

24 Day Itinerary

Sample Itinerary: 23-Night Tohoku, Hakodate & Sapporo

- | | |
|-------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Day 1 | Airport meeting
Transfer · Private car to hotel
Orientation
The Prince Gallery Tokyo Kioicho (3 nights) |
| Day 2 | Full-day private tour of Tokyo with local transport |
| Day 3 | Overnight luggage transfer: Tokyo - Nikko
Day at leisure in Tokyo |
| Day 4 | Rail · Ticket: Tokyo Station to Nikko Station
Half-day private tour of Nikko with private car
The Ritz-Carlton Nikko (2 nights) |
| Day 5 | Day at leisure in Nikko |
| Day 6 | Nikko - Aizu-Wakamatsu via Ouchi-juku Town with private car and guide
Keiryu no Yado Keizan (3 nights) |
| Day 7 | Full-day private tour of Aizu-Wakamatsu with private car |
| Day 8 | Overnight luggage transfer: Ashinomaki Onsen to Sendai
Full-day private tour of Aizu-Wakamatsu with private car |
| Day 9 | Transfer · Private car to station |

	Rail · Ticket: Aizu-Wakamatsu Station to Sendai Station Half-day private tour of Sendai with private car Saryou Souen (3 nights)
Day 10	Day at leisure in Sendai
Day 11	Full-day private tour of Sendai with private car
Day 12	Overnight luggage transfer: Sendai - Kakunodate Transfer · Private car to station Rail · Ticket: Sendai Station to Naruko-Onsen Station Naruko-Onsen Yumoto Kissho (3 nights)
Day 13	Day at leisure in Naruko-Onsen
Day 14	Day at leisure in Naruko-Onsen
Day 15	Rail · Ticket: Naruko-Onsen Station to Kakunodate Station Afternoon at leisure in Kakunodate Wa No I (3 nights)
Day 16	Day at leisure in Kakunodate
Day 17	Overnight luggage transfer: Kakunodate - Hakodate Full-day private tour of Dakigaeri Valley with private car
Day 18	Rail · Ticket: Kakunodate Station to Hakodate Station Afternoon at leisure in Hakodate Imagine Hotel Resort Hakodate (3 nights)
Day 19	Half-day private tour of Hakodate with local transport
Day 20	Overnight luggage transfer: Hakodate - Sapporo Day at leisure in Hakodate
Day 21	Rail · Ticket: Hakodate Station to Sapporo Station Afternoon at leisure in Sapporo JR Tower Hotel Nikko Sapporo (3 nights)
Day 22	Day at leisure in Sapporo
Day 23	Full-day private tour of Otaru with private car
Day 24	Transfer · Private car to airport

Day 1

Airport meeting

After clearing immigration, you will be met by a member of staff and escorted to your private car.

Transfer · Private car to hotel

Departing
Airport

Arriving
Prince Gallery

Notes

- You will be transferred to your hotel by private car.



Orientation

In order for your holiday to be as enjoyable and stress-free as possible, we have included a private and personalised orientation session, where you will be given everything you need to travel confidently in Japan.

One of our English-speaking staff members will meet you in the lobby of your hotel and will go through your itinerary with you, day by day, and answer any questions you may have. You'll also receive your "welcome pack" of additional information, such as tourist maps of each destination, suggested walking routes, and detailed information on any special activities you may have booked, as well as a Japanese phrase sheet, which should help you travel in Japan more easily!



The Prince Gallery Tokyo Kioicho

03-3234-1111

1-2, Kioicho, Chiyoda, Tokyo, 102-0094

〒102-8585 東京都千代区紀尾井町1-2

3:00 PM

Check-in

12:00 PM

Check-out

3 nights

Duration

Kioicho is a town embraced in luscious greenery and a rich history, where Japanese traditions and Western culture intertwine. It's here, in Tokyo's most dignified neighbourhood, that The Prince Gallery Tokyo Kioicho welcomes guests. It is a hotel that marries lush nature and artistic designs with cutting-edge functions in a sophisticated manner, accompanied by the top floor views as magnificent as paintings. The Prince Gallery Tokyo Kioicho offers a personalised environment like never before,

delivering comfort that's customised to the needs of each guest in an exquisite atmosphere via the latest and seamless services.

Room Selection

Category

Grand Deluxe Corner King

Room Description

58 sqm. Ample natural light from oversized windows and a refined palette of gold, orange, umber, and cream underscore the space's sleek but inviting ambience. Crowned by a cream leather headboard, the plump bed invites you to take in a favourite program on the 55-inch 4K-resolution television. Separated by glass doors and encased in grey marble, the bathroom extends the space's open atmosphere. A glass-enclosed wet room features a deep soaking bathtub as well as a rainforest shower with handheld wand and bench. Plush robes and signature Luxury Collection bath amenities elevate the experience. Guests of our Club Rooms enjoy access to our Club Lounge.

- Breakfast included

Day 2



Full-day private tour of Tokyo with local transport

Spend today exploring some of Tokyo's highlights with your guide.

Start your day at Meiji Jingu, Tokyo's most important shrine, situated in a large, forest-area in amongst the bustling city. From here you'll venture over to the trendy nearby districts of Harajuku and Omotesando: the former is the centre of Japanese teen culture, bursting with life, and the latter boasts more buildings by great modern architects than anywhere else.

