



Anytime, Ainu time!

An adventure around Lake Akan together with the Ainu



The Ainu are an indigenous people of Japan.

Discover the unique culture of the Ainu

living in the shores of Lake Akan.



阿寒湖
Lake Akan



In the hustle and bustle of daily life,
There are some things you may have forgotten.

Taking the time to listen to the forest,
And taking the time to appreciate
All the living beings in this earth.

The Ainu way of life gently reminds us
Of the importance of these simple things.

So come and meet the Ainu people
And experience their rich culture.
It will surely enrich your own life.

Experience an extraordinary time with

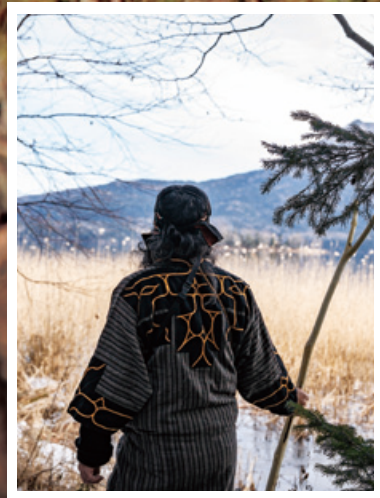
Anytime, Ainutime!

Concept Anytime, Ainutime! Cultural Guides

The Ainu believe that life is possible through the blessings we receive from everything that surrounds us, including the forests, rivers, and lakes, as well as family and friends. That is why they always respect nature, value their possessions, and interact with others with a caring heart.

Anytime, Ainutime! offers tour programs led by Ainu guides who share their culture on three different aspects: the forest, the lake, and craft-making. You can experience Ainu culture firsthand through traditional Ainu crafts or their way of life in the nature of Lake Akan.

By learning the Ainu way of life, you may find yourself suddenly wanting to thank someone in your life, or sharing more heartwarming moments with them. Through these tour programs, it is our hope that you will discover something that will enrich your life. We also sincerely hope that these life lessons from the Ainu will serve a purpose in your life, even after you return to your daily grind.



The Ainu People

Prior to the modern history of Japan, Hokkaido was mainly inhabited by an indigenous people distinct from the "Wajin" people of the mainland. These indigenous people called themselves the Ainu. In the Ainu language, the word "Ainu" means "human".

The Ainu lived a lifestyle that made full use of the blessings of nature through hunting and fishing. They had no written language, and they passed down their history and cultural heritage orally, but they have developed a unique spiritual culture and a rich tradition that includes epics, songs, and dances.



The Ainu Spirit

The Ainu believe that everything in nature is inhabited by a divine spirit called "kamuy". This includes animals, plants, fire, and water, and even objects essential to their daily lives, such as the tools they use. It also includes phenomena humans cannot control such as the weather. They revere these things as manifestations of kamuy who have come to the human world. They believe that interactions between humans and kamuy are the basis of this world, which is why they value coexistence and harmony with nature above all else.

A deep respect and appreciation for the nature that we humans live in. It is something we all can learn from the spiritual culture of the Ainu.



Ainu words used during the tours

「Irankarapte」

A word that literally means "Allow me to touch your heart gently". It is commonly used as a greeting equivalent to "hello".

「Kuwa」

A staff or walking stick used by Ainu men when they go into the forest. They use it to provide stability while walking, or use the Y-shaped end to hang objects and pick fruits and nuts from trees.

「Onkami」

A word meaning "to worship". It is also a form of ritual greeting performed to show appreciation and share one's heart to the spirits of nature.

「Kamuy-nomi」

A word meaning "pray to the gods". It is a ritual performed to communicate with the kamuy (gods) to show respect and gratitude or ask favors.

「Huci, Ekasi」

Huci is a term of respect for one's grandmother or a female elder, while Ekasi is a term of respect for one's grandfather, a male elder, or a male ancestor.

「Mukkuri」

A traditional Ainu mouth harp made from bamboo. It is played to express the sounds of nature, and is usually played solo or as an accompaniment to traditional dances.

「Iyayraykere」

An Ainu word meaning "thank you".

