

American Homes

By Karen Zhang

Karen in America

家是心灵的港湾，人人都渴望一个家。在美国，人们对家的定义是怎样的呢？美国的住房和中国的有什么不同？且看本期的《Karen in America》。



Everyone wants to have a house, no matter whether it's in China or America. But in America, there seems to be more options. For young adults, they usually rent apartments as they're still strengthening [加强, 巩固] their financial ability. For the majority of middle class people, it's not uncommon that they purchase a house on various mortgage [抵押] plans. Unlike in China, the real estate market in America is mature. The average cost of a single family home ranges from \$200,000 to more than double that amount depending on the location, the size, the facilities in the area and many other factors.

American people respect individual privacy and property rights. There are property lines between houses. Homeowners usually build fences around their lawns [草地, 草坪] or plant trees around their houses. If you see "Posted" signs on the tree trunks [树干] in the woods, it's best you stay out of the area as these signs mean no hunting, no trespassing [侵犯, 闯入私人领地].

Indeed, some Americans live very well, possessing a large amount of land. And it's likely for a stranger to get lost if they don't know how large the property is. One time I visited an American friend's house which was

located near a bay that was surrounded by dense [稠密的, 浓密的] woods. His property was so big that it went as far as my eyes could see. I asked my friend how he'd know if he entered his neighbor's land by mistake. He said jokingly, "If you see the lawn is greener, that's probably my neighbor's." And then he pointed to the far distance, and said, "My property extends to a hundred feet in the water. If you have a chance to walk down to the bay, you'll see some parts of the water are also private." Doesn't Mother Nature belong to the public? I thought.

Just like you see in movies, American houses have many functional rooms, from the kitchens, to the bedrooms, bathrooms and living rooms. There is also storage space provided by multiple closets, a basement [地下室] or garage in some houses. I see why some Americans don't bring umbrellas on a rainy day. If her house has a garage with an automatic door, she can open the garage door in her car with a remote control [远程控制], she then drives in her garage and enters her house from the garage. All the way she stays dry. How convenient American life is! 🍷

