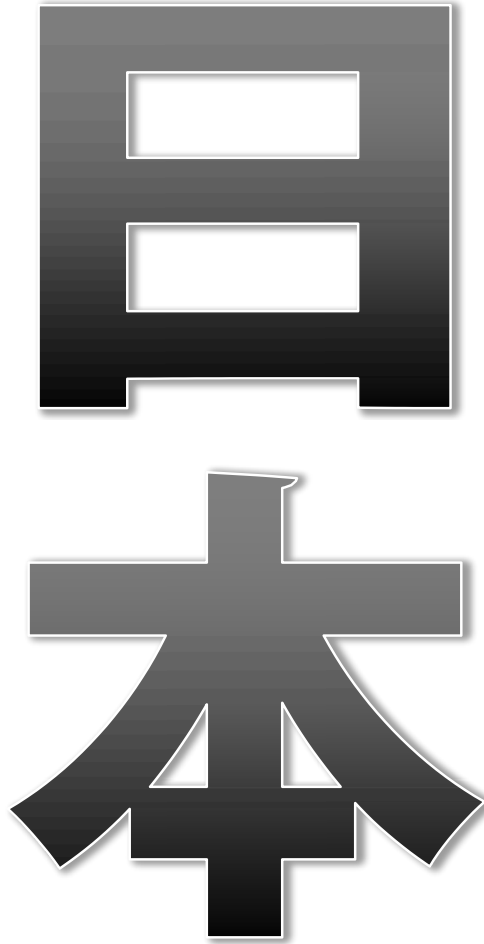


2024



Japan Guidebook

**Richard U. Light Fellowship
Yale University**

Unofficial JAPAN SAC Guide

PLEASE NOTE: There are certain risks assumed when using the resources provided in this Unofficial Guidebook. The Light Fellowship Program provides this resource as a convenience, does not vet any of the suggestions, and makes no representations as to the qualifications of any of the recommendations or resources provided. Students must perform their own due diligence and use their own discretion and judgment when making decisions about housing, visas, health and safety etc. Students are also encouraged to ask their language programs directly about additional resources. Neither Yale University nor the Richard U. Light Foundation, nor any of their respective employees, is responsible for the accuracy of any of the information supplied in this Guidebook.

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Section I: Pre-departure Planning

A. Pre-departure Checklist

Administrative Tasks

- I have a passport and a photo ID.
- I have a visa for Japan (if traveling for more than 90 days, or if you're not a US or Canadian citizen).
- I have my International SOS Insurance Card and Travel Assistance information
- **Call your bank and credit card companies before leaving for Japan** and let them know you will be using your cards and accounts abroad. If you do not, they may disable your card if they see suspicious activity.

Staying Healthy

- **Water:** Tap water is drinkable in Japan.

- **Gather health documentation** such as immunization records, prescriptions, and eye glass/contact prescriptions.

- **Prescription meds:** When bringing prescription drugs with you while traveling, also bring a note from your physician describing your condition and the necessity of the medication. Include the generic name of the drug as specific brand names available here may not be available in Japan.

- **Health coverage:** Exchange students are treated the same as citizens and so are eligible for healthcare in Japan. If you are staying in Japan for a year or a semester, you want to consider enrolling in Japan's national health care plan (the Kokumin-Kenkō-Hoken). Some programs, like Nanzan, makes it enrolling in Japan's national health care plan mandatory for international students. Don't worry though - you receive discounts as a student so you'll likely be paying no more than 2,000 yen per month!

Safety

- **Register with the local U.S. Embassy.** Registering with the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy will allow officials to contact you in case of an emergency. Registering is easy – you can do it online by going to the registration section of the Department of State travel website http://travel.state.gov/travel/abroad_r

[egistration.html](#). Click on "Travel Registration" and follow the instructions.

- **Stay informed** about local events in Japan and around the world. You can do this by reading the country information available on the Department of State travel website, by reading local papers and listening to local radio stations.

- **Be aware of issues (legal, safety and health) around alcohol and drug use.** The legal drinking age in Japan is 20. The penalties for drug possession and use are very severe. Stay safe!

Section I: Pre-departure Planning

- **Observe** the behavior of your hosts. Local habits can give you clues to what is safe in a city and country. Don't let your guard down as you become more familiar with the area.
- **Be aware of the emergency procedures** put in place by your program. Carry important contact information with you at all times – even when traveling! Japan 911 is **1-1-9**.

A: Pre-departure Checklist

- **Plan** to make regular contact with your family back home. Mobile phones, internet and email will make this easy to do, and will put your family's minds at ease while you are far from home.

Section I: Pre-departure Planning

B: Contact Information

B. Contact Information

General

Yale Club of Japan

President: Marina Yoshimura (marina.yoshimura@aya.yale.edu)

Join the Yale Club of Japan Facebook Group!

US Embassy: Tokyo, Japan

https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/Supplements/Supplements_by_Post/TKY-Tokyo.html

Phone: 03-3224-5000

Fax: 03-3505-1862

1-10-Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo 107-8420

International SOS

- Health Insurance or Travel Assistance (e.g. emergency evacuation services)– provide your **personal** health insurance number: 11B824535
<https://ogc.yale.edu/erm/ISOS>
 - 24/7 Emergency Response Center: +1 215 942 8478
 - Japan – +81 3 3560 7183

Yale Numbers

Yale 24-hour Security Office: +1(203) 785-5555

University Health Services: +1(203) 432-0123

Japan Emergency Numbers

Medical Emergencies: 1-1-9

Safety Emergencies/Police: 1-1-0

English-speaking Police Hotline (Tokyo): 03-3501-0110

C. Packing and Necessities

* = best to bring from home

= best to buy in Japan

General Packing Tips

Pack light! Some international flights have limits of 50lbs per checked bag, and some domestic Japanese flights have lower limits.

- **Most necessary supplies and toiletries will be available in Japan**, so you can pack light and get most things once you've landed.

- **Something thinner than jeans!** It gets hot and humid in Japan. Japanese men don't really wear shorts, so baggy pants are nice. That said, nothing will happen if you wear shorts (you may just appear more like a tourist).

Essentials

- *****Omiyage:** First impressions are important, and presents are just good manners, especially if you're staying with a host family! Gifts are customary any time someone extends you hospitality (even if it's only for dinner). That being said, there is no need to go crazy or worry over this. See *Section V: Miscellaneous* for more info on omiyage.

- ***Adapters/Converters:** The outlets in Japan are often 2-pronged, so you should only need an adapter if you have 3-pronged

appliances. These adapters are very inexpensive.

- **Hand Towel/Handkerchief:** Many times, Japanese public bathrooms lack paper towels, since you're expected to carry around your own handkerchief or hand towel. (100yen~, easily found at local 100-yen shops and department stores)

- **Clothing is cheaper in Japan!** It is possible to go with a relatively empty suitcase and buy most of what you need there. I ended up not wearing a lot of the extra clothing I brought from Yale.

- **T-shirts.** You would not want to do laundry too often, and the summer weather will make it impossible to wear anything more than once.

- **Shoes:** NOT high heels. Sandals, flip-flops, and sneakers are completely enough. You might want a nice pair of shoes for more formal events, but that is IT.

- **#Laundry Rack/Hanger** if living alone. Most Japanese people do not use dryers. These can be found at 100yen stores, combini, etc. Laundry detergent can be readily purchased at a grocery store.

- **#Umbrella:** it rains often in Japan, especially during the summer, so it's worth it to have an umbrella to carry around (500~800yen, convenience stores)

- **CAMERA.**

- ***Smaller pieces of luggage:** Backpack or something you can use for short trips around Japan.

- ***This guide!** Advertising never hurt anyone. But really, this guide will be useful, and is so much lighter than Lonely Planet.

Highly Recommended

- **Electronic Dictionary:** This is a good investment, especially if you are planning long-term studying in advanced Japanese. The price range for dictionaries with the features you'll need is 20,000 ~30,000 yen. However, most people get by with a dictionary app on their phones, which are often almost as good and significantly less expensive (or free!). See *Section V: Miscellaneous*, Electronic Dictionary.

Toiletries

- ***Stick Deodorant (if you use it):** It's almost impossible to find deodorant sticks in Japan. Bring extra as it is hot in the summer and you don't want to run out!

- ***SUNSCREEN:** It gets quite sunny in the summer. Japan is known for its great sunscreen, so don't sweat if you forget it.

- ***Bug spray:** there are lots of mosquitoes in Japan in the summer.

- ***Laptop:** Your call. You can survive without a laptop, but most programs have projects or essays for which you'll need a computer. Some program sites (e.g. PII, IUC) have computers available for students to use.

- **Comfortable backpack:** If you know you are a person who likes to take a lot of things around, bring a backpack.

- **Shampoo/Conditioner:** Japan has some western brands such as Pantene and Herbal Essence. Unless your hair is picky, try out some Japanese hair products.

- **Misc:** You can buy just about any toiletry item in Japan, so pack light and try out some Japanese brands!

D. Useful Resources and Websites

Get to Know Japan Before you Go!

- **Contact a SAC Japan representative!** We are here for you! You can find current SAC representatives [here](#) (navigate to the Japan section).

- <http://www.gaijinpot.com> provides advice and wisdom from real expats – make sure to check out their forums.

- *for the Kansai area:*
<http://www.whynotjapan.com>

- **The Japan Times** (<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/>) is very much worth exploring. For one, they keep a comprehensive record of the **matsuri** (festivals) happening in the Tokyo metro area (</entertainment/festivals.html>)

- **Tokyo Damage Report:** this is a site full of CRAZY information. Not only does this guy chronicle some awesome *underground music* and *events* happening in the city, but his "Tokyo Tour Guide" is full of some of the weirdest and insane things you can find in Tokyo.
<http://www.hellodamage.com/top/>.

- **Light Fellowship Bulletin Board:** end of program reports on Light website can give you a sense of what you're getting yourself into

- <http://japan.about.com/> has miscellaneous information about Japan.

FOOD

Google Maps is very effective for finding great foods. You can always find reviews in Japanese of places on there. Additionally, [食べログ](https://tabelog.com/en/) <https://tabelog.com/en/> is also used a lot, where you can find the best foods (harsh grading... a 3.8 ramen store is god-level ramen).

Transportation: Train Travel

- **Norikai Annai (乗換案内)**
(<https://transit.yahoo.co.jp/>)

This Yahoo app is most commonly used for Japanese people all around the country. You can find the most effective, efficient, and cheap ways to get to your destination!

- **Google Maps Japan**
(<http://maps.google.com>)

I've noticed that not all trains/routes show on Google/Apple Maps, but it will still get you where you want.

Section I: Pre-departure Planning

Online Dictionaries

(also see Section V: Electronic Dictionaries/Dictionary Apps, p. 68)

- Shirabe Jisho

A simple, and free Japanese-English and English-Japanese dictionary app for iPhone and iPad. Kanji lists by JLPT level and school grade (1 - 6). Multiple word lists divided by subject, grammatical function, JLPT level and more. It's so easy to use and convenient. You'll find yourself on it all the time!

- Jim Breen's WWWJDIC

(<http://www.csse.monash.edu.au/~jwb/cgi-bin/wwwjdic.cgi>)

A mainstay of online dictionaries, as well as the source file used by knockoffs such as denshijisho. On the front page, you can find many little-known but very useful resources: "Ben Bullock's new interfaces" has *handwriting recognition*, and the "multi-radical" function, for searching kanji by component part.

Good for: general Kanji

- Denshi Jisho

(<http://jisho.org/words?jap=&eng=west&dict=edict>)

An amazingly comprehensive and useful dictionary, with easy English to Japanese and Japanese to English search for both words, sentences and Kanji. Recognizes romaji as well!

Good for: everything

- Jiten.net

(<http://www.jiten.net>)

This is a simple yet powerful online

D: Useful Resources and Websites

dictionary. When you type in a word, you'll get the definition and a breakdown of every Chinese character:

Good for: kanji practice, vocabulary

- ALC

(<http://www.alc.co.jp>)

For *intermediate to advanced learners*. You only need to enter text

Beauty & Shopping

- Minimo

An app that allows you to search for and reserve a variety of beauty treatment staff such as beauticians, manicurists, eye designers (eyelash extensions, matupa), eyebrow artists, estheticians, etc. You can almost always find coupons on the app so the pricing is usually lower than going directly to the beauty salon. Highly recommend to year-long Fellows!

- Hot Pepper Beauty

Similar to Minimo, Hot Pepper is an app you can use to find the nearest beauty salon and the characteristics that each beauty salon offers you. Also good for finding haircuts.

- Rakuten

The largest online shopping platform in Japan. Kind of like Japan's Amazon!

into the form. The dictionary lacks furigana and other ease-of-use items, but it is a comprehensive dictionary used by professional Japanese translators. Most entries

Section I: Pre-departure Planning

D: Useful Resources and Websites

come with a list of possible English/Japanese equivalents, allowing the student to triangulate on how the word is used in context.

Good for: vocabulary, translation, example sentences

- RIKAI

(<http://www.rikai.com/perl/Home.pl>)

Copy text, or a webpage, and rikai will annotate it for you using Jim Breen's EDICT file!

***Rikaichan/Rikaikun** are plug-ins for Firefox/Chrome that display definitions and kanji information when you hover over Japanese text.

Good for: translation, annotation

- Sanseido

(<http://www.sanseido.net>)

For *advanced students*. Sanseido's popular 国語辞典 is online.

Good for: dictionary use

- Weblio Kobun

(<http://kobun.weblio.jp/>)

For *advanced students*. Possibly the best free online 国語辞典.

Good for: kobun

Section II: Adapting to a New Culture

A. Basics: Japan 101

Daily Life, Customs and Etiquette

Japanese people are generally more reserved and indirect in their actions and words. The culture emphasizes respect toward elders, and some customs require adjustment on your part.

- **Eating while walking, standing, or sitting in an unapproved place** is considered rude in Japan. This makes the great food you've bought a lot harder to eat.

- **Don't forget** 「いただきます」 と 「ごちそうさまでした」 **when eating**. Also, 「行ってきます」と 「ただいま」 when leaving and returning, and 「失礼します」.

- **Take your shoes off** when entering a home.

- **Women-only train cars:** If you're a guy, watch out for pink indicators on the floor of the train platform. These are women-only cars, and it can be awkward if you hop on only to find you are the only male in there.

- **Appearances are important:** type of clothing, mannerisms, etc.

Bathrooms

Most public bathrooms will be quite clean and easily accessible in train stations, convenience stores, and department stores. In Japan, there are two types of toilets: the western (洋式 (ようしき) and squat 和式 (わしき)).

-**Have a handkerchief or hand towel ready**, as you will rarely find paper towels.

Public Baths

Japanese public baths are great entertainment for a good 3 hours if you try all the baths. Baths are where Japanese socialize, so practice your Japanese!

- **Wash first** at the basins before entering the pool

- **You'll be naked** in a pool of hot water...

Purikura Photo Booths

If you have a friend or are in a large group, this activity will not only be your way to experience a very common Japanese teenager pastime, but also create a nice keepsake for the time you get back home.

Karaoke

Most visible are giant karaoke emporiums with "karaoke boxes"—where you can get a soundproofed room if you go with a group of friends.

-Pricing is usually per hour per person. It varies considerably so shop around.

-Ask about "Free Time" (all night deals). Also get a

membership card for more discounts.

Section II: Adapting to a New Culture Movies

- **Movie tickets are expensive**, but it can be a fun experience to go see a Japanese movie. You'll often get a cute little promotional item with your ticket. Major U.S. releases will usually have a Japanese sub, so you can enjoy a movie with Japanese friends.

