

Join Panda Travel in...

Hokkaido's Autumn Treasures

(GPI2984)



Cancel for any reason up to 60 days prior to departure date for a **FULL REFUND!**

Sept 21 - 30, 2023
8 Nights/ 10 Days

*Furano - Biei - Asahikawa - Sahoro -
Lake Noto - Lake Saroma - Abashiri -
Shiretoko - Lake Akan - Tomamu - Sapporo*

\$100 OFF PER PERSON
when you pay with a personal check/cash

\$4,268*
per person-double occupancy

\$4,738*
single occupancy

pandaonline.com
(808) 734-1961
1017 Kapahulu Ave, Honolulu, HI 96816

A minimum of 16 participants is required for the tour to operate

Itinerary



Day 1: (Thu) Sept 21 – Honolulu Depart Honolulu 1:40pm on Hawaiian Airlines 863

Please meet the Panda Travel representative **3 hours prior to departure** at the Hawaiian Airlines check-in counters.

Day 2: (Fri) Sept 22 – Haneda-Chitose Connecting flight on All Nippon Airways (TBA)

Air Terminal Hotel (Free WiFi)

On arrival in Chitose, please make your way to the baggage claim area. Luggage carts are available. We suggest that you use one as once we exit the customs area there is a short walk to our hotel, Air Terminal Hotel, which is located right on the airport grounds. Our local English speaking guide will greet us at the arrival lobby.

Day 3: (Sat) Sept 23 – Chitose-Furano-Biei-Asahikawa (B)

The JR Inn Asahikawa (Free WiFi)

→Breakfast at hotel

→8:30am – **Meet guide at lobby** – Our touring day begins with a drive to Furano and Biei, two towns in the center of Hokkaido, known for their pleasant and picturesque rural landscapes. The drive time is approximately 2-hours. While the lavender season has ended, there are still plenty of flowers left to enjoy, even purple ones!

→11:00am – **Furano Marche** – A cluster of shops in the heart of downtown Furano. With approximately 20 shops, enjoy some free time to browse, shop, and enjoy lunch on your own. This popular tourist stop also draws locals who come to enjoy the variety of food options, ramen, burgers, takoyaki, rice ball eatery, among others. End it off with freshly made ice cream!

→12:30pm – **Tomita Farm** – With the Daisetsuzan National Park as a backdrop, this is one of the most photographed spots in Hokkaido. Autumn brings clear skies, the fields vividly adorned with spider flowers and perpetual flowers that bloom until the first frost. Enjoy free time to enjoy the flower farm and its stunning **autumn landscapes**.



Day 3 - Biei Blue Pond

→2:15pm – **Biei Blue Pond** – An unnatural yet enchanting bright blue body of water that changes its hue depending on the viewing angle and time of day. The blue color of the pond has not been fully explained but is attributed to the presence of aluminum hydroxide in the water that reflects the shorter wavelength blue light the same way the earth's atmosphere does.

Although the water appears blue when viewed from the land, the color is not found in the water itself. At this time of the year, **autumn foliage** emerges, interweaving reds and yellows reflecting off the pond. Enjoy this unique colorful landscape.

→3:15pm We now make our way to Asahikawa, Hokkaido's second largest city. A city of water, Asahikawa sits on the confluences of the Ishikari, Biei, Chubetsu and Ushibetsu rivers. There are over 700 bridges in the city, the most famous of which has become an attraction, the Asahibashi over the Ishikari River, completed in 1932. The drive time is approximately 30 minutes.

→4:15pm – Once here, we visit the **Otokoyama Sake Brewery**, Asahikawa's most famous sake brewery. With a history spanning over 340 years, the brewery's sake was a favorite of the Tokugawa shogunate. It was even depicted in works by one of Japan's most famous Ukiyoe masters, Utamaro. As you enter the Otokoyama property, a lovely Japanese garden welcomes you. Inside the brewery are

large glass windows where you can view production facilities, and there is a museum dedicated to the art of making sake. Of course, there is also a sake tasting room and gift shop.

→**5:30pm** – Arrive at **JR Inn Asahikawa** – Connected to the JR Asahikawa Station and a direct elevator down to the AEON Mall. The city’s shopping arcade entrance is also steps away. Besides its location, the hotel offers a public bath for men and women in a semi-outdoor setting. Enjoy the evening at leisure.

Day 4: (Sun) Sept 24 – Asahikawa-Lake Noto-Lake Saroma (B/L/D)

Lake Saroma Tsuruga Resort (Free WiFi)

→**Breakfast at hotel**

→**8:30am – Meet guide at lobby** – We are off for a full day of touring, ending in Abashiri, most famous for its winter viewing of masses of drift ice covering the surrounding ocean. Our visit here is to take in the **beautiful autumn colors** and tasty food of Hokkaido’s northern frontier. Locals are known to boast that here is where you can enjoy the best seafood in all of Japan. The drive time is approximately 2.5 hours, and a rest stop will be made along the way.

