

SAMURAI TOURS

Adventures in Discovering Traditional Japan

www.samuraitours.com

Northern Japan Onsen



15 Days / 14 Nights

Northern Japan Onsen

Tour Overview

Enjoy the good life - Japanese style. Our Onsen tours only stay at Onsens. On the Northern Japan Onsen tour, you will enjoy the best local food specialties and the famous Japanese hospitality while relaxing in some of the best onsens in Japan and visiting out-of-the-way destinations.

📍 Destinations

Tokyo, Atami Onsen, Nikko Yumoto Onsen, Zao Onsen, Atsumi Onsen, Goshogake Onsen, Tsunagi Onsen

Tour Details

Visiting an onsen is the Japanese version of the good life. At Japanese onsens, you will enjoy excellent food and experience the famous Japanese hospitality. And don’t forget the Japanese baths. The Japanese have raised bathing to a whole new level, and they are an important experience that should be included in every visit to Japan. And in between all of this, we will be visiting some of Japan’s most remote sightseeing destinations. If you like Japanese food and enjoy the Japanese baths, this tour should not be missed.

You will visit the Izu Peninsula known for its hot springs, beautiful coastlines, mild climate and scenic mountainous interior. Nikko has been a center of Shinto and Buddhist mountain worship for many centuries. But Nikko is most famous for Toshogu, Japan’s most lavishly decorated shrine and the mausoleum of Tokugawa Ieyasu, the first shogun of the Tokugawa Shogunate which ruled Japan for more than 250 years,

Zao Onsen offers some of the country’s most acidic thermal waters. Atsumi Onsen with its 1000 year history, is a hot spring brimming with nature that has prospered along the clear stream of Atsumi River. Goshogake Onsen is a hot spring on the slopes of Mount Hachimantai in Towada-Hachimantai National Park. Tsunagi Onsen, in the outskirts of Morioka, is located on Lake Gosho with views of Mt. Iwate.

PLEASE NOTE: Tattoos in Japan are stigmatized, and therefore tattoos are not widely accepted at onsen baths in Japan. If you have tattoos, you may not be allow

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🗺Map



Destinations



Atami Onsen

Atami Beach, Kiumkaku Former Ryokan, Atami Castle



Izu Peninsula

Mt Fuji Panorama, Jogasaki. Coastline



Oku Nikko Onsen



Zao Onsen



Dewa Sanzan Pilgrimage

Yudono-san, Dainichibo Temple,
Hagurosan



Atsumi Onsen



Goshogake Onsen



Hachimantai



Tsun
Onse

Itinerary

Walking level descriptions:
Light – 0 to 2 miles on level ground
Medium – 2 to 4 miles on level ground or 0 to 2 miles on hilly ground
Heavy – 4 to 6 miles on level ground or 2 to 4 miles on hilly ground

Day 1 Arrive in Tokyo, Travel to the hotel

After clearing customs and immigration, you will be met at Tokyo's Narita Airport or Haneda Airport by a Samurai Tours meeting staff member. They will help you board the appropriate transportation to the hotel. After checking in, the evening is free. No meals are included.

Travel: 1 to 1 1/2 Hours; Walking: Light

Day 2 Travel to Atami Onsen; Tour Atami Onsen - Atami Beach, Kunkaku Former Ryokan, Atami Castle

Before leaving for the day, you will transfer your luggage to Oku Nikko Onsen. In the morning, you will travel to Atami Onsen. After dropping off the luggage at the hotel, we will tour Atami Onsen. We will start at Atami Beach, at the center of the onsen. Next we will visit Kiunkaku Former Ryokan. And we will end the day with a visit to Atami Castle. Dinner at the hotel in the evening. Breakfast and dinner at the hotel is included.

Travel: 1 Hour; Walking: Heavy

Day 2 Izu Peninsula - Mt Fuji Panorama, Jogosaki Coastline

We will start the day at the Mt Fuji panorama. Here, you will get an excellent view of Mt. Fuji (weather permitting). Next, we will visit the Jogosaki Coastline. The Jogasaki Coast is a beautiful section of coastline along the Izu Peninsula's eastern coast. An attractive hiking trail follows the coast, offering beautiful views of the jagged cliffs and stone formations that hug the coast. Breakfast and dinner at the hotel.

