



Off the Beaten Path: A Different Side of Japan

2026 SUMMER NORTHERN JAPAN ALPS

Featuring the Spectacular Snow Walls of Mt. Norikura
with Takayama, Sado Island & Niigata

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New and unique itinerary! Onsen hot springs experience with seasonal Kaiseki Dinners!

9 Nights / 11 Days • 23 Meals (9 Breakfasts, 6 Lunches, 8 Dinners)
Escorted from Honolulu • Includes an English Speaking Local Guide
Tour #1: June 07 – 17, 2026 • Tour Manager: Gwen Macion

OVERVIEW: Experience the spectacular snow walls of Mt. Norikura in the middle of summer.
Explore one of Japan's largest islands, Sado Island. It's culture can be seen in its unique traditional
arts and entertainment. From delightful onsen hot springs to specially prepared Kaiseki Dinners,
this tour has something for everyone! Join us!

VISIT: Omiya, Minakami, Matsumoto, Mt. Norikura, Takayama, Shirakawago, Toyama, Sado Island & Niigata

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS: Takumi no Sato, Firefly Viewing, Tanigawadake Ropeway, Tanigawadake Lift,
Kawaba Denen Plaza, Daio Wasabi Nojo, Miso Factory, Matsumoto Castle, Nawate Shopping Street,
Snow Walls of Mt. Norikura, Takayama Morning Market, Kami-Sannomachi Street, Takayama Jinya,
Shirakawago, Michi-no-Eki Marine Dome Noo, Minato Marche Pier Bandai, Jet Foil Ride to Sado Island,
Toki Forest Park, Kirarium Sado, Kitazawa Flotation Plant, Sado Gold Mine, Obata Sake Brewery,
Tarai-bune Boat Ride, Shukunegi, AEON MALL Niigata Minami, Niigata Furusato Village, Northern
Culture Museum & Shinkansen Bullet Train Ride

HANDS-ON EXPERIENCES: Soba Noodle Making Class, Ice Cream Making, Yukata Dress-Up,
Sake Tasting & Senbei (Rice Cracker) Making Class

UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE: Shirakawago

COMPLETE PACKAGES!

Includes Roundtrip Airfare From Honolulu,
9 Nights Hotel, 23 Meals, Tips for Local
Tour Guides and Motorcoach Drivers,
All Taxes & Fees

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ONI DAIKO — Demon Drums Performance!
KAISEKI DINNER — With Geiko (Geisha) Performance!

Day 1: Sun, June 07 — HONOLULU. Depart Honolulu via Japan Airlines flt #73 at 12:45 pm.

Day 2: Mon, June 08 — HANEDA — OMIYA. Arrive at the Haneda International Airport at 3:55 pm. After entry formalities, transfer by coach to your hotel in Omiya. The remainder of the evening is at your leisure. The hotel is conveniently located a five-minute walk from the JR Omiya Station, which is one of the largest stations in the Saitama Prefecture. There will be various choices for shopping and dining at the train station. PALACE HOTEL OMIYA (1 Night)

Day 3: Tue, June 09 — OMIYA — MINAKAMI. After a sumptuous breakfast buffet at the hotel, start the day with a **soba noodle making class** in the arts and craft village **Takumi no Sato**. After your soba noodle making class, you will have free time to explore more of Takumi no Sato on your own. Next, participate in an **ice cream making experience**. A great treat on a warm summer day! Continue on to Minakami. This evening enjoy a buffet dinner featuring seasonal vegetables and Minakami specialties at your hotel. After dinner, depart the hotel to **view fireflies**. Watch as these soft bodied beetles emit light in the darkening evening. Be sure to relax in the scenic **onsen hot spring baths** — which are divided for men and women — whether indoors or outdoors. The high-quality service and facilities are sure to become some of your fondest memories of your visit to Japan. GENSEN YU-NO-YADO MATSUNOI (1 Night) (B, L, D)

Day 4: Wed, June 10 — MINAKAMI — MATSUMOTO. Enjoy the view of Minakami from above when you take the **Tanigawadake Ropeway** and **Tanigawadake Lift**. Enjoy time for lunch (on your own) and shopping at **Kawaba Denen Plaza**. This roadside station sells many regional specialties and locally made food products. After lunch, transfer to the hotel in Matsumoto. Enjoy a Western dinner at the hotel tonight. MATSUMOTO HOTEL KAGETSU (2 Nights) (B, D)

