

Hello!



It's my birthday today! I'm having a FISH themed party! I think it's a great idea though Aliya thinks it's silly. But when I told her that I was going to buy the party supplies from a country that loves fish as much as I do, she didn't want to be left behind. We raced to our hot air balloon! Swish! Our magical map flew open. We pointed to Japan and said the magical words, "Let's go!"

Zoom! Our hot air balloon zoomed into the sky! And in no time we were right above Japan's capital, Tokyo! (Look out for Japan and Tokyo on the map! It'll also be fun if you put the stickers of their names, flags and the landmarks that we've sent on your Little Nomads passport.)

Foop! We landed in a wrestling ring! Right in between two very startled sumo wrestlers! "What's the yummiest fish dish in your country?" I asked the enormous men in diaper-like shorts before Aliya could drag me out. "Sushi!" they said and bowed, accidentally bumping their big, pony-tailed heads into each other's.

We found a restaurant that was playing some soothing Japanese music. (We've sent it to you on a CD so that you can listen to it too.) We then sampled some sushi rolls. They were made with fish, rice and green sea weed. Mmm! We smacked our lips, quite sure that our friends would smack theirs too.

"Your friends will have more fun if they eat with chopsticks!" the waiter whose name was Hiro said. He then gave us the pencil-like sticks that the Japanese use to pick up food. Aliya used hers like a whiz though my food kept slipping out. (We've sent a pair of kid's style chopsticks to help you pick up food easily)

"Wow!" Aliya shouted when we left the restaurant. She pointed to the sky. There were some beautiful kites shaped like carp-fish fluttering there. "Let's use them as decorations for your fish-themed party!" she said.

It was a great idea and so we found a shop selling the kites. (Look out for picture on the boarding pass.) "They are called 'koinobori' (koi-no-bori)!" the smiling shopkeeper told us. "We use them as decorations too on Japan's Children's Day."

Since my fish themed party wouldn't be complete without sharks, whales, octopuses and other members of the fish family, we decided to use origami! It's the Japanese art of folding paper into different shapes. While Aliya made a galloping sea-horse, I made a ferocious red lobster with claws that looked like they could really pinch! (You can make some too with the origami paper and instructions we've sent.)

"Ahem! It's my birthday today, Aliya!" I said once we had all the party supplies. "Aren't you going to give me a present or a nice birthday surprise?"

Aliya took me on a bullet train. It went really fast. She winked and blindfolded me before we got off.

"Here's your surprise, birthday boy!" Aliya said when she uncovered my eyes. "Welcome to Mount Fuji!"

I blinked when I saw that we were standing next to Japan's tallest and most famous mountain. "Thanks!" I said though my legs were shaking like jell-o. Well, yours would too if you were right next to a volcano!

"Relax," Aliya said, reading my thoughts. "Mount Fuji doesn't erupt any more!"

We climbed up this great mountain and gazed at the bright, blue sky through the cherry blossom trees. They reminded us of a blueberry pie with tufts of cotton candy. "Thanks," I whispered to Aliya. "This is the best birthday surprise ever."

Since it was time for my fish-themed party to begin, we climbed into our hot air balloon. Zip! It rocketed into the sky and took us and all our party supplies home again!

Look out for us! And join us on another fun adventure to another great country!

Your globetrotting friends,

Rahil and Aliya

P.S. The fish-themed party was a whole lot of fun! And guess who enjoyed it the most? Big Hint: Her name begins and ends with A!

P.S. Now that you know so much about Japan, why don't you try out some of the fun activities we have sent you?

You can also play the online games of Japan we have on the Little Nomads website. (The Little Nomads Boarding Pass has the check-in code to get you started!).

An award sticker is in the package! You can put it on suitcase after you complete all the activities to show you are Japan Certified!