

## My Uchideshi Experience

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My name is Nikola and I come from Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria. I was an uchideshi in Aikido Kobayashi dojo Japan for one month. I had an amazing time in this one month. I met my old friends and I made new friendships with members from both dojos, Kodaira dojo and Tokorozawa dojo.

I participated to a lot of trainings during this month. Each and every time, instructors and all other aikidokas were very positive. It was a great opportunity to practice with these amazing teachers. Something more, I had the chance to practice in five dojos during this month.

Uchideshi time was a very intensive one, maybe the most intensive in my life upon now. We had a lot of trainings, not much of a rest. However, I believe this means to be an uchideshi.



This is my fourth visit in Japan but for the first as uchideshi. It is totally a different experience. When I arrived in Tokorozawa dojo everything was fine. I would say the first week was the most difficult one because of the jet lag and the intense training schedule in addition. During the second week my knees started to hurt too much and I had to start using knee pads. It was an unpleasant experience. Happily during the third week my knees recovered.

There were not only aikido practices. I was able to visit some very interesting events. One of them was a sumo tournament. In that day I was able to meet Bulgarian sumo wrestler Aoiyama which was fantastic. Another very nice event was a tea ceremony that turned to be very interesting. I attended Japanese language class. My teacher, all other volunteers and students, they all were very kind and the atmosphere during the classes was so warm.



A really great experience I will remember forever was the Aki-Jinja.

I would like to thank you Yasuo Kobayashi Soshihan and Hiroaki Kobayashi Dojocho for the incredible month I had here in Kobayashi dojo For me it was pleasure and honor to practice under your leadership. I am proud to have been an uchideshi in Kobaayshi dojo.