Travel: 2 Hours; Walking: Heavy

Day 3 Aizu-Wakamatsu - Sazaedo Pagoda, Nisshin Samurai School, Tsuruga Castle

Today we will further explore the Samurai city of Aizu Wakamatsu. We will start at the Sazaedo Tower. Completed in 1796, the wooden Sazaedo temple isn't huge but what makes it unique is its double helix staircase on which the people going up and the people going down never pass each other. Next, we will tour the Samurai School where the children of the Samurai attended. In the afternoon we will visit Tsuruga Castle, originally built in 1384. Tsuruga Castle was one of the last strongholds of the Boshin War. However, it was destroyed by Samurai still loyal to the Tokugawa Shogunate after the Boshin War of 1868, a rebellion against the newly formed Meiji government. The castle was rebuilt as a concrete reconstruction in the 1960s, and in renovation works completed in 2011 the color of the roof tiles was changed from grey to the original red tiles. The inside of the castle houses a museum with displays depicting the history of the castle and the Samurai lifestyle. After touring the castle, we will return to the ryokan to retrieve your main luggage. Breakfast at the ryokan and dinner at the ryokan included.

Travel: 1 Hour;; Walking: Heavy

Day 4 Travel to Yamadera, Tour Yamadera, Travel to Zao Onsen

After breakfast we will travel to Yamadera. Yamadera is a scenic temple located in the mountains northeast of Yamagata City. The temple grounds extend high up a steep mountainside (the name Yamadera literally translates to “mountain temple”), from where there are scenic views overlooking the valley below. The temple was created over a thousand years ago in 860 as a temple of the Tendai sect. We will finish the day by continuing to Zao Onsen where we will stay for the next two nights. Zao Onsen is at an altitude of about 900 meters (3000 feet) on the slopes of Mount Zao, an active volcano. During the winter months, Zao is one of Japan’s leading ski resorts. The sulfuric waters at Zao Onsen are among the most acidic in Japan with a pH value close to 1. Before leaving Aizu-Wakamatsu, you will send your main luggage ahead to Zao Onsen. You will need enough items for 2 days and 1 night. Breakfast and dinner at the ryokan included.

Travel: 3 1/2 Hours; Walking: Heavy

Day 5 Zao Onsen - Free Day

Today is a free day to enjoy Zao Onsen. Take the gondola to the top of Mt Zao, an active volcano. From here you can get a great view of the surrounding area. And for the more energetic, there are many easy walking trails around the mountain. You will also be able to get a view of Okama Crater, a beautiful crater lake at the top of the mountain. Or visit one of the many public baths located around the onsen. Breakfast and dinner at the hotel are included.

Travel: N/A Walking: TBD

Day 6 Travel to Sendai; Matushima - Matsushima Bay Cruise, Godaido, Zuiganji Temple; Travel to Tsunagi Onsen

After breakfast, we will continue our adventure by traveling to Sendai, dropping off our overnight bags, and continuing to Matsushima. For hundreds of years, Matsushima has been celebrated as one of the Japan’s three most scenic view along with Miyajima and Amanohashidate. Matsushima Bay has more than 200 small islands covered with pine trees, and the best way to see these is by boat. After arriving at Matsushima, we will tour Zuiganji. Zuiganji was a former Tendai sect temple founded in 828, but later changed to a Zen temple in the 13th century. After years of decline, Zuiganji was restored to prominence by the feudal lord Date Masamune who rebuilt it as his family temple in 1609. We will then visit Godaido. Godaido was originally built in 807 and contains five statues which were enshrined there by the same priest who founded Zuiganji. The statues are displayed to the public only once every 33 years, and were last displayed in 2006. The present building is a 1604 reconstruction by Date Masamune. Later in the afternoon, you will board the boat for a cruise around Matsushima Bay. After returning to Sendai, we will travel on to Tsunagi Onsen. With a history stretching back 900 years, Tsunagi Onsen is a popular hot spring on the outskirts of Morioka. Before leaving Zao Onsen, you will send your main luggage ahead to Tsunagi Onsen. You will need enough items for 2 days and 1 night. Breakfast and dinner at the ryokan included.

