

Hitchhike Adventure to Osaka



I always consider it a miracle to hitchhike from Niigata to Osaka in a single day. The distance is over 600 kilometers or about twice what I usually travel. This time it only took 5 cars to get to my destination, and the last driver went out of his way to take me to the very residence I needed to go! I left home just after 9AM and arrived at my friends house in Osaka about 7:30PM after dark. It could have been a bit quicker if there had not been a traffic jam between Kyoto and Osaka. The cause of the jam was a traffic accident.



Route to Osaka from Niigata. Click on map to see an enlargement

The final driver was Mr. Inoue, a company owner. He was driving a brand new Mercedes costing 15 million yen or about \$150,000 US. He pulled up to a parking spot near me at the Shizugatake Service area on the Hokuriku Expressway. Just before he got out of the car, he looked at me and smiled. Usually when I make eye contact with a driver, it's almost certain that they will offer me a ride. I looked away and continued to hitchhike. When I looked back at the car, the man was gone, but a few minutes later as he walked back to his car he approached me asking my destination. I saw from his licence plate that he too would going to Osaka. Mr. Inoue was glad to take me and even went out of his way to drive me right up to my friend's apartment building.