

# Trekking in Noboribetsu to delve deeper into Ainu tradition, history, and culture

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The history, traditions and culture of the Ainu are back in the spotlight, and participants will have the opportunity to learn about them from different perspectives through a variety of activities.

In canoeing, participants will experience the "Yufutsu Crossing" on the Bibi River, which was used by the Ainu as an inland transportation route.

In the hiking part, participants will hike on the mountains in the Noboribetsu area, such as Kamuinupuri and Mount Fuppushi, whose names are derived from the Ainu language. Let's learn more about the Ainu people and their language through the names of places and the way they call plants and animals and feel the close relationship with the Ainu people.

## Highlights:

- Canoeing on the Bibi River
- Visiting National Ainu Museum and Park “UPOPOY”
- Trekking on Mountains Mount Fuppushi, Pewrepnupuri, and Mount Tarumae which is named by ainu words of “Father bear” and “Mother bear” respectively.
- Trekking on Mountains of Kamuinupuri (God’s Mountain) and Mount Washibetsu (Mt.

## Location:

### Bibi River

The Bibi River is a tributary of the Yufutsu River and extends 14.2 km from the Chitose Lake area to the confluence of the Yufutsu River. It is a pristine river rich in nature managed by Hokkaido.

### Shiraoi

Shiraoi Town is located in the southwestern part of Hokkaido, facing the Pacific Ocean. A town that tells the world of the Ainu people.

### Noboribetsu

Noboribetsu Onsen, known as a therapeutic hot spring for the Ainu people, is one of the most famous hot spring resorts in Japan.

<b>Main Activity:</b>	Hiking
<b>Difficulty:</b>	4 / 5 (Vigorous)
<b>Tour Dates:</b>	July, 2024 - September, 2024
<b>Pax:</b>	Minimum 4 - Maximum 7
<b>Price:</b>	349,000 JPY (tax included, 4 pax) // 259,000 PY (tax included, 7pax)

[Route map](#)

[Day-by-day Itinerary](#)

