



OUTDOOR ADVENTURES IN HOKKAIDO

The links in these documents contain information to make your life in Hokkaido easier and more enjoyable. Access each link and add it to your favourites list.

Whether you asked for it or not, welcome to the outdoor sporting paradise of Japan. Hokkaido has an abundance of almost any outdoor activity you are looking for. Here are a few tidbits. For further information, check out the *Hokkaido Guidebook*, available to buy from [\[hajat\]](#).

Hokkaido boasts the largest national park in Japan, Taisetsuzan National Park, as well as a plethora of other beautiful places, such as; Rishiri and Rebun Islands, Shiretoko Peninsula, Akan, Mashu, Kashuro and Toya Lakes, Furano, Niseko, and many, many others. Even in Sapporo, you can easily get out to Otaru, Jozankei, Lake Shikotsu, or up to Teine to enjoy skiing, hiking, cycling, camping, onsening, and whatnot.

WHAT IS THERE?

Hiking, camping, rock climbing, canoeing, kayaking, cycling, river climbing, skiing, snowboarding, mountain climbing, scuba diving, paragliding, natural hot springing and so much more!

Hiking

The official hiking season is from June through September, and this is when most Japanese take to the hills. However, you can hike in the mountains anytime.

Camping

Camping is very popular all over Japan and they even borrowed a couple of words from English to coin a term for their own form of camping, "Auto Camp". At these car campgrounds, you can drive up to your campsite and pitch your tent next to the car (and within spitting distance of about a dozen other campers). Or, you can venture

off the beaten track to find some quiet and beautiful areas to set up camp. The choice is yours.

Rock Climbing

Rock climbing has been and will continue to be a very popular sport in Japan. Hokkaido has over 40 designated places for climbing. Most of the places are bolted, with grades ranging from the American 5.8 to 5.13 plus. Some of the big names for rock climbing are Akaiwaseigankyo, Akaiwa, Yoshitsuneiwa and Kamuikotan. There are also indoor climbing walls in Asahikawa, Sapporo, and Niseko.

Kayaking & Canoeing

Kayaking and canoeing are also available in the many rivers, lakes, and ocean side areas in Hokkaido. The rivers are graded mostly between 2 and 3 on a scale from 1 to 6.

Cycling

Cycling is extremely popular in the summertime here. There are many cycling roads located all over the island and even if there isn't one near you, the Hokkaido roads are well known for their wide shoulders and beautiful back roads for bicycle riding.

Onsening

Onsening is a nice little hobby to take up even if you don't really enjoy outdoor sports. There are hot springs in almost every town, but if you are willing to drive, bus, and/or hike a bit, you can find some wonderful natural hot springs out there in the mountains. There is nothing better than sitting in an onsen, under a waterfall, during a full moon and with your beer in your hand. You can find information on hot springs in your local bookstore or from 2nd and 3rd year JETs.

And More

Mountain climbing, scuba diving, ice climbing and paragliding are also popular sports around Hokkaido. Ask around your town and/or check out the Hokkaido Guide or a sports and outdoor store. You're bound to find many places to play around your town.

Skiing & Snowboarding

Last but certainly not least are the winter sports: skiing and snowboarding. The snow begins to fall in early November and doesn't let up until the end of April almost every town has a ski resort, with big name places spread out here and there.

The biggest names are Niseko, Rusutsu, Sapporo Kokusai, Teine Highland, Mt. Racey, Tomamu, Sahoro (they have a Club Med there), Furano, and Kamui. The Asahidake Ropeway is great for people searching for deep powder and extreme lines.

If staying on the course is your thing, you'll find plenty of places to do that; most Japanese skiers and snowboarders prefer groomed trails to powder snow. There are also plenty of places to enjoy deep powder skiing. All it usually takes is a rope duck here and you are grinning ear to ear in untracked pow'. However, places to watch out for ski patrol are Rusutsu, Furano, Niseko Higashiyama, and many of the smaller areas.

It seems that every year someone dies in an avalanche or does a header with a tree. If you head off course, be safe, be aware of dangers, and take proper gear and a buddy.

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As always, the official [hajat/forum](#) is where you will find all the answers to any questions you may have regarding life in Hokkaido.

HAJET kindly asks you to use paper wisely and only print this document if you really, really must. LOVE HOKKAIDO, LOVE THE ENVIRONMENT!

USEFUL RESOURCES

Youth Hostel Association Hokkaido
How to Walk Hokkaido
Snow Japan
Hokkaipedia

www.youthhostel.or.jp
www.youthhokkaido.com
www.snowjapan.com
www.hokkaipedia.org

Hokkaido Association of Japan Exchange and Teaching
www.hajet.org

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