



Active Japan: Hokkaido in Winter, Sea Ice to Onsens

9 days, Abashiri to Sapporo

Trip code AJWH

What's included

- Your Welcome Moment: Meet Your CEO and Group
- Your Local Living Moment: Ryokan Stay, Akan-ko
- Your Foodie Moment: Ramen Dinner in Asahikawa, Asahikawa
- Snowshoeing in Primeval Forest
- Drift Ice Walk
- Abashiri Prison Museum
- Free Time in Abashiri
- Sulphur Mountain & Lake Kussharo
- Lake Mashu Observatory Deck
- Ryokan Stay
- Ainu Kotan - Ainu Culture Dance
- Free Time in Akan
- Try Asahikawa's famous ramen
- Daisetsuzan Asahidake Ropeway & Hike
- Free Time in Sapporo
- Nijo Market
- Sapporo Beer Testing

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and G Adventures. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

VERY IMPORTANT: Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

VALIDITY: Valid for all trips departing June 12th, 2026 and onwards

Itinerary



NOTE: Accommodations vary per departure and are subject to change until tour start date; they are not final and should be used as examples only. Travellers may login to the G Adventures App to view accommodations specific to their departure.

Day 1

Abashiri

Arrive at any time and meet your group and CEO for a welcome meeting in the evening.



Meals included

Dinner



Today's Activities

ACTIVITY

Your opportunity to meet your CEO and fellow travellers, and learn more about your tour. Opt to join the group for a local meal afterwards. Don't forget to see the notice in the lobby (or ask reception) for the official time and place to meet up with the group.

After a filling breakfast, depart the hotel en route to the Primeval Forest area of Shiretoko National Park. Strap on some snowshoes and hike through the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Shiretoko Peninsula awaits. Embark on a guided four hour snowshoe trek through the Primeval Forest area of the park. Be sure to bring binoculars if you are a keen animal enthusiast, as there is ample opportunity to spot various species from the Steller's sea eagle to Japanese deer and maybe even a flying squirrel. The scenery is equally as dramatic as you witness the cliff edges hang over the turquoise water of the sea. In the afternoon, join a local guide for an incredible adventure across the ice. Walk safely over the drift ice that forms on top of the sea during the winter months and float in the water if you dare. Head back to Abashiri in the evening for dinner.

**Meals included**

Breakfast | Dinner



Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Abashiri - Shiretoko

2h

70km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Snowshoeing in Primeval Forest

Shiretoko

Snowshoe through the Primeval Forest in Shiretoko, seemingly untouched by man, especially in when covered in now. Snowshoe through the forest and be on the look out for foxes and deer while admiring the incredible forest and cliff side views. You may even have the chance to see animal prints in the snow or the elusive flying squirrel.

Drift Ice Walk

Shiretoko

Gear up in a special dry suit and join a local guide to walk across the ever changing drift ice floating atop the sea. During the winter months, the ice in Shiretoko becomes nice and solid, allowing you to safely follow your guide through the beautiful winter wonderland. Float in the water if you wish and keep your eye out for the beautiful clione gastropods that travel with the seasonal drift ice.

Private Vehicle

Shiretoko - Abashiri

2h

70km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Discover the unique history of Hokkaido's wild frontier with a visit to the notorious Abashiri Prison Museum. Marvel at the beautiful architecture and explore the world's oldest surviving five-winged wooden prison house. Inside, realistic life-sized displays bring the past to life, illustrating daily inmate routines, grueling frontier labor, and legendary prison breaks. The museum offers a profound look at how these convicts helped build Hokkaido's infrastructure under extreme winter conditions. You can even sample an authentic replica of a traditional prison meal at the onsite cafeteria if you wish. In the afternoon, take a fat bike tour along the beautiful Okhotsk Coastline, spanning from Siberia down to Hokkaido.



Meals included

Breakfast



Today's Activities

Abashiri Prison Museum

Abashiri

Visit the notorious Abashiri Prison Museum to learn of the Meiji-era penal history and Japan's wild frontier. Opt to try to prison-style lunch and learn about the unique history here in Hokkaido.

Free Time

Abashiri

Enjoy the afternoon at leisure in Abashiri.

Fat bike tour

Abashiri

2h

Experience the beauty of Abashiri's Okhotsk coastline on a guided fat bike adventure. Ride along snowy coastal trails and enjoy panoramic views of the Sea of Okhotsk, with the chance to see drift ice during winter.

