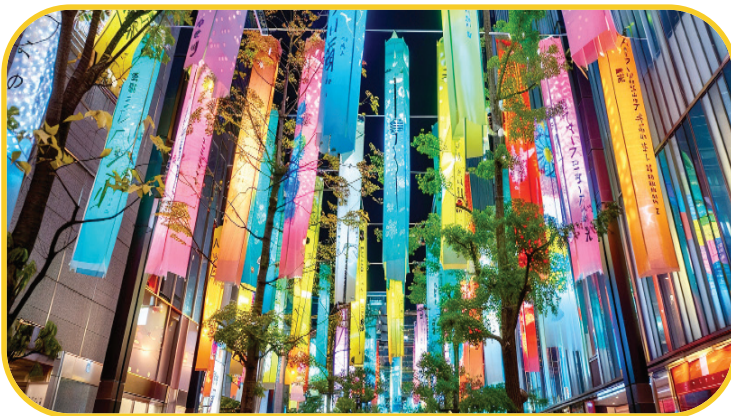


Join Panda Travel in...



2025 Tohoku Matsuri Hopper & Tokyo Tour

(GP13347)



July 31 - Aug 10, 2025

9 Nights/ 11 Days

*Tokyo - Aomori - Appi Kogen - Akita - Oga -
Morioka - Yamagata - Sendai*

\$100 OFF PER PERSON
on our complete package when you pay
with a personal check/cash

\$5,998*

per person-triple occupancy

\$5,998*

per person-double occupancy

\$6,898*

single occupancy

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1017 Kapahulu Ave, Honolulu, HI 96816

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

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

Itinerary

Day 1: (Thu) Jul 31 – Honolulu Depart Honolulu

→ Meet the Panda Travel representative at the airline's check-in counters 3 hours prior to departure.

Day 2: (Fri) Aug 1 – Haneda-Tokyo

Sunshine City Prince Hotel (Free Wi-Fi)

→ Arrive at **Haneda Airport** and meet your English-speaking local guide at the arrival lobby. We'll then transfer to **Sunshine City Prince Hotel**, which is directly connected to Sunshine City shopping center with many shopping and dining options available to you.

Day 3: (Sat) Aug 2 – Tokyo (B/L)

Sunshine City Prince Hotel (Free Wi-Fi)

→ Breakfast at hotel.

→ **8:30am** – Meet your guide at the hotel lobby for a full day tour in Tokyo.

→ **9:00am** – Our day begins with a visit to **Tsukiji Outer Market**. A renowned bucketlist spot, Tsukiji is the largest fish market in the world. While the inner auction market relocated to Toyosu in 2018, the charm remains in its outer market.

→ **12:00pm** – Time for an unforgettable culinary adventure at the **Asakusa Sumo Club**. Delight in an authentic **chanko-nabe** ("sumo stew") **Japanese lunch** around a genuine sumo ring (assembled with the same materials and standards found in the Ryogoku Kokugikan National Sumo Arena) and enjoy a spectacular sumo show from a former rikishi (professional sumo wrestler) and wrestling students in training. Those who'd like to experience this national sport are invited to wear a sumo costume and test their skills against the former rikishi— what a wonderful and rare opportunity to step into the ring! Participants can also commemorate the experience by taking a photo with the former rikishi.

→ **2:00pm** – Here we are at **Asakusa's** iconic **Sensoji Temple** and **Kaminarimon Gate** (aka "Thunder Gate") with its massive lantern. This spot is a "must see" in every guidebook and boasts over 30 million annual visitors. You'll also find the **Five Storied Pagoda**. This nearly 174 foot monument stands to represent Tokyo's few remaining pagodas. As you roam through the temple grounds, you'll come across the **Nakamise Shopping Arcade**, a lively and extensive shopping street lined with good luck charms, traditional goodies, and Japanese snacks.

→ **4:00pm** – Return to hotel. Enjoy the evening at leisure!

Day 4: (Sun) Aug 3 –

Tokyo-Aomori/Nebuta-Appi Kogen (B/L)

ANA Crowne Plaza Resort Appi Kogen (Free Wi-Fi)

→ Breakfast at hotel.

