



# **SAMURAI TOURS**

*Adventures in Discovering Traditional Japan*

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## **Eastern Hokkaido Self Guided**



8 Days/7 Nights

# Eastern Hokkaido Self Guided

## Tour Overview

Among the Japanese, Hokkaido has become synonymous with sensational food, stunning scenery, and some of the best onsens in Japan. As the rest of the country heats up in the summer months, Hokkaido stays warm and temperate, ideal for hiking or relaxing by the crystal-clear waters of the island's many caldera lakes. In the wintertime, the abundance of scenery offered in Eastern Hokkaido is enhanced when covered in pristine white snow, which has given plenty of opportunities for entertainment and winter sports in the area.

### Destinations

*Sapporo, Sounkyo Onsen, Akanko, Abashiri, Shiretoko*

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## Tour Details

After arriving in Sapporo, you will travel to Sounkyo Onsen where you will have your first opportunity to experience traditional outdoor onsens. In the winter months you will experience the beauty that snow brings to Sounkyo Onsen. In the summer months you will have the opportunity to hike in the Daisetsuzan National Park. You will then travel to Akanko, a destination offering an abundance of winter and summer sports and entertainment, as well as the cultural experience of

the Ainu Village. After visiting the International Crane Center in Akanko, you will go to the northeastern coast of Japan and visit Abashiri. In the winter you will be able to board an Ice Flow Cruise before going on to the quiet town of Utoro Onsen, the gateway to Shiretoko. A snowshoe tour in the winter, or a hiking tour in the summer of Shiretoko Goko will help you experience the tranquility and serenity of the area before departing back to Sapporo where the tour will end.

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Tour Highlights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Sounkyo Onsen</li><li>✓ Lake Akan</li><li>✓ Akan Crane Center</li><li>✓ Shiretoko National Park</li></ul>
Tour Inclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Reserved Seat Tickets on all trains</li><li>✓ Meeting service at the arrival airport</li><li>✓ Baggage transfer from city to city</li><li>✓ Electronic version of Tour Handbook and Japanese History</li><li>✓ Detailed, easy-to-follow directions on how to travel between cities and locations</li><li>✓ Bi-lingual maps, addresses and phone numbers for all your lodging</li><li>✓ English-speaking emergency contact number in Japan</li></ul>
Tour Exclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✗ International airfare is NOT included.</li><li>✗ A printed itinerary is not included</li><li>✗ Alcoholic beverages, soft drinks and desserts are NOT included</li></ul>

# Map



## Tour Destinations

- 📍 Sapporo
- 📍 Sounkyo Onsen
- 📍 Lake Akan
- 📍 Akan Crane Center
- 📍 Abashiri
- 📍 Utoro Onsen
- 📍 Shiretoko National Park

# Itinerary

## **Day 1 Arrive in Sapporo**

You will be staying overnight in the city of Sapporo. You will travel on your own to Sapporo and check into the hotel. We will mail your train tickets, bus tickets, and baggage transfer forms to your hotel.

**Travel: TBD**

## **Day 2 Travel to Sounkyo Onsen**

After breakfast you will travel by train to Kamikawa, and from Kamikawa you will travel by local public bus to Sounkyo Onsen. Sounkyo Onsen is a hot spring resort town in the north part of Daisetsuzan National Park. This quaint village town is located in a scenic, narrow gorge that is flanked by 100 meter high forested cliffs. After you check into the ryokan we suggest boarding the Kurodake Ropeway which will take you to higher parts of the Daisetsuzan National Park where you can explore the narrow gorge that is flanked by 100 meter high forested cliffs. You will have the opportunity to hike around the area and experience Sounkyo Onsen's cascading waterfall that flows in the summertime and freezes in the wintertime.

**Travel: 3 Hours**

## **Day 3 Travel to Lake Akan**

After breakfast you will travel by local public bus to Akanko. In addition to lakefront vistas and hot springs, Akanko is known for two things: marimo, a rare kind of algae that forms oddly perfect spheres, and its Ainu Village. We recommend taking advantage of the many activities Akanko has to offer. In the winter you can enjoy snowmobiling, skiing, or ice fishing. In the summer you can hike, fish, or take a sightseeing boat cruise around the area. We also suggest taking time to visit the Ainu Village with its many souvenir shops and authentic Ainu restaurant, or attending an Ainu Dance Demonstration at the Ainu Village.

**Travel: 3 1/2 Hours**

## **Day 4 Akan Crane Center**

Today is a free day to explore Akanko. We suggest visiting the Akan International Crane Center where you will learn about the Red-Crowned Crane, indigenous to this area of Japan. It was once thought that the cranes were extinct, however, about 50 years ago, a few cranes were found and extensive efforts were made to bring them back from the brink of extinction. While much work remains to be done, the crane population has stabilized and is even growing.

**Travel:TBD**

## **Day 5 Travel to Abashiri**

After eating breakfast at the ryokan, you will travel by local public bus to Kitami. Upon arrival in Kitami, you will board a train to Abashiri. Abashiri, on the northeastern coast of Hokkaido, is known for the drift ice on its coast in wintertime. We recommend visiting the Ryuhyo (Drift Ice) Museum in the winter, or the Northern Peoples Museum in the summer.

