

BASIC TOUR OUTLINE

2026 AUTUMN ADVENTURE IN HOKKAIDO JAPAN

Start: Thursday, 8 October 2026 from Tokyo (Haneda)
Finish: Sunday, 18 October 2026 at Sapporo
Duration: 11 days
Group size: 10 people
Cost estimate: AUD \$10,940 per person
Single supplement: AUD \$2,670 per person
Ref: GAH-26

TOUR OVERVIEW
Explore Hokkaido in autumn on this 11-day journey beyond the usual tourist routes. From the alpine peaks of Daisetsuzan National Park to the fertile Tokachi Plains and tranquil Lake Shikaribetsu, enjoy gentle walks, easy cycling, and scenic drives that showcase Hokkaido’s stunning landscapes.

Immerse yourself in local culture and traditions: visit the National Ainu Museum at Upopoi, stroll the historic streets of Sapporo, harvest mushrooms in Niseko, and take a guided “Hell Walk” among Noboribetsu’s steaming vents. Along the way, savour farm-to-table meals, local whisky and sake, and relax in onsen hot springs with autumn views.

Designed for repeat visitors to Japan or travellers seeking a more reflective and active experience, this tour blends nature, culture, and culinary delights, offering an intimate, memorable journey through Hokkaido at its most colourful season.

*Accommodation will be as planned below or similar.