「Suy unukaran ro」

An Ainu word meaning "good bye".

「Tonkori」

A traditional Ainu stringed instrument. Its shape is said to represent the female body, and it contains a glass bead that represents the soul. It is commonly used in performances onboard Lake Akan sightseeing boats and in the Iomante Fire Ritual performance in the Lake Akan Ainu Theater Ikor.

Lake Akan is one of the famous caldera lakes in Eastern Hokkaido surrounded by forests and volcanic mountains. The lake, forests, and mountains create a unique environment with majestic scenery. In "Lake Time", you will experience carving a traditional Ainu musical instrument called "mukkuri", then take a walk inside the "iwor" (living territory) forest along the shore of Lake Akan, ending up at a clearing with a stunning view of the lake and Mt. Oakan. Here you can take a short rest and play the mukkuri while listening to the stories of the Ainu guide.

The mountains and lakes are
living beings inhabited by kamuy.
Explore the symbolic lake and mountain
And learn about the unique Ainu legends
surrounding them.

Scan here for
details and
reservations



Fee
adult/child ¥10,000 per person (tax incl.)

Available period	June to March
Start time	10:00 ~
Duration	2 hours 30 minutes
Participants	Minimum 2, maximum 10
Age limit	7 years old and up
Included in fee	Guide fee, activity fee, mukkuri making kit, tax (plus snowshoe rental in case of snow)
Things to bring	Comfortable clothes and shoes, rain gear (or cold weather gear in winter)
Schedule	① Meetup at Lake Akan Ainu Theater Ikor ② Mukkuri making ③ Kamuy-nomi (prayer) experience ④ Guided walk in the iwor forest (long course) ※Snowshoe trek in case of accumulated snow ⑤ Mukkuri performance ⑥ Picture-taking with Ainu traditional clothes ⑦ Finish at Lake Akan Ainu Theater Ikor

◇ tour 2



※All photos are for illustration purposes only. Tour content and schedule may change without prior notice. Please check the website for the latest information.

The forest is a source of life.
From hunting wild animals
To gathering plants for food
The Ainu have lived in harmony with the forest.



◇ tour 1

Forest Time

Forest Walk Short Course

For the Ainu in Lake Akan, the forest was a place essential to their lives. It was a source of their food, their clothing, and their tools. They lived in harmony with the forest, always showing their appreciation to the many kamuy inhabiting it. In "Forest Time", you will take a walk inside the "iwor" (living territory) forest on the shore of Lake Akan together with an Ainu guide. You will also get to try playing a traditional Ainu musical instrument called "mukkuri".

Fee
adult/child ¥7,000 per person (tax incl.)

Available period	June to March
Start time	13:30 ~
Duration	1 hour 30 minutes
Participants	Minimum 2, maximum 10
Age limit	7 years old and up
Included in fee	Guide fee, activity fee, mukkuri, tax (plus snowshoe rental in case of snow)
Things to bring	Comfortable clothes and shoes, rain gear (or cold weather gear in winter)
Schedule	① Meetup at Lake Akan Ainu Theater Ikor ② Kamuy-nomi (prayer) experience ③ Guided walk in the iwor forest (short course) ※Snowshoe trek in case of accumulated snow ④ Mukkuri performance in the forest ⑤ Picture-taking with Ainu traditional clothes ⑥ Finish at Lake Akan Ainu Theater Ikor

Scan here for
details and
reservations





Using the blessings provided by the kamuy,
They carefully create their traditional crafts
With a prayer to protect their loved ones.

◇ tour 3

Craft Time

Embroidery making
Wood carving

Ainu patterns are a beautiful and important part of Ainu culture. These patterns are based on forms found in nature, and are used to decorate their clothing, tools, and other items. In "Craft Time", you will learn about Ainu patterns through embroidery making or wood carving. You can experience making your very own traditional Ainu handicrafts while learning about the beliefs and ideas behind their creation.

◇tour 3A Embroidery making

Fee
adult/child ¥6,000 per person (tax incl.)

