

Andrew Bialock, Age 14

School: La Jolla Country Day Grade: 9
Positions: P, CF
Bats: Left Throws: Right
Favorite Team: Pittsburgh Pirates Favorite Player: Honus Wagner
Japan Travel: 2nd Time



What interested you most about the Japanese culture?

The religion and customs for their religion.

What did you hope to learn from this visit to Japan?

How the people of Ofunato recovered from the tsunami. How life in Ofunato differs from the big cities like Tokyo.

What advice can you give to new players making or wishing to make this trip?

Pay close attention to the details in their culture, there's a lot of very small aspects that are important. For example the shoes, and wearing different slippers indoors, or in different rooms.

Do you have an interest in expanding your cultural experience with your trip to Japan? If so, how?

I want to learn more about the language. I would like to learn more about their religion. I think that the geography is really beautiful here. I thought it was interesting when our host family taught Evan and I a samurai dance to the Samurai God.

Kevin Covarrubias, Age 12

School: De Portola Middle School Grade: 8
Positions: 2B, Utility
Bats: Right Throws: Right
Favorite Team: San Diego Padres Favorite Player: Tony Gwynn
Japan Travel: 1st Time



What interested you most about the Japanese culture?

I loved their food (bentos), how polite they are, for example bowing when saying thank you. So much more I can't think of.

What did you hope to learn from this visit to Japan?

I wanted to try new foods. I wanted to play baseball with Japanese kids and learn some of their techniques. I was excited to read signs in Japanese because I have been memorizing Hiragana and Katakana alphabets.

What advice can you give to new players making or wishing to make this trip?

Learn how to pack because it was very hard packing my suitcase the day we left Japan. Also, it's really fun to try new foods and you should be willing to eat them. If you can learn a little bit of the Hiragana and Katakana alphabets it's really fun to read signs.

Do you have an interest in expanding your cultural experience with your trip to Japan?

If so, how?

I would like to learn some Kanji so I can read more signs, I also want to learn about other religions because Buddhism seems cool.

Comments: **The Japanese kids are AMAZING at baseball, Shu is a stud second baseman. I loved eating bentos every day. Coolish is yummy. HaiChu is very OISHI. The community service was interesting, it wasn't bad, after I picked up trash, then ran up walls "while the Japanese kids swam" says Kathy in all their baseball clothes. The Tanabata Festival was COOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOL! I liked yelling "Yo Yairo" and eating sno-cones and eating chocobanana and running around being a stupid American and eating chicken kebabs. It was very green here.**

Jonathan Engle, Age 14

School: St. Augustine High School Grade: 9
Positions: OFF
Bats: Right Throws: Right
Favorite Team: St. Louis Cardinals Favorite Player: David Eckstein
Japan Travel: 2nd Time



What interested you most about the Japanese culture?

Their style of life. For example their discipline and how they handle situations differently from other countries.

What did you hope to learn from this visit to Japan?

How the tsunami affected the Japanese way of life. How they are rebuilding.

What advice can you give to new players making or wishing to make this trip?

Be open to do things differently, not always doing things the same, the way you normally do them.

Do you have an interest in expanding your cultural experience with your trip to Japan?

If so, how?

Learn the language, experience their culture more in depth in their way of life.

Comments:

I enjoyed going out on the sailing boats. The fishing boat at the welcome party.

The sour and salty plum for breakfast. I tried natto. It wasn't bad. I enjoyed sleeping on the floor.

The bullet train photobombed my selfie.

Chris Alexander, Age 15

School: Junipero Serra High School Grade: 10
Positions: OF
Bats: Right Throws: Right
Favorite Team: None Favorite Player: None
Japan Travel: 2nd Time



What interested you most about the Japanese culture?

The differences in the structure of their society and the US.

What did you hope to learn from this visit to Japan?

I was a little humbled and appreciated what I have. I learned more about the Japanese culture.

What advice can you give to new players making or wishing to make this trip?

Definitely go on the trip. Mentally prepare for a culture shock. Be open to try new things.

Do you have an interest in expanding your cultural experience with your trip to Japan?

If so, how?

I would like to be involved with the Japan society with Dave and Mark and how they structure it so I can be a more influential part when I get older and strengthen the relationship between the two nations.

Connor Ferrell, Age 15

School: Junipero Serra High School Grade: 10
Positions: 3B, P, OF
Bats: Right Throws: Right
Favorite Team: San Diego Padres Favorite Player: Evan Longoria
Japan Travel: 2nd Time



What interested you most about the Japanese culture?