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
1	Thu 8/10/2026	Airport meet and greet on arrival	<p>Welcome to Japan! On arrival at Tokyo’s Haneda or Narita International Airport, you will be met by a Journey to the East escort and escorted to your airport hotel.</p> <p>Today is an arrival day, and no group program is scheduled. Your hotel is located at Haneda Airport, given the early flight on Day 2. However, if you have time, consider a short trip into central Tokyo before the start of your 2026 Autumn Adventure Tour of Hokkaido.</p> <p>*Many guests arrive a day or so early to settle in before the tour starts. Please contact us if you’d like us to arrange additional nights’ accommodation in the same room as the tour or in central Tokyo.</p>	No meals	Haneda Excel Hotel Tokyo [Standard Twin]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
2	Fri 9/10/2026	Transfer to Asahikawa and Daisetsuzan National Park	<p>Meet your friendly Journey to the East guide this morning at Tokyo's Haneda Airport and fly to Asahikawa, the gateway to northern Japan. From here, your 2026 Autumn Adventure Tour of Hokkaido begins.</p> <p>After a light lunch, travel into the heart of Daisetsuzan National Park, Japan's largest national park and one of its most beautiful wilderness areas. Covering around 2,268 square kilometres, the park is renowned for its rich alpine flora, diverse wildlife and spectacular mountain scenery. The Ainu people call this sacred landscape Kamui Mintara, meaning <i>"the playground of the gods."</i></p> <p>Enjoy a relaxing ride on the Kurodake Ropeway, ascending to panoramic viewpoints where you can admire expansive alpine landscapes and some of Japan's earliest autumn colours. Short, gentle walks allow you to appreciate the crisp mountain air and natural beauty at a comfortable pace.</p> <p>Later, unwind at your mountain hotel with a soothing onsen hot spring bath, overlooking the surrounding autumn foliage. This evening, enjoy your first dinner together as a group, a relaxed and welcoming start to your journey through Hokkaido's unspoilt nature, ideal for travellers seeking a scenic, easy-going and immersive Japan experience beyond Honshu.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Hotel Taisetsu [Japanese & Western style room]
3	Sat 10/10/2026	Canoeing in the Daisetsuzan National Park	<p>This morning, continue your journey through Daisetsuzan National Park, enjoying beautiful autumn mountain scenery as you travel over Mikuni Pass, one of Hokkaido's most scenic highland routes. The changing colours of forests and expansive views make this drive a highlight of any Hokkaido autumn tour.</p> <p>Next, arrive at tranquil Lake Shikaribetsu, the highest lake in Hokkaido and a place known for its calm, mystical atmosphere. Here, enjoy a gentle canoeing experience on the quiet waters, a relaxing and immersive way to appreciate the surrounding nature at an unhurried pace.</p> <p>In the afternoon, travel to Obihiro, the fifth-largest city in Hokkaido and the commercial and logistical hub of the fertile Tokachi Plain. You will stay here for the next two nights. After checking into your hotel, enjoy a stroll through the lively city centre before sitting down to an informal izakaya dinner, offering a taste of local food and a relaxed evening atmosphere.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Hotel Nikko Northland Obihiro [Twin room]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
4	Sun 11/10/2026	Cycling & farm visit in Tokachi	<p>Today is dedicated to experiencing the open landscapes and farming culture of the Tokachi Plain. Enjoy an easy, guided cycling tour through fields of potatoes and other vegetables, travelling along quiet country roads with very little traffic. Unlike much of rural Japan, Hokkaido's farms are large-scale and spacious, making this region ideal for leisurely cycling at a comfortable pace. The fresh air and wide horizons offer a wonderful sense of freedom and connection to the land.</p> <p>A highlight of the day may be a farm lunch enjoyed outdoors, depending on conditions, allowing you to sample local produce in a relaxed rural setting.</p> <p>In the afternoon, return to Obihiro City to visit a unique local sake brewery. While sake is Japan's most popular alcoholic beverage and is produced throughout the country, Tokachi was not traditionally a sake-producing region, as its cold climate is not ideal for rice cultivation. This innovative brewery has changed that by collaborating with a local agricultural university, helping to establish a new sake industry in Tokachi.</p> <p>After a guided tour of the modern brewing facility, enjoy a sake tasting accompanied by local snacks, a fitting and enjoyable conclusion to a day that blends Hokkaido nature, agriculture and regional innovation.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch	Hotel Nikko Northland Obihiro [Twin room]
5	Mon 12/10/2026	Transfer to and guided tour of Sapporo	<p>This morning, leave the Tokachi Plain and travel to Sapporo, the vibrant capital of Hokkaido. Famous for its wide streets, modern architecture, and rich history, Sapporo is also surrounded by nature, and at this time of year, its parks and gardens are ablaze with autumn colours. You will stay near one of the city's most popular parks, providing the perfect opportunity for a gentle stroll upon arrival and a first taste of Sapporo's seasonal beauty.</p> <p>Sapporo is not only a city of nature and culture - it also boasts a sophisticated dining scene. Tonight, enjoy a relaxing dinner at a restaurant with panoramic views, soaking in the city lights and reflecting on your journey from Hokkaido's mountains and plains to its lively capital.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Solaria Nishitetsu Hotel Sapporo [Standard Twin/Hollywood Twin]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
6	Tue 13/10/2026	Morning guided tour of Sapporo and free afternoon	<p>This morning, enjoy a guided walking tour of central Sapporo, Hokkaido's vibrant capital. Visit some of the city's most famous landmarks, including the Sapporo Clock Tower, a charming symbol of the city's early development, and the Red Brick Former Hokkaido Government Building, known locally as Akarenga, a beautiful example of early Western-style architecture surrounded by gardens that glow in autumn. Along the way, your guide will share stories of Sapporo's history as a planned city of the 19th century, designed with wide streets, public squares, and a balance of urban and natural spaces.</p> <p>In the afternoon, you can spend time freely at your own pace exploring Sapporo's streets, cafés, shops, or cultural attractions. Alternatively, join your guide for a visit to one of Sapporo's suburban parks, where autumn foliage stretches over expansive grounds, offering a serene escape from the city centre and a perfect setting for photography or gentle walks.</p> <p>This evening is free to explore Sapporo's lively evening scene. Sample Hokkaido's famous cuisine, from miso ramen to fresh sushi, and enjoy a refreshing Sapporo Beer, brewed right here in the city.</p>	Breakfast	Solaria Nishitetsu Hotel Sapporo [Standard Twin/Hollywood Twin]
7	Wed 14/10/2026	Transfer to and guided tour of Yoichi and Iwanai	<p>This morning, leave Sapporo and travel west to the charming town of Yoichi, known for its fruit orchards and emerging wine industry. Here, visit a local winery and enjoy a leisurely lunch, sampling regional produce and the wines made from Hokkaido's crisp, northern climate.</p> <p>In the afternoon, continue to Iwanai Town, a scenic coastal destination facing the Sea of Japan. Known for its abundant fresh seafood, nearby ski resorts, and water activities, Iwanai is a favourite getaway for locals. Visit Kiko-in Temple, home to the largest wooden Buddha statue north of Tokyo. Established in the Edo period, Kiko-in survived the devastating Iwanai Great Fire of 1954, which destroyed much of the surrounding town, and now stands as a symbol of hope and resilience. In 1969, it was recognised as Iwanai's first designated tangible cultural property, highlighting its historical and cultural importance.</p> <p>Tonight, stay on the outskirts of Niseko, one of Hokkaido's most famous ski resort areas. From your accommodation, enjoy breathtaking views of Mount Yotei, often called the "Fuji of Hokkaido," as the sun sets over this iconic peak.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Nikko Style Niseko Hanazono [Superior Twin/King]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
8	Thu 15/10/2026	Guided tour of Niseko	<p>Niseko is not only famous as a ski destination - it has a long tradition of agriculture, with fertile land producing a variety of local specialties. This morning, immerse yourself in the region's natural bounty with a hands-on mushroom harvesting experience. After your harvest, a chef will prepare the mushrooms into a delicious tempura lunch, showcasing the fresh, earthy flavours of Hokkaido's produce.</p> <p>In the afternoon, explore another of Niseko's local treasures: Japanese whisky. Over the past decades, Japanese whisky has gained worldwide acclaim, and Niseko and nearby Yoichi are among the country's key whisky-producing regions. Visit a local distillery, learn about the brewing process, and enjoy a tasting of these renowned spirits, paired with insights into the region's whisky culture.</p> <p>Return to your hotel for another relaxing night in Niseko, with mountain views and autumn scenery.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Nikko Style Niseko Hanazono [Superior Twin/King]
9	Fri 16/10/2026	Transfer to and guided tour of Lake Toya	<p>This morning, enjoy a peaceful nature walk around Shinsen-numa Marsh, one of the most scenic spots near Niseko. The boardwalk winds through alpine plants while birdsong fills the air, offering a gentle and immersive way to start the day surrounded by Hokkaido's natural beauty.</p> <p>Next, travel to Lake Toya, a serene lake and popular recreational spot for locals. After a casual lunch at a herb garden café, visit Usuzan, the area's active volcano. Take the ropeway to the summit for spectacular views of Showa-Shinzan, a lava dome formed by volcanic activity between 1943 and 1945, rising dramatically from the surrounding landscape. The combination of calm lake waters and volcanic peaks provides a striking contrast and a chance to experience Hokkaido's diverse natural scenery.</p> <p>Tonight, stay at a luxurious onsen resort, surrounded by beautiful gardens and calming music. Relax in the hot springs and enjoy a French-inspired dinner.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Lake Toya Tsuruga Resort Hikari no Uta [Standard Twin or Japanese & Western room]

