

Step into the Sacred Lake of Shikaribetsu in central Hokkaido and Explore its Beauty of Nature



This tour offers adventurers different outdoor activities while learning about the environmental history and coexistence with nature of the sacred lake of Shikaribetsu. As the only natural lake in Japan's largest national park "Daisetsuzan National Park" located in central Hokkaido, its origin dates back to the ice age, making this lake to be called "sacred" from the Ainu People (the aborigine of Hokkaido). The tour will start with a half day of hiking Mount Haku'unzan, one of the lava dome surrounding the lake with a beautiful bird's eye view of the lake. Then a good two and a half hour of walking in the "Forest of Moss" to meet rare animal and enjoying a fast speed zip line-like activity to experience the speed of living species follows. After exploring the area from the land, we go on to exploring the water area by kayaking on the sacred lake and hiking the surrounding. Last but not least, exploring the river flowing into the sacred lake to meet rare species in the water.

Highlights:

- Enjoy kayaking on Lake Shikaribetsu and hiking around Lake Shinonome
- Hike up Mt. Haku'unzan and get a beautiful bird's eye view of Lake Shikaribetsu
- Walk in the Forest of Moss and discover the wind cave formed from the unique geographical feature of Lake Shikaribetsu
- Enjoy outdoor lunch using a Dutch Oven with local products

Location:Lake Shikaribetsu, Hokkaido

Hokkaido Prefecture is the northernmost island and the largest prefecture in Japan, with an area of 83,450 square kilometers / 32,220 square miles and a population of 5.2 million people. Hokkaido is known for natural hot springs (*onsen*), volcanos and ski resorts. With the large area, many of its land are left unspoiled, which allows us to preserve and enjoy its natural beauty. Hokkaido is home to a Natural World Heritage Site, a Ramsar Convention Wetland and several national parks. Each time you visit, you will experience a new side of Hokkaido.

Lake Shikaribetsu

Lake Shikaribetsu is located in central Hokkaido in the Daisetsuzan National Park. Located 810 meters / 2,657 ft above sea level, it is known as the only Natural Lake in Daisetsuzan National Park. Primeval forest surrounds the lake of 13km / 8mi in circumference. On the east of the lake, you will see Mount Tenbouzan – the symbol of Lake Shikaribetsu. The mountain has 2 humps, and with the reflection on the lake, it is also known as the “Lip Mountain” as it looks like a person's lip.

Main Activity: Kayaking on Lake Shikaribetsu and hiking around Lake Shinonome

Difficulty: 3 / 5 (Moderate)

Tour Dates: 15 September, 2021 - 19 September, 2021

Pax: Minimum 4 Maximum 10

Price: JPY212,000-

[Route map](#)

[Day-by-day Itinerary](#)

[What's included](#)

