

Dog Sledding at Winter Camp in Tokachi 4-Day Tour



Dog sledding, which was used by Ainu (Hokkaido's indigenous people) in Karafuto (South Sakhalin in Russia) is one of the most popular winter activity in Hokkaido. The dog sledding tour is one of the few authentic ones in the world, and we will get an insider's look at Hokkaido's climate - long, cold winters with a lot of snow.

We will not only enjoy the dog sledding experience but also deepen our relationship with nature and animals through mutual aid with our team's dogs. People and dogs have to trust each other and cooperate in order to succeed in dog sledding through the snowfield. We will get to know and take care of our team's dogs while working to build a relationship of trust. In addition, we will be accompanied by a dog sledding guide during those 4 days. He will share with us all his experience and give lectures.

For the meals, we will taste local ingredients such as Hokkaido's representative gibier deer meat and agricultural products Shikaoi town and Tokachi subprefecture. The experience of having a heart-to-heart with the dogs and the sense of accomplishment of overcoming the frozen night at the camp will make us feel like true adventurers!

Highlights:

- Enjoy a 12 km dog sledding course on the heavy snow field of the Tokachi Plain
- Have a unique night dog sledding tour under a moonlit or starry sky
- Warm up your body in a sauna hut
- Experience winter camping and night bonfires
- Savor the local products of Tokachi called the farm kingdom

Location:

Shikaoi town of Tokachi subprefecture, Hokkaido

Main Activity: Dog sledding and camping

Difficulty: 3

Tour Dates: From Late January to Early March

Pax: Minimum 4 Maximum 4

Price: JPY 352,00

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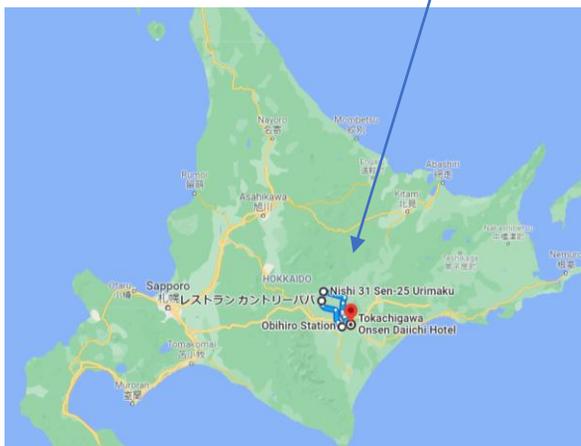
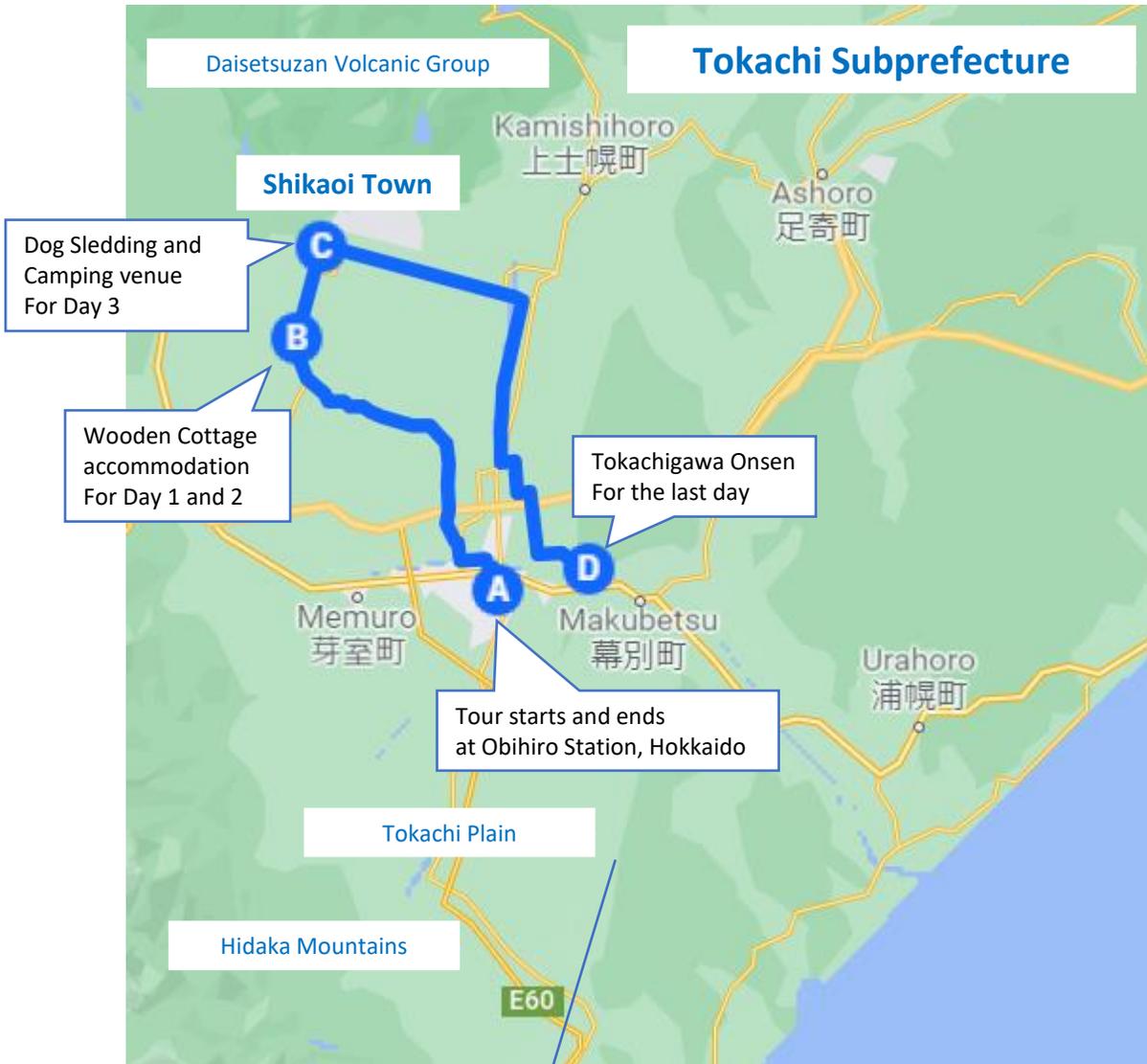
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Route Map



