



## JAPAN LANGUAGE TOUR

**During the April School Holidays, Thomas Hassall Anglican College had two groups of students abroad in Japan.**

The Language tour had 26 elective Japanese students who undertook a 14-day language and cultural educational tour. They visited Kyoto, Osaka, Hiroshima, Fukuroi, Shizuoka and Tokyo amongst other places, enjoying a large variety of Japanese immersion experiences. Students were able to navigate and communicate using their language skills and developed a real-life appreciation of the language, culture and people of Japan. They also spent the day engaging with students from one of our sister schools, Fukuroi Senior High School.

The Sakura Music Tour had 36 students representing the different bands and ensembles of Thomas Hassall Anglican College with their 9 day tour of Japan. Students had the opportunity to perform their repertoire at several locations around Japan. They also visited both of our sister schools, Takayamamura Junior High and Fukuroi Senior High School, performing for the entire school population. Students learned the art of taking the show on the road and enhanced their professional performance skills. They were able to enjoy the sights, sounds and tastes of Japan along their musical journey.

Here is what some of the students had to say:

Japan was very fun and a great experience. I enjoyed the different environment that it had with its unique culture and temples and shrines. The people were all kind and respectful even though our Japanese wasn't the best, and the food was delicious everywhere we went.

- Arjun

Some things I liked about Japan were the scenery, it was really beautiful during the day, and once it was sunset, the whole atmosphere changed. The culture is also very different from our culture, they are religious people, they are very polite, and they know how to communicate properly. Also adding to culture are structures and buildings, Japan is an ancient place with many old castles and villages to see as well as historical events and monuments, and statues. You would have to take your shoes off in sacred places such as a temple or shrine. The people of Japan are very bright, not just in personality, but also in clothes, their clothing in Japan is unique yet interesting, and Japanese people know how to make a dull outfit into a vibrant one. Japan is also a very clean place; there are no bins on the street, and it'd be your lucky day if there were. Japan is also quite modern, you could see how much they have developed compared to other countries, their technology is amazing, and their normal cars are hybrid or fully electric.

- Zane

The Japan trip was a fantastic experience, the attractions were all unique, the cherry blossoms were amazing and the people in the community were considerate and patient. I think that the ability to go off with our friends, really allowed us to engage and explore the new environment to have the best experience in every location.

- Isabella

Japan was a story of up and down events that was shared amongst my peers, new opportunities and experiences that were shown to us within two weeks. Japan is a very introverted country, it never really occurred to me until I first checked in with customs or when we roamed around the suburb to see everyone for themselves. It was a shock to see the cultural differences between Australia and Japan as it showcased small traditions that we were included in, such as Cherry Blossom Season or Hanami (flower viewing). These were celebrated in many temples that we visited from the first day to the last day, handing out gifts and posting posters of important hanami dates. Despite the weather, it never really disturbed any of our plans from seeing cherry blossom trees to walking through a busy marketplace. Exposing ourselves to many temples and cultural shrines we visited, the people never seemed to change, from students at Hamatsu to workers at Plaza everyone was very respectful and considerate towards each other. I enjoyed the sense of trying to understand what they would say to me and them trying to understand me, it was an enjoyable experience. Hiroshima was one of my favourite days in Japan as we saw the dome and went inside of the Hiroshima Museum to view what consequences occurred after and during the bomb hit. There were some disturbing images and information of children from the age of 3 and under to elders experiencing after-trauma and severe injuries. It was sad but when learning about the history and finally seeing the extra behind the scenes, it really exposes the truth of what happened. Tokyo was a colourful yet busy experience, as we walked through Shibuya Crossing and explored restaurants and shops around it. Heaps of people minding their business as it grows closer during the night time, restaurants and bars growing making it hard for us to find a place to sit and dinner. It was a fun experience as my friends and I found an Italian restaurant in a busy street alley. I ordered a shrimp spaghetti that was very flavoursome, maybe even better than Australia's pasta. I am grateful that I was able to go to Japan with my friends and make amazing memories with them. It is an experience that should not be missed, especially when you are in school with all your friends. This has taught me so many new things that I never new I needed or had to know, and also exposed me to new insights and opportunities in life.

- Allishya

