



I have been living in St. Mary's, Ontario, Canada for four months. St. Mary's is southern in Ontario, but the lake makes it snow heavily. I decorated a gingerbread house, which totally reminds you of overseas Christmas, doesn't it!? A lot happened in December, and I'd like to tell you about my life in Canada.

The school buses are canceled once a week, but the school is still open, which is called a snow day. I still need to go to school because I walk to school every day, so it doesn't matter to me. Since there are only about three students in each class, we often do activities like yoga, badminton, and volleyball instead of regular classes. In history class, I studied WWII. I learned that the first battle in which Canadian soldiers fought independently was the Battle of Hong Kong against Japanese soldiers. Japan attacked Hong Kong eight hours after Pearl Harbor. I had never heard of that battle before. It wasn't a major battle, but I think it is important to know about it. In leadership class, I worked on my project, on which I offered healthy breakfast to my classmates and gave a presentation about the importance of having healthy breakfast. We made avocado toast, scrambled eggs, and yogurt with fruit. They tasted good, and my classmates enjoyed them, which made me happy.



I'm on the curling team. We had two games, and we won both games, 8-3 and 4-1. My teammate told me that she had been curling, but she had never won before. I didn't expect that because I'm a beginner and don't really understand the rules of curling yet. Since I don't practice my right side very much, it was difficult, but during the games I learned how to do it better. It was really fun overall. I have two more games left this season, so I'll improve my curling skills.

I felt the troubles with my last host family and made the change. We had talked about me waiting until after Christmas, but my Japanese coordinator and my program decided that I moved before Christmas. I learned that saying goodbye can be painful. Still, we were able to say goodbye with the same feelings, which means we love each other. Finally, my host mom taught me how to say "forever" in sign language.

My current host family is so kind. We watched Christmas movies with my host family while eating snacks, and that is one of the things I wanted to do with my host family. I had breakfast with my host family. I didn't have breakfast with my last host family, so this time I felt perfectly happy. I felt sorry that my host family needed to take me in right before the holidays at first, but they are kind, and I'm enjoying preparing for Christmas so much. My host dad loves baking but is not good at it. He completely thought he had bought muffin mix, but he did not. He didn't read the recipe carefully, so he added too much water, and the dough became watery. He added brownie mix, but it was still watery. He added flour and an egg and decided to bake muffins. I

had a wonderful time on Christmas. Since my host mom is from Guatemala, which is located in Central American, I often eat Central American food. I ate plantains, which look like bananas but don't taste sweet. We grill and fry them and eat them with sour cream and sugar. I ate pupusas, which look like bread and are made of corn flour. We put meat and cheese inside them. I also ate tamales, which look like sweet potatoes and are made of corn masa dough. I had breakfast with my host family at a restaurant called Feature. It is a famous and popular restaurant in Stratford. Justin Bieber, a famous singer who is from Stratford, often comes to Feature, according to my host parents. My host mom told me that he used to sing on the bench when he was young. His grandmother worked with my host dad at a factory, and he also knows his father. My local coordinator used to be his babysitter. I was surprised!



I think spending time in another country alone is a significant experience. Studying abroad is a unique experience that only I can have. No one else can share the same feelings or moments. There are a bunch of people around me who support, help, and love me. I'm wondering if I will be someone who influences others positively.

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