

Passenger Boats of Hokkaido

1

Otaru (Otaru Canal)




We recommend you take your time strolling through the streets of Otaru, with their air of nostalgic charm. Along the Otaru Canal stand 63 gas lamps, and the banks are lined with gift shops and restaurants. Many boats are also moored in the North Canal area, creating a scene reminiscent of the old days of the canal.

ACCESS 25 min. by car from Sapporo North Interchange via the Sasson Expwy.

2

The Shakotan Peninsula




The incomparably majestic, clear seas draw divers from throughout Japan. Choose from many marine sports, and finish with a hike to the tip of the peninsula, for spectacular views of the unique rocks and emerald ocean.

ACCESS 60 min. by car from downtown Otaru via Natl. Rte. 5, and then Shiribeshi Expwy. and Natl. Rte. 229.

3

Tomakomai (Lake Utonai)




A landing base for middle- and long-distance ferries. Enjoy the rare marshland of Lake Utonai (a Ramsar Convention registered wetland), which preserves a diverse ecosystem. Known as a paradise for wild birds, approximately 270 types including geese, ducks, and swans have been confirmed, and visitors can experience nature in every season. Sakhalin surf clams are a popular souvenir.

ACCESS 25 min. by car from downtown Tomakomai, 15 min. by car from New Chitose Airport.

4

Lake Shikotsu




Forty kilometers in circumference, transparent to a depth of 17.5 m and averaging 3.6 degrees centigrade in water temperature, this is the coldest ice-free lake in Japan. Its depth of 360.1 m makes it the second-deepest lake in Japan, after Lake Tazawa. The lake is in Shikotsu Toya Natl. Park, surrounded by dense forest. This is a perfect place for a stroll amidst nature.

ACCESS 25 min. by car from downtown Chitose via Pref. Rte. 16 and Natl. Rte. 453, or 30 min. by car from downtown Tomakomai to Lake Shikotsu Hot Springs via Natl. Rte. 36 and then Natl. Rte. 276.

7

Okushiri Island




This island in the Sea of Japan is endowed with rich ocean resources. Untouched nature remains here, bestowing gifts in plenty such as water in an outstandingly clear shade called "Okushiri blue," rocks formed over long years, beech forests more than a century old and gushing hot springs.

ACCESS 140 min. from Esashi Port to Okushiri Port by Heart Land Ferry.

8

Hakodate




This port flourished as an early gateway to Japan. From bygone days, it has blended Western and Japanese styles. Among the many remaining structures that attest to this rich history are redbrick warehouses (see photo), churches in Motomachi, the Old Public Hall of Hakodate Ward and more. The Jomon Prehistoric Sites in Northern Japan, including Hakodate with its inheritance of the lives of the Jomon people (at the Kakinoshima and Ofune Sites), are registered as World Cultural Heritage Sites and have gained attention worldwide.

ACCESS A 15-min. walk from JR Hakodate Station toward Nijukken Zaka Slope, or 55 min. by car from JR Shin-Hakodate-Hokuto Station to the Kakinoshima Site.

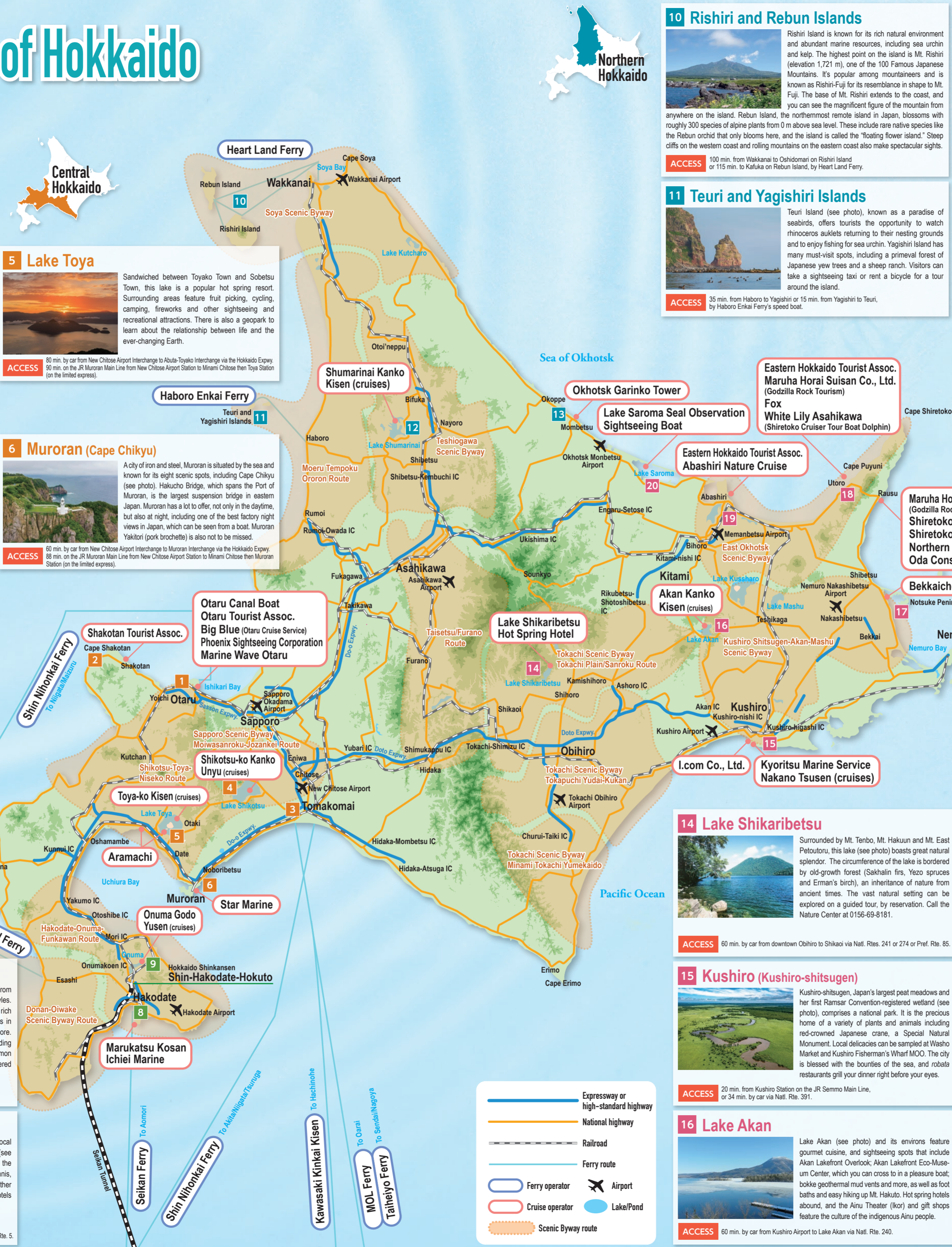
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Onuma




