

2024 September Vol.2

New Open

1. Perfect for Soccer Fans! Year-Round Stadium Views at Stadium City Hotel Nagasaki, Opening October 14



Provided by: Nagasaki Stadium City

Have you ever dreamt of spending the night at a soccer stadium? The unique Stadium City Hotel Nagasaki opening in central Nagasaki City is perched right above Peace Stadium, a grand sports venue that is home to the city's own soccer team V-Varen Nagasaki. The hotel offers guests the special opportunity to gaze at the stadium from the “Stadium View Rooms” as well as the pool, sauna, and natural hot springs. The close proximity will allow sports fans to feel as though they are almost in the stadium itself. The hotel's appeals are not limited to its rooms and closeness to the soccer stadium – it also prides itself in its delicious cuisine prepared with locally sourced seasonal ingredients by master chefs. Located a 10-minute walk from JR Nagasaki Station or 3 minutes from the street tram/bus stop, it is also a perfect location for exploring the city!

[NAGASAKI STADIUM CITY](#)

Festival and Event

2. See the Over 1,000-Year-Old Treasures of Shoso-in, October 26 – November 11, Nara



©2024 Nara National Museum and The Yomiuri Shimbun

Shoso-in is the treasure hall of Todaiji Temple in Nara Prefecture and holds a plethora of antiquities that were once the personal possessions of the 8th-century Emperor Shomu. The Annual Exhibition of the Shoso-in Treasures is held every autumn, during which time the imperial seal guarding the collection of what is said to be over 9,000 historical artifacts is temporarily opened and several exquisite pieces are put on display. This year, 57 items will be put on display, 11 of which will be part of the lineup for the first time. Such treasures include an upholstered armrest used by Emperor Shomu himself, intricately decorated boxes, stunning glasswork, and more. Around a 25-minute walk from Kintetsu Nara Station, Shoso-in is located in Nara Park and is surrounded by numerous other ancient buildings, including the approximately 1,300-year-old Todaiji Temple to which it belongs. After your visit, you can also explore the park and interact with the deer that famously roam it. Please check the official website for more details including ticket information.

[The 76th Annual Exhibition of Shōsō-in Treasures](#)

Festival and Event

3. Watch Sticks Be Set Ablaze During the Hitaki-sai Fire Festival, November 8, Kyoto



©Fushimi Inari Taisha

The iconic Fushimi Inari Taisha Shrine is one of Kyoto's most famous shrines, known for its magnificent traditional structures and tunnel of vermilion "torii" gates that draw tourists from all around the world. The shrine also hosts the dramatic Hitaki-sai Fire Festival, which is held in autumn to thank the deity Inari Okami for plentiful harvests and for the lives of all creatures. The highlight of the festival is the blazing bonfires lit up on the shrine grounds. Priests use tens of thousands of sticks from worshipers around the country for the fires, and the shrine's priests perform purification chants while the miko priestesses participate in the chants as well as perform Kagura dances. The fires reaching to the autumn sky, calling for the extinguishment of sins and welcoming good fortune, are certainly a sight to behold.

[Hitaki-sai Fire Festival](#)

Festival and Event

4. Enjoy Vivid Leaves and Gorgeous Autumn Flowers at Hirosaki Castle, November 1 – 10, Aomori



The grounds of Hirosaki Castle in Hirosaki City, Aomori Prefecture boast stunning seasonal scenery throughout the year. During the autumn, the leaves of 1,000 maple trees turn vibrant shades of red and orange, which create a lovely contrast with the deep green of the pine trees. The Hirosaki Castle Chrysanthemum and Autumn Foliage Festival takes place during the peak season of the autumn foliage, and during this time plump chrysanthemum flowers also adorn the castle grounds, decorating stunning sculptures and accentuating the structures around the castle. The view of the autumn foliage with the solemn castle is breathtaking, and the leaves are lit-up at night, offering a different vibe from the daytime. Approximately a 15-minute drive from Hirosaki Station, the festival venue will be open from 9:00 am to 8:00 pm during the festival period, with admission open until 7:30 pm.

