


"A top-quality, well planned & organised small group tour"
– Ross & Rosalind Hayward

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2024 FOOD TOUR OF HOKKAIDO JAPAN

Seafood, dairy, wagyu beef, rice, fruit and vegetables, sake and whiskey, from Michelin-starred restaurants to ramen and street food, the 2024 Food Tour of Hokkaido Japan has it all! The tour also includes many personal experiences such as cooking traditional dishes with fishermen's wives. Definitely, the Hokkaido Tour to brag about!

 **DURATION**
13 days

 **THEME**
Food Tours, Remote Japan Tours

 GROUP SIZE
Min 6 – Max 10

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TOUR OVERVIEW

The 2024 Food Tour of Hokkaido Japan is the latest in the range of our frequently commended Food Tours. This 13-day Japan Food Tour is staged on an island of Hokkaido. Hokkaido is becoming very popular among serious Japan lovers as the next 'it' destination, but is still full of untapped gems.

Early pioneers began farming in Hokkaido in the 16th century. However, it was a government policy to develop Hokkaido as a source of primary production in the 19th century when broadacre rice production, cattle grazing, dairy farming and vegetable horticulture started on a large scale. Hokkaido also has abundant high-quality seafood being surrounded by the rich arctic and subarctic waters of the Sea of Japan, the Sea of Okhotsk and the Pacific Ocean. The indigenous people of Hokkaido, the Ainu, add a fascinating and distinct culture to the island.

Highlights

- Visit dairy and vegetable farms in Tokachi Plain, and enjoy BBQ lunch in Hokkaido's great outdoor
- Mouthwatering Shiraoi Beef, best wagyu brand of Hokkaido
- Learn the secrets of dashi stock at konbu village of Shikabe
- Flex your muscle at mochi pounding in rice farmers house
- Be mesmerized by beauty of Michelin start Japanese restaurant
- Experience the unique culture of Hokkaido on distinctive guided walking tours in Sapporo. Hakodate and Otaru
- Check out the special Sapporo ramen in the ramen alley
- Try limited edition Nikka Whisky at the distillery

ITINERARY

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DOWNLOAD FULL ITINERARY](#)

▼ Day 1: Arrival in Sapporo

On your arrival in Sapporo's New Chitose Airport or JR Sapporo Station, you will meet a Journey to the East guide who will escort you to your hotel, which is located inside the airport terminal. No need to worry about being stuck in the airport even if you arrive early. The New Chitose Airport is an amazing airport and a destination in itself. It has a ramen ally, chocolate factory, theme parks, great shops and restaurants and even onsen!

After a good night's sleep, you will be ready to start the first full day of your 2024 Food Tour of Hokkaido Japan.

Although Hokkaido is known for its abundant snow, great skiing, and freezing winters, our food tour travels in early summer, the best season in Hokkaido. On average, the temperatures range from approximately 12°C (54°F) overnight to a maximum of approximately 22°C (72°F) during the day.

 Chitose (Air Terminal Hotel)



 No meals

▼ Day2: Obihiro



After breakfast at hotel, your first stop is an asparagus farm to try the fresh and high quality Hokkaido vegetables.

The next visit is one of the highlights of Hokkaido this time of the year, Yubari Melon. You might have seen precious melons wrapped in delicate paper and box in fruit shops in Tokyo selling at tens of thousands of yen per piece. They come from here. You will visit a fruit grading facility in Yubari and witness how this most sought-after fruit in Japan is grown and shipped. After a light lunch, you can try picking your own fruit (and tasting of course!).

Our final destination today is the city of Obihiro, located right in the middle of Hokkaido island. Tonight you will have a "welcome Japan" dinner at the hotel.

 Obihiro (Hokkaido Hotel)

 Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

▼ Day 3: Obihiro



Today you will get insight of another Hokkaido's food industry, dairy. More than half of Japan's dairy products come from Hokkaido. You will look around the farm, and enjoy a BBQ lunch at the farm's restaurant.

In the afternoon, your minibus will take you through the vast Naitai Highland, experiencing the differences in landscape in Hokkaido compared to other parts of Japan. We will stop at a local food outlet that displays everything this area produces from meat, dairy, sweets, beer and homeware.

Tonight, we will take you to a local popular izakaya for dinner. Enjoy some unique local dishes and interaction with locals.

 Obihiro (Hokkaido Hotel)

 Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



▼ Day 4: Shiraoi & Noboribetsu



Today you will travel in a private minibus from Obihiro to Shiraoi. On this tour, you don't wait long before you get to try one of Japan's most popular foods, wagyu beef. Today you will have the premium wagyu beef brand called Shiraoi Beef on BBQ at a farm restaurant in Shiraoi.

The next stop is the brand-new National Ainu Museum which will create a grand foundation about Hokkaido's history.

In the afternoon, you head for Noboribetsu hot springs which generate some 10,000 tons of hot water a day. Here your guide will take you on the Jigokudani (Hell Valley) Nature Walk, an interesting walk where you can observe intermittently erupting geysers along the path.

