly homework. The maximum class size is six, with an average class size of three during low season.

Homestay

All homestays are within walking distance of the school. There is usually only one student per family (except during the summer months) unless otherwise requested. Students enjoy a private room, laundry service and 2 meals per day (breakfast and dinner). Costa Ricans are famous for their hospitality and friendliness.

Activities/Excursions

This school has one of the busiest activity schedules of all



The staff in Heredia and a party at the school in honor of Friday’s graduation.

AmeriSpan partner schools. Latin dance classes are offered everyday in addition to other cultural activities such as cooking classes, movie nights, lectures, conversational “intercambios” with locals studying English and museum visits. Activities are free except for public transportation or entrance fees. Occasional evening activities are organized to take students to the theater, a disco or a typical restaurant.

The school arranges excursions on most weekends. These trips are usually accompanied by a teacher of the school and range in price from \$50 - 150, depending on the trip.

Academic Credit

The University of Southern Mississippi offers fully transferable credit at the undergraduate level. See other options for academic credit in the AmeriSpan Program Catalog.

Other comments

A very popular option at this school is the “Beach Week,” held the last week of every month.

During this week, students have the option to take classes at Jacó Beach. Students live in 4 person cabins complete with a kitchenette. There is no extra cost for “Beach Week,” but no meals are provided and the regular activity schedule does not take place. The “Beach Week” option is available at both campuses and you can sign up upon arrival in Heredia.

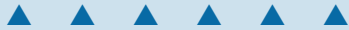




AmeriSpan: Off The Wire

Register Online

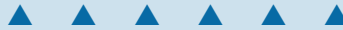
AmeriSpan has moved to a web server that supports "Secure Socket Layer" which protects confidential information sent over the internet. This means that you can now register for an AmeriSpan program online without worry.



Volunteer/Internship Program Update

The AmeriSpan Volunteer/Internship catalog can now be found on the web, <http://www.amerispan.com/volunteer>. Since the catalog first came out, listing over 60 Standard Placements, new ones have been added and more are expected in the coming months. To

make it easier to find what you're looking for, the new addition to the web site enables you to search all the different placements by country, type of work, placements providing free room and board and short-term commitments. Soon to be added to the volunteer/internship site will be a "What's New" section. Bookmark this as a favorite!

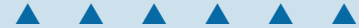


Ensure a Space, Register Soon

The middle of May to the middle of August is high season for study abroad. Even some of the largest schools get full during this time period. We recommend that you register as soon as possible to secure a space in the program of your choice.

New Web Site

Look for some exciting developments as AmeriSpan upgrades its award-winning web site over the next few weeks. Easier navigation, a better search engine, online registration and purchase ability and much more information are all part of this upgrade. Enjoy!



Language Travel Coupons

The perfect gift for Graduation, Birthdays and Holidays is an AmeriSpan Language Travel Coupon. The coupons are sold in any dollar increment, do not have an expiration date and are acceptable for study at any AmeriSpan program.



AmeriSpan Unlimited
THE BRIDGE BETWEEN CULTURES

P.O. Box 40007
Philadelphia, PA 19106-0007

For complete program descriptions, applications, prices and more, visit our web site at:

<http://www.amerispan.com>