*An admission fee is required to enter Hirosaki Castle Botanical Garden, the main venue of the festival.

[Hirosaki Castle Chrysanthemum and Autumn Foliage Festival](#)

Festival and Event

5. Witness Special Contemporary Artistic Connections at Art Collaboration Kyoto, November 1 – 3



©Courtesy of ACK,
photo by slide::show



©Courtesy of ACK,
photo by Moriya Yuki

Art Collaboration Kyoto is a contemporary art fair that focuses on "collaborations." The participating collaborators can range from artists to galleries, government organizations, private companies, and more. The art fair is held in the Kyoto International Conference Center, which is

about 30 minutes away from Kyoto Station, and will be divided into 2 main sections with the opportunity to experience art in many different ways. The fair will also host special programs and talks, as well as other exhibits displayed in various areas around the city. Any art lover should surely attend the Art Collaboration Kyoto to experience the unique combination of contemporary art and Kyoto's historic cityscapes.

[Art Collaboration Kyoto](#)

Festival and Event

6. Celebrate Animated Artworks at the New Chitose Airport International Animation Festival, November 1 – 5, Hokkaido



©New Chitose Airport International Animation Festival

With the 2024 edition marking the festival's 11th anniversary, the New Chitose Airport International Animation Festival in Hokkaido is one of Japan's leading animation festivals, boasting one of the largest number of entries in the Japanese section of the competition. It features select animations submitted by creators from around the world, and competitions are held to award and recognize the best-animated artworks of the year. In addition to animated film screenings, the festival also holds lectures and exhibitions. A distinctive point of this festival is that all the screenings and lodgings are held in the airport, easily visible to airport users passing by, strengthening New Chitose Airport's connections with the international community and the arts. Last year's festival attracted over 30,000 people, and this year, a new category designated "30 Seconds Animation" has been incorporated into the festival program. The selected films will be exhibited for a designated period on digital signage throughout the airport facility, providing an opportunity for a broader appreciation of animation.

[New Chitose Airport International Animation Festival 2024](#)

Luxury Travel

7. Discover the Deep-Rooted Traditions of Passionate Foresters, Carpenters, and Woodworkers, Nara



"Yamamori" are mountain foresters who engage in the beautiful tradition of Nara's Yoshino forestry, which dates back 500 years. Two-thirds of Japan is covered by forest and the world's oldest wooden building, Horyuji Temple, which is located in Nara, is a testament to the importance of wood in Japan's history and to its deep interconnection with the local way of life. The Yamamori show deep respect for the trees and their craft, and through this tour, you will be able to learn about the cultural and technical significance firsthand. Located in Yoshino, this tour will truly take you off the beaten path, as you will get to interact with experienced craftsmen as you witness them practicing their trades and explore the lush forests that have cultivated these beautiful traditions. In addition to Yamamori, you will also get to meet traditional carpenters, woodworkers, and architects who will tell you about their professions and deep ties to the mountains in Yoshino, making for a premium experience that is sure to leave you in awe. The memories of getting to speak with and learn from the craftsmen of Yoshino—a unique area of Japan where forestry has been practiced for generations among the region's breathtaking nature are sure to stay with you forever.

[Yoshino Cedar: The Story of 500 Years. The Mountain Forests of the Craft Masters.](#)

National Park

8. Mesmerizing Snowy Natural Landscapes at Rishiri-Rebun-Sarobetsu National Park, Hokkaido



©Ministry of the Environment

The vast Rishiri-Rebun-Sarobetsu National Park in northern Hokkaido has a unique topography that includes mountains, sand dunes, bodies of water, and more. Also, home to endemic flora and fauna, it is a treasure trove of untouched nature that offers awe-inspiring scenery

throughout the seasons. Wintertime is particularly magical, when the park is blanketed with glistening snow. Mt. Rishiri on Rishiri Island (which is accessible by ferry from Wakkanai Port) is one of the park's landmarks, and it turns white with the snow that highlights its jagged crevices. The spacious terrain is the perfect place to enjoy winter outdoor activities, such as snowshoeing and guided backcountry tours. The park is not devoid of animals during the winter either, as birds and other critters can be found spending their days among the thick sheets of snow.

