

04-N-02

Fossa Magna Cycling Tour

Ride from the Sea of Japan to Lake Nojiri – off the beaten path between the Japanese Alps and the Myoko Range



Explore a more remote, jagged and wondrous stash of Japan's mountain roads by bike; see a slice of what's life like in the deep mountainous region of Japan. Our guide will take you on a journey where you can witness and see how this miraculous mountainous area, this Japanese Archipelago was formed and travel back through history and hear of the many stories of from when civilization first began here. Starting from the Sea of Japan Coastline, from the foot of the Japanese Alps, through to Myoko Kogen. Ride through hidden hot springs regions and seldom used, middle-of-nowhere passes, only accessible during Summer and Autumn due to too much snow. Pedal through untouched forests between the Fossa Magna, Japan's great Rift Valley, and down to Lake Nojiri, once home to Naumann's elephants. Experience topographic changes made by tectonic plates movement along the border between Niigata and Nagano Prefecture. The bike takes you to part of Japan you would otherwise never have had a reason to see and make new friends along the way.

Highlights:

- Find out the definitive history of the Japanese archipelago, featuring stunning scenery, time travel CG based on the latest science, at The Fossa Magna Museum.
- Savor the beauty of the valley created by geological phenomena at Kinasa's open-air museum.
- Stay in 150-year-old house from the Edo period and mingle with locals by making Oyaki dumplings and try traditional rug weaving
- Hike around Kamaike Pond, a photographer's paradise with gorgeous autumn foliage
- Cycling from Lake Aoki to Hakuba Valley to enjoy the splendid view of the Japanese Alps
- Visit 450-year-old onsen ryokan in Otari, and experience the atmosphere of a therapeutic bath
- Crossing the border of Nagano and Niigata Prefecture on a hidden forest road only accessible 3 months in a year
- Early morning kayaking or canoeing on Lake Nojiri with views of the volcanoes.

Location: Start: Itoigawa City, Niigata Prefecture Finish: Shinanomachi, Nagano Prefecture

Itoigawa (Niigata) – Hakuba – Kinasa – Hakuba – Otari – Lake Nojiri (Nagano)

Main Activity: Cycling

Difficulty: 4

Availability: from September to late October

Tour Duration: 5 Nights 6 Days

Pax: min 4 / max 8

Price per person: JPY 300,000-400,000

[Route Map](#)

[Day-by-day Itinerary](#)

[What's included](#)

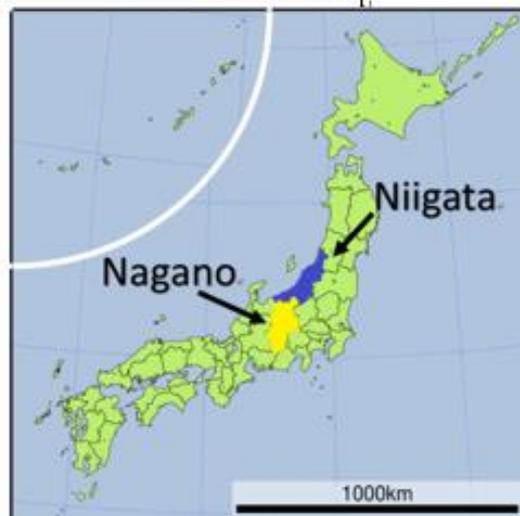
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Route map



Day-by-day Itinerary

Day 1 - Arrive Itoigawa and spend the night in Hakuba

Meet with your guide at Itoigawa Shinkansen Station. Take private transfer and visit the Fossa Magna Museum, Japan's first UNESCO's Geopark, to find out the definitive history of the Japanese archipelago, featuring stunning scenery, time travel CG based on the latest science, and understand the topography of the area. Take the train from Itoigawa to Hakuba on the non-electrified section of the Japan Railway line to experience the depth of the gorge. The luggage will be sent to the hotel separately by support vehicle. Orientation by the guide at the hotel.

