



# Anytime, Ainutime!

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

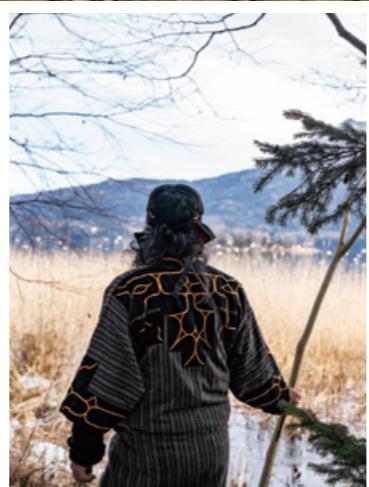
*Anytime, Ainutime!*

## 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.

#### 「Mukkuri」

「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.

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

#### 「Kuwa」

「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」

「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.

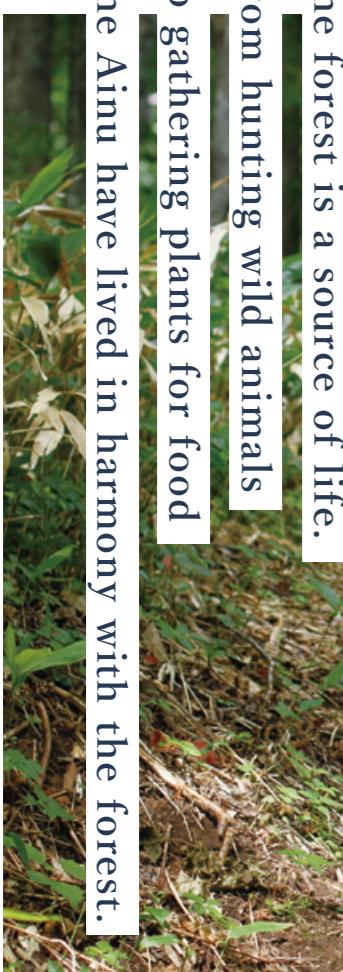
#### 「Kamuy-nomi」

「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.



## ❖ 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



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

Scan here for  
details and  
reservations



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.



## ❖ tour 3 Craft Time

Embroidery making  
Wood carving

### ❖ tour 3A Embroidery making

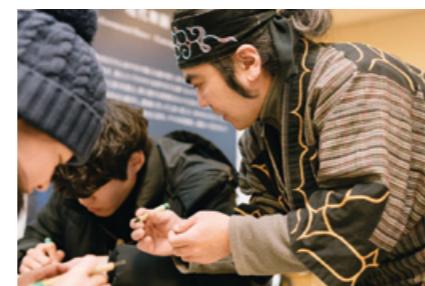
Fee adult/child **¥6,000** per person (tax incl.)

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



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

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

## ❖ 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 rype (frozen himemmasu 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 Mukkuri 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 Japan



## ■ 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

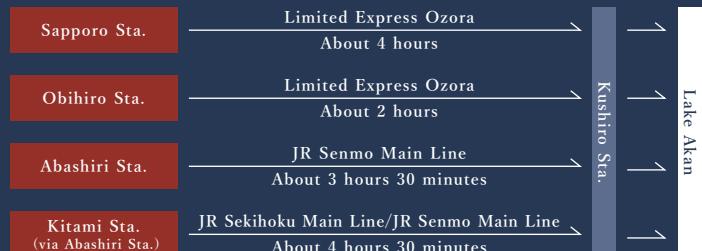
	About 2 hours
	About 1 hour 30 minutes (70.1 km)
	About 1 hour 30 minutes (70.1 km)

## ■ Access from Hokkaido

### ■ Airplane



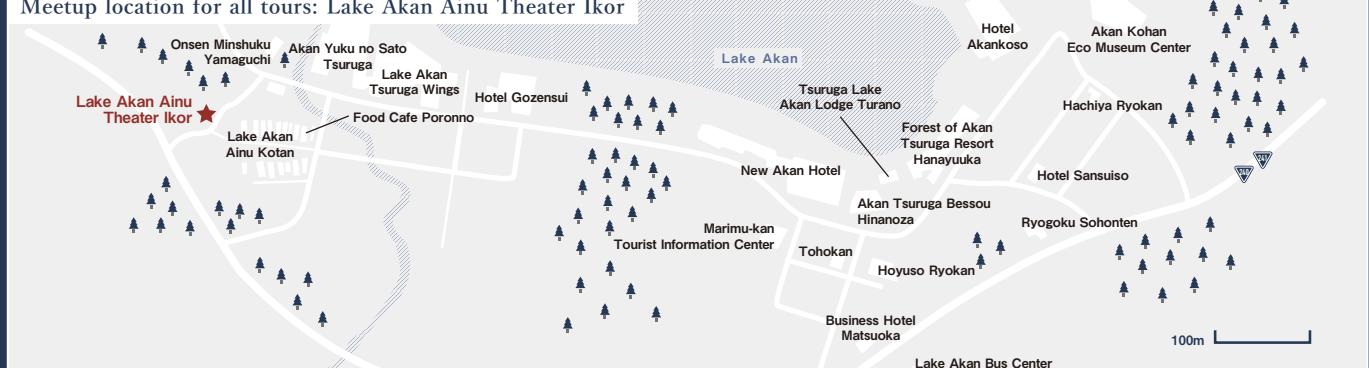
### ■ JR Train



### ■ Car



## Meetup location for all tours: Lake Akan Ainu Theater Ikor



Inquiries/Reservations  
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