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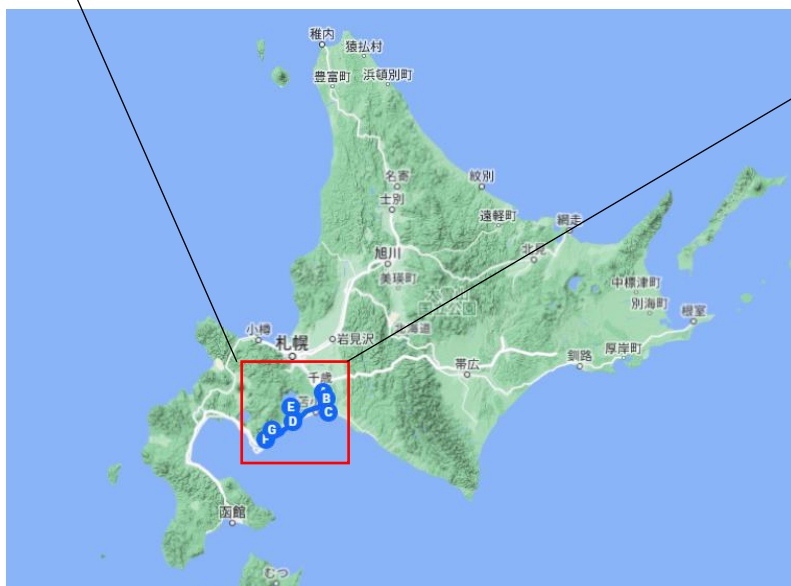
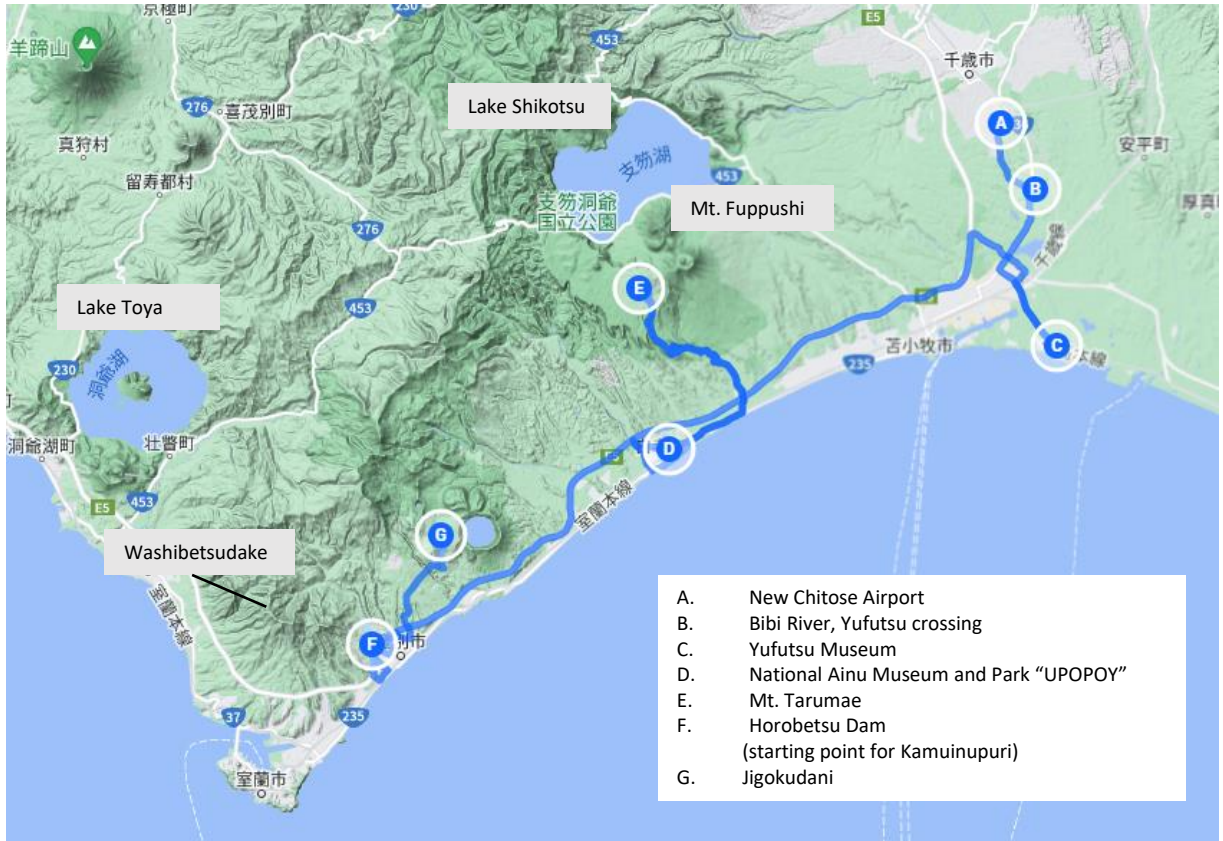
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# Route map



Source: Google My Maps

## Day-by-day Itinerary

### **Day 1 – Meet your group at New Chitose Airport, canoeing on the Bibi River, visiting Yufutsu Museum and National Ainu Museum and Park “UPOPOY”**

Your group will meet at New Chitose Airport at 10:00 AM. Once everyone gathered, we will have a brief meeting to get know each other and overgo the program before heading to the canoeing on Bibi river.

On the way to Bibi River, the tour guide will give an overview of how the Ainu people and culture are related to the history of Hokkaido.

The Bibi River is a tributary of the Yufutsu River. It stretches 14.2 km from the Chitose Lake area to the confluence of the Yufutsu River. It is a primitive river rich in nature and is under the management of the Hokkaido government. The tour will proceed slowly while listening to the activity guide's explanation of the flora and fauna of the Miu River. The guide will also explain the history of the "Yufutsu Crossing", when the Ainu people used to travel up the Bibi River by boat as an important inland transportation hub between the Pacific coast and the Japanese coast.

After enjoying the canoe ride, we will have a lunch at local restaurant which uses locally grown foods.

After lunch, we will stop at the Yufutsu Museum to learn more about the “Yufutu Crossing”. Then we will stop at the National Ainu Museum and Park “UPOPOY”. Upopoy is a facility built for the revival and development of Ainu culture, which is facing a crisis of survival due to the decline in the number of people carrying on the tradition. You will get an overview of the Ainu and widen your curiosity about the Ainu and their unique culture.

We will be staying at KAI Poroto, which is designed based on the concept of Ainu culture. It is decorated with designs and artwork inspired by Ainu patterns.

Activity : Canoeing, visiting museums

Difficulty : 1~2 / 5 (Relaxed/Social)

Accommodation : Kai Poroto / single occupancy

Included Meal(s) : Lunch, Dinner

## Day 2 – Trekking on Mt. Fuppushi, Pewrepunupuri, and Mt. Tarumae

After breakfast at the hotel, we will check out of the hotel and meet at the lobby at 8:00 AM. It will take about one hour to drive to Mt. Tarumae, where the hike starts.

