Beautiful Autumn Hokkaido Maple Tour

Cities Covered: Tomakomai, Asahikawa, Sounkyo, Kitami, Abashiri, Akan, Kushiro, Obihiro, Otofuke, Otaru, Jozankei & Sapporo

Tour Package Includes

* International Flight from HONOLULU
* Admissions and 19 Meals as Stated
* Deluxe Hotel Accommodations (Based On Double Occupancy)
* Fall Foliage Sightseeing – Incl. Jozankei & Hoheikyo Dam
* Natural Hot Springs Ryokan (4 Nights)
* Local Special Meals Included:
  • Hokkaido Crab Feast
  • Seafood Teishoku
  • Abashiri Kaiseki
* Boat Cruise on Lake Akan
* Daisetsuzan National Park by Cable Car
* Wine & Japan Nikka Whisky Tasting
* Shiroi Koibito Park – Chocolate Factory
* Tips and Gratuities are included

Visiting autumn leaves viewing spots, eating seasonal delicacies and staying at a cozy hot spring inn--these are idyllic ways for the Japanese to spend an autumn weekend. Hokkaido Island is the first place in Japan where we can see the leaves change from yellow to red and experience great natural scenery, relaxing hot springs, and Ainu culture.

Traveling Dates:
Oct 11 – 19, 2018
(9 Days)

Price per person:
$ 3,188
Incl: Tax & Fuel Charge
Single Supp: $ 850
Day 1
Honolulu – Chitose

We begin our journey by boarding an international flight to Hokkaido, Japan's second largest island and northernmost prefecture. Meals and snacks will be served on the plane.

Day 2
Chitose – Tomakomai

Upon arrival at New Chitose International Airport in Sapporo, we will meet with an Air and Sea Travel representative who will escort us to our hotel in Tomakomai.

Day 3
Tomakomai – Asahikawa – Sounkyo (B, L, D)

This morning, we will transfer Asahiyama Zoo, home to 700 animals representing 124 different species. It is the first facility in Japan to successfully breed in captivity, animals that live in cold regions, such as polar bears, Amur leopards, and Scops owls. After lunch, we will proceed to Daisetsuzan National Park by Cable Car. Daisetsuzan is the largest national park in Japan, and consists of three volcanic mountain groups. The park is known for its alpine meadows and remote backcountry and is famous for its wildlife, which is home to several rare species. We will enjoy a splendid panoramic view of the foliage of the park. Then we will check in at the Sounkyo Onsen Resort, located in a narrow valley within the park. Relax at the Hot Spring tonight, and we will explore more spectacular views at the famous Sounkyo Gorge tomorrow. A special “Mountain-River’s Four Season” Banquet is arranged for tonight. As the name suggests, seasonal ingredients from the surrounding mountains and river are used for a feast that features Japanese, Chinese, and western cuisines.

Sounkyo Onsen contains minerals such as hydrogen sulfide, salt, and iron. Its water is neutral and is said to be good for people suffering from hypertension and arteriosclerosis.

Day 4
Sounkyo – Kitami – Abashiri (B, L, D)

In the morning, we will visit the Sounkyo Gorge. This 12.4-mile gorge contains spectacular 100 meter (328 feet) jagged cliffs and gorgeous waterfalls, also known as the "Roof of Hokkaido." We will also see the beautiful Ginga Waterfall and Ryusei Waterfall, collectively referred to as “husband-and-wife falls” in Japanese. Next, we will go to the Kita Kitsune Fox Village where we will see the beautiful Hokkaido Red Fox (Kita Kitsune), famous for its fur. Then we will transfer to Abashiri, a city abundant with seasonal seafood available throughout the year and enjoy a Seafood Teishoku lunch. Afterwards, we will go to the Okhotsk Ryuhyo Museum which is famous for its permanent display of drift ice for tourists to see and touch. A simulated drift ice environment will allow us to experience what negative 15 degrees Celsius feels like. The four seasons of Okhotsk can be seen in a HI-vision theatre. If weather permits, we might see the Sea of Okhotsk from afar. Next we will visit the Abashiri Prison Museum. The prison was built to house more than one thousand dangerous criminals and became famous through a popular yakuza movie series directed by Ishii Teruo in the 1960’s. We can see prison structures and exhibits depicting daily prison life in the museum. Tonight’s dinner features the Abashiri Kaiseki.

