

Cameron's Mt Fuji Challenge

This summer my partner and I decided we wanted to climb to the tallest point in Japan: the summit of Mt Fuji! Honestly, I did not have a lot of experience with climbing but I decided that some hiking poles and a bag full of pocari sweat and onigiri was enough preparation. We arrived the day before by shinkansen and stayed at a lovely hotel next to Kawaguchiko with an amazing view of the mountain from our window! We also did some sightseeing around Fuji-Yoshida including some pretty photo spots and the Chureito Pagoda!

On the day of the climb we took a bus at 6am to get to the 5th station. At this point we were already above the clouds and the morning sun was stunning! It was mountain day (山の日) so it was very busy on the trail but we still climbed pretty quickly up the zig-zagging steps. However, near the 7th station the slope became very steep and rocky and we had to climb using our hands! The further we went the more we started to feel altitude sickness and by the time we reached the top we felt pretty dizzy and sick. It was worth it for the view though! The sky was bright blue and you could see clouds, cities and mountains for kilometers in every direction.

Unfortunately, the way down was much worse. Our legs were already shaking and the slope was completely covered in tiny rocks and sand. We had to slide down like we were ice skating and the dust went everywhere, making it difficult to breathe! This kind of movement is very bad for your knees and eventually an old motorcycle injury from when I was younger got worse and I couldn't walk properly. I was able to use the walking sticks to move slowly to the end and we made it just in time for the final bus home!

We spent the next two days relaxing and enjoying the beautiful scenery around the lake as well as lots of delicious peaches! I'm so glad that I completed this climb but it was absolutely the most difficult physical challenge of my life. I definitely agree with the saying「富士山に一度も登らぬばかりに、二度登るばかり」(笑)。

