

Why do I **love Chiba?**



When I agreed to do this article it did not take me long to realize what I love about Chiba, the people! I have gained much respect for the people of Chiba for the way they treat others, how they respect other people's time and put others ahead of themselves in many aspects of their lives. They are courteous and respectful who go out of their way to ensure you are properly looked after. The people I have made close friends with are the reason I want to visit Chiba again and again.

I have been to Japan 6 times now and have been to Chiba 3 times in the last five years primarily to visit friends that I have made over the years in addition to food trip. On my last trip in April, I had the opportunity to stay with a family in Chiba for a weekend. I enjoyed the family interaction and seeing how close they all were. I really appreciate how the kids respect their parents and honor their grandparents. And most of all, I loved how they made me feel like part of the family.

I have a strong connection with Chiba by way of my volunteer work with a Youth Exchange Program. Chiba City and North Vancouver have been sister cities for almost 50 years. Five years ago I was a chaperone for 4 students visiting Chiba. Now I am on the board of this program and I get to meet 6 new kids from Chiba every year. On my last trip, the kids that travelled to North Vancouver last August took me out for dinner. It was so nice to see them again and see how they have grown and developed into wonderful young men and women.

I love the kindness of the people. On my last visit I had the pleasure to

meet the proprietor of a small shop where I went for a cold beverage. We spoke for hours that first night and I found myself stopping in each evening to say hello and enjoy some more conversation and sharing about our backgrounds. On one occasion he presented me a rare 200 year old cup from his father's collection. He insisted it, so now it has a place of honor in my dining room in Canada.

I love the Chiba Marines. When friends found out, they booked tickets, picked me up, and took me to a game. The experience at the Marines Ballpark is fascinating. The food is really good and I enjoyed buying a cold beverage from the vendor girls that come to your seat, -this is so different from North American Ballparks. What I really love is how everyone takes their garbage out with them and leaves the ballpark as clean when you leave as it was when you arrived.

In closing, my best experiences in Chiba are about people and I look forward to my next visit to Chiba to see old friends and make some new friends.



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