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2025 SHIBATA CITY ORGANIC RICE PLANTING, NAGANO, NIIGATA Plus Tokyo Shopping

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**Plant your very own organic rice paddy in the heart of Niigata Prefecture!
Your organic Koshihikari Rice will be delivered to Honolulu in the fall!!**

11 Nights / 13 Days • 23 Meals (11 Breakfasts, 4 Lunches, 8 Dinners)
Escorted from Honolulu • Includes an English-Speaking Local Guide
May 12 – 24, 2025 • Tour Manager: Michael Lindo

VISIT: Tokyo, Nagano, Yudanaka, Niigata & Shibata City

OVERVIEW: Introducing Shibata City, Niigata — "The Rice Capital of Japan!" Celebrating organic Koshihikari Rice, Shibata wagyu beef, organic sake, and one of the best natural onsen hot springs in Japan! Join us on this one-of-a-kind tour to the "Rice Capital of Japan!"

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Book by 01/31/25 & **SAVE \$50[†]**

2025 Shibata City Organic Rice Planting, Nagano, Niigata



Day 1: Mon, May 12 – HONOLULU. Depart Honolulu via Japan Airlines flt #73 at 12:15 pm.

Day 2: Tue, May 13 – TOKYO. Arrive at the Haneda International Airport at 3:55 pm. After entry formalities, transfer by coach to your hotel. Enjoy a Welcome Dinner at the hotel. KEIO PLAZA HOTEL TOKYO (2 Nights) (D)

Day 3: Wed, May 14 – TOKYO. After a delicious breakfast buffet, depart the hotel for a full day of sightseeing and activities. Begin at **Asakusa**, the center of Tokyo's shitamachi (literally "low city") districts, where an atmosphere of the Tokyo of past decades survives. Asakusa's main attraction is **Sensoji**, a very popular Buddhist temple built in the 7th century. The temple is approached via the **Nakamise**, a shopping street that has been providing temple visitors with a variety of traditional local snacks and tourist souvenirs for centuries. Enjoy free time to shop and explore Sensoji on your own. You'll have time to enjoy lunch (on your own) here as well. After lunch, explore the all-new **TeamLab Borderless – Azabudai Hills**. "TeamLab Borderless is a world of artworks without boundaries, a museum without a map created by art collective TeamLab. Artworks move out of rooms, relate to other works, influence each other, and at times intermingle, without boundaries. Through this group of works, one continuous world without boundaries is created. Immerse your body in borderless art. Wander, explore with intention, discover, and create a world with others." Return to the hotel for an evening of leisure. Your Local Guide will have recommendations for shopping and dining opportunities near the hotel. (B)

Day 4: Thur, May 15 – TOKYO – NAGANO – YUDANAKA – After a delicious breakfast buffet, transfer to Tokyo station by coach. Transfer to Nagano by **Shinkansen Bullet Train** with **reserved seating** in the **Green Car**. Upon arrival in Nagano, take a tour of **Zenkoji Temple**, one of the most important and popular temples in Japan. It was founded in the 7th century and stores the first Buddhist statue ever to be brought into Japan when Buddhism was first introduced in the 6th century. The original statue is hidden while a copy of it is shown to the public every six years for a few weeks. The next opportunity to see the statue is in 2027. Similarly to Sensoji, Zenkoji is also approached via the **Nakamise**, a shopping street that has been providing temple visitors with a variety of traditional local snacks and tourist souvenirs for centuries. You'll have free time to shop and enjoy lunch (on your own) here. Transfer to the hotel. Soak in the soothing **onsen hot springs** and enjoy an authentic **Kaiseki Dinner**. The onsen facilities – which are divided for men and women – and allow you to enjoy the onsen hot springs whether indoors



or outdoors. The high-quality service and facilities are sure to become some of your fondest memories of your visit to Japan. ISSA NO KOMICHI "BIYU NO YADO" (2 Nights) (B, D)

