

Living and Learning in Japan: A Filipino's Experience From Tokyo to Tawaramoto



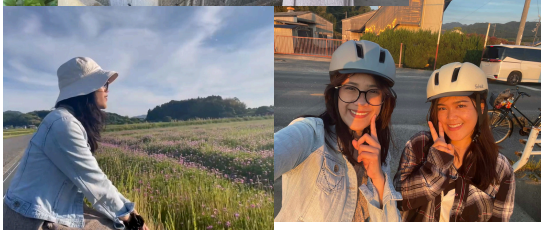
Living in Japan has been a meaningful and unforgettable experience for me.

I am currently living in the countryside of Tawaramoto in Nara Prefecture, where life is much quieter compared to the busy cities I used to live in before.

Even though I have only been living in the countryside for a short time, I already feel warmly welcomed. I arrived during the beginning of spring, and the peaceful mountains, blooming flowers, quiet roads, and beautiful sunsets immediately gave me a sense of calm and comfort. The kindness of the people here also made my transition easier than I expected.



During Golden Week, my friend (Mae sensei) and I rode our bicycles all the way to Asuka Village. It was our first time riding bicycles such a long distance, and the experience taught me that no distance is impossible to reach when powered by willingness, determination, and of course, prayers. The ride itself was already memorable because we passed through beautiful rice fields, traditional houses, and scenic roads surrounded by nature. When we arrived in Asuka Village, I was amazed by its historical atmosphere and relaxing environment. It felt like traveling back in time while enjoying the peaceful beauty of Japan's countryside.



Although I am enjoying new experiences here, there are still moments when I miss home deeply. Living far away from my family made me realize that a place truly feels like home when the people you love are with you. Sometimes, the quiet surroundings of the countryside make me think about my loved ones even more. Still, living here has taught me many things not only about Japanese culture, but also about myself. I am learning to become more independent, patient, and open to new experiences.

Coming from a country where the weather does not change much throughout the year, experiencing Japan's four seasons has become one of the most amazing parts of my journey.

Spring was the first season that truly captured my heart. Seeing cherry blossoms bloom everywhere made the scenery feel magical. Parks, riversides, and even ordinary streets turned soft pink, and I found myself constantly taking pictures and videos because everything looked so beautiful.

As spring slowly changed into *summer*, the weather became warmer and the surroundings greener. Although the summer heat can sometimes be intense, festivals, fireworks, and lively evenings make the season exciting and enjoyable. I also noticed how active and energetic the community becomes during this time.

I have already experienced *autumn and winter* in Japan during my time in Tokyo, but I am especially looking forward to experiencing autumn here in the countryside. Since Tawaramoto is surrounded by greener trees and mountains, I feel that the scenery will become even more beautiful once the leaves begin to change colors. Although I heard that it does not usually snow here during winter, I still feel lucky to have experienced my very first snowfall in Tokyo, where I was able to touch the snow and even build a snowman for the first time. Thinking about these experiences makes me even more excited to continue discovering more about life in Japan.



As I continue my journey here, I hope to share more stories, experiences, and lessons about living, learning, and finding a second home far away from my own country.