

This is my first time coming to a foreign country and staying with a host family. I have been interested in Japanese culture and people since childhood, so as soon as I heard about this homestay program, I immediately wanted to join. The experience turned out to be truly worthwhile, and I enjoyed it as much as I had anticipated.

After returning from the university to the host family's home, we had a traditional Japanese dinner that included rice, nabe, and fried tofu. The host family was very kind, and we talked a lot about our respective cultures. The Nagasaka family has two children: Yume-chan, who is five years old, and Haru-kun, who is three years old. It took a little time for them to become comfortable with me, but once they did, we had a great time playing various card games together. Natsuko-san was an English teacher before, thus it was very easy to communicate. What surprised me was that the kids were very good in English too and I could talk to them in English. Tomoyuki-san and the kids made homemade cookies which were very delicious.

On Saturday morning, we went to ride the Hamanako Tenryu Railway, which has a rich history in Japanese railways. We listened to explanations about the train and then rode along the Hamanako Line. The scenery from the train was mesmerizing. After that, we visited an amusement park and enjoyed a gondola ride, which offered a beautiful view of Lake Hamanako. In the evening, we made different kinds of pizza with the children. We prepared a chicken pizza and another type that was new to me, topped with small fish.

The next morning, we visited the Hamamatsu Science Museum, where we participated in various science-based activities that were very interesting. For lunch, we had sushi. I tried eel sushi for the first time, and it was surprisingly delicious. In the evening, the children's grandparents visited and kindly gave me some oranges, which were very sweet. I learned some kanji from Natsuko-san and wrote the family's names in my native language, Bangla. Yume-chan was especially interested in Bangla characters. Later, I did origami with the children, and before I realized it, it was time to return.

Overall, this homestay experience was extremely meaningful and something I would not have been able to experience otherwise. It allowed me to learn more about Japanese culture, family life, and hospitality, and it will remain a very special memory for me.