Travel: 3 1/2 Hours; Walking: Medium

Day 7 Travel to Kakunodate; Kakunodate - Kakunodate Denshokan Museum, Samurai Residences, Return to Tsunagi Onsen

After breakfast, we will continue our adventure by traveling to Kakunodate. Kakunodate is a former castle town. And while the castle no longer exists, the samurai tradition is still strong. There were two distinct sections of Kakunodate: the merchant district and the samurai district as designed in the Edo Period. Today, the samurai district has some of the best preserved examples

of samurai architecture anywhere in Japan. We will tour two homes: the Aoyogi and the Ishiguro homes. The Aoyogi home is the largest in Kakunodate, and includes multiple buildings with musuem collections documenting the samurai traditions and history in Kakunodate. The area open to visitors at the Ishiguro home is limited because the Ishiguro family still maintains a residence in the home. We will finish the day at the Denshokan museum. This museum has numerous local arts and handicrafts on display, the most prominent being items made from cherry tree bark. During the cold winter months, the samurai would earn extra income by making these items. In the afternoon, we will return to Tsunagi Onsen for the evening. Breakfast and dinner at the ryokan is included.

Travel: 3 1/2 Hours; Walking: Medium

Day 8 Travel to Noboribetsu Onsen

Before leaving Tsunagi Onsen, you will need to send your main luggage to Lake Akan. You will need to take whatever you will need for three days/two nights with you. After breakfast, we will travel to Noboribetsu Onsen, one of Japan's most popular onsen. Breakfast and dinner at the accommodations are included.

Travel: 6 Hours; Walking:Medium

Day 9 Upopoy Ainu National Museum

Today we will visit the nearby Upopoy National Ainu Museum where we will learn more about and experience Ainu culture. Breakfast and dinner at the ryokan included.

Travel: 1 Hour Walking:Heavy

Day 10 Travel to Akan International Crane Center; Travel to Akan Onsen

After breakfast, we will travel to Kushiro and then on to the Akan International Crane Center. It was once thought the cranes were extinct. However, about 50 years ago, a few cranes were found, and extensive efforts were made to bring them back from the brink of extinction. While much work remains to be done, the crane population has stabilized and is even growing. In the afternoon, we will continue on to Akanko Onsen where we will be staying for the evening. Before leaving Noboribetsu Onsen, we will send the luggage to Utoro Onsen. You will need enough items for 3 days and two nights. Breakfast and dinner at the accommodations are included.

Travel: 6 1/2 Hours; Walking: Light

Day 11 Free Day at Lake Akan

The day is free to enjoy the quiet and solitude of Lake Akan. Visit the Ainu dance theater to enjoy a demonstration of traditional Ainu dances. The Ainu were the original inhabitants of Japan. Or take a cruise on Lake Akan, where you can see Marimo. Marimo is a ball-shaped algae that is only found at Lake Akan. Or take an easy forest walk along the shores of the lake to a small geo-thermal area. Breakfast and dinner at the accommodation are included.

Travel: 1 Hour; Walking: Medium

Day 12 Akan National Park - Lake Masshu, Iozan; Travel to Utoro Onsen

Today, before traveling to Utoro Onsen we will visit two popular locations in Akan National Park; As soon as we arrive, you will discover how Iozan (Sulpher Mountain) got it's name. Next we will

travel to Lake Masshu, considered by many to be one of Japan's most beautiful lakes because of its clear, deep blue water. But the lake is shy, and is often shrouded by fog. In the afternoon, we will travel to Utoro Onsen where we will staying. Breakfast and dinner at the accommodations are included.

Travel: 3 1/2 Hours; Walking: Light

Day 13 Shiretoko National Park - Oshinkoshin Waterfall, Shiretoko Peninsula Cruise; Shiretoko Goko Nature Walk

Today we will explore the remote and beautiful Shiretoko National Park. Shiretoko is an ancient Ainu word meaning 'edge of the world'. Shiretoko National Park is famous in Japan for its beautiful scenery and abundant wildlife including deer, bear and foxes. In the morning, we will start with a quick stop at Oshinkoshin Waterfalls, included in the list of 100 Best Waterfalls in Japan. Next we will take a sightseeing cruise along the Shiretoko peninsula where we can see the dramatic and spectacular coastline with its tall cliffs and waterfalls and the mountains in the background. In the afternoon, we will take an easy 3km (2 mile) hike around the Shiretoko-go-ko area. (PLEASE NOTE: Depending on weather conditions, the boat cruise may be cancelled. The walk around Shiretoko Goko is flat, but the trails are not paved.) Buffet breakfast and buffet dinner at the hotel included.

Travel: 1 Hour; Walking: Heavy

Day 14 Travel to Tokyo

Today is a travel day to Tokyo. You will have some free time in Tokyo in the afternoon. We will enjoy the Sayonara dinner in the evening. Breakfast at the accommodation and dinner at a local restaurant.