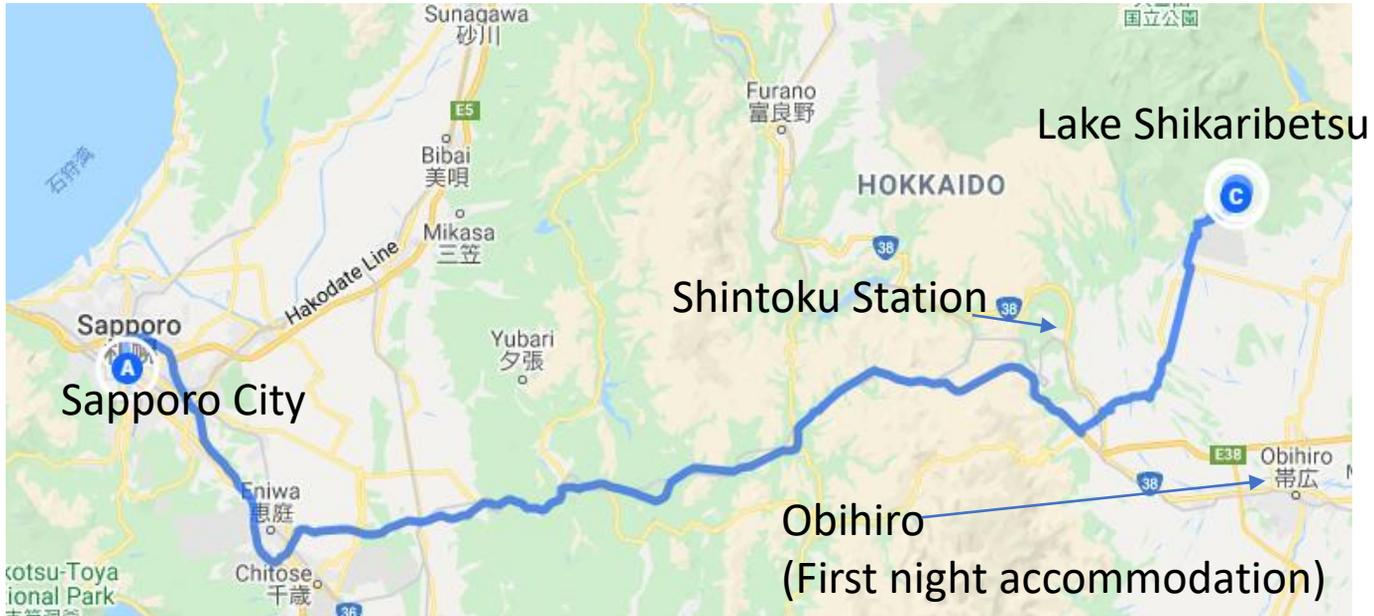
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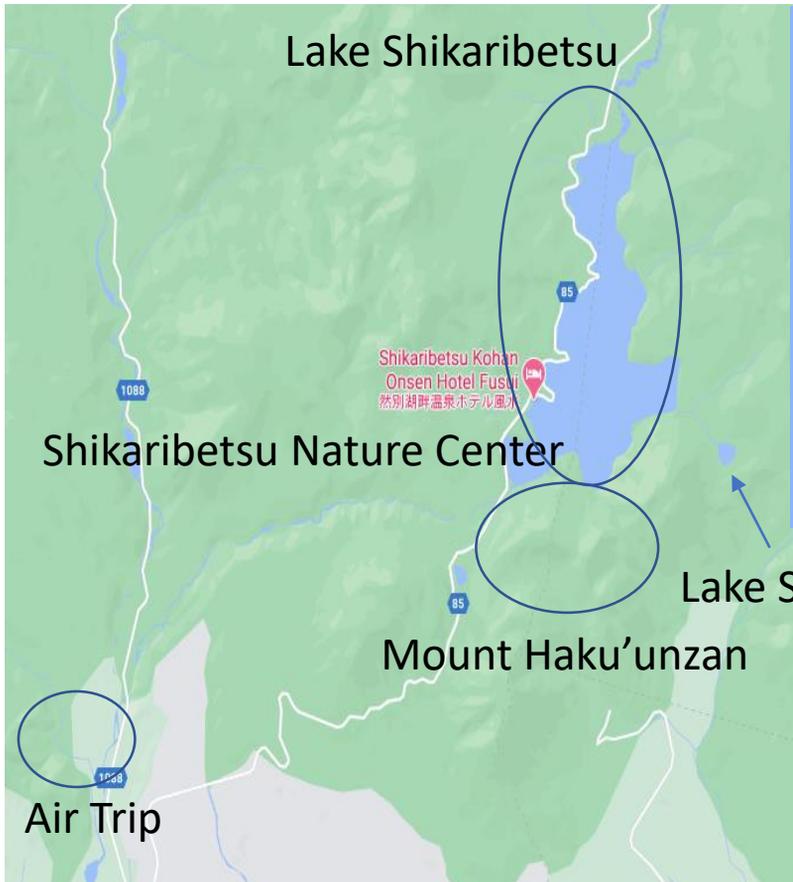
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Route map

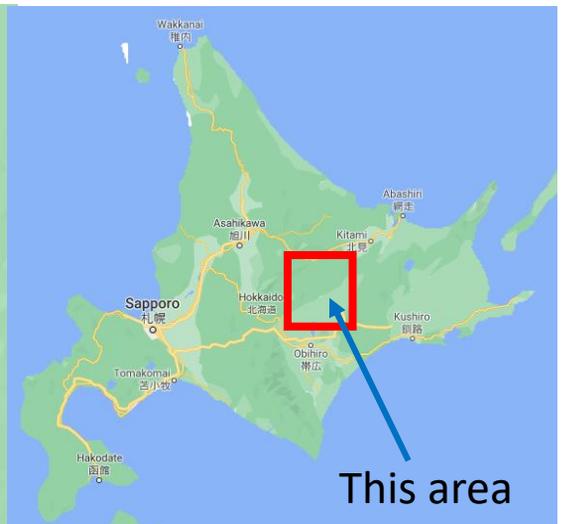


You will take a JR train from Shintoku Station to Sapporo on the last day.

