

# Exchange Students Experience

My time in Fukuoka was unforgettable. It was a time and place where I've met incredibly courteous and kind people, tasted various delicious food and learned a lot more than I had originally expected.

Starting off, the view I enjoyed when I first arrived has set the beautiful tone that would follow me in my endeavors. A clear blue sky and heartwarming nice weather.



I couldn't wait to explore the rest of the city on my own so I spent what felt like the first two weeks purely in exploration. Luckily, I got an email with a free offer to have a guided tour through old town Hakata, which I immediately embarked on!







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無形民俗文化財博多祇園山笠

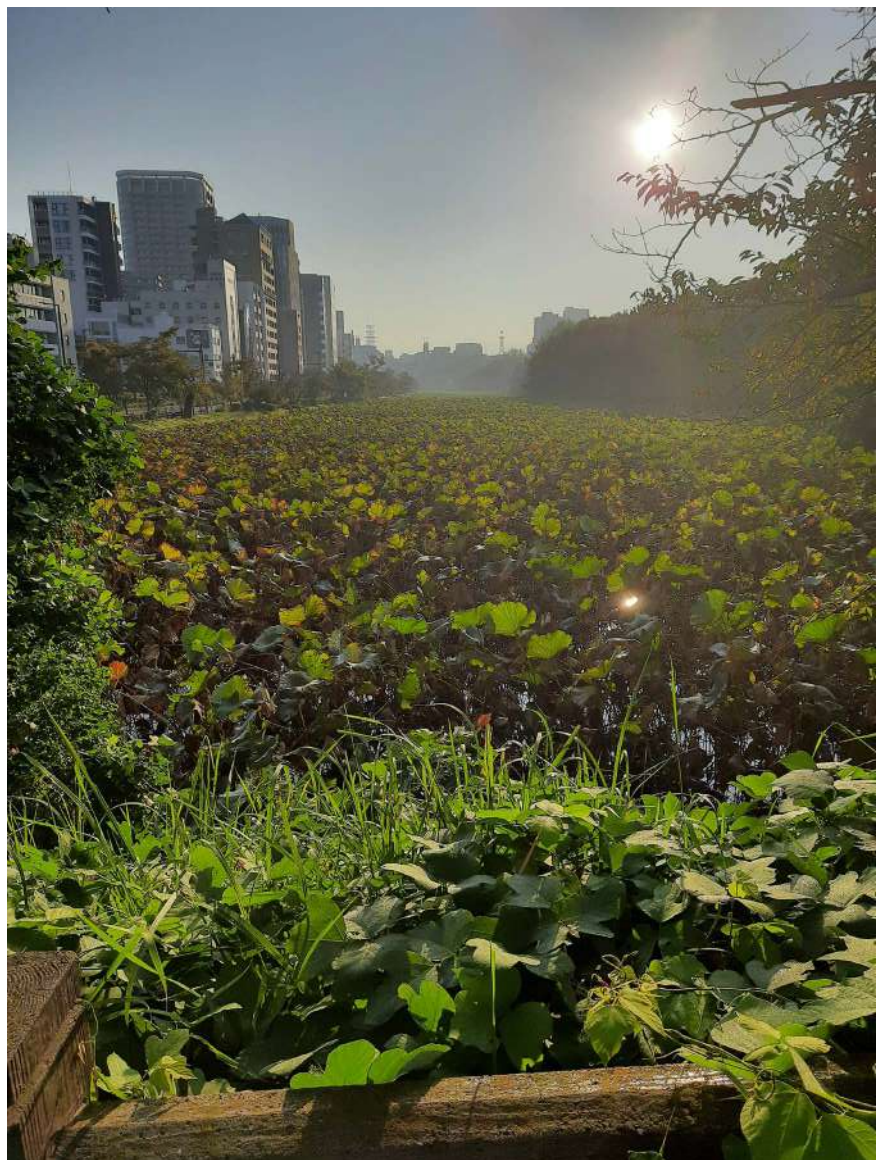
博多祇園  
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Fukuoka's long history definitely shined through these traditional buildings and shrines, as well as temples. It was comforting to see how splendidly these spiritual sites were cared for. I barely could recall having seen a single leaf on the ground. It was a very memorable day.

I also embarked on a early-morning-solo-city-hike from Ijiri to Fukuama Beach. I saw a beautiful sunrise near Maizuru Park. It felt like I was walking through a Monnet painting.



My love for adventure and hiking were also able to shine through in the surrounding Area of Fukuoka by having the possibility of public transportation to almost anywhere around Fukuoka at the Tenjin Bus stop.

One local showed me a hiking tour to Itoshima's Mt. Takeshita, where I took this incredible picture and enjoyed more breathtaking views.