- **Go to the movie theatre early**, because the Japanese movie theatres often have *reserved*

Smart Shopping and Tips

- **Exchange money beforehand!** Come with some yen ready before entering Japan. Currency exchange rates at the airport suck! You may need yen for your train or bus tickets to your onward destinations, and you'll likely need to buy something before your program. Alternatively, you can withdraw yen at an ATM in the airport (you can usually find them in convenience stores). See ATM section below.

- **Check out a 100yen store** (like the **Daiso** chain). They are the one stop shop for school supplies, household items, and other interesting Japanese things. The quality is decent, but beware of bad deals (usually chocolate snacks which you can get in supermarkets for cheaper).

- **Yukatas**: find one at a **Uniqlo** for around \$40. Don't get one from a department store — they usually cost \$300~400 there.

- **Take advantage of time sales at supermarkets, usually after 5:00pm**. If you're lucky, you can

A: Basics: Japan 101
seating. Buy your tickets early!

- **Discounts** on the first day of the month. Lady's day discounts are usually Wednesdays, and there are foreign student discounts.

- **Make sure you watch a subtitled (jimaku 字幕) version** rather than the dubbed "fukikae" (吹き替え). You can also always just watch a Japanese film!

even get good quality okazu (side dishes) or sashimi for 50% off. You may have to fight the throng of middle-aged ladies, but it is so worth it.

- **Tax-free (免税 めんぜい) shopping**: If you enter Japan as a tourist (i.e. most summer fellows) you can buy things tax-free at most large stores if you spend more than ¥5000, so like clothes, electronics or souvenirs / food to bring back home. Bring your passport since you'll need to show your entry stamp.

- **BUY A JR PASS BEFORE ENTERING JAPAN**. This applies *especially* to people who want to travel before/after the program. It will give you *nearly* unlimited access to JR system for 7/14/21 days, and can only be bought outside of Japan by foreigners who enter as tourists. You will have to order one online and then have the passes shipped to you before you leave for Japan, so plan ahead if this sounds like something you would be interested in.

Section II: Adapting to a New Culture
Unfortunately, you cannot purchase a JR pass if you're staying in Japan for a semester/year on the student visa.

- **Try to buy books, DVDs, video games and CDs used**. There are many stores such as **Book-Off** where the products are in excellent shape. Since these are all sold by other Japanese, you might not find the whole set of manga from the same store; ask the store clerks (Japanese only). <http://www.bookoff.co.jp/shop/shop.php>

- **Check out the books aimed for younger kids**. They have furigana above all the kanji which make it

Customer Service

"The Customer is God" 「お客様は神様です」: customer service is usually incredible. This is the case anywhere from 7-11 to Takashimaya. Be prepared to hear lots of keigo. (**Note**: There is **NO** tip system in Japan. Fancier restaurants and bars have cover charges though, and these can be pricey.)

Cell phones

Cell phones are highly recommended because you can use them to practice texting your Japanese friends, navigate the train system, etc.

Japan's cellphone networks are slightly different than in the rest of the world. Fortunately, the majority of newer smartphones will work in Japan, assuming that they are unlocked for international use. Your phone will have to support W-CDMA (3G) 2100 Mhz. You can check for this by looking up your model on Google. BIC Camera sells prepaid SIM cards that are easy to setup.

This is a handy guide that summarizes the SIM cards available in Japan: <http://www.japanmobiletech.com/2014/01/updated-comparison-of-b-mobile-products.html>

Japanese phone numbers are necessary to sign-up for many events, from sports games to expos. However, you can often ask your housemates or host family to use theirs.

Data Only SIM

If you can get away without having to have a phone number, you can easily get a data-only SIM card at large electronics stores such as BIC Camera or

A: Basics: Japan 101
easier to look up. Also, they are filled with idioms and cultural lessons.

- **Clothing**: Make sure to try on the clothing, since a medium size in Japan is more like a small in the States. Also, it tends to be more pricey especially if it's imported clothing. Look out for sales in the summer!

- **If you're going to be cooking for yourself** in Japan, you're going to be using a lot of rice and tofu. Shop around as food prices vary from supermarket to supermarket. **業務スーパー** is a really inexpensive supermarket chain.

Section II: Adapting to a New Culture

A: Basics: Japan 101

Yodoyabashi Camera, or at Narita/Haneda/Kansai airports. Once activated you get 30 days to use a set amount of data (usually 1GB for ¥3000). Some SIM cards allow you to purchase more data online as well, instead of having to find a

store to buy a new card. You can then use FB messenger, Skype, email, Gchat, etc. to communicate. The only real downside is not having a phone number, but it's the best short-term option otherwise. Since almost all Japanese people use an app called LINE (which lets you send messages and make calls to other LINE users via your data plan), it is very possible to only buy a Data Only SIM and get around fine in Japan. Previous Light Fellows **highly recommend** this option for most users.

Monthly Plan

It is possible to get a calling plan (SIM card only) if you have a resident card (summer fellows not eligible). B-Mobile is the only real option as most other companies' plans require a 2 year contract. The cheapest B-Mobile plan is around 2000-2500 yen per month, and comes with a limited number of free minutes, but it includes unlimited "slow" internet. Definitely enough to use email, FB messenger, and look up train directions etc., but it will not handle media-heavy stuff like Youtube. You can get faster data at different tiers for a fee. The card can be purchased at a store, and then activated online. You will need a photo of your resident card, and your address will have to be verified, which could take up to a week. This is definitely the most recommended option for year-long fellows.

Otherwise, there may be some prepaid/pay as you go options:

You can rent a phone or a SIM at the airport, but beware of extremely high prices and short service lengths. There may also be expensive fees for lost or stolen equipment.

Some companies rent global phones or SIM cards that will work in Japan. The service may be very expensive, and internet access may not be an option.

Getting prepaid service with a major carrier may be impossible, and it appears that the policies change quickly and are not uniformly enforced. Your best bet might be SoftBank.

Prepaid Soft Bank:

Soft Bank is generally the only company that will sell prepaid service to non-residents. This changes often, so do ask in store for the latest plans.

- Soft Bank requires you to put between 3000-5000yen in your account to start with. This balance is usually valid for 60 days.
- Calling is metered per minute or even second, and is pricy.
- You can usually get unlimited texting for 300 yen for a month!
- You might not be able to get just the SIM--this seems to be hit and miss. Be prepared to buy a cheap, low-tech phone from SoftBank.
- **Bring your passport and keep your Japan address handy.**

Section II: Adapting to a New Culture

B: Vocabulary 101

B. Vocabulary 101

Self-introduction (自己紹介)

_____と申します。(My name is _____)

どうぞよろしく願います。(Please take good care of me)

Academic Major (), Specialty ()

イエール大学で○○を/しております。(I am studying/majoring in ___at Yale)

Anthropology:人類学

Astronomy:天文学

Biology:生物学

Chemistry:化学

Computer Science: コンピューター・サイエンス

Classics:古典学

Economics:経済学

Geology:地質学

History:歴史

Humanities:人文科学

Hobbies (趣味) / Interests (興味)

Music: 音楽 (おんがく)

Linguistics:言語学 (げんごがく)

Literature:文学 (ぶんがく)

Math:数学 (すうがく)

Music:音楽 (おんがく)

Physics:物理 (ぶつり)

Poli Sci:政治学 (せいじがく)

Sciences:科学 (かがく)

Social Sciences:社会学 (しゃかいがく)

Theater Studies:演劇学 (えんげきがく)

To Sing:歌う (うたう)

To play a wind instrument: literally, "to

Section II: Adapting to a New Culture

B: Vocabulary 101

blow” 吹く (ふく)

To play strings/keyboards/percussion: 引く (ひく)

Sports: スポーツ

Many times the word for a particular sport in Japanese is just the (Katakana equivalent of the) English word. Some exceptions:

Baseball: 野球 (やきゅう)

Swimming: 水泳 (すいえい)

To Swim: 泳ぐ (およぐ)

Shopping:

Bag: 袋 (ふくろ) Often will be used by store clerks when asking if you want a plastic bag.

Section II: Adapting to a New Culture

B: Vocabulary 101

Host Family

きもちだけですが、おみやげです。(It isn't worth much, but here's a gift for you)

いただきます、ごちそうさまでした (Before and after meal)

お世話になりました。(Thanks for taking care of me)

General

何が入っていますか。〇〇は入っていますか。(What's in it?/Is there _____ in this?)

すみません、ちょっとうかがいますが。。。 (Excuse me, may I ask a question?)

〇〇はどういうですか。(What does _____ mean?)

(On a taxi) 〇〇までおいします。(Please take me to _____)

すみません。〇〇で〇〇に行きたいんですが。。。 (Excuse me, I'd like to go to ___ by _____)

〇〇をしています。(I am looking for...)

みせ かた
お店の方ですか。(Are you a store clerk?) By saying this you are hinting you need help.

Basic grammar patterns not covered in first year

You can use ある as an adjective, such as ある (some unspecified day) or ある (some person). There are a number of verb forms that translate as “if” or “when”, with slightly different meanings. Among the most common are:

1. たら Form: for consequences of an action (“when/after”), also for hypotheticals.
 - a. お弁当を食べたら、ねむくなった。When/after I ate the bento, I got sleepy.
 - b. このプログラムがわったら、てつだいます。When the program ends, I will help you.
 - c. (もし) 安かったら、買しましょう。If it's cheap, let's buy it.

Section II: Adapting to a New Culture

B: Vocabulary 101

1.1. ～たらいい (ですか)?: when asking for suggestions:

e.g. ○○にはどうしたらいい? How should I get to _____?
何を食べたらいいと思いますか? What do you think I should eat?

2. ば Form: for hypothetical events

週末忙しくなければ、映画を見に行きたいです。If I'm not busy on the weekend, I want to go see a movie.

3. Dictionary form + と: for something that logically follows/is associated with something else.

薬を飲めば、元気になるよ。You will feel better if you take medicine.

An important pattern to learn: ○○したことがない (I have never done _____)

e.g. A: アメリカに行ったことはありますか。(Have you ever been to the US?)

B: いいえ、アメリカに行ったことはありません。(No, I've never been to America)

Kansai-Ben (関西弁)

おおきに = Thank you、not widely used among young people

～へん、あらへん = ありません

～はる、～はります、行かはりますか? = 行きますか?

This is a kind of respectful language used primarily in Kyoto

チャリ = Bicycle

なんぼ? = How much

せやけど = そうだけど

せやなー = そうだね

Section II: Adapting to a New Culture

D: Mail

C. Money

There are three main options: cash, IC cards (see below) and credit/debit cards. Japan is a developed country, but it is still a very cash-based economy, so you'll want to have it handy. That said, in recent years many stores and restaurants now accept credit/debit cards (Ask: カードを使えますか?). Additionally, we highly recommend getting a **card with no foreign transaction fees: it can be significantly more cost-effective than changing money or withdrawing from an ATM in Japan.**

IC Cards (IC カード) are rechargeable stored-value cards originally developed for the train/bus networks (think MetroCard but you tap a card reader instead of swipe) but which can now also be used in convenience stores, shops and even at vending machines. Every region has their own version of the card (e.g. Suica/PASMO in Tokyo, ICOCA in Kansai) but they are all compatible with each other, so you can use a Suica on the Osaka subway, for example. Having an IC card makes public transport much easier, since you don't have to buy a ticket every time you ride and you just tap in/out, and it also saves you from dealing with small change at stores (¥1 coins are a pain to get rid of).

Budgeting

Considerations

Students often spend more money abroad than intended, so it's important to keep track of your spending. Keep in mind that prices will be higher in areas popular with tourists and higher yen-dollar exchange rates (so the Light money might not be enough). Be sensitive to the current exchange rate. Always exchange money in official banks or exchange offices when in Japan.

Budgeting your Money

When thinking about a budget for your time abroad consider the following points:

- **How much do you eat?**
- **What do you like to do on weekends?**
 - Going out, drinks, clubbing, etc. are similar in price to the US
 - Museums and cultural sites are generally in \$10-30 range.
 - *Show your school ID wherever you can for student discounts!*
- **How much are you planning on shopping?**
- **How much do you plan to travel outside your city?**
 - Airline tickets can range from \$100-\$200 if you book in advance. In recent years domestic low-cost carriers are expanding and can be considerably cheaper (\$25-50), see *Transportation* section below.
 - Shinkansen can be pricey: a trip from Tokyo to Kyoto is around \$140 one-way. Trains to closer areas are cheaper, the farther you go the

Section II: Adapting to a New Culture

D: Mail

more you spend. Some programs (like CJS at Nanzan University) have student discounts (学生割引), so always ask!

- o Overnight highway buses are cheaper (\$50–80) and can save you a night's accommodation.
- o Food prices, hotels, etc. outside major cities are generally cheaper.

• How are you going to get around your city?

- o *Taxi*: good if you're completely lost and/or it's getting late, but it's **very expensive** and often drivers don't know where they're going even if you give an exact address. *Tip: give landmark, train station, and intersection names.*
- o *Bike*: Used ones start from 3,000yen, or ask your host family if they have an extra one. Be careful of local laws, and use one if the city isn't too busy.
- o *Train/Subway/tram*: depends on the city, but try to buy a monthly pass or multiple-ride tickets. Ask your host family or program advisor for more information.

• How much should you have in an emergency fund? If possible, \$500

• Miscellaneous Expenses

- o School supplies
- o Personal supplies: expect similar prices to the US
- o Souvenirs and gifts for others

Accessing your Money

ATMs

Perhaps the best way to handle money is to deposit it to a checking account of your US bank and then withdraw money as needed from an ATM in Japan.

Advantages:

- **Safe**: You don't risk carrying large amounts of cash.
- **Convenient**: You can pay with credit/debit at stores where cards are accepted. Some places don't take cards, but many do.
- Lower exchange rates: This depends on your bank, but the conversion fees charged when using a dollar-based card in Japan are usually lower than at an exchange counter.

Disadvantages:

- **ATM fees**: Most banks will charge you a small fee each time you use an ATM in Japan. Most of the time it's around 5 dollars.
- **Withdrawal limits**: The daily withdrawal limit is usually around 500 dollars. You will probably never need more than that, but it's still something to

Section II: Adapting to a New Culture

D: Mail

consider.

Tips:

- **Take out large sums of money at one time.** You are charged around 5 USD each time you withdraw, so you should probably get the most bang for your buck.
- **Contact your local bank before going** to Japan and determine what the withdrawal fees may be in Japan, and also perhaps how to avoid them.
- Some credit cards waive currency exchange fees abroad. Check to see if your bank offers any such cards.

ATM Locations

- **Post office** (郵便局: ゆうびんきょく): Almost every post office in Japan has an ATM that you can use during normal business hours. The post office should be your no. 1 go-to place for withdrawing money. Easily locate the closest post office ATM using your 7-digit post office number (〒): <http://map.japanpost.jp/pc/>
- **Convenience Stores**: Many convenience store chains have ATM's that accept foreign cards for withdraw. 7/11's ATMs in particular are very good; you should try those first.
- **The ATMs of most banks will not work for what you want them to do. Try your local post office and 7/11 first.**

Avoiding Problems

- **Have cash handy.** Japan is very cash driven. Credit cards are often not accepted.
- Try to have access to multiple accounts, and perhaps carry only one card with you at a time. Set up pin numbers for credit and debit cards.
- **Getting a coin pouch is also very handy, as you'll probably accumulate a lot of change over time.**

D. Mail

If you wish to send or receive packages, ask your program administrator to direct you to the nearest post office. They may ask you the contents (documents, souvenirs, etc.), so you may want to know how to basically describe the package. *Tip: If your package contains food, it is advantageous to describe vaguely, e.g. cookies.* Overall, sending packages to the U.S. can be very expensive.

