

## To Be An Uchideshi Elyes Zlitni



Why would someone abandon his home, his people, his Life to be uchideshi in Japan? Maybe it is youth's craziness; yet; I believe it is interesting to experience another way of living. Thus, I took the plane from Tunisia to the land of the rising sun with my friend Adam. And then, our adventure in aikido Kobayashi dojo began.

Our first aikido class was in Higashimurayama with Horie sensei. There, I learned that delicacy overcomes power; I would never forget the joyful atmosphere of this dojo.

On Saturday, we had to take the train at 5:13 am to go to Kodaira dojo and then sweep the floor, pick up the leaves, water the plants and prepare tea for the tea ceremony at the end of the session. Yet, we had the honor to attend Kobayashi soshihan class and enjoy aikido with wonderful partners.



In Tokorozawa dojo, where we stayed, we trained with Hiroaki sensei. After receiving any of his wrist techniques, you can tolerate anybody's technique.



Yamawaki sensei's nage was also incredible. We really liked his sessions.

Children class with Kasahara sensei and Akiba sensei was funny.

Moreover, we had a special training with Kasahara sensei in the forest. Like a manga character, we went through different stages until the end of the adventure.

On Tuesdays, we had Japanese class. I really enjoyed those sessions.



On Fridays, there is a meeting. We are grateful to Ochi sensei for teaching us how to prepare green tea.

Mondays are free.

Training at Hombu dojo was interesting as we discovered a different aikido style.



Overall uchideshi experience was cool; way easier than my expectations.

That said, what does it mean to train in aikido? Is it a matter of fighting skills? No. Self-defense techniques? Neither. aikido's aim is Ai: to Unite.

To unite body and spirit; to unite Uke and Tori; to unit individual and cosmos.

And the Do is to abandon power and free the movement.

To conclude, Thank you Hiroaki sensei for accepting us as uchideshi. Those three weeks were short; yet; we learned so many things in aikido and about Japanese culture.

Thanks to all the sensei that took care of us and to all our dear partners.

We loved training in aikido Kobayashi dojo.

May we meet again and enjoy aikido together!