[Rishiri-Rebun-Sarobetsu National Park](#)

Special Experience

9. Unforgettable Experience! Learn How to Make Iconic Japanese Dishes in Tokyo



With these two cooking classes, sushi lovers and food aficionados can now try their hands at sushi or bento making and learn the basics of cooking these beloved dishes, using traditional tools and ingredients to make their own culinary masterpieces. The basic sushi course in Tokyo, which takes place in a facility near Tokyo Tower, covers 2 types of sushi: "nigiri" (toppings atop rice), and "gunkan" (toppings atop rice and wrapped with seaweed). The "character bento" course teaches participants how to create social-media-worthy "bento" boxes filled with food that is almost too cute to eat. Learn how to manipulate and prepare classic ingredients to turn them into adorable animals, smiling faces, flowers, and more. With these courses, you are sure to learn culinary skills that will certainly impress yourself and your loved ones.

[Character Bento Cooking -Regular Program-](#)

[Sushi-Making Experience Basic Course -Regular Program-](#)

Special Experience

10. Relaxing Morning with Meditation and Tofu-Making at a Temple, Shimane



©Shimane Prefectural Government

With this experience, you can enjoy a calm, pleasant morning at a temple in Masuda, a splendid city facing the Sea of Japan in Western Shimane Prefecture. Start your morning with reflective Zen meditation and let go of your worries and stresses as you lose yourself in the moment. After the refreshing meditation session, you will get to indulge in a healthy breakfast where tofu is the star of the show. The tofu is extremely fresh, as you will make it yourself using the soymilk and bittern provided! You can then dress your tofu with carefully selected seasonal condiments. Wake up bright and early and have a refreshing session of meditation at 7:30 am, you will certainly leave this experience feeling as though both your mind and body have been revitalized.

[Meditation and Tofu Making experience at the temple in the morning](#)

Expo 2025 Osaka Kansai

Appreciate Ainu Heritage and Mesmerizing Nature with This Immersive Journey Through Hokkaido



Discover Hokkaido's rich natural and indigenous heritage in an immersive journey reflecting one of the Osaka Expo's themes: connecting people's lives. Experience Ainu culture at Upopoy, a museum and park where ancient traditions meet modern, forward-looking initiatives, and paddle along the serene waters of Lake Poroto, taking in the lush scenery from a unique vantage point. Wander through the Kushiro Wetlands, home to the endangered red-crowned cranes, and embrace stories of harmony with nature at the Akanko Ainu Kotan, Japan's largest Ainu village. Immerse yourself into the world of Kamuy Lumina, a magical night walk through the forests of Akan-Mashu National Park that brings Ainu folklore to life through stunning digital art and music. Finally, embark on a cruise in Hokkaido's Shiretoko region Cruise to encounter the diverse marine life of this remote, pristine peninsula. This journey through Hokkaido showcases the powerful connections between culture, nature, and local communities, offering visitors a profound understanding of how these ties can enrich our lives and sustain the world around us.

Looking for more Hokkaido adventures? Join the mystical 76th Marimo Festival which is held between October 8 and 10, 2024 at Lake Akan. Sacred rituals are performed to protect the local marimo, a rare type of algae, which is also called lake balls and reflects the Ainu's deep respect for nature.

For more details, visit the JNTO Expo 2025 website.

URL : <https://www.japan.travel/en/expo2025/article/hokkaido/>

Notes:

- The above details are correct as of the time of publication, and are subject to change.

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