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
10	Sat 17/10/2026	Guided tour of Shiraoi and Noboribetsu Onsen	<p>Today, the tour brings you to the towns of Shiraoi and Noboribetsu. Begin the morning at Shiraoi, home to the National Ainu Museum, Upopoi, where you will immerse yourself in the rich culture and history of the Ainu, Hokkaido's indigenous people. The museum's serene setting, harmoniously integrated with the surrounding nature, offers a reflective space to learn about the Ainu's life, traditions, and connection with Hokkaido's landscapes over millennia.</p> <p>Afterwards, travel to Noboribetsu, one of Hokkaido's most famous onsen towns, renowned for its abundant natural hot spring water. Take a guided walk in the Jigokudani (Hell's Valley) through the geothermal area, where geysers, steaming vents, and sulphurous landscapes reveal the raw power of the earth beneath your feet. It's an unforgettable encounter with Hokkaido's volcanic energy.</p> <p>Tonight, stay at a traditional Japanese ryokan, where you will experience the warm hospitality of a Japanese inn. Relax in your private or a large public hot spring bath and enjoy a multi-course kaiseki dinner, showcasing seasonal ingredients and regional flavours - a perfect finale to your 2026 Autumn Adventure Tour of Hokkaido, blending nature, culture, and regional flavours for a memorable experience.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Takinoya [Japanese & Western room]
11	Sun 18/10/2026	Departure	<p>After breakfast, check out of your ryokan and transfer to New Chitose Airport for your departure. If time permits before your flight, or if you plan to extend your Hokkaido adventure, we can help create a personalised itinerary tailored to your interests - whether exploring more of Hokkaido's nature, culture, or culinary delights.</p> <p>Alternatively, you may continue your journey to another region of Japan, discovering new landscapes, towns, and experiences. The possibilities are endless, and our friendly Journey to the East travel consultants are on hand to offer advice or make arrangements to ensure your travels continue smoothly.</p> <p><i>Please ensure your flight is departing after 12:00 pm to allow sufficient travel time from Noboribetsu.</i></p>	Breakfast	

DAY	DATE	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
		Inclusions for Group Tour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 9 nights' accommodation (including traditional Japanese inn) ■ All breakfasts, 8 lunches, 7 dinners ■ Airport meet & greet at Haneda Airport on arrival ■ Transfer from the hotel to New Chitose Airport in Sapporo on Day 10 ■ All local transport (train and private minibus) ■ Domestic flight from Tokyo (Haneda) to Asahikawa ■ Expert English-speaking tour guides (Locally licensed) ■ Cultural activities and entry fees are included in the itinerary 		
		Exclusions for Group Tour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ International and domestic airfare (unless otherwise stated) ■ Travel insurance ■ Alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages (except the 1st drink at each meal) ■ Tips and gratuities ■ Transport during free time ■ Personal expenses (laundry, coin-locker, internet, telephone etc.) ■ Visa (if required) 		