Up Close



The Island of Hokkaido



Day-by-day Itinerary

September 15 - Day 1 – Meet your group at the hotel in Obihiro

Please check in to the hotel by 05:00PM. An English Speaking representative will be waiting for you at the tour desk, set in the lobby. Once everyone arrives, we have a small get-together to introduce each other and go over the itinerary. After that, it is free time for the rest of the night. If you need help in choosing the restaurant, feel free to ask us. Our hotel is located in front of Obihiro Station, about 5 minute walk.

Accommodation : Hotel Nikko Northland Obihiro / single occupancy

Included Meal(s) : None

September 16 - Day 2 – Head to Lake Shikaribetsu and Hike Mt. Haku'unzan

After breakfast at the hotel, we meet at the lobby by 07:45AM. We board a chartered bus and head to Lake Shikaribetsu. After an hour ride, we meet an activity guide from the Shikaribetsu Nature Center. This activity guide will be with us throughout the tour.

We first learn about the safety procedures in the mountain. With a height of 1,186 meters / 3,891 ft, Mt. Haku'unzan is an active lava dome, so we must be set for any troubles that may occur. After the explanation, our hike officially starts.

Mountain trails here are not well maintained. There are a few narrow roads and steep hills. As we hike the mountain, we learn about the history of the area. As lava domes grew, it stopped the *Yanbetsu River* – the river flowing from the north of the lake. This stop eventually made the river to turn into a lake now called Lake Shikaribetsu. At the summit of the mountain, a beautiful bird's eye view of the sacred lake of Shikaribetsu greets us.

During the 5-hour hike, we take few breaks and also have lunch. Once we come back from the hike, we rest our bodies and meet up for dinner.



Welcome Dinner

Welcome Dinner will be at the banquet room in the hotel. A traditional Japanese set menu with local ingredients will be served.

Sample Menu : a plate of appetizers, tofu, deep fried fish, pickles, pork or beef plate, cooked Miyabe Charr, Sashimi (raw fish), rice and miso soup



(Sample Picture)

Accommodation : Hotel Fusui / single occupancy (Japanese Room) / Onsen

Included Meal(s) : Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

Activity: Hiking Mt. Haku'unzan

Difficulty: 3 / 5 (Moderate)

September 17 - Day 3 – A day of Walking and Outdoor Lunch

Breakfast

Breakfast is a buffet breakfast, mixture of Japanese and Western menus. Seats are free to take, so please come down to the dining room and have a good breakfast before another long adventurous day !

After breakfast, we meet in the lobby at 08:45AM. We walk over to Shikaribetsu Nature Center and meet our guides. Our morning activity is taking a walk into the forest so called "Forest of Moss". In this 2 and a half hour of walking in the forest, we learn about the natural environment in the forest. One of the must see places in this walk is the wind cave. These wind caves are not seen everywhere, only under certain conditions. It is told that rock rabbits prefer to live around wind caves, so if lucky, we may be able to hear and see them! Note that half of the trails are well maintained, but we walk directly on the soil for the other half.



(Rock Rabbit)

Lunch

Lunch will be a self-cooking outdoor lunch using Dutch ovens. Ingredients are from the local areas so that we can contribute to the local industry. As cooking by Dutch ovens takes time, there will be plenty of time to talk.



September 17 - Day 3 – A day of Walking and Outdoor Lunch

After our wonderful outdoor lunch, we head on to our last activity of the day – Air Trip. It may be easy for you to imagine what Air Trip is if you think of “zip-line”. You will fly through the forest at the top speed of 40km/h or 24mi/h !

**Dinner**

Dinner this night will again, be in the hotel. A different Japanese set menu will be served so you won't feel tired of tasting Japanese menu.

Accommodation : Hotel Fusui / single occupancy (Japanese Room) / Onsen

Included Meal(s) : Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

Activity: Walking in the Forest of Moss and Air Trip Experience

Difficulty: 2 / 5 (Easy active)

September 18 - Day 4 – Kayak on Lake Shikaribetsu and Hike around Lake Shinonome**Breakfast**

Breakfast will be a buffet breakfast, mixture of Japanese and Western menus.

