

BASIC TOUR OUTLINE

2027 FOOD TOUR OF HOKKAIDO JAPAN (SIGNATURE)

START: (Refer to website for date) from Sapporo (New Chitose)

FINISH: at Sapporo

DURATION: 13 days

PRICE: AUD \$12,050 per person

GROUP size: 10 people

SINGLE SUPP: AUD \$2,050 per person

REF: GFH-27

TOUR OVERVIEW

The 2027 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 the island of Hokkaido. Hokkaido is becoming very popular among serious Japan lovers as the next 'it' destination, and you will visit many of the 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.

*The group size of our Hokkaido tours is a maximum of 10, instead of our usual 8, because we use a comfortable larger size minibus throughout the tour of Hokkaido. Due to this, we also require a minimum of 6 guests for this tour to be guaranteed to operate.

*This Food Tour is carefully designed to showcase the variety of Japanese traditional and modern meals, consequentially we are unable to alter menus to accommodate individual dietary preferences, including allergies.

*Accommodation will be as planned below or similar.

DAY	PLAN	DETAILS	MEALS	ACCOMODATION
1	Airport meet and greet on arrival	<p>Welcome to the 2027 Food Tour of Hokkaido, Japan.</p> <p>Upon arrival at New Chitose Airport or JR Sapporo Station, you will be warmly greeted by your Journey to the East guide and escorted to your hotel, conveniently located within the airport terminal. Even if you arrive early, there is no need to worry about waiting around - New Chitose Airport is a destination in its own right. Explore its famous ramen alley, visit the Royce' Chocolate World factory, browse specialty boutiques, enjoy excellent restaurants, or even relax in the airport's onsen.</p> <p>After a restful night, you will be ready to begin the first full day of your Hokkaido culinary adventure tomorrow.</p>	No meals	Air Terminal Hotel [Western style room]

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		<p>While Hokkaido is often associated with powder snow, world-class skiing, and long winters, this tour takes place in early summer - arguably the most delightful season. Expect fresh green landscapes, comfortable temperatures ranging from approximately 12°C (54°F) in the evening to 22°C (72°F) during the day, and seasonal produce at its very best.</p>		
2	Guided tour of Obihiro	<p>After breakfast at an airport café - your first taste of Japan's classic "morningu setto" (set breakfast) - your Hokkaido food journey begins in earnest.</p> <p>Your first stop is Yubari, synonymous with the prized Yubari King Melon - Japan's most celebrated luxury fruit. Often seen in high-end Tokyo department stores, perfectly wrapped and presented in individual boxes, these melons can command tens of thousands of yen each at auction.</p> <p>Here, you will visit a melon grading facility to gain rare insight into the meticulous cultivation, sugar-level testing, and strict selection process that define premium Japanese fruit culture. Learn how terroir, climate, and craftsmanship combine to produce the melon's signature fragrance, fine-textured flesh, and extraordinary sweetness.</p> <p>After a light lunch, you will have the opportunity to pick seasonal fruit yourself - and, of course, taste it at peak freshness.</p> <p>This afternoon, you continue to Obihiro, located in the fertile Tokachi Plain, often called Hokkaido's breadbasket. The region is renowned for its dairy, wheat, beans, and pristine produce - foundations of Hokkaido's distinct culinary identity.</p> <p>Tonight, enjoy a special "Welcome to Japan" dinner at a carefully selected local restaurant, introducing you to the flavours of Tokachi through seasonal ingredients and regional specialities.</p> <p>Your accommodation is a luxury onsen resort. Unwind in the mineral-rich hot spring baths - an essential Japanese experience - and let the restorative waters prepare you for the gourmet discoveries ahead.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Tokachigawa Onsen Daiichi Hotel Toyotei [Western style room at River side]

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3	Guided tour of Obihiro	<p>Today is a deep dive into the agricultural heart of Hokkaido, a region revered by Japanese food connoisseurs for its pristine terroir and exceptional produce.</p> <p>Your morning begins at a local potato farm that has been family-run for over a century. Potatoes are one of Hokkaido's defining crops, and here you will learn how the island's fertile volcanic soil and cool climate create superior texture and sweetness. You will also take part in making imomochi (potato mochi), a comforting regional specialty with a delicately chewy texture - simple, honest, and deeply satisfying.</p> <p>After a farm lunch featuring seasonal ingredients, continue to a boutique dairy farm producing high-quality butter from grass-fed cows. Hokkaido accounts for the majority of Japan's dairy production, and Tokachi in particular is known for its rich milk, clean flavours, and artisanal craftsmanship. Taste the difference that open pastures, pure water, and careful husbandry make in world-class Japanese dairy.</p> <p>On your return journey, pause at the Tokachi Hill Observatory, where sweeping views across the vast Tokachi Plain reveal why this region is called Japan's breadbasket. A brief stop at a respected local sweet shop offers another glimpse into Hokkaido's refined dessert culture - where dairy, beans, and wheat come together in elegant confections.</p> <p>This evening, enjoy a generous buffet dinner at your hotel, an excellent opportunity to sample a wide range of Hokkaido produce - from freshly harvested vegetables and seafood to dairy, meats, and seasonal specialties - beautifully prepared and thoughtfully presented.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Tokachigawa Onsen Daiichi Hotel Toyotei [Western style room at River side]

