

Kevin Nicholas Tanex (Indonesia)

Experiencing this homestay is one of the greatest moments in my life that I will never forget. I got the chance to experience what living with a big family in Japan feels like. The family was so nice and friendly. The homestay host even invited his child and grandkids to come and see me as their guest. I had so much fun!

I got the chance to make mochi with an actual wooden hammer tool with the family and their grandkids. Of course, we ate them after. I also had the chance to have a family dinner and share drinks together. I got the chance to enjoy unique foods in Japan like temaki sushi (手巻き寿司) and lemon nabe (レモン鍋). I also tried tororo over rice (とろろご飯), made from grated Japanese yam, nagaimo (長芋). We also went to a real onsen named Kawane Onsen. It gave me a blissful moment of relaxation. At this onsen, we had the chance to see a working steam train that still operates in the area. It was fascinating, especially hearing the steam blow off! On our way while travelling, we also got a great chance to talk a little bit about the history of Japan's clans during the Sengoku period. The talk led to the host family showing the daimyo-like clothes they gave to their baby boys during Tango no Sekku (端午の節句), also known as Children's Day (こどもの日). The weapons and armor were props, but they were very beautiful and intricate. On the last day, we went to a small event that had a mobile sauna. The sauna reached 90 degrees Celsius. It was a treat to feel warmth in such a cold winter!

Lastly, we went to visit the Hamamatsu wine cellar. They not only have wines from all over the world, but the cellar itself was a repurposed mine! It had such an interesting story because it turns out the temperature of the mine is very suitable for aging wine, so it was repurposed as a wine cellar.

During our free time, we often played "Bozu-mekuri" with the family, especially with their grandkids. The game was simple but so much fun, and it even had kanji that I got to learn a bit from along the way. It is the one game that I will never forget.

I am very lucky to meet such a wonderful big family. Lastly, we traded gifts and said our farewell. I really hope that I will visit them again sometime!