Source: Google My Map

Day-by-day Itinerary

Day 1 - Meeting dogs of your team

Arrival at the camp and meeting with our pack of dogs.

In the afternoon, we will meet at Obihiro Station. After arriving at the dog sledding camp in Shikaoi town, we will have a brief meeting with our dog sledding guide about our upcoming 4 days of adventure. We will also try on our winter gear.

We will get warm greetings from our furry friends before to ride fat bike and inspect the sledding course shortly that we will run tomorrow.

We will head to our wooden accommodation to settle down for the next 3 nights. Tonight, we will enjoy a welcome party and toast at the beginning of our challenge with a homemade dinner of local ingredients at a restaurant next to your cottage.

Accommodation – Shikaoi | COUNTRY PAPA | Wooden cottage

Included meals – Homemade dinner at a local restaurant

Activity:

Fat biking

- Time Required: about 30 minutes
- Location: Shikaoi town
- Field situation: Snow field

Difficulty: 2



Day 2 – First day of dog sledding

After the breakfast delivered to our cottage, we will head to the dog sledding venue.

Today we will complete the 12 km course in pairs, taking turns as being the mushers (the one commanding to the dogs and running the sled). We will learn how to give the direction at the right time in order to make the dogs run well. After we have successfully completed the run, we will praise our dogs with gratitude.

After lunch in a tent, we will chop the wood for the nightly bonfire. Hokkaido's natural forests are composed of coniferous and broadleaf trees. It is quite interesting as each of these trees burns in a different way. Afterward, we will have the opportunity to warm ourselves up and relax the mental and physical tension in the sauna hut of the camp.

