

Why do I **love Chiba?**



How exciting it is to write to you through this medium about my experience and thoughts about Chiba-prefecture and city. My name is Victor Strijbis. I am from the Netherlands, which only a small country right west of Germany being only about 1/10th the size of Japan. I am confident that most of you know the Netherlands for our stroomwafels, tulips and windmills! In February last year (2017) I came to Japan for the first time, so it was very exciting for me. I have been living in a host family stay until September. During this time, I was doing a 6-month internship at the National Institute of Radiological Sciences (NIRS) in Inage, and I have come to truly love Chiba.



First of all, I would like to say that my memories of my first few weeks in Chiba are very vivid, because I was seeing so many new things! During this time I frequently visited the Japanese supermarkets such as Aeon, just to be amazed by the many different groceries and to see the beautifully made bento boxes that were available. But I think I should talk a little bit about Chiba specifically.

There are several things that I really like about Chiba. First: when you live in Chiba, it is really easy to just hop on the train and you'll be in the middle of Tokyo in half an hour, so one can enjoy everything Tokyo has to offer, without having to deal with the insane crowds of the Tokyo busy life. As for myself, I am not much of a city person, so it was ideal for me to live in Chiba because it is not nearly as crowded and busy as Tokyo is.

Second, I think Chiba prefecture is a great place because the sea is very close in all directions. In summer, you can enjoy the fireworks festivals at the

seaside of Tokyo bay, but there are plenty of shores nearby that are well suited for swimming or exploring the rocks! Makes for an excellent activity to hang out with friends and enjoy some food together.

Third, I think the Chiba countryside is really beautiful. As some of you may know, the Netherlands are really flat. I don't want to suggest that Chiba looks just like the Netherlands, because there are hills here and there in Chiba. But sometimes it certainly reminded me of my home country, because Chiba is definitely more flat than other places in Japan. Chiba's peanut plantations are also beautiful to see.

Actually, for me there were many reasons that made me love Chiba, but these do not necessarily have to be inherent to Chiba but more to Japan as a whole. For example, the Japanese food, the parks that can be found within the city that are really tidy, and the people in Chiba have always been really friendly to me. I really hope to come back to Chiba someday!



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