

The weather changes fast in this place. This morning we woke to cloud which soon turned to drizzle. The kids were keen to get up the mountain at first lifts and get a few runs in before our afternoon tour to the Snow Monkeys. The Villa turned on a favourite breakfast of omelette for Andy's birthday, the rest of us stuck with the continental breakfast.

The gondola opens at 8:40 and we were on it at 8:42. The kids wanted to make the most of the snow park run at Uenotaira without the sunshine. There was light rain falling for the first couple of runs, but we didn't get too wet as the chairs had big plastic bubble covers. We tried the bubbles on a hot day and it was a bit like being in a sauna, but on a wet day they were a bonus. The snow stayed fast for the seven runs we could fit in (the chair is nearly 2km long so the runs are a decent length) so it was loads of fun and the place was nearly deserted. We got back to the base station in time to meet Gab from the Villa and catch a ride back. The customer service here at the Villa is amazing and these guys regularly drive us round the village to save us walking.

We swapped ski boots for gumboots and were off on the Villa bus around 12:30. First stop was the nearby town of Iiyama for a stop at Kappa Sushi. The place was packed with locals and there were 28 of us, but we eventually got a booth at this cool sushi train restaurant. There were two tracks - one had plates chugging round on a conveyor belt that you could just grab. The other had a bullet train that delivered food you ordered on a touch screen. There was a huge variety of sushi on offer, as well as various fried items and even French fries (the first we have seen, usually it's just wedges) and desserts. It was a huge hit and we had a feast, all for about \$28! This may well be the sushi version of McDonalds, but the food was really good. There were a few new experiences like crumbed eel (yum) and eating chocolate mousse with chopsticks (easier than it sounds) and a few old favourites too (yes the kids did have a plate of fries each!).

テーブル番号 **22**
タッチパネルは取り外さずにお使い下さい。 ご不明な点は係員にお申し付け下さい。

to Order.



Nigiri



Gunkan
Makimono



Special
Menu

かっぱ寿司

Multilingual

Staff Call

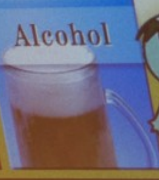
Please choose food & drinks from these menu



Miso Soup
Chawanmushi



Side
Menu



Alcohol



Order List

Account

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抜きます





From Iiyama it was about half an hour drive to Jigokudani National Park where the Snow Monkeys live. These Japanese Macaques saw humans bathing in the nearby onsen and copied their behaviour. The monkeys now have their onsen, about 2kms walk through a beautiful forest. We were glad of the borrowed gumboots as the melted snow had turned the trail to mud. Monkeys are always highly entertaining, but watching these ones perform their antics in the hot pool was just hilarious. Most of them were just relaxing and grooming each other, but some were more active. The young ones were playing and pushing each other around. We were surprised that some of them loved to swim right under the water. There were the inevitable fights as well and monkeys were regularly pushed off the edge down towards the river. It was totally worth the trip and a great way to spend a wet afternoon (we were quite happy for rain as the monkeys are more likely to be in the onsen in bad weather).

[SnowMonkeys](#) from [CreedyNZ](#) on [Vimeo](#).









Dinner tonight was Andy's choice and we returned to Wakagiri where we ate on the first night. We celebrated the birthday with a variety of yummy dishes. It was still raining but much colder, so we are hoping there might be some fresh snow up the top for us in the morning.