→**11:00am** – First, we’ll visit some marine life at the world’s first ice-sea observation tower: **Okhotsk Tower**. Spanning four floors, this landmark offers an observation deck, a 4D theater, a mini aquarium in the basement’s “undersea floor,” a touch pool filled with sea creatures, a sturgeon feeding area, a gift shop, and more!

→**12:30pm – Lunch at a local restaurant**

→**3:30pm** – From here, we are off to **Lake Noto Coral Grass Colony**, Japan’s largest coral reef colony. This coral grass is a vividly tinted red field of grass that stretches into a beautiful expanse. Under the blue autumn sky, enjoy this stunning red carpet over the lakeshore of Lake Noto, said to have the largest area of coral grass. As this area is endangered, the viewing is from a wooden pathway that cuts through the center of the fields.

→**5:00pm** – Arrive at **Lake Saroma Tsuruga Resort** – An onsen hotel on the shore of Lake Saroma. The hotel features a large hot spring public bath “Wakka no Yu”, a natural hot spring that is known to have great heat retention or bath of heat. It is a perfect way to enjoy your free time.

→**6:30pm – Buffet dinner at the hotel**

Day 5: (Mon) Sept 25 – Lake Saroma-Abashiri-Shiretoko (B/L/D)

Shiretoko Daiichi Hotel (Free WiFi)

→**Breakfast at hotel**

→**8:00am – Meet guide at lobby** – Our morning begins with a

drive to Shiretoko National Park, located at the northeastern tip of Hokkaido. The drive time is approximately 2-hours, and a short rest stop will be made along the way. It is one of Japan’s most beautiful and unspoiled national parks. It is also home to a variety of wildlife, including brown bears, deer, and foxes.

→**10:30am – Shiretoko Cruise Aurora** – One of the area’s main attractions, a 90-minute sightseeing cruise that travels along the coast of the Shiretoko Peninsula. Said to be Japan’s last frontier, this cruise allows you to enjoy viewing areas untouched by man. Keep your camera handy for this one-of-a-kind scenery, tall cliffs with waterfalls and sea caves in a panoramic setting. Keep an eye out to spot many of its wildlife population, brown bears, Yezo deer, Ezo red foxes, white-tailed eagle, Steller’s Sea eagle, and Blakiston’s fish owl. Look out for seals and dolphins as they frolic in the sea along with black-tailed gulls and Japanese cormorants. Nothing matches the chance to see animals in their natural environment.

→**12:10pm – Lunch at a local restaurant**

→**1:20pm – Michino-eki Utoro** – A popular roadside station at the entrance of Shiretoko National Park. Enjoy free time to visit the information center and gift shop, offering regional specialties and souvenirs.



Day 5 - Shiretoko Five Lakes Wooden Pathways

→**2:20pm** – We are now for a walk along the **Shiretoko Five Lakes Wooden Pathways**, a primeval forest surrounding five pristine lakes, to enjoy the flora and characteristic animals of this region. It is without a doubt, a “World Heritage” site.

Shiretoko Goko Lakes, five small lakes mysteriously located amid these forests, are the habitat of many wild animals. You can see an abundance of nature with traces of brown bear scratches and black woodpecker bites. It makes for an incredible sight against the Shiretoko Mountain Range. This elevated wooden path ensures a safe walk to the lakes. The distance is 1 mile and takes approximately 40-minutes. **Enjoy fall colors all around you.**

→**4:40pm** – Arrive at **Shiretoko Daiichi Hotel** – Set on high ground overlooking the Sea of Okhotsk. Our onsen hotel features both indoor and outdoor natural hot spring baths.

Enjoy relaxing time surrounded by the views of this World Heritage Site.

→6:30pm – Japanese style dinner at the hotel

Day 6: (Tue) Sept 26 – Shiretoko-Lake Akan (B/L/D)

Hotel Lake Akan Tsuruga Wings - Lake view rooms confirmed (Free WiFi)

→Breakfast at hotel

→8:30am – Meet guide at lobby

→8:45am – The morning begins with a short drive to **Oshinkoshin Waterfall**. Known as Twin Beauties Waterfall since its flow splits half-way down. Oshinkoshin is a powerful falls at the entrance to Shiretoko. From the observatory, you can also enjoy views of the Sea of Okhotsk and the Shiretoko mountain range. This waterfall has been included in the “100 Waterfalls of Japan”.

→10:15am – Next is a fun visit to the **Kiyosato Shochu Distillery**, located among endless potato fields. This rare town-run brewery is known for brewing Japanese shochu from potato as the raw material for the first time in Japan. The tour includes viewing the entire mashing and distillation process. At the end, there are tastings of three different shochu from mild to super strong.

