northern islands of Hokkaido by bike

Kia Ora from Adventure South

Thank you for your interest in our Northern Islands of Hokkaido By Bike adventure. It’s a superb adventure and we hope you can join us. Adventure South has been operating active holidays throughout New Zealand since 1992 and Japan since 2008. Thanks to our experience we’re confident to say that we offer the very best travel itineraries available in New Zealand and Japan today.

An Adventure South holiday aims to take you beyond the more popular and busy trails to provide you with a truly unique Japanese wilderness experience.

We’re here to show you that there are many, many more trails and cycling routes in this great country that are the new frontiers in adventure tourism - beautiful, scenic, and without the crowds. We aim to explore these delicate environments in a sustainable manner to ensure we leave as little impact as possible from our visit. We’d be honoured to introduce you to the wide variety of natural wonders that Japan is famous for. Go forth, go south - join us on this amazing small group, value packed adventure!

why travel with Adventure South?

“Small Groups, Great Guides, Superb Holidays.”

This comment encapsulates an Adventure South active holiday in Japan. The phrase was not born from a long and tortuous strategic planning process, it came from a client review! We could not have said it any better. Our client feedback also confirms that what helps make our holidays different are the quality of our professional guides. They share their humour, compassion and wilderness experience to ensure that you have a great vacation and the right degree of personal challenge.

On an Adventure South tour you can also expect the right, proven equipment is provided for your tour; the food is delicious, plentiful and can be catered to your dietary requests; your guides are all First Aid trained; that the itinerary you have chosen has been carefully crafted from years of personal experience in the Japanese wilderness, not from a guide book recommendation.
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Cycle highlights of the Northern Islands of Hokkaido.

The trip
Hokkaido at the northern edge of Japan offers fantastic opportunities for adventure seekers. Hokkaido may be best known for the excellent snow conditions, but there are secrets that are revealed only in summer. The heavy snowfall in winter is what makes Hokkaido roads so wide and smooth, providing perfect conditions for road cycling. The roads are maintained regularly (virtually every summer) and built with ample space to house the snow. The harsh winter also means less population, traffic and good food, everything you wish for in a cycle touring destination! The ocean surrounding Hokkaido is blessed with bountiful seafood, attracting many food lovers all over the country, and it gets more exotic and even higher quality as we journey further north. This 7 day itinerary explores the northern most national park of Japan containing the undiscovered twin islands Rishiri and Rebun. There are over six thousand islands belonging to the Japanese Archipelago, and islands are the destinations you can’t miss when in Japan!

We highly recommend our 2 nights extension option in Kyoto, including a day cycling through a bamboo forest, rock garden, Zen temple and the Golden Pavilion. Ask us for more details.

About your leader
Our Guides are one of our biggest assets. We pride ourselves on the standard and quality of these great people who you will be spending your holiday with. They come from all walks of life but they all have a common desire to give you the best possible experience, heaps of fun and lots of fond memories to take home with you. We provide you with the services of two guides for many of our trips, (this may depend on the size of the group). All are certified in first aid and CPR and many are trained bike mechanics.

At a glance

Day 1
Meet in Abashiri

Day 2
Abashiri to Lake Saroma

Day 3
Lake Saroma to Hamatonbetsu

Day 4
Hamatonbetsu to Wakkanai

Day 5
Wakkanai – Ferry – Rishiri Island

Day 6
Rishiri Island – Ferry – Rebun Island – Ferry – Wakkanai

Day 7
Wakkanai finish

What’s included

- 6 breakfasts and 5 evening meals
- 6 nights accommodation on a twin share basis
- All water and snack food whilst cycling
- English speaking guide & mechanic
- Support vehicle(s)
- Rental bikes
- Helmets by request only (please advise on booking)
- Bike tools and spare parts
- All ferry transport as described in the itinerary
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detailed itinerary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Altitude Gain</th>
<th>Meals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DAY 1</td>
<td>Meet in Abashiri</td>
<td>0km</td>
<td></td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 2</td>
<td>Abashiri to Lake Saroma</td>
<td>70km</td>
<td>200m</td>
<td>B,D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 3</td>
<td>Lake Saroma to Hamatonbetsu</td>
<td>80km</td>
<td>400m</td>
<td>B,D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 4</td>
<td>Hamatonbetsu to Wakkanai</td>
<td>95km</td>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAY 5</td>
<td>Wakkanai – ferry – Rishiri Island</td>
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This morning we will drive to miss cycling the busy traffic section from Lake Saroma to Oumu (approx 2hr drive). Along the way we pass interesting fishery towns, one of which is Monbetsu famous for its massive drift ice in winter. The rich nutrient that the drift ice carries makes this area productive for its fishery, especially the crabs. Once we reach Oumu we get back on our bikes continuing our journey north all along the coastline to Hamatonbetsu. Tonight we are staying at a “cycling terminal”, a type of accommodation established to cater to cyclists, equipped with rental bike facility and onsen to restore tired bodies. Accommodation: Cycling terminal/Ensuite/Onsen