Day 5: Fri, May 16 – YUDANAKA – NAGANO – YUDANAKA. After breakfast, depart the hotel for a full day of touring. Begin the day in **Obuse**, a small town in northern Nagano, renowned for Edo Period (1603–1867) woodblock painter, Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849). Best known for his ukiyo-e woodblock print *The Great Wave off Kanagawa*, Hokusai spent the later years of his life in Obuse after being invited there by Takai Kozan, a wealthy farmer and merchant. During his stay, Hokusai painted several masterpieces including *Dragon and Phoenix* for the ceiling of the Higashimachi Festival Float, *Masculine Waves and Feminine Waves* for the ceiling of the Kanmachi Festival Float, and *Phoenix* for the ceiling of the main hall at Gansho-in temple. Several of the town's highlights are related to the artist. Enjoy free time to explore the many craft shops and stores that litter this town. After lunch, visit **Oyaki Farm**, a new factory, café, and store by Irohado to showcase their oyaki. Irohado's popular oyaki are prepared one at a time by hand, the wheat and buckwheat flour dough stuffed with local farm and mountain vegetables, mushrooms, and other fillings. Oven baked rather than steamed, Irohado's oyaki have an addictively crisp crust. You can easily make a meal out of these tasty snacks. Return to the hotel for another **Kaiseki Dinner**. (B, L, D)

Day 6: Sat, May 17 – YUDANAKA – NIIGATA. After breakfast, depart the hotel for Niigata. Take a short break from the bus ride at **Yoneyama SA**, to stretch your legs, pick up a snack or two, or shop for local souvenirs. Once in Niigata, you'll have free time to get lunch (on your own) and shop at **AEON MALL Niigata Kameda Inter**. The Shirone Area of Niigata has a long and colorful history with kites. Take a tour of the **Shirone Kite Museum**, and see the numerous kites on display from Japan and from around the world. After learning about these kites, you'll have the chance to **make your own mini kite**. You don't even have to wait for the wind outside to pick up to test your creation as the museum is home to a wind tunnel – allowing you to fly it right away. What a great souvenir of this trip! Continue to the hotel in Niigata. Enjoy a little leisure time, before departing for dinner at a local restaurant. ANA CROWNE PLAZA HOTEL NIIGATA (2 Nights) (B, D)

Day 7: Sun, May 18 – NIIGATA. Rice is the heart of sake brewing, and Niigata Prefecture, renowned for its rice cultivation, is home to the largest number of sake breweries in Japan.