In the afternoon explore Shibuya, one of Tokyo's busiest, most colourful districts, and home to the famous 'Shibuya Crossing.' The area has many great arcades where you can try Japanese-style games and make some memories in the amazing 'purikura' photo booths.

Famous for shopping and nightlife as well as unparalleled people watching, Shinjuku Station is the busiest station in the world and is surrounded by department stores, restaurants, and izakaya. You could then end the day trying out one of the most famous Japanese pastimes, karaoke. There is no shortage of karaoke venues in the city, and it's easy to simply walk in and request a private room to sing the night away!

- Guided
- Transport: Local transport

Day 3

Overnight luggage transfer: Tokyo - Nikko

To allow you to travel comfortably your luggage will be sent from Tokyo to Nikko overnight. We suggest packing a small overnight bag as you will be without the bulk of your luggage for your arrival night in Nikko.



Day at leisure in Tokyo

Spend today exploring independently at your leisure. We suggest starting your day at the Hamarikyu Garden. Located right by Tokyo Bay, it features tidal seawater ponds, as well as a tea house on an island, where visitors can take a rest and enjoy the scenery. The traditionally styled garden stands in stark contrast to the skyscrapers of the next door Shiodome district. From there you can take a boat along the Sumida River to Asakusa to see Senso-ji, Tokyo's oldest and most famous Buddhist temple.

From Asakusa we recommend heading to Kappabashi, Tokyo's restaurant-supply district, a wonderful area for souvenir shopping for all things cooking-related. Convincingly realistic plastic replicas of Japanese foods, the likes of which you may have seen displayed in restaurant windows, can also be found here.

If you're still feeling energetic this evening, why not head to Tokyo Skytree? One of the tallest structures in the world, the views from the top are magnificent. With 360° views, you can watch the metropolis glisten below.

- Unguided

Day 4

Rail · Ticket: Tokyo Station to Nikko Station

Departing
Tokyo Station

Arriving
Nikko Station

Train Type
Japan Rail Shinkansen &
Local Line

Notes

- Make your way to the station this morning.
- Take the bullet train to Utsunomiya Station before changing to the Nikko Line for Nikko Station.



Your guide and driver will meet you at the station and take you on a half-day tour.

You will visit the intricately carved Toshogu Shrine complex, which, unlike more austere shrines elsewhere in Japan, is elaborately carved, decorated, and gilded. Most famous of the painted carvings are those of a sleeping cat, as well as the three wise monkeys of Asian folklore. The shrine complex was designated as a World Heritage Site in 1999, and the detail is said to be the best remaining example of Edo period workmanship in the country.

You'll also visit the Rinno-ji Temple, which dates from the eight century and houses three important Buddhist deities. The Futarasan Shrine - a Shinto place of worship - also, interestingly, founded in the eighth century by a Buddhist monk, is the third of Nikko's main sights.

At the end of your tour you will be dropped off at your hotel.

- Guided
- Transport: Private car



The Ritz-Carlton Nikko

0288-25-6666
2482, Chugushi, Nikko, Tochigi 321-1661, Japan
2482, 中宮祠 光市 栃県 321-1661

3:00 PM
Check-in

12:00 PM
Check-out

2 nights
Duration

Secluded along Lake Chuzen-ji and overlooking Mount Nantai, The Ritz-Carlton Nikko - built in 2020 - breathes tranquility. Throughout, local elements are elevated yet they retain Japan's beautiful minimalism: luxury accommodations feature traditional engawas - or porches - and the wellness experience is highlighted by indoor and outdoor onsen baths.

Enjoy Afternoon Tea in the Lobby Lounge, or head to the spa for an afternoon of relaxation.

For dinner, head to either the Japanese restaurant where you can enjoy delights such as teppanyaki and sushi, or stop by the Lakehouse, a Western courtyard restaurant that uses fresh local food from nearby farms in its carefully crafted menu. Afterwards, make your way to the bar to try an array of beverages including Japanese sake.

Room Selection

Category

Riverside Garden View King

Room Description

This stunning King room features warm hues of cream and pale gold, with floor-to-ceiling windows to allow plenty of natural light. Enjoy views of the the riverside garden from the bedroom and the bathtub, and make use of the double vanity with luxury Asprey amenities.

- Breakfast included

Day 5



Day at leisure in Nikko

Enjoy a day at leisure, relaxing at your ryokan and exploring the scenic nature.

Formed when the now extinct Mount Nantai last erupted, the Lake Chuzenji area is refreshingly cool in the summer, and once acted as a summer residence for foreign embassies to Tokyo. There are walking trails both around the lake, which allow you to take in some of Nikko's more famous waterfalls, and takes a little over an hour. There are also hiking trails in the hills around, though if you plan to climb Mount Nantai do be aware that it can take a full day, depending on your fitness level and speed.

- Unguided



Nikko - Aizu-Wakamatsu via Ouchi-juku Town with private car and guide

This morning you will be met by your driver and guide and will be transferred to your next destination.

On the way, stop by Ouchijuku, a former post town along the Aizu-Nishi Kaido trade route, which connected Aizu with Nikko during the Edo Period. Restrictions set by the shogunate required travellers to make their long journeys on foot and as a result, post towns developed along the routes to provide travellers with food, accommodations and rest.