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4	Transfer to and guided tour of Shiraoi and Noboribetsu	<p>This morning, travel by private minibus from Obihiro to Shiraoi, continuing your culinary exploration of southern Hokkaido.</p> <p>You won't have to wait long to experience one of Japan's most celebrated ingredients: wagyu beef. Today's highlight is premium Shiraoi Beef, one of Hokkaido's finest wagyu brands, renowned for its exquisite marbling, refined sweetness, and clean finish. Enjoy it at a farm restaurant, grilled yakiniku-style - allowing the delicate fat to render gently and release its signature aroma.</p> <p>Next, visit the impressive Upopoy National Ainu Museum and Park, Japan's first national museum dedicated to the indigenous Ainu people. Through beautifully curated exhibits, traditional architecture, and cultural demonstrations, you will gain a deeper understanding of Hokkaido's history and the Ainu's spiritual connection to nature, food, and land - an essential cultural foundation for appreciating the region's cuisine.</p> <p>In the afternoon, continue to Noboribetsu, Hokkaido's most famous hot spring resort. Your guide will lead you on a walk through Jigokudani (Hell Valley), a dramatic volcanic landscape that produces approximately 10,000 tons of mineral-rich hot water daily. Along the trail, observe steaming vents and intermittently erupting geysers - a vivid reminder of the geothermal forces beneath your feet.</p> <p>Tonight, stay at a high-class traditional ryokan. Savour an elegant multi-course kaiseki dinner showcasing seasonal Hokkaido ingredients, then unwind in the therapeutic onsen baths. Refined cuisine, serene surroundings, and impeccable Japanese hospitality - an unforgettable evening at its finest.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Takinoya [Japanese style room/Japanese & Western room]

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5	Guided tour of Toyoura and Onuma	<p>Today, immerse yourself in Hokkaido's seafood, scallops - a hallmark of northern Japan's coastal cuisine.</p> <p>Your morning begins in the charming fishing village of Toyoura, where a local guide will share the fascinating lifecycle of Hokkaido scallops, from tiny eggs to the plump, sweet delicacies enjoyed across Japan. Witness hands-on harvesting techniques and auction process, gain an appreciation for the meticulous care required to produce such premium seafood.</p> <p>After tasting Hokkaido's juicy, sun-ripened strawberries on a way at a farm, you enjoy a lunch lovingly prepared by a local lady.</p> <p>In the afternoon, you travel further south to Onuma Park, a picturesque quasi-national park known for its serene lake dotted with small islands connected by charming bridges. Take a leisurely stroll along walking paths and soaking in views of Mt. Komagatake and surrounding forests.</p> <p>Tonight, you'll stay in an exquisite western-style auberge, a refreshing contrast to last night's traditional ryokan. The highlight is a refined French-style dinner, "Onuma 50 miles," crafted with fresh local vegetables and seafood, celebrating Hokkaido's rich culinary bounty while offering a sophisticated international flair.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Hakodate Onuma Tsuruga Resort Epyu [Twin room]
6	Guided tour of Minami Kayabe and Hakodate	<p>Today highlights one of Hokkaido's iconic seafood treasures: kombu (kelp), the essential ingredient in Japan's famous dashi stock. Hokkaido is Japan's largest producer of kombu, prized for its rich umami flavor and role as the backbone of traditional Japanese cuisine.</p> <p>Begin the day in a quaint kombu fishing village, where local fishermen will share the secrets of harvesting, drying, and selecting kombu. You'll also learn the art of making perfect dashi, a cornerstone of Japanese cooking, directly from those who have practiced the craft for generations.</p> <p>In the late afternoon, travel to Hakodate, a historic port city known for its scenic harbor and rich seafood culture. Before settling in, your guide will take you to Mt Hakodate, offering one of the world's most celebrated night views. From the summit, you can see the glittering city lights spread around the harbor, creating a panoramic scene that perfectly captures the magic of Hokkaido at dusk.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Century Marina Hakodate [Deluxe Twin]