The way they play and practice baseball.

What did you hope to learn from this visit to Japan?

How to be a better baseball player. Hope to learn the Japanese lifestyle.

What advice can you give to new players making or wishing to make this trip?

Come prepared. Always be happy under any circumstance.

Do you have an interest in expanding your cultural experience with your trip to Japan?

If so, how?

I want to learn more about the baseball, food and language.

Evan Earl, Age 14

School: Junipero Serra High School Grade: 9
Positions: C, 1B, OF
Bats: Right Throws: Right
Favorite Team: Tampa Bay Rays Favorite Player: Evan Longoria
Japan Travel: 2nd Time



What interested you most about the Japanese culture?

Listening to the language. Food looked interesting.

What did you hope to learn from this visit to Japan?

Learning Japanese culture, more of the language. How their daily life compares to mine. Pick up a few baseball skills.

What advice can you give to new players making or wishing to make this trip?

I would really recommend it. Listen to the language, learn about baseball. Bring a lot of comfort food or be very open to try new things.

Do you have an interest in expanding your cultural experience with your trip to Japan?

If so, how?

I would like to try to pick up more phrases to speak with people. Perhaps try more of the food.

Nicholas Liong, Age 14

School: Junipero Serra High School Grade: 9
Positions: OF
Bats: Right Throws: Right
Favorite Team: New York Yankees Favorite Player: Ichiro Suzuki
Japan Travel: 2nd Time



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What interested you most about the Japanese culture?

I like the people because they are very nice. I like how they play baseball.

What did you hope to learn from this visit to Japan?

I wanted to play baseball more like how the Japanese people do. They play really hard and are very dedicated to the game.

What advice can you give to new players making or wishing to make this trip?

Try to eat the food, even if it looks weird it can be pretty good.

Do you have an interest in expanding your cultural experience with your trip to Japan?

If so, how?

I would like to come back to Japan. I really liked seeing the Miracle Tree in Rikuzentakata. I liked becoming friends with the Japanese people and the kids from Connecticut while playing baseball.

Luke Reece, Age 12

School: De Portola Middle School Grade: 7
Positions: P
Bats: Right Throws: Right
Favorite Team: Washington Nationals Favorite Player: Stephen Strasburg
Japan Travel: 1st Time



What interested you most about the Japanese culture?

The food. Differences which include language and mannerisms.

What did you hope to learn from this visit to Japan?

More about the culture.

What advice can you give to new players making or wishing to make this trip?

Listen to your advisors/coaches/chaperones. You'll get lost with nobody speaking your language.

Do you have an interest in expanding your cultural experience with your trip to Japan?

If so, how?

Trying their foods, perhaps come back in the future.

Adam Lovato, Age 13

School: De Portola Middle School Grade: 8
Positions: LF, CF, 2B
Bats: Left Throws: Right
Favorite Team: Los Angeles Angels Favorite Player: Josh Hamilton
Japan Travel: 1st Time



What interested you most about the Japanese culture?

The language.

What did you hope to learn from this visit to Japan?

A few phrases in Japanese.

What advice can you give to new players making or wishing to make this trip?

Be ready to try new food.

Do you have an interest in expanding your cultural experience with your trip to Japan?

If so, how?

Future business trip.

James Reece, Age

School: Junipero Serra High School Grade: 10
Positions: C, SS, 1B
Bats: Right Throws: Right
Favorite Team: San Diego Padres Favorite Player: Adrian Gonzalez
Japan Travel: 1st Time



What interested you most about the Japanese culture?

Their traditions, discipline and food.

What did you hope to learn from this visit to Japan?

Trying different types of foods. Seeing different sights and seeing how they recuperated from the tsunami.

In general, what their normal day is like, and how they live.

What advice can you give to new players making or wishing to make this trip?

Be open to trying new things and make sure that you listen. Be respectful.

Do you have an interest in expanding your cultural experience with your trip to Japan?

If so, how?

I would like to come back in maybe a different area, not a small town but a larger city like Tokyo.

Learn more about the Japanese and US relationships.

Comments:

I learned that you have to sleep with your feet facing North. When you eat, and finish something they refill it, even if you don't want any more. I liked the boat rides where you could see a lot of things, even the Russian boat. They're very technical about your socks, slippers and shoes. There are different slippers for every part of the house.