Lava from the eruption of Mt. Komagadake, a local landmark, formed Onuma by banking up the river (see photo). Onuma's beauty has been widely known since the Edo era. This resort features fishing, cycling, golfing, tennis, hiking, horseback riding, camping, fruit picking and other outdoor recreations, in addition to hot spring baths, hotels and local specialties.

ACCESS 15 min. by car from JR Shin-Hakodate-Hokuto Station. 32 min. by car from Hakodate Airport via Hakodate Shinsotkan Rd., the Hakodate Shindo, and Natl. Rte. 5.



10

Rishiri and Rebun Islands




Rishiri Island is known for its rich natural environment and abundant marine resources, including sea urchin and kelp. The highest point on the island is Mt. Rishiri (elevation 1,721 m), one of the 100 Famous Japanese Mountains. It's popular among mountaineers and is known as Rishiri-Fuji for its resemblance in shape to Mt. Fuji. The base of Mt. Rishiri extends to the coast, and you can see the magnificent figure of the mountain from anywhere on the island. Rebun Island, the northernmost remote island in Japan, blossoms with roughly 300 species of alpine plants from 0 m above sea level. These include rare native species like the Rebun orchid that only blooms here, and the island is called the "floating flower island." Steep cliffs on the western coast and rolling mountains on the eastern coast also make spectacular sights.

ACCESS 100 min. from Wakkanai to Oshidomari on Rishiri Island or 115 min. to Katuka on Rebun Island, by Heart Land Ferry.

11

Teuri and Yagishiri Islands




Teuri Island (see photo), known as a paradise of seabirds, offers tourists the opportunity to watch rhinoceros auklets returning to their nesting grounds and to enjoy fishing for sea urchin. Yagishiri Island has many must-visit spots, including a primeval forest of Japanese yew trees and a sheep ranch. Visitors can take a sightseeing taxi or rent a bicycle for a tour around the island.

ACCESS 35 min. from Haboro to Yagishiri or 15 min. from Yagishiri to Teuri, by Haboro Enkai Ferry's speed boat.

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Lake Shumarinai



The largest reservoir in Japan (the size of about 2,373 soccer fields) is also famous as the habitat of the very rare Japanese huchen. Wilderness areas subject to strict nature conservation regulations extend across the whole of Lake Shumarinai, retaining nature's primitive form. The land is a marvelous wilderness.

ACCESS 105 min. by car from Asahikawa Airport via Natl. Rte. 237 to Hokkaido Expwy. Asahikawa-kita Interchange, then Shibusetsu-Kembuchi Interchange and Natl. Rte. 239 to Pref. Rte. 251.

13

Mombetsu (Okhotsk)



Mombetsu is noted for drift ice and the tiny clone mollusk. After a bracing ride aboard the Garinko-go icebreaker, visit the Giza Okhotsk Sea Ice Museum of Hokkaido (see photo) or take a break at Okhotsk Hyoumon-no-Eki Mall. Built on the site of the former JR Mombetsu Station, the mall offers local delicacies and adjoining hot baths.

ACCESS 135 min. by car from downtown Asahikawa via Hokkaido Expwy. Asahikawa-kita Interchange, then Asahikawa Mombetsu Expwy. Ukishima Interchange to Natl. Rte. 273. 118 min. by car from Memambetsu Airport to the Bihoro Bypass and Natl. Rte. 238.