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7	Guided tour of Hakodate	<p>Hakodate is a city steeped in history, a vibrant melting pot of Japanese and Western cultures, and a delight for culinary explorers.</p> <p>Start your day at Goryokaku Fort, a massive star-shaped citadel built during the final years of the Edo Period. Designed to defend Hokkaido from Western encroachment, the fort is a striking example of Western-style military architecture. Hakodate itself holds a unique place in Japanese history as one of the first ports to open after the Edo isolation policy, and the influence of Western culture is still visible throughout the city.</p> <p>Next, visit a green tea merchant founded in 1937, where you'll learn the meticulous process of Japanese tea production - from harvesting and steaming to drying and brewing. Gain insight into the craftsmanship that produces Japanese-quality green tea, a perfect complement to the country's rich food culture.</p> <p>Lunch is at Hakodate's famous seafood market, renowned for its astonishing variety of fresh seafood. Enjoy a free-choice lunch, sampling sashimi, shellfish, grilled seafood, or other local specialties - a true paradise for Japanese food enthusiasts.</p> <p>In the afternoon, enjoy a guided walking tour of the Motomachi district, known for its historic churches, Western-style houses, and colorful streets that reflect Hakodate's multicultural heritage.</p> <p>The evening is free to explore Hakodate's excellent restaurants, izakayas, and bars at your leisure - perfect for discovering hidden gems and tasting the local flavors in a lively port city setting.</p>	Breakfast	Century Marina Hakodate [Deluxe Twin]

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8	Guided tour of Kuromatsunai and Niseko	<p>Today takes you northward through Hokkaido's scenic landscapes, blending natural wonders with culinary pleasures.</p> <p>Your morning begins in Kuromatsunai, a small town celebrated as the northern limit of Japan's beech forest. This ecological treasure has been fiercely protected by locals, twice saving it from deforestation. Enjoy a guided 40-minute walk through the forest, where the towering beech trees, filtered sunlight, and serene environment provide a tranquil contrast to the food-focused experiences of previous days.</p> <p>Lunch today is a beachside BBQ overlooking the Sea of Japan. Savor fresh ingredients grilled to perfection while taking in the ocean breeze and coastal scenery - a relaxed, alfresco Hokkaido experience.</p> <p>In the afternoon, travel about an hour to Niseko, famous for its world-class ski resorts and fertile agricultural lands. Niseko is especially renowned for its dairy products, and no visit would be complete without a stop at Takanashi Dairy Farm to taste their famous fresh ice cream.</p> <p>Tonight, enjoy dinner at one of most popular restaurants among our past guests, offering a warm sophisticated atmosphere and dishes that highlight the region's local ingredients. It's the perfect introduction to Niseko's culinary charm after a day of forest walks and seaside BBQ.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Setsu Niseko [Deluxe Twin]
9	Guided tour of Yoichi and Otaru	<p>Today's journey takes you further north to explore Hokkaido's famed whisky, exquisite fruits, and charming port towns.</p> <p>Begin in Yoichi, best known as the birthplace of Nikka Whisky. Visit the historic Nikka Distillery and enjoy tasting a special whisky that is exclusive to this venue, a rare opportunity to savor Hokkaido craftsmanship in liquid form.</p> <p>Next, indulge your senses with a visit to a local orchard. Set against breathtaking scenery - the sea on one side, mountains on the other - this orchard is arguably the most beautiful "office" in the world. Sample Hokkaido's unique seasonal fruits and enjoy a light lunch overlooking this stunning panorama, blending nature and gastronomy.</p> <p>In the afternoon, transfer to Otaru, one of Hokkaido's most picturesque port towns.</p> <p>Tonight, settle into your hotel, which will serve as your base for the next two nights. After a brief orientation walk with your guide, enjoy dinner at Naruto, Otaru's famous fried chicken restaurant. Crispy, flavorful, and adored across Japan, the chicken pairs perfectly with a refreshing local craft beer - a delicious finale to a day full of Hokkaido highlights.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner	Authent Hotel Otaru [Deluxe Twin]

