

Bonus episode #112 - Visiting Osaka

Episode description

In this episode, Andrew talks about his upcoming trip to Osaka, Japan. He discusses the top three things he's looking forward to: the first-ever Culips meetup, shopping, and exploring Osaka through running. Andrew also looks back on his previous visits to Osaka and his approach to travel, focusing on personal interests rather than typical tourist activities.



Note: The transcript has been edited for clarity.

Andrew: Hello everyone and welcome to bonus episode number 112 of the Culips English podcast. How's it going? My name is Andrew. I will be your host and your study buddy for today. And what we do in our bonus episode series is I tell you some stories from my everyday life as a Canadian guy living abroad in Seoul, South Korea. And I hope that by listening to these stories, you will be able to B.I.G.B. B.I.G.B. Do you know what that stands for? That is our motto for this series. It stands for build your fluency, increase your cultural knowledge, grow your vocabulary, and become a better English communicator. So, if those are your goals, then you're in the right place and I think you will enjoy this episode.

To accompany this episode, we have provided you with some fantastic study tools, at least in my opinion. They are some fantastic study tools, OK? What you will get is an interactive transcript plus a vocabulary glossary that will describe and explain and break down all of the interesting or important or difficult expressions that you will hear me use in this episode. They're free for everyone to use. You can check them out just by clicking the link in the description for this episode. And if you are a Culips member, then we will also throw in a comprehension quiz just as a way to thank our members for their support. We also include the comprehension quiz for all Culips members. So again, just click the link in the description. You can find all of those tools and I hope they will assist you when you are learning with this episode.

If you tuned in to last week's bonus episode, then you know that shortly I'll be visiting Canada because in that episode I talked about the three things that I'm looking forward to when I visit Canada soon. In just a little while. So actually guys, you know what? I'm not going directly to Canada. I'm doing a short two-day layover in Japan, and I thought in this week's episode what I could do is talk about the same thing, talk about the three things that I'm looking forward to. But this time I won't focus on Canada. I'm gonna focus on

Japan. So that's what I'm gonna talk to you about in today's episode. The top three things that I'm looking forward to during my short, but hopefully sweet trip to Japan.

So, I'll get started with that story in just a moment. But before I do, I want to tell you all about the benefits of becoming a Culips member. If you're ready to take your English to the next level, then I highly recommend signing up and becoming a Culips member. When you're a Culips member, you will get access to our learning materials that our expert team of English teachers have created to help you become a more fluent, a clearer, and a more confident English communicator. So, this includes things like our interactive transcripts and helpful study guides for all of our episodes. In the study guides, you'll have detailed examples and explanations of the key vocabulary and idiomatic expressions that we think you need to know to improve your fluency and to sound more natural with your English speaking. There's also comprehension quizzes in there and questions that you can use for speaking practice and writing practice. The guides are super helpful and really great, in my opinion.

But that's not all. You'll also get so much more. You'll be able to join our weekly speaking classes. So, each week, we have several different classes that you can join where we talk about a recent Culips episode. So, we think this is just a really powerful way to learn English. First, you listen to the podcast, you learn the vocabulary and get to understand the topic. Then you can think about your own opinion and your own thoughts on that. And then you can share your opinion and share your thoughts and get to learn about other people's opinions and thoughts about the topic as well in our weekly speaking classes. In the classes, each one is led by one of our expert teachers. And you'll also get to join with other members of the Culips community as well in the classes. So yeah, it's really fun. And everybody has been saying that they are really useful for improving their English as well. So that's just one of the many benefits and bonuses that you will get when you are a Culips member. To see all of the details and to sign up and become a member today for an affordable price, just visit our website, [Culips.com](https://www.culips.com), and you can do that.

OK, so let's get started with the main story for today. The top three things I am looking forward to about my upcoming trip to Japan. Now, I have to say I'm going to skip some of the obvious ones, like food. Japanese food is delicious. It's one of my favorite cuisines on the planet. I don't think I'm a foodie **per se**. Like I'm not really, really, really one of those people who lives to eat. And I'm not one of those people who would travel to a place just for the food. Like there has to be another **draw** for me. But I do love food as pretty much everybody does, right? And Japanese food is no exception. So, I'm not going to talk about food in this episode. Just know that, of course, that is a huge draw for me. And I'm looking forward to eating some delicious food while I am in Japan.

I guess I should say also that I will be only visiting Osaka. And I'm only going to be there for two nights and about two and a half days overall. So, it's just going to be a short but sweet trip. And I'm going to do my best to see and try and do many different things during that time. But yeah, I obviously can't do too much in just that very short window of time. Also, I should say that I've already been to Osaka two times in the past. So, I'm going to skip some of those touristy things that you must do when you visit a city for the first time, because I've already done them. And I've already seen them. "Been there, done that" is what we say. **Been there, done that**. So that gives me a little bit more freedom to sort of go on my own and do what I want to do. And not really have to feel stressed about seeing the most major attractions that are like the must-see, must-do things when you visit a new place.