Rise and shine ! We have explored the area of Lake Shikaribetsu these past 3 days, mainly on land (mountain and forest). Now, we are finally going to explore the sacred lake. Our exciting day will start with kayaking on Lake Shikaribetsu, though the starting time will be a little late as the temperature of the lake in the early morning may be too cold. We meet our guides again and listen to the procedures of controlling the kayak. We will ask you to pair up (or we will assign you) as the kayak is for 2 people. Once we learn about the procedures and the safety precautions, we are ready to go on the great adventure ! Starting slowly first, we enjoy the peaceful sound of nature and the murmuring of the water. Once we are used to handling the kayak, we head to Lake Shinonome, another small sacred lake only accessible by kayaking on Lake Shikaribetsu or hiking the surrounding mountain. It was too difficult for people to get to this lake, so it was untouched until the late 1800s.



(View of Lake Shinonome from ground level)

September 18 - Day 4 – Kayak on Lake Shikaribetsu and Hike around Lake Shinonome**Lunch**

After a good hour of kayaking, we will arrive at Lake Shinonome and get off the kayak for lunch. Should you have any questions about anything, please ask the guide while you eat.

Once we finish lunch, we start walking around Lake Shinonome. As mentioned before, Lake Shinonome is one of the three major secret lakes in Hokkaido, and is only accessible by hiking or kayaking. We walk around the lake for a good hour and a half, total of 1km / 0.6 mi. After we finish walking, we hop on the kayak again and head back to Shikaribetsu Nature Center.



(Lake Shinonome)

Farewell Dinner

We have a barbeque for dinner. After refreshed, we meet up in the hotel lobby around 05:00PM and head to the outdoor barbeque site. We make a fire out of scratch, which takes about 30 minutes. When the fire is ready we start the barbeque. If the weather is nice, we may be able to enjoy starry skies. Since it is the final evening of the tour, let's look back and talk about our adventures.

Accommodation : Hotel Fusui / single occupancy (Japanese Room) / Onsen

Included Meal(s) : Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

Activity: Kayaking on Lake Shikaribetsu and hiking around Lake Shinonome

Difficulty: 3 / 5 (Moderate)

September 19 - Day 5 – River Watching and Transfer to Sapporo

Breakfast

Breakfast will be a buffet breakfast, mixture of Japanese and Western menus.

Before we leave for Sapporo, there is one last adventure to go on. We meet at the lobby around 09:15AM. Please make sure to check out, and return your keys to the front desk. If you had any additional drinks, please pay when check out. Make sure to double check that you leave nothing behind you.

Our last activity on the tour is River Watching. We put on waders and actually dip into the Yanbetsu River, the river that flows into Lake Shikaribetsu. Using the water glass, we observe the living species in the river. Fish like rainbow trout and Miyabe charr inhabit in this river. We will walk a good 400 meters / 0.2 mi in the river for about 2 hours.

When the observation of the river is over, we go back to Shikaribetsu Nature Center and say our farewells to the guides. We will board the bus and head to JR (Japan Rail) Shintoku Station. The train ride to Sapporo takes about 2 hours, and we prepare a local bento box for you to taste on the train.



(Miyabe Charr)

Accommodation : N/A

Included Meal(s) : Breakfast / Lunch

Activity: River Watching using water glass

Difficulty: 1 / 5 (Relaxed / Social)

Accommodations :

September 15 : Hotel Nikko Northland Obihiro / single occupancy

September 16-19 : Hotel Fusui / single occupancy (Japanese Room)

What's included

- All of transportation as stated in the itinerary
- English Speaking representative(s) and guide(s)
- Kayak gears (paddles, life jackets)
- Kayak boats (Northwest Kayaks Seascape)
- 4 night accommodation, single occupancy
- 4 Breakfasts, 4 Lunches, 3 Dinners

What's not included

- Cost to/from Sapporo Station before and after the tour
- Personal expense
- Any extra cost for drinks other than those provided within the tour

We provide & What to bring

We provide

- Kayak gears (paddles, life jackets)
- Water to prevent dehydration
- First Aid Kit
- Rain gears (ponchos or jacket type)
- Waders, water glass and rain boots

What to bring

Necessities

- Couple sets of comfortable clothing
- Warm clothing (as temperature in Hokkaido may drop in September)
- Waterproof jacket (windbreaker would be better)
- Rain Gear (umbrellas, raincoats)
- Exercise shoes with thick soles
- Reusable bottles (to fill up with water)
- Any personal medications
- Passport (you may need to present it at the time of check in)
- Travel Insurance
- Cash (in Yen) as many of the stores only accept cash

