

## Historical Walking Tour in Mikasa Geopark



Location: Central Hokkaido, Mikasa City

Main Activity: Historical Walking

Difficulty: 2

Duration: 1 day

Pax: Min. 15, Max. 40

### Highlights

- A unique walking tour: The guide will introduce the history and culture of the mining town.
- Dance the old charcoal miner's, "Hokkai Bon Odori" together with locals.



Mikasa City Museum  
Explain the history of Hokkaido



Coal Mine Site of Ikushunbetsu in Mikasa



Historical Straddle Tunnel  
Cross the era



Dance the "Hokkai Bon Odori"  
together with locals!

## Overview

In 1868, the year of the Meiji Restoration, the modern history of Hokkaido began. In this guided walking tour, we would like to introduce the coal mining area of the Sorachi region, which offers an excellent opportunity to learn about the history of the dawn of Hokkaido.

Over the last 100 years, the population of the region has seen rollercoaster-like growth and declines. Today's tour explores the principal reasons behind that. The core theme of our tour is "coal". The Sorachi region is a microcosm of Hokkaido's history. Thus, with this theme in mind, we would like to step through the region's past, present, and future in the form of guided walking tours so that you can experience the history visually.

Mikasa is striving to regenerate itself as a place where visitors can experience a unique history, one which is a representative example of that of Hokkaido.

Now, let us set out on a journey where you can experience 100 years in just a few hours!

## Itinerary

8:30 AM: Meet at your hotel in central Sapporo. Then, you will travel by bus from Sapporo to Mikasa.

10:30 AM: Arrival at Mikasa City Museum, the guide will explain the modern history of Hokkaido and the culture unique to the coal mine town that has supported Hokkaido's industry,

11:00AM: Move to the open-air museum. You can enjoy learning about the geography and geology of the region, such as terrain, strata and coal mine.

12:30PM: Lunch

1:30PM: Walk around the former Ikushunbetsu coal mine. The area once had a population of 15,000 people. However, after the coal mine was shut down, it became a ghost town and returned to the forest. The area grew and declined rapidly, like a roller coaster.

3:00PM: Tea time at Mikasa "High School Restaurant"

4:30PM: Let's dance the "Hokkai Bon Odori" together with locals! "Bon Odori" is a dance that is performed all over Japan during the "Bon" period in August. All participants will wear "happi coats", which are light costumes for Japanese festivals, hold a uchiwa, and dance around the yagura to traditional Japanese music.

5:30PM: You will be taken back to Sapporo by bus. The journey takes about 90 minutes.

## Lunch

Have lunch at the scenic spot along the river at the open-air museum area, Katsurazawa Kamui Kotan. Here you can enjoy the food culture unique to the coal mine town: "Geo Ben" (a combination of "Geopark" and "Bento lunch box") and hot soup. It might be a challenging meal for some because the ingredients may be unfamiliar. However, through this lunch, you will be able to feel the unique food culture of this Sorachi region.



## Tea Time

You can relax here and enjoy interacting with the students who run the pastries made by young people in this area. This restaurant is a symbol of the future as faced with the crisis of closing down after the abandonment of the coal mine, Mikasa High School has revived the area brilliantly with innovative ideas and action. Here you can experience the town's hope for its future.



## Contact

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