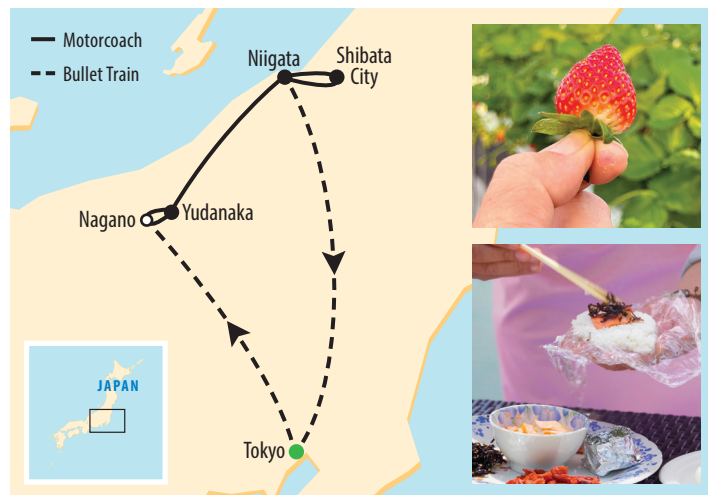
Plus Tokyo Shopping



Begin the day at **Imayo Tsukasa Sake Brewery**, a long-standing producer of sake that started brewing in the mid-Meiji Period (1868–1912). The sake crafted at Imayo Tsukasa boasts a dry yet robust flavor that harmonizes exquisitely with food. You can find some rare sakes, some that are only available in their sake shop. And for those that are not much of a drinker, sweet, creamy, non-alcoholic amazake is available as well. And for the “young at heart” try your luck at a special capsule toy “Gacha-gacha” machine here that allows everyone to win real sake or amazake based on the color of the coin that they receive from the machine. Next, explore **Minato Marche Pier Bandai**, a food market that offers a multiple of food options, including fish caught in Japan Sea, to vegetables and fruit directly delivered from farms, to Niigata-produced Koshihikari rice, to a variety of high-quality brand sake from across the prefecture, all kinds of Niigata’s specialties relating to food are here. Enjoy lunch (on your own) here. Then take a tour the **Northern Culture Museum**, which originally serving as a mansion of Ito Bunkichi, who lived in the Edo Period (1603–1868) and was one of the greatest landowners in Japan. Nowadays, the museum houses calligraphy and ceramics, lacquer ware, and documents related to Ito’s family history. Don’t forget to view the beautiful garden with its large pond. While there, **learn how to pound mochi**. It’s not as easy as it looks. Return to the hotel for dinner and an evening of leisure. (B, D)

Day 8: Mon, May 19 – NIIGATA – SHIBATA CITY. After breakfast, depart the hotel for Shibata City. En route, stop at **Suwa Taisha Shrine**, one of Japan’s oldest shrines, known for its unique festival that happens once every seven years – in which onbashira (sacred wooden pillars) are replaced and the trees selected are towed/ridden down the mountain before being erected with the shrine. Today’s lunch will be kamameshi, or “kettle rice,” a Japanese rice dish traditionally cooked in an iron pot called a kama. Many varieties exist, but most consist of rice seasoned with soy sauce or mirin, and cooked with meat and vegetables – and it is often considered a type of takikomi gohan (a mixed rice dish). After lunch, learn about rice storage at a **rice storage facility**, before arriving at the hotel in Shibata City. Relax before dinner. Don’t forget to try out the **2nd best onsen hot spring facilities in all of Japan**. You don’t want to miss out. SHIRATAMA NO YU KAHOU (3 Nights) (B, L, D)

Day 9: Tue, May 20 – SHIBATA CITY – RICE PLANTING. Today is the day! We join the Sase Family in **planting our very own organic Koshihikari Rice**. Enjoy **onigiri making and cooking local specialties** with local farmers. Businessman and founder of the Okura



Zaibatsu (Okura Financial Group), Kihachiro Okura, was born in Niigata as the son of the head of a big village in the Shibata Clan. He built a guest house in Tokyo which he named **Zoshunkaku**, which was later brought over to Shibata and reassembled. Dinner tonight will be held in this historic building. (B, L, D)

***10 pounds per Tour Member.**

Your organic Koshihikari Rice™ will be delivered to Honolulu in the fall!

Day 10: Wed, May 21 – SHIBATA CITY. Start the day **picking strawberries** at a local farm. Next, visit **Tonton Ichiba** for a chance to purchase local ingredients from the Shibata Area. After lunch, learn about sake at the **Aumont Sake Brewery**. Return to the hotel for some leisure time before dinner. Tonight is your last chance to **soak in the healing waters** of the **2nd best onsen facilities in all of Japan**. (B, L, D)

Day 11: Thur, May 22 – SHIBATA CITY – NIIGATA – TOKYO. After a delicious breakfast buffet, transfer to Niigata station by coach. Transfer to Tokyo by **Shinkansen Bullet Train** with **reserved seating** in the **Green Car**. Upon arrival in Tokyo, visit **Toyosu Senkyaku Banrai**, a shopping complex that recreates an Edo period neighborhood. Toyosu Senkyaku Banrai offers fresh food from the neighboring Toyosu Market and serves to showcase the best foods in Tokyo. Enjoy shopping here, exploring the offerings at the numerous stalls. If you get tired, head up to the 8th floor and relax at the foot bath garden – which is free of charge to all visitors. Enjoy an evening of leisure. Your Local Guide will have recommendations for shopping and dining opportunities near the hotel. KEIO PLAZA HOTEL TOKYO (2 Nights) (B)

