

Kurashiki Student Exchange - What the group of 2001 had to say

“Visiting Japan was an experience of a lifetime. I enjoyed every moment of it. My home stay family was great. They were always doing their best to make me feel right at home. I tried to communicate with the students and most of the time we could make sense from each other. It really did help my Japanese and apparently I was even sleep talking Japanese.

Lauren Gyde

“When I landed in Japan my first impression was the heat. It was so humid. I soon learnt why there were vending machines everywhere.”

Brock Colville

“My trip to Japan was a very fun and memorable trip. We did many interesting things like visiting Hiroshima, the Kikkodo factory, meeting the Mayor, visiting the Bikan Historical Centre, the toy museum, the cake factory, school, the Aeon Shopping Centre, Washuzan Highland Amusement Park and many other places.”

Jessica Landery

“The thing I was most afraid of before leaving was meeting and living with my host family but I found these fears to be totally unjustified as they were extremely nice and accommodating.

Hayley Pooley

“Staying with a home-stay was really good because it gave us an opportunity to experience what happens in a Japanese home, and other things like calligraphy, the food, the things they do in their spare time, and much more.”

Jessica Landery

“My homestay family the “Yamagiwa” family was absolutely great they were always happy, very kind and generous it was almost like being at home. I felt very welcome. My homestay Grandfather came with us on most of our day trips and took a video of my trip for my family to see back home.”

Ben Knox

“Ben’s host “granddad” became “our granddad” as he was always with us. He was a delightful man whom we adopted as one of our group. He could be found hiding behind bushes, columns, escalators and corners ready to pop out and capture us on his video. We often found ourselves saying “where’s granddad?” when we couldn’t immediately spot him.”

Barbara August

“Most of all, I enjoyed my home stay it was a great experience. I still keep in touch with my host family.”

Aaron Clark

“We spent two weeks in Kurashiki travelling around seeing the different sights but the best day out was when we went to Hiroshima, the Atomic Dome where the atomic bomb was dropped was very interesting and quite depressing, it just shows you how stupid war is.”

Ben Knox

“The visit to Hiroshima was an experience I will never forget. Just seeing the Peace Dome standing there, a survivor of the blast was amazing. Miyajima Island was interesting with all the shrines and the deer everywhere!”

Brock Colville

“There were things that we needed to adjust to eg. Millions of ‘eat you alive’ mossies, squat toilets, toast the size of encyclopedias and a lot of vending machines! We ate funny pizza made of coleslaw! Big fat noodles and so many sweets and sugar I lost count.”

Daniela Aebli

“I really enjoyed going to school and experiencing the school lunches. I must say they were not that bad. I made a lot of new friends at school and have already written to them.”

Anna Stace

“The school I attended, Mizushima JHS, was very different to New Zealand schools. The most remarkable thing I found was the teacher-student relationship. In Japan the teachers and students are friends where as in NZ the teachers are more like leaders than friends.”

Elizabeth(Biff) Kitson

“In conclusion I’ve learnt to tackle things head on and much of the Japanese culture too. School life and how some try so hard but may fail. They are friendly people and I would go back in the future.”

Jonathan Direen

“I have benefited greatly from this trip, I have become more confident and I am definitely going to continue with Japanese at school. Thank You Kurashiki for looking after me for two weeks.”

Mitchell Grant

“I liked Japan so much that I am planning on coming back to live when I’ve finished my schooling in New Zealand, and I can’t wait to come back in early 2003 with my school.”

Sarah Marquet

“Not only did this trip help me with my understanding of the Japanese culture and language but it also helped me to become a little more independent and showed me that I could step out of my comfort zone and survive.”

Hayley Pooley

“I think that Kurashiki is a very beautiful city and is much like Christchurch. This trip was the best thing that I have ever done and I hope to go back again one day.”

Ben Knox

“I would recommend it to anyone applying for this great opportunity.”

Joseph Clarke

“Well, what can I say about my trip to Kurashiki, it was one of the most exciting and worthwhile things I have ever done.”

Mitchell Grant