◇tour 3B Wood carving

Fee
adult/child ¥5,000 per person (tax incl.)

Scan here for details
and reservations



Embroidery



Wood
carving



Available period	All year round
Start time	Embroidery making : ①11:00 ~ ②13:30 ~ Wood carving : ①11:00 ~ ②13:30 ~
Duration	1 hour (for either activity)
Participants	Minimum 2, maximum 10
Age limit	Embroidery making : 7 years old and up Wood carving : 10 years old and up
Included in fee	Guide fee, activity fee, craft making kit, tax
Schedule	① Meetup at Lake Akan Ainu Theater Ikor ② Embroidery making or wood carving experience ③ Finish at Lake Akan Ainu Theater Ikor



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◇ Option Food Time

Fee
adult/child ¥3,500 per person (tax incl.)

※Food Time cannot be
reserved by itself.



※Menu may change depending on the season.

The Ainu people lived a hunter-gatherer lifestyle, obtaining their food from the nature around them, including the forests, rivers, and lakes. In Food Time, you will visit the Traditional Ainu Food Cafe Poronno to enjoy Ainu cuisine made from the blessings of nature. This program can be included as an option to the tours offered on this site (Forest Time, Lake Time, Craft Time – Embroidery Making and Craft Time – Wood Carving) so you can get a deeper experience of the Ainu way of life. Ainu food is seasoned simply so you can taste the natural flavor of the ingredients.

Menu

- Amam (rice cooked with beans or millet)
- Choice of Yuk ohaw (soup with deer meat) or Cep ohaw (soup with salmon)
- Kapacep ruype (frozen himemasu salmon sashimi)
- Mehun (salted and fermented salmon kidney)
- Rataskep (mashed pumpkin)
- Konpu sito (dumplings with kombu kelp sauce)
- Ainu tea

◇ tour

Premium Half-Day Plan

Fee
adult/child ¥14,600 per person (tax incl.)

The "Experience Ainu Culture together with Ainu Guides!" Premium Half-Day Plan is a tour program that combines the contents of "Forest Time", "Craft Time (Wood Carving)", and "Food Time", plus an additional Kamuy-nomi (Ainu prayer ritual) experience around a hearth inside a traditional Ainu house called "cise". You can get a deeper understanding of the culture of the Ainu by experiencing it from various angles, including nature, handicrafts, food, and rituals.

Available period	June to March	Duration	4 hours
Start time	10:20 ~	Participants	Minimum 2, maximum 15
Age limit	7 years old and up		
Included in fee	Guide fee, activity fee, lunch, tax, snowshoe rental (in case of snow)		
Things to bring	Comfortable clothes and shoes, rain gear (or cold weather gear in winter)		
Schedule	① Meetup at Lake Akan Ainu Theater Ikor ② Guided walk in the iwor forest ③ Lunch of Ainu cuisine ④ Kamuy-nomi (prayer) experience in a cise ⑤ Mikkuri performance ⑥ Finish at Lake Akan Ainu Theater Ikor		

Scan here for inquiries
and reservations for
the Premium
Half-Day Plan



※ Please use the QR code above for reservations
for the Premium Half-Day Plan.



Access



Access from Hokkaido

Airplane

New Chitose Airport	ANA	→	Kushiro Airport	→	Lake Akan
	About 45 minutes				
Okadama Airport	JAL	→	Kushiro Airport	→	Lake Akan
	About 45 minutes				

JR Train

Sapporo Sta.	Limited Express Ozora	→	Kushiro Sta.	→	Lake Akan
	About 4 hours				
Obihiro Sta.	Limited Express Ozora	→	Kushiro Sta.	→	Lake Akan
	About 2 hours				
Abashiri Sta.	JR Senmo Main Line	→	Kushiro Sta.	→	Lake Akan
	About 3 hours 30 minutes				
Kitami Sta. (via Abashiri Sta.)	JR Sekihoku Main Line/JR Senmo Main Line	→	Kushiro Sta.	→	Lake Akan
	About 4 hours 30 minutes				

