ALUMNUS PERSPECTIVE

Sora Choi, Summer ‘11
Jenna Malcom, Spring ‘12
HOMESTAY + DORM LIFE

**Homestay offers...**
- Cultural immersion
- Home-cooked meals!
- Daily native conversation
- Daily “Japanese-y” lifestyle
- Supportive family

**Apartment offers...**
- Quick commute 😊
- Social life with peers
- Less homesickness
- Freedom/independence
- Study buddies always nearby

NOTE: Weekend homestay options are also available! You will find out more about this option during orientation in Japan.
Money

- pg. 8
- Bring more than what you think you’re going to need
- Japanese people usually use **cash**, not cards
- International bank accounts/debit cards
- International ATMs available with English option (7-Eleven)
Gift Giving

- pg. 10
- Home university memorabilia
- State memorabilia
- Hard candies/dried foods (anything non-perishable)
- Birthday/thank you cards/stationary
- Magazines
- Cultural items if you have ethnic background
Plugs + Cellphones

- 3 to 2 prong converter.
- Jenna: Brought iPhone and changed it to an international phone.
  - Could make calls, sometimes couldn’t text
    - Japan is on a different texting system
  - I wish I got a Japanese phone
- For shorter programs, you may not need a phone at all as long as you travel safely
WHAT NOT TO WEAR

- pg. 9
- Torn/dirty clothing
- Revealing clothes
- Leggings
- Be cautious
- You represent your school, state, and American students
WHAT JAPANESE PEOPLE WEAR
WHAT JAPANESE PEOPLE WEAR
Things I Wish I Had Brought...

- Extra warm socks (if you’re there for winter)
- More of personal shampoo.
  - Japanese shampoo is VERY different
- Favorite (non-perishable) foods from home
- An extra blanket from home
- Lots of gifts
- Better walking shoes
- Deodorant, toothpaste
- Electronic dictionary
THINGS I WISH I HAD LEFT AT HOME...

- Heavy, fluffy towels
  - Japanese towels are thinner and MUCH easier to dry
- Unnecessary books
- Too many accessories
- Anything big/heavy
  - You will be needing space for gifts and other things you buy in Japan
WHAT IS IT LIKE TO BE A GAIJIN

- You are a celebrity.
  - Be prepared for stares if you are:
    - Tall
    - Blonde/red hair/have a hair color other than black or brown
    - Any other ethnicity aside from East Asian

- You are an English conversation partner.
  - People will come up to you out of nowhere and practice their English.
  - “Nihongo wa jouzu desu ne!”
WHAT IS IT LIKE TO BE A GAIJIN
DON’T BE AFRAID...

- To travel on your own
- To ask for help
  - Japanese people are usually very helpful
  - Go to a *kouban* (police box) if you need anything
- To strike up a conversation with the Japanese person sitting next to you on the train/bus/etc.
- To join a club or organization at local universities
- To make mistakes in Japanese
- To HAVE FUN!! (while keeping up with your studies and staying safe 😊)