Today, Ouchijuku has been restored to look as it did in the Edo Period with telephone and electricity wires buried. The unpaved main street is lined by thick thatched roof buildings, which house a variety of shops, restaurants and minshuku (small traditional Japanese inns). Soba noodles and locally caught char fish roasted on sticks are popular specialities.

Ouchijuku's former *Honjin*, the principle inn for high ranked government officials, is also located along the main street and open to the public as a museum. It offers visitors an example of elegant, traditional housing interior of the Edo Period and includes a collection of dishes, clothing and other artifacts.

Also of note are Ouchijuku's shrine and temple. The temple is located at the end of the main street up a steep set of stairs. Visitors are rewarded with a panoramic view of the main street and its surroundings. A five minute walk off the main road stands a quiet shrine, set back in a patch of cedar trees. Its pleasant atmosphere and unique purification fountain make for a nice visit.

At the end of your tour you will be dropped off at your ryokan.

- Guided
- Transport: Private car



Keiryu no Yado Keizan

0242-92-2031

Shitadaira-984-3 Otomachi Oaza Ashinomaki, Aizuwakamatsu, Fukushima

969-5147, Japan

〒969-5147 福島県会津若松市町字芦牧下夕平984-3

3:00 PM

Check-in

10:00 AM

Check-out

3 nights

Duration

This charming ryokan sits atop a mountain overlooking the valley below, and is the perfect place to unwind. Take advantage of the natural hot springs in this area in the public indoor bath and also in the outdoor baths that you can rent for private use.

Enjoy the stunning kaiseki meals, crafted using only the freshest ingredients, and wash it down with some delicious sake.

Room Selection

Category

Special Japanese Room

Room Description

This traditional Japanese room allows you to enjoy an authentic stay. Unwind on a comfortable futon and take in the gorgeous valley views from the seating area. A traditional wood or stone bath can be enjoyed with the large windows opened to let in the fresh mountain air.

- Breakfast and dinner included

Day 7



Full-day private tour of Aizu-Wakamatsu with private car

Today enjoy a full-day private tour of nearby Aizu Wakamatsu.

Start at Oyakuen, a pleasant Japanese landscape garden with pond. Oyakuen can be translated as "Medicinal Herb Garden", a name given in the 18th century when the feudal lord encouraged citizens to cultivate medicinal plants. So, besides its pond garden, Oyakuen has a herb garden where hundreds of types of medicinal plants are still grown. Oyakuen's main garden consists of carefully cultivated greenery centred around a pond. A path winds around the the pond, and walking along it is the best way to enjoy the garden.

From there we suggest heading to the nearby Fukushima Prefectural Museum, which has an extensive permanent exhibition that illustrates Japan's entire history, stretching from archaeological finds from the Jomon Period (300 BC) to artefacts of daily life in the 1950s. The building is big and spacious, allowing the museum to feature quite large and impressive displays. In addition to the permanent exhibition, there is space devoted to hosting varying temporary exhibitions that pass through. The Fukushima Museum presents an interesting and informative survey of Japanese history and culture, as well as the particularities of Fukushima Prefecture. A thorough English pamphlet is available which explains most of the permanent exhibition.

Next door to the museum is Tsuruga Castle, surrounded by Tsuruga Castle Park, which is rather impressive. The park has well tended lawns and cherry trees, which are particularly attractive when they are in bloom around mid April. The surrounding moat and stone walls, which previously served defensive purposes, now contribute to the pleasant atmosphere of the park. Near the castle there are a few other sites of interest. Still inside Tsuruga Castle Park is Rinkaku Teahouse, where the feudal lords used to hold the tea ceremony. The teahouse is surrounded by a small garden, and visitors can try some of the green tea themselves.

Finally, head to the Sazaedo Temple. Built in 1796, this stunningly unique Buddhist temple structure is the only one of its kind in the entire world. Built in a hexagonal shape, the inside features a double-helix slope, meaning that those ascending and those descending will not cross paths.

- Guided
- Transport: Private car

Day 8

Overnight luggage transfer: Ashinomaki Onsen to Sendai

To allow you to travel comfortably your luggage will be sent from Ashinomaki Onsen to Sendai overnight. We suggest packing a small overnight bag as you will be without the bulk of your luggage for your final evening here.



Your guide will take you on another full-day private tour today.

This morning, head to the Inawashiro Lake, the crystal clear lake that is known for its mirroring effect. Head out on a sightseeing boat, where you can learn about the stunning beauty of the lake.

Then, head back into town and visit the Aizu Sake Museum. The Aizu Wakamatsu area is naturally blessed with the three requisites for brewing good sake: high quality rice, an abundance of pure water, and cold weather. Rice and water are the two ingredients of sake, and the cold weather is desirable during the fermentation process. Since Aizu's sake brewers could avail themselves to these things before the advent of modern technology, the region has had a long tradition of sake brewing.

Over the course of Aizu's rich sake producing history, local technique and expertise has developed immensely and many quality sake producers have evolved. One of them, Miyaizumi, has partly converted its old brewery into the Aizu Sake Museum. The museum offers visitors a look at both Aizu's sake brewing history and the sake making process generally. Both modern and traditional sake making equipment is on display. Adding to the enjoyment of a visit, some sake sampling opportunities are available.

