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Taste of Hokkaido

July 6 - 17, 2019

Please contact us for the price.

Land Package Price includes:

- Tour Escort
- Hotel Accommodations
- Ground Transportation as indicated in the itinerary
- Nine breakfasts, three lunches, and seven dinners
- Admission to all sites, attractions, and tours as indicated in the itinerary

July 6, 2019 **Day 1** **Saturday** **Honolulu to Chitose**

An afternoon flight takes us from Honolulu to Hokkaido.

July 7, 2019 **Day 2** **Sunday** **Chitose**

We arrive at Chitose Airport in the evening. Upon arrival we will pass through immigrations and then collect our luggage to clear customs. From there we will go to our hotel for the night.

July 8, 2019 **Day 3** **Monday** **Chitose to Asahikawa**

Today we head north to Hokkaido's second largest city, **Asahikawa**. Along the way we will visit **Tomita Farms** in **Furano**. This farm is noted for starting the lavender craze, growing beautiful lavender fields and making a myriad of lavender products from lavender ice cream to award winning perfume. The farm also grows roses, poppies, and yubari melon.

For lunch we will try a local specialty, **gatatan**. This dish was a favorite of the local mining community and combines a staggering amount of ingredients.

As we continue on we will also stop at the **Trick Art Museum**, which specializes in paintings that create the illusion of three dimensions. The paintings range in size from three feet to thirty feet.

Dinner tonight will be at a **tonkatsu** specialty shop.

July 9, 2019 **Day 4** **Tuesday** **Asahikawa**

In the morning we will go to Kamikawa to visit the **Ice Pavilion**. This facility is kept at a cool - 4 degrees Fahrenheit. Here we can experience the cold Hokkaido winter. The highlight of the facility is a room that is kept at - 42 degrees Fahrenheit, the coldest recorded temperature in Japan.

For lunch, we will try one of Hokkaido's specialties, **Jingisukan**, a grilled lamb dish. Named after Genghis Khan because lamb was believed to be the choice meat of Mongolians.

Then it is off to the **Asahiyama Zoo**. This is one of Japan's most popular zoo's. Its habitats are designed to let the animals live in more natural surroundings while still allowing visitors to get up close.

To finish the day we will visit the **Kawamura Kaneto Ainu Museum**, highlighting the culture of Hokkaido's indigenous people. They also offer various Ainu handcrafts for sale. This is the least commercialized of the three Ainu museums in Hokkaido

For dinner, we will try **Asahikawa Ramen**, which uses a shoyu based broth.

July 10, 2019

Day 5

Wednesday

Asahikawa to Soya

We hop on a train to journey northward to Japan's northernmost city, **Wakkanai**. Upon our arrival we will enjoy some time strolling through the small **downtown** area near the station. Next we head to **Wakkanai Park** where we will see a number of memorials, as well as a beautiful view of the surrounding area. Among the monuments are one honoring **Jiro and Taro**, two sled dog brothers who survived a year in Antarctica on their own. Our last stop will be at the **memorial to the Korean Air jetliner** that was shot down by a Russian MIG in 1983.

We will then check in to our hotel before walking to a nearby monument marking the **northernmost point of Japan**. There is also a marker honoring **Mamiya Rinzo**, the Japanese explorer who finished mapping Hokkaido and the Sakhalin islands. Near the monument we can see **ryuhyo** or drift ice which is created during Hokkaido's winter when Soya's waters freeze.

Tonight's dinner will be **Iroribatayaki**. It features a pit in the floor around which you sit and your food is cooked over charcoals in the pit. Their specialties include fresh King Crab, scallops, and local fish.

July 11, 2019

Day 6

Thursday

Soya to Otaru

After a quiet evening, we will head to the Wakkanai Pier to see some of the products made in the area and to pick up lunch. On the way, weather permitting, we may have a chance to see **konbu harvesting**. Hokkaido's konbu is the best in Japan with most going to Okinawa.

We will then continue south, so that we can visit **Rishiri-Rebun-Sarobetsu Park**. We will visit the **Sarobetsu Moor**, a large marsh field with wild flowers. In the far distance we may be able to see **Rishiri-Fuji**, a large mountain located on Rishiri Island just off the coast. Here we can enjoy the outdoors and the summer weather, while we have lunch.