While sitting around our bonfire and drinking hot drinks, we will have a brief meeting regarding today's experience. Before leaving the camp, we will feed our furry friends.

Accommodation – Shikaoi | COUNTRY PAPA | Wooden cottage

Included meals – Breakfast delivered to your cottage

Lunch of bread, sausage, and cheese produced in Tokachi

Homemade dinner at a local restaurant

Activity:

◆ Dog sledding

- Time Required: about 1 hour 30 minutes
- Location: Shikaoi town
- Field situation: Snow field and small path

Difficulty: 3



Day 3 – Challenge a 12 km course by ourselves and an overnight at the camp

After having breakfast delivered to our cottage, we will head to the dog sledding venue.

Today, we will run the same 12 km course as yesterday with riding a sled each. We will feel our skill improvement and as we will gain the cooperation of our pack of dogs by giving the good instructions, our appreciation and love for them will increase.

After lunch inside a tent, we will have time to enjoy again the sauna hut.

After the today debriefing around the bonfire, we will cook ourselves our dinner composed of grilled venison (It might have been hunt by the guide) and bean stew. This activity will warm us thanks to the wood stove.

Before we go to sleep in a warm sleeping bag, we will go dog sledding again in the dark and silent night.

Accommodation – Shikaoi | Tent

Included meals – Breakfast delivered to your cottage

Lunch of bread, sausage, and cheese produced in Tokachi

Self-cooked camping food dinner with grilled venison etc.

Activity:

- ◆ Dog sledding
 - Time Required:
 - Daytime: about 1 hour 30 minutes
 - Night: about 1 hour
 - Location: Shikaoi town
 - Field situation: Snow field and small path

Difficulty: 3



Day 4 – Having our morning coffee at dawn and refreshing ourselves at the hot spring

Today's our coffee time at dawn will have a special taste! After feeding the dogs and lighting the wood stove, we will eat a simple breakfast inside the tent. After breakfast, we will exchange about what we experienced during those three days.

Before the departure, we will have plenty of time to play with our companions and give them a last hug!

After saying our goodbyes to the guide, we will stop at Tokachigawa hot spring to refresh ourselves and have lunch on our own. Then your 4 days adventure will end at Obihiro station.

Included meals – Simple breakfast

Activity:

◆ Coffee at Dawn

- Time Required: about 15 minutes
- Location: Shikaoi town

Difficulty: 1

◆ Hot Spring visiting

- Time Required: about 1 hour
- Location: Garden Spa Tokachigawa Onsen (Closed on Thursday and the second and third Tuesday)
- Clothes for bathing (available for free) or swimsuits are required

Difficulty: 1

Accommodation

Dates	Location	Type
Day 1 & Day 2	Shikaoui	Wooden cottage with beds, heater, shower room, kitchen *Participants of the same gender may stay in the same cottage.
Day 3	Shikaoui	Tent with a wood stove *The wood stove may be turned off during the night for safety. *Restroom is available inside a cabin near our tent. *No shower room

Meals

All meals on this tour include local ingredients such as agricultural products and from Tokachi, the subprefecture in Hokkaido, or Hokkaido's representative gibier deer meat. We will do our best to make arrangements for any dietary requirements so please be sure to let us know your needs in advance.

What's included

- 3 nights accommodation
- 3 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 3 dinners
- Transportation and all the activities
- Dog sledding guide
- English-speaking Japanese guide

What's not included

- Airfares and train fares to/from Obihiro station
- Lunch on Day 4
- Personal expenses
- Travel insurance

*Please note that you will be asked to show your passport when checking into accommodation in Japan. It is a requirement for accommodation providers to take a photocopy of the passport of overseas guests.

