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Rebun And Rishiri Islands: Japan's Unbelievably Unique Northernmost Islands

September 25, 2023 by [Kaitlyn Owen](#)

Do busy intersections, white faced goshes and red torii gates flood your mind when you think of a trip to Japan? That is the common thought of the country, however, there is so much more to discover in Japan when you get off the beaten path a little. In the far northwest of Japan lie two islands that are waiting to be discovered.

Rebun and Rishiri Islands are well known to many Japanese as being beautiful nature escapes, but

A travel obsessed mom and a nature obsessed son exploring at home in Southern California as well as throughout the world looking for adventure, nature and a little luxury too!

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35+ Helpful Japan Travel Tips To Know BEFORE You Go

September 27, 2023 by [Kaitlyn Owen](#)

Japan is a remarkable country filled with so much history, natural beauty and modern touches. I've just returned from my second trip to Japan and was reminded of so many things I had forgotten about the country! Traveling in Japan is an amazing and enriching experience, however it is also a country filled with traditions and unique ways of operating that visitors may not be used to. Below I share the best Japan travel tips to help you make the most of your trip.

Disclosure: Some of the links in this post are affiliate links, meaning at no additional cost to you, I will earn a commission if you click through and make a purchase.

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Key Takeaways From ATTA's First Asia-based World Summit in Hokkaido, Japan

Sep 28, 2023

Adventure Travel Sustainability




The Adventure Travel Trade Association held its latest Adventure Travel World Summit in Hokkaido, Japan.

Credit: 2023 [www.atwworldsummit.com](#)

After a two-year delay due to the pandemic, the [Adventure Travel Trade Association \(ATTA\)](#) hosted its 19th [Adventure Travel World Summit \(ATWS\)](#) in Japan from Sept. 11-14. Japan is the first Asian country to host the ATWS, which took place in [Hokkaido](#) — the northernmost of Japan's main

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Shannon Stowell, CEO of the ATTA

Credit: 2023 [Zoe Baillargeon](#)

"It's up to us to show how tourism can be done right," said [Shannon Stowell, CEO of the ATTA](#), in his welcome speech. "It's an opportunity to stand out from messy mass travel and show how adventure travel is respectful of local communities."

Here are some of the key takeaways from the ATTA World Summit.

AI Is Here to Stay

The growth of easily accessible and usable artificial intelligence (AI)

Adventure.com
THE FUTURE OF TRAVEL
Could this Japanese town be a blueprint for how we should all be living?

Phoebe Smith
September 9, 2023

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In 2014, the Japanese government designated 11 settlements as 'Future Cities'—challenging each to create a blueprint for sustainable communities for generations to come. A decade on, writer Phoebe Smith visits Shimokawa to learn what a Future City really could be—and is.

It's early in the morning when 50-year-old Chikako Nakatani walks to the biomass plant in the town of Shimokawa, in the far north of the island of Hokkaido, Japan. But she isn't here to work in the plant, which, for the past 10 years has been burning waste wood from the community-owned forestry industry, providing 88 percent of the heating and hot water for the town. Rather, she is there to forage a by-product of this initiative—the humble shiitake mushroom.

The heat created from the woody biomass plant not only heats water and powers boilers in a multitude of public buildings—including the hospital, school, childcare center, elderly care home, affordable housing and a public hot spring—but also warms an on-site greenhouse where each day tons of the edible fungus are produced. These mushrooms are often sold to suppliers around the prefecture. But many are misshapen or too small to make the cut for suppliers—resulting in the kilograms being thrown away every single day. That was until Nakatani moved here from Osaka in 2021 and started asking for unwanted mushrooms to use in her restaurant.

"I grew up in the third most densely populated city in the country," explains Nakatani as she dishes out food onto a row of 10 plates lined up along the bar in her restaurant, Takayuki Konomi. "But when I had a close friend to stomach cancer, I needed to escape everything I knew." Coming to Shimokawa after a year in the Philippines—where she learned how to cook a variety of dishes using no meat or animal products, and ran cooking classes online during the pandemic—she saw an urgent calling for someone to take over the main restaurant in town. A phone call later, and she arrived.

We were the first of our kind... what we had been doing... when I moved here from Tokyo a couple of years earlier to get back into nature. "Take the smaller leaves off and squeeze as many as you can into the 'boiler,'" she instructed as I learned the art of making my own essential oil products from what would have been waste wood.

There was a group of eight of us in the class, and we spent the afternoon laughing as we experimented with a range of scents and concoctions, feeling like wizards. But the real magic, Asa tells me, is Shimokawa itself.

"The fact that I can work here, make a living and get out into the forest whenever I want makes this the best place in Japan," she says. "My friends didn't understand why I would leave the city at first, but now they get it."

When one business thrives it helps promote another, who promotes another. One success benefits many more.

The following day, I enjoy a yoga class, taught by 34-year-old Harumi Tada, who is originally from Fukushima. After meeting her husband (a former Shimokawa resident) and surviving the earthquake and tsunami in 2011, they both decided to leave and start a family somewhere safer and quieter. She has since set up a forest pre-school, teaching adults and children how to play in nature and connect with their environment.

For lunch I take on a bento box—a classic Japanese pack lunch—made by a local man who, I'm told, came back to the town three years ago and set up his own company. All the vegetables featured inside are grown locally for low-food miles, and the bread provided is made in the town's bakery.

soultrekkers
September 20, 2023

Puffing vents, collapsed calderas, sulphur lakes and moss-covered forest... another beautiful day hiking in Hokkaido. Our route took us over Mt Meakan and past th...

experiencejordanadventures
September 20, 2023

Experience Jordan Adventures at the Adventure Travel World Summit in Hokkaido. Japan has been an incredible experience. This summit is unlike any other, as it u...

travellina.hu
September 19, 2023

A Daisetsuzan Nemzeti Park Japán északi szigetén, Hokkaidon a legnagyobb nemzeti park. Igazi érintetlen vadon, a túrázók, a szarvasok és a barnamedvők paradicsma...

explorewithlora
September 19, 2023

Canoeing down the Kushiro River was so much fun!

The river pretty much did the work for us, and our expert guide made some impressive maneuvers. It was incred...

himalayanhightreks
September 19, 2023

Daisetsuzan National Park, Hokkaido.

ATWS Day of Adventure

laurawaters_writer
September 18, 2023

Wandering around the mountain to see some of the 1000+ fumeroles of Meakan, the sulphur can be pretty overwhelming at times. Thanks to the wind, those moments a...