Tonight's accommodation is a high-class traditional ryokan (Japanese-style inn), where you will sleep on futon bedding in a tatami mat room, and enjoy a kaiseki dinner. The Japanese hospitality at its best!

 Noboribetsu (Takinoya)

 Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

▼ Day 5: Toyoura & Yakumo



This morning is all about scallops, one of Hokkaido's seafood specialties.

We will stop at a little fishing village called Toyoura. A local guide will explain the fascinating story of how scallops grow from a minute egg to the delicious scallop. Of course, you will get to taste-test the scallops at lunch.

In the afternoon at the bay side village of Yakumo you engage in the fun activity of "mochitsuki", Japanese traditional rice cake pounding. A local rice farmer, Mr Chiba, whose family settled in Hokkaido in 1870 and have been producing rice ever since. He will show you the traditional custom of making mochi (sticky rice cake). After seeing the impressive pair-work between the pounder and the turner, it is your turn to swing the mallet.

Tonight you will travel to the city of Hakodate. This evening is free for you to have some rest after the action-packed few days. But before breaking up, your guide will take you to the top of Mount Hakodate by gondola for a magnificent view of the port, which is considered to be one of the top three night-views of the world!

 **Hakodate (Century Marina Hakodate)**

 **Breakfast, Lunch**

▼ Day 6: Hakodate



Hakodate is packed with history, a melting pot of cultures and a wonderful place to explore.

Firstly at Hakodate's famous seafood market, you will be amazed by the range of fresh seafood available. The next stop is Fort Goryokaku, a massive, star shaped, Western-style citadel, which was built in the last years of the Edo Period. It was constructed to defend Hokkaido against the Western powers. Hakodate has a unique history as it was one of the first ports that opened to the outside world after the isolation policy of the Edo period, and there has been great influence from western cultures.

Your next activity, a walking guided tour of Motomachi area will continue the theme. You will see the multi-cultural aspect of Hakodate in this walk. The last program this afternoon is a visit to a green tea merchant founded in 1937, where you can hear all about how Japanese green tea is produced, processed and brewed.

Tonight's dinner is sublime Japanese cuisine at a Michelin-starred restaurant. Enjoy one of the freshest, tastiest and prettiest meals on earth!

 **Hakodate (Century Marina Hakodate)**

 **Breakfast, Dinner**

▼ Day 7: Shikabe & Onuma



Another of Hokkaido's famous seafoods, konbu (kelp) is on display today. Hokkaido is the biggest producer of konbu which is used in most dashi soup stock.

After visiting a local shrine and konbu grower's cottage to get the background of this seaweed, you join the fishermen's wives for a cooking lesson. The cooking class is held in a purpose-built modern facility where you will get stuck right into hands-on techniques. The main feature of the cooking lesson is to learn how to make your own konbu dashi.

On a way to Hakodate you will stop at picturesque Onuma Park for a bit of relaxation. It is a quasi national park with a lake dotted with little islands connected by bridges. Relax among lovely walking tracks, bike trails and sightseeing boats.



Tonight's accommodation, an exquisite western style auberge will contrast with last night's stay. The hotel offers superb dinner called "Onuma 50 miles" which uses local vegetables and seafood.

 **Onuma (Hakodate Onuma Tsuruga Resort Epuy)**

 **Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**

▼ **Day 8: Kuromatsunai & Niseko**



You travel north today in the private minibus to the town of Kuromatsunai. This small town is known as the northern limit for the beech forest in Japan. This natural treasure has been valued and fiercely protected by locals who have saved it twice from being cut down. We will have a guided walk of the forest this afternoon (about 90 minutes).

The lunch today is a BBQ right on the beach looking over the Sea of Japan. In the afternoon, you head towards Niseko (1 hour drive), well-known for its winter ski fields, where you stay for the night. It is also a prime agricultural region, in particular the dairy industry. We will make a stop at Takanashi Dairy Farm and try its famous ice cream!

Dinner is contemporary French inspired cuisine, Niseko style.

 **Niseko (Chalet Ivy)**

 **Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**


▼ **Day 9: Yoichi & Otaru**



You continue travelling north to the town of Yoichi. Yoichi's biggest claim to fame is perhaps whisky. Today you can taste a special whiskey at Nikka Distillery that is only available at this venue. The next activity is a fruit-picking of Hokkaido's unique fruits. You will have a light lunch at the orchard overlooking the breathtaking scenery.

This afternoon's special treat is the Former Aoyama Villa. Once the residence of wealthy herring fisherman, when Otaru prospered with its herring fishery industry in the 19th century up to the 1950's. The houses built by successful fishermen are called Nishin Goten (herring mansions) and the Former Aoyama Villa is a great specimen of them. The well-preserved Aoyama Villa which spared no expense in the materials and construction, is a great place to reminisce how much wealth was made by the herring fishery in its heyday.

Tonight, we will finally reach a most photogenic canal city of Otaru where we stay for the next two nights. After settling into your hotel and having an orientation walk with guide, dinner tonight is at Naruto, Otaru's famous fried chicken restaurant. People travel from all over Japan to Otaru to experience this crispy chicken. You will wash it down with some local craft beer.