→ Your luggage (2 pcs per person) will be delivered by courier services from Tokyo to Akita. Please prepare an overnight bag for 1-night.

→ **9:30am** – Meet your guide at the hotel lobby for Tokyo station. We'll board a **bullet train** from Tokyo to Aomori. **Bento lunch** will be provided on the train to enjoy.

→ **1:57pm** – Upon our arrival at **Shin Aomori Station**, we'll begin our tour in Aomori.

→ **2:30pm** – This afternoon, we'll visit the famous **Nebuta Museum Wa Rasse**, dedicated to Aomori's annual Nebuta Matsuri festival. This museum showcases beautiful exhibits that highlight the 300-year-old festival's history, lore, and traditions.

→ **3:30pm** – Next, a visit to **A-Factory**, a duty-free, market-style shopping center that offers a diverse range of local products. Most notable is the onsite apple cider factory that produces fresh cider and juices from Aomori's renowned apples—the region's pride as Japan's leading apple producer. Sampling these apple products is a must!

→ **4:45pm** – From here, we'll stop at the **Sun Road Aomori Shopping Mall**, where you can shop and enjoy dinner on your own at one of its many restaurants.

→ **7:00pm-8:00pm** – Get ready for the **Aomori Nebuta Matsuri**, one of Japan's most illustrious summer festivals. Attracting nearly three million visitors each year, this is a celebration you won't want to miss!

During the festival, marvel at the intricately designed floats. Adorned with decorative washi paper, these massive masterpieces display vibrant images of warriors, gods, and demons that evoke the spirit of kabuki actors. While there, you can also admire the haneto dancers as they leap and twirl to the beat of the lively drums that rouse participants from summer lethargy and join in on their spirited chants of "Rasse-ra! Rasse-ra!" that echo through the air.

→ Arrive at **ANA Crowne Plaza Resort Appi Kogen**. Enjoy the evening at leisure.

Day 5: (Mon) Aug 4 –

Appi Kogen-Akita/Kantou (B/L/D)

ANA Crowne Plaza Akita (Free Wi-Fi)

→ Breakfast at hotel.

→ **10:00am** – Meet your guide at the hotel lobby for Akita. Our morning begins with a visit to **Koiwai Farm**. Established in 1891, it is one of the largest and most renowned farms in

Japan. Lauded for its sustainable practices and preservation of the Tohoku region's farming heritage, the farm has also earned a well-deserved reputation for excellence in producing high-quality dairy products, such as fresh milk, cheese, butter, and ice cream.

→ **11:00am** – Time to hop on a **bus tour** for a special behind-the-scenes look into dairy production facilities and important cultural sites on the farm. And at **12:00pm**, enjoy a **Japanese-style lunch** on site.

→ **2:15pm** – Along the way, we'll stop by **Lake Tazawa**. Almost perfectly circular in shape, this crater lake is the deepest lake in Japan and changes from sapphire-blue color to shades of jade green and indigo blue depending on the sunlight and season. Interestingly, the lake also does not freeze in winter. This is a great place to snap a photo of these stunning views.

→ **4:30pm** – Arrival at **ANA Crowne Plaza Akita**, followed by **dinner at 5pm**.

→ **6:50pm-8:35pm** – Tonight, we'll attend the **Akita Kanto Festival**, held annually in early August in Akita City, is one of Tohoku's largest summer matsuri and has been an Important Intangible Folk Cultural Property since 1980. You may recognize the festival from its stunning "kanto"—tall bamboo poles reaching up to 39 feet decorated with glowing lanterns—or from its skilled performers who deftly balance kanto on their foreheads, shoulders, and backs. The festival symbolizes prayers for a bountiful harvest and fosters community spirit, drawing locals and tourists alike to its vibrant celebrations. After the festival, we will take a short walk back to the hotel.

