

# **lisa looks back / 1 / leaving the US**

I spent two or three years here **teaching both** kids and adults English. That was **in the mid-90s**. I **was living** in Iowa when I decided to come here. I **had just graduated from college** and I was **wondering** what to do with my life. I **ran into a girl I knew**, Mary, one day **at** the mall. We **got to talking** and she told me that she **was going** to Europe and asked me if I **was interested in joining** her. I said yes **without even thinking** about it. I mean, Europe. **What an** interesting place. I thought I **would** never leave the United States and now this big chance **came up** and I **wasn't going to miss** it. I didn't **even care which** country I was going to.

I knew I was going to spend the rest of my life in America **worrying** about money and jobs **like most people** do. I **felt** I needed to get out of the States **for a while so I could take** my last **break** from all the **duties and payments**. Mary said she **had to** choose a country to go to and she chose the Czech Republic. **At that time** I had no idea **such a** country **even** existed. I **looked it up** in the map and there it was, right in the middle of Europe. I decided to **read up on** its history a little and **found out** that it had only become a free country a few years **earlier**. I **figured** it **might be** a good place **for me to learn** about life.