



# 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.



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

#### 「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.

#### 「Irankarapte」

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

#### 「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.

#### 「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.

#### 「Iyayraykere」

An Ainu word meaning "thank you".

#### 「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.

#### 「Suy unukaran ro」

An Ainu word meaning "good bye".

#### 「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.

#### 「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         | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① Meetup at Lake Akan Ainu Theater Ikor</li> <li>② Mukkuri making</li> <li>③ Kamuy-nomi (prayer) experience</li> <li>④ Guided walk in the iwor forest (long course)<br/>※Snowshoe trek in case of accumulated snow</li> <li>⑤ Mukkuri performance</li> <li>⑥ Picture-taking with Ainu traditional clothes</li> <li>⑦ Finish at Lake Akan Ainu Theater Ikor</li> </ol> |



※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         | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>① Meetup at Lake Akan Ainu Theater Ikor</li> <li>② Kamuy-nomi (prayer) experience</li> <li>③ Guided walk in the iwor forest (short course)<br/>※Snowshoe trek in case of accumulated snow</li> <li>④ Mukkuri performance in the forest</li> <li>⑤ Picture-taking with Ainu traditional clothes</li> <li>⑥ Finish at Lake Akan Ainu Theater Ikor</li> </ol> |



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 ~<br>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<br>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<br>② Embroidery making or wood carving experience<br>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<br>② Guided walk in the iwor forest<br>③ Lunch of Ainu cuisine<br>④ Kamuy-nomi (prayer) experience in a cise<br>⑤ Mukkuri performance<br>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



- Airport
  - Railway
  - Expressway
  - Shinkansen
- ※As of December 2020

## Access from Japan

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

## JR Train

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

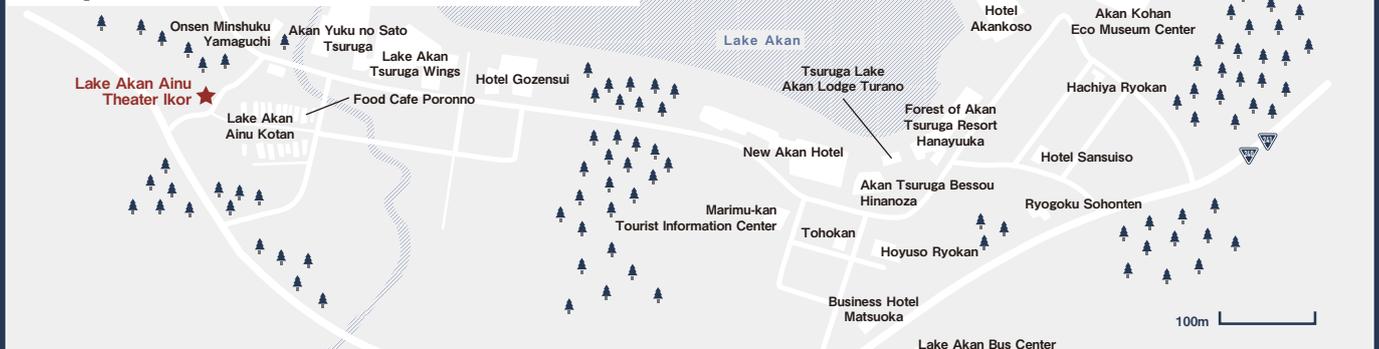
## Kushiro Sta. to Lake Akan

|          |                                   |
|----------|-----------------------------------|
| Akan Bus | About 2 hours                     |
| Car      | About 1 hour 30 minutes (70.1 km) |
| Taxi     | About 1 hour 30 minutes (70.1 km) |

## Car

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



## Related Information

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

Akan Yukar  
**LOST KAMUY**

**KAMUY LUMINA**

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