Abashirikoso Onsen includes outdoor and indoor baths. The Japanese claim that onsens have various medical effects and believe that a good soak in the right onsen heals aches, pains and diseases and can treat illnesses such as arthralgia, chronic skin diseases, diabetes, constipation, and menstrual disorders.

Day 5
Abashiri – Akan (B, L, D)

After breakfast, we will visit Lake Mashu (Mashu-ko) in Akan National Park, a caldera lake and one of the clearest lakes in the world. In 2001, it was designated a “Hokkaido Heritage” Site. The mysterious deep blue color of the lake is called “Mashu blue”. After a Local Flavor Set Lunch, we will take a sightseeing cruise on Lake Akan (Akan-ko). Nestled in dense forests, Lake Akan has more primeval natural beauty than any other part of Hokkaido. It is famous for Marimo (moss balls), a Special Natural Monument. There are many hot springs in this volcanic region and even a hot spring town along the lakeshore. The largest Ainu Village (Ainu Kotan) in Hokkaido is nearby. There is a “Onnechise” (Ainu for “huge house”) where traditional folk dances are performed. Two museums provide an introduction to traditional Ainu culture (Ainu Seikatsu Kinenkan and Mori to Mizuumi no Geijutsukan). People can benefit when they see how the Ainu can coexist with nature without harming it. For dinner, we will have a Hearty Buffet at the Onsen Resort.

Akan Onsen is a neutral hypotonic high-temperature spring. It is said to soothe fatigue, rheumatism, sprains, stiff shoulders, neuralgia, muscle pain, and arthralgia.
Today, we will go to Tsurui (Tsurui-mura), a breeding ground for the Red-crowned or Tancho Crane and one of the 100 Soundscapes of Japan. Next, we will stop at the Kushiro Fisherman's Wharf MOO (Marine Our Oasis), a waterfront marketplace that combines sightseeing, shopping, eating and leisure in a spacious building with an atrium from the first to the fifth floors. After lunch, we will head to Ikeda Wine Castle built on a hill and similar to European castles. During our visit, we can view the process of making Tokachi Wine, a very special wine in the town. We can even taste the local wines and grape juice produced here. Later on, we will head to the Flower Clock in Obihiro, a large beautiful clock decorated with flowers that is definitely worth seeing. Tonight, we will enjoy a Buffet Dinner at the hotel.

Tokachigawa Onsen is a moor spring whose heat is generated by ancient plants deposited deep in the ground and gushes out with lots of organic matter. The moor spring is unique to the area because of the peat deposited there over a long period of time. The amber water, due to its low alkaline level, is highly moisture-retaining and bathers recognize that their skin has become much smoother after soaking in it.

After breakfast, we will pass by the Nissho Pass – a beautiful scenic spot that provides an unbroken view of the broad Tokatsk plains with the Taisetsu and Akan Mountains. This is a must-see destination where we can fully experience the majesty of Hokkaido. Our next destination is Otaru, a small harbor city that served as a major trading and fishing port in the late 1800’s. Many old warehouses and former office buildings give the city center a special charm reminiscent of past decades. On the way, we will visit Nikka Whisky, one of Japan’s top whisky makers, in Yoichi. The company was founded by Taketsuru Masataka, known as the father of Japanese whisky. He studied whisky making techniques for several years in Scotland before helping establish the country’s first whisky distillery, the Yamazaki Distillery near Kyoto. He later set out on his own to start Nikka Whisky here in Hokkaido. The Yoichi Distillery was built in 1934, on a site chosen for its clear water, brisk air and rich peat. Taketsuru believed that the conditions in Yoichi best resembled those found in Scotland and would be perfect for recreating Scotch whisky. Nikka whiskies have been ranked among the world’s best single malt whiskies and have won numerous awards. The Otaru Canal makes for a pleasant stroll. During the day, artists present their works to passing tourists and in the evenings, old fashioned gas lamps are lit to provide a romantic atmosphere. Otaru is well known for its beautiful handmade and intricate music boxes. We will visit the Otaru Music Box Museum to learn about this special local product.