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10	Guided tour of Otaru	<p>Today begins with a journey into Otaru's rich maritime history. Your first stop is the Former Aoyama Villa, once the residence of affluent herring fishermen. These grand homes, known as Nishin Goten (herring mansions), reflect the prosperity brought by Otaru's herring industry from the 19th century through the 1950s. The villa's meticulously preserved architecture and luxurious materials offer a fascinating glimpse into the wealth and lifestyle of Hokkaido's historic fishing elite.</p> <p>After a guided walking tour of Sakai Street and the canal area, enjoy some free time along the Otaru's iconic thoroughfare lined with craft shops, local delicacies, and artisanal boutiques. It's a perfect chance to explore, shop, or simply soak in the atmosphere of this charming port town.</p> <p>In the afternoon, visit a local sake brewery to see the art and tradition behind Japan's prized rice wine. From fermentation to bottling, you'll gain insight into the meticulous process that produces Hokkaido's distinctive sake flavors.</p> <p>The day concludes with a meal at a top sushi restaurant in Otaru, celebrating yet another of the town's culinary specialties. Enjoy fresh seafood and masterful sushi preparations that showcase the quality and diversity of Hokkaido's coastal bounty.</p>	Breakfast, Dinner	Authent Hotel Otaru [Deluxe Twin]
11	Transfer to and guided tour of Sapporo	<p>Today, you journey to Sapporo, the vibrant capital of Hokkaido Prefecture, blending urban energy with historical charm.</p> <p>En route, visit the Okurayama Ski Jump Stadium, one of the venues for the 1972 Winter Olympics. From the Okurayama Observation Lounge, perched 307 meters above the ground, enjoy panoramic views of Sapporo's city centre, including the iconic Odori Park, and take in the surrounding mountains and urban landscape - a breathtaking perspective of Hokkaido's capital.</p> <p>For lunch, savor Hokkaido's most famous dish - ramen - at Sapporo Ramen Yokocho (Ramen Alley). This culinary hotspot offers a variety of rich, hearty bowls crafted with miso, shio, or shoyu broth, highlighting the depth and regional flavor of Hokkaido cuisine.</p> <p>In the afternoon, enjoy a walking guided tour of central Sapporo's historic sites, including the Former Hokkaido Government Office, the Clock Tower of the former Hokkaido Agricultural College, and the leafy Odori Park, each reflecting the city's unique blend of history, architecture, and green spaces.</p> <p>This evening is free to explore Sapporo's vibrant dining scene. From izakayas and ramen shops to fine dining and local craft beer bars, your guide can help you select a restaurant to match your tastes - the perfect finale to a day of sightseeing and gastronomic delights.</p>	Breakfast, Lunch	JR Tower Hotel Nikko Sapporo [Moderate Twin]

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12	Morning guided tour and free afternoon in Sapporo	<p>On your final day in Hokkaido, start with a visit to one of Sapporo's most iconic landmarks, Hokkaido Shrine. Wander through the vast shrine grounds, soaking in the serene atmosphere, and take a restful pause at the nearby tea house to enjoy classic Hokkaido sweets, a sweet conclusion to your spiritual morning.</p> <p>This afternoon is reserved for your personal interests. Sapporo offers a wealth of experiences: cultural and historical museums, immersive theme parks, tranquil parks and gardens, and some of Japan's finest shopping districts. Share your preferences with your guide, who will tailor suggestions to ensure a perfect final day.</p> <p>In the evening, gather for a farewell group dinner at a contemporary restaurant dedicated to sustainably grown, local ingredients. Every dish reflects the passion, care, and pride of Hokkaido's producers and chefs, offering a fitting finale to a tour that has celebrated the region's rich culinary and cultural heritage.</p>	Breakfast, Dinner	JR Tower Hotel Nikko Sapporo [Moderate Twin]
13	Departure	<p>After breakfast this morning, your 2027 Food Tour of Hokkaido, Japan comes to a close. You may depart directly from New Chitose Airport for your journey home, taking with you unforgettable memories of Hokkaido's cuisine, culture, and landscapes.</p> <p>Alternatively, consider lingering longer in Hokkaido or elsewhere in Japan. Whether it's exploring another region, visiting hot springs, or diving deeper into Japanese culinary experiences, we would be delighted to plan a personalized post-tour extension to make your journey even more extraordinary.</p>	Breakfast	
	Inclusions for Group Tour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 12 nights' accommodation (including traditional Japanese inns) ■ All breakfasts ■ 8 lunches ■ 9 dinners ■ Meet and greet on arrival at New Chitose Airport (Sapporo) ■ Airport transfer at departure in Sapporo by public transport ■ All local transport (private minibus) ■ Expert English-speaking tour guides (locally licensed) ■ Cultural activities and entry fees included in the itinerary 		

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Exclusions for Group Tour

- 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)