

Language Immersion in the Land of the Rising Sun

By SM

She/(she/her)

SFU Student Undergraduate

Arts + Social Sciences › International Studies | Arts + Social Sciences › Global Asia

Program: Study Abroad › Exchange

University: Kansai Gaidai University

Location: Hirakata, Japan

Experience Faculty: Arts + Social Sciences › International Studies, Arts + Social Sciences › Global Asia

I studied for one semester at Kansai Gaidai University (KGU) in Hirakata, Japan from late January to early June. As an International Studies major with a minor in Global Asia, I was under the Asian Studies Program at KGU.

Experience Details

Semester: Spring

Year: 2023

Introduction + Preparation

Before my journey abroad, I had known that I wanted to study at KGU for a long time. I had learned about the school in my first year through a booth at SFU's study abroad fair, and I was drawn to the school and the Asian Studies Program due to the location of the campuses, the intercultural dorm, and the variety of both Japanese language and culture courses offered. Throughout my one-semester-long experience, I not only learned more about Japan, but about myself and my future goals as well.

Location Research

Before I went on exchange, I spent a lot of time searching through the different course options provided at different partner institutions in Japan.

Financial Preparation

During my exchange, the Japanese yen and the Canadian dollar were almost equal (1 CAD = 100 JPY), therefore the price of living was similar and even cheaper than in Canada. Food and drink were especially cheaper in Japan, while transportation was a bit more

bring back souvenirs to share with everyone. Because I chose to stay in the dorm, I was able to make friendships that I hope will last a lifetime.

Most Valuable Aspects of This Experience

Although at times I was worried about fitting in or making friends, in the end, all students at KGU – local and international alike – were all looking to make new friends and learn new things from one another. Keeping that in mind, I was able to come out of my shell in ways that I was never able to back in Canada.

Advice for Future Students

My advice for other students looking to study abroad is to be confident, push yourself out of your comfort zone, and try new things. Through these steps, although hard at times, I was able to make irreplaceable friends and memories through my time in Japan.

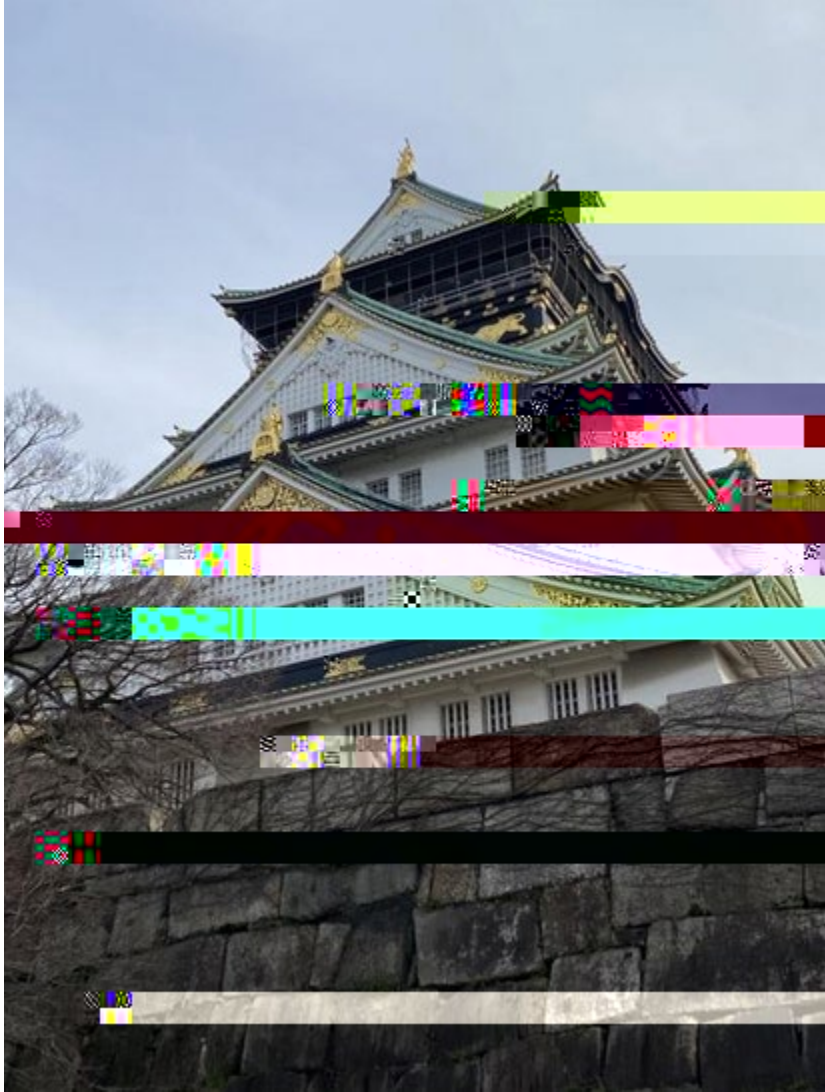


Wearing Kimono with my friends – Kyoto



Cherry blossom festival – Kyoto

Kiyomizudera Temple



Osaka Castle – OsakaOsaka Castle – Osaka