If you've now got a taste for some sake, also nearby is the Suehiro Sake Brewery, one of the largest and most famous sake producers in the Tohoku Region. Founded in 1850, it has been a family owned business for eight generations. Suehiro's sake is famous throughout Japan and annually wins domestic and international awards. Suehiro Brewery is open to visitors, and offers hourly guided tours. The tour includes a walk through the brewing areas with explanations of the sake making process, a small museum with displays of the brewery's history and the history of sake making, and a visit to the factory store with a tasting bar where you can sample from and buy nearly their entire product line.

- Guided
- Transport: Private car

Day 9

Transfer · Private car to station

Departing

Keiryu no Yado Keizan

Arriving

Aizu-Wakamatsu Station

Notes

- After breakfast you will be transferred to the station via private car.

Rail · Ticket: Aizu-Wakamatsu Station to Sendai Station

Departing

Aizu-Wakamatsu Station

Arriving

Sendai Station

Train Type

Local Line & Japan Rail
Shinkansen

Notes

- Take a local line train to Koriyama Station before changing to a bullet train to Sendai.



Half-day private tour of Sendai with private car

On arrival in Sendai, your guide and driver will meet you and take you on a half-day private tour of some of Sendai's highlights.

First, head to Rinno-ji Temple, built in 1441. At first this temple may seem somewhat unexceptional, but the real delight lies behind the temple itself in a stunning Japanese garden complete with pagoda. Sit for a moment and enjoy the sounds of the birds chirping, and you will find yourself transported back centuries.

Then, head to the site of the Aoba Castle ruins. Although very little stands today, you can take a look around the commemorative museum which features models of the castle as it stood in the Edo Period, artefacts from the castle, and a short movie, in Japanese, on the castle. As the castle was built here for its great lookout vantage over the city, it is a great spot to see Sendai as a whole.

From there head to the nearby Zuiho-den Mausoleum, that of Date Masamune, the powerful feudal lord that ruled over Sendai from Aoba Castle in the Edo Period. Designed in the style of the Momoyama Period, the mausoleum features intricate patterns filled with vivid colours. A small museum beside the mausoleum shows some of the personal belongings of the Date family, and even some specimens of their bones and hair.

At the end of your tour, you will be dropped off at your ryokan.

- Guided
- Transport: Private car



Saryou Souen

022-398-2311

Kamatsuchihigashi-1 Akiumachi Yumoto, Taihaku Ward, Sendai, Miyagi 982-0241, Japan

〒982-0241 宮城県仙台市太白区秋保町湯元釜東1

3:00 PM

Check-in

11:00 AM

Check-out

3 nights

Duration

This gorgeous ryokan complex is situated in the Akiu Onsen area, along the crystal-clear Natori River. The lovely 26,000 square-metre Japanese garden and the architectural beauty of the traditional sukiya-style make for a relaxing space in which to enjoy the slowed-down local way of life.

Guest rooms are authentically styled, and each faces the Japanese garden outside. Enjoy the indoor and outdoor baths and dive into the delicious world of Tohoku Chakaiseki cuisine, crafted using the freshest, local ingredients.

For ultimate relaxation, enjoy a spa treatment in the comfort of your own room.

Room Selection

Category

Taizan Room (Annex)

Room Description

This traditional Japanese room is warm and comfortable, featuring all the classic design elements such as tatami and sliding paper doors. Rest on the luxury futon bedding and enjoy your private open-air bath with a view into the garden, where you can spot a small waterfall in front of your room.

- Breakfast and dinner included



Today, head off to nearby Matsushima, which is famous for its bay.

Your ryokan will be able to arrange for a taxi to take you to Sendai Station, from where you can take a train to Matsushima Kaigan (Bay).

The bay is dotted with many pine-clad islets and has been ranked one of Japan's three most scenic views for centuries, alongside Miyajima and Amanohashidate. The small town is also known for Zuiganji, one of the Tohoku Region's most important Zen temples.

A good way to enjoy the bay is by sightseeing cruise. Multiple companies offer various courses, including circular cruises starting and ending at Matsushima and cruises that connect Matsushima with nearby Shiogama. Longer cruises will get you to the more remote areas of Oku-Matsushima which are less spoiled by industrial and urban development. Cruises last 25-50 minutes, cost between 1000 and 1500 yen and depart frequently.

Oshima is a small, pine tree covered island close to the pier of Matsushima. The island can be accessed over a short bridge free of charge and offers some pleasant, short walks. Oshima used to be a retreat for monks, and decorated meditation caves can still be found on the island. The bridge to Oshima was destroyed in the 2011 tsunami, but was rebuilt and reopened two years later.

Also of note is the *Kanrantei*, a Momoyama style tea house originally built in Kyoto. *Kanrantei* means "place to view ripples on water", due to its beautiful view over the water and surrounding islands.