Day 6: (Tue) Aug 5 – Akita-Oga-Morioka (B/L)

Hotel Metropolitan Morioka/New Wing (Free Wi-Fi)

→ **Breakfast at hotel.**

→ **8:45am** – Meet your guide at the hotel lobby for **Morioka**.

→ **9:00am** – Our day kicks off at **Akita Shimin Ichiba Market**, a vibrant local market affectionately nicknamed "the kitchen of Akita" for its vast array of fresh produce and regional specialties.

→ **10:30am** – Next, a stop at **Takashimizu Sake Brewery** for sake tasting. This brewery's sake consists of select Akita rice and water, which results in an excellent taste unique to Akita. Its products have even received the Gold Prize at several annual Japan Sake Awards.

→ **12:30pm** – We'll enjoy a **Japanese-style lunch** at a local restaurant, accompanied by a **Namahage performance**.

→ **2:00pm** – Now a visit to **Namahage Museum**, dedicated to highlighting the Namahage Festival where young men don devil's masks and traditional straw garments on New

Year's Eve. The men also hold papier mache knives and go door to door admonishing sluggards to ward off misfortune and bring blessings.

→ **6:30pm** – Arrive at **Hotel Metropolitan Morioka**. Ideally located, the hotel is close to Morioka Station, with a variety of dining and shopping options just steps away. Enjoy the evening at leisure.

Day 7: (Wed) Aug 6 – Morioka-Yamagata/Hanagasa (B)

Hotel Metropolitan Yamagata (Free Wi-Fi) or similar

→ **Breakfast at hotel.**

→ **9:00am** – Meet your guide at the hotel lobby for a full day tour to Yamagata.

→ **9:30am** – This morning, a fun visit to **Morioka Tezukurimura**, an artisan's village of workshops dedicated to local craftsmanship. The motto here is "see, touch, and create." As an introduction to traditional Japanese crafts, we'll enjoy a **hands-on experience: handkerchief dyeing**.

→ **12:30pm** – During our time at **Akita Furusato Village**, explore and enjoy lunch at your leisure.

→ **2:15pm** – Here we are at the **Yokote City Tourism Association Kamakura**, a multi-facility complex that introduces visitors to Yokote city's community and culture. You can also find a store selling Yokote speciality products onsite.

→ **5:30pm** – Check-in at **Hotel Metropolitan Yamagata**. Conveniently located, the hotel offers a variety of dining and shopping options nearby. Enjoy dinner on your own and meet your guide back at the hotel **by 7pm**.

→ **7:30pm-9:00pm** – This evening, we'll walk to the **Yamagata Hanagasa Festival**, a spectacular three-day dance extravaganza and one of Tohoku's largest parades. The event features over 10,000 dazzling performers proudly displaying hand-crafted hanagasa hats (flower hats) that are adorned with bright orange safflowers, the symbol of Yamagata Prefecture. The dance is accompanied by the energetic rhythm of folk music and the powerful beats of the Hanagasataiko drums. After the festival, we'll walk back to the hotel.

Day 8: (Thu) Aug 7 – Yamagata-Sendai/Tanabata (B/L)

Hotel Monterey Sendai (Free Wi-Fi)

→ **Breakfast at hotel.**

→ **9:00am** – Meet your guide at the hotel lobby for **Matsushima**, a stunning coastal town in Miyagi Prefecture that is often ranked with Amanohashidate and Miyajima as Japan's three most scenic views.

→ **11:00am** – Prepare to embark on a **sightseeing cruise**

and set sail through breathtaking **Matsushima Bay**. Dotted with over 200 small islands covered in pine trees, this picturesque bay boasts stunning natural landscapes that change with the seasons. Sit back, relax, and enjoy the scenic views.

→ **12:00pm** – Enjoy **Japanese-style lunch** at a local restaurant.

→ **1:15pm** – From here, a visit to **Godaido Temple**, the symbol of Matsushima and a designated National Important Cultural Property site.

→ **2:45pm** – We are now off to a fun **blueberry picking experience** at JR Fruit Park Sendai Arahama.

→ **4:30pm** – Arrive at **Hotel Metropolitan Sendai**. Enjoy some free time to relax or shop around this popular area.