Car

Sapporo	via Doto Expressway	→	Kushiro	via National Route 240	→	Lake Akan
	About 4 hours 14 minutes (299 km)			About 1 hour 30 minutes (70.1 km)		
Asahikawa	via National Route 39	→	Hakodate	via Hokkaido Expressway/Doto Expressway	→	Lake Akan
	About 4 hours 10 minutes (221 km)			About 7 hours 6 minutes (538 km)		
Obihiro	via Doto Expressway	→	Kitami	via Hokkaido Route 27/National Route 240	→	Lake Akan
	About 2 hours (120 km)			About 1 hour 25 minutes (68.8 km)		
			Abashiri	via National Route 240	→	Lake Akan
				About 1 hour 44 minutes (88.8 km)		

Access from Japan

Narita Airport	Peach	→	Kushiro Airport	→	Lake Akan
	About 2 hours				
Haneda Airport	JAL·ANA·AIRDO	→	Kushiro Airport	→	Lake Akan
	About 1 hour 45 minutes				
Kansai International Airport	Peach	→	Kushiro Airport	→	Lake Akan
	About 2 hours 30 minutes				
Itami Airport	ANA (seasonal)	→	Kushiro Airport	→	Lake Akan
	About 1 hour 55 minutes				
Chubu Centrair International Airport	JAL (seasonal)	→	Kushiro Airport	→	Lake Akan
	About 1 hour 55 minutes				

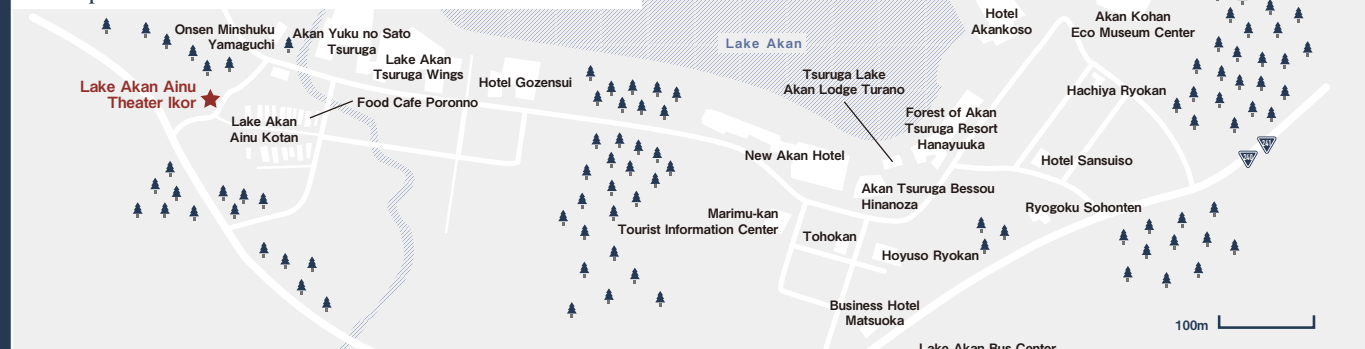
Kushiro Airport to Lake Akan

Akan Bus	About 1 hour 5~20 minutes
Car	About 1 hour (59.4 km)
Taxi	About 1 hour (59.4 km)

Kushiro Sta. to Lake Akan

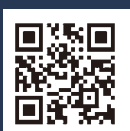
	About 2 hours
	About 1 hour 30 minutes (70.1 km)
	About 1 hour 30 minutes (70.1 km)

Meetup location for all tours: Lake Akan Ainu Theater Ikor



Visit the website for tour details and reservations
(except for Premium Half-Day Plan)
<https://anytimeainutime.jp>

Akan Ainu Industrial Arts Association
Akan-cho Akanko Onsen 4-chome 7-84, Kushiro-shi, Hokkaido
TEL:0154-67-2727 FAX:0154-67-2657



※ Reservations for the Premium Half-Day Plan are available on a different site.
See previous page for details.

Related Information

Check out the websites below for more information about Ainu culture that can help enhance your experience with Anytime, Ainutime!.

Akan Yukar
LOST KAMUY



KAMUY
LUMINA

