

THEPSONGSANG PANSANG  
(Thailand)

I recently participated in a three-day homestay program, and it became one of the most meaningful experiences of my time in Japan. Before joining the program, I felt a bit nervous about language and cultural differences. Although I have been living in Japan for some time and can communicate in Japanese to a certain level, staying with a Japanese family was still something new for me.

From the moment I arrived, however, my worries quickly disappeared. The host family welcomed me very warmly. Their two children were waiting for me at the entrance of the house, even though it was already past their bedtime. That small gesture immediately made me feel accepted and cared for. On the first night, we enjoyed a homemade Japanese dinner together and spent time talking about daily life, culture, and our backgrounds. The second day was a sightseeing day. We visited Hagoromo no Matsu and Nihondaira, both of which were beautiful and impressive. I also had the chance to try a famous tempura dish that was nearly 30 centimeters long, which was a fun and memorable experience. In the evening, we took a walk in a nearby park and enjoyed a calm and relaxing time together.

One particularly touching experience was visiting the home of the host family's parents. It felt as if I was having a homestay with two families instead of one. When I mentioned that I wanted to try rolled cabbage, they kindly prepared it for me, and we enjoyed the meal while chatting together. Throughout my stay, I never felt like a stranger or "a foreign student." Instead, I felt like a member of the family. Before returning, the children came to see me off, and the host parents kindly drove me back to my accommodation. Throughout the entire program, I felt safe, comfortable, and truly welcomed. This homestay was the first time since coming to Japan that I felt the warmth of family life so deeply, and it has become a very special memory for me

