

## Studying Abroad Experience in Japan (So Far)

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On the 17th of September, I came to Japan. Because this wasn't my first time coming to Japan as I was not anxious at all. I already knew about Ikebukuro and Otsuka and what they were like. However, I have not lived on my own before.

Kyohei (my other half) picked me up from Haneda airport. We had been waiting for about a year for me to return to Japan, so I was very happy.

After sorting out my apartment and sorting out all the paperwork at the municipal office, I started exploring Japan. So far, I have been to Odawara, Nagano, Oyama, Hakone, Izu and Kofu. I have also discovered that I like hot springs. There are no hot springs in England, so I had never experienced being in one before. The first time I went into a hot spring was whilst in a traditional hotel (Ryokan) in Nagano. The ryokan is in a small, quiet town, so I was the only one in the hot spring, which made the experience even more relaxing.



I went to the N3 level classes. But one of them was an N2 level class, so it was a little bit difficult, but it was fun. For that class, we visited the primary school attached to Ochanomizu University to visit the students. It was a lot of fun. The students introduced me

to their school. There was a surprising number of pets and small animals in

the classrooms. After being shown around and watching their presentations, we ate lunch together. As becoming an ALT in Japan is something I'm thinking about doing after graduation, it was an interesting, fun and invaluable experience.

December was the hardest month for me. In England, Christmas is a massive family holiday (possibly the biggest celebration of the year in general) where extended family comes and visit and exchange presents. But, because I was in Japan and Kyohei had never experienced Christmas before, this was my first Christmas on my own. But Japanese Christmas was also fun. When you are on your own, you can make new Christmas traditions, such as doing a stamp rally or going to an England-inspired village.



So far, my experience of living in Japan has been wonderful. There's a lot of fun and interesting things I have done. I plan on doing more fun and interesting experiences next semester.