We start from the parking lot of the 7th station of Mt. Tarumae and pass the summit of Pewrepunupuri to the summit of Mt. Fuppushi.

Mt. Fuppushi is a cone-shaped post-caldera volcano located on the southern shore of Lake Shikotsu in Shikotsu-Toya National Park. The name is derived from the Ainu word hupuni-nupuri (Abies sachalinensis, clustering, mountain), and as the name implies, Abies sachalinensis grows in clusters up to the summit. While hiking, you can also observe other vegetation that grows naturally in Hokkaido, and from the summit you can see Lake Shikotsu spread out below. The guide will explain not only the vegetation but also the origin of Lake Shikotsu.

After a good 3 hours of hiking, we will take a lunch break at the summit of Mt. Fuppushi. For lunch, we will have a special rice ball lunch box prepared by a long-established local caterer.

After a lunch break, we take the same route down to the Tarumaeyama 7 station parking lot.

After descending the mountain, we will transfer to Noboribetsu, where we will stay today and tomorrow. (Approx. 1 hour) Let's cure the fatigue of the mountain climbing at Noboribetsu Onsen, known as the Ainu's therapeutic hot spring.

Activity : Hiking

Difficulty : 4 / 5 (Lively Activities)

Accommodation : Takimotokan/ single occupancy

Included Meal(s) : Breakfast, Lunch (lunch box), Dinner (buffet)

### **Day 3 – Hiking on Kamuinupuri and Mt. Washibetu**

After breakfast at the hotel, we will meet at the lobby at 8:00 AM.

We will start our hike at the Kamuinupuri trailhead near the Horobetsu Dam. (Approx. 1 hour drive from the hotel) The hike will be led by a Hokkaido Certified Adventure Travel Guide. You will learn about the Ainu language and the relationship between the Ainu way of life and the flora and fauna that you will observe during the hike. This will give you a better understanding of the Ainu world view.

While actually hiking on Kamuinupuri (Kamui = God, Nupuri = mountain), which the Ainu people worship as the mountain of the gods, we will touch and learn about the Ainu religious belief that everything in nature has a soul.

We will reach the top of Kamuinupuri in about 3 hours and will take a break for lunch at the summit. We will take a set of hamburgers from IRENKA, a hamburger shop on the summit, for lunch. (Menu may change depending on availability). The burgers are made with ingredients such as Hokkaido's "Ezo deer" and locally produced "Noboribetsu pork".

After lunch, we head for the summit of Washibetsu-dake. (Approx. 1 hr. 40 min.)

After reaching the summit of Washibetsudake, we descend by a different route.

After the descent, we return to the hotel. (Approx. 1 hour drive to the hotel)

Here we can relax in the hot springs.

Activity : Hiking

Difficulty : 3 / 5 (Moderate)

Accommodation : Takimotokan/ single occupancy

Included Meal(s) : Breakfast, Lunch (hamburger set), Dinner (Buffet)

## **Day 4 – Stroll around Oyunuma river foot bath and Jigokudani**

After breakfast we will check out of our rooms and meet in the lobby.

We will take a walk to the Oyunuma River Footbath and Jigokudani (Hell Valley). Noboribetsu means "Nupurupetsu" in the Ainu language. This word refers to the Noboribetsu River, which means a muddy white river. Nupuru not only means muddy, but also means spiritual power, and the Ainu people have been using the hot springs as medicinal water since ancient times.

After the walk, the guide will give a lecture on the Ainu language, and we will have a tour summary and feedback session. The tour will then have a transfer to New Chitose airport, where the tour will end.

Activity : Walking, feedback session

Difficulty : 1 / 5 (relax/social)

Included Meal(s) : Breakfast

## What's included

- All of transportation as stated in the itinerary
- English speaking representative(s) and guide(s)
- Canoe gears (paddles, life jackets)
- Canoe
- 3 night accommodation, single occupancy
- 3 Breakfasts, 3 Lunches, 3 Dinners

## What's not included

- Cost to/from New Chitose Airport
- Personal expense
- Any extra cost for drinks other than those provided within the tour



