

Yuya Yura, Host Family

Three days from the September 30, we hosted Abel, the twenty-seven-year-old young man from Mozambique. It was the first homestay host experience for my family and we were not sure what we should do for him. However, someone told us “He would be happy with whatever you do for him.” Abel and we started communicating awkwardly.

When he had breakfast, we were surprised to see him enjoy eating miso soup, natto and oden. He said “delicious” while eating fried tofu with mochi (rice cake) in oden. We were surprised to see him using chopsticks without any problem. People use chopsticks in Mozambique, he told us.

He was surprised to see many deer, when we went to Nara. He seemed to be very happy as he got used to them, feeding or holding their horns. When we went to the Great Buddha building, he took pictures. He was astonished by the big size of

Buddha. In the car on the way to Nara, he showed his interest in the engine, accelerator or brake. He knew a lot of names of Japanese cars. Abel said he drives a Japanese car.

At the farewell, we had fifty minutes on the platform at the station. We were waving each other until the last minute when the Shinkansen (Bullet Train) left. We were very sad at a separation from Abel who was one of our family members for three days.

We communicated with each other by body language, random sentences of single word by word. Even though we couldn't understand each other satisfactorily, he held me saying “no problem.” I wish I could speak more English.

The three days I spent with Abel were a great fun. I hope we will meet again in the future.



Mabel Milagros Gonzalez Bencosme, Dominican Republic Participant

These days in Osaka allowed me to appreciate closely the immense treasure of Japanese culture through living with my host family who showed me incomparable warmth. Thanks to them I could see first hand the most ingrained habits related to behavior and family life.

During my stay I was able to sample authentic Japanese cuisine which is quite tasty. I also had the opportunity to sleep in a typical Japanese room which was completely different from the Western way of sleeping. I experienced a feeling of harmony and simplicity.

I visited various historical locations in Osaka on which I met important aspects of Japanese history shown by my family with great enthusiasm while showing pride in belonging to this nation.

I can say that thanks to the excellent command

of the English language I could have a fluid and permanent conversation with my great family. In the same way, to live with them I felt a very kind treatment, and also the authenticity of the Japanese people. It is admirable to see how they preserve the values and traditions while open to modernity without losing its essence.

Time passed so fast, a lot of comments and opinions based on Dominican Republic and Japan that helps us to remember how valuable our heritage is. When the time to say goodbye arrived, it was very nostalgic to say goodbye to a family that opened their home and heart.

Those days made me realize how wonderful human society can be when your mind and soul are full of hospitality and solidarity.

