

Why do I love Chiba?



Chiba was wonderful surprise in my life. I attended Chiba University and had an amazing time enjoying life in Japan. In Chiba life is not hectic and streets are not totally taken by cars. I could actually run errands riding a bicycle or walking and every day I would go to class and see my teachers getting to work on their bicycles too. Neighbors know each other, staff in small shops and restaurants remember us and warmly make us feel part of the community. Yet, it has everything I expect from a big city, plus Tokyo is just a few stations away.

Even though I speak four languages, I am still not comfortable with Japanese, so language was often a barrier. However, everybody I met in Chiba was always willing to help. When I got sick and seeing a general practitioner was not enough, Chiba University Health Center managed to find a doctor near my home that could speak Spanish. They phoned him, arranged an appointment for the same day, wrote a letter in Japanese to him to explain my case and sent me to see him. Later that day, the doctor saw me and gave me the medical treatment I needed.

Being a tourist in Chiba was also nice because transportation is very convenient, the landscape is marvelous with the beautiful contrast of mountains and sea.

I am a trip goer kind of person, but after a while on the road I really feel the need to go back home, to the place where I belong. While I lived in Japan, I traveled abroad on vacation for a few weeks and had a great time; however, there was that moment I started missing home and I was surprised to realize my heart felt Chiba was home without a single piece of doubt.

I remember how happy I felt when I landed in Narita airport after that trip and was again warmly welcomed by Narita Airport staff; the stroll to the train station right below the airport to take the reliable Sobu Line train was so enjoyable.

I take a sit and, as it is early afternoon, enjoy the scenic ride; just off one the main airports of Japan, riding a train headed to Tokyo, it feels Chiba is simply a small village. I see green areas, rice crops, cities and time goes by pleasantly as I feel again that calm and kind energy Chiba has.

Approaching Inage station, the announcement prompts me to get ready to get off. I think to myself "Home at last!". I go through the gate and head straight to a familiar restaurant nearby. I need some comfort food. I am hungry and I know exactly what will quench my hunger, a generous serving of *kare raisu* in Chiba.

After that, I slowly walk to my building and one more time see familiar faces, buildings and everything falls into place. There is no rush, I am home.



Name: Fabricio Oliveira da Silva
City/Country: Brazil
Educational Background: BA in English and Portuguese, MPhil in Applied Linguistics, Teacher Training Program Certificate
Current Profession: Teacher
Length of Stay in Japan: 18 months
Current City: San Paolo, Brazil
Other: Judo and Brazilian Jujitsu practitioner

Onjuku Beach

