Chrystel Marincich’s Top 10 Do’s and Don’ts
CIEE Tokyo, Japan

GEO Peer Advisor, 2010-2011

1. **DO** make Japanese friends — your language skills will improve and you will have someone to go visit when you go to Japan again!

   **DON’T** join a “gaijin bubble”; what’s the point of being abroad if you only hang out with people of your same culture?

2. **DO** join a club at the university; most of your Japanese friends will come from this circle.

   **DON’T** miss club activities outside the usual schedule; those are the best times to bond and you might not be completely included if you don’t attend.

3. **DO** spend money on traveling and souvenirs; you don’t want to regret not having experiencing something because you didn’t want to spend the money.

   **DON’T** lose track of your budget; money can run out faster than you think.

http://blog.chucksanimeshrine.com/2008_03_01_archive.html
4. **DO** travel outside Tokyo; you’ll get a better picture of what Japan really is.

**DON’T** be afraid to travel by yourself if you don’t have someone to go with; Japan is one of the safest places in the world and you will get to meet very cool people this way.

5. **DO** go to 飲み放題 (nomihodai) and 飲べ放題 (tabehodai) (all you can eat and all you can drink for two hours); really cheap and usually the way Japanese people socialize.

**DON’T** just eat American food (a.k.a McDonalds); you’ll miss part of the experience if you don’t try some Japanese cuisine, even if you don’t like fish.

6. **DO** go shopping to 竹下通り (Takeshita Street) in Harajuku; the coolest fashion ever, as Gwen Stefani sang in her hit “Harajuku Girls”.

**DON’T** be shocked about the way people dress there; instead, enjoy and take lots of pictures!

7. **DO** travel by train; you’ll be using one of the best and most efficient transportation systems in the world, and it can take you almost anywhere in Japan for a reasonable price.

**DON’T** take cabs unless it is utterly necessary; it is really overpriced and they take longer than using the train.
8. **DO** try once to eat 納豆(natto): fermented beans that most Japanese people eat every morning.

**DON’T** feel bad if you don’t like it; it is a hard taste to acquire and even some native Japanese people do not enjoy it.

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9. **DO** go to Karaoke! Personally, my favorite activity.

**DON’T** feel embarrassed to sing if you don’t have a good voice; the point is to have fun, and honestly, the chances are that most of your friends won’t sing well either.

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10. **DO** spend a night once in a まんがきっさてん (manga kissaten); you will get to read all the manga you want and a couch to doze on for only 10 bucks.

**DON’T** miss your last train if you don’t have a place to spend the night (unless you like really, really long walks in the middle of the night).