We will then catch the train south to **Otaru**.

July 12, 2019

Day 7

Friday

Otaru to Niseko

Today we will head to **Niseko**. Our first stop will be a visit to the Sakaimichi district of Otaru, where we will visit an antique music box museum and a glass factory. **The antique music box museum** showcases music boxes from the 19th century ranging in size from a small wardrobe to a full size organ. Nearby is a store where you can make your own music box, selecting the music ranging from Japanese music to classical pieces to Disney songs and then decorating the box itself. At **Kitaichi Glass** you can find glass ware such as light weight mugs with color changing designs to dripless shoyu bottles. The area also sells freshly made senbei, high end chocolates, and antiques.

For lunch, we will go to the **Otaru Pier** to eat at a restaurant that specializes in catch of the day.

Our last stop will be in Yoichi to visit **Nikka Whiskey**. Founded in 1934, it has produced award winning whiskey. A 2014 Fall NHK drama is based on the love story between the Japanese founder and his Scottish wife.

July 13, 2019 **Day 8** **Saturday** **Niseko**

In the morning, we will take a **cooking class** making a German confection, **baumkuchen**. This is a popular dessert can be found throughout Japan. This class will teach how to cook it using an outdoor grill.

The afternoon is free to do as you wish. For those who are interested in the outdoors, you can go rafting (on own). Or you can also go into the town to do a little shopping (on own). And for those who just want to relax, you can enjoy the onsen at the hotel.

July 14, 2019 **Day 9** **Sunday** **Niseko to Sapporo**

After two peaceful nights, we leave Niseko for Sapporo, the capital of Hokkaido. Along the way we will stop at **Niki** to do a little **cherry picking at a local farm**.

As we enter Sapporo we will visit the **Ishiya Chocolate Factory**. This whimsical factory produces Hokkaido's signature cookie, Shiroi Koi Bito. Here you can see how it is made, as well as its sugar crafts and other chocolate delights. There is chocolate lounge, where you can enjoy chocolate desserts and drinks, and a small toy museum.

July 15, 2019 **Day 10** **Monday** **Sapporo**

Our day begins with a visit to **Moerenuma Park**. It was designed by Japanese American artist, **Isamu Noguchi**, with the concept of a "park that is considered to be one complete sculpture". In addition to the natural features of the park, there are several sculptures and buildings designed by Noguchi. Here you can rent a bicycle (on own) and ride around the large park or enjoy a leisurely stroll through the grounds.

The **Megmilk Snowbrand Museum** is our next stop, where we will learn about one of Sapporo's largest dairy producers from its early days to the modern era. We can see how the technology evolved and the wide variety of dairy products that they produce.

We will then visit the **Okurayama Ski Jump Stadium**. Designed for the 1972 Olympics, here we will ride the ski lift up to the top of the hill and gain a view of the city below. We will also visit

the **Winter Sports Museum** to learn about winter sports, as well as try various simulators that will give you an idea of what it is like to play a winter sport.

For dinner, we will try **curry soup**. Instead of the traditional thick Japanese curry, the ingredients are eaten as chunks with a curry broth.

July 16, 2019

Day 11

Tuesday

Sapporo

In the morning, we will visit **Sapporo's main shopping district**, where we can find **Japan's third largest 100 yen store**. We can also visit Sapporo's fish market, **Nijo Market**. Here you can find seafood and produce from Hokkaido. We will then make a stop at **Oodori Park**, the site of the annual Sapporo Snow Festival. During the summer it is home to the Sapporo Beer Garden and host to a city wide flower competition.

July 17, 2019

Day 12

Wednesday

Sapporo to Chitose to Honolulu

On our last day the morning is free to relax and do any last minute shopping and packing. We will head to the Chitose Airport early. There will be time to explore its three levels with everything from restaurants and shops to a Doraemon Play Area to the Royce Chocolate World and even a movie theater. You can enjoy onsen one more time at the airport (on own) or make one last stop at a hundred yen store.

Our flight departs in the evening and will return us to Honolulu on the morning of the day we left Japan. Upon arrival we must pass through immigration before we collect our luggage and then clear customs.