

Backcountry Skiing in the Roof of Hokkaido Daisetsuzan and Tokachi-Dake



The Japan's largest Daisetsuzan National Park is called "The Roof of Hokkaido" due to its unique landscape including some active volcanoes such as Mt. Asahi-Dake (2,291m) and Mt. Tokachi-Dake (2,077m). In summer, huge alpine meadows are filled with various species of colorful alpine flowers, then in winter, it dramatically changes to as if grand white giants with abundant snow, then many snow patches remain until late summer.

Volcanic activities of Mt. Tokachi-Dake, one of the principle peaks in this magnificent mountain range brought several severe disasters to locals in the past, and forced local communities a considerable number of victims so far. Among them, the great eruption of 1926 became the biggest disaster ever which remained 144 victims.

Such a severe but beautiful mountains are appealing nature lovers world-wide, especially in winter, the backcountry skiers who are thirsty for the highest quality snow. On this tour, we do skiing above tree-lines and in-forest slope called 'The world's best spot' by back-country ski enthusiasts.

Highlights:

- Enjoy back country ski in Japan's largest national park 'Daisetsuzan'
- Backcountry skiing as watching active volcanoes both Mt. Asahi-Dake and Mt. Tokachi-Dake
- Gliding at wide open slopes above the tree lines and inside the natural forest
- Powderly generated ideal snow by cold and dry air inland
- Warming your chilled body after skiing with high quality hot springs

Location:

Daisetsuzan National Park is located in the center of Hokkaido and established in 1934. It's known as the largest national park in Japan with area of 2,267.64 sq.km, this size is nearly equal to Luxemburg. The nearest fly-in entrance is Asahikawa Airport which is located 20 km away from the city center of Asahikawa, the second largest city in Hokkaido.

Main Activity: Backcountry Skiing

Difficulty: 4 (Vigorous)

Tour Dates: December to May

Pax: Minimum 2 Maximum 6

Price: JPY280,000

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Day-by-day Itinerary

Day 1 – Transfer from Airport to Asahi-Dake Onsen

You will meet a guide at Asahikawa airport that connects to Tokyo Haneda airport or other airports with multiple daily flights. An hour drive with a private van will take you to Asahi-Dake Onsen, one of the principle hot spring resorts in Daisetsuzan National Park. The resort is located at altitude of 1,100 meters, Mt. Asahi-Dake (2,291m) is just in front. Get relaxed and enjoy hot springs at a hotel.

Activity – | Time –

Accommodation – Asahi-Dake Onsen | Hotel | Private room with ensuite | Onsen Spa

Included meals – Dinner

Day 2 – Guided Backcountry Skiing at Mt. Asahi-Dake

After breakfast, we take an rope-way to the upper station called Sugatami-no-Ike, it takes 10 minutes to gain 500m in elevation. The upper station is situated at above the tree line of 1,600 meters in elevation, if the weather permits, you will see a breath taking scenery of white mono-color world with Mt. Asahi-Dake spouting water vapor violently from several fumaroles. Pasting the climbing skins on your ski sole, while looking up at Mt. Asahi-Dake, although it depends on weather conditions, we reach to Sugatami-no-Ike Refuge situated at 1,670 meters where we start skiing. If the weather doesn't allow us, we'll enjoy skiing between upper and lower cable station. This section is about 4 km long and is almost inside the natural forest with just the right distance between trees, a ski lane created by a snow cat is also usable. Normally, multiple time of skiing are recommended with using an unlimited one day ticket. After skiing, we return to the hotel in Asahi-Dake Onsen.

Activity – Back Country Skiing | Distance – 5 km | Time – 5 to 6 hours

Accommodation – Asahi-Dake Onsen | Hotel | Private room with ensuite | Onsen Spa

Included meals – Breakfast , Dinner

Activity: **Backcountry Skiing**

Difficulty: **4 / 5 (Vigorous)**

Day 3 – Guided Backcountry Skiing at Sandan-Yama

After breakfast, we take a transfer by private van to Tokachi-Dake area, it takes nearly 2 hours . A lovely mountain lodge called Hakuginso is located at 1,010 meters, we paste climbing skins and start climbing toward to Mt. Sandanyama (1,748m). Cutting tracks on the ridge that continues at a steady angle, we go beyond tree line at altitude of around 1,200 meters. We may need to attach the ski crampons to tackle the slippery snow surface. It usually takes about 2 to 3 hours to get the top of Sandanyama. From the top, we ski down on the ridge we came up, or in the valley called Furiko-Zawa, it depends on the condition of the day. If the situation permits, a multiple time of skiing with re-ascending will be possible. After skiing, we take a short drive to the accommodation in this area.