In the morning, we will visit Jozankei, a Sapporo natural attraction surrounded by beautiful scenery and bubbling hot springs. Come and experience the fall foliage colors, taking in a few moments to enjoy the ever changing views. We will go by Electric Bus to Hoheikyo Dam on the Toyohira River. The dam has created a large reservoir called Jozan Lake and is surrounded by virgin forest in a steep canyon. The forest consists of many Japanese maple and Rowan trees. In autumn, we can spot the vibrant yellow, orange and red colors. Shiroi Koibito Park is a fantastic space based on the ideals of deliciousness, fun and stories of sweets from a bygone era. In addition to housing the Shiroi Koibito Factory where this well-known Hokkaido confectionery is produced, the park also has the Chocolate Museum, Cookiecraft Studio, a toy exhibition room and the Rose Garden. A wide selection of roses from classic to modern types fills this 480-square-meter compound. The garden enchanters visitors with its seasonal roses and other flowers from mid-May to the end of October. What we see, taste and experience here will provide truly “sweet” memories! We will have some time to go souvenir shopping at the Duty Free Shop. Our special Farewell Dinner tonight will be a Crab Feast. There are four main species of crabs in Hokkaido: Hanasaki Crab, Hairy Crab, Snow Crab, and King Crab. Local crabs are usually boiled with salt or broiled, bringing out the elegant sweetness and sophisticated flavor. It is said that the crab is so delicious that Japanese people become silent once they start eating.

We can enjoy breakfast and relax at the resort. Then, we will transfer to the largest shopping mall in Sapporo, the Tanuki Koji Shopping Arcade. Let us enjoy some shopping here. The unique feature of this 123-year old mall is that we will find traditional merchants selling kimonos, tea or incense side-by-side with modern stores specializing in computer software or state-of-the-art electronics. After our shopping excursion, we will stop at the Hokkaido Shrine, constructed in 1870 in Sapporo as an interim building of the shrine for three deities of the Hokkaido reclamation. Then we will transfer to the New Chitose International Airport for our return flight to Honolulu, taking with us lasting memories of a magnificent trip to delightful Hokkaido.

We wish you a safe journey and have many wonderful memories to share with family and friends! ☺

Day 6

Akan – Kushiro – Obihiro – Otofuke

Day 7

Otaru – Sapporo

Day 8

Sapporo

Day 9

Sapporo – Chitose – Honolulu

B: Breakfast | L: Lunch | D: Dinner
Welcome to Hokkaido

Payment Policy:
CHECK OR CASH PAYMENT ONLY. A deposit of $350 per person is required at the time of application. The payment balance is due 70 days prior. In the event balance of payment is not made within the required time period, Air and Sea Travel Center reserves the right to cancel reservations and charge some service fee for cancellation.

Written notice is required for any cancellation.

$350 deposit is non-refundable if you cancel within 70 days before departure.

Within 70 days before departure, the cancellation fee will be as follow:
** 69-31 days prior departure, 50% of total price plus any other service fee caused from the cancellation;
** 30 days prior to departure or withdraw during the tour shall be regarded as willingly give up all rights concerned, 100% of total price, and request for the other service as substitute shall not be accepted.

Also we strongly recommend you to purchase travel insurance when you make a reservation.

Remarks:
✦ Fares are per person, USD based on double occupancy and include all airline taxes and fees
✦ Escorted tour with a minimum of 20 passengers
✦ Local English speaking tour guide service
✦ All transfers and sightseeing by air conditioned coach
✦ Refer to “General Condition of Grande Holiday”
✦ We reserve the right to modify the itinerary for smooth operation
✦ Tour price is subject to change according to any airfare increase, increase in government taxes, additional fuel charges and fluctuation of the rate of exchange between U.S. and foreign currency
✦ Tour price includes fuel surcharge & government taxes and fees. The tour price shown is current at time of listing and pricing on Dec. 18, 2017