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Intrepid Hokkaido Explorer 7 days / 6 nights
Aug 31, 2026 - Sep 6, 2026

Trip Summary

August 31 - Monday

Depart from Niseko

Lunch

Visit Hell Valley

Check-in at Park Hotel Miyabi Tei or similar

Dinner

September 1 - Tuesday

Check-out at Park Hotel Miyabi Tei or similar

Depart from Noboribetsu

Lake Canoe

Check-in at Marukoma Ryokan

Kaiseki Dinner

Special Information

September 2 - Wednesday

Breakfast

Check-out at Marukoma Ryokan

Travel to Asahikawa

Check-in at Hotel Amanek Asahikawa or similar

Leader-led orientation walk

Afternoon and evening at leisure

September 3 - Thursday

Breakfast

Kawamura Kaneto Ainu Museum Visit & Cooking Demonstration Experience

Dinner at Leisure

Special Information

September 4 - Friday

Breakfast

Check-out at Hotel Amanek Asahikawa or similar

Asahikawa – Mt. Asahi Ropeway & Blue Pond

Check-in at Comfort Hotel ERA Sapporo Kitaguchi or similar

Sapporo – Leader-led orientation walk

Dinner at Leisure

September 5 - Saturday

Breakfast

Otaru Coastal Town Visit

Farewell Dinner

September 6 - Sunday

Breakfast

Check-out at Comfort Hotel ERA Sapporo Kitaguchi

Tour Snapshot



Competitors and spectators alike from the 2026 UCI Gran Fondo Worlds are invited to join this custom Intrepid tour to experience the best of Hokkaido.

Soak in volcanic hot springs, paddle across lakes, watch a dumpling-making demonstration and discover the vibrant spirit of Hokkaido's key cities. This 7-day journey across Northern Japan immerses you in the country's rich tapestry of culture, history and natural beauty.

During the tour you will explore northern Japan's natural wonders, like the volcanic steam and bubbling hot springs of Hell Valley, Hokkaido's highest peak at Mt Asahi and the serene waters of Lake Shikotsu plus stay in two local ryokan hotels (traditional inns) where you'll unwind in the soothing waters of Japanese onsens and savour a signature, multi-course kaiseki dinner.

Japan's colourful wonders await – are you ready?

Start Location: Noboribetsu, Japan - 31 August 2026

Finish Location: Sapporo, Japan - 6 September 2026

Accommodation: 4 nights Hotel, 2 nights Ryokan

Rooming Requirements: Twin/Double Share

+ Single Supplement option available

Included Meals: Breakfast (6), Lunch (2), Dinner (3)

Transport: Private Vehicle, local train, bus, subway

Leader/Guide: English Speaking Leader throughout

Inclusions:

Activities, accommodation and transport as per daily itinerary including entrance/admission Fees where applicable with included activities

Transfer from Hirafu to Noboribetsu Onsen on 31 August to commence the tour

Bike transport from Hirafu to Sapporo and storage (supplement cost applies)

Support: 24-hour support from Intrepid local office

Exclusions

- Domestic Flights
- International Flights
- Departure Transfers
- Any visas required
- Services not mentioned in the itinerary
- Late check out at hotels
- Meals and drinks not mentioned in the itinerary
- Drinks with included lunches and dinners
- Tips for leaders, guide and driver
- Expenditure of personal nature

- Personal Insurance
- Optional activities

Price per person: \$4,415 AUD twin/double share

Single supplement: \$1,150 AUD

Bike transport & storage during the tour: Capped at \$250 AUD

Minimum group size: 6

Maximum group size: 16

Please note: In order to provide good value for money and to offer guests the enjoyment and fun of travelling as part of a small group, the tour requires a minimum of six guests and has a maximum of 16.

Guests will be advised as soon as the minimum 6 guests have deposited on the tour and the departure is confirmed. If by 5 June 2026 the minimum group size has not been reached the tour will be cancelled.

Those who have been booked on the tour will be notified and a full refund of their deposit paid back to them within 5 business days of receiving their bank/card details. Assistance in booking alternative experiences either in Hokkaido or elsewhere will be available for those that wish.



Why Choose Intrepid?

Our business is global, but our expertise is local, with innovative products operated by our experienced teams in-destination. Each year we create and deliver incredible travel experiences in more than 90 countries.

All our local leaders are trained in first aid and crisis management, and our hotels, vehicles, and activities are audited regularly to ensure they meet international standards. We operate with full public liability insurance and OH&S policies and have rigid risk mitigation and emergency procedures, so your product is delivered safely.



About Your Tour Leader

On this trip you will be accompanied by one of our tour leaders. The aim of the tour leader is to take the hassle out of your travels and to help you have the best trip possible.

Your leader will provide information on the places you are travelling through, offer suggestions for things to do and see, recommend great local eating venues and introduce you to our local friends. While not being guides in the traditional sense you can expect them to have a broad general knowledge of the places visited on the trip, including historical, cultural, religious and social aspects.

We aim to support local guides who have specialised knowledge of the regions we visit. If you were interested in delving deeper into the local culture at a specific site or location then your leader can recommend a local guide service in most of the main destinations of your trip.

