

Twelve Differences of America Compared to Japan



Me hugging a huge palm street on Hollywood boulevard, Los Angeles California

I've lived in Japan for 36 years at the time of this post – more than half of my life. In 2014 I had an opportunity to go to Los Angeles for a week. You might find my observations of America compared to Japan interesting.

1. People using skateboards for transportation! At least in L.A. they do. I've never seen this in Japan.
2. Exact change needed when riding a city bus! In Japan all buses have a machine by the driver that will break a 1000 yen bill into coins.
3. Some buses don't accept cash, only credit or debit cards! The bus I rode from the airport to L.A. Union station was such a bus. The driver let me ride for free!
4. Toilet technology the same as it was when I was a kid in the 1950s! In Japan, toilets are high-tech! They all have washlets that will wash your bottom just by pressing a button. Some you don't even have to flush manually. The toilet will flush automatically when you leave the toilet seat.
5. Slow service at shops. In Japan, people do not need to wait as long to be served. Lines are much shorter.
6. Trash on the streets. In Japan, some out-of-the-way areas are filled with litter, but not the ones frequented by the public. Ironically America has more public trashcans than Japan does! In Japan, it costs money to get rid of the trash. There are no trashcans in public parks or on the streets.
7. Great pizza and hotdogs! In Japan good pizza is expensive, and hotdogs are not nearly as tasty.
8. Huge variety of food products! The selection in Japan is mostly limited to Japanese food.
9. Great bread! Japanese eat white bread mostly. Good bread is expensive.
10. People bumming money! Twice I was asked for money by strangers. I gave them a dollar each. This doesn't happen in Japan.
11. Crumpled money! Lots of Americans apparently do not use wallets. Japanese do. Paper bills are not nearly as crumpled as American dollars.
12. More outgoing people in public. Japanese on the street are rather shy and inhibited to talk to strangers.