Hiking Trails

Hiking in Oku-Nikko

Nikko is a popular hiking destination. The stunning, dynamic landscapes including mountains, wetlands, and lakes are easily accessed from Tokyo. There are hiking trails suitable for visitors of all levels, from walks for beginners to more strenuous routes for experienced hikers. The history and development of Nikko is deeply rooted in nature, and Nikko thus offers a great opportunity to enjoy both the great outdoors and traditional Japanese culture.

Mt. Nikko Shirane

At an elevation of 2,578 m, Mt. Nikko Shirane is the highest mountain contained in and north of Japan’s eastern Kanto region. It is designated as one of the top 100 mountains in Japan. Hiking routes of varying difficulty and length allow visitors to enjoy superb views of the surrounding lakes from the mountain.

Total Distance: approximately 6.2 km to 12.5 km, depending on the route

Increase in Elevation: maximum 1,091 m

Time Required: approximately 5 to 9 hours, depending on the route

Trailheads: Yumoto Onsen, Sugenuma, Nikko Shiranesan Ropeway

Restrooms: Sugenuma parking lot, Nikko Shiranesan Ropeway Sancho Station

Lake Yunoko (circular route)

On the closest hiking route to Nikko Yumoto Visitor Center, Lake Yunoko was formed when lava flows from Mt. Mitsudake blocked a river. Around 90% of its waters are spring water, including natural hot springs. In the winter, steam can be seen rising from the surface of the lake. On the hike towards the towering 70 m Yudaki Falls, there is a wide variety of brightly colored azaleas, and majestic Japanese thuja trees (*Thuja standishii*), and magnificent views of the lake.

Total Distance: approximately 3 km

Increase in Elevation: approximately 1 m

Time Required: approximately 1 to 1.5 hours

Trailhead: Yudaki parking lot

Restrooms: Inside Yumoto Onsen, Yudaki parking lot

Senjogahara Wetland Area

The Senjogahara Wetland is located between Lake Yunoko and Lake Chuzenji. It was formed when Mt Nantai erupted in ancient times. Hiking courses start and end at Oku-Nikko’s impressive Yudaki Falls and Ryuzu no taki Falls, and follow the gently flowing Yugawa River across the Senjogahara Wetland. The hiking route has some wooden walkway sections and also includes walks through the forest.

Total Distance: approximately 5 km

Increase in Elevation: approximately 100 m

Time Required: approximately 2.5 to 3.5 hours

Trailheads: Yudaki parking lot to Akanuma parking lot

Restrooms: Yudaki parking lot and Akanuma parking lot

Lake Kirikomi and Lake Karikomi

Lake Kirikomi and Lake Karikomi are twin lakes formed by lava flows. They are situated along a hike connecting Oku-Nikko Yumoto Onsen and Kotoku. Visitors will reach the emerald-green lakes after an uphill hike from Oku-Nikko Yumoto Onsen. These lakes are surrounded by coniferous forests and are recommended for travelers looking for a serene and tranquil environment.

Total Distance: approximately 10 km

Increase in Elevation: approximately 300 m

Time Required: approximately 4.5 hours or longer

Trailheads: Yumoto Onsen parking lot, Kotoku parking lot

Restrooms: Yumoto Onsen (north parking lot), Kotoku parking lot

Lake Chuzenji

Lake Chuzenji is a large lake in Oku-Nikko which became popular with foreign diplomats in the early twentieth century who came to enjoy its pristine nature and cool summer climate. The northern side of the lake has a number of historic villas which formerly belonged to foreign embassies. The southern side of the lake has a 13-kilometer hike along which visitors can enjoy the peaceful sound of waves lapping on the shores and unspoiled views. Due to its length, the southern route is recommended for stronger hikers.

Total Distance: approximately 13 km

Increase in Elevation: approximately 5 0m

Time Required: approximately 4.5 hours or longer

Trailheads: Utagahama parking lot, Senjugahama bus stop

Restrooms: Utagahama parking lot, Senjugahama bus stop