

Adventure to Kansai



March 27, 2010: Today is the first day of an extended hitchhiking adventure to southern Japan.

I left home at 7:30AM. The weather was unusually fair for normally-cloudy Niigata. The first stop was Kariwa, a village next to Kashiwazaki city and home to the [largest nuclear power plant in the world](#). Since a major earthquake just off shore Kariwa in the Sea of Japan, two of the 9 nuclear reactors are again producing electricity.



Nobuo and Miwako
at their wedding
party

After arriving Kariwa a little before 10AM, I spent the next two and a half hours with Nobuo and Miwako, friends who I came to know when hitchhiking four years ago.

By 12:30 the beautiful weather turned cold and cloudy with intermittent snow. I had hoped to hitchhike all the way to Otsu City just before Kyoto this day, but when a man offered me a ride to Matsumoto in Nagano Prefecture instead, I grabbed the offer. I knew that Nagano would be better weather, and my appointment to meet a friend in Otsu was not till the next day on Sunday.

(To be continued!)