Cycling distance – 80km/50mile
Altitude gain - 400m/1312ft
meals: B,D

This morning we take a 1.5 hour ferry to the Rishiri Island. Rishiri Island is Japan’s cycling paradise with a circumference of 60km. The coast line is all rideable with ocean views on one side and mountain views on the other. There is a 25km section of road cycling through some flower reserves, which will be in full bloom in June. There are no major hills, little traffic and superb views all day.
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fast facts

Private Groups:
Private group options are available for this trip*

Singles:
A single supplement is available for this trip*

Leader:
Expert local leader

*Ask our staff for more information

long. Mount Rishiri, also known as Rishiri Fuji, is situated in the centre of the island and is always in your sight. We will take our van on the ferry with us so the support will be there if the island breeze picks up.

Accommodation: Ryokan/Ensuite
Cycling distance – 60km/37mile
Altitude gain - 300m/984ft
meals: B,D

Day 6  Rishiri Island – ferry – Rebun Island – ferry – Wakkanai
A forty mins ferry voyage takes us to neighbouring Rebun island. Unlike Rishiri, Rebun is a non-volcanic island that is long and narrow. The west coast is rugged and predominantly cliffs, whereas the east coast slopes more gently to the sea. Rebun Island, famous as a floral island, has a number of walking and hiking trails, offering opportunities to see rare alpine flowers growing naturally. Today we have a couple of options to cycle or hike this wonderful island Rebun, depending on the weather and everyone’s energy on the day. In the late afternoon we will board the ferry that takes us back to Wakkanai.

Accommodation: Hotel/Ensuite/Onsen
Cycling distance: up to 20km/12.5mile or 2-3 hour hiking
meals: B,D

Day 7  Wakkanai finish
The tour finishes today after breakfast in Wakkanai.
Cycling distance – 0km
meals: B

This itinerary is subject to change with any change in Community regulations as well as Governmental changes and natural circumstances beyond our control.

cycling

Cycling is one of the best ways to see a country and our trips have been well researched to take you on the best route, using wherever possible quiet secondary roads. On the route you will see incredible scenery and landscapes, view the main sights, eat delicious food, stay at unique accommodation and meet the locals. Our trips follow the philosophy of “Cycling the Best and Driving the Rest”. The support vehicle enables riders of all fitness levels to enjoy the tours in Japan, covering up to 60-90km plus per day (37-56 miles). On some days we intentionally use the support vehicle or public transport to avoid busy sections for the sake of your safety.

Bike hire is included in the cost of your tour and full details of our bike fleet can be found on our website: <http://www.advsouth.co.nz/information.aspx?id=61>

All equipment and luggage will be carried by the support vehicle. Your bike will come with a front pannier bag for your camera, wallet, jumper etc. It is important to remember that these cycling journeys are not designed to be a marathon event. While these tours offer point to point riding, no one needs to feel under pressure to ride – everyone rides at their own pace. If at any time you do not wish to ride, the support vehicle is always available for you and your bike to be transported. Remember that cycling involves some physical exertion, and some pre trip preparation will help towards making your cycle tour an enjoyable experience. Cycling, of course, is an active pursuit and to maximise your own personal protection in case of a tumble or fall, the wearing of a bicycle helmet is compulsory at all times whilst cycling. We also highly recommend wearing bright/fluoro cycle clothing to increase your visibility on the road.
**country information**

Hokkaido is located in the northern part of the Japanese Archipelago, which extends north and south. It represents 22% of the nation’s total landmass. It is the largest prefecture in Japan, nearly 40 times the size of Tokyo and equivalent to the area of Austria (83,859 km²).

With almost equal areas of mountains and of plains, Hokkaido is less mountainous and hilly and has more flatlands compared with the rest of Japan.

Tourists are attracted from all over the country to Hokkaido’s rich variety of fresh fish and processed seafood. This delicious bounty includes crab (kani), scallops (hotate), sea urchins (uni), salmon roe (ikura), salmon (sake), herring (nishin), flounder (karei), cod (tara), squid (ika), octopus (tako), shrimp (ebi), abalone (awabi), surf clams (asari), kelp (konbu) and loads more!

Are you prepared to try these out?

