



## Japan TLC: Thermal Hot Springs, Lavender Fields and Cycling!

July 14 to July 22, 2018

AMC Adventure Travel  
Prospectus Trip # 1825

Our Japan adventure is a full immersion in Japanese culture and outdoor activity! The 8 day, 7 night bicycle tour combines daily moderate cycling (approximately 35 miles a day) through the rolling hills of Central Hokkaido with total immersion in the Japanese culture, including daily onsens (hot spring fed thermal baths) traditional Japanese Inns (Royokans) and local, healthy Japanese cuisine. Well paved smooth roads, very little traffic and breathtaking scenery make Hokkaido an outstanding place to cycle. Our bikes are high end with choice of racing style or flat handle bars. They are light weight with alloy frames and carbon forks. Of course they have the Japanese made Shimano groupset. July temperatures are in the mid 70s and the lavender and wildflower fields are in full bloom!

Our relaxed pace allows ample time for photo stops and sight-seeing. Along our cycle route we stop at various artists' studios and galleries to see potters, glass artists, photographers and fiber artists. Our luggage is transported for us each day between hotels so we can just enjoy riding our bikes. In addition to cycling we will have a day of hiking up the highest mountain in Hokkaido, Mt Asahi (7516') which is a volcano! We will also enjoy an afternoon of rafting the crystal clear headwaters of the Sorachi River.

This trip is suitable for participants who can comfortably cycle 35 miles a day of moderate terrain. Elevation gain is about 1000 feet a day except for Day 5 when we ride in Daisetsusan National Park to the base of Mt. Asahi climbing about 1500 feet. We are self-sufficient and carry our lunch/snacks with us or stop at a Ramen or Izakaya shop for lunch. Participants are encouraged to know/learn basic bike maintenance skills such as how to change a flat however it is not a prerequisite to participate on the trip. Each morning when our luggage is picked up, the van driver who is also a bike mechanic can tweek our bikes. If we have difficulties of any kind during our ride he will be in the area with the van and he is just a phone call away. The Van Driver/ Mechanic speaks English and Japanese.



## A day by day look at our Hokkaido cycling adventure...

The first "official" day of the trip is July 14 so that the AMC trip insurance will cover you during your travel to Japan.

Sunday, July 15 Our trip starts in Tomamu which is a resort town on the main rail line from Chitose Airport. We'll meet our bike supplier in mid afternoon, size up our bikes and go for a spin to ensure everyone's bike is ready for the week ahead. Next is a relaxing soak in the onsen before heading to our first Japanese dinner.



Each morning at breakfast we look at the map and preview the day's ride and excursions. Daily mileage is 30 to 35 miles. The schedule and ride lengths are subject to change due to weather conditions.



Monday, July 16 Today's ride is gentle terrain through rural villages and past vast fields of carrots and onions. We cycle through the valley along a pristine mountain river in the shadow of steeply wooded peaks. We stop along the way for a scenic raft ride along the Sorachi river. After rafting we continue cycling a short way to our inn for the evening which is along the shore of a lake.

### Tuesday, July 17

As we cycle north today the surrounding peaks get higher and the summits of the Yubari range appear in the west. As we head into the small town of Rokugo we get our first views of the mighty Tokachi mountain range. Rokugo is a famous town that was the setting for a long running TV show that romanticized life in the deep north. After Rokugo we head into the town of Furano. Here we can visit local glass and wood artists' studios, a cheese factory and a winery before heading to our hotel and nightly soak in the onsen.





### Wednesday, July 18

Continuing our ride north over rolling hills and valleys we stop and visit the galleries of Japanese artists Goto Sumiyo and reknowned photographer Shinzo Maeda. Our cycling route has some small and gentle climb as well as some short sharp inclines. For lunch, we stop in the town of Biei which is set at the base of the Tokachi mountains with its imposing volcanic peaks. After lunch we head into the mountains on a gentle incline, partially along a dedicated cycle track to the spa town of Shirogane. Here we finish the day soaking in a neck deep thermal pool.



### Thursday, July 19

We start the day cycling through some valleys of traditional farming and rice growing before heading up the only major climb of the trip. The challenge is a 7 mile climb to the spa village of Asahidaki. The climb varies from easy to sustained. The route takes us through forests of Hokkaido Red Pine and Silver Birch as we ascend toward the spa town at the base of Hokkaido's highest mountain, Mt. Asahi at 7516'. The soothing thermal waters of our inn's onsen and a Japanese dinner await us.

### Friday, July 20

Today we take a break from our bikes and go for a hike up Mt Asahi which is a volcano with spewing fumaroles. We start by riding the Ropeway Tram. Then we hike another 2000 feet through alpine flower filled meadow and up the side of the crater to the summit. Hopefully we are lucky and have a blue sky clear day and we'll be able to see 360 degrees for miles. We return that afternoon to a welcome soak in our inn's onsen and another fantastic dinner of local fare.





Saturday, July 21

Back in the saddle for our final ride of the trip. We cruise 30 miles mostly downhill and flat on our way to the town of Asahikawa. Asahikawa is well known for its artisans. We will explore the town and tour the studios of the woodworkers, furniture designers, potters, glass artists and textile artists. After our evening onsen soak we enjoy a final dinner together looking back at our fantastic week cycling in Hokkaido.