**Travel: 2 1/2 Hours**

## **Day 6 Tour Abashiri; Travel to Utoro Onsen**

If you are traveling in the wintertime, you will have the opportunity to board an ice-breaker boat where you can get a close-up view of the ice flow that clogs the Abashiri harbor every winter as the boat breaks its way through the ice flow. In the summertime you can visit the Abashiri Prison Museum to learn how the inmates lived, and the role Abashiri Prison played in the history of Hokkaido. In the afternoon you will travel by bus to Shiretoko, located in the remote and beautiful Shiretoko National Park. Shiretoko is an ancient Ainu word meaning 'edge of the world'. Shiretoko National Park is famous for its beautiful scenery and abundant wildlife including deer, bear, and fox.

**Travel: 2 Hours**

## **Day 7 Shiretoko National Park**

This day is free to experience the beauty of Shiretoko on your own. During the winter, you can take a snowshoe tour to explore the Shiretoko Goko Lakes area, or warm up in the onsens at the ryokan before dinner. In the summertime you can take a hiking tour or a boat cruise tour along the Shiretoko coastline with its 100 meter lava rock cliffs and waterfalls. You may even see seals and dolphins!

**Travel:TBD**

## **Day 8 Travel to Sapporo or Tokyo**

In the morning you will travel by bus to Membanbetsu Airport where you will fly to Sapporo Chitose Airport. After arriving at Sapporo Chitose Airport, you will continue around Japan on your own, or travel home.

**Travel: TBBD**

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## **Dates & Pricing**

### **Low Season-**

**\$1,692.00** (per person, based on double occupancy)

January 6 - February 28

June 16 - August 5

August 18 - August 31

November 16 - December 24

### **Regular Season-**

**\$1,833.00** (per person, based on double occupancy)

March 1 - March 14

May 7 - June 15

September 1 - October 14

### **Peak Season-**

**\$1,974.00** (per person, based on double occupancy)

March 15 - May 6 (Cherry Blossom & Golden Week)

August 6 - August 17 (Obon Holiday)

October 15 - November 15 (Fall Foliage)

December 25 - January 5 (New Years)

### **Adjustments for 2020 Tours**

There will be an additional 5% charge for 2020 tours

The following dates will also be peak season due to the 2020 Olympics

July 10th - Aug 23rd

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## 📌 Inclusions

- Accommodations in 3 Star hotels including all taxes, fees and breakfast every morning (contact us regarding accommodation upgrades)
  - Sapporo: Western-style hotel such as Keio Plaza Hotel Sapporo
  - Sounkyo Onsen: Japanese-style ryokan such as Northern Lodge
  - Akanko: Japanese-style ryokan such as New Akan Hotel
  - Abashiri: Japanese-style ryokan such as Hotel Abashirikoso
  - Shiretoko: Japanese-style ryokan such as Shiretoko Daiichi Hotel
- Detailed, easy-to-follow directions on how to travel between cities
- Bi-lingual maps, addresses and phone numbers for all your lodging
- English-speaking emergency contact number in Japan
- Suggested train schedules including train schedules for 2 hours prior and 2 hours after the suggested time to allow you to choose your own times
- Reserved seat train tickets on the following segments:
  - Sapporo to Asahikawa
  - Kitami to Abashiri
- Bus reservations on the following segments:
  - Sounkyo Onsen to Lake Akan
  - Lake Akan to Kitami
- Drift Ice Sightseeing Cruise (winter only)
- Flight from Memanbetsu Airport to New Chitose Airport
- Breakfast every day
- Electronic version of itinerary
- A copy of our “Gaijin on Getas” tour handbook (this is the same popular handbook our escorted tour members receive) which contains 180 pages of Japan travel tips, Japanese language tips, Japanese customs and etiquette and Japanese history to prepare you properly for your trip and allow you to enjoy Japan even more after you arrive.
- Baggage transfer forms (We will provide the necessary forms in Japanese to transfer your main baggage ahead, allowing you the freedom of traveling light. The service provided will only work overnight, so you will need to travel with an overnight bag. The actual transfer fees are not included and will be paid by you at the time of transfer. These fees normally run between 1,250 Yen and 1,750 Yen.)

## What's Not Included

- **Airfare to/from Sapporo is not included** (only the flight from Memanbetsu Airport to New Chitose Airport is included)
- Local transportation (subways, buses, taxis, etc.)
- All admission fees
- Lunches and dinners (except where noted)
- Desserts at any included meals (except where noted)
- Drinks other than water and tea at any included meals (except where noted)
- A printed itinerary is not included



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## Contact Samurai Tours

### WEBSITE/EMAIL

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### USA CONTACT INFO

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### Samurai Tours

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### MEMBERSHIPS/ASSOCIATIONS

Better Business Bureau  
American Society of Travel  
Agents  
National Tour Association  
Japan National Tourist  
Organization  
JNTO-approved Japan Travel  
Specialist