There are 29 National Parks in Japan, 6 of which are in Hokkaido. These National Parks have been designated by the Ministry of Environment and account for approx 5.5% of the nation’s total land mass. Japanese National Parks are quite different from NZ national parks where the first priority is given to conservation. Whereas in Japan, the emphasis is often placed on the preservation of “scenic beauty” and provision of recreational opportunities. Because Japan is a small and densely populated country, the land comprising National Parks cannot be exclusively allocated as government-owned park land.

For this reason, National Parks of Japan often comprise of privately owned residential areas and industrial lands such as agriculture and forestry. Shiretoko National Park is a World Heritage Site registered by UNESCO only in July 2005, is considered to be the last pristine wilderness remaining in Japan.

**climate**

Japan has a remarkably diverse climate because of its wide range of latitudes and altitudes. Hokkaido has short dry summer and lengthy winter with heavy snowfall, whereas the southern islands, such as Okinawa, enjoy a subtropical climate. Most areas of Japan except Hokkaido experience a 3-4 weeks rainy season in June, and it becomes hot and humid July onwards.

The average temperature in summer months in Hokkaido is about 15-25°C, depending on where in Hokkaido you are, it gets as hot as 30°C during the day, it can also go just below 15°C on a cool night. The average annual rainfall in Hokkaido is approximately 1,100mm, which keeps the mountains filled with lush, green vegetation throughout the summer. If you are extending your trip to Kyoto please bear in mind that the summer weather is hot and humid, much more so than Hokkaido, and hydration becomes more essential when cycling. Occasionally weather conditions on the land may prevent us from completing a scheduled activity. The decision to alter the itinerary is made in the best interest of the group and it’s safety, and alternative plans are made.

**accommodation on the trip**

A wide range of accommodations has been chosen for this trip to give you an opportunity to experience different types of accommodation that are available in Japan. Our accommodations are equipped with private facilities, except for the rare occasion where their location and charm outweigh the privacy factor. Full details of the lodges are provided with the trip notes.

Accommodations in Japan generally supply towels and yukata in your room. Yukata is like a casual kimono that Japanese people put on after spa and are also acceptable to wear at dinner. This night wear lessens the need to bring multiple outfits as we dine at our accommodation on most nights. We also try to reserve Japanese style rooms as much as possible, and this means that you will be sleeping in futon on tatami floors on some nights.

Please note: although every endeavour is made to stay at the accommodation detailed in the
Itinerary, due to seasonal shortages occasionally, we need to use other accommodation of a similar standard.

Pre and post tour accommodation
If you would like some help booking pre/post tour accommodation speak to Ayaka (ayaka@advsouth.co.nz) as she can help with different suggestions.

What you carry
Your bike will be equipped with a water bottle and a small pannier bag. It will have enough space for your jumper, camera, wallet etc. Helmets can be supplied but are of limited supply so please ensure you request one at time of booking.

What’s not included
- Airfare
- 7 lunches and 1 evening meal
- Drinks with included meals
- Personal expenses
- Optional activities
- Gratuities, tipping is not expected but gratefully received. It is at your discretion whether or not to reward for excellent service

Private groups
The adventures featured in our brochures, and on our website, are just a starting point. Planning and providing special group departures is something we do exceptionally well. Over the past 20 years we have developed some exceptional itineraries, from cycling to hiking or combination multi-adventure trips. School groups, charities, work colleagues and cycling buddies have all been part of our experience. Our team can assist you with all aspects of your private group to ensure the trip is tailored just right for your group. Contact our team today.

Subscribe to our e-newsletter
To keep up to date with the new and exciting trip releases, special offers plus more please subscribe to our free e-newsletter at www.advsouth.com
Or why not view past travellers images and join in on the conversation at http://www.facebook.com/AdventureSouthNZ

Trip availability
If this trip seems right for you then we encourage you to call us now to check availability. A popular reason to travel with Adventure South is because of our small group sizes. These can fill quickly so it is important to check your availability well in advance. We always need to ensure other services, like train tickets or accommodations, are also available before we can confirm your place on our tours. To ensure we can assist you onto your Japanese adventure of a lifetime we ask that you check your trip availability with our team at your earliest convenience.

How to book
To book an Adventure South holiday, you can book directly online (http://www.advsouth.com/booking.aspx) or you will need to complete a booking form (found at the back of our brochure). You can also download a copy from www.advsouth.com. On completion, please fax or post the form to Adventure South, along with your non-refundable deposit. If you’re unsure what would be the best option for you call us NZ free phone 0800 00 11 66, AUS free phone 1800 10 70 60,
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USA free phone 1866 479 9827 anywhere else +64 3 942 1222 or email us on guide@advsouth.co.nz