Depart Abashiri this morning and head inland towards Lake Akan. En route, stop at the shore of Lake Kussharo, where you can take a moment to get your hands dirty digging into the sandy shore and actually hitting hot spring water. Dig your own personal Onsen! A sign of the volcanic activity still present underground in this area. The next stop is a visit to the active volcano, Mt Lo, which sits inside the Kussharo caldera. Watch the sulfurous smoke and steam rise from the craggy landmass. Make a final stop at the observatory deck to take in views of Lake Kussharo and Lake Mashu before continuing on your overnight stay at a Ryokan. After a dinner with your fellow travelers, enjoy a cultural performance in tribute to the history of the local Ainu people of the region. Akan Yukar Lost Kamuy is a presentation of Ainu ancient ceremonial dance, contemporary dance and digital art.



Meals included

Breakfast | Dinner



Today's Activities

Private Vehicle

Abashiri - Akan Mashu National Park

1h30m

70km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Sulphur Mountain & Lake Kussharo

Kussharo-ko

Visit the otherworldly sulphur mountain and breathe in the hot air. See the greenish yellow algae that grows around the fumaroles with a steady stream of steam released across the mountain. The head to Lake Kushharo. With a hot spring under the sand, dig a hole and relax in your hand-dug beachy hot spring.

Lake Mashu Observatory Deck

Akan Mashu National Park

Visit the impressive caldera lake within Akan Mashu National Park. Take in the views from the best spot to see whats considered the clearest lake in the world.

Private Vehicle

Kussharo-ko - Akan-ko

1h15m

53km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

ACTIVITY

Experience traditional Japanese life with a night at a traditional Japanese Inn. Stay in tatami-matted rooms and enjoy a glimpse into Japanese culture and history.

Ainu Kotan - Ainu Culture Dance

Akan-chō

Visit the Ainu Kotan Village. There are only two indigenous groups remaining in Japan and Akanko Ainu Kotan is one of the largest settlements still remaining in Hokkaido. During our visit, we'll see the village and experience their cultural performance in the evening.

Day 5

Akan-ko/Asahikawa

Enjoy a leisurely start to the morning to spend the morning hours enjoying the Ryokan hot springs a second time. Or choose to join your CEO for a walk around Lake Akan. Then make your way towards Asahikawa. Leave room for dinner, because this evening we'll try the famous Asahikawa ramen. This ramen is famed throughout Japan as one of the best in the country.



Meals included

Breakfast | Lunch | Dinner



Today's Activities

Free Time

Akan-ko

Spend the morning soaking in the ryokan onsen or take a stroll around Lake Akan with your CEO

Private Vehicle

Akan-ko - Asahikawa

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

ACTIVITY

Nearly every region of Japan has their own style of ramen, so a trip to Hokkaido wouldn't be complete without trying Asahikawa specialty ramen. With thin noodles and savory broth, this is a dish you won't want to miss.

It's time to rise and shine and strap on those hiking boots once again. This morning, head to the Daisetsuzan Asahidake Ropeway. Board the ten minute gondola ride up to the start of the walk. Spend a couple of hours exploring the area on foot, and hope for glimpses of the mountain ranges as the fog comes and goes.

It's important to note that in the winter, you can expect snow on the ground at Asahidake, so itinerary adjustments may be made. Cold weather clothing should be packed during this season.



Meals included

Breakfast



Today's Activities

Daisetsuzan Asahidake Ropeway & Hike

Asahikawa

1h30m

1km

Visit Daisetsuzan National Park and ride the gondola up to start your hike around Sugatami Pond Loop. This easy, loop hike will give you astounding views of volcanic rock and Mount Asahi-dake, the tallest mountain in Hokkaido reflecting off ponds. After the hike, take the gondola back down.

Sapporo, the capitol of Hokkaido, is home to some of the island's most interesting spots. With a day at leisure, choose to join your CEO to visit the Hill of the Buddha, a incredible and huge shrine. Or, choose to explore the Hokkaido Jingu shrine, a shinto shrine honoring 4 deities.



Meals included

Breakfast



Today's Activities

Local Train

Asahikawa-eki - Sapporo Station

Climb aboard, take your seat, and get around like the locals do.

Free Time

Sapporo

Spend a free afternoon in Sapporo



Optional Activities - Day 7

Hokkaido Jingu Shrine

Sapporo

Visit the important Hokkaido Jingu Shrine, the resting place of four different kami (deities) of the Shinto religion. Come to the shrine and walk through torii (Japanese gates), write your wish on a wooden plaque and buy a lucky charm. This shrine is one of the best places to witness the four season of Japan. As one of the most renowned places to see cherry blossoms in the spring, fall leaves in autumn, green and colorful in the summer and snow covered in the winter.

Hill of the Buddha

Sapporo

Visit the beautiful and massive Hill of the Buddha outside Sapporo. A metro ride and bus ride brings you to this incredible location. Covered in snow in the winter or covered in flowers in the spring, this place is a must see no matter the season.

