

February 4, 2019

## Journal Entry #6

Today was our first full day with our homestay family! We're living with the Nishimura family in a small fishing town called Nishiki. It's right at the bay that connects to the Pacific Ocean. For breakfast we had fried eggs (sunny side up!!) with an interesting sauce that I'm pretty sure you can only get in Japan; we also got rice, coffee, and this super cool and really delicious dessert that is only found in Taiki Town! It's basically a folded crêpe stuffed with coffee cake and tons of whipping cream—definitely one of the best foods I've ever had :O

Since our homestay was right by the beach, our Japanese ChiChi took us for a walk to the little tropical beach park and it looked just like Bora Bora!! We took a ton of photos and explored around the area. There was a National-level marathon or race going on and we met people from Osaka, Tokyo, and Hokkaido! We cheered on the first heat of racers with a bunch of our neighbours and the village's flag. It was very intricately designed.

After spending some time on the beach, we went to hike a very, very, steep mountain. It was so much fun and view was amazing, except, we were terrified for our ChiChi because he's 71 and we didn't want him tiring himself out just for us. It turned out to be okay because almost all the other hikers we came across on that hike were the same age as our ChiChi, if not older. Everyone is really fit in Japan!! When we got to the first viewpoint of the mountain, we couldn't believe our eyes because the view was sugoi. Literally something out of a painting because it was unbelievable. And the air was so fresh. There was food too! Green tea, miso soup, cookies, and different types of sushi and tempura; we wouldn't mind living there for the rest of our lives :')

Except, our homestay ChiChi and HaHa told us they had a surprise for us. Of course, we were also really excited to get back home and see what it was. We definitely didn't expect to dress up in kimonos, come back to the beach and stand on a podium in front of almost a thousand people!! At first it was really awkward and perplexing. Especially since there was an audience member from Toronto that spoke perfect English and asked us a bunch of questions in front of everyone. I'm pretty sure we were being recorded for local TV as well. As we got off the podium, a swarm of people came to ask us to take photos with them. We felt like celebrities!!.

We came back to eat one of the best lunches ever! Udon with a salad that we didn't even know was made from nato (fermented soybeans) until our HaHa told us, who could have imagined?? We also visited a shrine and went out for coffee at a little cafe. Our homestay parents were very fond of coffee so naturally, we drank almost eight cups a day while we were there. As dusk fell, we went for a long stroll around the village, it was almost completely deserted since everyone was still at the beach. Our ChiChi showed us all the evacuation routes and shelters on a bunch of mountains surrounding the town. We're still trying to figure out how he managed to open up basically every door that stood in his way...

However, the highlight of the day was when our ChiChi and his granddaughter brought home fireworks and sparklers for us to gEt LiT. We even did a bunch of karaoke with our neighbour who visited us every night. The homestay was hands-down the best part of Japan and we'll never forget the Nishimura family!!! ♡♡♡♡♡

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