So, with that disclaimer out of the way that I'm only in Japan for a short time, and that I am not going to talk about some of the obvious things like food, food, and drink, then let's get started with my list. Here we go with number one. The first thing I'm looking forward to doing in Japan is the first ever Culips meetup. Yeah, that's right. On Tuesday, July 30th, we're going to have the first ever Culips meetup. And I couldn't be more excited to be able to meet some of our Culips listeners from the Osaka area in real life. You know, often it's just me talking into my microphone or talking into the camera here at Culips. Of course, when I connect with my co-hosts and we do our other series together, then that's a little bit

different. But here for the bonus episodes, it's a little bit lonely. I'm just **talking into the void**. It feels like talking into nothingness. Now, I know on the other end, there are people listening, of course, but sometimes it doesn't feel like this.

So, I guess that's why I'm really excited to actually get to meet some of our listeners in real life. And I think going forward with Culips, we're going to try and do this more often. I can't promise and say that we'll be able to visit every city around the world, although that would be super awesome, and I'd love that. But whether it's in real life or online, in the future, I want to connect more with our audience and get to know more about you guys, where you're from, what you like, what you do. And I want there to be a connection between the Culips staff and the Culips audience. And really to make a strong community here at Culips. So that is the first thing that I am super stoked about doing, is to meet some of our listeners from the Osaka area.

And guys, if there are any listeners out there who are in the Osaka area who would like to participate in the meetup, unfortunately, we don't have any spaces available at the moment. But I will put the link to the RSVP form in the description for this episode anyways. You can always sign up and if there is an availability, like if somebody else cancels or something, and we do have a free spot, then I can email you and let you know. So, if you would like to participate, unfortunately, I mean, it's a good thing, but all of our spots are gone for now. But if there is an availability that opens up, hey, sign up anyways and I can let you know if that becomes available. And yeah, super excited to meet some of our Culips community in Osaka.

And the second thing that I'm really looking forward to doing in Osaka is shopping. If you know me, if you've listened to Culips for a long time, then you've probably learned this about me. Actually, I usually hate shopping. I don't really like shopping. It's just not something that interests me. It's not one of my passions, but there are two things that I want to shop for in Osaka. And let me tell you the story behind why I'm looking forward to shopping.

Actually, the first item that I really want to buy in Osaka is a new pair, or maybe even several pairs, of new running shoes. A couple of weeks ago in the bonus episode series here, I told you a story about how difficult it is to buy running shoes here in Seoul at the moment. And in fact, I am **in dire need of** a new pair of shoes. I really, really need a new pair of running shoes. I've worn out the pair that I'm wearing right now. And on top of that fact, it's the rainy season here in Seoul right now. So, it has been pouring rain, but that usually doesn't stop me from running. I try and get out there and run as often as possible anyways. And often that means that I'm running in puddles. So, my shoes are just in a **terrible state** right now. I really need to get new running shoes ASAP, but it's so difficult here to find the shoe that I need to buy, the model that I want here in Seoul.

However, the brand of running shoe that is the best fit for me out of all the different brands and models that I've tried is a Japanese company. And I've been looking online, and it seems like I can buy some of those shoes in Osaka. It kind of makes sense that there would be more in Japan if it's a Japanese company. So, I'm crossing my fingers and hoping that I can buy some of those running shoes in Japan and just make my hobby life and my running life a lot easier. And I can stop wearing the gross old running shoes that I've been just **abusing** these days as I go out for my runs here in Seoul. So that's the first thing that is on my list to pick up while I'm in Osaka.

And the second thing that I want to go shopping for is LP vinyl records. My wife and I, this is one of our shared hobbies, is that we love listening to music and we enjoy going to used record stores and shopping for records. And actually, my wife and I are also both really into Japanese music as well. So obviously, Japan is probably, I would imagine, I could be mistaken about this, but I would imagine, and I bet on it, that Japan is the best place in the world to buy old Japanese LPs. And from my past visits to Osaka, I know that there are tons of record stores, like just probably hundreds of record stores in Osaka. So, I won't have time to visit all of them, but I love to **go digging** and just explore and see what I can find, see if I can find any hidden treasures. And I have a list of certain LPs that I want to

search for. So, I'm going to do my best just to enjoy some time walking around, going from store to store to store to try and find some of the old LPs that are on my list.

And I won't be able to bring too many back with me. In fact, I'll have to carry them from Japan to Canada and then back to Korea. So yeah, that won't be too comfortable. So, I can't bring too many with me. But I hope that I can find some of the things that are on my **want list**. And even if I don't find them, it'll just be fun to explore the city and to check out some of the LP stores, the record stores that they have over there. It's just something that I enjoy doing while I'm traveling. So that is the second thing that I'm looking forward to doing in Osaka is shopping.