# We provide & What to bring

## **We provide**

- Canoe gears (Canoe, paddles, life jackets)
- Drinking water
- First Aid Kit

## **What to bring**

### Necessities

- Several sets of comfortable clothing
- Warm clothing (temperature in Hokkaido may drop even in summer)
- Waterproof & windproof jacket and pants
- Rain Gear (umbrellas, raincoats)
- Hiking/trekking shoes
- Sunglasses
- Reusable water bottles
- Any personal medications
- Passport (you may need to present it at the time of check-in)
- Travel Insurance
- Cash (in Yen)

### Good to have

- Camera
- Sunscreen / lotion
- List of any Medical history

# About us

## Nippon Travel Agency Hokkaido



We, Nippon Travel Agency Hokkaido (NTA Hokkaido) launched business in 1994, spinning off from “Nippon Travel Agency (NTA)”, the first travel agency in Japan founded in 1905. This spin-off helped us become a specialist in all types of travel in Hokkaido, the largest prefecture of Japan, ranging from Destination Management, Outgoing Tourism, MICE Solutions to Special Interest Tours. We extended our business from the Sapporo office to 8 branch offices within Hokkaido, from Hakodate of southern Hokkaido to Kushiro of eastern Hokkaido. From our 115+ years of experience in the travel market, we are committed to offering travel services of the highest quality, combining our energy and enthusiasm. Our greatest satisfaction comes in serving large numbers of satisfied clients who have experienced the joys and inspiration of travel. If you have any questions or concerns about a trip to Japan, please feel free to contact us. Our mission is to provide the best experience on your next exciting trip to Japan !

### Guides : Kazutaka Teraguchi

Muroran Nature Office Affiliation: **Hokkaido Adventure Travel Guide (No. 8 )**

**Kazutaka Teraguchi, a mountaineer and Ainu language researcher, has self-published an Ainu dictionary of everyday terms and place names, using the method of subtracting Japanese meanings from Ainu words. Specialist in mountain Ainu language.**



Hokkaido Certified Mountain Master Guide (No. 2)  
(Mountain (summer mountain) Guide No. 325, Mountain (winter mountain) Guide No. 331)

\*Certified by the Japan Mountain Guides Association, Mountaineering Guide Stage II [Ski Guide Stage I

\*Nature Conservation Instructor, Japan Alpine Club (No. 457)

\*Hokkaido Certified Outdoor Guide Summer/Winter Examiner

\*Certified Mountain Coach 2 by the Japan Sports Association (No. 0117412)

\*An expert in explaining the names of places in the Ainu language

# Information and Requirements

## **Dietary Restrictions**

If you have any dietary restrictions or special requests, please let us know at the time of booking on the registration form. We will do our best to accommodate your request, but there may be a time when we have to ask for your forgiveness if we cannot accommodate a request. In our years of working with overseas groups, we have been asked for Halal, Gluten Free and MSG Free. We ask you to let us know especially for these three restrictions as many of Japanese dish uses gluten and MSG. Halal has not penetrated much in Japan yet, especially in the countryside. Our greatest desire is for you to experience Japan to the fullest, not only through activities and communication with the locals, but also through food. As we mentioned above, in certain areas, especially in the countryside of Japan, it may be difficult to fulfill your wishes completely. Therefore, we would like to ask you to try your best to enjoy the local specialties. On the other hand, we strongly understand that dietary restrictions are very important, and so we will try our best to meet your request. But we may need some time to arrange the meal for you, so please let us know as soon as possible.

## **Emergency Response Plan**

We believe that in order to enjoy any kind of tour, we must first consider safety as a top priority. We, Nippon Travel Agency Hokkaido, require all activity guides to be certified with the Advanced First Aid Course or any certificate of a similar course (such as Wilderness First Aid). In addition to being certified, the guides will carry a first aid kit during the tour. We will also have a staff in our office to take care of any problems that may arise during the tour. Depending on the weather conditions of the day, the guide will give specific instructions to avoid any danger that may occur due to the weather conditions. The guide will make a decision to change the itinerary if the weather is unsuitable for an activity. In the worst case, we will replace the activity with another one that is as enjoyable as the original activity.

## **At the Time of Filling in the Reservation Form, we will ask you to fill in....**

### 1.Height and weight -

we will need this information to make sure we can prepare the right gear (like waders and life jackets). In Japan, the sizes are a bit smaller even with the same size. For example, a medium size in the United States will be a large size in Japan. So please fill in your size in your country and we will prepare one size larger gear.

### 2.Hiking experience -

Hiking history, what mountains have you hiked up (elevation and frequency of climbing)

### 3.Dietary restrictions -

Allergies, religious food restrictions, and dietary precautions to be taken and arranged in advance.