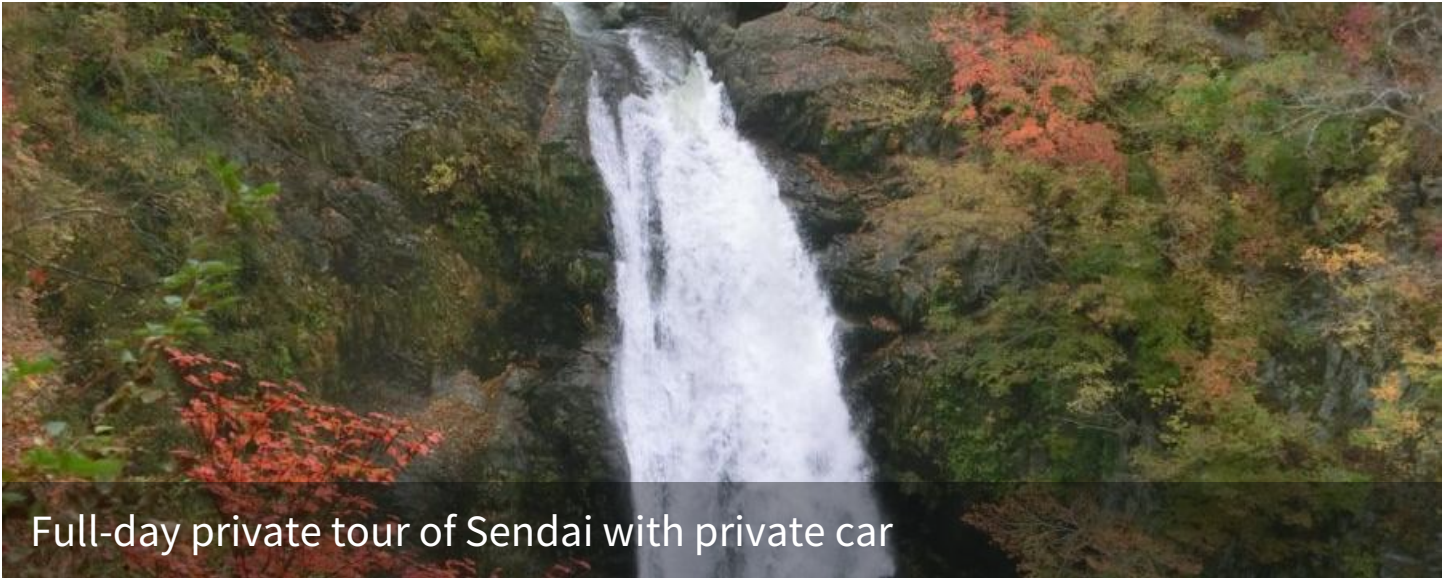
The tea house has two rooms, each with beautiful golden sliding doors (*fusuma*), which were used to house the feudal lords' wives, visiting princesses and envoys of the shogun. These days visitors are able to admire the rooms while having tea (from 600 yen). Behind the tea house is the small Matsushima Museum which houses armor, weapons, tools and other relics of the feudal times.

The Godaido is a small temple hall on an islet just next to the boat pier. Due to its prominent location, it has become a symbol of Matsushima. Godaido was built in 807 and contains five statues which were enshrined by the same priest who founded nearby Zuiganji. The statues are displayed to the public only once every 33 years, and were last displayed in 2006, so sadly won't be on display on this occasion. The present building is a 1604 reconstruction by the local feudal lord Date Masamune.

Zuiganji is one of the Tohoku Region's most famous and prominent Zen temples, and is well known for its beautifully gilded and painted sliding doors (*fusuma*). Zuiganji was originally founded in 828 as a temple of the Tendai sect, and was converted into a Zen temple during the Kamakura Period (1192-1333). After years of decline, Zuiganji was restored to prominence by the feudal lord Date Masamune who rebuilt it as his family temple in 1609.

- Unguided

Day 11



Full-day private tour of Sendai with private car

This morning your guide will meet you and you will be taken on a full-day private tour.

First, head to Rairaiyoko Gorge, a beautiful rocky gorge with a 1km walking trail that hugs the rock walls about 20m above the river below. There are plenty of lovely spots for photos, the most charming of which is the 'Lover's Sanctuary Spot' by Nozoki Bridge, where you can spot a naturally-formed heart-shaped cavity in the canyon. It is often filled with water from the previous rain, so it is said that you can see your lover's reflection in the heart.

Next, head further up the valley to the Akiu Great Falls. Past a beautiful old shrine in the forest you will find yourself on a platform looking at the majestic waterfall, 55 metres high. If you are feeling adventurous, you can walk to the base of the falls, but be careful - the stairs are slippery. If you would prefer to relax for a moment instead, stop at the on-site teahouse for a hot drink and a snack.

This afternoon, head to the Nikka Miyagiko Distillery for an inside tour on the elaborate process behind the famous whisky distilled here. These group tours are conducted in Japanese but you will be provided with an English headset with all the information translated. Your guide for the day will also be able to ask the guide any further questions you may have. At the end of the tour you can try some of the whisky for free, and if one takes your fancy, there is plenty available for purchase too.

- Guided
- Transport: Private car

Day 12

Overnight luggage transfer: Sendai - Kakunodate

To allow you to travel comfortably your luggage will be sent from Sendai to Kakunodate overnight. We suggest packing a small overnight bag as you will be without the bulk of your luggage for the next two nights.

Transfer · Private car to station

Departing
Saryou Souen

Arriving
Sendai Station

Notes

- After breakfast you will be transferred to the station by private car.

