



much except the hotel and the concert venue. In other places I'd risk a walk to see the sights but in Japan, which is probably the country I'd been looking forward to most of all, I'd be lost under a thousand fans if I set foot outside the hotel without a host of bodyguards!

"And it's not just the girls out there who go mad. In Japan, Western pop music was a little late getting recognised and it's only now that they are going through their own version of Beatlemania and almost everybody who goes there from Britain and America gets roughly the same fantastic treatment. Yeah, I thought it was just me at first but I quickly discovered that pop is taking Japan by storm and the kids are really making up for lost time."

What impressions did David take away from Japan from outside the pop scene?

"The main one was of course the beauty of the real Japan. I say the real Japan because so much of what we see is American influenced and while I wouldn't knock it, skyscrapers and flashing neon signs and hamburger places are not the sort of things you associate with traditional Japan. The older people are very proud of their ancient history and customs and ceremonies going back centuries and which are kept very much alive.

"For instance having a formal meal with a Japanese family who keep the rituals is quite a thing with a lot of bowing and toasting. The toasting seems to go on for ever and that rice wine isn't quite as harmless as you might think! I enjoyed the market

places and the colourful displays of exotic foods. As you probably know, the country's population is among the most dense in the world so everywhere you go, it seems crowded. The streets are full of hustle and bustle and the people always seem to be aiming for somewhere. The only people wandering about aimlessly are the tourists.

"Apart from transistors and electronics the Japanese are rightly noted for their hospitality and politeness. I'd heard a lot about it before I went but I really wasn't prepared for the warm receptions, kind treatment and help of all kinds that I got. The young women are perfectly trained to please. From an early age they help around the house and I've been told they make great wives.

"I think it will be a long time before Women's Lib catches on in Japan but the teenage girls growing up now won't be content to take the permanent back seat that their mothers and grandmothers did. Mind you, despite their role in society it wouldn't be true to say the Japanese woman is treated as a second class citizen. From the little I was able to learn for myself, I'd say women are held in very high esteem and their position is regarded as important.

"It's just that it is a different position from the men. The roles are divided whereas in Western Europe women are fighting to establish themselves as equals in almost every field. Boy, am I glad to see they haven't tried to make their presence felt on the baseball field! But back to Japan.

The food was excellent and quite an experience. I couldn't pronounce the names of the dishes, let alone remember them!

"I recall that I tasted the most fantastic fish meals I've ever had. Next time I must ask for the recipes.

"Fishing is a major industry round the coastlines but inland almost everybody works in factories and offices. I'd seen television programmes at home about Japanese working methods and their odd ways certainly seem to pay off. No clocking in every morning, just a prayer meeting before the assembly lines start up and a mid-morning keep-fit class and a pep-talk from the manager.

"The Japanese are real film fanatics and I only hope I get a chance to go there in the future perhaps for the Japanese premiere of my first starring movie. But I don't think it will be a kung-fu epic. All that high-kicking would probably split my jeans!" ★