August 31 - Monday



Depart from Niseko

Guests joining the Hokkaido Tour will be transferred by private vehicle to the tour starting point in Noboribetsu Onsen, an approximately 2 hour scenic drive from the group hotels.

For guests travelling with bikes, please see the bike transport and storage section at the bottom of the document.



Lunch

Guests will be met by their tour leader for lunch together in the village of Noboribetsu Onsen - a famous hot spring town that forms part of the larger Shikotsu-Toya National Park.



Visit Hell Valley

In the afternoon you'll go straight to Jigokudani, literally meaning 'Hell Valley' – this is an apt name for the volcanic activity on display! There are nine different types of onsen in Noboribetsu and they're all powered by the geothermal activity at this volcanic crater.



Check-in at Park Hotel Miyabi Tei or similar

Tonight, you'll stay in a ryokan hotel (traditional Japanese inn) that offers a range of onsen baths to try – the perfect chance to soak away your travel fatigue.



Dinner

September 1 - Tuesday



Check-out at Park Hotel Miyabi Tei or similar



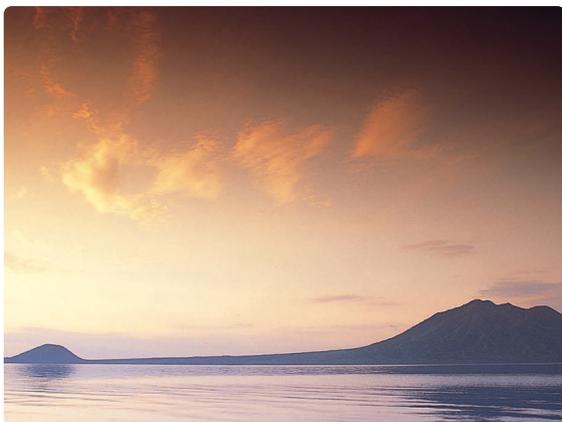
Depart from Noboribetsu

Pass through rural Hokkaido as you travel to Lake Shikotsu by train and bus, where you'll be welcomed by the sight of this majestic caldera lake formed by volcanic activity.



Lake Canoe

Cruise along the clear water in the afternoon in a canoe and admire the surrounding forests. Lake Shikotsu is known for its natural beauty and tranquil atmosphere, so soak up the calm vibe as you cruise across the stunning waters.



Check-in at Marukoma Ryokan

Return to another ryokan hotel this evening and take advantage once again of the relaxing hot springs.



Kaiseki Dinner

In the evening the group will enjoy a kaiseki dinner – a traditional Japanese fine dining multi-course experience.



Special Information

We will send your suitcases on to Asahikawa today, since you will travel by trains. Please prepare a light overnight backpack for your one night in Lake Shikotsu. Your guide will help you this morning. One suitcase per person is included; if you wish to send additional luggage, the cost is around JPY3000 per bag paid locally.

September 2 - Wednesday



Breakfast



Check-out at Marukoma Ryokan

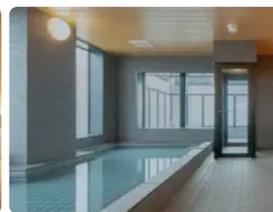
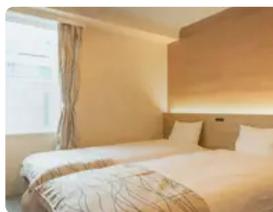


Travel to Asahikawa

Guests will travel by public transport to Asahikawa, Hokkaido's second largest city. Located in the heart of the island it is one of the coldest cities in Japan, particularly in winter.



Check-in at Hotel Amanek Asahikawa or similar



Leader-led orientation walk

The group will enjoy a relaxed walk in the city to orientate themselves and see the key sites such as Japan's first permanent pedestrian shopping street.



Afternoon and evening at leisure

Guests are invited to further explore the city with the option to visit places such as the Otokoyama Sake Brewing Museum where you can learn about the brewing process and sample the local beverage.

Dining options are extensive with Alley Furarito offering some great local options.

September 3 - Thursday



Breakfast



Kawamura Kaneto Ainu Museum Visit & Cooking Demonstration Experience

Start your day with a visit to the Kawamura Kaneto Ainu Museum and learn about the rich culture of Ainu people – an indigenous group from the northern regions of Japan. This is the first Ainu museum in Hokkaido – it was set up in the 1930s by an Ainu family who was hoping to preserve Ainu culture through the museum, and it's still owned by the same family.

Join a guided tour to gain insight into Ainu history and traditions. If you're lucky, the tour might be led by a member of the Ainu family who established the museum. After, get familiar with Ainu cuisine during a cooking demonstration showcasing Ainu dumplings (and then sample some for yourself!).



Dinner at Leisure

Guests are invited to explore more of Asahikawa in the evening and try some of the many great restaurants in the city.



Special Information

We will send your suitcases on to Sapporo today, since you will travel by trains. Please prepare a light overnight backpack. Your guide will help you this morning.

One suitcase per person is included; if you wish to send additional luggage, the cost is around JPY3000 per bag paid locally.

