

# 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](#).

## [Summer 2013 Hitchhike Adventure to Nagano](#)



Posted on [August 3, 2013](#) by [James Arendt](#)September 8, 2019



Reading Time: 2 minutes I hitchhiked some 300 kilometers in 3 cars to the

Shangri-La mountainous wonderland in Japan, Nagano Prefecture, the source of ... [Continue reading →](#)

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## [2013 Summer Adventure to Osaka](#)



Posted on [July 23, 2013](#) by [James Arendt](#)September 8, 2019



Reading Time: 2 minutes Trip Highlights: I hitchhiked 1077 kilometers from Niigata to Osaka and back and though I was out for 4 days, ... [Continue reading →](#)

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## [Another hitchhike adventure up north on a rainy day](#)



Posted on [July 13, 2013](#) by [James Arendt](#)September 8, 2019



Reading Time: < 1 minute Carrying an umbrella in one hand while riding my bicycle through heavy rain, I road 15 minutes to the local ... [Continue reading →](#)

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## [Hitchhike Adventure to Tokyo – July 6-7, 2013](#)



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



Reading Time: < 1 minute Highlights of this trip: Had to wait 2 hours and 40 minutes for the first ride! But the next 2 ... [Continue reading →](#)

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## [June 29 to July 1 2013 Hitchhike Adventure to Hirosaki, Sendai and Niigata](#)



Posted on [July 4, 2013](#) by [James Arendt](#)September 8, 2019



Reading Time: 3 minutes Highlights of this trip Mrs. Fujiwara, the fish market lady, picked me up for the 4th time to date. It's ... [Continue reading →](#)

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## [June 21-23 Hitchhike Adventure to Hirosaki](#)



Posted on [June 27, 2013](#) by [James Arendt](#)September 8, 2019



Reading Time: 4 minutes June 21st is my birthday but I had to celebrate it on the road traveling. The Sea of Japan was ... [Continue reading →](#)

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## [June 14-15 Hitchhike Adventures to Aomori and back](#)



Posted on [June 17, 2013](#) by [James Arendt](#)September 8, 2019



Reading Time: 4 minutes This trip I broke the 150,000 kilometer mark of distance traveled by hitchhiking since keeping statistics from August of 2005. ... [Continue reading →](#)

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## [Record time hitchhiking back from Aomori](#)



Posted on [June 13, 2013](#) by [James Arendt](#)September 8, 2019



Reading Time: 3 minutes This trip I hitchhiked 951 kilometers from Niigata Prefecture to Aomori Prefecture and back in 16 cars. Again the first ... [Continue reading →](#)

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## [May 2013 Adventure to Aomori](#)



Posted on [May 15, 2013](#) by [James Arendt](#)September 23, 2019



Reading Time: 4 minutes From May 10 to 12 I traveled 870 kilometers from Niigata Murakami City to Aomori City and back in 22 ... [Continue reading →](#)

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## [Second Trip of Golden Week 2013 Hitchhiking Adventures](#)



Posted on [May 7, 2013](#) by [James Arendt](#)September 8, 2019



Reading Time: 5 minutes Toward the end of Golden Week, I again went to Aomori Prefecture and back. Six vehicles took me 431 kilometers ... [Continue reading →](#)

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