Dinner:	Buffet at the hotel
Activity:	Fossa Magna Museum Visit
Difficulty:	1

Day 2 – Hakuba to Kinasa

From the idyllic park of Oide, climb up to the Shirasawa pass, where the magnificent and majestic Japanese Alps can be seen rising upwards of 3000 meters. Then check out the western edge of the Fossa Magna before entering an area where previously the seabed used to exist in ancient times. Ride along the valley to an open-air museum in Kinasa village with its spectacular views of faultlines and autumn leaves to the Okususobana Nature Park, untouched Beech Forest. Stay in 150-year-old private house dating back from the Edo period and experience timeless village life while you are tracking in the mountains.

Breakfast:	Buffet breakfast
Lunch:	Buckwheat noodle
Dinner:	Japanese set menu
Activity:	On road cycling (70km 300m gain 6 hours)
Difficulty:	4

Day 3 - Kinasa to Hakuba

Starting from the Kinasa Village, where the jagged Mt. Togakushi looms in the background, climb to a viewpoint in Daido Kogen to overlook the Alps and small villages nestled below in the base of the hills. Passing through enthralling villages with teared rice paddies and apple orchard trees in Ogawa Village. Mingle with local elderly ladies and learn how to make Oyaki, dumplings with a variety of delicious fillings. Pass by a thatched farmhouse dating back from the 17th Century, one of the nation's important cultural assets. Continue riding through to Hakuba, pausing at Lake Aoki, the cleanest and clearest lake in the prefecture with a depth of 58m.

Breakfast:	Japanese
Lunch:	Ramen at Zebrik
Dinner:	Shinshu Premium Beef Course
Activity:	On road cycling (60km 500m gain 6 hours)
Difficulty:	5

Day 4 - Hakuba to Otari

Move from Chubu-Sangaku National Park to Myoko-Togakushi Renzan National Park to experience the changes in topography, geology and landscape. On the way, visit a traditional rug weaving workshop and the Yamada Ryokan, to see 450-year-old Onsen Inn and learn the way of Japanese therapeutic bath culture, lifestyle and its culture of an area buried in the deep snows for more than 6 months of the year. After a hike around Kamaike pond, a photographer's favorite site for autumn foliage, relax in an open-air hot spring surrounded by a magnificent Beech Forest.

Breakfast:	Buffet at the hotel
Lunch:	Set menu with wild mushrooms from the area at Bunarin-tei
Dinner:	Kaiseki with mountain vegetables and chirs
Activity:	On road cycling (50km 500m gain 6 hours)
Difficulty:	3

Day 5 - Otari to Lake Nojiri through Myoko Kogen

Ride a secluded forest trail through Otomiyama Pass and cross the Nagano/Niigata border to Myoko Kogen campsite. As this is one of the heaviest snowfall areas in Japan, the pathway is blocked by snow except during a few months of each year. After a lunch break, enjoy a long and exhilarating descent to Lake Nojiri. At the lakeside guesthouse, wood-burning sauna and hot-pot dinner will condition and recover the ached muscles, along with a great bonfire and a nightcap under the stars.

Breakfast:	Japanese
Lunch:	Niigata Beef Steak
Dinner:	"Chanko" Hot-pot with Miso paste
Activity:	Cycling (45km; partially untarmacked 1300m gain 4 hours)
Difficulty:	5

Day 6 – Depart Lake Nojiri

Kayaking on the lake in the morning will give the final look of the volcanoes – Mt. Myoko and Kurohime and other peaks of the Myoko-Togakushi Renzan N.P. Options to add early morning Yoga or SUP before breakfast. The trip concludes with a visit to the Naumann Elephant Museum, where fossils excavated at Lake Nojiri, provides a summary of 70,000 years of history and of Japan in the Ice Age. Take the private transfer to Kurohime railway station where the group will part. (Connect with express train to Nagano station at 10:50am)

Breakfast:	Buffet
Activity:	Kayaking (1.5 hours)
Difficulty:	1

Accommodations:



Western Japanese Room with ensuite & onsen at Hakuba Highland Hotel (Hakuba)



Japanese Room & shared bathroom at Lodge En (Kinasa)



Western Twin room with ensuite & Onsen at Sierra Resort Hakuba (Hakuba)



Japanese Room with toilet & vanity & Onsen at Amakazari-so (Otari Onsen)



Japanese Room & shared bathroom at Guest House Lamp (Lake Nojiri)

