

Adventure from Osaka to Hamamatsu City



Miss Mai

July 28: Today is low atmospheric pressure throughout Japan with intermittent and sometimes very heavy rain. My destination is Hamamatsu City in Shizuoka Prefecture, the [city I visited on May 26th](#) this year. I'm travelling from Osaka and the distance is only a fraction of my previous trip from Niigata. Nevertheless the trip wasn't as easy as I had hoped. I had to take refuge from the rain from time to time, and I had to wait over an hour for a ride at two different parking areas on the Meishin Expressway which runs from Osaka to Nagoya.

The first vehicle was a car carrier truck. The driver took me from Suita Service Area in Osaka to Taga Service Area just before the junction that goes off to Fukui on the Sea of Japan. I was very glad to get a ride this far because it took me way past Kyoto. Normally when standing at Taga, I'm looking for rides going toward the Sea of Japan as this is the closest route on the way home to Niigata. However today I need to go in the direction of Nagoya. I figured it would be easy but it wasn't. The first hour a dozen drivers offered me a ride, but they were either going only a short distance or the wrong direction away from Nagoya.

After an hour a car stopped with two ladies who said they were travelling to Nagano! Their destination would take me to the Chuo expressway past Nagoya which heads off away from my destination. Nevertheless because I knew of the Owari-Ichinomiya Service area which just before the junction to the Chuo expressway, I asked them for a ride.

The driver's name is Eri and her passenger was her 17 year old daughter Mai. They both were glad to meet a foreigner to practice their English. Eri spoke better English than her daughter because she travelled extensively in the USA and Canada.



Man who took me from Owari-
Ichinomiya to Moriyama

I had to wait yet another hour just to get a ride to a parking area on the Tomei Expressway which runs past Nagoya and goes to Shizuoka. Now my chances are better with more traffic heading in the direction of Hamamatsu. A man from an advertising company took me to the Moriyama parking area. Now I was sure to make it to my destination in spite of the rain!

After waiting a relatively short time, a young man, an off duty policeman named Mr. Itou took me to the Togo parking area near Toyota city. I enjoy meeting professional people and usually ask them many questions about their work.

From there a 34 year old single man named Mr. Sukanuma took me to Toyokawa train station from where I took a short train ride the rest of the way. He works in the automobile manufacturing business which is now in a major slump. Mr. Sukanuma asked me to buy a car, but I told him I prefer catching rides with others. □