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Lake Shikaribetsu



Surrounded by Mt. Tenbo, Mt. Hakuun and Mt. East Petoutoru, this lake (see photo) boasts great natural splendor. The circumference of the lake is bordered by old-growth forest (Sakhalin firs, Yezo spruces and Erman's birch), an inheritance of nature from ancient times. The vast natural setting can be explored on a guided tour, by reservation. Call the Nature Center at 0156-69-8181.

ACCESS 60 min. by car from downtown Obihiro to Shikaoi via Natl. Rtes. 241 or 274 or Pref. Rte. 85.

15

Kushiro (Kushiro-shitsugen)



Kushiro-shitsugen, Japan's largest peat meadows and her first Ramsar Convention-registered wetland (see photo), comprises a national park. It is the precious home of a variety of plants and animals including red-crowned Japanese crane, a Special Natural Monument. Local delicacies can be sampled at Washo Market and Kushiro Fishermen's Wharf MOO. The city is blessed with the bounties of the sea, and robata restaurants grill your dinner right before your eyes.

ACCESS 20 min. from Kushiro Station on the JR Semmo Main Line, or 34 min. by car via Natl. Rte. 391.

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Lake Akan




Lake Akan (see photo) and its environs feature gourmet cuisine, and sightseeing spots that include Akan Lakefront Overlook, Akan Lakefront Eco-Museum Center, which you can cross to in a pleasure boat; bokke geothermal mud vents and more, as well as foot baths and easy hiking up Mt. Hakuto. Hot spring hotels abound, and the Ainu Theater (Ikor) and gift shops feature the culture of the indigenous Ainu people.

ACCESS 60 min. by car from Kushiro Airport to Lake Akan via Natl. Rte. 240.

17

Bekkai (Notsuke Peninsula: Japan's largest sandspit)



The "Bekkai Jukkei" (Ten Magnificent Views of Bekkai) include the Notsuke Peninsula; Todowara; Notsuke Peninsula Wildflower Park; Hakubadai, where swans congregated from December through March; Barasan Pond, a paradise for small animals; the pristine Lake Furen; and Yaushubetsu Estuary that displays the beauty of the border between the great river and the lake. In early summer and late autumn, you can see fisherman hauling in Hokkai tiger shrimp, a local specialty, from the Utase trawlers (see photo) in Notsuke Bay.

ACCESS 50 min. by car from Nakashibetsu Airport via Natl. Rte. 272.

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The Shiretoko Peninsula

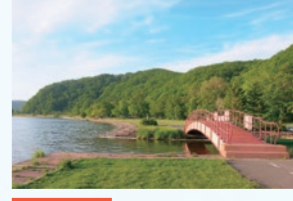


After taking a pleasure cruise from Utoro Port or Rausu Port to experience in full the nature of the Shiretoko Peninsula, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, why not visit the "Shiretoko Hakkei" (Eight Magnificent Views of Shiretoko)? These include Oshinkoshin Falls, Oronko Rock, the Yuhidai overlook, Cape Puyuni, Furepe Falls, Shiretoko Pass, the Shiretoko Five Lakes and Kamui Wakka Falls. Seseki Hot Spring and Lake Rausu are also famous and have appeared in a Japanese television show.

ACCESS 104 min. by car from Memambetsu Airport to Utoro via Pref. Rte. 64 to Natl. Rte. 244, then Natl. Rte. 334. 131 min. by car from Memambetsu Airport to Rausu via Pref. Rte. 64 to Natl. Rte. 244, then Natl. Rte. 334. 60 min. by car from Nakashibetsu Airport to Rausu via Pref. Rte. 174 to Natl. Rte. 225. 110 min. by car from Nakashibetsu Airport to Utoro via Pref. Rte. 150 to Natl. Rte. 244, then Natl. Rte. 334.

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Abashiri




Abashiri is known for drift ice viewing, such as from the Aurora icebreaker ship and from the Ryuhyo Norokko Train. Not only does the city offer opportunities to enjoy the splendid natural environment of the Sea of Okhotsk in winter, but one can also enjoy these opportunities from spring through summer, such as by watching whales, dolphins and seabirds off of Abashiri. The Abashiri Prison Museum and Okhotsk Ryu-hyo Museum are also famous.

ACCESS 25 min. by car from Memambetsu Airport via Pref. Rte. 64 to Natl. Rte. 39.

20

Lake Saroma



With a circumference of 91 km, Lake Saroma is the largest lake in Hokkaido. It's surrounded by scenic spots, including Wakka Wild Flower Park, which is famed as a vantage for beautiful sunsets over the lake (see photo). The lake is also known as the venue for the Lake Saroma 100-km Ultra Marathon, which is held every late June. Scallops and Hokkai shrimp from the lake are not to be missed.

ACCESS 65 min. by car from Memambetsu Airport via the Bihoro Bypass to Natl. Rte. 39, then Natl. Rte. 238.