Rail · Ticket: Sendai Station to Naruko-Onsen Station

Departing
Sendai Station

Arriving
Naruko-Onsen Station

Train Type
Japan Rail Shinkansen &
Local Line Train

Notes

- Take the bullet train to Furukawa Station and change to a local line train bound for Naruko-Onsen.
- Your accommodation is just a few minutes' walk from the station.



Naruko-Onsen Yumoto Kissho

0229-82-4451

Yumoto-58-10 Narukoonsen, Ōsaki, Miyagi 989-6823, Japan

〒989-6823 宮城県崎市鳴温泉湯元58-10

3:00 PM

Check-in

11:00 AM

Check-out

3 nights

Duration

The Naruko Onsen area is tiny, and off-the-beaten-track village, known for its natural hot springs and its kokeshi dolls.

A stay at Yumoto Kissho is sure to relax and revitalise. The well-appointed rooms are stylistically authentic yet practically modern and stylish, and the on-site onsen are a real treat for the body and soul. Indoor and outdoor baths, as well as a private rental bath, give ample opportunity for some rest and relaxation on this quiet interval in your journey.

Room Selection

Category

Shounun

Room Description

This 100sqm room comes complete with wide twin beds, an indoor bath and a private open-air bath. Relax out on the terrace where you can find wicker chairs, and enjoy the traditional Japanese decorations such as tatami mats and sliding doors.

- Breakfast and dinner included

Day 13



Day at leisure in Naruko-Onsen

Spend the day relaxing at your accommodation, or perhaps head out to explore the local village.

There are a number of shrines and temples, including the Tosen-in Temple, and the Naruko Onsen Shrine.

You will find kokeshi dolls wherever you go, as this village has a rich history of making them by hand. There are plenty of shops where you can buy these dolls, and even two museums dedicated to them, just down the road from your accommodation.

- Unguided

Day 14



Day at leisure in Naruko-Onsen

Spend the day at leisure. We recommend heading to the nearby Naruko Gorge, one of Miyagi Prefecture's most scenic spots.

The gorge is around two kilometres long, and the famous views of the Ofukazawa Bridge can be enjoyed from the observation deck that can be found next to the rest house.

You can venture down a number of steep paths into the gorge, where the breathtaking Naruko Gorge Walking Trail once ran the length of the gorge. Unfortunately, an earthquake in 2008 led to the closure of most of this route, and today only short sections of it are open to tourists at either end from 9:00 - 16:00 each day.

At any rate, this area is stunning and a walk here (around an hour from your hotel) is a nice way to leisurely stretch your legs. Alternatively, your hotel will be able to arrange a taxi to take you to the gorge and pick you up when you are done exploring.

- Unguided

Day 15

Rail · Ticket: Naruko-Onsen Station to Kakunodate Station

Departing	Arriving	Train Type
Naruko-Onsen Station	Kakunodate Station	Local Lines

Notes

- Take a local line train to Shinjo Station before transferring to another local line for Omagari.
- At Omagari, hop on a 10-minute bullet train to Kakunodate Station.



Afternoon at leisure in Kakunodate

Spend the afternoon relaxing at your accommodation, or head around the town for some exploring at leisure.

- Unguided



Wa No I

0187-53-2774

Japan, 〒014-0311 Akita, Semboku, Kakunodatemachi Tamachikamicho,
1 1 -1

〒014-0311 秋県仙北市館町町上丁 1 1 -1

3:00 PM

Check-in

10:00 AM

Check-out

3 nights

Duration

Wanoi Kakunodate comprises of a small collection of renovated historical storehouses, which are scattered throughout the town of Kakunodate, a town also known as 'Little Kyoto' for its samurai residences.

You can experience the lifestyle of the old times in the "Kura Storehouse - Where Life is Preserved," which is related to the background of the use of the storehouse. Once inside, you can enjoy feeling as if you have travelled back in time.

A stay includes breakfast delivered to your room - created using fresh, local ingredients.

Room Selection

Category

Nishinomiya Bukigura

Room Description

Built in 1919, this restored storehouse has two floors and a total of 150sqm.

The room features two large twin beds, a traditional irori fireplace and a stone bath, and the room is decorated with samurai tools.

- Breakfast included

Day 16



Day at leisure in Kakunodate

Spend the day exploring this area at leisure.

Wander around the Samurai district and the Merchant district, where you can see the traditional buildings and storehouses. Of the Samurai residences that still exist, six are open to the public - so you can head inside and step back in time to the feudal era of Japan! Many of the old merchant buildings are also still open as shops that sell local goods.

Next, head to Aoyagi Samurai Manor Museum, which features six galleries and a stunning Japanese garden. The Museum includes: the main house, an armor gallery, the Kaitaishinsho Gallery, the Akita Folk Museum, the Samurai Tool Museum, the Bakumatsu Gallery, and a Samurai Experience Booth, tea room and a gift shop.

Finally, stop by the Omura Art Museum, which has a beautiful collection of glassware. Or, if you are more interested in traditional crafts, the Nishinomiya House showcases lacquerware, tansu chests and sake flasks.

- Unguided

Day 17

Overnight luggage transfer: Kakunodate - Hakodate

To allow you to travel comfortably your luggage will be sent from Kakunodate to Hakodate overnight. We suggest packing a small overnight bag as you will be without the bulk of your luggage for your final night in Kakunodate.