What's included

- All breakfasts, 4 lunches, 5 dinners
- All accommodations (twin share basis)
- Snacks and beverages
- Expertise and services of our experienced guides
- Train fare from the arrival railway station and transfers to the departure railway station
- Van shuttles to support a variety of route options
- Baggage transfers
- Museum & park entry fees
- Special events, including oyaki dumpling cooking and other select attractions
- Fully equipped mountain bike or eBike
- Equipment for kayaking and canoeing

We provide & What to bring

We provide

- Bike and helmet
- Repair tools
- First-aid kit
- Maps
- Support vehicle

What to bring

- Cycling jersey, pants, shoes and gloves
- Windproof / Waterproof jacket and pants
- Insulation
- Sunscreen
- Medications
- Water bottles
- Walking shoes
- Comfortable clothes
- Cash in Japanese Yen
- Items of a personal nature such as laundry, alcoholic beverages
- Travel Insurance

About us

Ski Japan Holidays was established in 2003 and has been providing a comprehensive range of ski travel packages and services to the best snow resorts in Japan until today. We work together with some of the biggest and most well respected operators in the Japan travel industry, offering the best ski resorts, packages and tours.

Ski Japan Holidays works with Local, State and National tourism offices to better promote this beautiful area that we live work and play in and we very much look forward to showing off this great area to you.



Jason Jansen, President

Our Team

Guides



Jon Daily, Lead Guide (Ski Japan Holidays)

Born and raised in Southern California, with a great passion for ocean sports. In 1980 he moved to Aspen Colorado, a famous North America ski area, where he learned to ski, snowboard and telemark in winter and biking and kayaking in summer. Moving to Hawaii in 1983, continuing his passions for the ocean, he then met and married a Japanese woman and moved to Japan in 1987 at age 24. After moving to Japan, he studied martial arts intensively, to the extent that he obtained his third degree black belt in Karate in Tokyo. Wanting to leave the city, he came to live in the small village of Ogawa in Nagano prefecture in 2005. Taking advantage of his bilingual ability, he then began his career as an outdoor and cultural guide based in Hakuba valley. Presently he has also taken up farming to self-sustain himself and his family raising two daughters on their home grown rice and vegetables. His present job involves taking foreign visitors on cultural tours around Nagano, especially to Jigokudani Snow Monkey Park for over 10 years. He is certified in Wilderness First Aid.



Toshu Arai, Cycling guide (Representative of Otari Fatbike Center)

He took his master degree in synthetic organic chemistry at Yamagata University and worked at a chemical company, involved in manufacturing technology. When he started riding a road bike it was as a training for snowboarding. Then his cycling mate invited him to try the Mt. Norikura Hill Climb Race which eventually fascinated him and since then he entered many hill-climb races. In 2013, he moved to Otari village in Hakuba Valley (Nagano prefecture), wanting to live in the snow country. After moving there, he started new career as bike trip guide and owns a bike repair workshop at

Otari Fatbike Center. His signature tour is fat bike ride in snow, and also offers road bike and e-bike tours in Nagano prefecture, preferring to ride on the back roads with less traffic and great the sceneries. He is the founder/manager of Otari Hill Climb courses, unique cycling courses that takes advantage of the valley with many hills and few flat areas. Occasionally he also works as a recyclable energy consultant at the village council. He has qualification for Wilderness First Aid (50 hours). He is a member of the Japan Mountain Bike Association.

Back Office

Coordinator



Ayuko Arai

Reservation Consultants



Yoko Nakano
(Reservation Manager)



Yui Pope



Satomi Maruyama



Yumiko Mayuzumi

Administrative



Mika Matsuzawa
(Office Manager)



Mako Hirooka
(Account Manager)



Matt Skinner
(Managing Director)

Information and Requirements

Dietary Restrictions

At the time of the booking, SJH confirms the participant's dietary requirement through the agent. Catering to most dietary requirements is fine as well as vegetarians and vegans. Please make us aware of any allergies you may have in advance, such as those which may cause such symptoms as, anaphylaxis etc. However, please note that soy sauce is an indispensable condiment in Japan and it often contains wheat gluten (which affects those who has celiac disease). As gluten-free soy sauce is yet to be a common choice in Japanese restaurants in rural areas, you may have to substitute by one of the famous Japanese salt. Likewise, soba (buck-wheat noodle, not a gluten) is an important food product in Japan (especially in Nagano), and it is difficult to substitute when it comes to the soba making activity incorporated in a day's program. Therefore, if a guest has allergies to buckwheat, we may be able to offer substitute food such as a rice ball for this leg in this tour. Otherwise, we may ask the guest to carry your own reliable food as a back-up.