Sunday, July 22 After our final breakfast at our Asakawa hotel then all will go to the airport to either head home or to other points in the land of the rising sun! The Chitose airport is approximately 2 hours and Asahikawa airport is approximately 1 hour.

**Cost**

The trip cost is \$2995. per person. Airfare is not included.

The trip is limited to 9 participants plus the leader.

The trip fee includes the following:

7 nights lodging in traditional Japanese Inns and 3 Star hotels. Double Occupancy.

7 breakfasts

5 dinners

Bike rental

Rafting Trip

Ropeway (Gondola) at Mt Asahidaki

Baggage transport between hotels

Local guide/van driver/mechanic available to us all day

Emergency medical and evacuation insurance



Not included:

- Airfare (Estimate \$1550 to Chitose Airport, Japan from major East coast cities. Leader will provide guidance for air travel.)
- Ground transportation (train) from airport to Tomamu, Japan. The leader will provide detailed information for all travel.
- Lunches
- 2 Dinners
- Alcoholic beverages.

**Trip Leader** Lisa Graves

Lisa regularly cycles, hikes, climbs and kayaks in Maine and New Hampshire.

She has adventure travelled extensively including a six month cycle tour from Athens to Amsterdam, trekking in Nepal and rock climbing in the US and Europe.

She has led AMC Adventure Travel cycle trips in Italy and Switzerland.

In January 2016 and 2017 Lisa spent several weeks back country ski touring in Japan and she will be back in January of 2018. Although Lisa speaks very minimal Japanese her recent trips in Japan have made her very comfortable navigating and communicating in Japan.



This is a non-profit excursion conducted by the leaders on a volunteer basis. Any unforeseen increases in costs will be shared by all participants. Any funds remaining after all expenses are paid will be divided among the participants in accordance with AMC Adventure Travel rules.

A portion of the Leader's expenses for the trip, and administrative costs in organizing the trip have been included in the overall trip costs.

There is an AMC-AT program expenses fee that is applied to all land and/or water costs of the trip and that this is included in the overall trip cost. The fee is not applied to the airfare portion of the trip costs. This fee covers insurance costs and the shared costs of running the AMC Adventure Travel program.



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### **Application and Registration**

A registration deposit of \$500 is due with your application. You must submit the completed and signed Application Form, the AMC Confidential Health Questionnaire, AMC Optional Confidential Supplemental Medical Questionnaire, and the signed AMC Acknowledgment and Assumption of Risk and Release.

A second payment of \$1500. is due upon acceptance.

The balance of \$995. is due by April 1, 2018

Please make checks payable to "Appalachian Mountain Club" and mail with your completed application to:  
Lisa Graves 177 Hersey Hill Rd Minot, ME 04258

Single Applicants: Single applicants will be paired with a roommate of the same gender. The price of the trip is based on double occupancy of the rooms.

### **Cancellation and Refund Policy**

A full refund is given if the trip does not run.

No refund is given unless another suitable participant is confirmed. Once that participant is confirmed and monies deposited, a refund will be issued. Refunds will only be refunded to the extent that the cost of the trip for other participants and the leader is not affected. Participants are responsible for their own airline tickets and cancellation or change penalties. Trip cancellation insurance is highly advised. Policy information will be supplied to all participants. Late cancellations are likely to result in no refund.

### **Trip Requisites:**

A) Health and fitness: Participants must be in good health and able to cycle up to 35 miles daily of moderate to hilly terrain.

B) Adaptability: An important criterion for this trip is the ability to be flexible. Please note that the itinerary may be modified due to weather. Safety will always take priority in the leaders' decisions.

C) Understanding of Trip Purpose. There are three themes to this trip. 1) Nature: The Japanese have a reverence for nature. This is the result of the influence of Shinto which is an ancient nature based religion indigenous to Japan. This trip is designed for everyone to experience, learn about, and appreciate the natural world each day. 2) Japanese Food: Due to their diet and lifestyle the Japanese have the longest life expectancy and lowest obesity rate on the planet. We will enjoy excellent fresh and local Japanese food each day. 3: Arts and Crafts: Japan has a long tradition of art and craft particularly in wood and fiber. We will visit several artists' studios and galleries on our trip.

D) Being a Team Player: AMC trip participants are known for their cooperative efforts, and expectations are that all participants be considerate of others sharing this AMC Adventure Travel experience. We will be more than just a group; we will be a team. As a member of our team, you will be responsible for yourself as being a part of the group. Being a team player also means proper communication as to your whereabouts and your personal health. Although we are all adults, the trip leaders have a responsibility for the overall safety of the group and part of that is knowing where everyone is. You should tell the leaders if you become ill or do not feel you are physically capable of safely participating in any of the activities.



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E) Safety, Risks and Hazards: As participant safety is a high priority for all AMC-sponsored events, procedures and policies have been developed to attempt to limit participant risk. Participants are expected to work with the leaders to reduce risks and make the experience successful for all. Participants should be aware that there are risks associated with outdoor adventure activities, including but not limited to adverse weather and environmental

Trip Extensions: The official trip dates are July 14 to July 22, 2018. Be aware that the AMC-included medical and evacuation insurance coverage is only valid while you are participating on the AMC trip. You should consider purchasing additional insurance if you will be extending your trip.

I look forward to our Japan cycling trip and hope that you can join in the adventure!

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