→12:00pm – Lunch at a local restaurant



Day 6 - Lake Mashu

→1:15pm – We’re off to **Lake Mashu** (transparent lake), a caldera lake in Akan Mashu National Park. Considered by many to be Japan’s most beautiful lake, it vies for the position of clearest lake in the world. Appreciated for its clear blue water, the lake is famous for its notorious fog, which often hangs over the water for the entire day (a rare phenomenon for a lake), hence its nickname “Foggy Lake Mashu”. Depending on the time of day—morning, noon, or evening—and the season of the year, the lake can take on many different appearances.

If you enjoy photography, you will be taken by the beautiful landscapes, more so if we are blessed with clear weather.

→3:45pm – **Lake Akan Ainu Theater Ikoro** – Enjoy a traditional ancient dance performance by local Ainu.

→5:15pm – Arrive at **Hotel Lake Akan Tsuruga Wings** – A “New Style” – stylish and contemporary - hot spring Ryokan. Many indigenous or local artworks are on display at the gallery on the lobby floor. This onsen hotel is ideally situated along the town’s main street so that after dinner if you choose to take a stroll, many of the shops are open late into the evening. Enjoy free time to try the onsen or just relax.

→6:30pm – Buffet dinner at the hotel

Day 7: (Wed) Sept 27 – Lake Akan-Tomamu (B/D)

Hoshino Resort Tomamu (Free WiFi)

→Breakfast at hotel

→8:30am – Meet guide at lobby

→9:45am – The morning begins with a visit at the **Akan International Crane Center**, a combination of museum, breeding center, and sanctuary where cranes can be seen year-round. This facility is unique to Japan in its purpose is to conserve the tancho crane while providing research and information about these magnificent birds. Enjoy viewing informative displays. Outdoors you can observe tancho cranes being raised in nature throughout the year.

→11:00am – Next, off to **Kushiro Washo Ichiba Market** for lunch on your own and shopping. Established in 1954 as “the Citizen’s Kitchen,” it is Kushiro’s oldest market and forms, along with Sapporo Ichi Jo and Otaru Hanazono, Hokkaido’s Big Three Markets. The lively calls of “Wasshoi wasshoi” , meaning goods and trade, fill the market and are said to give the market its name. Seafood and the famous “Katte Don” bowls are not to be missed in the market.

→2:00pm – Our afternoon begins with a visit to the **Ikeda Wine Factory**, one of the specialties of Ikeda Town. Located on a small hill overlooking Ikeda Town, this factory is also known as the Ikeda Wine Castle due to its resemblance to a medieval European castle.

Enjoy free time, look round the exhibition rooms, displaying grape cultivation and winemaking techniques and visit the wine maturation cellars where vintage wines are aged. The wine tasting area, restaurant, and shopping area selling wines and other local specialties are all very popular with visitors. If you would like to do tastings, the cost is approximately JPY 350-800 per glass.

→4:30pm – Arrive at **Hoshino Resort Tomamu** followed by **dinner** - An all-seasons resort, most famous for its winter ski activities. Surrounded by nature, enjoy the **beautiful fall colors** all around.

One popular activity here is the Mina-Mina Beach, the largest indoor beach in Japan. You can also spend the afternoon with a stroll around the grounds or lying in a hammock while surrounded by a flock of sheep. There’s always the

large wooden deck to sit back and enjoy a beverage while gazing at the **beautiful fall colors**.

Day 8: (Thu) Sept 28 – Tomamu-Sapporo (B/D)

Century Royal Hotel Sapporo (Free WiFi)

→Breakfast at hotel

→8:30am – Meet guide at lobby – We are making our way to Hokkaido's capital, Sapporo.

→10:15am – The morning begins with a drive to visit **Yuni Garden**, a British style garden featuring displays of colorful flowers and herbs. The drive time is approximately 1.5 hours.

In early autumn the highlight is the garden. Enjoy free time to walk along the flowers and a variety of herbs, all of which you can touch and smell. By October the landscape is filled with some 30,000 red kochia bushes. You can enjoy **autumn colors** along with maple and Japanese Ivy. Stop by the garden shop where they sell unique herbal cookies and teas, perfect souvenirs.

→12:30pm – Now, off to Sapporo to visit the **Sapporo Central Wholesale Market (Jogai)**. This market offers some of the freshest fish and produce in Japan. At the “Curb Market,” you can find approx. 60 stores selling everything from fruits to seasonal goods. Pick up some fresh crab and salmon sushi, a donburi bowl, or other regional delicacies as you enjoy lunch on your own here.

