

Nagasaki Travel Report

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Travelers: Corporate travelers from Turkey. They came to Fukuoka to attend an international symposium, and on free day enjoyed one day trip to Nagasaki.

Sight-see spots: Nagasaki city (Atomic bomb museum, Oura Cathedral, Glover Garden, Confucius Shrine, (Koushi-byo) and Peace Park)



Nagasaki is a place I hoped to go for a long time, and it actually happened 2 years after I moved to Fukuoka. As I think of Nagasaki, I always remember Shusaku Endo's books about Hidden Christian history, such as 'Silence' and 'Onna no Issho', and also Giacomo Puccini's 'Madame Butterfly' which is based on the real story in Nagasaki. Also Nagasaki brings me the delicious images of local food such as Champon seafood noodle and sponge cakes. But as I spent most of my life near Tokyo which is so far away from Nagasaki, I never imagined that I was visiting Nagasaki, even guide oversea tourists there. Life can be really surprising.



Before I guided tourists in Nagasaki, I visited there three times and researched the town passionately. I could have done it within a day, if I was to be efficient, but I wanted to take time, so that I can say I 'stayed' there, rather than just 'visited'

there. I even took a ropeway to Mt. Inasayama to see the city of nights, which is said to worth 100 million dollars, so that I can say it 'was' beautiful. So I spent time in Nagasaki as long as my schedule permits, and tried to feel at home. Or I didn't try at all. Nagasaki was just too amazing and it was hard to leave.

Nagasaki is really exciting, as all my senses get awake. It's such a hilly city with old buildings with the mixture of Japanese, Western, and Chinese standing at random, so they look dynamic. In the evening you can hear the ships blowing a whistle, so you can feel the special atmosphere of a port town. Church bell rings. Then you are covered with sea breeze, salty smell of the tide, sweet crisp smell of sponge cakes, sound of people's shoe heels kicking stone pavement, the exotic and nostalgic atmosphere of the whole city... I felt as if I happened to take a time slip trip to a completely different times and place, and was totally attracted.



Then I was at a loss, wondering how I can show and explain such a dramatic beautiful place. So I visited Mr. Koji Chatani who was a producer of 'Saruku Haku', a special event which was held for half an year aimed at the revitalization of Nagasaki tourism. Mr. Chatani, though he was so busy at that time, invited me and my daughter (I was bringing my daughter who was 2 years and 8 months old at that time) with friendly hospitality, and even gave me a lecture of Nagasaki, explaining Nagasaki can be described as 3 points; City of Christians, Trade city as the only link to western world during the national isolation, and Westernization of Japan. Thanks to him, I got the organized idea about this city.



On the day of the tour, since my customers were visiting Nagasaki only for one day, and they are in a big group, they did not have enough time to enjoy the mood fully. It was rather like a rush, visiting from one place to another. And because it was August, the busy season, I had tours and interpreter jobs every day, so while I guided the customers I also had to arrange other jobs with my mobile phones.

Tours always have unexpected accidents and troubles, so I need to take care of them, as well. This required problem solving skills, rather than language or knowledge.

I hope I will have another opportunities to bring customers to Nagasaki. Then I want my customers to feel really at home there, taking time. Until then, I am very eager to learn more about Nagasaki.

*Saruku Haku

Saruku Haku is a local event held in Nagasaki aimed at the revitalization of Nagasaki tourism, for half a year between April to October in 2006. Through this event, Nagasaki citizens themselves spontaneously guided people with a variety of walking tour programs, and they also enjoyed exploring Nagasaki, rediscovering how attractive Nagasaki is. During Saruku Haku, 7 million people enjoyed walking in Nagasaki, 400 citizen tour guides offered 4,700 tour programs, and all these led to a sustainable success until today, attracting people's attention as the high quality tourism. 'Saruku' means 'Aruku(walk)'.