Emergency Response Plan

SJH staffs have longstanding relationships with our suppliers, including restaurants, hotels, services, and transportation providers. These partners know our standards and have been thoroughly inspected by our staff to make sure they comply with all local regulations regarding health and hygiene. Our activity guides are trained in first aid (including wilderness first-aid) and aware of the health regulations as well as Ski Japan Holidays practices and protocols. We will follow all procedures to ensure the journey is safe. Everyone involved in running the journey follows governments health and safety guideline, including regular staff health and temperature monitoring. Our office is experienced in handling emergencies and have the contacts and knowledge to support guests 24/7 in the event of accidents and medical challenges.

Weather Conditions

High mountains of Nagano all receive their fair share of snow but in general, the Japan Sea side of Honshu has much harsher winters than the Pacific coast. Thus the North Alps get a lot more snow than the Southern Alps. Winter snow can last through November to early April. Cherry Blossom front advances to Nagano from mid-April to early May, when the last frost is observed and the riding season starts. The mountains are affected by a rainy season from early June until mid-July, around 20 July. While mountains are subject to changeable weather and must be respected, in general, summer in Nagano is pleasant. Summer mornings tend to be better than the afternoons when thunderstorms are common. After mid-August, the temperature in the morning and the evening drops significantly, and typhoons may develop occasionally. In mid-October the first frost is observed, and autumn foliage is at its peak by the end of October.

Reservation & Cancellation Policy

Booking

Bookings must be made by email to bookings@japanspecialists.com. Bookings are considered secure upon receipt of designated payment.

Pricing

All prices are in Japanese Yen and include Japanese consumption tax as well as service charges and hot spring tax where applicable. Prices are subject to change without notice and may be subject to re-issue if incorrect through error or omission.

Payment

Once a booking has been confirmed to the agent by email from the Ski Japan Holidays reservation consultant, full payment will be required 30 days prior to the service commencement date. Failing to meet the required deposit date may lead to an automatic cancellation of the booking. Bookings made within 30 days to the service date require immediate full payment, or as otherwise specified by the reservation consultant.

All payments must be made to Ski Japan Holidays by credit card or bank transfer.

All agent remittances require supporting booking information including agent's name, Ski Japan Holidays reference number, guest names, booking amount to be allocated to each booking.

Credit Card Payment: Only Mastercard and Visa Cards are accepted. Payments incur 3.5% surcharge.

Bank Transfer Payment: The Agent is responsible for all bank transfer fees charged by your bank, intermediary bank or receiving bank fees charged by your international transfer company. Any shortfall in payment must be paid prior to the guest's arrival.

Cancellation Policy

Cancellation request must be made by email to bookings@japanspecialists.com on or before the specified payment dates.

Date of Cancellation	Cancellation Fee
30-22 Days before service date	0% - Full Refund
21-15 Days before service date	20%
14-8 Days before service date	50%
Within 7 days of service date	100%

Disclaimer of Liability

No refund will be given for any reason after the tour contract is concluded if the guests leave the tour course, or if the guests do not take some of the services in the tour.

We may refuse to continue participating in the tour if the guest acts against the law or public order and morals, or if he / she does not keep the designated meeting time during the tour.

Ski Japan Holidays and our tours are covered by liability insurance, but this applies only when the accident is caused by our fault. It does not apply to accidents caused by the fault of the guest or a third party. This responsibility and the amount of compensation for damages are determined based on the laws in Japan. We cannot be held responsible for any injury, loss, accident, and delay or any other irregularity outside of our control.

Ski Japan Holidays cannot under any circumstances be held responsible for weather conditions. No holiday can be cancelled, altered, or amended on the basis of weather conditions.

Ski Japan Holidays reserves the right to correct any errors or omissions in its published materials and to amend these Terms and Conditions at any time as the result of any material changes to legislation or regulation.

Tour Operator / Contact

Ski Japan Holidays

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