## **Tips on Onsen (Hot Springs) / Wearing Yukatas / Japanese Rooms**

Japan is a very famous country for Onsen (hot springs). Most ryokans have public baths where you can take a shower and bathe in the onsen. However, you must be careful as the water is quite hot and you may feel dizzy if you soak for too long. Remember to drink a good cup of water after bathing, as you will be dehydrated. In many of Japan's ryokans, a yukata is provided instead of pajamas. Yukatas are one-piece garments worn over your underwear (undershirt and socks are optional). Yukatas are typical Japanese robes. You may wear yukata to dinner, but this is optional. Your guide will show you how to wear the yukata when you check in.(Next page has more detailed steps on how to wear yukatas)At the hotel in Noboribetsu, you will be staying in a single room, but all the rooms are Japanese rooms with tatami mats. There are no beds in Japanese rooms, and we ask that you sleep on futons on the tatami mats. Futons are mattresses stuffed with cotton wool and covered with a duvet. When we don't use the futons, they are stored in the closets. During your dinner time, the hotel staff will come to your room and prepare the futon. If you need more mattresses, please let the hotel know.



(Sample Picture of a Japanese Room)

## How to Wear Yukatas



Step 1: Put on your yukata over your underwear (Undershirt and socks are optional). Slip your arms into the sleeves of the yukata and grasp it along its front hem, one side in each hand, at about waist level. Fold the right side under the and hold it in place with your hand.

Step 2: Now fold the left side over the right side and hold it in place with your hand as you put on your obi (belt).

Step 3: Secure everything in place with the obi (belt) by wrapping it around your waist. Start at the front and wrap around your back. The obi are usually stored folded in little pentagons, so look for these if you have trouble finding the obi.

Step 4: Wrap the belt around your back and tie it in the front. For men, the belt should be fairly low on the hips. For women, the belt is tied at the waist.

Step 5: Adjust the length of the ends of the belt so that they hang evenly from your right hip. Then adjust the knot so that it rests on your right hip.

Step 6 (optional): In cooler weather, the outer jacket can be worn over the yukata like a coat. Yukata coats have ties at the chest to secure them. and may have a pocket for carrying small items such as your small items such as your room key. Alternatively, the sleeves of the yukata coat are designed to carry small items, so you can use the sleeves instead of a pocket on the yukata coat.

# Reservation & Cancellation Policy

## Reservation and Payment Methods

After receiving your reservation request, we will email you the necessary forms to complete and return. Please complete the forms and return them to us by email. Personal questions regarding dietary restrictions, height, weight, etc. are used only to provide you with the best service, activities and meals.

We accept payment by wire transfer or credit card. If you wish to pay by credit card, please note that we only accept VISA or Master. Any other type of credit card company, we unfortunately cannot accept. If you wish to pay through our bank, please let us know on the reservation form and we will send you our bank information.

We require a deposit of JPY 50,000 or full payment at the time of completing your reservation form. Your deposit will be applied to the total price of the tour. Final payment is due 21 days prior to your tour date. We will send you a payment reminder email approximately 30 days prior to the start of your tour.

## Cancellation

If you wish to cancel your reservation, please let us know in writing by email that you are canceling the tour. Please see below for our cancellation fee.

<b>Cancellation Notice is Received on:</b>	<b>Cancellation Charge</b>
31 days or Before prior tour start date	No Charge
30 to 15 days prior to group arrival date	20% of total tour fare
14 to 8 day prior to tour start date	50% of total tour fare
7 to 5 day prior to tour start date	70% of total tour fare
4 day to 1 day prior to tour start date	100% of total tour fare
No show or on and after tour start date	100% of total tour fare

Note: The dates and times are based on the Japan Standard Time.

## **Disclaimer**

Our tour programs are designed with your safety in mind. The guides will pay sufficient attention to keep you away from accidents and/or injuries during the tour. However, we cannot be held responsible for the following incidents:

1. Accidents and/or injuries caused by poor physical condition and/or any illness or disease you may have suffered prior to the tour.
2. Accidents and/or injuries caused by your failure to follow the safety instructions given by your guides during the tour.
3. Any other accidents and/or injuries caused by you.
4. At the time of filling out the reservation form, we will ask you to sign the disclaimer form that will be sent with the reservation form.

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## **Tour Operator / Contact**

Nippon Travel Agency Hokkaido

Takahiro Murayama

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Phone: (+81) 11-208-0182

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