

## **SERVAS: Exploring Japanese Culture and Architecture**

SONG Jun Eui (Brother)

SONG Choo Eui (Sister)

-SERVAS Korea-

**Duration of travel:** 2013.01.29~2.07

**Places:** Japan-Tokyo, Kyoto and Osaka

**Hosts:**

ISHIWATA Yoshiko →Tokyo

Mr. and Mrs. KASUGAYA→Yokohama

SAITO Sumiko→Kyoto

Mr. and Mrs. ASAKURA→Osaka

**Day Host:** Tanaka Kunio→Yokohama Port and Kamakura

During winter break of University, we decided to travel Japan. My brother Jun-Eui (Joseph) was very excited to go Japan as he have deep interested in Japan's architectures. And for me, I was also excited about the first visit of Tokyo. Although I had lived in Japan (Kyushu region) for about 4 years, I wanted to explore more about Japanese culture and way of living. Of course, we both were very looked forward to meeting Servas members in Japan. Through our mother's connection of Servas Japan- Mrs. Hirai and Mr. Tanaka, we were able to meet four nice hosts, and we had great opportunity to look around Yokohama and Kamakura with Mr. Tanaka, who is the National secretary of Servas Japan.

On 29<sup>th</sup> January, we met our first host in Tokyo. Ishiwata san gave us a lot of hospitality. We felt closeness to Ishiwata san even though it was our first time to meet.

Tokyo was complicated and busy city than we expected. But we were able to see every spots without troubles because Ishiwata san's detailed information and directions around Tokyo city helped us very much. Especially, before we go for sightseeing Tokyo city, Ishiwata san provided historical explanation too.

We talked about many things and shared cultures of both Korea and Japan. Two nights at Ishiwata san's house passed so quickly. Even it was the first day away from Korea, we felt like home.



On 31<sup>st</sup> January, we met Tanaka san in Yokohama. He gave as one day guide to see Kamakura and Yokohama Port. We had opportunities to look around the history of Japan as well. Also for JunEui, it was his first time to visit Sinsa-円覚寺. Also we saw a statue of big Buddha, 高德院. Tanaka san explained historical background to us so that we can understand more and know about new things. As Jun-Eui is interested in and majoring architecture, Tanaka san showed us to Yokohama International Passenger Terminal and Landmark building. We also shared stories about ourselves and Servas.





After say good bye to Tanaka san, we moved on to our next host, Kasugaya sans' house in Yokohama. We were surprised because the house is located at the top of hill and much more surprised with great view from the house. Although it was dark night, we could see Mountain Fuji from the window. For Mr. and Mrs. Kasugaya, we were the first Servas traveler. So it was very glad to meet them and little bit worrying whether we could give them good impression of Servas.

They were very friendly and felt as our close relatives. We had delicious dinner and shared the experience of Servas and each others' stories. It was very sad that we only had one night to spend together.

Next morning, we could not see clear Mt. Fuji, which usually can be seen. We promise them to re-visit to spend more time with them and see Mt. Fuji next chance.



At night of 1<sup>st</sup> February, we took night bus to Kyoto from Tokyo station. We arrived at Kyoto station at around 7am. We decided to spend some time look around Kyoto city before meet our host because it was early in the morning. Kyoto was very different place compare to Tokyo and there was full of history and culture.

Around 4pm, Saito san picked us up at Kyoto station. Although we met Saito san for the first time, we felt very close and enjoyed sharing stories with her. Saito san's house was very close to Kyoto so we had no problem of sightseeing Kyoto. Kyoto has abundant of traditional architecture of Japan. All the places we go were good place to feel Japan.

Saito san invited Mizuno Yuji san, an auditor for Servas Japan, and we had dinner and shared the experience of Servas together.

Also, on the next day we met friends of Saito san who are learning Korean. We had conversation with Japanese, Korean and English. It was fun and exciting experience.





On 4<sup>th</sup> February, we moved on to our last destination of Japan, Osaka. Jun-Eui have great interest in the work of Ando Tadao (Architect). So he was excited to go Osaka as there are many Ando Tadao's architectures. Before we arrive at Japan, Mr. and Mrs. Asakura send us list of Ando Tadao's work which helped us to make up our schedule. Before we meet Mr. and Mrs. Asakura, we were able to go and see 'Church with Light' by Ando Tadao. Mr. and Mrs. Asakura picked us up from the station near to their house. They prepared many detailed guide to Osaka for us. Jun-Eui was very happy to see many of Ando Tadao's architecture. And on the day we went to Osaka Castle, Mr. Asakura showed us recorded television program of Osaka Castle. It helped a lot when we understand both history and architecture form of the Castle. Also, on the last night, Mrs. Asakura gave me an opportunity to try on Kimono, Japanese traditional costume. I was so excited because it was my first time to wearing it. We very enjoyed spending time and sharing stories with Asakura family.



We really enjoyed meeting Servas members in Japan and we were so lucky to have nice hosts in Tokyo, Kyoto and Osaka.  
We would like to express our gratitude to them.  
**Thank you so much and see you again!!**

