

A few weeks ago I went down to Kashikojima for the day with some friends. We drove down on a road that I had never taken before, which had some really beautiful scenery as we drove through Minami-Ise. We stopped along the way to buy mikans and finally arrived in Shima where we ate lunch at a café that was recommended by a friend. I have been down to the Shima area on a few occasions (ALTs' birthday parties, going to the beach with friends, going to Spain-Mura) but this was the first time that I had been to this particular café. It was lovely, and much better than a lot of the places that I like to eat at in Tsu. What a surprise!

The day was full of other treats as well. After having lunch, we walked across the street to a new library that had recently been built. I was told that the building looks exactly like Tokyo Station, but I had to take my friend's word for it because I have never actually seen the outside of Tokyo Station (only the trains inside). We walked through a Japanese garden near the library that was full of gorgeous flowers and other plants. I was pleasantly surprised to find such a gorgeous place where I was least expecting it.

We spent the rest of the afternoon driving around the area, having tea at a nearby hotel and admiring the nice seaside view on what was a very sunny and pleasant day. On the way home, we drove to the top of a steep slope and walked uphill a little while until we got to a nice lookout from which we could see all of the Shima area. It was gorgeous! I thought that I "knew" Mie and that I was so familiar with a lot of places, but this trip made me realize that just because I have been to a lot of places doesn't mean I have seen everything there is to see. Our day in Kashikojima was in some ways more enjoyable than a lot of the days that I spent traveling around Kyushu. I want to tell more ALTs that they don't need to go so far from home to see somewhere beautiful or try something new. I'm glad that I have the time to stay in Mie a little while longer and visit more of these wonderful places that are so closeby!