Mailing

Easily locate the closest post office using your 7-digit post office number (〒): <http://map.japanpost.jp/pc/>

郵便番号から該当地域を検索する

郵便番号を入力

→ 該当地域を検索

例) 1010001

※ 3けた以上の数字を入力してください

E. Things to Keep in Mind

General Mindset

When feeling challenged or frustrated, remember that **Japan is a new learning experience**. Most living situations are not at the same standards that they are in the West (and especially at Yale). While your living situation isn't too bad, it hardly compares to what you're accustomed to at Yale. What you are used to, and the conveniences we take for granted—reliable internet access—do not operate at the same level. *A sense of adventure and realization that these inconveniences are temporary for you, but experienced daily by your Japanese hosts will bring you some perspective!*

To avoid thinking negatively, **try to educate yourself as best you can so that your expectations are realistic**. When confronted by difficult situations, try to understand the reasons behind them. Remember, each interaction is occurring on two levels: the first is basic, superficial, utilitarian; the second can serve to enlighten you

It's ok to mess up

“One thing I have realized about learning Japanese is the immense importance of simply trying, even if I made mistakes. Upon reflection, I realized that in English I do not necessarily understand every single word I hear in a sentence—someone might have a strong accent, there might be background noise etc. I don't realize this however, because I have total confidence in my ability to infer from context. Over the last month, I have consciously tried to relax when speaking and listening to Japanese, and rather than being tense or nervous, and trying to hang onto every word, I have started relying more on my intuition and context. In the past, when I didn't understand a word in a sentence, it would throw me off and

on Japanese history and society. Try to function on both levels during each encounter!

Even if your language abilities fail you, the interaction itself can be successful on a deeper level if you **actively choose to try to learn from it**. To better understand the historical context surrounding these situations; read up on Japanese history and culture before your trip! Differences that arise are some of the most fascinating aspects of living in Japan.

Don't be alarmed if you receive attention. It is definitely not as common as in China, but some Japanese people still may take interest in you or stare. This is usually because you may look different and appear as a novelty to them.

Heritage Speakers

People will inevitably compare you with the natives, which may seem unfair. Try not to be too sensitive to it; you're in Japan to learn after all.

Section II: Adapting to a New Culture

E. Things to Keep in Mind

I would often lose track of what I was listening to. Now that I have tried to bolster my self-confidence, I find that I am understanding more of what I listen to.”

Homestay Advice

- **Spend time with your host family**, even if it's really boring or awkward at first. They will appreciate the gesture in itself, and they're not necessarily expecting you to immediately click. A period of getting-to-know-you is normal.

- **Communicate right from the beginning**. If things make you uncomfortable or you would prefer something else, let them know politely right away. Waiting to bring it up later when you all “know each other better” makes it more awkward because by then the routine has been set.

- **Be honest from the start** when they ask you what kinds of foods you don't like/can't eat. Japanese food can get funky (and stinky, like the “kusaya” fermented fish strips). It makes things so much easier.

- **Your host family is an amazingly valuable resource**. They know the city from a resident's point of view, so they can answer an awful lot of basic questions and know the 411.

- **Communicate with them**. They decided to host you because they are interested in your background and in sharing their experiences with you. *They are letting you into their private life*; you are part of the family. It's basic respect to tell them if you won't be home for dinner, and don't make them worry.

- **Ask questions**. They chose to host you, so that automatically means they *want* to share information with you. Asking them usually won't be a nuisance; they'll probably get really into it.

- **Don't be afraid to ask them to write things down or take notes while they talk**. You're in Japan to learn. At first, you may feel like you're drowning in Japanese, and it's not easy comprehending long explanations. Looking at the writing later solidifies the information at your own pace.

- **Use common sense**. If you'll be late, call ahead. Don't destroy things in the house.

Tips to Minimize the Impact of Culture Shock

— Learn as much as possible about your host country before you go.

—Try to look for the logical reasons

why things are done or perceived differently in your host country.

Section II: Adapting to a New Culture

E. Things to Keep in Mind

— What are the historical, economic, religious, and/or social reasons for these differences?

— Eat healthily, exercise, and get plenty of rest.

Section II: Adapting to a New Culture

—Try to meet local people with whom you can discuss the differences between the local culture and your own.

—Most people will be curious to discuss such differences, especially with Americans, as most people in the world have some preconceived notion of the United States.

—Try to learn as much as possible about local viewpoints and customs—this means going beyond newspapers and television!

—Expect change, difference, and *ambivalence*. These are learning opportunities rather than problems to overcome. During much of your time abroad, especially at the beginning, you will not completely understand how things work or what they mean.

Immersing yourself in the local culture can aid in cultural adjustment. How much effort you put into this experience determines how much you gain from it. So, challenge yourself to try new experiences when you live abroad!

- Set goals and tasks for yourself and write them in a travel journal.
- Challenge yourself to try something new each day or week.
- Try the local food, cooking it as well as sampling it.
- Shop in local boutiques rather than stores you would find in the United States.
- Participate in local festivities and events.
- Spend time in “common places” such as the local green, park, library, courtyard, or shopping district.
- Attend cultural events such as plays, sporting events, and museums.

E. Things to Keep in Mind

—Learn to be comfortable with failing at some tasks, feeling discouraged, and asking people for help.

—From time to time, remind yourself of your reasons for and objectives in going abroad.

—Cultural learning is never an easy process, and it is largely by feeling uncomfortable that you will learn the most, both about the host site and about yourself.

—Expect inconveniences such as long commutes! Your goal is to live like a local—not all locals live in the center of the city and their friends don’t necessarily live in the same part of town. And locals definitely don’t use taxi cabs every day!

Section III: Traveling

A. Transportation

Section III: Traveling

A. Transportation

Special Deals – Save Money!

-**Japan Rail Pass** is gives you unlimited travel for 7/14/21 days on most JR trains all over Japan, including the , Narita Express and *Haruka* express to Kansai Airport, with a few exceptions.

- **Summer Participants only.** Must enter as a tourist (either tourist visa or under 90-day visa waiver).
- Yearlong participants: be ready to pay for full train fares!
- **Good for:** travel after program. A 7-day JR pass is cheaper than a round trip between Tokyo and Osaka or Kyoto.
- Buy an exchange order before going to Japan
- <http://www.japanrailpass.net/eng/en001.html>

- **Seishun Juuhachi Kippu** (青春 18 切符) 11,500 yen, is a voucher for 5 days of unlimited travel on local and express trains

- MUCH slower than Shinkansen, but MUCH cheaper
- **Summer** and **Year-long** participants

- **Trying to map out a trip?** Websites like Hyperdia are super helpful. Google Maps has gotten much better recently as well.

- **Multiple ride tickets** are usually cheaper for travel between selected stations for trains and buses. Ask your program administrators or host families!

- **Monthly ride tickets:** if you’re commuting, this is worth looking into. Buying one may require a student ID of the university campus you’re studying at for further discount.

- **Kyoto has Kimono-discounts on taxis:** this is the case for most taxis.

- **Ask the information desk about good deals:** usually they can speak in English if needed.

Within Cities:

Taxis are a good option if you’re *lost* and/or it’s *getting late (after the last train!)*.

- They are very expensive.
- Often, drivers don’t know where they are going, even with an exact

Section III: Traveling

A. Transportation

address. Many streets in Japan aren't marked and addresses aren't clearly labeled on buildings.

—**What to tell your driver:** an intersection, part of town, name of landmark, or train station.

Bikes can be a good option, especially if your program isn't too far from where you are staying

—Used bikes are 3000yen~, or ask your homestay if they have an extra one, especially if you're staying for a semester/year

—Japanese streets are *narrow*, aka bike-friendly.

—Be careful of local bike laws!

—In bigger cities, drivers may not yield and there are more people walking, so be smart about bike use.

Public transportation (trains/subways/bus/tram)

—Some cities have many lines, some only have one

—Usually the most dependable. Also the fastest way around in bigger cities.

—The private rail operators (e.g. Tokyu or Keikyu in Tokyo/Yokohama or Hankyu/Hanshin in Kansai) are often cheaper than JR.

—*****Multiple-Ride Tickets***:** If you plan to frequently travel around town, rechargeable commuter cards are a must. You can charge them with money and stop worrying about buying tickets every time.

- Tokyo/Yokohama area: Suica/PASMO (Both work anywhere in Japan)
- JR West in Osaka: ICOCA

Between Cities:

Trains are convenient, comfortable, and punctual, but are expensive.

The JR network is the main train system. There's usually no need to buy tickets in advance, unless you're travelling on or around public holidays.

Planes: most domestic flights fly in and out of Haneda Airport in Tokyo.

—There has been a proliferation of **low-cost carriers** like **Peach**, **Vanilla Air** and **Jetstar Japan** in recent years, and tickets can be as cheap as ¥2000 one-way. The usual warnings about budget carriers (think Spirit not Southwest) apply: strict carry-on rules, baggage fees etc.

Highway Bus is a cheap and safe option for long-distance travel

—**Yakou Bus** (夜行バス) or **Kousoku Bus** (高速バス)

—**Most convenient method:** no transfers midway, though they are often slower than trains: can take 7 hours on overnight bus from Tokyo to Kyoto.

—Cheaper than Shinkansen—plus, if you time it right, you save on the night's lodging as well

Section III: Traveling

A. Transportation

—Variety of routes, and they leave from most major train stations.

—**Make reservations** a few days or weeks in advance, depending on the popularity of the route.

- Easiest way: **Midori no Madoguchi**, the ticket office in JR train stations.

B. Lodging

General Comments

- Book early** especially if you're traveling during Japanese holidays when rooms go quickly.
- Don't assume you can reserve in English:** make sure you have the necessary vocabulary ready or have someone reserve in your place.
- Going to places in groups** makes hotel rooms and ryokan rooms cheaper than if you go solo.
 - For solo travelers, some ryokans charge by head rather than room and youth hostels are always an inexpensive option.
- Bring a lock with you** to store things in a safe place during travel.
- For guys:** you can stay in capsule hotels.
- Other cheap option:** Hostels are always an option.
- Look at Ryokans in the city:** they are designed for student travelers, and offer cheaper rates than hotels.

Websites

HOTELS

Super Hotel (スーパーホテル)

<http://www.superhotel.co.jp/en/>

The hotel chain is a great stay for its price. Winner of the Japan Quality Award, it's clean and most branches have free breakfast included with the stay. The staff can speak English if needed. It's the most reasonably priced hotel.



Toyoko Inn (東横イン)

<http://www.toyoko-inn.com/eng/>

Centrally located in whatever city it is in, Toyoko Inn is also cheap (a little more than Super Hotel). Although it's had legal problems in the past due to its over-utilization of hotel space supposedly for handicapped access area as parking lot, it is reasonably priced with high scores in the three most important criteria of rating a hotel: cleanliness, location, and security.

HOSTELS

Youth hostels are another great option, as they are one of a few social spaces where Japanese strangers of different ages and genders mix naturally. As hostellers tend to be somewhat more outgoing and adventurous, you can often meet

people who are interested in meeting new people and foreigners.

Finding a youth Hostel: <http://www.iyh.or.jp/english/>

Hostel World

<http://www.hostelworld.com>

A good place to find and book your hotel or hostel stay. If you don't want to pay site fees, you can use it to find the hostel of interest and then book a stay directly with that hostel or hotel.

TRAVEL WEBSITES

American student travel websites such as **StudentUniverse** (<http://www.studentuniverse.com>) and **STA Travel** (<http://www.statravel.com/>) can offer some good package airfare and accommodation deals.

Confident with your Japanese? Major Travel Reservation Sites (Japanese only):

- **RAKUTEN** <http://www.mytrip.net/> Japanese version of Expedia and Orbitz, with good deals.
- **Editor's Pick: Ikyu**, <http://www.ikyuu.com/> Japanese version of Expedia and Orbitz, but great deals especially with hotel reservations. *Editor's note: I often reserve a bigger room for the price of a single, or my reservations come with extra gifts!*
- **JTB** <http://www.jtb.co.jp/> Great for travel package deals
- **KINTETSU** <http://www.knt.co.jp/> Great for travel package deals

Section IV: Programs

A. Arriving in Japan

Transportation from Narita to Tokyo city

Narita is the obvious port of entry for most programs. From there, it is possible to get to the programs via train, plane, or bus:

-**Planes and trains** tend to be the *fastest* and *most expensive*—buy in advance

-**Buses**, especially the night buses, are quite cheap but can be quite slow.

- You can make reservations at the airport.

-To **Tokyo**, there are three fast options and a cheap one:

1. “**Limousine**” **Bus** from the airport to downtown Tokyo, Shinjuku, Shinagawa, takes approx. 60 to 90 minutes, depending on traffic. The buses leave every half an hour. (¥2800 to Tokyo Station, ¥3100 to Shinjuku/Shinagawa, ¥3600 to Yokohama.)

2. **JR Narita Express train** will take you to Tokyo Station, Shinjuku Station, and Yokohama Station (among others) in approx. 1 hour. This is good if you're spending a few nights in Tokyo after arrival. It may be more expensive than taking local trains, but is the fastest and most comfortable way to Tokyo. The Narita Express is also covered by the JR Pass! (¥3020 to Tokyo Station, ¥3190 to Shinjuku, ¥4290 to Yokohama).

3. **Keisei Skyliner** is an express train that takes you to Ueno station in 41 minutes and is somewhat cheaper than the Narita Express (¥2490 to Keisei-Ueno).

4. The **Keisei Access Express** is a fast local train that departs about every 30–45 minutes, and gets you to Asakusa / Ginza / Shinagawa in about 60–80 minutes. Most trains in the morning and early afternoon continue to Haneda Airport. (¥1330 to Shinagawa).

Transportation from Haneda to Tokyo city

In recent years, more and more international flights serve Haneda airport, which is **much closer** to central Tokyo and Yokohama (20–30 minutes compared to 60–80 from Narita). There are two main ways to get out of the airport:

1. “**Limousine**” **Buses** to downtown Tokyo (30–45 minutes, depending on traffic and destination) are the most convenient but also the most expensive (about ¥1000).

2. **By rail**: the **Keikyu Airport Line** gets you to Shinagawa Station in 20 minutes (¥410) or Yokohama in 25 (¥450). The **Tokyo Monorail** takes you to Hamamatsucho Station (on the Yamanote Line) in 20 minutes (¥490).

Takkyuubin (宅急便) Mailing Advice

Quick and easy luggage delivery at a reasonable price.

You can have your luggage shipped to your homestay families within a few days!

Major carriers: Kuroneko Yamato, Pelican.

Price range: 3000yen (any distance) from airports

*****Requirement**: Mailing address **and** phone number for home- or hotel-takkyuubin service.

Locations: Airport arrival terminal, hotels, convenience stores

Takkyuubin have service desks in Narita and most other airports. If you travel around after the program—especially in super-hot summer weather—it's worth it to send what you don't need to the airport.

Q: How early should I to send my luggage to the airport?

- From Tokyo: at least 2 days before your departure date
- From outside Tokyo: about 5 days before departure date

B. Hokkaido International Foundation

Program Overview

Academics

Do not take the Placement Test lightly. Take time to study and review beforehand. If you feel that you are placed in the wrong level, speak with your Sensei about possibly switching classes. The Senseis and HIF staff are generally very accommodating to your needs if you communicate honestly and openly with them. However, do remember to talk with them as soon as you feel uncomfortable with your placement—it will become much more difficult to switch classes further into the program. The HIF curriculum and the Yale curriculum do not align that well, so you may have to choose between having a class below or above your level, depending what you want your summer experience to be.

Independent Study Project: all students are required to complete an independent study project that runs the length of the program and includes a final presentation on their chosen topic. *Really choose a topic you're passionate about* (or else spending so many weeks on it really sucks) and use the HIF staff to help you find the people in the community to help you.