Fukuoka also has an incredible selection on shopping malls and underground shop “districts”. The food display is very inviting and aesthetically pleasing. I had fun just roaming through these underground passages and looking at all the treats!



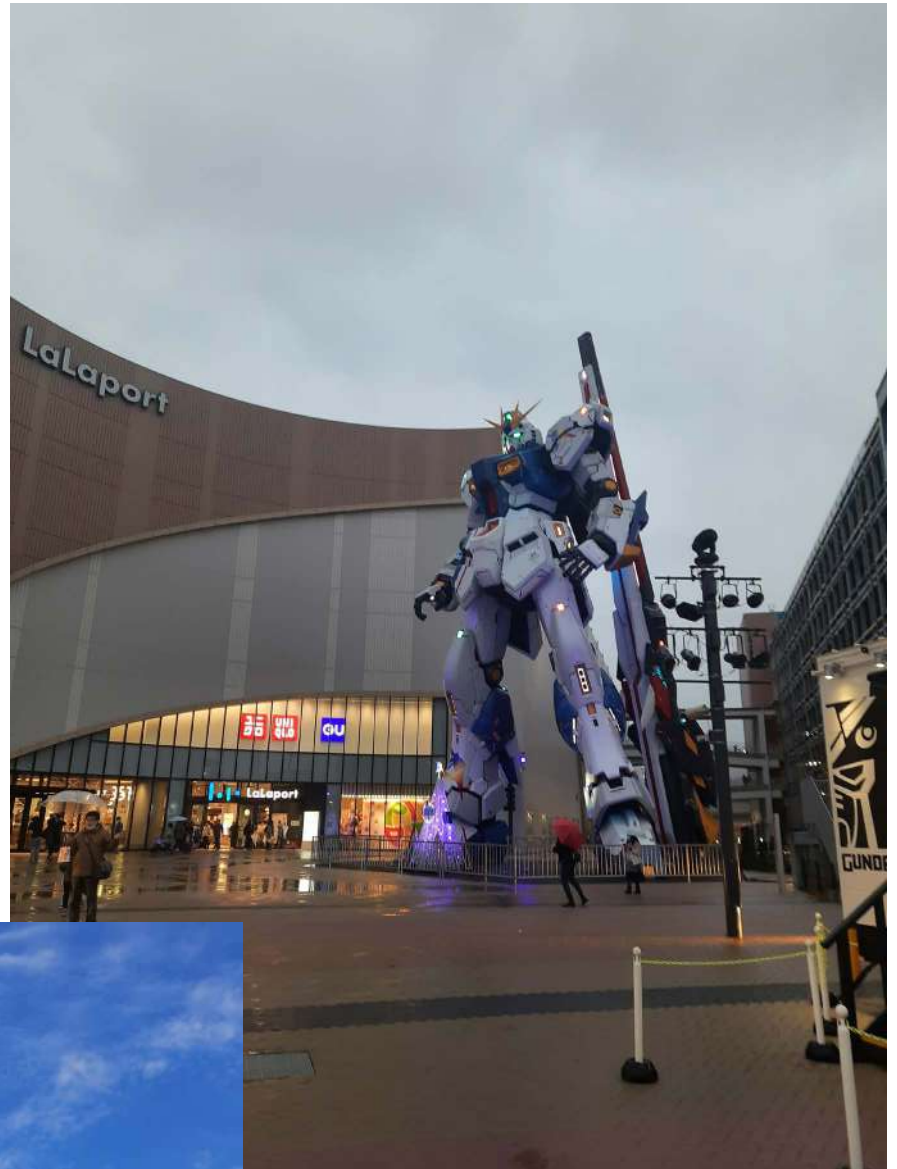
One of my favourite restaurants was a chain restaurant called “Yayoi Ken”, which also served vegetarian options! It was also very cheap and incredibly delicious.

