

Lake Shikotsu and the Three Mountains

The landscape visible throughout Shikotsu-Toya National Park is largely the result of volcanic activity, some ancient and some quite recent. The beautiful Lake Shikotsu, the eighth largest lake in Japan, is a caldera lake formed after a massive eruption some 40,000 years ago. From its shores you can easily see Mount Eniwa to the northwest and the conjoined Mount Fuppushi and Mount Tarumae diagonally to the southeast. The latter mountain made its debut a scant 9,000 years ago (roughly this morning in geological time), and the iconic lava dome on its crown only emerged in 1909. Tarumae is technically an active volcano, although the last minor eruption was over forty years ago.