Activity – Back Country Skiing | Distance – 6 km | Time – 5 to 6 hours

Accommodation – Tokachi-Dake Onsen | Hotel | Private room with ensuite | Onsen Spa

Included meals – Breakfast , Dinner

Activity: **Backcountry Skiing**

Difficulty: **4 / 5 (Vigorous)**

Day 4 – Guided Backcountry Skiing at Mt. Furano-Dake

After breakfast we take a short drive or start directly from the hotel entrance, toward to the end of ‘Giant ridge’, one of big ridges stretching from Mt. Furano-Dake (1,911m). We start climbing from a point at altitude of 990 meters, crossing two small valleys and hike up constantly, we finally reach to the ridge top, it normally takes 3 hours to get to the position at elevation of 1,750 meters.

Skiing down on Giant Ridge is definitely one of the best spot in Hokkaido. If the situation permits, and also you still have spare energy, a couple more times of skiing should highly be recommended.

Activity – Back Country Skiing | Distance – 5 km | Time – 5 to 6 hours

Accommodation – Tokachi-Dake Onsen | Hotel | Private room with ensuite | Onsen Spa

Included meals – Breakfast , Dinner

Activity: **Backcountry Skiing**

Difficulty: **4 / 5 (Vigorous)**

Day 5 – Transfer to Airport

After breakfast, an hour drive with a private van will take you to Asahikawa Airport.

Time – 1 hour

Included meals – Breakfast



Accommodations :

Day	Location	Type	Room	Spa
1	Asahi-Dake	Hotel	Private room ensuite	Onsen Spa
2	Asahi-Dake	Hotel	Private room ensuite	Onsen Spa
3	Tokachi-Dake	Hotel	Private room ensuite	Onsen Spa
4	Tokachi-Dake	Hotel	Private room ensuite	Onsen Spa

Food & Accommodation

Breakfast & Dinner

All breakfasts and dinners on this tour are included. Both will be served at a hotel as a set menu or a buffet, it depends on the day and subject to an accommodation. In many cases, it will mainly be served basically 'Washoku', Japanese cuisine, and some other dishes like Western or Chinese cuisines may also be included. If you are not good at using chopsticks, cutlery can easily be requested. Any kind of dietary requirements will happily be accepted, or if it's not, the proper substitutes must be provided, so please feel free to tell us your requirements in advance.

Purchasing Backpacking Food

Winter outdoor, we shouldn't take a time for eating a packed lunch or similar, because, the air temperature is normally around zero degree or less even in the daytime. So, you'd better take high energy food regularly also quickly, whichever you're hungry or not. You have a time to buy something at a local convenience store like Seicomart, which has wide range of foods and beverages such as cooked sandwiches, chocolates, energy bars, high caloric snacks, mixed nuts, sports drinks etc. Please buy them and pack it in your backpack.



The Airport

Our guide will awaits your safe arrival at Asahikawa Airport (AKJ), which is closed to Asahikawa the second largest city in Hokkaido. The distance from AKJ to both Asahi-Dke Onsen and Tokachi-Dake Onsen is 40 to 45 km and it takes about 1 hour by car. Multiple daily flights from/to Tokyo, Haneda airport are operated, as well as flights for other domestic airports are also available. Tell us your flight details in advance.