Day 12: Fri, May 23 – TOKYO. Enjoy a full day at leisure. Enjoy shopping and dining in the bustling Shinjuku Area. Your Local Guide will be available to assist as needed. (B)

Day 13: Sat, May 24 – TOKYO – HONOLULU. The day is at your leisure until it is time to depart for the airport in the late afternoon. Transfer to the airport for the flight home. Depart Tokyo on Japan Airlines flt #74 at 9:05 pm and arrive in Honolulu at 9:35 am the same day. Aloha and welcome home! (B)

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TOUR HIGHLIGHTS: Asakusa Sensoji Temple, TeamLab Borderless – Azabudai Hills, Shinkansen Bullet Train Ride, Zenkoji Temple, Shirone Kite Museum, Northern Culture Museum, Suwa Taisha Shrine, Rice Storage Facility & Zoshunkaku

SHOPPING OPPORTUNITIES: Nakamise, Obuse Area, Oyaki Farm, Yoneyama SA, AEON MALL Niigata Kameda Inter, Imayo Tsukasa Sake Brewery, Minato Marche Pier Bandai, Tonton Ichiba, Aumont Sake Brewery & Toyosu Senkyaku Banrai

HANDS-ON EXPERIENCES: Mini Kite Making, Mochi Pounding, Rice Planting, Onigiri Making and Cooking Local Specialties with Farmers & Strawberry Picking

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS:



TOKYO — KEIO PLAZA HOTEL TOKYO (2 NIGHTS + 2 NIGHTS = 4 NIGHTS TOTAL): The Keio Plaza Hotel Tokyo is at the perfect location to explore the delights of the city of Tokyo. Just outside the Tochomae Station and only a five-minute walk from Shinjuku Station, the most popular shopping and entertainment spots, this luxury hotel provides stunning experiences which will linger with guests for a long time. Stay in a **Premier Grand Room** (located on the 35th to 41st floors), with stunning views of the city, where you will have **access to the Club Lounge** on the 45th floor.



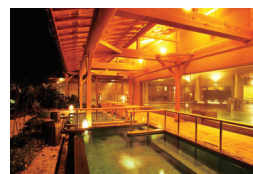
YUDANAKA — ISSA NO KOMICHI “BIYU NO YADO” (2 NIGHTS): Located within reach of the Japanese Alps, the famed Jigokudani Monkey Park, and the hot springs of Yudanaka Onsen, Biyu no Yado is an **authentic Japanese-style ryokan** and a great addition to your tailor-made tour of Japan. Two public baths make the most of the area’s fascinating volcanic geography, filled with **100% natural onsen hot spring mineral water**.



NIIGATA — ANA CROWNE PLAZA HOTEL NIIGATA (2 NIGHTS): Escape to the vibrant city of Niigata and experience a **luxurious stay** at ANA Crowne Plaza Niigata. Immerse yourself in the city’s rich culture, indulge in delicious seafood, and explore nearby landmarks like CoCoLo Niigata shopping center, Niigata Nippo Media Ship, and Pia Bandai Market. Conveniently **located just a 10-minute walk from the JR Niigata Station**.



SHIBATA CITY — SHIRATAMA NO YU KAHOU (3 NIGHTS): Relax in your **Japanese-style room** that includes a wide veranda. The hotel’s large public bath is equipped with an indoor cypress open-air bath, large rock bath, lying bath, and a sitting bath. The outdoor air bath and cooling space are equipped with infinity chairs. After getting out of the bath, you can enjoy the hotel’s special shrimp miso soup and various drinks in the spacious rest area, and at the back of the large bath, there is the dedicated beauty salon and scrubbing space. It’s no wonder the facilities are considered **the 2nd best onsen hot springs in ALL of Japan**.



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