

FEATURE

Views from the street

By STEPHANIE HANNON

*Stephanie Hannon asks people what defines Japan for them.***Daniel Schuellein****Student, 23**

The cell phone market here is so advanced. People use them for everything; from earthquake announcements to checking when the bus arrives. The distinctive youth culture in Harajuku can only be found in Japan.

Yuki Takayanagi**Student, 25**

For me, Akihabara says a lot about Japan. Not only the technology and electrical stuff, but also the many kinds of manga available. For a really Japanese experience, you should go to one of the maid cafes.

Yukue Ikeda**Architect, 32**

Sophistication is an important Japanese characteristic. At the base of our culture is the willingness to accept imports and make them better. The spirit of Japan is not the result, but the process of making things more beautiful.

Laura Noonan**Teacher, 24**

People are open to change but there are still a lot of traditional values. Japan is very seasonal and there is some kind of celebration or festival for every season. Also, I think most people in Japan are physically beautiful.

Jennifer Hayes**Teacher, 29**

People never do anything by halves. Whatever their style, rockabilly, punk, salaryman or housewife, they do it 100 percent. People are very modern and westernized but can easily revert back to their traditional Japanese values.

Suzanne Szydlowski

Senior analyst, 39

The thing that surprises me about Japan is that it has more of a Midwest, small town feel. It's sometimes said to be like New York but it's actually more laid back. It's busy but not frantic and very clean despite the number of people.

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