Good to have

- Cameras
- Sunglass
- Sunscreen / lotion
- List of any past illness

About us



Nippon Travel Agency Hokkaido

We, Nippon Travel Agency Hokkaido (NTA Hokkaido) launched business in 1994, spinning off from “Nippon Travel Agency (NTA)”, the first travel agency in Japan founded in 1905. This spin-off helped us to become a specialist in all types of travel in Hokkaido, the largest prefecture of Japan, ranging from Destination Management, Outgoing Tourism, MICE Solutions to Special Interest Tours. We extended our business from the Sapporo office to 8 branch offices within Hokkaido, from Hakodate of southern Hokkaido to Kushiro of eastern Hokkaido. From our 115+ years of experience in the travel market, we are committed to offering travel services of the highest quality, combining our energy and enthusiasm. Our greatest satisfaction comes in serving large numbers of satisfied clients who have experienced the joys and inspiration of travel. If you have any questions or concerns about a trip to Japan, please feel free to contact us. Our mission is to provide the best experience on your next exciting trip to Japan !

Arcs Travel / Masahiko Sakamoto

As the director of the travel division in Arcs Travel, a local travel agency, Masahiko Sakamoto has been working in the travel industry for over 40 years. Starting his career as a salesperson in a hotel, he was soon fascinated by the nature of Hokkaido and founded *Shikaribetsu Nature Center* and became the pioneer of Adventure Travel in Japan. His nature center was the first ever nature center to be founded in Asia. Over the years of his works, he and his nature center were recognized as an excellent land operator by the government and was awarded the Prime Minister’s Award in 2007. Not only do they operate tours, they work as a member of conservation management counsel for natural recreation of the forest around Lake Shikaribetsu.

Guides

The guides on this tour are professional guides living in the Shikaribetsu Nature Center located in front of Lake Shikaribetsu. Lake Shikaribetsu is not just a lake, but a lake located in a national park meaning it is owned and protected by the government. But from its long history of working in Lake Shikaribetsu, the Nature Center was given permission to investigate and preserve the lake and its surrounding. So even in an off season for tourists, the staff are busy working on the investigation to make sure the lake and its surroundings are preserved. The guides on this tour are the top 2 expertise staff in this Nature Center (both working for about 30 years) so we are quite confident to say that you will enjoy your time on this tour for sure.

Information and Requirements

Dietary Restrictions

Should you have any dietary restrictions or any special requests, please let us know at the time of booking, in the Registration Form. We will work our best to match your request, but there may be time where we have to ask for your kind understanding. In our years of working with overseas groups, we have been requested for Halal, gluten free and MSG. We ask for you to let us know especially for these three restrictions, as many of Japanese dish uses gluten and MSG, and Halal is not penetrated much yet in Japan, especially in the countryside.

Our most desire is for you to experience Japan to the fullest, not just through activities and communicating with the locals but through food as well. As we stated above, in certain areas, especially in the countryside of Japan, it may be difficult to completely match your request. So we would like to ask for you to try your best to challenge it. On the other hand, we do understand that dietary restrictions are very important as well. All in all, we will work our best to match your request, so please let us know at the earliest.

Emergency Response Plan

We believe that in order to enjoy any kind of tour, we must first think of safety as the top priority. We, Nippon Travel Agency Hokkaido, ask for all activity guides to be certified with the Advanced First Aid Course or any certificate of similar course (for example wilderness first aid). Other than just being certified, the guides will have a first aid kit along with them during the tour. We will also have a staff in our office to take care with any kind of trouble that happens during the tour.

Depending on the weather condition of that day, the guide will be giving out specific instructions to prevent any danger that may occur because of the weather condition. If the weather is unsuitable to fulfil the activity, the guide will make a decision to change the routing, or if worse, we will substitute the activity with a different activity just as enjoyable as the original activity.

At the Time of Filling in the Reservation Form, we will ask you to fill in....

1. Height and weight - we will need this information to make sure we can prepare the right gears (like waders and life jackets). In Japan, the sizes are a bit smaller even with the same size. For example, medium size in the United States will be a large size in Japan. So please fill in your size in your country and we will prepare one size larger gear.
2. Shoe size – Shoe size are needed for preparing the right rain boots. We have over 200 pairs of rain boots ready, but we would like to be sure we have your size.

Tips on Onsen (Hot Springs) / Wearing Yukatas / Japanese Rooms

Japan is a very famous country for *Onsen* or we call it Hot Springs. In most of the Onsen Ryokan (Japanese Inns), there are public baths for you to take a shower and try a dip into the onsen. You may take a clean bath together with other guests, using as much water you may desire, and talk to acquaintances as long as you desire. However, you must be careful as the water is quite hot you may get dizzy. Remember to drink a good cup of water after you bath, as you will be dehydrated.

