Since high school I have had a special interest in Japanese culture especially in Japanese cuisine. After finishing one Japanese course for the beginners in my university, I was so happy when knowing that there would be a home stay program with a Japanese family. Of course, I registered with my teacher and hoped that I could join the program.

One week later, I was really glad to be chosen as the participant. My little journey started like that.

The family that hosted me located in a nice neighborhood with the wonderful view from the window. My first impression was the warm welcoming of all the family members. Because that was a real-life experience, I did not speak Japanese very fluently and had to ask them to repeat at least twice so that I could understand. In addition, the two children seemed to be less patient than their parents while I was struggling with my Japanese. However, we still managed to communicate in both Japanese and English.

Amazingly, most of the time I spent in the family was in the kitchen. It was very interesting when I helped my host to prepare the ingredients as well as cook them. Although the time was quite short, fortunately I learned how to cook daily Japanese dishes for example Tamagoyaki which is the fried and rolled eggs and Miso soup. My host especially treated me with the Sushi made from Japanese rice. Now I know why Japanese are always proud of their special rice.
Furthermore, I also prepared one traditional Vietnamese food called Spring Roll or Harumaki to show my gratitude to the host family.

Besides cuisine, one special thing that I noticed in the family was that they tried their best to teach Japanese as well as the custom to their children. One of the games that I played with the little boy was trying to pick up the correct hiragana characters according to the mother’s pronunciation. On each hiragana card, there was one vocabulary representing the hiragana and I learned many new words from that game.

On my last day of the home stay program, we went to the park nearby and a wet market as a whole family. We took a lots of photo there and then had lunch together before they saw me off at one MRT station.

I had such a wonderful memory during the stay and I wish that the program had been longer. Now whenever I gather with my friends, I always offer to make Tamagoyaki for them but in a bit different way, I add cheese inside the egg. Last but not least, I am very thankful to the family as well as my teachers who gave me this precious opportunity to experience Japanese culture.