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Joy Ho Travel Interview (Transcription)

Joy Ho

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Interview conducted with Joy Ho on August 7th, 2020.

Joy is an international student from Hong Kong who is studying at Tufts University.

Question: Please tell me about your travel experiences.

Answer:

I flew like two days after Tufts announced we had to leave. I had a midterm on the day I left. That was March 16th. By that time there was already a confirmed case on campus. I emailed the prof and asked if we can take the test in smaller separate rooms but he said we still have to take it together in a pretty packed room of like 80 people. I quickly finished the test because I heard someone coughing multiple times. I did not do good on that test. I only had 5 hours to pack up everything. Nobody was wearing masks but I had some that my mom suggested to buy a few weeks earlier, so I wore masks my last couple hours on campus and on the way to the airport. I could definitely feel some people lowkey judging me.

Anyway, my flight plan was from Boston to Toronto, from Toronto to Taiwan, and from Taiwan to Beijing. The timing was originally organized pretty well, but then the Boston to Toronto flight got delayed 3 hours so I missed all the subsequent flights. Barely anyone was wearing masks on the flight from Boston to Toronto. But on the flight from Toronto to Taiwan, almost everyone was wearing masks. That's because most passengers were Asians, and only Asians were wearing masks.

After arriving in Beijing was pretty crazy too, since there were so many new policies. Soon after landing, they collected samples with the throat swab to test me for Covid. I remember being pretty shocked because I had heard so many stories about how difficult it is to be tested, but everyone that landed in Beijing got tested. Since then, I've been tested 8 times without being asked. I got to quarantine at my grandparents' apartment. It had to be cleared out so I could quarantine alone. Back then, I was already so shocked at how seriously they took it in China unlike people in America. Everything that happened since then really proved my point.

Question: Do you have any other travel experiences ever since then?

Answer:

Recently, I took a trip to Hong Kong to see my grandparents and to take care of some stuff for an apartment we have over there. Upon arriving in Hong Kong, I had to quarantine 14 days, and then coming back to Beijing, I had to quarantine another 14 days. So it was a lot of time lost.

There was a second wave in Beijing like a month ago and the government got it under control really fast. There's a second wave in Hong Kong now, which is why I came back to Beijing so fast, and they're definitely not containing it as well as they did in Beijing. Honestly, I think it's because the government doesn't have the same power and resources in Hong Kong.