Day 8

Sapporo

Spend today getting well acquainted with the city of Sapporo, home of the world famous beer. Begin your day with a visit to the Nijo Market. Walk through the stalls full of fresh seafood, most caught right off the coast of Hokkaido. You'll see crabs, fish and things you may have never seen before like fresh urchin and fish eggs. Afterwards, head to the home of the first Japanese made beer, Sapporo Beer Museum, and sample beer that can only be found at this location.



Meals included

Breakfast



Today's Activities

Nijo Market

Sapporo

Visit Nijo Market, a market over 100 years old. You'll see fresh local seafood like urchins and salmon eggs, and other local vendors.

Sapporo Beer Testing

Sapporo

Visit the Sapporo Beer Museum for a tour and tasting of the popular brew. Known as the first beer made in Japan, we'll have a chance to sample a beer that can only be found at the museum. Opt for a fun all-you-can-eat-and-drink meal in the Beer Hall.

Day 9

Sapporo

Depart at any time.



Meals included

Breakfast

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What are the main highlights of this trip?

Snowshoe through the snow-covered Shiretoko Five Lakes, Soak in a soothing onsen at a traditional ryokan, Discover the culture of northern Japan's Indigenous Ainu people with a visit to Ainu Kotan Village, Float on the solid ice covering the sea

What are the main highlights of this trip?

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How large will the group be?

Max 16, avg. 14

What meals are included in this trip?

8 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 4 dinners

What are the modes of transportation on my trip?

Plane, private vehicle, local train, walking, snowshoe.

Where will we stay during the trip?

Hotels (7nts), Ryokan stay (1nt)

What should be on my packing list?

Cold Weather:

- Long-sleeved shirts or sweater
- Warm gloves
- Warm layers
- Scarf
- Warm hat
- Warm waterproof jacket

Documents:

- Flight info (required) (Printouts of e-tickets may be required at the border)
- Insurance info (required) (With photocopies)
- Vouchers and pre-departure information (required)
- Passport (required) (With photocopies)
- Visas or vaccination certificates (With photocopies)

Essentials:

- Toiletries (required) (Shampoo, bodywash, soap, etc.)
- First-aid kit (should contain lip balm with sunscreen, sunscreen, whistle, Aspirin, Ibuprofen, bandaids/plasters, tape, anti-histamines, antibacterial gel/wipes, antiseptic cream, Imodium or similar tablets for mild cases of diarrhea, rehydration powder, water purification tablets or drops, insect repellent, sewing kit, extra prescription drugs you may be taking)
- Locks for bags
- Binoculars (optional)
- Flashlight/torch (Headlamps are ideal)
- Long pants/jeans
- Camera (With extra memory cards and batteries)
- Fleece top/sweater
- Moneybelt
- Cash, credit and debit cards
- Footwear
- Outlet adapter
- Day pack (Used for daily excursions or short overnights)
- Hat
- Personal entertainment (Reading and writing materials, cards, music player, etc.)
- Reusable water bottle
- Ear plugs
- Headphones (Noise-cancelling recommended)
- Shirts/t-shirts
- Sleepwear
- Small travel towel
- Sunglasses
- Swimwear
- Watch and alarm clock
- Waterproof backpack cover
- Windproof rain jacket

Health & Safety:

- Face masks (Clients will be only be required to wear a face mask where it is mandated by local regulations.)
- Hand sanitizer
- Pen (Please bring your own pen for filling out documents.)

What activities are optional on this trip?

Sapporo

- Hokkaido Jingu Shrine
- Hill of the Buddha

How old must I be to join this trip?

You must be 18 to travel unaccompanied on a G Adventures tour. For minors travelling with a guardian over 21 years old, the minimum age is 12.

Are international flights included in this trip?

No, international flights are generally not included in the price of your tour.

However, on some combo tours travelling between two different countries, international flights are included as part of the itinerary and price of the tour. Please speak to your GCO or booking agent for further details.

In addition, check-in times and baggage allowances/restrictions vary by airline and can change at any time. For the most up-to-date information for your flight, please contact your airline. We recommend checking in online in advance to avoid potential delays at the airport.

Dossier Disclaimer

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Itinerary Disclaimer

While it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable to make alterations. The itinerary is brief, as we never know exactly where our journey will take us. Due to our style of travel and the regions we visit, travel can be unpredictable. The Trip Details document is a general guide to the tour and region and any mention of specific destinations or wildlife is by no means a guarantee that they will be visited or encountered. Aboard expedition trips visits to research stations depend on final permission.

Additionally, any travel times listed are approximations only and subject to vary due to local circumstances.