Day 5: Thur, June 11 — MATSUMOTO. Start the day at **Daio Wasabi Nojo**, the country's largest wasabi farm. Next visit a **miso factory**, where you will learn about this Japanese cooking staple. Enjoy lunch while there. After lunch, visit **Matsumoto Castle**, one of Japan's premier historic castles. Also known as "Crow Castle" due to its black exterior, Matsumoto Castle is unique for having both a secondary donjon (fortified main tower) and a turret adjoined to its main keep. While there, you'll have the chance to **dress-up in a yukata**, unlined cotton summer kimono that are worn in casual settings. Before returning to the hotel for the evening, stop at **Nawate Shopping Street**, a frog-themed shopping street. The 200 meter long street is lined with around 50 shops that vary from antique dealers, "dagashi" candy stores and stylish bakeries, to designer boutiques. Return to the hotel for a **Kaiseki Dinner**. (B, L, D)

Day 6: Fri, June 12 — MATSUMOTO — MT. NORIKURA — TAKAYAMA. Travel to **Mt. Norikura**. At 3,026 meters in height, it's the third highest peak in the Northern Japan Alps. Feel dwarfed by the spectacular 10 meter tall **snow walls** near the top of Mt. Norikura. Although it's June, the temperature will still be cold enough to keep the walls frozen — make sure to bring some warm clothes if you plan on getting off the bus to take pictures. After a bento lunch at the Norikura Tourist Information Center, travel to Takayama. Located amongst the Japan Alps, it is known as "Little Kyoto" for its preserved historical structures. It was cut off from the rest of Japan for most of its history and thus has maintained a very unique and traditional atmosphere. Enjoy a Western dinner at the hotel. HIDA HOTEL PLAZA (1 Night) (B, L, D)

Day 7: Sat, June 13 — TAKAYAMA — SHIRAKAWAGO — TOYAMA. After breakfast, explore **Takayama's Morning Market**, where can you browse the market stalls for local crafts and fresh farm products. Then take a stroll around **Kami-Sannomachi Street** (old town), before visiting the **Takayama Jinya**, a former government outpost. After lunch, visit **Shirakawago**, a World UNESCO World Heritage Site, home to several dozen well preserved gassho-zukuri farmhouses — some of which are more than 250 years old. Depart Shirakawago for Toyama. Enjoy a buffet dinner at the hotel. ANA CROWNE PLAZA HOTEL TOYAMA (1 Night) (B, L, D)

*Baggage will be sent from Toyama to Niigata, skipping Sado Island. Prepare an overnight bag for two nights.

Day 8: Sun, June 14 — TOYAMA — NIIGATA — SADO ISLAND. After breakfast, depart Toyama. Stop at road side stand **Michi-no-Eki Marine Dome Noo**. Not only do they provide a clean and convenient rest stop, local farmers and fisherman sell their products at rock-bottom prices. Next, explore **Minato Marche Pier Bandai**, a food market that offers multiple food options, including fish caught in the Sea of Japan, vegetables and fruit directly delivered from farms, Niigata-produced Koshihikari rice, a variety of high-quality brand sake from across the prefecture, and all kinds of Niigata's specialties relating to food are here. Enjoy lunch (on your own) here. Transfer to Niigata Port. Ride a **jet foil** to **Sado Island**. Upon arrival in Sado, take a tour of the **Toki Forest Park**, a conservation park of crested ibis that allows visitors to see the endangered species close-up. Transfer to the hotel for a special dinner accompanied by an authentic **Oni Daiko (Demon Drums) Performance**. Don't forget to try out the **onsens** before or after dinner. HOTEL YAHATAKAN (2 Nights) (B, D)

