

Japan: Kyoto July, 2016



The same day that I went to Hiroshima, I took the Shinkansen to Kyoto. Known for its rich history and impressive nature, I was glad that I had the chance to go there. Since I arrived late at night, all I did when I got to my hotel was read guidebooks and think about what I would enjoy visiting the most. I knew I wanted to go to the “bamboo grove” Arashiyama and the best time to go there was in the early morning. There is no photograph that can accurately show the impressive nature of the forest. It was a very unique experience for me as I was walking in the middle of such stunning beauty. Before coming to Asia, I had never seen natural bamboo so for me to see so much of the plant in one place was very memorable. I noticed that the bamboo path was very clean and has been well taken care of for people to enjoy. I thought it was a bit difficult to find and take the right train but people in Japan were always very kind to me and helped me when I had questions about the directions on how to get there.

After my walk, I bought a ticket to the Sagano Scenic Railway Train. Before 1989, it was part of the JR Sanin Line but now it is a popular train ride for tourist because the view is outstanding. The 25 minute train ride was a total of 7 kilometers that run along the Hozugawa River between Arashiyama and Kameoka. The train was old style, nice and slow, and had no windows so it was easy to enjoy the nature outside along the way. The picture on the right is a photograph that I took myself while I was on the train. Great view!



After my morning of hiking and train ride, I knew that I could not leave Kyoto without visiting the famous Kinkaku-ji temple. The “Golden Pavillion” is a World Cultural Heritage and has beautiful architecture with details such as gold leafs and my favorite Zen garden surrounding it.

To end my evening in Kyoto, I went to Fushimi Inari-Taisha which is a Shinto shrine of thousands of torii gates in South Kyoto. It was absolutely impressive to see so many torii gates going 4 kilometers up a mountain. I read that they are dedicated to the gods of rice and sake by the Hata family in the 8th century. Kyoto is such an enchanting city full of culture and history that is worth visiting.