Full-day private tour of Dakigaeri Valley with private car

Today, head to the nearby Dakigaeri Valley.

Known as the Yabakei of Tohoku, the virgin forests on both sides, the waterfalls on the rocks, and the unique blue waters of the streams are a beautiful sight. Famous for its beauty of verdure and autumn leaves. Easy-to-walk footpaths are available for viewing odd-shaped rocks, rapids, and waterfalls large and small. The view from the noticeable Kami-no-Iwahashi suspension bridge is magnificent.

- Guided
- Transport: Private car

Day 18

Rail · Ticket: Kakunodate Station to Hakodate Station

Departing
Kakunodate Station

Arriving
Hakodate Station

Train Type
Japan Rail Shinkanse &
Local Line Train

Notes

- Take two bullet trains Shin-Hakodate-Hokuto, before changing to a local line to Hakodate City.
- Part of the journey to Hokkaido includes travelling through the Seikan Tunnel (under the sea bed) on the bullet train.



Afternoon at leisure in Hakodate



Spend the afternoon exploring Motomachi. This quaint area was the district for foreign residents who came to Hakodate when the port was opened to foreign traders in 1854. Among the most famous buildings here are the Russian Orthodox Church, the Former British Consulate, the Chinese Memorial Hall, the prefectural government's former branch office building and the old Hakodate Public Hall. You can even stop for afternoon tea at the Former British Consulate.

Afterwards, explore the bay area with its red brick warehouses - now converted into shops and restaurants. Here you'll find stalls selling some of Hakodate's famous sweet treats - Snaffle's Cheesecake.

Finish the day by taking the ropeway up Mt Hakodate, to enjoy one of the best night views Japan has to offer.

- Unguided



Imagine Hotel Resort Hakodate

0138-57-9161

3 Chome-1-17 Yunokawacho, Hakodate, Hokkaido 042-0932, Japan

〒042-0932 北海道函館市湯川町3丁1-17

3:00 PM

Check-in

10:00 AM

Check-out

3 nights

Duration

A 12-minute walk from Hakodate train station, this upmarket hot spring hotel is 4 km from Mount Hakodate and 6 km from Goryokaku Park. Warmly decorated rooms have flat-screen TVs, mini fridges, and tea and coffee making facilities; some have sitting areas or chabudai dining tables with tatami mats. Dining options range from upscale eateries to a casual cafe. Additional amenities include a spa, a hot spring and a sauna, as well as a wooden soaking tub.

Room Selection

Category

Soreil Western-Japanese Room

Room Description

A bright room featuring twin beds and a traditional tatami mat area. With gorgeous views out over the ocean, this room is sure to lift your spirits.

- Breakfast included

Day 19



Your guide will meet you at the port ready for a half-day private tour of Hakodate.

Begin with a visit to the Hakodate Morning Market. The Hakodate Morning Market is held daily from 5am (from 6am during winter) to noon, just a few steps away from JR Hakodate Station. The market area spans about four city blocks.

Products on sale include various types of fresh seafood such as crabs (kani), salmon eggs (ikura) and sea urchin (uni), as well as fresh produce such as melons. Many restaurants can be found in the market area, offering fresh seafood breakfasts, such as uni-ikuradomburi.

Afterwards, head to Goryokaku Fort, the Former Magistrate's Office and Goryokaku Tower. Fort Goryokaku was built in the final years of the Edo period to protect Hokkaido from the threat posed by Imperial Western powers. After Hakodate lost its military power, the fort was converted into a public park. In the centre, you can find the Former Magistrate's Office, from where the former shogunate administered Hokkaido. The building was rebuilt and totally refurbished in 2010.

After the tour, we recommend spending the afternoon at leisure - exploring the city centre by foot, where you can grab a bite to eat, or do some souvenir shopping.

- Guided
- Transport: Local transport

Day 20

Overnight luggage transfer: Hakodate - Sapporo

To allow you to travel comfortably your luggage will be sent from Hakodate to Sapporo overnight. We suggest packing a small overnight bag as you will be without the bulk of your luggage for your last evening in Hakodate.



Day at leisure in Hakodate

Spend the day exploring the nearby Matsumae at leisure. Matsumae is a former castle town, boasting the only Japanese-style castle to have been built on Hokkaido. Only 20 km across the strait from Aomori, Matsumae Castle once marked the Northern limit of Japan.

There are three direct buses each day from Hakodate Station to Matsumae.

- Unguided

Day 21

Rail · Ticket: Hakodate Station to Sapporo Station

Departing
Hakodate Station

Arriving
Sapporo Station

Train Type
Limited Express Train

Notes

- Take a limited express train to Hokkaido's capital - Sapporo.



Afternoon at leisure in Sapporo

Enjoy shopping in the area surrounding Sapporo station. Home to both underground shopping streets and multi-storey department stores, this is the best place for any souvenirs!

- Unguided



JR Tower Hotel Nikko Sapporo

011-251-2222

2 Chome-5番地 Kita 5 Jonishi, Chuo Ward, Sapporo, Hokkaido 060-0005, Japan

〒060-0005 北海道札幌市中央区北5条2丁5番地

2:00 PM

Check-in

11:00 AM

Check-out

3 nights

Duration

Enjoy a stay at the tallest building in Hokkaido! Feel at home in the well-appointed rooms that are full of modern touches.

