



There's no place like home (except at spring break)

By Nancy Feigenbaum
Reporter

I don't understand the big fuss at Texas A&M about spring break. Students at the University of Minnesota would probably give anything to have the choking humidity, dead daffodils and sunburns of central Texas at this time of year.

Spring break seems to have been named strictly for students in the south, the only part of the country where you can call the second week in March "spring" without being sarcastic. People here who start wearing shorts to class in February can hardly be sick of winter.

For the sake of contrast, consider my alma mater, a large, Ivy League University in upstate New York that shall remain nameless, in order to preserve its reputation.

A little less than two years ago, as I was struggling to graduate, we were enjoying a typical northern week in May, (which is not considered summer, incidentally). A few spring flowers

were out, the timid kind that huddle around bases of trees. Exams were approaching full steam.

Then, on one of those mornings when we all slept through the weather report, the skies opened up and burnt every-

the libraries to do the work that piled up while they concentrated on competitive beach volleyball, surfing (and there

are no waves in Virginia Beach), and distinguishing between light beers so that they

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thing a frigid white, from the grass to the roof tops.

It was May, and it was snowing.

I've lived in some of the most popular vacation spots in the United States: Miami, Virginia Beach, and San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Students in these places are at a loss when their universities close in March, ostensibly to give them a chance to relax, go sailing and drink margaritas.

"What have we been doing all year?" they ask themselves.

For a change, they hole up in

can get jobs doing commercials.

There's something depressing about admitting to people you're going home for spring break, even if your parents live in Virginia Beach like mine do, where the bars outnumber the gas stations and "formal attire" means "don't forget your flip-flops."

There's an until-now unwritten rule on campus that after mid-terms no one makes small talk by asking a person's major. By mid-term, most people are as enthusiastic about their ma-

jors as they are about hay fever.

I violated the rule recently at a party held by the outer-Snook home town club.

"Arsenic," replied the angelic face of a slightly drunk sophomore.

"I don't understand," I said. "You're majoring in arsenic? I thought they only offered that in Detroit."

"No, no," he slurred. "I'm going to poison my BANA professor. It's too late to drop."

Since then, I've stuck to the convention, which is to ask about spring break.

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Alerted at an early stage, you can move on to the next person before things get to the dance floor.

So I always hedge a little on these occasions. I don't want people to know that I'm actually going to spend the week watching tapes of Masterpiece Theater and fighting with my little brother about doing dishes, when there's a beach 20 minutes away.