

TOURIST MAP OF TESHIKAGA HOKKAIDO, JAPAN

DISCOVER TRUE BLUE

Lake Mashu - A mystery waiting to be discovered. A brilliant blue lake with crystal clear waters surrounded by towering cliffs, creating an atmosphere of peaceful calm. Lake Mashu's striking color - called Mashu Blue - at times appears indigo, navy blue, ultramarine, and lapis lazuli, among other delicate colors like sky blue or ocean blue.

真実の青を探しに



Tokyo

Teshikaga

One day
is not
enough!



DISCOVER THE UNSEEN

Mt. Mashu - Called "Kamui-nupuri" by the Ainu people, meaning "Mountain of the God." Discover untouched wilderness and delicate natural beauty along its winding trails. Beyond the caldera you will find a spectacular view of Lake Mashu's pristine waters - preserved for 3,000 years - and understand how the mountain got its name.

Photo by Tomoki Kagoshima



JOURNEY TO THE STARS

Mt. Io - Known as "Atosa-nupuri" in the Ainu language, meaning "Naked Mountain," Mt. Io has over 1,500 fumaroles that continue to rumble and vent white steam. In this peculiar place a vast and radiant field of stars becomes visible at night, the same stars under which sulfur was mined as raw material for fuel in the distant past.

Planet Earth - Photo by Tomokazu Sato



UNCOVER THE MYSTERY

The source of the hot spring in Kawayu Onsen is said to be the underground waters of Lake Mashu, which are heated when they pass under Mt. Io and then rise to the surface. The Tsutsujigahara Nature Trail, which runs from Kawayu Onsen to the base of Mt. Io, features a bounty of vibrant and ever-changing tree life.

Photo by Shinobu Katase

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efore coming to Teshikaga, you may have imagined Japan as an unending, fast-paced, urban sprawl.

It will surprise you to find a place with the rolling green hills and quiet charm of the English countryside hidden away in the northern reaches of the industrial giant.



Beyond the lush hills lie the mountains encircling the mysterious, clear face of Lake Mashu and the still waters of Lake Kussharo. Resting on the western bank of Kussharo is a refuge for the culture of the Ainu, the people who have lived here for hundreds of years; providing an opportunity to learn about a heritage on the brink of extinction. Mount Io - Atosa-nupuri in Ainu language, smolders

in the distance, conspicuously bare among the trail-cut wilderness. It lends its heat to the hot springs of Kawayu, famous throughout Japan for their potent acidity. And when you grow tired of roughing it, you can enjoy an authentic Japanese meal made from the freshest ingredients in the country, and then spend your evening in the comfort of a traditional Japanese ryokan (inn).



Words can express the stunning diversity of Teshikaga's landscapes, the quality of its local delicacies, or the kindness of its people, but these are all things, perhaps, that you cannot truly understand until you experience them yourself.

AND MAKE NEW FRIENDS

Lake Kussharo - The largest caldera lake in Japan, Kussharo becomes a paradise of Whooper swans every winter. After their long journey from Siberia, they rest their wings in the hot spring water which gushes out from the bottom of the lake. By turns friendly and aloof, these elegant creatures exude an air of grace and pride.

Photo by Tomoki Kagoshima

● Emergency Call

Police : 110

Fire station or ambulance : 119

● AMDA International Medical Information Center

www.amdamedicalcenter.com/activities

TEL:03-6233-9266 (Mon - Fri 10 a.m.-4 p.m.)

● Safety Tips

www.jnto.go.jp/safety-tips/eng/

● JNTO Tourist Information Center (English, Chinese, Korean)

TEL:03-3201-3331 (Daily 9 a.m.-5 p.m.)

● Teshikaga Town Office

TEL:015-482-2191

● Mashu Kosei Hospital (Emergencies)

TEL:015-482-2241

● Teshikaga Police Station

TEL:015-482-2110

● Kawayu Police Substation

TEL:015-483-2151

FIND OUT MORE

"Teshikaga-navi" www.masyuko.or.jp/en/

Teshikaga-navi provides extensive information about where you can go, what you can do and where you can stay in Teshikaga.

"Untouched HOKKAIDO" <https://untouchedhokkaido.jp/en/>

Find information about the surrounding area.

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Introduction & History

Discover True Blue

Teshikaga is located in a basin referred to as a “caldera” meaning “pot” or “cauldron” in Spanish left over from ancient volcanic activity. Gentle, sloping mountains line Teshikaga from the east, up around the north, and all the way around to the west. These mountains act as a sort of folding screen, separating Teshikaga from the surrounding lands and giving the town a unique character of its own. Rice, the main food of the Japanese people, cannot be grown in this cold climate. The cherry blossoms beloved by the Japanese people bloom nearly 2 months later here than in Tokyo, and the locals of this region are among the last to see the pink flowers every year.

Why were the first settlers charmed by this untamable land? It is hard for us to answer that question now. But isn't it romantic to imagine that people were first drawn here by a cool, clean blueness?

The ethereal Lake Mashu boasts having being the clearest lake in the world at one time. The blue waters lacking of any impurity still remain to this day. Since the lake itself cannot be accessed except for the purpose of periodic inspections, only the wind is allowed to touch the surface of the water.

Teshikaga possesses yet another body of water: Lake Kussharo. Looking down from the elevated northern side of town, a willowy figure appears like an outstretched goddess wrapped in blue clothing.