The Teachers, are, for the most part, pretty awesome. They are approachable. While strict, they were quite fair in both grading and expectations of the class. Also, talking with them or having lunch

with them at the HIF canteen on the second floor is a really great way to practice your Japanese.

“Intensive” really does mean intensive. You should come prepared to work, but there will still be time for having fun. Since you are covering a year’s worth of Japanese in two months, the workload is heavy.

Many opportunities to practice Japanese: the lower levels of the HIF building houses a Russian school and, talking to them is a great way to make Japanese friends and practice Japanese.

Living Situation Host Family

As almost every HIF student will tell you, the host family is *one of the program’s best features*, because you make lasting personal connections. No matter how cool or tough you think you are, you will be sad to leave at the end of the summer.

Your homestay may not be as proactive in doing things as a family compared to some others. Suggest things to do with them!

Miscommunication will happen, but usually there aren’t too many problems. Most host families have worked with HIF before (some even up to 20 years), so they are familiar with the needs of foreign students unfamiliar with life in Japan. Even if they don’t speak English at all, you’ll

see that they are generally more open and receptive than just any average Japanese family. If you are really having difficulty communicating with your host family, don’t hesitate to speak with the HIF administration about it.

Internet access: Some host families do not have internet access at home. Even if they do, you should refrain from excessive use, unless they say otherwise. Japanese people may endure a lot of discomfort before they voice their opinions, so be as thoughtful as possible.

You will be **constantly speaking Japanese** (not just in school, as often happens when students are put in dorms), as well as **observing and actively participating in the customs your host family performs** (such as saying “itadakimasu” before eating, “tadaima” when returning home, or even going to onsen once in a while with your host parents).

Neighborhood

Hakodate is a very safe and serene fishing town. As a major tourist spot, you can always see tourists from all over Japan walking around. There are many tourists from China and Russia as well. The city is not particularly vibrant for young people seeking excitement and nightlife. That is compensated by its friendly people, stunning scenery, and the historical and cultured atmosphere.

Geographically, Hakodate is shaped like an hourglass. One end has Mt. Hakodate, the Yachigashira Onsen area, and Motomachi (old port town with a number of scenic European style buildings). The narrow middle

has the downtown area, wedged between the harbor area and Tsugaru strait, and past that is the rest of the city.

Although Hakodate is a safe city, there is not much light along the roadside late at night. The people of Hakodate will also offer to escort you home, but be wary of even the kindness of Japanese strangers...

Weather

Weather in Hokkaido is much better than the rest of Japan in the summer, and the humidity is much more bearable. Some weather advice:

-There tends to be no air conditioning in Hakodate, so be prepared. At the same time, the weather will almost never get uncomfortably hot.

-Bring a jacket and a sweater or two: although you won’t encounter the sweltering heat of Tokyo, it can also be a little chilly at times in the evening, especially during the first couple weeks of the program. In 2009, the entire first week hovered around 50 °F!

-Surviving the hotter part of summer: Stay hydrated.

Extracurriculars

The HIF extracurricular activities are just the thing one needs to forget about grades and projects for a bit and enjoy Japanese culture. The program offers everything from kimono culture classes to performing in a summer festival, and certainly something for anyone’s taste.

Special events

Should you choose, you can find a way to fill every minute of free time. Many people enjoyed making friends with local high schoolers by participating in Judo, Kendo, and Kyudo. Of the special events, Japanese cooking and traditional Japanese confectionary making are so fun—and delicious—so be sure not to miss out on those. If you participate in flower arrangements (ikebana) and calligraphy, you will have beautiful presents to bring back to your host family!

Activities around Town

To start off, let me remind you that Hakodate is not Tokyo. It is the second largest city in Hokkaido, and it is just the right size for this program: there are enough cool things to do, but it is not overwhelmingly awesome, as to make it difficult to study.

Goryoukaku is the main entertainment area, home to several karaoke halls, bars, and the Goryoukaku fort (site of a major Meiji Restoration battle). **Rising** is a huge multi-story pachinko parlor/karaoke bar/game center.

り: from August 1-5, Culminates in the famous squid “**ika-odori**” dance through the streets of Hakodate. **You should NOT miss out on participating in the parade!** There will also be lengthy fireworks and spectacular procession.

Goryoukaku geki: a historical play that the people of Hakodate put up every year. The basic idea behind the play is summarizing the history of

HIF Midterm Break Trip

There is a four-day midterm break when most students travel around Hokkaido. You can either plan your own travel, or participate in a group travel plan to Sapporo sponsored by HIF. There's pretty good feedback about that, and it's very well structured.

Hakodate—from its settlement of Ainu peoples to after WWII and present day Japan. If you have time, watch the play, or even better, sign up to participate in it!

Exercise/Health related : there is a gym with a pool close to Hakodate eki. For those with host families, you can go on runs or bike rides near your host family's house.

The closest movie theatre to HIF

たいまほほこだて is シネマ太陽函館 and is several blocks past Hakodate Eki.

Incidentally, you can get pokemon-shaped ice cream sundaes at a café in the same building.

Transportation**Getting to the Program**

If you are not confident in navigating with your Japanese yet, definitely enroll in HIF's **group travel plan** from Tokyo, and that will arrange everything for you. This is a great way to meet other program participants.

Alternatively, you can choose to travel to Hakodate on your own using **night bus, shinkansen, ferry (from Honshu to Hakodate), or plane** without many problems. Refer to HIF's travel guidebook.

If you're highly adept enough at navigating Japanese travel websites, I'd highly recommend booking a flight and hotel room for a day before the placement test.

Getting around the City

Depending on where you host family lives in the city, your means of commuting to school will vary a great deal. The commute for some students was as long as an hour just to get to Hakodate Eki.

The three main forms of public transportation are: JR, bus, and tram (red and blue lines). **Hakodate JR** is the main train hub, in front of which are bus terminals where you can buy tickets to Hakodate-yama, Sapporo, and so on.

Beware that more private means of transportation like *taxis* are expensive in Hakodate. Also, public transportation service stops pretty early (10PM is the latest). If you are too far to walk (and the weather cooperates), try biking!

The Hill: however you choose to commute, the last two or three blocks will be up a very steep hill (so steep they just put steps in the sidewalk). Great view, but walking up can be a pain. Shikata ga nai ne. Groups of students even crammed into one taxi, split the fare, and comfortably avoided the steep hill.

Food and Restaurants

- **Co-op** is a supermarket a few blocks away from HIF down the hill. It has an amazing array of cheap and delicious bentos with sushi, yakitori, udon as well as

pastries and sweets.

-Kantaro's Sushi Bar is widely considered Hakodate's No.1, and offers sushi on conveyor belt and other Japanese menu.

-Guru Guru is a small place right behind HIF that serves delicious "soup curry." The spiciest option is almost unpalatable, so be careful!

-Lucky Pierrot is an almost exclusively Hakodate-based fast food chain. You can still try whale meat burger here pretty cheap. Also, the lucky egg burger and elaborate are things you should try at least once.

-The Morning market (asaichi) has mostly vegetables and fish, which goes from 5am~3pm every day. You can find ridiculously fresh seafood, and it is also the place for seafood breakfasts such as various kinds of donburi. It's also a great place to practice Japanese. **Try the squid ice cream** here!

-Hakodate is famous for shio ramen. Try sampling local stuff.

Delicious melons: the whole melons are overpriced, but you can buy slices of the best melon you've ever tasted for just 100~200yen

ソフトクリーム: there is a shop near the Guru Guru near HIF. If you can finish a 7-layered cone on soft serve in 20 or 30 sec. or less, it's free!

Places to Go

Learning

-Hakodate-city Museum of Northern Peoples: This museum exhibits traditional Ainu race artifacts. The Ainu are the indigenous population of mostly northern Japan. In Hokkaido in particular, there are a lot of Ainu- history related activities, as the Ainu population is high. (300yen adult, 21-7 Suehiro-cho, Hakodate)

- Fort Goryoukaku is Japan's first Western-style fortress in a star shape. Surrounding the Fort is a serene lake, and rent a boat on a sunny afternoon and row around the lake!

-Motomachi district is filled with

relics of Hakodate's history of international influence. In one afternoon you could visit the Old Public Hall of Hakodate, the Old British Consulate of Hakodate War, the Chinese Memorial Hall.

Parks and Scenery

- Mount Hakodate: once you climb

it (about an hour's trip; less if you go on a harder path or take a car) the view of the city is great. The night view from Mt. Hakodate is ranked 4th or 5th most beautiful such in the world! So, a definite stop if you can.

-Tachimachi Point: located in the very southeastern corner of the city, right next to Mt. Hakodate. The point is basically a cliff that overlooks the Tsugaru Strait – you can see the silhouette of Honshu if you come on a sunny day! At night, you can see the lights from squid fishing boats. The point itself also acts like a small park, and is covered in rose bushes that blossom in late summer. Riding the bike along the shore to the point has always been a calming and refreshing experience that I enjoyed thoroughly.

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- Another great place to go is the beaches around Yunokawa, easily accessible via tram or even bike. You can take a seawater bath first, and then straight into one of the many onsens there—be sure to come on a hot summer day!

Tourism

- **Kodomo no Kuni** is an adorable tiny children's amusement park and zoo tucked away at the base of Mt. Hakodate.

- **The 市電**^{しでん} street car line stops at the bottom of the HIF hill, slowly making its way to Hakodate Eki and Goryoukaku every 5-10 minutes. Try riding it for the experience.

- **Onsen**: they are everywhere, including the top of Mount Hakodate.

- **Goryoukaku koen**: a star-shaped park, famous for historical battles and currently overrun by omiyage stores selling everything from ice cream to plushy copies of Hokkaido/drama heroes. The view from the Goryoukaku Tower is also pretty cool.

Advice from Sempai

- **If you are using public transportation often**, buy monthly passes (*teikiken*, for the first time you will have to fill in name and address in Japanese; bring your host parent with you). HIF also sells tram cards at a student discount. *JR Passes*: buying these

B. Hokkaido International Foundation

Doritsudonanshikinomori Park:

If you happen to live as far north as Kamedanakanochō, or are ever in the area, check out this park. (If you're in an area near Mirai Daigaku/Future University, you know you're close). It's very peaceful, with paths winding through the forest, and is perfect for a stroll. The park also has an area with fun playgrounds!

Necessities

- **Boni Moriya**: the department store a block from Hakodate Eki. You'll find almost anything you can think of.

- **Daiso** near JR Goryoukaku Station is a nice 100yen shop.

- **Exchanging traveler's checks to yen** can only be done at major banks. 北洋銀行 or みずほ銀行 right in front of JR Hakodate Station are a couple.

can be confusing,

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B. Hokkaido International Foundation

entire group gets a good discount at smaller karaoke bars around Goryoukaku. Unfortunately many are far from the JR station.

so be sure to ask either your host family or the JR staff.

- **Luggage takkyubin users**: If you use takkyubin baggage service to send your belongings to your host family home, it will take about 2 days for your luggage to arrive. Be sure to keep any essential items with you for the duration of the two days.

- You can survive without a cell phone, but a prepaid cell phone can be quite useful.

- **Do not bring books/studying materials**, unless you are POSITIVE you'll be using them. There is plenty of review material in the textbooks HIF provides, and you are likely to not have time to read anything else but your Japanese workbook. Plus, there will be plenty of manga/magazines you'll want to buy!

- **Avoid getting lost**: Google Maps is your best friend!

- **Don't miss the last train**: be careful to mind your train schedule.

-**If your host family doesn't have internet access**, the easiest place to access the internet is the Machizukuri Center (free wifi, Ethernet, and an adorable café). Ask the HIF staff for directions.

- **For the karaoke frequenter**: buy a customer loyalty card and the

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Highlights

- “My host family was the group of people with whom I ate, conversed and spent time every single day. This is where the real learning happened for me.”

- Things like enjoying the night view from the top of Mt. Hakodate, watching my host dad’s motorcycle race, playing video games with my

B. Hokkaido International Foundation

host parents and fishing are some of the memories I cherish the most.

- “HIF offered an opportunity for unskilled labor like us to volunteer in Kantaro’s Sushi Bar’s kitchen.” (paid employment is discouraged)

- “Sitting in a local bar and watching Japan play in the World Cup. Japanese people are very intense and passionate about this.”

Section IV: Programs

C. IUC, Summer

C. Inter-University Center for Japanese Studies (Summer)

IUC is for self-motivated students with a serious academic interest in Japan. It is not for students who simply want to boost their Japanese while enjoying a fun study abroad experience. The atmosphere is intensive, and geared towards graduate students.

Program Overview

Academics

We learned a huge amount of kanji and vocabulary in class through daily discussion, and homework took around 3-4 hours. The kanji I remembered best were the ones used in class often and the kanji I needed to look up for reading.

Location

Perched at a day-trip distance between Tokyo and Kamakura, and a charming city in its own right, Yokohama is awash in social, cultural, and recreational opportunities.

Living Situation

Students live either in a “tried-and-true” apartment recommended by IUC, like Toriumi Haimu, or they can find their own accommodation. Airbnb is quickly becoming a popular choice for IUC students, but those considering it should pay extra attention to the locations and living situations on offer. Some students choose to live in Tokyo and commute in and out each day as well (Shibuya / Shinagawa are

extremely convenient via the Tokyu / Keikyu lines).

Tokyo Weekly Mansion

I rented a room through Tokyo Weekly Mansion in Yokohama Part I building in Isezaki-cho, and was very happy with the experience. Living in Isezaki-cho was convenient because it put me close to a shopping arcade only a block away, and it is close to the Motomachi and districts.

Also, about 8 students from the program also stayed in the same building so it was easy to coordinate dinner trips and small events together. I know that some other students in the program who had found their own housing in more distant or isolated locales had a harder time meeting up with fellow IUC students outside of class.

Ups and downs: the rooms are much smaller and more expensive than Toriumi Haimu. The location, though, is fantastic (within walking distance of the Center). Building has proper insulation — somewhat of a rarity in Japan.

“As an aspiring scholar, you will not only meet the colleagues with whom you will work for the rest of your life, but possibly make some life-long

Section IV: Programs

friendships as well.”

C. IUC, Summer

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Extracurriculars

IUC has **mandatory cultural field trips once a week** to places like Yasukuni Shrine, kabuki theatres, and Zen temples. These trips can last for hours, but are great practice

for your Japanese.

Other extracurriculars include **“free conversation” with Japanese university students** every weekday at your leisure after class.

Food

- **Indian food:** Mohan(インド料理店 モハン) has the best I've ever tasted. (3min walk from JR Kannai North exit)
- **Izakaya** feature drink and finger food (don't be afraid to experiment), although they can get pricey. You get your own table/room if you go in groups of 2-8. If you are truly hungry, do a light meal at a kaitenzushi place first...then on to karaoke!
- **Nogechō** is within walking distance of IUC (go south past Sakuragicho Station) and is filled with small restaurants serving inexpensive delicacies ranging from roasted entrails (ホルモンキ) to gyōza.

Activities around Town

- **Movies:** at Warner MyCal Yokohama, you can get a student discount or a 1000yen discount ticket every first day of the month. Roppongi Hills movie theater is also highly recommended.
- **Karaoke:** A very good place is Shibuya, close to IUC via the Minatomirai and Tokyu Toyoko Line. Great especially for birthday parties, with yakiniku and shabu-shabu.

Places to Go

Learning

- **日本民家園:** a collection of 23 Japanese farmhouses from all over the country. Some are up to 400 years old! (http://www.city.kawasaki.jp/88/88minka/home/minka_e.htm)

- **横浜赤レンガ倉庫(The Brick Warehouse)** is a historical building currently being used as a complex including a shopping mall.