→ **6:00pm** – After freshening up, meet your guide at the hotel lobby for a leisurely stroll to the **Sendai Tanabata Festival**, or Star Festival. This enchanting celebration honors the legend of Vega and Altair, star-crossed lovers who reunite once a year across the Milky Way. The festival features thousands of colorful streamers that transform the city's shopping arcades into a stunning spectacle. Enjoy various crafts, stage performances, live music, and traditional dances along the streets. Don't forget to check out the food stalls offering local treats!

Day 9: (Fri) Aug 8 – Sendai-Tokyo (B)

Sunshine City Prince Hotel (Free Wi-Fi)

→ **Breakfast at hotel.**

→ **9:30am** – Meet your guide at the hotel lobby. **Your suitcase (2 pcs per person) will be delivered by chartered truck from Sendai to Tokyo (same day arrival).**

→ **10:00am** – Our first stop takes us to **Kanezaki Sasakama Kan** for a unique **Sasakama** (grilled fish cake) **making experience**, a local specialty of the region. Our skilled instructors will guide us through the process of making and then enjoying the finished product hot off the grill.

→ **11:45am** – Now visit the lively **Sendai Asaichi Morning Market** or “Sendai's kitchen.” Here, savor an incredible selection of seafood sourced from Miyagi, one of Japan's top three fishing spots. This renowned fishing region, blessed with bountiful coastal waters, ensures that the seafood available at the market is fresh and of the highest quality.

→ **1:31pm** – Now, we'll hop on a **bullet train** from Sendai Station to Ueno Station, Tokyo.

→ **2:58pm** – Upon arriving at **Ueno**, we'll take a short drive to our next destination.

→ **3:15pm** – Here we are at **Ameyoko Shopping Street**. This is the perfect place to get your omiyage. “Ameyoko” is short for “Ameya Yokocho” or “candy shop back alley” since candies were traditionally sold there. Alternatively,

it is short for “America,” a callback to the post-WWII era when American products were sold there illegally. Now, the street is lined with over 400 shops from cooked street food, snacks like dried squid, and fresh seafood to clothes, bags, accessories, cosmetics, and much more!

→ **5:30pm** – Arrive at **Sunshine City Prince Hotel**. Our hotel lobby directly connects to a huge shopping and entertainment complex with 4 towers that include an aquarium, planetarium, solarium, a virtual reality play experience, and a nearly 788 foot high skyscraper with an observation deck. Enjoy the evening of shopping and dining on your own.

Day 10: (Sat) Aug 9 – Tokyo-Free day at leisure (B)

Sunshine City Prince Hotel (Free Wi-Fi)

→ **After breakfast, enjoy your free day to explore Tokyo!**

→ If you've already experienced Sunshine City shopping mall, take a visit to Ikebukuro station and hop on a rail line that will connect you to other popular areas like Shinagawa, Shibuya, Shinjuku, Ueno, and Akihabara. Ikebukuro station is also close to our hotel.

Day 11: (Sun) Aug 10 – Tokyo-Haneda-Honolulu (B)

→ **Breakfast at hotel.**

→ **11:15am** – Meet your guide at the hotel lobby for Tokyo.

→ **11:45am** – Nestled in the heart of Tokyo is **Azabudai Hills**, a vibrant urban development that seamlessly blends nature, art, and technology. Here, we'll venture into the digital art world of **teamLab Borderless**, where dazzling light displays and fields of flowers make for an immersive and unforgettable experience. Then, take some time to explore the area and enjoy lunch at your leisure from the various dining options available.

→ **3:30pm** – Enjoy some last minute shopping at the **Divercity Shopping Center**. Located on the artificial island of Odaiba, this unique landmark is one of the popular shopping, dining, and entertainment complexes in Tokyo. Don't forget to take a moment to snap a photo in front of the famous Gundam Statue.

→ **Arrive at Haneda Airport to begin our check-in process for the flight home.**

→ **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 65 days prior to departure date, May 27, 2025.
- » Final payment due by June 9, 2025. 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.
- » 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.