The sky is an unobstructed, sorrowful blue. Perhaps it is because of the crystal clear air that the blue pierces even the whiteness of snow.

Teshikaga encompasses more than 50% of Japan's famous Akan-Mashu National Park. The unique climate and natural features allow for flowers that otherwise could not survive to bloom, and the aftereffects of volcanic quickening give birth to an abundance of naturally occurring hot springs. This town is not surrounded by nature; it humbly resides within nature.

History of Teshikaga

Human presence in Teshikaga can be traced back to around 7,000 years ago. The first settlers discovered a fish gathering spot amidst the flowing river and tried to insert shafts in an attempt to place nets. But in the end, they lamented the presence of the hindering and steadfast bedrock below. In the native Ainu language, “Teshikaga” means “above the bedrock.” The reason this area flourished was due to the presence of sulfur. Sulfur summoned the railroad to this region, breathing life into industry after industry. Tourism and leisure permeated the lives of the people, and along with those trends Teshikaga was established as a major hot spring area. Spurring forth this development was the designation of a national park and construction of major roads. Even now, 860 thousand people annually visit this nature-rich land. These people are able to feel the Hokkaido that existed in ancient times.

Translated by Eric Odle

Teshikaga is divided into 3 areas



*Teshikaga is located in eastern Hokkaido and is divided into three areas by locals: **Mashu**, **Kawayu Onsen**, and **Kussharo**. Lake Mashu is world famous for its clear water, Kawayu Onsen offers pristine water flowing directly from a hot spring source, and there are breathtaking views of Lake Kussharo from surrounding passes and hilltops.*



Activities

Recommended season varies depending on the weather conditions every year.



Hiking

Trails in the deep primeval forests, refreshing tracks along the lakes, and rough rocky trails heading to the mountains – there are a variety of walking trails in Teshikaga. Once you take to the trails, you will be moved by the songs of birds and the chirps and buzzes of the insects around you. The cool climate fosters alpine plants that usually only grow on high mountains. You will be able to find a trail that fits your ability and preferences among courses from a half day easy walk to a 2 night 3 day trek to a neighboring town.

Recommended Season : Mid May – October (Depending on the snow condition for mountain climbing)



Fishing

Why don't you try Matching the Hatch at the Lake Kussharo, Japan's largest caldera lake and recognized as the Mecca of fly fishing? Lake Kussharo is very bountiful. At any time you could come face to face with Rainbow Trout, Kokanee Salmon and Japanese Dace. Catch and Release is the basic rule in this



area to sustain the beautiful and fragile environment.

Recommended Season : June – October (except August)



Canoeing

The Kushiro River is one of the few

“National class A” rivers in Japan which has its flow unobstructed by dams all the way to the ocean.

Canoeing in the headwater stream of the Kushiro River is a fantastic and valuable experience in this region. You will be excited to see fish darting through the transparent water while birds flutter through the trees. Taking in the natural beauty of the area from the vantage of a canoe will surely bring each person new and personal discoveries. If you are a beginner, the experienced canoe guides will escort you safely through this unforgettable canoe experience.

Recommended Season : May – October



Cycling

Cycle in the middle of the deep forest along Lake Kussharo and touch the breath of mother earth at the foot of Mt. Io – a sulfur mountain emitting white smoke. Ride along a straight road through idyllic pastures and begin the challenging ascent



PARK IS OUR BACKYARD



toward Lake Mashu. You will understand why this is called one of Japan's cyclist paradises when you ride through an area abundant in wildlife. There are a variety of courses that suit any level of cyclist from beginner to expert. Cyclists get together in town to participate in "Granfondo Mashu" in spring every year and complete a 100km ride through pleasant roads.

Recommended Season : May – October

Bird Watching

Teshikaga is also a bird sanctuary. You will meet many

of them while walking in the parks and woods, as well as just driving on the street. The majestic White-tailed Eagles, Steller's Eagles and Whooper Swans are particularly impressive. Prefectural bird of Hokkaido, the Tancho, or red-crowned crane, sometimes shows its elegant figure in town. In winter, Lake Kussharo is a paradise for Whooper swans and the photographers from all over the world who want to capture their beauty.

Recommended Season : October – June

Snow Shoeing

Eastern Hokkaido is renowned for its brilliant sunny days in winter. While exploring this pure, white world in snow shoes, surrounded by hoarfrost and diamond dust (tiny ice crystals in the air), you can reach hidden

places that are otherwise inaccessible. Snow shoeing offers the unique opportunity of encountering frozen lakes, snow-capped mountains, wild birds, and other animals. In the ice-cold air of minus 20 degrees centigrade, as you delve into hushed, snow-white forests, you will experience the tranquil majesty of winter in Hokkaido.

Recommended Season : January – March

Stargazing

The darkness at night in Teshikaga is spellbinding. In the crystal-clear sky, millions of stars will appear right before your eyes. The sky is so clear and vast that subtle shades of light can be seen in the Milky Way, and shooting stars are clearly visible, providing the perfect opportunity to make a wish. Encompassed by this astonishing view of the heavens, you'll be able to glimpse the boundless nature of the universe and humanity's place within it.

Recommended Season : October – March

Activities and tours are provided by local operators. Please visit "Teshikaga-navi" for more details. www.masyuko.or.jp/en/



Access