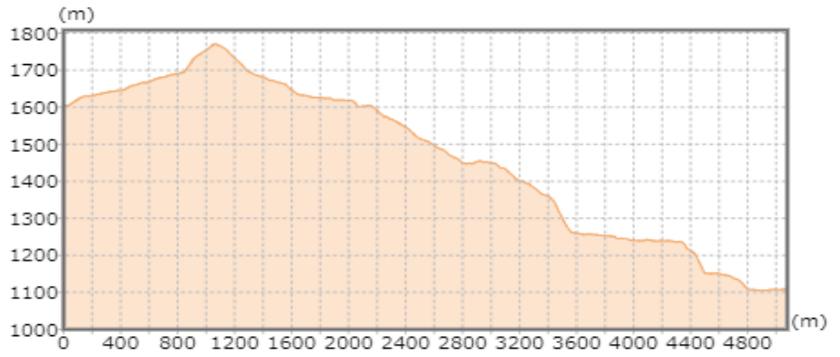
Elevation Profile

Day 2

Distance 5 km

Time – 5 to 6 hours

Elevation: – 550m

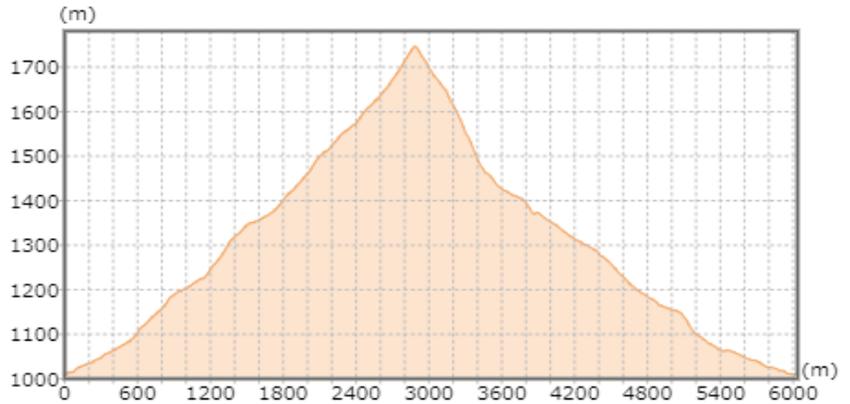


Day 3

Distance 6 km

Time – 5 to 6 hours

Elevation: – 750m

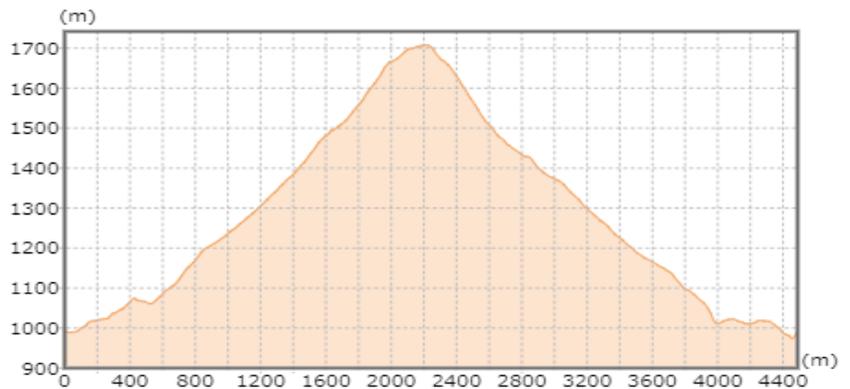


Day 4

Distance 5 km

Time – 5 to 6 hours

Elevation: 720m



What's included

- 4 nights accommodation with 4 breakfasts and 4 dinners
- One day unlimited rope way ticket at Asahi-Dake
- All transportations as described in the itinerary
- English speaking Japanese guide, assistants and porters upon group size

Not included

- Drinks, lunches & personal expenses.
- Equipment for backcountry skiing ; skis with tour bindings, boots, climbing skins, couteaus, ski poles, and other suitable items for backcountry skiing.

We provide & What to bring

We provide

- First-aid kit
- Safety equipment and maps

What to bring

Essentials

- Skis with alpine touring bindings (with heel free function)
- Ski boots, climbing skins, couteaus/mountings, ski poles
- Avalanche beacon, probe and shovel
- Gore-Tex jacket and pants suitable for mid winter
- Base layers top and bottom
- Thermal Layers top and bottom
- Fleece or down jacket
- Woolen gloves and windproof outer gloves
- Balaclava or Bienne, neck warmer
- Sun glasses and sun screen
- Water bottle of more than 1 L
- Quick dry hand towel
- Toiletries
- Personal Medications
- Backpack suitable for all items
- Travel insurance
- Passport
- Cash in Japanese Yen. Local restaurants and shops often don't accept credit cards. You can withdraw cash from an ATM at the post office and 7/11 convenience stores
- Rations/Lunches (you will have time to purchase them at local shops)

Recommended items

- Cell phone power bank
- Dry bags
- Extra snacks/energy bars
- Camera

About us

Nomad

Nomad Co Ltd established in 1987 in Sapporo, the principal city of Hokkaido Prefecture in Japan, We've been dealing various types of nature related tours over 35 years, and now we ended up had various experiences and useful knowledge those all provided from our valued guests and nature.