We provide & What to bring

We provide

- Winter gear (Jacket, pants, boots, gloves, beanie)
- Head torch
- First aid kit
- Fat bike and helmet

What to bring

Essentials items

- Long sleeves/full length warm inner (Wool is recommended)
- Base layers top e.g., wool knit, fleece, light down jacket
- Warm bottoms e.g., thick ski tights or fleece
- Thick and warm socks (Wool is recommended)
- Neck warmer, sunglasses or goggles, heat packs
- Change of clothes
- Toiletries
- Personal medications
- Masks
- Travel insurance

Recommended items

- Camera

About us

We are Hokkaido Treasure Island Travel (HTIT), an award-winning team of creators of unique, perfectly tailored Hokkaido travel experiences. HTIT Team is deeply rooted in Hokkaido, North Japan. In 2004, HTIT started its journey as a pioneer of a new style of adventure travel by sharing the treasures of Hokkaido. We are constantly opening new doors and making local destinations previously inaccessible for travelers available all over Hokkaido. We provide a compelling combination of personal and professional travel advice, knowledge beyond that of the guidebook insider, and behind the scenes access to places and authentic local experiences generally not available for the public. Our mission is to create for you a journey of a lifetime, every time you travel with us.



Dog sledding guide

Mr. Takeshi Takita

Takeshi has been working as a dog sledding guide for 10 years. He grew up in Wakkanai and during his childhood he was inspired by the international dog sledding race taken place in the city. After enjoying training sport dogs for frisbee and flyball, he finally returned to his first dream and decided to settle in Tokachi. This area has vast snowfield, frequent fair weather in winter, freezing temperature below $-20^{\circ}\text{C}/-4^{\circ}\text{F}$ and amazing sceneries of Hidaka and Daisetsu mountains. He desires to offer his guests the opportunity to understand the sled dogs through the programs he offers.



Information and Requirements

Dietary Restrictions

We believe that eating like the locals is the best way of experiencing Hokkaido's unique culture. However, we understand that it's not possible for everyone to do this and we're more than happy to cater for food allergies, dietary restrictions, and special requirements. If you have any diet restrictions or preferences, please tell us in the Registration Form at the time of booking, and we will do our best to accommodate your dietary needs.

In some rural areas particularly, we may ask you for some flexibility. For example, if you require halal food, we may be able to substitute for a vegetarian option instead. Please also be aware that for those who are allergic to MSG we may struggle to arrange a good alternative at every meal in Japan. Some of our overseas guests in the past found it difficult to find ready-made foods completely free of MSG, especially when buying from convenience stores. Most Japanese supermarkets sell simple foods like plain bread, boiled eggs, vegetables and fruits, so you should always be able to find something suitable. The most important thing about dietary requirements is to let us know in advance so we can prepare and organize the foods you need.

Emergency Response Plan

Your safety is our top priority, closely followed by fun and comfort! All our tour guides have years of guiding experience in the outdoors under their belt. The dog sledding guide has taken Advanced Firefighting Lifesaving Course. At all times, our guides will carry a first-aid kit, and hold an Emergency plan with the nearest emergency hospital for any severe accident. In case of heavy snow, strong winds or other unsafe weather conditions for dog sledding, there may be times when we have to change our tour plan. In such cases, we will try to substitute the original activity with other alternatives such as sightseeing, visiting museums or hot springs. We are here to turn a bad day around into a fun day!

Weather Conditions

Except some parts of southern Hokkaido, almost all Hokkaido has a subarctic climate with low temperatures throughout the year. And in mid-winter, many days are below freezing even during the daytime, with the lowest temperature being around -20°C/-4°F. The average highest temperature between January to March is 8°C/46°F and the lowest is -15°C/5°F.

What is Tokachi?

Tokachi is located in the Doto (Eastern) region of Hokkaido. It has a population of about 360,000 and consists of 1 city, 16 towns and 2 villages including Obihiro City. Tokachi is famous for its agriculture, including field crops and dairy farming. According to calorie-based estimates, Tokachi's food self-sufficiency rate is a whopping 1,100 percent. It is said to be Japan's food base and is an attractive destination for delicious food even for Hokkaido locals. Another attraction of Tokachi is that you can enjoy nature in each of the four seasons. Especially during the winter, the Hidaka Mountains block out the snow clouds, resulting in a series of sunny days, commonly known as "Tokachi Fine".