September 4 - Friday



Breakfast

Breakfast: Meals Included: Breakfast.



Check-out at Hotel Amanek Asahikawa or similar



Asahikawa – Mt. Asahi Ropeway & Blue Pond

After breakfast the group will travel by private transfer to Asahidake Ropeway – a line that climbs Mt Asahi, the tallest mountain in Hokkaido. Get all the rewards without the sweaty workout by riding the ropeway up the mountain, taking in the bird's eye views.

The group will then drive to the Blue Pond – a body of water with a deep blue hue caused by natural minerals. The pond's startling blue is the result of a mix of natural minerals such as colloidal aluminum hydroxide.

Following the visit to the Blue Pond the group will then travel by train to Sapporo.



Check-in at Comfort Hotel ERA Sapporo Kitaguchi or similar



Sapporo – Leader-led orientation walk

Known for its winter sports scene, Sapporo is bordered by mountains and ski hills. You'll also notice it has a grid-based street layout, which is very rare for Japan – and easy to navigate!

Your guide will lead the group for a visit in the city and provide recommendations for dinner and further activities to experience in Hokkaido's capital.



Dinner at Leisure

The evening is yours to explore at your own pace – maybe stop for a Sapporo beer and miso ramen at a local restaurant.

September 5 - Saturday



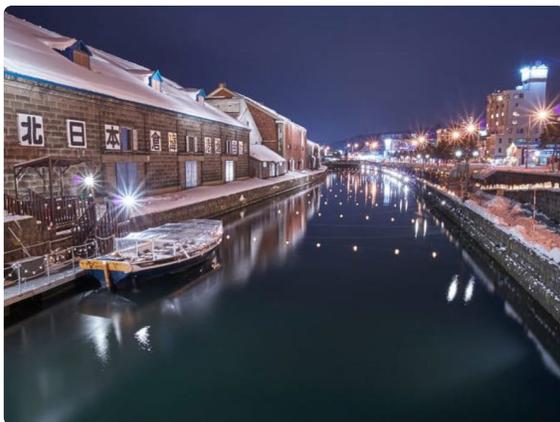
Breakfast

Breakfast: Meals Included: Breakfast.



Otaru Coastal Town Visit

Head out on day trip today to Otaru – a nearby town with a scenic canal area – and enjoy some free time roaming the streets. Maybe visit the Otaru Music Book Museum, home to 25,000 music boxes and lots to learn about the city's music box craftsmanship.



Farewell Dinner

In the afternoon the group will transfer back to Sapporo for a farewell dinner of Sapporo's signature Genghis Khan barbecue lamb (alternative meal options available) and toast to your Japanese adventure with your group.

September 6 - Sunday



Breakfast

Breakfast: Meals Included: Breakfast.



Check-out at Comfort Hotel ERA Sapporo Kitaguchi

The tour concludes after breakfast.

Transfers to the airport are available.

Tour Information



About This Tour

- It is essential that you pack light and compact for rail travel in Japan. Luggage size restrictions apply.
- Japan is best explored on foot and by public transport. You'll need to be fit enough to spend most of each day on your feet and able to handle your luggage as you navigate busy train stations. We recommend comfortable shoes and packing light.
- Japanese train connections are typically centred around major cities, so travelling to smaller towns and cities often requires passing through these larger hubs.
- This trip includes a canoeing activity which isn't too demanding but requires a good level of fitness to fully enjoy the experience.
- Double rooms in Japanese hotels can be smaller than you may be used to (for example, 20 sq m). Every effort will be made to accommodate double room requests. However, during busy periods, there may be occasions when we are unable to offer a double room, so a twin room will be provided.

Payment requirements:

- A \$1,250 AUD non-refundable deposit is required to confirm your place on the tour.
- Final balance payment is required 65 days prior to travel.

Cancellation by the traveller:

- Cancellation up to 45 days prior to travel; loss of deposit.
- Cancellation 45 days or inside prior to travel will incur 100% cancellation fees
- No shows will be treated as a cancellation and will incur 100% cancellation fees.

Cancellation by Intrepid:

- Cancellation is in line with those detailed in the standard Intrepid booking conditions in clause 8.

Full terms and conditions for Intrepid can be found here:

<https://www.intrepidtravel.com/au/standard-booking-conditions>

As this tour is a custom tour, the payment and cancellation terms listed above apply.



Bike Transport & Storage

Due to the nature of the tour it is not possible to keep your bike with you during the program. As such a bike transport and storage option will be organised between the Niseko group hotels for the Gran Fondo Worlds, Sky Express transport provider and the tour hotel in Sapporo.

Bikes will be stored from 31 August through to 4 September when the group reaches Sapporo. Full details of this service and any associated cost (capped at \$250 AUD per bike) will be confirmed once the group is finalised and bike numbers are known.

Please note, bikes are transported and stored at the owner's discretion and risk. Whilst care will be taken with the bikes, Higher Ground Travel & Events, Intrepid, Sky Express and the hotels take no responsibility for any damage or theft and guests should ensure they have suitable insurance in place for their bike for all travel and storage.

Guests using this service will be required to sign a waiver to the above effect.