- **資料館** (The Japanese Coast Guard

Museum) located next to 赤レンガ倉庫 features a North Korean spy ship captured by the Japanese Coast Guard after a skirmish in the East China Sea in 2001, with guided tours by retired coast guard personnel.

Local Places – Minato Mirai Area

- **桜木町 in Yokohama** has some of Japan's new development and tallest buildings, as well as

Section IV: Programs

wonderful parks, shopping, and a mile-long people mover.

- **Chinatown** has great restaurants and a fun atmosphere. Avoid the crowds by going a weekday, and don't be afraid to check out the smaller streets and alleys. If you're mainly after Chinese food, however, you're probably better off visiting one of the many Chinese restaurants elsewhere in town (like), as Chinatown doesn't always offer the best value.

- 山下公園 (**Yamashita Park**) plays host to a two-day fireworks festival called **Yokohama Sparkling Twilight** held on a weekend in July.

ひかわまる

- 氷川丸 is one of Japan's most beautiful early sea liners.

Local Places

- **Motomachi** has an international foods store (expensive but good for American food cravings) and higher-end shops. There is also great takeout sushi and a neat little sento.

- **Jiyugaoka** has lots of boutiques and great cafés.

Advice from Sempai

- **Electronic Dictionaries:** at this level, if you don't have one with stylus for kanji input, it is definitely

Highlight

During the six busy weeks of IUC, I found the time to go to two fireworks parties, two trips to Kamakura, a visit to my former host family in Kanazawa, a trip to Odaiba in Tokyo, a festival at Yasukuni Shrine, two movies, ride on the two biggest Ferris wheels in Japan, and lots and lots of trips to karaoke, once with 17 people.

C. IUC, Summer

worth the investment. For those in history and literature, get one with classical dictionaries as well!

- **Free Wi-Fi is very difficult to find.** Prepaid SIM cards (internet only) offered by companies like B-Mobile are a great way to stay connected with 4G.

Shopping

- **Yokohama World Porters** is a 5-floor shopping/dining center just down the street from the Center. There is a kaitenzushi, a great lunch spot on days with no afternoon class. 1st Floor: food. 2nd floor: a variety of shops almost on some sale, a *300yen shop*. 4&5: movie theatre.

- **Vivre Yokohama (near Yokohama station)** has good bargains from time to time. There is also a large used clothing store on the top floor. Also, watch out for *season-end sales*; they have great bargains.

- **Chinatown** is great for finding unusual ingredients like lemongrass and cilantro.

The insularity can get suffocating, and while there are occasional extracurricular activities, interaction with locals is limited—which is why you should really try to join a local club.

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D. IUC, Year-long

D. Inter-University Center for Japanese Studies (Year-long)

Please also see the IUC *Summer* section.

Program Overview

Academics

The year is broken up into quarters. For the first two quarters, morning classes focus exclusively on grammar and expressions (10-12, M-F). Afternoon class (1:30-3, MTThF) is dedicated to reading news articles, listening comprehension of news programs, and discussions thereof.

For the second half of the year, morning classes break up into the following distribution: 2 mornings for grammar, 2 mornings for your academic elective (literature, history, politics, art, anthropology, etc.) wherein you begin to seriously survey the academic literature of your field, and 1 morning is for an additional skill-centered workshop (academic speaking, reading, writing, etc.) In the afternoon, the 3rd quarter provides another theme-based elective, and the 4th quarter liberates you from classes to pursue your research project with one-on-one tutorials with your assigned faculty advisor.

Living Situation

This is by far the trickiest aspect, since IUC does not provide housing or host families. Mid-summer before the academic year begins, IUC will send out a list of recommendations of commercial establishments (monthly and weekly mansions), as well as private apartments that have been hand-me-down from one generation of IUC students to the next.

Unless you are VERY advanced and fully comfortable negotiating a lease by yourself in Japanese or have native friends to help, do **not** attempt to find your own housing! Not worth the staggering legal and financial minefields.

Extracurriculars

Throughout the year IUC gives many free tickets to its students. They range from Takarazuka to Kabuki, Noh and Bunraku performances. Take full advantage of this generous offer! Buying a ticket for these performances can be quite expensive.

Essentials

A cell phone is a must. Having a cell phone is helpful. Refer to the previous section about purchasing one.

Pursue a hobby outside of the IUC bubble. I joined a choir. Others join running clubs or hiking clubs or koto studios. There is a pottery studio that is a 15-20 min walk from school. Look up the clubs at the most convenient university and ask if you can join for the year.

Advice from Sempai

- **The IUC “tried and true” apartment is your best shot:** they circumvent many problems.

- **Teach English on a private basis** to housewives, ambitious salary men, and smart children. IUC generally discourages this, but if you feel you have sufficient time to complete homework, this actually will increase your contact with people.

E. Princeton in Ishikawa

Program Overview

Academics

PII is an eight-week intensive Japanese language program, but it only offers courses for 2nd and 3rd year Japanese language students. Classes meet five days a week for 3 hours each morning. Students study a variety of materials, from newspapers to short stories and textbooks. Furthermore, students are expected to follow a language pledge.

Living Situation

PII is located in one of the most beautiful and historic cities of Japan: Kanazawa, Ishikawa Prefecture. It is only two and a half hours from Tokyo

Computers

Rifare (the international building where classes are held on the 4th floor) has WiFi throughout the building. The building is open on weekends as well.

Library on Third Floor has five computers and is open on weekends. But you can only use them for 30 min at a time. No power outlets available.

Large classroom on Fourth Floor is available for use after classes (12–5 pm) and has four computers and a color printer.

Irregular access to internet: many host families don't have

and three hours from Osaka by express train. Furthermore, students live with host families in the area.

Extracurriculars

Students participate in a variety of activities from flower arrangement to internships in Ishikawa.

The International Center in Kanazawa

A great place to take classes on Japanese activities like dancing, calligraphy, musical instruments (shakuhachi and koto), Go (ancient board game), and the traditional tea ceremony at Kenrokuen—all for free.

internet.

Activities

Noto Peninsula Onsen

This is one of PII's most fabulous services, an overnight trip to an onsen resort. Everybody rides in a highway bus and you stop at a variety of cultural spots and sightseeing. You have to do a group research presentation about one of the sites while riding on the bus—can be a pain—but some groups put together some really entertaining skits.

Mid-Semester Break Travel

One of the best features of PII is

the four-day break you get at the

Getting There

Closely follow the instructions PII provides, and you'll arrive in Kanazawa safe and sound. Make sure you say "Kanazawa" clearly and correctly (can get mixed with "Kanagawa" or "Karuizawa") when asking for directions. Kanazawa is also the name of a suburb in Yokohama, so be careful with Google Maps.

Train from Osaka: *Fastest and easiest:* Take the Haruka limited express from Kansai Airport to Shin-Osaka station (¥3000/¥2330 reserved/unreserved, 50 min), then change to the Thunderbird (¥7850/¥7130, 160 min) for Kanazawa. *Cheaper:* The JR Kansai Airport rapid service gets you to Osaka station (¥1190, 70 min) where you can change to the Thunderbird limited express.

Train from Tokyo: The Hokuriku Shinkansen began operations in 2015 and connects Kanazawa and Tokyo Station in 2h30min (¥14,120 one-way).

Plane: JAL and ANA fly from Haneda to **Komatsu** airport (4 daily flights each). ANA also has a single daily flight between Narita and Komatsu. Fares range from ¥9000–¥15000 each way, depending on how far in advance you book. Note that baggage allowance for domestic flights is 1 bag at 20 kg (44 lbs). From Komatsu you can take an express bus to Kanazawa station (¥1130, 40 min).

Night Bus is a long ride (10 hours) but inexpensive (~\$70-80 each way) alternative to plane and train.

half-way point of the program.

Places to Go

Shopping and Restaurants

- **Katamachi:** shopping karaoke, izakaya, and restaurants.

- JR金沢駅 has nice eateries and Omiyage shops. Check out the German Bakery! On the top, there's a cheap supermarket with obentos and lunch foods.

— 世界で2番目においしいきたてメロンパンアイス (lit. *the second-most delicious freshly baked melon-pan-ice in the world*) has amazing melon pan (a bun unfortunately containing no melon) ice cream sandwiches that are perfect for a hot summer's day. The original outlet is located at Hirosaka (広坂), on the road from Korinbo to the 21st Century Art Museum.

Learning

- **21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art**

- **Ninja Temple Myoruji:** make reservations to see this.

Parks and Scenery

- **Utatsuyama Park:** a mountain where you can overlook Kanazawa and see the ocean on a clear day.

Tourism

- **Uchinada**, a suburb of Kanazawa, has a fabulous firework display and carnival during the PII interval. Be

sure to check it out, as well as its great free beach.

Advice from Sempai

- **Stay hydrated!** Tap water is safe to drink and dehydration and heat exhaustion is not uncommon during summer.

-**Explore the region:** Most people don't venture beyond Tokyo and Kyoto/Osaka, which is a pity. There are some amazing sights in the surrounding areas: the UNESCO World Heritage Site is a day trip away, and the Japanese Alps in nearby Toyama / Gifu / Nagano prefectures can be really good for hiking. A few years back a group of us rented bicycles and cycled around the Noto coast, which was an incredible experience with some breathtaking views.

- **Don't bring a lot of books to**

Highlights

Listening to the solemn Teramachi Bells of the Zen Temples toll as sunset rolls on into the evening. This is one of the top 100 soundscapes in all Japan—just don't be disappointed by the characteristically Zen-like minimalism of the experience.

Take part in the festivities of the : the annual festival that happens over the first weekend of PII. During the parade on Saturday night the whole town turns out and lines up in the streets for three hours of non-stop dancing. PII gets a place in the contingent as well. Also, head to the river on Friday to watch the release of lanterns down the river at night.

(Photo by Jacob Taswell '17, PII 2015)

Japan with you. A simple binder, notebook, an electronic dictionary (or a dictionary app on your phone), pens, and your previous textbooks are enough.

- **Summer sales during** ^{うみ}海の日: some stuff goes for 70% off about the third to last week of PII.

-**Cultural activities** (): Try to sign up for as many of the PII-organized activities as you can. It's possible to fit time into your schedule to do them, and they provide wonderful opportunities to bond with friends, learn more about various aspects of Japanese culture and expand your Japanese language skills.

F. Sun Academy Nihongo Center

Program Overview

The Sun Academy is geared toward students who want to improve their Japanese skills by interacting with natives, especially Japanese college students. There are endless varieties of entertainment in Tokyo, requiring effective time management.

Academics

The lower number of students (10-15) tends to foster camaraderie among students. The daily schedule in the school is divided into 3 time blocks of 1 hour each. Classes go from 9AM to 1PM, with two 10 minute breaks. There are 1 midterm and final, with homework taking no more than 4 hours every day. You will have plenty of time to explore the city!

Extracurriculars

Past guests include NHK director of Ryomaden, the assistant cabinet secretary to the PM, vice governor of Tokyo, Asahi Shinbun journalists, and Tokyo University Physics Nobel Prize winner. Last summer's interviews included Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Chikao Kawai, Nichi TV producer Seiji Okuda and Kikkoman President Noriaki Horikiri.

We interned at Kikkoman—the largest soy sauce company in Japan for a day!

Buddy System

You'll be set up with a native Japanese student. This gives you the opportunity to speak the language and interact with the

young culture! At the welcome party, you'll have some sort of a draw to determine the pairs.

The buddies are mostly college students looking forward to meeting us and learning about our culture. Every Friday, some buddies come and participate in discussions for an hour with each class level.

Mid-Semester Break

Go traveling! Going to Kyoto is very do-able. Kyoto, Kobe, and Osaka are located close to each other. These cities are part of Kansai, a part of Japan definitely worth visiting.

Housing

The program offers 1 month of homestay and 1 month in an apartment. Apartment locations vary by year, but it's usually somewhere in the heart of Tokyo. Apartments are furnished to meet the majority of students' needs.

Transportation

- **Buy a Suica card or monthly commuter pass!** This is recommended for almost all students. Suica cards are essentially charge cards you can purchase at JR train stations, and can be used for commuting by train and bus, and purchasing items at some convenience stores/restaurants.

Activities around Town

- **Asakusa** is the area reminiscent of Showa period Tokyo, as well as "shitamachi" Edo style houses. Many good and cheap foods in this area.

- Expect to use up to several hundred dollars in travel costs for frequent excursions.

- **Karaoke:** In downtown Shinjuku students can easily find karaoke establishments (usually around 1,500yen/hour, and depends on size of the group, but the hourly price could be as low as a couple of hundred yen if you register for a membership).

Shopping

Clothes in Japan for the most part are very expensive although prices may be offset somewhat depending on what the exchange rate is. Be prepared to spend more money than in America, and sizes may also be an issue.

- **Remember that subway and train systems shut down around midnight (the exact last service time varies according to different companies and routes). Google Maps has an extremely useful function that allows you to view the last trains for a particular route or journey.** Taxis are the most convenient option after this time, but are expensive.

- **Train system starts around 5AM.**

- Clubbing

- Roppongi (district tailored towards foreigners' expectations). E.g. 911, Heartland. Previous students have expressed need to be wary of hustlers, and also the costs of bar cover fees.

- Shibuya: Popular destination for Japanese college students. They card everyone (20, not 21). They have cheaper covers and drinks compared to Roppongi. Check out Womb for its impressive light show.

Places to Go

Undoubtedly, there is so much to do in Tokyo. Consult your Lonely Planet book! Also, ask Yalies who are from the area, as well as Light fellows.

Suggested Spots

- **Asakusa:** famous for its temple and the shopping district that surrounds it

- **Kamakura** is an hour train ride away from Tokyo (1000yen/one way). Hosts one of the three famous Buddha. You can go inside it too!

- **Akihabara:** A section of Tokyo devoted entirely to anime, manga, and electronics. This is heaven for otakus.

- **Shibuya:** super-sized shopping center, clubs

- **Harajuku:** weird high school students with ridiculous outfits and make-up (check out the bridge near JR station on Sunday afternoons). Check sidestreets to avoid areas overwhelmed by tourists.

- **Ginza:** high class shopping



"I really enjoy getting coffee at the Starbucks near Shibuya station, where you can overlook the famous Shibuya Crossing."

district, with historic department stores.

- **Tsukiji:** fish market. Eat the freshest sushi in the morning. Closed on Sundays! Do your research before attempting to visit, as hours have changed when the market is open to the public. Due to the 2020 Tokyo Summer Olympics, Tsukiji is currently being planned to be relocated to a new site in Toyosu around winter 2017/2018.

- **Shinjuku:** Kind of parallel to NYC's Manhattan. Breath-taking night view. Highly recommended. Go to the Tokyo Metropolitan Tower for FREE night view! Huge shopping complexes.

- **Roppongi:** The famous Tokyo Tower. Another recommended place for night viewing.

- **Tokyo Station:** Traditional train station architecture, royal garden and upscale shopping area.

- **Odaiba:** Tokyo's most famous Ferris Wheels and a mini Statue of Liberty.

The Unofficial Light Fellowship Guide on Where to Eat in Tokyo

by Kellen Silver '20 and Rhea Teng '19 (SANC 2017)

Around Yoyogi Station

1. **Street Pasta Company** (sign in English)

We definitely didn't expect to find an incredible Italian restaurant with homemade pasta and pizza in the heart of Tokyo, but we are so glad we did! There are also some really delicious Japanese-Italian fusion dishes. If you go at lunchtime, there is a special that includes a smoothie and dessert for under ¥1000!

2. **Why Do You Put Chili Oil in Soba?**

(なぜ蕎麦にラー油を入れるのか?)