Day 9: Mon, June 15 — SADO ISLAND. Begin the day at **Kirarium Sado**, the Sado Gold Mine Welcome Center, where you will learn everything you need to know about the gold mine. Take a drive by the **Kitazawa Flotation Plant**, before transferring to the **Sado Gold Mine**, to learn about the 400+ year history of the largest gold mine



in Japan. Full-size dolls and robots provide accurate representation of the historic workings of the mine in the Edo period. In the museum, you can try to lift a pure gold bar, with a value of over 100 million yen, out of a clear box. Many have tried, but few have succeeded. After lunch, visit the **Obata Sake Brewery**, the brewer of the *Manoturu* brand sake. Established in 1892, this brewery has won the gold prize a total of ten times at the nation's most respected National New Sake Awards. It was also honored three times with a prestigious gold medal in the sake category at the world's largest wine competition held in London, the International Wine Challenge (in 2004, 2007, and 2015). This is your chance to **sample their products** and purchase some of these prize winning sakes for your own collection. Next, take a traditional **"tarai-bune" boat ride**. The tarai-bune tub boats floating along the Ogi coastline are considered the symbol of Ogi. These boats are constructed out of cedar wrapped with bamboo on the outside, with a diameter of about 150 centimeters. Developed and used during the Edo and Meiji periods, the tarai-bune tub boats, mainly operated by women, were ideal for tight turns and stability amidst the abundant reefs and coves along the Ogi Peninsula. These boats were originally used for collecting shellfish and seaweed from around the coast. Then visit the charming fishing village of **Shukunegi**. The entire village is designated as a National Historic Site. Take a stroll along the narrow streets of Shukunegi Village to feel the history and experience the living conditions of people living during the Edo period. As this area was previously a trading port for ships going to Edo (Tokyo) and Osaka, many who lived here were ship carpenters and sailors. Here, you will be able to find the popular sankaku-ya, which is a triangle-shaped house built to fit the shape of the land available at that period of time. Enjoy a Western dinner at a local restaurant before returning to the hotel. (B, L, D)

Day 10: Tue, June 16 — SADO ISLAND — NIIGATA. After breakfast, transfer to Ryotsu Port and take the **jet foil back to Niigata**. Enjoy free time at **AEON MALL Niigata Minami** for shopping and lunch (on your own). After lunch, you'll **learn how to make senbei (rice cracker)** at Senbei Okoku. You're in for treat this evening!! Along with a **Kaiseki Dinner**, we are entertained by an authentic **Geiko**. Dancing, singing, and playing fun games. HOTEL NIKKO NIIGATA (1 Night) (B, D)

Day 11: Wed, June 17 — NIIGATA — HANEDA — HONOLULU. Take a tour of the **Niigata Furusato Village**, where there are shops selling Niigata specialties, restaurants serving local cuisine, a Niigata sightseeing information area, and a corner providing Niigata historical and cultural information to visitors. Then take a tour of the **Northern Culture Museum**, which originally served as the 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. A special hagama (rice cooked in a traditional cast iron pot) lunch has been arranged for you to enjoy here. After lunch, transfer to Niigata Station. Take a **Shinkansen Bullet Train** to Tokyo. Transfer to the airport for the flight home. Depart Haneda International Airport via Japan Airlines flt #72 at 9:55 pm and arrive in Honolulu at 10:35 am on the same day. Aloha and welcome home! (B, L)

UNESCO World Heritage Site: Shirakawago (1995).

* Fares are per person, USD based on double occupancy and include all airline taxes and fees. Airline fuel supplements, taxes and fees are subject to change and tour member is responsible for any increases. Some airline-imposed personal charges, including but not limited to baggage, priority boarding and special seating, may apply. For details visit www.tripadvisor.com/AirlineFees. After initial deposit, a \$75 per person Non-Stop Travel (NST) Cancellation Fee will apply. Group departures may be cancelled, if there are less than 24 tour members. Final payment to NST for "non-cruise/line" Air and Land Package must be made by money order or personal check. NST does not guarantee that all tour members will fly together with Tour Manager. Tour Manager assignments, number of meals offered on tour, tour price, discount, and the "final" cruise or tour itinerary are subject to change with/without notice. NST reserves the right to correct errors or omissions including but not limited to, fares, fees, and surcharges at any time. Deposit: \$500 per person. Final Payment Due: 01/28/26. NST at its discretion, may use group and individual photos on its website, print, television, and various social media. † Early booking discount is per person. Purchase of NST's complete Air and Land Package is required. †† Earn rewards every time you refer a friend. For each "new-to-NST" customer you refer, both you and your referral can receive a \$25 discount off your next NST escorted group. **Special Assistance:** You must notify NST, at time of reservation, of any disability requiring special attention. NST reserves the right to cancel your booking or terminate your vacation if your special needs or disabilities are not suitable for the vacation or if you are not travelling with a companion who will provide all the assistance you require. **Wheelchair and electric scooter access outside of the USA is severely restricted.**