And finally, the third thing that I'm looking forward to doing in Osaka is running. I bet you probably guessed that already, right? Yeah, no, guys, I love it. When I go to a new place, I really enjoy running. It's like one of the best ways, in my opinion, just to see some areas that are a little bit outside of the places where tourists usually go. You also get to feel just a little bit of like the local running culture. And it's a great way to sightsee. And yeah, it's just something that I always do when I travel, is try to get outside and go for a run in wherever I'm visiting at the time.

So, I've been doing a little bit of research online about places to run in Osaka. And it seems like there's a river that you can run along and also the Osaka Castle, which I visited in a previous trip to the city. That's a great place to run around. And I heard that there's a lot of people who run around the perimeter of the castle. So probably I'll be **hitting up** one of those spots, maybe both of them. I know this is not the greatest time of the year to run in Japan. It's super humid, but I'll be doing it anyways, provided I can find some new running shoes. If the running shoes that I want are sold out, then I may have some problems accomplishing this third goal. But provided that I can find the running shoes that I want to buy, and I can buy them, then that is my goal. I'll probably run either early in the morning or a little bit later at night. But yeah, I'm really looking forward just to exploring the city by running a little bit and to check out some of the areas that I haven't seen before.

Although I have run in Japan, I've run in Tokyo and some other cities, Hiroshima? And yeah, some other places that I visited in Japan, Fukuoka, I believe as well. But I didn't go for any runs in Osaka yet. So, I'm excited to do that. And that is the third item on my bucket list for my short but sweet trip to Japan.

All right, everyone. Well, that's going to bring us to the end of this episode. I hope you enjoyed it. I hope you were able to improve your English fluency by listening to my story. If you have any questions or comments for me, as always, you can connect with me and our entire Culips community just by joining our Discord server, which is completely free to join. Anybody can join. And that's just an awesome place where you can practice your English with our entire community. You can write messages, you can leave voice messages, you can get into voice chats with other members. You can do all different kinds of activities to improve your English on our Discord server. So, join just by following the link in the description for this episode. And I hope to see you there.

And before I let you go, let me share the completion code for this week's episode with you. By sharing an example sentence using the completion code code word, well, then you can signal to me that you listened all the way to the end of this episode. You can share your example sentence on the YouTube page if you're watching the video edition of this episode, or our Instagram or Discord community if you are listening to the audio version of this episode. And this week, the completion code is: "Vinyl." V-I-N-Y-L. Because I want to shop for vinyl records in Osaka. So, this week's completion code is: "Vinyl." Go, go, go. You know what you need to do. Leave your comment with the completion code and let me know that you listened to this whole episode.

All right, everyone. I'm going to take off now. Please take care. Have a great week of English learning up ahead. And I'll talk to you in the next Culips episode. Bye-bye.

Glossary

1. **Per se** A Latin term meaning "by itself" or "intrinsically." Andrew uses this term to explain that he doesn't consider himself a true foodie by nature. *Example: I don't dislike spicy food per se, but I prefer milder flavors.*
2. **A draw** Something that attracts interest or attention. Andrew mentions that food is a significant draw for him when visiting Japan. *Example: The new art exhibit is a major draw for tourists.*
3. **Been there, done that** A phrase used to express that someone has already experienced something and is not interested in doing it again. Andrew uses this to explain why he won't do typical tourist activities in Osaka. *Example: I've been to that concert before – been there, done that.*
4. **Talking into the void** Speaking without knowing if anyone is listening or responding. Andrew feels like he is talking into the void when recording his podcast alone. *Example: Sometimes it feels like I'm talking into the void when I leave voicemails.*
5. **In dire need of** In urgent or desperate need of something. Andrew says he is in dire need of new running shoes. *Example: After the storm, the town was in dire need of supplies.*
6. **In a terrible state** In very bad condition. Andrew's running shoes are in a terrible state because of frequent use and rainy weather. *Example: The old house was in a terrible state after years of neglect.*
7. **Abusing (in the context of overusing shoes)** Using something too much or in a way that damages it. Andrew has been abusing his old running shoes by wearing them despite their poor condition. *Example: I've been abusing my favorite jeans by wearing them every day.*
8. **Go digging** To search thoroughly for something, often in a pile or collection. Andrew enjoys going digging in record stores to find rare LPs. *Example: I love going digging at flea markets for vintage items.*
9. **Want list** A list of items someone wants to obtain. Andrew has a want list of LPs he hopes to find in Osaka. *Example: I keep a want list of books I plan to read someday.*
10. **Hit up (a place)** To visit or go to a place. Andrew plans to hit up running spots in Osaka during his trip. *Example: Let's hit up that new café downtown this weekend.*

Episode credits

Host and preparation: Andrew Bates

Operations: Tsuyoshi Kaneshima