Just down the street from Street Pasta Company, this place had the best soba we had in Tokyo by far. The soba was so good that we spent over an hour scouring the Internet for the name of the restaurant so we could put it in this guide. All the sizes are the same price, but beware, the portions are huge. If you somehow aren't bursting at the seams once you've finished your soba, add some hot water to the dipping broth to make a nice bowl of soup! Look for the yellow sign!

Make a day of it

3. **Nakiryu** (鳴龍)

This is one of the only Michelin-starred ramen restaurants in the world (the other, Tsuta, is also in Tokyo, but we never went there — *ed.: I did and it's amazing; see below*). On top of that, there are only nine seats total, so there are always crowds of people waiting in line outside. Prepare to get there before they open if you want to make sure you get inside before they close. Seriously,

it's that busy. Nakiryu is famous for their delicious Chinese-style , which is a mildly spicy, almost nutty ramen. Would recommend shelling out a few hundred extra yen for pork, soft-boiled egg, and kaedama, an extra serving of perfectly cooked noodles delivered to you once you've devoured the first (make sure you save enough broth!). Because when else are you going to eat Michelin-starred ramen?

editor's recommendation:

3.5 **Tsuta**

Tsuta was awarded a Michelin star for its ramen back in 2015, and its ramen is the best I've had in my (very many) trips to Japan. The soup is clear and light but incredibly flavorful (they use truffle oil), and the chashu is tender and rich. The best part: a bowl of ramen costs less than ¥2000. The shop seats only nine people at a time, and they work on a ticket system: come by in the morning (8am is good) to pick up a ticket to return at a specified time slot from 11am to 3pm — but note that this is the time at which you start queuing; you'll need to wait about half an hour for a seat. It's worth it though. Tsuta is located a short walk from Sugamo station on the JR Yamanote line. Sugamo (巢鴨) is a destination in itself. Jizō-dori (地藏通り) the shopping street near the station is also known as 「おばあちゃんの原宿」 (old ladies' Harajuku) and the area is pretty different from what you'd normally see in the rest of Tokyo. (One of my instructors at IUC named it his favorite part of the city.)

Section IV: Programs Near Akihabara

4. Kikanbō (鬼金棒)

In my opinion, this was the best ramen we had in Tokyo (even better than Michelin-starred Nakiryu!). The pork belly at Kikanbo was the best we had in any ramen shop anywhere in Tokyo, hands down. Beware, this ramen is spicy. Like really spicy. Definitely not for the faint of heart but worth it if you can survive the tear-inducing karashibi and the oni (demon) décor. For first timers, we would recommend you order futsu-futsu, which is the standard level of spice.

Note: there is a sister tsukemen (dipping noodle) restaurant run by the same people right next door, so don't get confused!

5. Tsukiji Market

We highly recommend you make the trip out to Tsukiji at some point. Even if you don't make it before sunrise for the tuna auction (we never did), the fish market is world-renowned, and the sushi and sashimi are the best in the world. Honestly, order from any of the vendors and you'll be happy. The chuu-toro (medium fat tuna) and ikura (salmon roe) rice bowl I ate at Tsukiji was a little pricy on a student budget but remains the best thing I've ever eaten in my life.

Shinjuku Station for dessert

6. Mr. Waffle (sign in English)

Keep an eye out for this little Belgian waffle stand near the JR station in Shinjuku. One bite and you'll keep coming back! They even have soft serve ice cream! Also, down the street is a bakery with a sign advertising "Scandinavian smells" where you can buy lots of yummy European and Japanese fusion treats.

F. Sun Academy Nihongo Center

Cheap Eats

7. Matsuya (松屋)

The orange and blue Matsuya awnings are the Tokyo equivalent of the McDonald's golden arches (besides the actual golden arches that are also in Tokyo). Matsuya is a chain fast food restaurant, but don't be discouraged, the food is delicious, fast, and easy on the budget. You can find them in almost every part of Tokyo.

8. Sushi-Ro (スシロー)

Sushi-Ro is a chain restaurant at which you order from a computer at your table and your sushi is delivered right to you on a conveyor belt. Affordable and delicious!

9. Kura Sushi (くら寿司)

Like Sushi-Ro, Kura is another kaitenzushi restaurant with a similar computer ordering style, but there's a twist. At Kura, once you've eaten your sushi, your plates become tokens in a capsule toy game. Five plates equal one chance to win a little toy from the machine, complete with an animated video showing whether or not you won.

Note on : Not all kaitenzushi restaurants have computer ordering like Kura and Sushi-Ro. At most places, the sushi simply revolves and you can pick up whatever you like and pay for whatever you take at the end, usually with different plate colors representing different price levels. There are also usually menus from which you can place an order with a waiter or just call out your order to the chef! If you find a good kaitenzushi restaurant, it can be (almost) as good as higher-end made-to-order sushi for a fraction of the cost.

Section IV: Programs

Advice from Sempai

- **Cell phones:** try and get everyone to buy a cell phone from the same company, Softbank prepaid is a good option. iPhones may not work.

- **Exchange contact info with your buddy in the beginning:** they can be a great help if you want to sightsee in Tokyo or travel around Japan.

- **Bring a laptop and have a dictionary on your smart phone, or buy an electronic dictionary.**

- **Watch your wallet.** The receipts will run up quickly and your summer fund will be used up if you aren't careful. Some of us went over \$1,000 even on a frugal budget.

- **Escalators:** Pay attention to stand on the left in the Tokyo area, but switch to the right in the Kansai region. Even the car looks full, you can still manage to get in since everyone will automatically squeeze

F. Sun Academy Nihongo Center

inside to make room for one more person. So don't wait because every train will be exactly the same during the rush hour.

- **Rush Hour Train Commute:** try and stand away from the doors, in-between where people sit; you are less likely to get squished against the door and who knows, you might even get a seat!

- **Karaoke** during the weekday during the day is cheaper.

- **When you miss the last train...** Go to McDonald's, Konbinis, or cheap restaurants!

- **Taxis** are very expensive. A taxi ride from Roppongi to Nishi-Shinjuku can run up to 3,000yen. It's a good idea to divide up the ride cost with friends.

- **Pack business casual attire** since Sun arranges interviews with fairly prominent people in Japan.

Highlights

The interview with Seiji Okuda producer and with it, the trip to Japan TV tower was one of the most memorable events during the summer. Seiji Okuda (奥田誠治) is one of the main producers for the international anime blockbuster Spirited Away and has worked closely with Hayao Miyazaki, the internationally acclaimed maker of anime feature films. During the interview he revealed to us that Chihiro (千尋), the main character in Spirited Away, is based off his daughter. After his presentation on Ghibli's path to becoming the world's best anime feature film studio, Mr. Okuda gave us a tour on Japan TV tower. At one point, we were escorted into the live newsroom. Witnessing national news anchors broadcasting live in person was truly an unparalleled experience.

G. Kyoto Consortium for Japanese Studies

Program Overview

KCJS is geared for higher level Japanese study and is most effective for highly driven and independent individuals. Students are motivated to proactively immerse themselves in the culture—a type of learning gained only by those sensitive to opportunity.

Academics

Doshisha University

Doshisha is located on Karasuma-dori and Imadegawa, just above the Imperial Palace. Student have full access to Doshisha facilities like the library.

Year-long

Each weekday starts with language class at 9:10 for two hours with a 10-minute break between sessions. In the afternoon students take elective courses about Japanese history and culture. Classes focus on humanities, anthropology, and linguistics. A course may be offered in Japanese for advanced students, such as Gender in Japan. Check course listings in advance.

Living Situation

Kyoto is a fairly safe and small city, but be careful walking alone especially near Bukkyo Daigaku (which can be unsafe for foreigners). Most buildings are 300 years old on average, and the customs more conservative. KCJS arranges your housing, but whether you stay in an apartment or with a homestay family is your choice.

If you are staying for a year, you can

Summer

9AM-2PM class every day, with individual project one-on-one time with teacher once a week. We had two classes, one with 5 people and one with around 10. Classes take place in Fusokan, where the Doshisha exchange student office is also located.

Take the placement test seriously, as the pace, workload, and academic experience will differ between the intermediate and advanced class.

You are in charge of your learning: the teachers ask you how much you want to study, so your workload depends on your dedication, and more so in the upper level classes.

stay for one term in one and then switch.

One other option is living in the Kajiwara House, a sharehouse that has been hosting exchange students for years.

- **Recommended Locations:** near Karasuma-dori (Gojo, Shijo, Sanjo, between Shijo and Oike), Hyakumanben (Kyoto Univ. area)

Extracurriculars

The program provides very little extracurricular opportunities: there is very little exposure to Japanese people and if you don't actively explore, you end up hanging out almost exclusively with Americans.

Summer

Every Friday, you will participate in a "cultural activity," but generally they

Transportation

Bus/Train

The city-run transportation system will take you to almost every part of town.

Bus: 220yen/ride, Subway:

210-50yen. Some recommendations:

: for commuters, in 1,3, or 6 mo. deals

トラフィカ京カード: prepaid card for city bus and subway. Sold in 1000, 2000, and 3000yen increments, it is sold at subway stations. The balance is always printed on the back every time you swipe, and you get more money than you pay for (3000yen actually has 3,300yen).

are lackluster, including arts and crafts at a touristy place with foreigners and a subpar presentation by a lawyer.

Check the bulletin board on the first floor of Fusokan! There are local job opportunities and extracurricular opportunities, most of which you can participate in even though you are not a Doshisha student.

: unlimited rides for one day within the main city area.

Consider buying an ICOCA card at the JR Kyoto station.

Bike

Kyoto is small enough that you can get around, and the program will provide permits for campus parking. Be careful about parking elsewhere, since the city tows all the illegally parked bikes. Also, people have been hurt in bicycling accidents.

JR Line: JR Kyoto Station

Keihan-line: the Tozai subway line turns into Keihan as you approach Otsu.

Hankyu-line: cheapest way to Umeda, Osaka. Shijo-Kawaramachi, Karasuma (same as subway), Omiya, Katsura.

Activities around Town

- **Drinking: Billy's Bar** is a small bar that sometimes has music events and has free cover for females and foreigners. Also, **Hub** is a chain bar with decent price. **Denen** has all-you-can-drink (usually 2 hours/1,000yen).

- **Dance Clubs: Sam and Daves** (1,000yen for girls, 2,000yen for guys, with 1-2 drinks included); **World** (1,000-3,000yen, use the 1,000yen foreigner/student discount on the brochures sitting outside the club. Classier than Sam and Daves); **Pure** for a crazy dance-club experience (Dotonbori in Osaka, for 2,000yen all-you-can-drink, goes until 6am).

Food and Restaurants

- is a chain ramen restaurant across Japan. There is one near campus on Imadegawa-dori.

- **Fresco** is the chain supermarket near most major subway stations. They have the best deals, obanzai (appetizers), and daily discounts.

- **Holly's Café** is also a chain café. It is cheaper than Starbucks and a great place to study.

- **Meiji-ya** for foreign foods. They had

- **Movies:** movie theatre in Nijo station sells discounted tickets for foreign students.

- **Arcade: Round One** for arcade games, bowling, purikura, or gambling. **Jiyuu Kuukan** (Shinkyogoku a little north from Shijo) is where you can watch movies, read manga, play billiards, sing karaoke, and sleep inexpensively (if you miss the last train) for a small hourly fee.

- **Karaoke: Super Jankara** is everywhere. Request the student discount! If you go in the summer, try to find one on 四条烏丸, where you can see the Gion Matsuri parade while doing karaoke

- 錦市場: Definitely go! There's an amazing matcha shop called “茶わ々”.

pumpkin puree for Thanksgiving! (near Kawabata on Sanjo)

- かつば寿司 sells good priced sushi for good quality sushi.

Sanjo/Shijo/Oike Area

- **Café Independent** near Sanjo-Karasuma serves fancy American/European food for a semi-reasonable price.

- **Haikara-ya:** a decent yakitori place along Kiyamachi (120yen, happy hour beer special from T-Th!)

Places to Go

There is so much to see in Kyoto. Please see **Section V: Miscellaneous, C. Fellows' Favorite Spots!**

Learning

- **Teramachi Shotengai** between Shijo and Oike-dori. With lots of cute shops, it also houses very old temples.

Parks and Scenery

- **The Imperial Palace** is just south of Doshisha campus, and nice to take a stroll in.

Shopping

- **Zest:** underground mall next to Shiyakusho-mae on Tozai Line.

- **Aeon:** huge food court and selection, shopping, and game center. (near Nishioji-Gojo)

- **Sweets Paradise:** 1,440yen all-you-can-eat cake, ice cream, curry,

pasta, salad at 90min limit.

- **Tonchinkan:** popular place for okonomiyaki (on side street next to Mina on Kawaramachi)

Hyakumanben

- **Raju** is an Indian restaurant with great lunch deals (800yen for multiple courses).

- **Shijo-Kawaramachi** is the main shopping district. The department stores have a selection too.

- **Pontocho** is the red-light district, as well as home to ryotei and tea houses.

- on Shijo-Karasuma has a funky rando goods store for present ideas.

Events

- **21st of every month:** large flea market at Toji Temple in the south. There's always good food, antiques, yukata, plants, jewelry, and the like.
- **20th of every month:** Kitano-Tenmangu flea market, or Tenjin-san.
- **Jidai Matsuri** on October 22nd.
- **Gion Matsuri** in the summer is one of the most famous festivals. Get up early on the day of the festival if you want to get a good spot (it gets extremely crowded).

Advice from Sempai

- **Computers and Electronic Dictionaries** are indispensable. Kyoto is not Tokyo and certainly not Yale. The school computers are somewhat old, and wifi is not available in many places.

- **Most businesses run from 9AM-5PM.** Plan accordingly.

- In the Kyoto dialect, 「__はる or 「_

Highlights

“ One month I went to Tenjin-san at 7AM, where I was able to negotiate with the vendor to buy a kougou (incense container) for ¥6,000 when he was selling for ¥10,000yen. He also gave me a bunchin (paperweight for Japanese calligraphy).

- In the winter, Kobe, Osaka, and Arashiyama have famous “illuminations” with Christmas-themed activities.
- In the spring, cherry blossom viewing is a big deal at most temples and shrines.
- **Sakura Matsuri** around key areas of Kyoto
- Try the amazake at Kiyomizu dera!
- **Setsubun on February 3:** head over to Yasaka-jinja to get beans thrown at you by maiko!

__してはる」 equals 「__る」 or 「_ _してる」

- **Apply for the Doshisha student jobs posted on the Doshisha bulletin.** Even though the office will try to reject you, say that you are in it for the educational opportunity, and if you're lucky, you'll land a job!

I know that Yale found (at Tenjin-san) one of the Buddhist inscriptions that are related to Hyakuman-ben.

When I went to Daimaru at 6:30 one day, I saw a shopkeeper marking down prices on the bread. When I

came back an hour later, I was surprised to see a group of obasan

standing around the outside of the shop. After a few minutes, I saw them all rush into the bakery: at 7:45, all prices were slashed again by half, and the obasans are waiting to run in and buy everything.”

“My friend and I were on our way back from Kiyomizu-dera and decided to explore this small temple. We were the only people there and one of the monks invited us in to see parts of the temple that weren't open to the public. We talked for over two hours. It took a while to understand we were trying to say to each other, but he was very patient and listened carefully to our thoughts. It was one of our many interactions with the

locals, but it was definitely one of the deepest conversations I've had in a long time.”

During my 8 weeks there my housemate and I went to a local Aikido合気道 Dojo near Fushimi Inari Shrine伏見稲荷神社 a dozen times and had great time talking to the people at the Dojo. The master was extremely friendly and talked to us about the philosophy of Aikido and its roots in Chinese Qi Gong. It was nice to have some work out every week and get some real cultural experience at the same time.