Relax at the spa with onsen on the 22nd floor and take in the fantastic views of the city from the restaurants on the 35th floor. There are a number of restaurants to choose from - some offer Japanese style and others offer French style cuisine from the renowned chef Kiyomi Mikuni.

Room Selection

Category

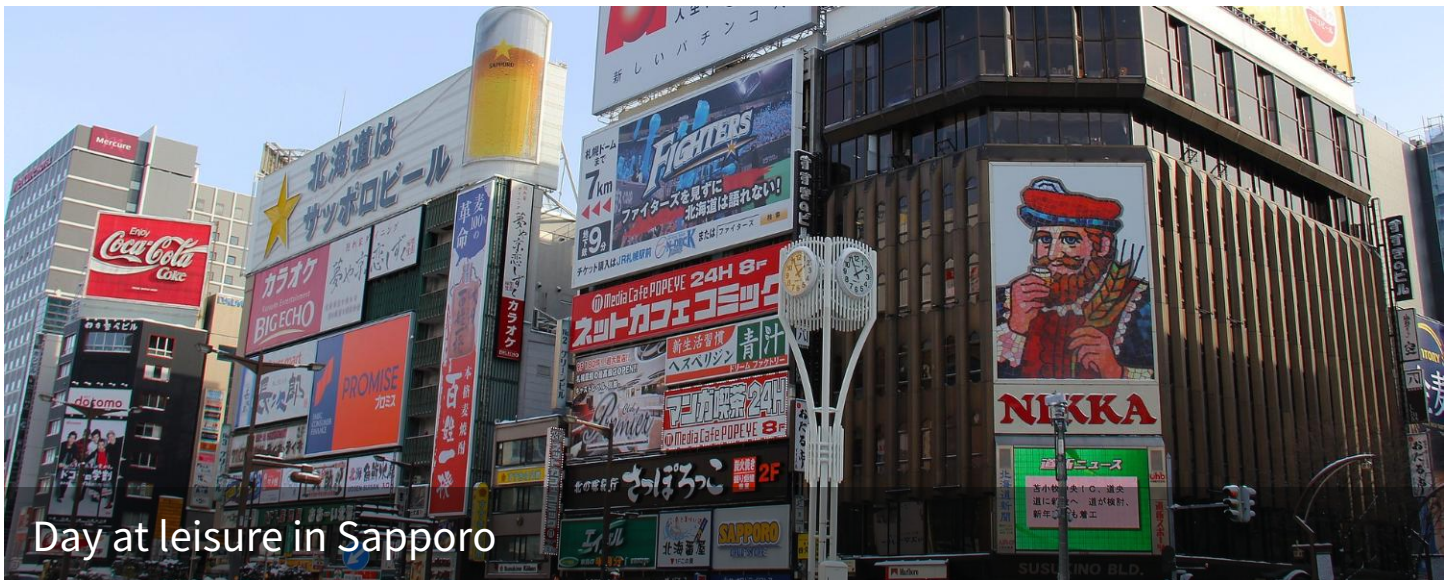
Corner Twin/ Double Twin

Room Description

In the corner of each floor are 40-square meter Corner Twin and Double Twin Rooms with large windows through which you can view the city scenery below in its seasonal splendour.

- Breakfast included

Day 22



Day at leisure in Sapporo

Today you can spend the day exploring Sapporo at your own pace.

This morning, head out to the Hokkaido Historical Village, where you can learn about Hokkaido's fascinating history and also enjoy the frontier-like feeling of early Sapporo, created by buildings that have been re-erected in the Historical Village.

Afterwards, Take a stroll through Odori Park, the beautiful green area in the centre of the city. Surrounded by shops, it is a great way to take a breather from the hustle and bustle.

Walk down to Susukino, the bustling entertainment district and choose a place to enjoy a famous dish of Sapporo - soup curry!

- Unguided

Day 23



Full-day private tour of Otaru with private car

Your guide and driver will meet you this morning, ready to head to nearby Otaru.

Otaru is a charming city by the seaside, facing the lovely Ishikari Bay. Otaru also has many historical buildings and also has a buzzing arts scene with local live bands playing concerts in the city's old warehouses. Locals often call Otaru "the Venice of

Hokkaido”, not only because of the canal but also because the city is famous for its hand-blown glassware. Be sure to browse the shops offering everything from glass table lamps to glass fountain pens!

To make the most of your trip, enjoy a fresh sushi lunch in one of the many seafood restaurants and then follow it up with a slice of the famous “Double Fromage” cheesecake in the Le Tao café.

In the afternoon, visit the villa of one of the most successful families in the Herring fishing industry. The herring fishing industry played a major role in the history of Otaru since the early days of the town's development, with the vast majority of fish being processed into fertilizer rather than consumed by humans.

Time allowing, you may also wish to visit the Nikka Whisky Distillery in Yoichi. The company was founded by Taketsuru Masataka who studied whisky making techniques in Scotland prior to bringing the trade to Japan. He was key in establishing the first whisky distillery in Japan, the Yamazaki Distillery near Kyoto.

- Guided
- Transport: Private car

Day 24

Transfer · Private car to airport

Departing

JR Tower Hotel Nikko
Sapporo

Arriving

CTS Airport

Notes

- You will be transferred to the airport in good time for your connecting flight home.