



A Samurai town and a farm

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

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 samurai district



- 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.

Transfer to a nearby farm.

Why not experience the life of a farmer while enjoying the interaction with local people. You will be able to help with the farmer's farm work, cook local dishes together, and pick wild edible plants (these activities are available from June to November).

Participation in the preparation of the dinner with the host, a sort of local cooking class.

Dinner and night at the farm.



D2 : Agricultural activities - Tokyo

In the morning, participation in agricultural activities.



Agricultural activities @ communication design Division

Lunch on your own.

The activities to be scheduled in the afternoon will be either:

- A) Lake Tazawa
- B) A hike.
- C) A complementary visit to Kakunodate.

Return to Tokyo by Shinkansen (about 3 hours)



Possible activities:

A) Lake Tazawa

*Located just south of Towada-Hachimantai National Park, **Tazawa Lake** is a picturesque caldera lake which has not been overdeveloped and retains a natural and rustic atmosphere. The lake is often visited in collaboration with nearby sites such as Nyuto Onsen or Akita-Komagatake Mountain, which also offer rustic scenes typical of the Tohoku region.*

- **Tazawa Lake Cruise** (duration 40min): the deepest lake in Japan with a Persian blue color. You can see picturesque sites such as Gozanoishi Shrine and the statue of Tatsuko, goddess of the lake, while touring Tazawa Lake.

Lunch on your own.

Possible activities in the afternoon:

◇ Stand up paddle: 2h course (non-privatized session) *
Activity possible from June to October

◇ Kayak: 2 to 3 hours course depending on the season (not privatized session) *
Activity possible from April to October

◇ Bike rental: 20km for a tour of the lake, average duration 1h-1h30
Activity possible from April to October

◇ Tazawako Ski Station: 30min by bus from Tazawako station
Activity possible from December to March

**Reservations are required, we can take care of the reservations.*

B) One of the hikes of Mt. Akitakomagatake in Towada Hachimantai National Park (access possible from June to October).

Departure for the 8th station of Mt Akikomagatake

Tazawako 10:05 am - Komagatake Hachigome 11:04 am 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

*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.*

Komagatake Hachigome 16h24 – Tazawako 17h24 by bus (to be paid on site)

This program can be combined with an overnight stay at Nyuto Onsen to build a 3-day to one-week stay with activities.



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