 **Otaru (Hotel Sonia)**

 **Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**



▼ **Day 10: Otaru**



This morning you have free time to explore the canal city of Otaru. You may like to walk along the canal and take photographs or pop into many craft galleries and sweet shops lined the streets of Otaru.

In the afternoon, you will meet again and visit a local sake brewer to witness first-hand how this prized alcohol is produced. Otaru is well-known for its sweets and afternoon guided tour will include some cake shops and Japanese sweet shops. You will finish a day at a top sushi restaurant in Otaru, which is another of Otaru's food specialty.





-  Otaru (Hotel Sonia)
-  Breakfast, Dinner

▼ Day 11: Sapporo



Today you will finally reach Sapporo, the capital of Hokkaido Prefecture. On the way, you drop by Okurayama Ski Jump Stadium. It was one of the competition venues for the 1972 Sapporo Winter Olympic Games. From the Okurayama Observation Lounge at 307 m above ground, you enjoy breathtaking panoramas expanding from Sapporo’s city center, including the iconic Odori Park.

In central Sapporo you will have a guided walking tour of historic sites which include the former Hokkaido Government Office, the Clock Tower of the former Hokkaido Agricultural College and Odori Park after having ramen lunch at the famous Sapporo Ramen Yokocho (the Sapporo Ramen Alley). This evening is free for you to try any of the endless choice of restaurants in Sapporo to suit your personal taste. Your guide will help you with the selection.



-  Sapporo (JR Tower Hotel Nikko Sapporo)
-  Breakfast, Lunch

▼ Day 12: Sapporo




It is the last day of the tour. This morning you will visit one of the iconic sites of Sapporo, Hokkaido Shrine. After walking around the vast shrine grounds and having a rest at the nearby tea house for typical Hokkaido sweets, this afternoon is set aside for you to cover off your personal interests. There are many cultural and historical museums and theme parks to learn more about this unique region, peaceful parks and gardens to stroll, and arguably the best shopping in Japan! Let us know what your interests are and we will make suggestions.


In the evening, you will come together for the one last time for a group dinner at a restaurant offers contemporary dishes using sustainably grown ingredients. Through their meals you will feel the passion, care and pride of the producers, well fitting the theme of this tour.

-  Sapporo (JR Tower Hotel Nikko Sapporo)
-  Breakfast, Dinner

▼ Day 13: Goodbye

This morning after breakfast, the 2024 Food Tour of Hokkaido Japan will conclude. You can head back to your country by air from the New Chitose Airport, but alternatively, why not linger longer in Hokkaido and Japan? We will be delighted to plan your personal post-tour extension to show you a different part of Japan. Please see our Extension Model Itineraries for inspirations!




 Breakfast



DATES & PRICES

2024 Food Tour of Hokkaido Japan

Tour Code	Starts	Departs From	Available Places	Currency	PP Twin Share	Single Supplement 		
GFH-24	Jun 04, 2024	Sapporo	Available	AUD\$	9,450	1,800	ASK A QUESTION	BOOK NOW

You can choose a different currency at the very top right of the page

INCLUSIONS

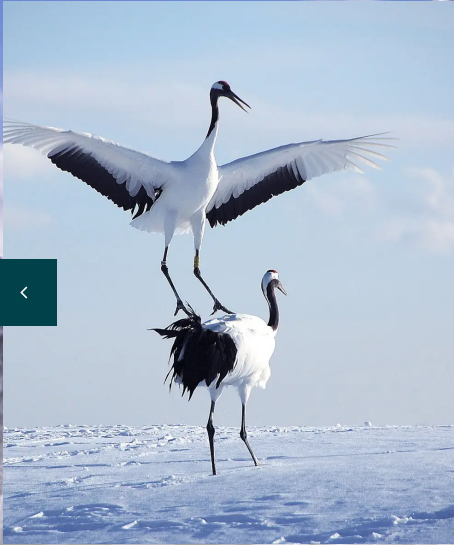
Each guest is personally looked after with one-on-one interactions with our hand-picked, expert tour guides. As part of your investment, this tour includes:

- ✓ 12 nights accommodation (including traditional inns)
- ✓ Lunches & dinners as specified
- ✓ Airport meet & greet on arrival
- ✓ Transport by minibus throughout
- ✓ All local transport (train and minibus)
- ✓ Locally licensed English speaking tour guides
- ✓ All cultural activities and entry fees included in itinerary

DISCLAIMER: Unless otherwise stated, this tour does not include the costs of international and domestic airfares, transfers on the last day, travel insurance, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, transport during free time, personal expenses (laundry, internet, telephone, coin lockers etc.) and Visa (if required).



REVIEWS



The Journey to the East Food Tour of Hokkaido was an exceptional trip. Well worth doing. This is the second JttE tour I have been on, the previous Food Tour of Kyoshu was similarly outstanding. These small group tours are a must for those who like Japanese food and want to get a more informed insight into the life of ordinary Japanese people. I thoroughly recommend them to all.



Trip date: June 2023

Graeme Seaton - Australia

Have a question about this tour? Get in touch with our staff directly.



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