What is an onsen (hot spring) ?

As a volcanically active landscape, Japan has well over 25,000 natural hot springs scattered throughout the country. Since ancient times, the people of Japan have loved onsen and will travel far and wide to visit famous onsen establishments. Please keep in mind that there are certain protocols that go with bathing in an onsen, however they're super simple!

Onsen Etiquette [Tokachigawa Garden Spa]

- Take a shower before you enter the water. It's important for the onsen waters to stay clean so make sure to rinse all soap off and long hair should be tied up.
- You can take a towel in, but the towel cannot touch the waters. Please lightly dry yourself before returning to the changing room as we're quite fussy about keeping the floors of the changing room dry.
- Be respectful of others. Do not run, talk too loudly, eat, drink alcohol, or splash around while in the onsen.

Last but not least, relax and enjoy yourself!

Reservation & Cancellation Policy

Reservation

When we receive your reservation request, we will send you an email with a link to a page on our website, where it asks you to fill in the Registration Form. We will ask for your contact details and personal information such as your height and dietary requirements etc., in order for us to adequately organise and arrange the tour service. Once the Registration Form is completed, you will be taken to the Shopping cart to review your booking, and finally onto the Check Out page to make the payment (Deposit/Full) to secure the booking.

Payment Methods

We will send a booking confirmation by email with an invoice requesting a deposit

- * A 20% Deposit is required for the confirmation of the booking.
- * The remaining cost(Balance Payment) is due 21 days before your arrival.
- * Payment is acceptable by Credit card or Bank Transfer:
 - A. Credit card
 - * We will send you a link with a form to fill in your credit card details
 - B. Bank Transfer
 - * Please process the payment from your local bank in Yen.
 - * All Transaction Fees will be paid by remitter.

Cancellation

- 20% of the tour price will apply 20 days prior to the travel starting date
- 30% of the tour price will apply 7 days prior to the travel starting date
- 40% of the tour price will apply 1 days prior to the travel starting date
- 50% of the tour price will apply on the travel starting date
- 100% of the tour price will apply after the start of the tour or the traveler does not participate in the Tour without notice

Disclaimer

Assumption of risk and safety declaration

Travelers are advised that all activities are undertaken entirely at their own risk and they must behave in a fit and proper manner at all times in accordance with Hokkaido Treasure Island Travel Inc's guidelines. All adventure tours and outdoor activities carry inherent risks and Hokkaido Treasure Island Travel Inc nor its partners do not assume any responsibility for accidents that are caused by its customers or caused by factors outside of human control.

With the purchase of your trip you acknowledge that:

By its very nature, adventure travel, hiking and cycling tours are more challenging and demanding with a significantly higher level of risk, and involve potential exposure to injury and possibly death.

Additional dangers and risks associated with adventure travel may include difficult and dangerous terrain; high altitude; extremes of weather, including sudden and unexpected changes; political instability; remoteness from normal medical services and from communications; and evacuation difficulties in the event of illness or injury.

You must follow our guide's instructions and use any safety equipment provided at all times. For the above reasons you accept the inherent and increased dangers and risks associated with the proposed adventure and the accompanying risk of injury, death or property damage or loss.

Our Responsibilities and Exemptions from Responsibility

All Travelers are required to acknowledge the Terms and Conditions that we provide to them before contracting with us. The Traveler acknowledges that he or she understands the Terms and Conditions, as well as the following information about exemptions from our responsibility.

- We shall be responsible for compensating any damage caused to the Traveler intentionally or negligently by us or by our agent in the performance of this Contract. However, this shall be limited to cases when we have received notice within two years from the time when the accident occurred.

- Except as provided in the preceding Paragraph, we will not be responsible for compensation in the following cases:

- (1) Acts of providence
- (2) Maelstrom of war or civil commotion
- (3) Suspension of Tour Services including transport and accommodation facilities
- (4) Orders from government and public agencies
- (5) Other causes beyond our control or the control of our agents

Tour Operator / Contact

Hokkaido Treasure Island Travel Inc.

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