Initially, we were dealing various kind of travel related products and materials such as simply air tickets , hotel bookings, train/bus/rent-a-car bookings, visas, group tours for academic conventions, travel arrangements for inbound groups/individual into Hokkaido, and many more. That is, we dealt everything a person needs to move.

Many periods so far, we have been producing nature relating tours, as if trekking/hiking tours and mountaineering tours. We actually had a guiding section called 'Alpine Guide Nomad' as well, therefore, we have been guiding mainly Japanese hikers, trekkers and climbers to various mountains in domestic and overseas.

As same as others, we had to be facing this pandemic, the overseas tours have suspended. Then we have been getting to focus our home ground Hokkaido since March 2020.

In result, unexpectedly, we were reminded again how our home Hokkaido is filled with amazing nature, and there still are unlimited target places to explore existed, and also those places are luckily accessible without big effort relatively. Therefore, we are recognized that our next mission is obviously inviting nature lovers from all over the world warmly, and take them into genuine and dense Hokkaido's nature, and provide them a great opportunity with unforgettable experiences by unique and active enough adventurous activities.

If you wish to touch and explore the genuine nature of Hokkaido, give us a chance to support you on exciting adventure. See you in Hokkaido!

Guides

Yu Sato (YOU)



‘YOU’ was born in a small village, situated at eastern Hokkaido, as a family member of a big farm who generates various crops and local specialties of produces. He grew up in an ideal nature-filling environment, where the eastern foot of a great mountain group called Hidaka Mountain Range, a magnificent huge uplift with a total length of 150 km, also considered as a backbone of Hokkaido. He have learned in his daily life, how to deal with nature or how to walk in a dense forest as well as how to avoid an unexpected encounter with a wild bear. He moved to Sapporo City when he was 18 years old to learn outdoor guiding, and after that he has worked in Nomad, then brushed up his guiding skill. He has been guiding our guests to various locations in and outside Hokkaido, also to the mountains abroad such as Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, Annapurna Sanctuary in Nepal, and many more. He’s recently started his own guiding office ‘Your Time’ which propose you various adventures. HMGA official Mountaineering Guide Stage-1 and Ski Guide Stage-2, Hokkaido official Outdoor Guide (All seasons).

Michiko Aoki (Michiko)



Michiko, born in Sapporo, the principal city of Hokkaido, she has started skiing from her early age. After she studied the international development at the University of Calgary, AB, Canada, had worked as a park-ranger at Daisetsuzan National Park in Hokkaido, and then gained a two year experience in the Republic of Kenya as a JICA Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer. After returning to Japan, she had experienced as an assistant guide in Hokkaido for a while, then she had again been to Canada and learned higher guiding skill at the Mountaineering course in Yamnuska Mountaineering School, Canmore, AB. In 2014, she started her own mountain climbing guide firm “Mountain Flow”, and has been guiding a lot of domestic and international guests so far. The certainty of her guiding is undisputed, but more than that her cheerful personality and mindfulness attracts all the customers coming from any location of the world.

HMGA official Hiking Guide Stage-2 and Ski Guide Stage-1, CAA ATS Level-2, JAN Level-1, Wilderness First Aid.

Information and Requirements

Dietary Restrictions

Before pandemic, 150 million foreign tourists enjoyed Hokkaido every year. Of course, since they come from all parts of the world, it's not surprising that there are dietary restrictions for health or religious reasons, and we've grown to accommodate them. Currently, many accommodations and dining facilities are able to accommodate or have closer alternatives to your dietary restrictions, such as vegetarian, halal, and MSG allergies. We too will do our best to accommodate you, even if it is a camp in the mountains. If you have dietary restrictions, please do not hesitate to fill out the pre-departure questionnaire.