Gion Matsuri, the festival of Yasaka Shrine, is the most famous festival in Japan and takes place over the entire month of July.

H. Nanzan University

Program Overview

Nanzan University is located in Nagoya, a metropolis that divides Kansai and Kanto regions. The weather is hot and humid in the summer, and cold in the winter (bring warm clothes!)

Academics

- **Take the placement exam seriously** because it's hard to switch out of your class once you're set. Also, the intermediate class tends to be bigger so aim for 300/500/600/700 since 400 is crowded.

- Nanzan's English language lecture classes are nowhere near as intensive as Yale classes, but interesting.

1. Language skills: writing, business Japanese, Japanese in tourism

2. Elective classes include classes on basic Japanese culture, linguistics, foreign policy, economics, and business.

3. Fieldwork Research Methods allows you to pick a topic of your choice regarding Japanese society and culture, and interview local people.

4. Art and culture classes such as ikebana, tea ceremony, ink painting, calligraphy are fun and relaxing electives to add to your schedule.

-Take advantage of fall semester classes with Japanese students. These courses are not offered in the spring.

-Higher levels have more demanding workload, as well as more speeches.

- Language partners are a wonderful resource!

Living Situation

Host family

This is for those willing to experience new things. It can be difficult for people not accustomed to adjusting to rules, or possibility of stricter parents. It can be kind of far, but a great way to practice Japanese.

Dorms

Nanzan has multiple dorm buildings. Yanssen is the newest dorm building in Nanzan. Nagoya Koryu Kaikan (1:4 Japanese to foreign student ratio) is the dorm closest to Nanzan, closely rivaled by Yamazato. Other dorms, like Rainbow House or Toyota, are a bit farther away. All dorms provide singles. Free heat and air conditioning!

Computers and Internet Access

- Wi-Fi available on campus.

-In the Nanzan dorm, you can subscribe to an internet plan: ¥5,000/mo. (broadband) or ¥3,500/mo. (dial up). Private dorms have similar plans.
- Computer clusters at Nanzan: free with your Nanzan ID.

Money Access

- Nanzan and private dorm

students must open up a bank account with the **Bank of Nagoya**

-**Citibank** branch is located in Sakae.

Transportation

Nagoya subway is a little overpriced compared with Tokyo.

- buy a monthly commuter pass (定期券) and use your Nanzan student ID to save money
- Get a day pass if you are using the subway for 3+ times
- **Discount Card:** 20% off during daytime and weekends, and 10% off evenings.

Activities around Town

- **Karaoke!** Most big joints are in Sakae. **Karaoke Yubo** has unlimited drinks after 6PM (go in before 6PM and stay for 6 hours for 780 Mon-Thurs and 980yen Fri-Sun).

- **Clubbing: ID** in Sakae is the most popular club among foreign students. Real hip-hop atmosphere: **Lush Underground** in Sakae.

- **Movie Theatre: Piccadilly Theater** next to JR Nagoya Station has 1,000yen for Ladies' Night on Thursday, foreign students get in for 1,100yen on any other night (alien registration card and student ID needed)

Food

- **Food Shopping:** big supermarket **Valor** near Nanzan has 98yen bread. **Jusco** at Yagoto Station is a big supermarket and department store complex.

- **Torinosuke** near Irinaka eki has an "endless special" where it's all-you-can-drink from 10pm until closing time (around 2 or 3am) for only 1500 yen! supermarket

- **Sushiro**, a kaitenzushi place near Nishi Takakura eki. The salmon basil is HIGHLY recommended.

- For students interested in snowboarding, in the spring, the travel agent in **Copain** at Nanzan offers good deals.

- **Shopping:** the market at **Osu** has cheap clothing (personal favorite: Thank You Mart. Everything sells for 398yen). **Sakae**, the downtown district, has several department stores. **JR Nagoya Station** has underground tunnels with shops and restaurants.

Meibutsu

- **Hitsumabushi:** teriyaki unagi on rice. Find one in your area using gnavi.co.jp

- **Miso, Miso, Miso! Misonikomi-udon**, and anything with red miso.

Places to Go

- **Tsurumai Koen** is beautiful in the spring

- **Osu-knonn:** cheap, cheesy, and vintage-ish area with tattoo parlors and Turkish food

- Spend the day at the **Nagoya City Science Museum** in Sakae. It has one of Japan's largest planetariums and you get a student discount!

- Go to the **Hadaka Matsuri** (Naked Festival) at **Konomiya Shrine** in Inazawa, which takes place in February. Everyone needs to witness grown men running around nearly naked in the freezing cold at least once in their lives.

- **Nagoya Castle**

- **Okazaki Park** is really beautiful in the spring with its cherry blossoms

Advice from Sempai

- **If you choose AU for cellphone**, purchase your phone from **Gokiso tation AU shop** because that specific shop allows foreign students to subscribe to student plans.

- **Ask Nanzan about Nanzan-related discounts.**

- If you want to make some **extra spending money**, make sure you turn in your **work authorization forms** (available at CJS) ASAP. My English Room in Sakae hires a bunch of Nanzan students.

- Make sure to go to the **gym orientation** at the beginning of the semester. You get a special ID card, so it's impossible to get one later if you miss it.

- Nagoya has been known as the Detroit of Japan—lots of immigrants, industry, and it is the birthplace of pachinko. Please be prudent if you choose to go to **Imaike**, an area famous for its Yakuza activities.

- Join one of the many sports and extracurriculars Nanzan has to offer. Some of the clubs have high time commitments, but this is best way to meet lots of Japanese students on a regular basis.

- Go to Stella and World Plaza to meet Japanese and other international students!

Highlights

During my year at Nanzan University, I took a class called Fieldwork Research Methods that allowed me to pick a topic of interest and explore it by interviewing Japanese people near my area. I have always been interested in mental health,

Section IV: Programs

H. Nanzan

and I decided to study the state of mental health care in Japan. I spend the fall semester surveying college students at Nanzan about their attitudes and knowledge of mental health. I continued with this project through the spring term by shadowing psychiatrists at local hospitals.

This experience allowed me to interact with Japanese firsthand and learn about a facet of Japanese culture that is unfamiliar to many native Japanese residents. During my interview of college students, I had the opportunity to meet and make friends with many of the Japanese students that attended Nanzan University. Although mental health tends to be a taboo topic in most circles of Japanese society, many students expressed interest in learning more about the topic. In this sense, the interviews were more of a cultural exchange—the Japanese students could learn about the United States while I learned about Japan.

The project also opened many doors into Japanese society that I would not have had the chance to encounter on my own. I had the chance to see patient-doctor interactions in a Japanese hospital setting as well as listen to the problems and worries that psychiatric patients in Japan currently face. As with many parts of the world, Japan faces problems with the ostracization of the mentally ill. I had the rare opportunity to speak and befriend these patients and talk with them about the problems in modern Japanese health care.

Beyond academics, the program at Nanzan University offered me plenty of opportunities to meet Japanese students. I joined the school tennis team which involved two practices per week in addition to several social events. Joining this team was probably one of the best decisions I made in Japan as it afforded me the chance to really get to know a small group of Japanese students. They were the ones who taught me everything about Japan ranging from college dating culture to the proper way to eat yakiniku.

Thanks to the program's many breaks, I had the chance to extensively travel throughout Japan. Nagoya was also conveniently located, and I was able to easily and quickly travel to many different cities such as Kyoto and Nagasaki. I traveled every chance I had, and the places I visited include Nagano, Osaka, Kobe, Tokyo, and Okinawa. Traveling and seeing Japan was by far the highlight of my year abroad, and I am glad that Nanzan offered me the flexibility to be able to travel extensively.

Somin Lee

Section IV: Programs

I. CET Osaka

I. CET Osaka

Program Overview

CET Osaka is an eight week Summer as well as fall and spring term-time program geared toward highly motivated students who seek a greater degree of social interaction with Japanese locals, starting with a Japanese roommate! The program is fairly polished and helps a lot with the transition process.

Academics

Class is every day from 9AM to 2:00PM at Osaka Gakuin Daigaku. We had tests and a final presentation, and the classes were fairly intense.

Osaka Gakuin Daigaku

In general, don't expect the regular facilities to be overly welcoming to foreign students. Some students had success meeting Japanese exchange students at events put on by the university's International Club, but don't expect that you'll have access to any of the student clubs. Some students have had luck participating in a limited capacity in the Kendo club.

After dealing with some hassles, I was able to get to use the gym, but trying to do research in the Library proved difficult.

Living Situation: The Neighborhood

The districts where students were actually living were very suburban (like Fujigaoka).

Extracurriculars

The director at CET spends a great amount of time planning weekly events for CET students and their

buddies. In recent years, these events include: making itigodaifuku, movie screenings, manga drawing lesson from a local celebrity, and training in traditional Japanese arts. CET will also plan one or two day-long trips that should absolutely be attended, because they always take place in lush, rural areas.

Roommate System

"I got to meet so many other Japanese college students and became good friends with people."

The main draw of the program is living in a two person apartment with a Japanese college student. **If you want to understand what real Japanese college students do and want to interact and do things with people your own age, this is the program for you.**

It can be a hit or miss. You could have a roommate with whom you'll form close connections, or your roommate could work long and obscure hours, rarely communicating with you. **It is a two-way street**, though, both in overcoming cultural differences specifically and building a relationship in general.

Internet

Wi-Fi access is draconian and spotty at Osaka Gakuin!

All apartments usually have good internet access.

Transportation

Take JR into Osaka and Hankyu into Kyoto for cheapest rates. Both stations are located within 3-5 minutes by foot from Osaka Gakuin Daigaku.

Food and Restaurants

Food in Osaka can be expensive outside of supermarkets. Eating out adds up very quickly, and don't expect to find any fast food noodle places or other similarly cheap staples near the school, though they exist in downtown Osaka.

Here are some meibutsu, must-try foods originated from this Kansai city:

- **Takoyaki**: the fried balls of octopus are everywhere. You may have a chance to make them with your housemates.

- **Okonomiyaki**: kind of like fried pancakes made with cabbage and egg batter, served with mayonnaise, bonito flakes, seaweed flakes, and katsu sauce are great! (try 風月)

- **かに道楽** is the chain store famous for its moving Crab mobile in front. Mostly a tourist attraction, the Douraku specializes in crab dishes.

- まん: pork buns, just not sweet like Char Shew Baos.
 - **はこずし**
 - **バッテラ (箱寿司)**: Mackerel nigiri stuffed into a box.

- **ふなぼしづか**
 - **船場志津可** has served its legendary 鰻まむし to generations of locals in Osaka. This teriyaki freshwater eel is basically the Unajyu of Kansai. 大阪府 大阪市 中央区道修町1丁目

Kansai Supermarket and Friendmart are relatively close to the school and are much cheaper than restaurants

Aikawa has some great restaurants to discover. Mendokoro Shoryu is a hole-in-the-wall with amazing ramen.

Places to Go**Osaka**

どうやまちょう
 - **堂山町** is the district about an 8-minute walk from main Osaka/Umeda station. Big mix of interesting bars, restaurants, some clubs with live shows.

- **FriendMart** is the biggest supermarket next to the school, so you'll usually get better deals here than smaller ones nearby your living place. Bring an eco-bag to school and go shopping afterwards.

- **Yamada denki** is the best place to buy cellphones, nearby the main stations, JR Osaka, Hankyu Umeda)

- **Aquarium**: The Kaiyukan is one of the largest in the world. It's a surprisingly long series of train transfers...

- **Karaoke**: the place in the parking lot next to the school has the best deals on weekdays.

- **Spa World**: 3,000 yen gets you into the 1 story complex for the day. The main attraction? The incredible line-up of onsen, but there's also arcades, restaurants, swimming pools, shopping centers, and more!

- **HEP5 Shopping Center (ヘップファイブ百貨店)** has a big red

Ferris wheel, shopping, game arcades, movie theatres, and restaurants. Don't miss the all-you-can-eat Gelato for 1,100 yen on the 8th floor!

- **Den Den Town** is the Osaka equivalent of Akihabara, next to

Section IV: Programs

Nankai Namba station. If you're into video games, electronics or counterculture, this is it.

- **Umeda** is the area surrounding Osaka station. High-scale shopping malls, backstreets filled with clubs and bars for you to discover.

Light Fellows tend to enjoy the area, but be prudent if you ever choose to visit **Tsutenkaku** and **Shinsekai**. Going at nighttime is a challenge. Make sure to go to Spa World in a big group. Sex workers have been known to frequent Spa World to find foreign potential clients. This is emphasized by Lonely Planet.

Greater Kansai Area

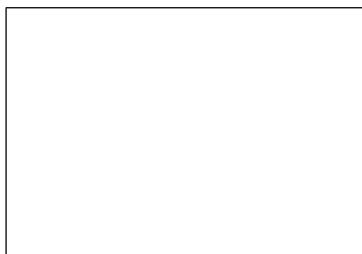
たからづか

- **宝塚** is an area famous for the all-female troupe that's vaguely based on Kabuki except transformed into western musicals. Each performance is two shows- a full-length opera or musical, and an hour-long extravaganza of plot less dancing. You can also visit the **Osamu Tezuka museum** (Astroboy, etc.) although it is nearly all in Japanese.

- **Nara** is a place of history. Deer and the Buddha (Todaiji).

- **Kobe**: interesting legacies of white colonialism (Dutch district and French perfume museum). Also a growing Islamic district.

I. CET Osaka



Section IV: Programs

- **Himeji** in Hyōgo-ken has “the most magnificent castle in Japan”, which is currently under 5 year renovation.

- **Kyoto** is just as close to many CET students' apartments as downtown Osaka. Kyoto is about 40 minutes

Advice from Sempai

On the escalator, stand on the right side to avoid blocking traffic!

- **When you ask for directions to a station**, make sure you specify which line, because different lines often have stations by the same name.

- **Look for small, family-run places** on the streets as much as you can. Not only is the shopkeeper more likely to strike up a conversation with you, but you can also find a much better deal. The food is also typically much better than at larger, flashier chains!

Highlights

Celebrating Fourth of July in our small apartments, cooking s'mores and sharing what it means to be an American.

The most rewarding and educational part of the summer for me was hanging out for long stretches in bars and talking with locals.

There was a small, unmarked Takoyaki stall on the road I walked to school that gave out 14 balls for 350yen—the big chain down the street did 10 for 600yen. Plus, as I struck up a friendship with the shopkeeper of the small place, she often gave me discounts or extra takoyaki for free (omake!).

We took a class trip to Nara, which was quite cool.

There was only one CET-organized field trip (the other ones got cancelled

I. CET Osaka

away from the university. **Don't think of it as a day trip destination—it's a second home.** Highlights include Monkey Mountain, Kinkakuji (the Golden Pavilion), and Kiyomizudera. For specifics, see pages 53-54.

- **Head to the supermarket later in the evening**, when all perishable items are **50% off!!!!**.

- **If you're cooking your own meals** prepare to shell out big yen once you start craving fresh fruit and vegetables.

- **CET Osaka is** probably not a program for strictly book learners, but if you are social, and looking to learn Japanese through Japanese life and people, this can be the perfect program.

Section IV: Programs

I. CET Osaka

because not enough people signed up), but people in the program (OGU Students) organized group events a lot, and I had the most fun going out with everyone to places like Spa-World, Universal Studios, or summer festivals.

