Akan National Park – feel the power of Mother Nature

Akan National Park is located in the central part of eastern Hokkaido and comprises the three calderas of Akan, Kusharo and Mashu, as well as volcanoes, forests and lakes as far as the eye can see! The Akan area boasts Lake Mashu, which is said to be the clearest lake in Japan and the second clearest in the world behind Lake Baikal. Also not to be missed is the view of Lake Kussharo from the nearby mountain pass – a sight to behold whatever the season. The hot springs of Kawayu Onsen close by are popular for the health-benefiting properties of the water, which has a high sulfur content.

Walk Talk

Lake Mashu
The landscape reflecting on the deep-blue mirror-like surface of the lake gives the impression of the existence of another world. Colors changing in the light. Mt. Mashu appearing through the mist; ice trapper everything in winter. Lake Mashu transforms as the seasons unfold.

Lake Kussharo
One of the world’s great caldera lakes surrounded by forests. Open-air baths punctuate the lakeshore – particularly at Sunayua, a popular spot among tourists who dig holes in the sand and bathe in the water that springs forth. Pleasure cruise boats, rest houses and a campsite ensure the lake is a popular aqua leisure spot. The Akan area is famous for the beautiful scenery of the Akan and majestic peaks of Mt. Oakan (pronounced Oh-akan) and Mt. Meakan (Meyakan) and the beautiful lakes Akan and Lake Kussharo.

Kawayu Onsen
A spa town fed by the waters that spring from the sulfur mountain of Mt. Io. Indeed, a hot-water stream flows alongside the shore reflect in the light, creating a beautiful scenery of the Akan and majestic peaks of Mt. Oakan – a sight to behold whatever the season.

Kussharo
Boasting 100 mines and a population of 4,962 people, the lake is a popular aqua leisure spot. Boats, rest houses and a campsite ensure the surroundings evolve from fresh green leaves, to vivid autumn birdsong, where the spa-town inns and souvenir shops that offer a variety of products are popular for the health-benefiting properties of the water. Kawayu Onsen Station is on the JR Sapporo Line.

Kushiro
Kushiro is famous for the lake that is a popular aqua leisure spot. Boats, rest houses and a campsite ensure the surroundings evolve from fresh green leaves, to vivid autumn birdsong, where the spa-town inns and souvenir shops that offer a variety of products are popular for the health-benefiting properties of the water. Kawayu Onsen Station is on the JR Sapporo Line.

Sorachi’s coalmining heritage
Sorachi was once Japan’s largest coal-producing region, and at its peak boasted 100 mines and a population of over 83,000. The “black diamond” produced there formed the foundations for Japan’s contemporary culture, but subsequent changes in the nation’s energy policies led to rationalization, and the majority of Sorachi’s coalmines have since disappeared. Various mining-related facilities remain in the region, from those connected with the production of coal, to ones related to the lifestyles of the miners themselves – a veritable open-air museum. Like the Hokkai Bon Dance that originated in the city of Mikasa, countless lifestyle cultures from the mining community remain even today in Sorachi.

Sapporo Factory and its environs
Two or three blocks east of Sapporo’s TV Tower stands Sapporo Factory, a shopping and leisure complex built on the historic site where the first-ever beer was brewed in Japan. Indeed, the majestic brick buildings and chimney that once formed part of the brewery still remain, and parts of the machinery used in the brewing process have been ingeniously incorporated into the fixtures and fittings of the modern glass atrium that forms the center piece of the complex.

Lion King
After a day at Sapporo Factory, why not treat the family to a night out at the theater? The Theatre de Printemps – located conveniently between Odori Park and Sapporo Factory, a couple of hundred meters from the Frontier Kan – is the current home of the Shiki Theater Company and venue of the dynamic Disney musical, Lion King. This relatively small theater enables the audience to not only see and hear the spectacular show, but to almost feel it and be part of the experience – something not to be missed. Matinee and evening performances are held depending on the days. For ticket details and other information, visit the website below.

Renga Kan
As well as furniture stores and boutiques selling interior goods and accessories, 3-jo Kan also houses service-related facilities such as a post office, a bank, beauty and massage salons and more.

Frontier Kan
Featuring a supermarket and drugstore for quality food and everyday items, as well as shops selling distinctive imported lifestyle goods and exotic snacks and alcoholic beverages ideal for the party season. Linked directly to one of the many parking lots at Sapporo Factory, the Frontier Kan provides easy access to the Atrium and other facilities.

1-jo Kan
A large toy store, pet store, game center and cinema complex showing the latest movies ensure 1-jo Kan is popular among the younger generations – a great place to relax while mum and dad do the Christmas shopping!

2-jo Kan
Atrium Dine “al fresco” as the sunlight sparkles on the water that flows amid the perfectly groomed lawns and flowerbeds... in December! This enormous glass-roofed Atrium houses numerous “street cafes” and bars serving delicious meals, snacks and sweets in an atmosphere reminiscent of the Riviera, despite the freezing temperatures outside. Various events are held on the stage in the spacious courtyard, and from early November the lights and decorations of the huge Christmas tree add to the romantic mood after dark.

2-jo Kan
A must for sports and outdoor activity enthusiasts, with the largest selection of popular top-quality brand stores anywhere in Hokkaido, not to mention fashion boutiques, shoe stores and much, much more.

3-jo Kan
As well as furniture stores and boutiques selling interior goods and accessories, 3-jo Kan also houses service-related facilities such as a post office, a bank, beauty and massage salons and more.

Renga Kan
This beautiful, historical brick-built structure houses a variety of smaller shops perfect for browsing for souvenirs or gifts – local brand confectionery, seafood products, crafts and other mementos of your time in Hokkaido. Renga Kan also houses a beer hall and a microbrewery that reproduces the taste of the original Meiji-period brew.