



Sado Island

Do you think the program and the educational environment helped promote your research?

My research activity takes up most of my time. As a double degree student I don't have to take many classes (only 18 credits for a 2-year degree), so I can focus mainly on my research, which is great.

I think the educational environment varies a lot depending on the laboratory, but in my case I was very lucky with the organization of my lab. I can meet two or three times a week with my advisor for seminars of between 1 and 2 hours, and it's only me, my advisor and another student. So I can get consistently a lot of help and directions from my advisor, and we can go in depth into the problems and sometimes even find solutions together.

Also, me and the other international students have received enormous help from the Incoming Student Exchange Section regarding diverse procedures like scholarship application, insurance payment or making a bank account. Especially since I can't read Japanese very well, having help for dealing with this kind of procedure saves me a lot of time and troubles, so I can focus more on my research.

Living in Sendai : Experience and Advice

Tips for new arrivals.

In Sendai, transportations can be a little bit pricey, so it is important to know that if you want to commute between campuses (Aobayama, Kawauchi, Katahira and so on) there are campus buses that you can use for free, and that run from about 9 am to 5 pm. You can check the exact schedule on the university website or at the bus stops.

Also, if you want to find some imported products from your country, you may want to try Kaldi, they have a store in Aobadoori, and another one in Sendai station, and they have a lot of not too expensive imported goods.

It is good to know that in food stores, there are usually discounts (around 30%) on fresh food after 6 pm, so you can get pre-prepared meals for cheap.

What is the monthly cost of maintenance in Sendai beyond the dormitory?

My budget for a month (excluding dormitory rent) is 45,000 ¥. I mostly spend on food, and the great thing about Japan compared to Paris (my hometown) is that restaurants are not expensive. You can get a good meal in a restaurant for just slightly more than the price of one meal of groceries. The price of groceries itself is not expensive, except for fruits.

Preparation for essential items for maintenance prior to arrival.

I like to travel light so I didn't bring much from France, and I bought what I needed when arriving. I think that you can find pretty much anything you need in Japanese stores. Compared to Paris, most items are quite cheaper in Sendai. But if you come from a place where things are way cheaper, you may want to take some stuff with you.

There are some places in Japan where you can not pay with a credit card. You can check with your bank before going for the fees when withdrawing money at a Japanese ATM. In some cases it may be worth it to trade for some yen in cash before coming.

Difficulties you may encounter after arriving in Japan.

The main thing that can be difficult is the language barrier. In my case I was quite bad at Japanese when arriving, and most Japanese people don't really speak english. In particular for something like getting a Japanese phone number and mobile data plan, since this is something you want to do as quickly as possible. If you are bad at Japanese like me, it is great if you can have the help of a friend who can speak Japanese. Or you can try using some instant translation phone app to communicate, it can be very efficient.

Leisure

There are tons of different types of Japanese food to enjoy. My favorite one is sushi, and I recommend chain restaurants like Hama sushi or Kappa sushi, you can eat a lot of good food for not too expensive. There is a Kappa sushi restaurant near Sendai port at JR Nakanosakae train station (中野栄駅) that I recommend.



Sendai is not the most touristic city, but there are still some nice places to see. The riverside is a great place especially during spring when the flowers blossom. In autumn, Nanakita Kōen at Izumi Chuō subway station is full of very beautiful red trees. I also had the chance to travel to many cities with friends and family.



Shiraishigawa (Funaoka JR station) Funaoka Castle Ruins Park



Yamadera

Matsushima

Nanakita Kōen



Sado Island



Mount Haguro



Kanazawa



Mount Zao



Mount Yudono



Aizu Sazaedo



Daihonzan-Eiheiji



Tsurugajo Castle / Nagoyajo Honmarugoden



Career Paths

Pursuing graduate school degree (including PhD) at home university or Tohoku University.

I will continue with a PhD in Tohoku University. I really love the research I am doing, and in my laboratory it is fairly simple to progress to a PhD if the Master's research went well, and if you have a good direction of what to research next.

Professional career outside of academia.

If you want to work in Japan, most companies will require you to have at least a JLPT N3 or N2 certification, English alone is usually not enough. But for some companies (like Rakuten) you can work using only English. It is important to know that it is a lot easier to get recruited through the new graduates recruitment campaign that usually takes place in May / June of the year before your graduation, so it is important to plan ahead.