



Jade

From

Brampton

To

Japan

“this place really has become my home”

I can not fathom the fact that this is the last report that I will be writing to Rotary in Canada, no more than the fact that I am now in the last few weeks of my exchange. Before my exchange I never really had anything to put in perspective to how fast time really goes by in life until my exchange and wow all I can say is that all of the “years turn into months and months into weeks” and well...you know the rest, it is all 100% true.

Since my last report I have experienced and done so much, I have been to many different places, made many different connections with new people, and most importantly have been having the time of my life. In March I had my Rotary trip around Japan. Before my trip I was a little bit worried because I had gotten very sick two days before my trip and was worried that I would not be able to participate in the trip I had been waiting for all year, but fate came through and I made a recovery (not really) and pulled my socks up and went on the trip. It was a four day trip to Miyajima, Hiroshima and Osaka. I am happy I got to see more of the beautiful country of Japan. Like most countries Japan is made up of many different parts, you have the cities, the mountains, the sea and the forests. Where I am living in Japan it is more of the country, I live by the mountains and the sea. It is a very beautiful place and love it a lot but it was nice to see the fast pace of Osaka, beautiful temples at Miyajima and the history of Hiroshima. On the first day we went to Miyajima, it is an island off of Hiroshima and it is very beautiful. We then went to Hiroshima on the second day, in Hiroshima we went to the Bomb dome and I was very touched by history of the place and at the same time very sad of the tragic past. When we were in Osaka on the last days of are trip we visited Universal Studios of Japan. For one day, it was so much fun to ride the roller coasters and to pretend to be a wizard in Hogwarts (Harry Potter World) and on the second day and last day we visited the Castle of Osaka. All together the trip was an amazing time and well put together by the Rotary club that hosted it.

My host family has been very kind to me and has taken me to multiple different places within our prefecture, I have been to and participated in many different festivals and I feel like I have fully immersed myself into the culture of Japan. I have come to love the history and I am always eager to know more about the country.

At the end of April and the first week of May in Japan we have a vacation called Golden Week, during Golden week one of the members of my Rotary club brought me to Tokyo. Tokyo is a very unique city with a combination of everything you like whether you like the modern scene, or you like tradition and history of places and temples, Tokyo has it. In Tokyo there are lots of people and lots of things to see. I and the family I was travelling with did a lot of sightseeing. In three days we visited the major tourist spots such as Shinjuku, Harajuku, Shibuya, China Town and Asakusa and many other places; at the end of the trip we were exhausted! However, I am so thrilled to have been granted these privileges to see all of these great places.

I have fallen into an everyday lifestyle here in Japan and this place really has become my home. I definitely believe that coming home from an exchange is the hardest part. I really have never experienced the emotions that I am now feeling, I have been through so many changes in the past year. Before my exchange I would have never imagined being where I am today. I have made an abundance of life long friends that are from everywhere around the world. I have been brought into strangers homes and now I am fortunate to refer to these strangers as my families. I came on this exchange with high expectations and I can say that I have easily exceeded all of my previous expectations.

Throughout the course of my exchange I wanted to find who I was but in the end I think that I have just fallen in love with myself more. I have definitely put myself out of my comfort zone this year and I am now reaping the benefits of feeling like a whole new person by doing that. None of this would have been possible without Rotary. I am so grateful for this once in a life time opportunity. I will take the lessons that I have learned and apply them to my everyday life back home forever. Nothing lasts forever but I am glad that I have had the time of my life. I hope to one day revisit this place that I now call my second home, Japan. I will never forget this past year off my life, this place, these people or this exchange; it will all be forever marked on my heart.

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