

Hitchhiking In Japan



James
hitchhiking

Japan is a great country for sightseeing and travel – if you can afford it. Transportation costs are at least double that of the USA. It costs around US \$85 just to travel 300 KM (about 190 miles) by the “bullet train” (*Shinkansen* in Japanese). Want to save some doe and meet people? Try hitchhiking! I do and I love it!

I first came to Japan in 1972 while in the US military stationed near Tokyo. A couple years later I decided to become a missionary to the Japanese people and tell them about Jesus Christ. Missionaries need to “live by faith”. This also means to live within one’s income. I needed to travel the country to “preach the Gospel” but could not always afford public transportation. My partner and I often opted to hitchhike. We usually got to our destination that day, and if we didn’t, often the person that picked us up took us to their home where we spent the night and sometimes several days.



With Shizuka



Yutaka and Ayumi
who visited my
home.



Couple who took me
from Otsu City to

Ishikawa
Prefecture



First trip 1998!

I wish I had kept a record of all my adventures hitchhiking in Japan. If I had, I would have a book by now which might have even been a best seller. LOL! At the very least, it would have made interesting reading for me in my old age. I will be 67 in June this year of 2017.

I define hitchhiking as getting rides from total strangers. Therefore it does not include rides from associates, friends or family.



Take and Nami,
Toyama Prefecture,
2001



With Russian
Gennady



Eiji and Miki



A young couple on
a coastal road of
the Sea of Japan

What kind of people pick me up?

Kind people, unselfish people, people who care about others. Some are fond of Westerners, some study English and want to practice using it, some lived in the USA and want to repay the kindness they received from Americans, some have hitchhiked in their university days and understand people who do, some have broken hearts (often marital problems or broken love relationships) and wish to pour out their hearts to somebody, some are lonely, and some know they are prone to be sleepy driving on the expressway and wish to have

someone to talk with in order to help them stay awake! Some drivers have correctly identified me as a Christian missionary even before I tell them so! They are usually the most open to hearing the Message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ from the Bible than most Japanese. To meet such people and have an opportunity to share the Truth with them makes it worth all the discomfort of the hot sun, rain, wind and snow I sometimes face while hitchhiking.



College friends



Chinami who I am
still in touch
with.



Chieharu who took
me to Kanazawa
from Shiga



Two girls in
Toyama

How do I hitchhike? Read a [page of tips I compiled!](#)

Since August of 2003 I have been keeping [statistics of my travels](#).

[Six hundred kilometer hitchhike trip home in record time](#)



Posted on [May 12, 2014](#) by [James Arendt](#)September 8, 2019



Reading Time: 4 minutes I left Hirosaki in Aomori Prefecture just after 7:00 a.m. and got home in Niigata city by 2:04 p.m.! This ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[Adventure to Aomori via a new route](#)



Posted on [April 15, 2014](#) by [James Arendt](#)September 8, 2019



Reading Time: 5 minutes In order to save a bit more money, rather than take a train from Niigata city to Murakami, I decided ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[February – March 2014 Adventure in Kansai](#)



Posted on [March 2, 2014](#) by [James Arendt](#)August 31, 2020



Reading Time: 6 minutes February 28, Day 1 It's the first day of a one week adventure traveling mainly by hitchhiking! I'm on my ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[February 26, 2014 Hitchhike Adventure to Aomori](#)



Posted on [February 27, 2014](#) by [James Arendt](#)September 8, 2019



Reading Time: 3 minutes Today was partially overcast with dark snow clouds. It snowed from time to time. Nevertheless I made it as far ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[Mid Winter Hitchhike Adventure to Aomori](#)



Posted on [February 19, 2014](#) by [James Arendt](#)September 8, 2019



Reading Time: 3 minutes February 15, 2014 According to yesterday's weather forecast, I expected it to snow all day and was prepared to take ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[2014 Winter Hitchhike Adventure to Osaka](#)



Posted on [February 12, 2014](#) by [James Arendt](#)August 31, 2020



Reading Time: 5 minutes On a snowy morning of January 17, after a 5 minute bike ride to the local train station where I ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[End of Year 2013 Hitchhiking Stats](#)



Posted on [December 31, 2013](#) by [James Arendt](#)September 8, 2019



Reading Time: < 1 minute This year I hitchhiked 24.048 kilometers (15,030 miles) which is 4518 kilometers more than my previous record of 19,530 kilometers ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[Rainy Autumn day trip to Aomori City and Back](#)



Posted on [October 30, 2013](#) by [James Arendt](#)September 8, 2019



Reading Time: 3 minutes October 25, 2013: My destination was Aomori City, 470 kilometers from home. I hitchhiked from Murakami City as far as ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[Autumn Hitchhike Adventure to Shizuoka, Osaka and Toyama](#)



Posted on [October 9, 2013](#) by [James Arendt](#)September 8, 2019



Reading Time: 4 minutes From October 4th to 6th over three days I traveled in 15 cars 1358 kilometers or 849 miles passing through ... [Continue reading →](#)

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[April 2013 Hitchhike Adventure to Tokyo](#)



Posted on [September 16, 2013](#) by [James Arendt](#)September 8, 2019



Reading Time: 2 minutes The other day, (September 13, 2013) I ran into a man at a park who said he picked me up ... [Continue reading →](#)

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