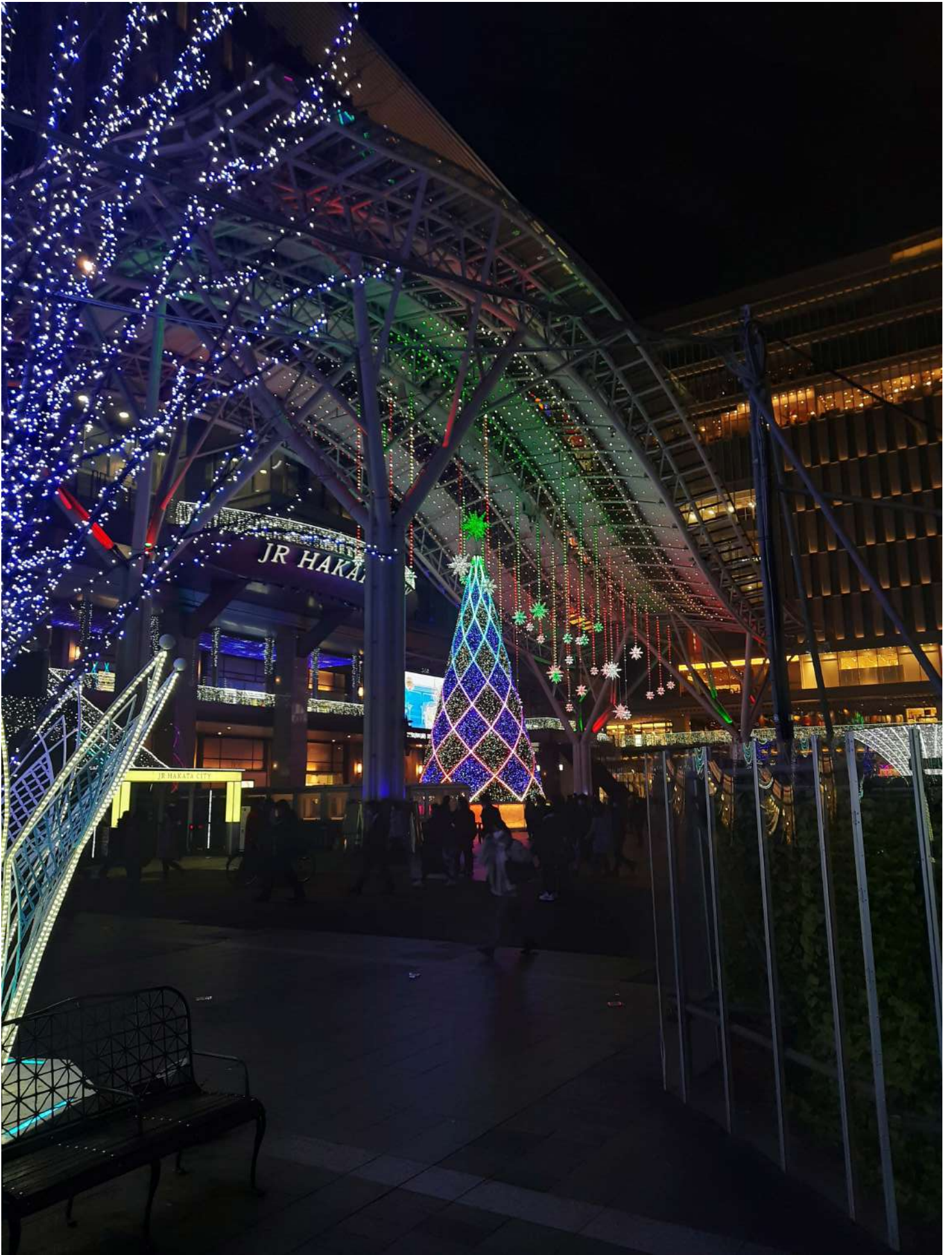


The main dish was actually a soy-based meat substitute and tasted incredible! Japan, especially Fukuoka, has really tasty food.



There are also many activities that the city offers. Whether it is a stroll in Ohori Park, a shopping experience at Lalaport (along with an incredible Mecha statue) or exciting nightlife illuminations like the one near Hakata Station.





Beautiful Christmas Illumination at Hakata Station.

There were a lot of workshops I attended (for free) one which includes a Ikebana workshop. I assembled this piece and got to keep it as well! It was a beautiful addition in my small student dormitory.



I even got to organise a trip to Karatsu City (1h from Fukuoka, in Saga Prefecture) with a few students and got to plan out the activities! This was a very precious experience and showcases how much students can achieve if they take initiative. VERY special thanks to Keita-san and Fukada-san for assisting me with this trip. I could not have done it without you!





Karatsu is famous for their pottery. We painted our own designs on cups with special color. It was incredibly fun! We were welcomed in a traditional Japanese pottery workshop as well.



The students were not used to the hiking but in the end we all enjoyed a really nice long move up to Mt. Kagami and amazing views!

Sadly due to the winter term, most shops on the top site of Mt. Kagami were closed and it was very windy. But it was a lot of fun nevertheless!





I ended my time with a heartfelt, strong Karaoke session with friends. In my time, everyone wore a mask, but thanks to that, I also did not get sick ever. We had a lot of fun renting an entire room and singing our hearts out. Karaoke is an unparalleled bonding experience. I want to thank everyone from the bottom of my heart who made my time in Japan unforgettable. I will forever treasure it, I believe it has hugely influenced me in ways I am very grateful for.

I hope your time will be just as amazing!