

## **Grassland (Kyu-maru-maru Sogen)**

Visitors to 900 Grassland will discover sweeping views from the observation deck, tasty local food, and park golf courses. This expansive grassland area features viewing platforms and a café/restaurant. In contrast to the vast caldera lakes and jagged, steaming volcanic terrain in sections of the Akan-Mashu National Park, the grasslands present a gentle pastoral landscape of rolling hills and grazing cows.

### *Spectacular surroundings*

Wander up to the hilltop observatory tower and deck for panoramic views of the surrounding area. Mt. Io and Mt. Mashu can be seen looming in the distance. On sunny days, look for Kushiro Marsh, the large wetland area and national park some 50 kilometers to the south.

### *A spot of lunch*

Located a 30-minute drive from either Lake Mashu or Lake Kussharo, 900 Grassland makes a perfect lunch stop after a morning exploring one or both of the caldera lakes. The restaurant offers a selection of light meals and snacks, including noodle dishes, *jingiskan*—thin strips of lamb ready to barbecue—and locally sourced venison burgers. The soft-serve ice cream is made with milk from local cows. Slices of Mashu melon are also on the menu from early August to early September. This is a special treat, as this very sweet, orange melon is not available in supermarkets due to its limited cultivation.

Barbecue facilities are available on-site at 900 Grassland. Reservations (Japanese only and required a couple of days in advance) assure that the staff will have food and utensils ready and waiting. Ask for assistance with reservations at your accommodation or local tourist information center.

### *A game of park golf*

While at 900 Grassland, try playing park golf. As with standard golf, the goal of this game is to knock the ball into a hole with as few strokes as possible. There are four nine-hole courses to choose from. The game is fun for all ages and provides an excellent opportunity for some light exercise in beautiful surroundings.

900 Grassland is open from May 1 to October 31, and there is a large parking lot with free parking.