Emergency Response Plan

We prepare the well-organised first-aid kit, and those will be carried by our guides who are well-experienced and qualified. The qualification, for instance, Mountain Guide Stage I / Ski Guide Stage II, which are certified by the Japan Mountain Guide Association (JMGA), and Hokkaido Outdoor guide Qualification (HMGA). As you know, nature doesn't promise us 100% safety, Especially our tour is consisted with activities in deep nature. Guides always consider the safety first, and lead the team correctly, however, unexpected cases could always be happened. Although, our guides are well trained, but if any cases, they try finding the best solution as sufficient as possible, also guides are sometimes carrying a satellite phone to call an emergency rescue. If necessary, they may carry a bear spray just in case even in winter.

Weather Conditions in Winter

Winter, of course, it's cold and sometimes forcing severe condition, but it gives us magnificent scenery to see. Hokkaido is situated at 41 – 45 North Latitude. Despite being at the northern tip of Japan, Hokkaido is located on similar latitudes to major American and European cities, for instance, cities at the same latitude as Sapporo(43N) are Toronto, Canada, Milwaukee, USA and Marseille, France. Snow covering period in mountain area in Hokkaido is roughly from October to May, but real winter could be said as from the middle of December to the early of March. The weather in mid winter is subject to typical winter-type pressure distribution and strong northwesterly winds, once it's under this winter type system, it tends that the northwest side of Hokkaido is snowy and windy, but southeast area is sunny and calm. The temperature in mid-winter often drops to minus 15 to 25 degrees Celsius inland.

Natural Hot Springs - 'Onsen'

It makes sense that there are uncountable hot spring points existed entire Japan which is consisted with considerable number of active volcanoes. Unexceptionally, Hokkaido as well, there are a plenty of Onsen sites are seen, and the majority of those hot springs are the grace either from the volcanic activities. In fact, more than 10 obvious active volcanoes have been identified, and they are constantly in volcanic activity. In other words, Even in mid-winter, you have a benefit of enjoying natural hot spring anytime, anywhere. This will especially be an unignorable advantage for those who have spent a day for outdoor activities in winter cold air.

To enjoy Onsen, here are some tips you'd better know in advance.

1. No swimwear is required, you can bathe naked, nobody care about each other.
2. Before you soak in the bath, clean your body at a shower booth then rinse soap off.
3. To keep hot water always clean, do not soak your towel in the bath.
4. To prevent wet the floor, wipe roughly your body before going back to the changing room.

Onsen Hotels

Accommodations situated at Onsen resort are commonly called Onsen Hotel or Ryokan (旅館). The guestrooms are usually traditional Japanese style with tatami floor, you will sleep in a Futon set on the floor instead of a bed. However, the western style bed rooms are also widely provided these days.

Despite both room types, you can find 'Yukata' in the room. It's a traditional Japanese night robe looks as if simple kimono, and it's normally allowed to go with wearing Yukata wherever inside the facility even at the dinning room.



Reservation & Cancellation Policy

Reservation

When we receive your reservation request, we will ask for your contact details and personal information such as your height and dietary requirements etc., in order for us to adequately organize and arrange the tour service. Once the Registration Form is completed, you will be taken to the payment (Deposit/Full) to secure the booking.

Payment Methods

We require the Deposit of 50,000 yen or Full Payment to secure your booking. The Deposit is treated as a part of the Tour Price. You will receive an email reminder about payment of the balance, which is generally due 30 days prior to the tour departure date. We accept payment by credit card in our local currency, Japanese yen. If you prefer to pay by bank transfer, we will give you our bank details and the amount of bank fees that should be added to the Tour Price.

Cancellation

If you wish to cancel a tour reservation, please notify us in writing. Our Cancellation Policy is as follows.

- Cancelled more than 31 days prior to departure : zero fees
- Canceled between 30 and 15 days prior to departure : 20% of the Tour Price
- Canceled between 14 and 8 days prior to departure : 30% of the Tour Price
- Canceled between 7 and 3 days prior to departure : 50% of the Tour Price
- Canceled 2 days prior to departure or later : 100% of the Tour Price
- **No refunds will be given after the tour has commenced**