Travel: 5 Hours; Walking: Light

Day 15 Return Home

It's time to say "sayonara" (Goodbye). Breakfast at the accommodation is included.

Travel: 1 to 1/2 Hours; Walking: Light

Dates & Pricing

Dates	Price (land only) / Single Supplement (All prices are per Person)	Status

Add-On Tours

Our tours and tour itineraries are the best, but as the saying goes, “you can’t make everyone happy all of the time”. There may a specific destination or a specific experience you may want to include in your visit to Japan that may not be included your tour. Choose from our Add On tours to include your interests and make your Japan tour even better.

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Inclusions

- Local, licensed, English-speaking, Japanese guides
- **Travel insurance from Travel Guard**, one of the world's largest travel insurance providers, will be provided to everyone from the United States. All others will receive a $100 per person credit and will be responsible for obtaining their own travel insurance in their own home country. (The insurance provided by Samurai Tours will cover the land portion only. Insurance to cover airfare and other additional expenses is the tour member's responsibility.)
  - Exact coverage dependent on state
    - For residents of the following states please click here for your available plan. CO, FL, IN, KS, MN, MO, MT, NY, and WA
    - For all other states and the District of Columbia click here
  - **Travel Insurance Surcharge:** Depending on your age at the time the travel insurance is purchased, you may be subject to the following surcharge for your travel insurance. Travel insurance surcharges will be due at the same time as your tour deposits. (the surcharge itself is not insured)
    - Up to 69 – $0
    - 70-74 – $175
    - 75-79 – $375
    - 80-84 – $700
    - 85+ – $1,175
  - **Travel Insurance Opt-Out:** If you would prefer to opt out of the travel insurance, please note this at the time of registration. You will receive a $100 credit per person, which will be reflected on your invoice. In the event that you would need to cancel your tour, cancellation penalties may apply. See the Terms and Conditions page for the Cancellation Fees Schedule.

- Domestic airfare from Hokkaido's Memanbetsu Airport to Tokyo

- Meeting service at Tokyo's Narita Airport or Tokyo's Haneda Airport and transfer to the accommodations in Tokyo
  - The meeting service will meet you at the airport and provide you a transfer to the accommodations in Tokyo
  - Meeting service can only be provided between 8am and 9pm. If you arrive at a time outside of these hours, we will need to provide alternative directions for you to get to the hotel on your own.

- Sending service to the Shinagawa station at the end of the tour
  - The sending service will escort you to the Shinagawa station and make sure you board the correct train or subway depending on the airport. The sending service will not accompany you to the airport.

For those requiring meeting or sending services on other than the scheduled arrival/departure dates, there will be a $100 fee for the meeting service from the airport into Tokyo or the sending service to the Kyoto train station.)

- Lodging for 14 nights in Japanese-style hotels or ryokans and western style hotels

- Meals
  - Japanese-style or Western-style breakfast every morning (Please Note: Some ryokans offer Japanese breakfasts only.)
  - Japanese-style or Western-style dinner every night

- The appropriate amount of free time to allow you to explore and discover your own personal Japan.
- All transportation costs when traveling with the group. (Transportation costs during scheduled free times are the tour member's responsibility.)
- Admission fees to the destinations and activities (Itinerary specifics subject to change)

- Electronic version of itinerary
- Sayonara dinner at the end of the tour
- Baggage transfer from Tokyo to Aizu Wakamatsu (one bag only)
- Baggage transfer from Aizu Wakamatsu to Zao Onsen (one bag only)
- Baggage transfer from Zao Onsen to Tsunagi Onsen (one bag only)
- Baggage transfer from Tsunagi Onsen to Lake Akan (one bag only)
- Baggage transfer from Lake Akan to the hotel in Tokyo (one bag only)

Each tour member receives an electronic copy of our tour handbook. This handbook is full of tips and suggestions taken from our Japan travel experiences that allow you to better plan and prepare for your trip, and therefore enjoy your trip even more. The tips and suggestions included cover everything from how to save while exchanging money, what to pack, some basic Japanese-language tips, general etiquette do's-and-don'ts, ryokan customs, etc.

Exclusions

- International airfare is NOT included.
- A printed itinerary is not included
- Alcoholic beverages, soft drinks and desserts are NOT included

Thank you for downloading this PDF version of our tour. Please visit our website at www.samuraitours.com/tours for the most current dates, prices and information.

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