Next, we'll cross over to **Tanukikoji Shopping Street**. Started in 1868, it is Sapporo's oldest, including a covered shopping arcade stretching 10 blocks with 200 stores. Here, you'll find merchant stalls from the old world and the new, selling traditional goods like kimonos and tea sets alongside electronics and tech accessories. You'll also find Hawaii favorites like a multi-story Daiso, a 24-hour Mega Don Quijote, and a variety of dining options.

→4:00pm – Arrive at **Century Royal Hotel** – Our hotel is ideally situated adjacent to the shopping zone in front of JR Sapporo Station, and directly connected via an underground passage.

→6:30pm – Hokkaido crab dinner at a local restaurant

Day 9: (Fri) Sept 29 – Sapporo/Free day at leisure(B)

Century Royal Hotel Sapporo (Free WiFi)

→Breakfast at hotel – Enjoy a free day to explore Sapporo.

Not too far from the hotel are plenty of shopping and sightseeing opportunities. Here are some other ideas for the day:

Sapporo Station: (right around the corner from our hotel) – It is the city's main railway station located right downtown. Multiple shopping centers surround the station complex,

particularly on its south side. The area's most impressive tourist attraction is the T38 Observation Deck at the top of the JR Tower building that rises above the station. Occupying the tower's 38th floor, 525-feet above ground, the observation deck is quite a bit taller than the 295-foot observation deck of the TV Tower.

Sapporo Beer Museum – The first and only “beer museum” in Japan since the 1870s. The museum introduces the history of beer in Japan and the process of beer making but has few explanations in English. After the exhibitions, beer tastings are available at a small fee.

Clock Tower – Symbol of Sapporo. Today, the Clock Tower serves as a museum with displays about the building's history and Sapporo on the first floor. On the second floor are displays about the clock and a spacious ceremony hall that calls to mind the simple buildings of the colonial American Midwest.

Botanic Garden – Established in 1886, this botanical garden preserves a small part of the forest which formerly covered the Ishikari Plain. There is also an alpine garden, a greenhouse, and a small Ainu Museum.

Day 10: (Sat) Sept 30 – Sapporo-Chitose-Haneda-Honolulu (B)

→Breakfast at hotel

→9:00am Meet guide at lobby

→9:30am Okurayama Ski Jump – Constructed in 1931, the stadium was home to the 90m ski jump competition during the 1972 Sapporo Winter Olympic Games and is still used for competitions today. At the foot of the jump hill is the Sapporo Winter Sports Museum, which commemorates the 1992 Sapporo Winter Olympics and winter sports like ski to the peak where a viewing lounge will provide us with a spectacular view of Sapporo, the Ishikari Plain, and Ishikari Bay. This is also the ideal location to view the start line of the ski jump—look below at the steep slope to put yourself in the skiers' boots right before they begin their jumps!

→We'll then head to **AEON Mall Sapporo Hassamu** – A large shopping mall with everything you need to round up any last minute shopping before the drive out to New Chitose Airport.

Depart Chitose via All Nippon Airways (TBA)

Connecting flight via Hawaiian Airlines to Honolulu.

Arrive in Honolulu on the same day.

Thank you for traveling with us! 

Need to Know...



Payment Policy

- » **Reserve with \$75 per person deposit. Refundable up to 60 days prior to departure date, July 23 2023.**
- » **Final payment due by August 4, 2023. Package is non-refundable after this date.**

* Fares and Fees (Priced in USD)

- » Are subject to change in light of fuel supplements, taxes, and differences in costs.
- » Air ticket fare is guaranteed, but taxes, fees, and fuel surcharges are subject to change until tickets are issued, approximately 45 days out.
- » We reserve the right to make changes to the itinerary with or without notice.



Special Assistance

- » You must inform us of any disability/impairment that requires special attention at the time of your making the reservation.
- » We reserve the right to cancel the reservation(s) if the disability/impairment is unsuitable for the tour.
- » You are also responsible for any costs and/or accommodations related to your disability/impairment, such as providing your own travel companion.



Travel Insurance

- » We highly recommend the purchase of trip insurance. Please ask our representatives for more information.



Travel Documents

- » A valid passport is required for all U.S. citizens and must be valid and not expire at least 6 months from the return tour date.
- » Non-U.S. passport holders must check with the Japanese Consulate to see if a visa is required.



Land Tour Operator & Costs

- » Land Tour Operator is Nippon Travel Agency.
- » Land Tour costs are based on current currency conversion rates, which are subject to change.



Other remarks

- » Not Included in the tour: Gratuities for local English speaking guide; additional baggage fee charges from the airlines; alcohol and soft drinks with meals.
- » A minimum of 16 participants are required for the tour to operate.
- » You are expected to abide by domestic and international government and accommodation policies related to health, safety, and welfare.