

JAPAN: Fukuoka

July 8-9, 2016



The previous night, Satoka and Misato spend the night at the apartment I am staying at and taught me to make takoyaki. I had never tried takoyaki before and I didn't know what it was but I heard from many people that it was delicious. I am always open to trying something new so I was happy that they came over and were willing to teach me.

Takoyaki is a wheat-flour based dish with octopus (tako) and egg. We made several batches and added cheese and ocras to some of them. It was up to us to experiment and modify it to our taste. After we cooked them, we added mayonnaise and special takoyaki sauce to give it more flavor. It was my first time trying octopus and now I have become a fan of takoyaki. However, I also tried a piece with a wasabi-type sauce and so far I have liked every Japanese sauce I have tried except this one. I will be sure to skip the wasabi next time.



Saturday afternoon, I met with Momoe and Yuki and they took me to a special matcha cafe where everything on the menu was matcha related. We took a taxi on the way there and once again, Japan didn't fail to impress me. The taxi cars have automatic doors so when a person is about to get in and out of the car, they don't have to open the door themselves. The taxi driver simply presses a button, and the door opens widely for the passengers. In addition to this, it also surprised me the way the driver was dressed. He even had white gloves on, so fancy!

It is amazing all that the café could do with matcha. Their menu offered traditional hot matcha tea, ice cream, and even pastries all with matcha as an ingredient. I read that there are plenty of benefits in matcha including the fact that it is full of antioxidants and minerals. It is said that one cup of matcha tea has as many antioxidants as 10 regular cups of brewed green tea. It is healthy and tasty! I wish Florida had a matcha cafe such as this one.





After the café we walked around the area for a bit and then stopped at a nearby local dessert shop where I asked Momoe and Yuki to tell me their favorite dessert so I could try it. They recommended one called sakura mochi which is a pink ball shaped dessert made primarily from rice.

For dinner, we went to a barbeque place where the restaurant served plates of raw meat and in the middle, there was a grill where you could cook it yourself. I usually don't eat meat so often, but the one in Japan is so delicious and I enjoy it very much. Just like in many rest



Within the next few days it was going to be Mayus birthday. Usually at the restaurants that I have been too, it is more traditional that the restaurant gives a sweet dessert such as cake. However, this was not the case. In this particular restaurant, there was a person in a cow costume that came with a "raw meat cake" and started singing as the whole restaurant flashed lights. It was a hilarious evening and I had a great time with the Japanese students.

