



## **A city of Samurais and hot baths**

*Located in the Tohoku region, Akita Prefecture is considered as one of the sociologically and economically deprived prefectures in Japan. Nevertheless, this unjustly ignored region has a great opportunity thanks to tourism, in terms of responsible tourism, to boost its economy. There are many interesting cultural and natural treasures as well as numerous Onsen (thermal baths), all the ingredients to satisfy the curiosity of visitors. One can also enjoy stays in the countryside, off the beaten track.*

### **D1 : Tokyo – Kakunodate – Tazawako – Nyuto Onsen**

Departure to Kakunodate by Shinkansen (about 3 hours)

**Kakunodate** is an ancient castle town and samurai fortress in the present Akita Prefecture. Although the castle of Kakunodate does not remain any more, the city is famous for its numerous samurai remains.

Scheduling of sightseeing and meals are at your convenience.

- The **Kakunodate samurai district**, which once housed about 80 families, is one of the best examples of samurai architecture and housing in the country. Its wide streets and large courtyards are shaded by many weeping cherry trees (shidarezakura) which bloom in early May.
- **The Aoyagi House** (Aoyagi-ke) is an impressive complex with its museum whose collections are spread over several buildings. The exhibits provide interesting information in English and Japanese about the traditions of the samurai, the way of life and the historical background of Japan in relation to Kakunodate. This place is a must for anyone interested in samurai history. There are also restaurants and souvenir stores.
- The second samurai house that deserves special attention is the **Ishiguro house** (Ishiguro-ke). The area open to visitors is much smaller than that of the Aoyagi house, largely because the family still resides in the rest of the house. A collection of samurai armor and clothing is on display, as well as drawings and anatomical studies. The Ishiguro house also has a well-preserved cellar.
- **The private Omura Museum** is dedicated to René Lalique, considered a master of Art Deco. The museum's rotating collection of some 400 pieces includes Lalique's glass artworks, Art Deco pieces from the same period as his life. To fully display the beauty of his glass works, the museum uses small exhibition spaces and careful lighting. In addition, the museum chooses a special theme every two or three months and presents pieces selected for the exhibition accordingly.
- **The Denshokan Museum** introduces the history of Kakunodate and traditional handicrafts. The most important craft in Kakunodate is cherry bark woodworking (kabazaiku), which is used to make tea caddies, dishes and large furniture.
- **Warabi Theatre**, established in 1951, performs and preserves traditional Japanese dances and folk songs. In addition to traditional songs, the theater also presents a variety of contemporary arts, such as musicals. Warabi Theater is located in Akita Art Village where you can fully experience the appeal of Akita Prefecture and rural Japan through performances, hot springs, restaurants serving local Akita food and craft beer. They offer cultural experiences such as taiko (drum) classes held by professionals.



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Transfer by local bus to Nyuto Onsen (about 30 min from Tazawako, to be paid on the spot), located in Towada Hachimantai National Park.



Nyuto Onsen

**Nyuto Onsen** is a cluster of ryokan onsen in the eastern mountains of Akita Prefecture. The area is known for the thermal baths found in its eight ryokans, some of which are traditional and rustic. With a history of over 300 years, Tsurunoyu is the oldest and most famous Nyuto Onsen. The name Nyuto Onsen means "mamelon hot spring" and comes from the suggestive shape of nearby Mount Nyuto rather than the milky appearance of the hot spring water in the area.

Dinner and overnight in a recommended ryokan.



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## **D2 : Nyuto Onsen - Tokyo**

Breakfast at the ryokan.

The rest of the day will be taken up by one of the hikes of **Mt. Akitakomagatake** in Towada Hachimantai National Park (access possible from June to October).



Mt Akita Komagatake

Departure for the 8th station of Mt Akitakomagatake

Nyuto Onsen 8h50 – Arupa Komakusa 09h04 by bus (to be paid on the spot)

Arupa Komakusa 09h27 – Komagatake Hachigome 09h52 by bus (to be paid on the spot)

Short hike (average duration 3H)

The 8th station of Mt Akitakomagatake ~ Amida Pond ~ Mt Oname ~ Katakura Observatory ~  
The 8th station of Mt Akitakomagatake

Long hike (average duration 4H45)

The 8th station of Mt Akitakomagatake ~ Katakura Observatory ~ Amida Pond ~ Onamedake  
~ Oyakesuna ~ Mt Yakimori ~ the 8th station of Mt Akitakomagatake



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On Mt. **Akita-Komagatake**, various alpine plants delight the eyes of visitors. The most impressive views are the fields of Aleutian Mountain avens and daylily flowers around Amidaike Pond and along the Babanokomichi Trail. And the views from Katakura Viewpoint and Mount Onamedake are other scenic attractions.

Mountaineering map

[https://www.env.go.jp/park/towada/hachimantai/en/course/course\\_004/index.html](https://www.env.go.jp/park/towada/hachimantai/en/course/course_004/index.html) (Ministry of the Environment)

Return to Tokyo at the end of the day (about three hours)

***This program can be combined with the Hachimantai Park and Overnight Farm programs to build a 3-day to one-week stay with activities.***

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