



Filip Arvidsson

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Nationality: Swedish

Dojo: Gubbangens Aikidoklubb

Mr. Arvidsson stayed in Tokorozawa dojo as an uchideshi for one month. It seems that he had many good experiences in and out of dojo during his stay.

My Uchideshi Experience Filip Arvidsson

Since I first started training Aikido in 1999 I've always wanted to go to Japan and experience aikido on its home turf.

Now, ten years later that dream has come true. My dojo back home, Gubbangens Aikidoklubb in Stockholm, have given me great support throughout the years and they are highly responsible for making it possible for me to have this uchideshi experience for one month in Kobayashi Dojo.

When I first came to Tokorozawa dojo I ate lunch with Hiroaki sensei and the other two male uchideshis, Shinozaki san and Hayashi san. I felt welcome and calm. The long flight had made me tired but I was too excited to take the first evening of practice was great, very confusing with all the new faces and all the new impressions, but I felt that this was going to be a memorable stay.

Before coming to Japan, I've been attending classes with Kobayashi sensei and Hiroaki sensei as they were teaching at Iyasaka Dojo in Stockholm. This time around, I was their guest at their own dojo, in their own hometown.

It is amazing to learn aikido and to be a part of Japanese everyday life in full scale. I saw Tokyo through the eyes of an aikido trainee, not through the shaded glasses of a tourist. Except for the training, I got to do a lot of things with the people I've met through Kobayashi Dojo. Yano san invited me for dinner at his place; I ate hamburgers at Dylan's barbecue party; sang karaoke at Hiroaki sensei's daughters' birthday party; just to mention a few highlights.





Of course I got to do some sightseeing too. Except for my Tokyo trips, I took the train to Nikko one Monday, visiting the shrines, temples and climbing the mountains. My camera's photo count displays about 2000 pictures. Even when my memory starts to fail, the camera will help me. I have a lot to show my friends at home.

At times it has been really tough waking up after just a few hours of sleep to clean the dojo and at times I've wished that the next morning would be keiko-free. But of course that was rarely the case. During class I've always been smiling on the inside even when the heat and my tiredness sometimes kept me from doing so on the outside. To have this opportunity has been incredible.

The greatest lesson of this stay hasn't been the basic techniques of aikido that we've been practicing everyday. Of course my aikido has improved and it will keep on improving as time goes by. I wouldn't hesitate to state that this has changed me a lot, not only when it comes to aikido, and that I will carry these memories for a long time to come.

I would like to thank Kobayashi sensei, Hiroaki sensei, Koyanagi sensei, Kasahara sensei, Komine sensei, Suzuki sensei and all the other great teachers that I've had the opportunity to learn from, in fact, I would like to thank both everyone that I got the opportunity to train with and all the others that have been part of creating the Kobayashi Dojo atmosphere. I would also like to thank my dojo back in home for all the support and Urban Aldenklint from Iyasaka Dojo that recommended me for this uchideshi stay.