Section V: Miscellaneous

A. Omiyage Ideas

Section V: Miscellaneous

A. Omiyage Ideas

As you may know, Japanese culture places heavy emphasis on gift-giving. Though you certainly do not need gifts for each of your teachers, especially if you are in a large program, you will definitely need something for your language partner if you have one, and even more so for your host family. Bring a large amount of small gifts with you; you might want to bring a few extra gifts as parting gifts for any friends you make during your stay. *It is simply good to have gifts around!*

Ideas, in case you're stuck

- Yale paraphernalia (t-shirts, stickers, stuffed animals, key chains)
- Coffee, tea, and other easy to brew beverages
- Things unique to your hometown (Mexican blankets, museum souvenirs, I love NY shirts, postcards)
- Chocolates (Godiva, Lindt, See's Candies, La Maison du Chocolat)
- Bath and Body Works type things for girls

Things to avoid

- Be careful about perishables; not everything is let through customs.
- Stationery. Japan is the mitochondria of school supply production.
- Gifts that are marked "Made in Japan." Made in the US would be best.

B. Electronic Dictionary/Dictionary Apps

Why should we avoid the ones under 9,000yen?

The ones under 9,000yen will usually not have *kanji input*, which means you have to recognize the kanji. The ones priced above that and have a kanji input pad will cost at least 20,000yen. If you feel you don't need the kanji input, the choice is up to you.

*iPhone/iPod APPS

An **EXCELLENT** idea if you don't want to buy a dictionary. If you already have an iPhone/iPod, or even if you decide to buy one, overall this is a much **cheaper** option. It is SO much lighter to carry around compared to an electronic dictionary. The apps are **just as helpful** and very easy to use. The apps have nearly all of the beneficial features of an electronic dictionary, so this option is highly recommended. Being able to quickly pull out your iPhone/iPod in Japan will make your life so much easier. Most apps use the same source dictionary (Jim Breen's JMdict/EDICT), so there's not much of a difference between them. Here are some good *apps*:

iOS:

Shirabe Jisho: Simple but powerful free Japanese-English and English-Japanese dictionary app for iPhone and iPad

Midori: Japanese/English dictionary that allows you to draw in kanji or identify kanji through radicals. Price: \$9.99

Japanese: Another great Japanese/English dictionary with basically the same functions as Midori. Price: **FREE**

Android:

Takoboko: A great free Japanese/English dictionary with stroke diagrams and lots of example sentences.

Google Translate (if you have an internet connection) can also be very helpful (yes, seriously), since you can point your camera at text and get an instant (passable) translation. Incredibly useful when dealing with large chunks of kanji (i.e. menus and the like), or trying to skim readings before class (don't!).

Flashcard Apps (courtesy Clay Bailey '20, SANC 2017)

Kanji Study: This app, \$10 for the full version, contains a database of every kanji and pairs well with any dictionary or flashcard app. Includes the kanji's readings, meanings, as well as reading examples, vocabulary, example sentences, and even Japanese names containing the kanji. You can make your own lists manually, by copying, or having the app scan the kanji out of a document or website. The study tools include flashcard study, matching quizzes, and writing

challenges. This app can eliminate the need for a notebook dedicated to practice, as you can practice writing them on your phone screen. It pairs well with a stylus.

Kanji Recognizer: This app is free for the basic version, and a few dollars for the full features. It can really help out once you've had practice writing some more complicated kanji and get the hang of the stroke order for all the radicals. Basically, you can write a kanji onto the screen and it will pop up in unicode for you to look up in an electronic dictionary. It will really save you when you need to read a kanji and just have no idea what it sounds like.

Alternatives

Nintendo DS 漢字そのまま楽引き辞典 Genius edition. It has Japanese English and English-Japanese, Hiragana-Kanji conversion, and has *character recognition*, so you can write characters you want to look up. Software costs \$30-60 *Note:* the word bank isn't as advanced as is in many electronic dictionaries.

*Online Dictionaries / Firefox/Chrome Plugins

Jim Breen's WWWJDIC has a very useful **Text Glossing** page where you can paste in a chunk of Japanese text and get translations of every word in there. Incredibly helpful for making 単語表 for a speech/presentation.

Rikaikun (Chrome) / Rikaichan (Firefox) are browser extensions which, when activated, translate Japanese words/phrases as you hover your cursor over them. Makes reading Japanese websites way easier than Google Translate.

Important Functions for Electronic Dictionaries:

1. Japanese-English
2. English-Japanese
3. (*Advanced users*) Japanese-only dictionary and/or thesaurus
4. Kanji look-up by radical, stroke order, and reading

Section V: Miscellaneous

B. Electronic Dictionaries

- 5. Kanji compounds given for the kanji (**Kanjigen** 漢字源 is the standard, but most e-dictionaries have this)
- 6. (**Scholars of History and Literature**) Classical Dictionary function
- 7. Jump/Super jump function: allows you to cross-reference words in other dictionaries.
 - o If you look up a word and arrive at its definition, but there is a character you've never seen, the jump function allows you to highlight that character and "jump" to its definition.

Recommended Models: some good ones include Casio, Canon (Wordtank series), Sharp PW-9800, EX-word Dataplus 3 (XD-SW6400).

Where can I purchase one?

There are many places to purchase electronics, but here are some recommendations. **NOTE:** If you buy yours in Japan and are on a tourist visa, you can get the dictionary **TAX FREE**. Be sure to bring your passport and the store clerks will know what to do.

- Kyoto** **BicCamera Kyoto Station**
- Tokyo** **BicCamera Yurakucho**
 LAOX Akihabara
 Yodobashi Camera
- Yokohama** Electronics stores near Yokohama Station and Kannai
 BicCamera
- Hakodate** ****Try to buy your dictionary in Tokyo****
 Yamada Denki: ask your host family for directions.
- Osaka** **BicCamera Nanba**
 Yodobashi Camera
- Online** <http://www.thejapanshop.com>
 Based in Florida, the Japan Shop is owned by Japanese people, and is affordable.
 BicCamera
 (<http://www.biccamera.com/bicbic/jsp/w/oa/index.jsp>)
 Ships anywhere in Japan. Highly recommend buying with help from Japanese person.

Considerations when Purchasing

- You may want a dictionary with a stylus (lets you write-in a kanji character). This way, you can easily look up a word.

Section V: Miscellaneous

B. Electronic Dictionaries

- More dictionaries within a machine doesn't necessarily mean better, and can even be less user-friendly.
- Ask if there are English user manuals on hand.
- Students with Chinese/Korean backgrounds might benefit from looking into a electronic dictionary that includes serious Chinese or Korean content. These languages are more closely related to Japanese than English, so there are some things that can be learned faster through Korean or Chinese.

C. Fellows' Favorite Spots!

Kansai/Chugoku Region: Hiroshima, Okayama, Kobe, Himeji, Kyoto, Osaka, Nara

Kanto and Tohoku Region: Hakone, Nagoya, Shizuoka, Tokyo, Sendai, Aomori, Hakodate

Tokyo Area

Tokyo, much like every other metropolitan center, is filled with interesting places, restaurants, and activities. Tokyo will host the 2020 Olympic games; it has a very useful network of English signs and maps available for navigation. It is quite easy to navigate. **Also see: *The Unofficial Light Fellowship Guide on Where to Eat in Tokyo* (pp. 50–51)**

Central Tokyo

Famous neighborhoods/places:

Ginza, Imperial Palace and Tokyo International Forum, Akihabara, and Tsukiji Fish Market

- **Ginza** is known for its high fashion; the equivalent of New York's Fifth Avenue. The glamorous and unusual buildings are beautiful in the evening. Even the police boxes in this area have a slick and modern appearance. The Sony Showroom located in this area usually offers presentations in the latest technological gadgets.

- **Akihabara** used to be known as the Mecca for electronic goods, but it has become dominated in recent times by the Anime and Manga industry.

- **Imperial Palace and Tokyo International Forum** are worthwhile places to see, although Imperial Palace can only be viewed from a distance unless you apply to take a tour. The Kyoto Imperial Palace offers tours, which you can sign up

for ahead of time in the office near the palace itself. International Forum also has a rice museum, which has rice cosmetics, cooking exhibitions, and recipes. The best thing about it is that it is free.

- **Tsukiji** is the largest fish market in the area. In order to view the tuna auctions, one should come early in the morning, approximately 3–4 a.m. The fish market also has some of the freshest sushi in the city and delicious, hearty miso soup. [Market is closed on Sundays]

Northern Tokyo

- **Ueno** is not only a great place for cherry blossom viewing in the spring. This district also includes impressive shop areas and the famous Ueno Zoo.

- **Asakusa** is home to the Senso-ji Temple, the most impressive temple in the city. Free walking tours are available at the tourist center

opposite the main entrance to the temple.

Western Tokyo

- **Shibuya** is famous for being one of the busiest places in the world, especially in the evening at the famous Shinjuku crossing. A nice view of the crossing is offered by Starbucks situated in a building overlooking it. Roppongi District, filled with fellow foreigners and expatriots, is situated nearby.

Tokyo's Best

Best Shrine

めいじじんぐう

- **明治神宮**, Tokyo. Easily accessed from the JR Harajuku Station stop. On your way to the shrine, if you go on the weekend, you will also see a good number of "Harajuku girls" (not Gwen Stefani's) dressed up in various cosplay. Most of the time, if you ask them nicely, they'll be more than willing to take a picture with you, if you so desire.

Best Gardens

はまりきゅうおんしていえん

- **浜離宮恩賜庭園**, public park in

Chuo Tokyo. It is a great landscape garden. Tokyo

さんけいえん

- **三溪園**, has historically

significant structures bought by Tomitaro Hara (10 of 12 are declared Important Cultural Property). (Yokohama)

- **Shinjuku** has impressive architecture, like the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Offices, which also has a free observatory, and NS building with a 95ft high water-powered clock inside.
- **Harajuku** is a center of trendy teenage fashion, as well as a great place to get some very unique "I love Japan" shirts.
A good guide book specifically for Tokyo is "Eyewitness Travel: Tokyo".

Beautiful Views (Observatories)

- **Tokyo Metropolitan**

Government Building, Shinjuku, Tokyo (unlike Tokyo Tower, the observatories here are FREE)

- **St. Luke's Observatory**, Tokyo

えのしま

- **江ノ島タワー**, Enoshima, Kamakura

- **Tokyo Tower**, very romantic spot to take a date

- **Tokyo Skytree**, the tallest structure in Japan

Kansai Region (Kyoto, Nara, Osaka, etc.)

Explore for their Atmosphere

- **Uji (宇治)** : a 30 min train ride

from Kyoto, it is known for great tea, the summer villa of the emperor, and Byodoin!

- **Nara (奈良)**: home of **Todai-ji 東大寺**--the largest wooden building in the world, which contains an enormous Buddha, and a pillar visitors can try to crawl through. Also home to over a thousand insane deer walking the streets.

なんきんちょう

- **南京町** : Chinatown of Kobe. It is literally a mini-China. (Kobe)

Best Temples

さんじゅうさんぽんどう

- **三十三間堂** : A long wooden

building with an enormous statue of the bodhisattva Kannon in the middle--and 1000 smaller ones surrounding her on either side. (Kyoto)

きんかくじ

- **金閣寺**: The "Golden" temple. The

construction is not actually made out of gold, but it is worth a visit because of the scenery. (Kyoto)

びょうどういん

- **平等院** : Buddhist temple built in

998 in the Heian period. Its Phoenix Hall is on the 10-yen coin. (Uji)

やくしじ

- **薬師寺**: one of the most famous

imperial and ancient Buddhist temples in Japan, also a UNESCO World Heritage Site (Nara)

ほうりゅうじ

- **法隆寺**: Buddhist temple in

Ikaruga, Nara. One of the oldest wooden buildings in the world, it serves as seminary and monastery. (Nara)

Best Shrines

いせじんぐう

- 伊勢神宮: the most sacred Shinto

Shrine in Japan. It's kind of out of the way though, so plan accordingly (Ise, Mie)

ふしみいなりたいしゃ

- 伏見稲荷大社: paths into the

mountains, lined with thousands of torii and mysterious statues. (Fushimi, Kyoto)

へいあんじんぐう

- 平安神宮: check out the

beautiful garden. (Kyoto)

きよみずでら

- 清水寺: one of UNESCO World

heritage sites, this shrine has an impressive veranda suspended high above the ground on tall pillars. The complex also has the famous Jishu shrine love stones. (Kyoto)

かすがたいしゃ

- 春日大社: UNESCO World

Heritage, a Shinto shrine established in 768 for the Fujiwara family. (Nara)

Best Castles and Villas

-: two pillars of wood

support the castle from the basement to the sixth floor. The exterior lines of the castle are also beautiful. Constructed in feudal Japan to stockpile weapon and house soldiers. There is an interesting "haunted well," because a lady was thrown down there and never let out. (Himeji)

にじょうじょう

- 二条城: the nightingale floors

are pretty cool. (Kyoto)

ひこねじょう

- 彦根城 Hikone Castle:

wonderful views of Biwa Lake. You might even see a couple of rainbows on the lake! The garden on the grounds is also nice. (Hikone, Shiga)

Beautiful Views

ぬのびき えん

- 布引ハーブ園: a herb garden located on Mt. Rokko, open daily. Take the Shin-Kobe Ropeway

gondola lift from downtown Kobe (Kobe)

つうてんかく

- 通天閣タワー (Osaka)

- **Umeda Sky Building**: the building itself is cooler than the view from the top because you'll be standing on the one distinctive

structure in Osaka.

いみずえ

ん

- 依水園, the only walking garden in

Nara (Nara)

Chūgoku (Okayama, Hiroshima), Shikoku

Best Shrines

いづくしまじんじゃ

- 巖島神社 : better known as the

“Floating Torii.” Like Nara, full of deer. (Miyajima, Hiroshima)

ことひらじんぐう

- 琴平神宮: better known as

Kompira-san (金刀比羅宮). You

have to climb over 1000 stairs just to get to the main shrine. Great exercise and wonderful view from the Oku-sha. (Kotohira, Shikoku)

Best Gardens

こうらくえん

- 後楽園Kouraku-en one of the

Three Great Gardens of Japan. (Okayama)

りつりんこうえん

- 栗林公園Ritsurin-kouen, one of the most famous and most beautiful historical gardens in Japan. (Takamatsu, Shikoku)



Tohoku and around Tokyo regions (Kanazawa, Nagano, etc.)

Best Gardens

かいらくえん

- 偕楽園Kairaku-en, Mito, Ibaraki one of the Three Great Gardens of Japan. (Mito, Ibaraki)

-Kenroku-en, Kanazawa one of the

Three Great Gardens of Japan. (Kanazawa, Ishikawa)

Must-see Temple

みょうりゅうじ

- 妙龍寺“Ninjadera” (Kanazawa)

Summer Festival

- ねぶた: big paper float festival held in Aomori city. It takes place the first week of every August. (Aomori)

Best Castle

まつもとじょう

- 松本城 Matsumoto Castle, famous for its black exterior, is one of Japan's premier historic castles. Easiest to reach from Tokyo (Matsumoto, Nagano)

Chūbu Region (Nagoya, Gifu)

Towns for their Atmosphere

- **and** : try to hike the

7km Kiso road that connect these two towns. Keep in mind that this was part of the Nakasendo, the ancient road connecting Kyoto and Edo. This was how the feudal Japanese daimyo traveled to Edo from their homes in the countryside. (Nakatsugawa, Gifu)

- 高山 is famous for Oda-gyu

brand beef (the best bento ever, you pull a string and it heats up instantly!) and its history. Hidden in

the mountains, it is an easy train ride from Nagoya. (Takayama Gifu).

Best Castles and Villas

- 犬山城 いぬやまじょう **Inuyama Castle**, one of the 12 castle still in existence in Japan that were built before the Edo period. (Inuyama, near Nagoya)

- **Nagoya Castle**: famous for its golden roof decoration.

Best Onsen: BEPPU!

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