

Japan- a place to learn

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“You have the opportunity to go to Japan”- How wonderful this news sound? Specially for someone who is passionately fond of traveling, foreign countries and cultures and for someone who cannot imagine another fate than working in a multicultural environment. Convinced that you have to undertake to succeed’, as my motto of life, “Love what you do and do what you love” and “Win the challenges”. So, it is for sure that I’ll head for this fabulous challenge and so, now I am writing this article on Japan!

During my childhood, in my dreams, Japan is a land of Kimono, ikebana and samurais! But after coming to Japan I enjoyed the tea ceremony, lovely tulips and ofcourse, the cherry blossoms. I never forget my first experience with *Sushi and Sashimi*... my first impression was, how it is possible to eat raw fishes? And to tell you a secret thing, now I love them!

I always tried to live the world in all its colors... I went to the Fujisan and saw the sunrise standing at the top... and

realized moment like this comes once in a life. I enjoyed cruising at Hiyama beach in Yokohama. I visited *Hiroshima Peace Museum* and realized again that peace is not a feeling that follows naturally and requires much more effort and courage than war. I also enjoyed host family weekend, *umi no hi* and skiing in the snow-my sincere thanks goes to ISC of Niigata University to arrange such programs for us which let us know Japanese culture more closely.

May be Japan is the only country where you can find the most modern technologies mixed up with the thousand years of old traditions. I am always surprised to see all houses, equipped with the most up to date electronics, also have a *tokonoma* decorated with admirable *kakeziku*- a scroll with brush writing. I really appreciate the way they still use to promote *kabuki* and *noh* play. It reminds us, “Becoming modern doesn’t mean you should forget your roots.”

There are many other things to learn from Japan. Politeness and honesty with hard work and punctuality is few of them. All stores will greet you with saying *irashshaimasu* and may be you’ll never get the chance to say

sumimasen before them. One more thing which impressed me most, that is “Safety”, even for woman to walk alone at night is not considered dangerous.

I believe, a period of immersion in a foreign culture is an effective way to understand human diversity and it provide students with insights that broaden their horizon, makes them more global and more matured. For me, the most important point as a cause to study abroad was to get, one of the best research environments with outstanding facilities so that I can bring the best out of myself and needless to mention, I found it here. In this regard I don't want to

miss the chance to say my heartfelt thanks to Professor Chikara Saito, who is just like my own father and sometime I found him more caring, Professor Ohshima, an intelligent man with future insight, Dr. Ejiri, a kind hearted man always willing to help you, Dr. Kobayashi, my supervisor from whom I learned a lot and my friends and colleagues who made me forget I was far away from my home. Finally I would like to thank Shingaki sensei for whom this article is now in front of you.

Last but not the least, do visit Bangladesh. I'm sure you'll love it as we love Japan. Greetings from Bangladesh!



Three years in Niigata.

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My name is Ariadna A Djais, I arrived here at Niigata on August 30th, 2001. I came from Indonesia, I worked as lecturer in Department of Oral Biology under Faculty of Dentistry at University of Indonesia. Now I am the third year graduate student in Oral Ecology in Health and Infection at Niigata University, supervised by Professor Hoshino.

Indonesia is the largest archipelago in the world between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean and it located in Southeast Asia. The figure of total number of islands is 17000 islands which 6000 is inhabited. The climate and weather of Indonesia is characterized by two tropical seasons consisting of dry season and rainy season. The mean temperature is around 21°C-30°C for the whole year. Bahasa Indonesia (Indonesia language) is the national and official language of the country. Indonesia consist of various ethnic groups such as; Javanese, Sundanese, Madurese, Malays and others.

My first challenge here in Japan is the differences in climate, customs, culture and language. Niigata is place of meeting people and making friend. Being as foreigner here and do know

nothing about Japanese language, I greatly appreciate of people surrounding me. They are very friendly and helpful. As a citizenship of Niigata, mutual understanding and the concept of 'give-take' are the most valuable qualities that I have learned.

Here in Japan, the changing season influences our lifestyle. I never experienced this kind of phenomena. The atmosphere of winter is the best experience I ever had. Living in Niigata, I have an opportunity to play ski. Now, skiing is my favorite sport. While in Japan, I take this opportunity mastering my ski technique.

I would like to say thank you to the International Exchange Support Center. The supporting volunteer and organization that always arrange varieties of activities for foreign students. While at Niigata University, I had opportunities to join home stay programs and ski events. This center provides the students an environment in which they can get the latest information relating to their study and activities, quickly and directly.

Eating in Japan does not involve simply eating Japanese foods. Adaptation of Japanese food is the most important factor to me. Most impor-

tantly, I hope to foster a greater understanding of Japanese foods and etiquette, and now I like all kind of Japanese food except 'nato'.

Studying in Niigata given me a lot of guidance and help me in study. One important point that impressed me is the kindness of Japanese people. As foreign student here, my Professor Hoshino and my Associate Professor Nakazawa showed me new ways of thinking about Japan life, which may help me explore some important issues and culture. I really appreciate to both of them that help me a lot. What they provided me is not only their own language and knowledge but also their kindness. In this sense I should say that I do not have any problems in my study and daily life here. I have also learnt a lot from my fellow Kazuko, a Japanese student and Tamanna from Bangladesh. Unfortunately, both of them already graduated last year. I always miss

them and hope to see them in the future.

Next year, I will go back to my country and back to my normal life in Indonesia. Living in Niigata without family is very hard for me. Even though they are not here with me but they my inspiration to continue my life here. The experiences living here is the best gift I ever had. I met nice friends and sensei and I will never forget them.

These sweet memories will always in my mind. I am sure that I will miss Niigata after I going back to my country next year. I am hoping my study and research will be completed with flying colors. I really hope that all my effort will be paid. Last but not least, live your life to the fullest and you will get better paid at the end.

Thank you.