In many of Japan's ryokans, they prepare a *Yukata* instead of pajamas. Yukatas are one piece clothing, where you wear on top of you underwear (undershirt and socks are optional). Yukatas are typical Japanese style robes. You can wear Yukatas to dinner, but that is optional. We will teach you how to wear Yukatas at the time of check in.

(Next page has more precise steps on how to wear Yukatas)

Other than the first night, we have booked a hotel located in front of Lake Shikaribetsu. This hotel will be single occupancy, but all rooms are Japanese rooms, using tatami mats. In Japanese rooms, there are no beds, and we ask for your to sleep on the tatami mats in *futons*. Futons are mattress stuffed with cotton wool with a bed quilt. When we don't use the futon, they will be stored in the closets. During your dinner time, the staff from the hotel will come into your room and get the futon ready. If you need more mattress, please feel free to let the hotel know.



(Sample Picture of a Japanese Room)

How to Wear Yukatas



Step 1: Put on your yukata over your underwear (undershirt and socks are optional).

Slip your arms into the sleeves of the yukata and grasp it along its front hem, one side in each hand, at about waist level. Fold the right hand side underneath the left hand side, and hold it in place with your hand.

Step 2: Now fold the left hand over the right hand side and hold it in place with your hand while you get your obi (belt).

Step 3: Secure everything in place with the obi (belt) by wrapping it around your waist.

Begin in the front and wrap it around your back.

The obi are usually stored folded into little pentagons, so look for these if you are having trouble finding the obi.

Step 4: Cross the belt around your back and tie it in the front.

For men, the belt should rest fairly low on the hips. For women, the belt is tied at the waist.

Step 5: Adjust the length of the belt ends so that they hang evenly from your right hip.

Then adjust the knot so that it lies on your right hip.

Step 6 (Optional): In cooler weather, the outer jacket can be worn over the yukata like a coat.

Yukata coats have ties at chest level with which they can be secured, and may have a pocket for carrying small items such as your room key.

Alternatively, yukata coat sleeves are designed so that items can be carried inside.

Reservation & Cancellation Policy

Reservation and Payment Methods

After receiving your reservation request, we will send you an email with the Reservation Forms. Please fill in the forms and send it back to us by email. There may be some personal questions (dietary restrictions, height, weight etc) but we will need these information to provide our best service to you.

We accept payment via Credit Card or Wire. If you wish to pay by Credit Card, please be noted that we only accept VISA or Master. Any other type of credit card company, we are afraid we can not accept them. If you wish to pay through our bank, please let us know on the reservation form, and we will send you our banking information.

We will require a deposit of JPY50,000- or Full Payment at the time of filling in the Reservation Form. The Deposit will be waived to the total tour fare of this tour. Final payments must be made 21 days prior to tour date. We will send you a reminder email on the payment approximately 30 days prior.

Cancellation

If you wish to cancel your reservation, please let us know by email with a writing that you are cancelling the tour. We must receive the writing in order to cancel your request.

Please see below for our Cancellation Charge

Cancellation Notice is Received on:	Cancellation Charge
31 days or Before prior tour start date in Japan	No Charge
30 to 15 days prior to group arrival date in Japan	20% of total tour fare
14 to 8 day prior to tour start date in Japan	50% of total tour fare
7 to 5 day prior to tour start date in Japan	70% of total tour fare
4 day to 1 day prior to tour start date in Japan	100% of total tour fare
No show or on and after tour start date in Japan	100% of total tour fare

Disclaimer

Our tour programs are programmed under the careful consideration of your safety. The guides will pay sufficient attention to keep you away from accidents and/or injuries during the tour. However, we could not assume any responsibilities of the following incidents :

1. Accidents and/or injuries caused from bad physical conditions and/or any diseases or sickness which you already have suffered prior to the tour.
2. Accidents and/or injuries caused by your negligence to safety instructions given by your guides throughout the tour.
3. Any other accidents and/or injuries caused by your self-infliction.

At the time of filling in the Reservation Form, we will ask for you to make a signature on the disclaimer form sent with the reservation form.

Partner CompanyArcs Travel

Director – Masahiko Sakamoto

Email: m.sakamo@sage.ocn.ne.jp

Phone: (+81) 11-223-5045

Tour Operator / ContactNippon Travel Agency Hokkaido

Nozomi Hirao

Email: nozomi_hirao@nta.co.jp

Phone: (+81) 11-208-0182

Kasumi Katie Yamazaki

Email: kasumi_yamazaki@nta.co.jp

Phone: (+81) 11-208-0182