

## Sapporo Odori Beer Garden

The mainstay of the Sapporo Summer Festival is the beer garden in Odori Park that runs from mid-July to mid-August. The beer garden is divided into six sections throughout the park, from 5-chome to 8-chome, and at 10-chome and 11-chome. There are 13,000 seats available in total, making it the biggest beer garden in the country. An important feature of the festival is support for charity, and a portion of the proceeds from the beer garden goes to charitable organizations.

The four biggest breweries in Japan are Sapporo, Asahi, Kirin, and Suntory. Their beer gardens occupy the center of Odori Park, in the blocks between 5-chome and 8-chome. The four brewers offer limited-edition beers that can only be sampled at the festival. Further down the avenue at 10-chome is World Beer Square, followed by Sapporo German Village at 11-chome. Microbrew craft beers are also on offer. Beers can be ordered in tasting sets as well as large sizes like three-liter tower pitchers.

Foods that pair well with beer are readily available, including pizza, sausages, pretzels, and beef hors d'oeuvres. A Hokkaido specialty is *jingisukan*, barbecued lamb or mutton with plenty of vegetables. The name of the dish—a Japanese rendition of “Genghis Khan”—is supposedly derived from the pan it is cooked in, which is thought to resemble the helmet of a Mongolian soldier. Food and drinks can be ordered directly at each stall, or by using tickets purchased at the ticket counter or from the specialized ticket staff.

There are several seating options to choose from in the various blocks: non-reserved seats at tables, either open to the sky or covered; spaces at standing bars; and reserved seating. Seating in some areas fills up quickly, however, reservations for hospitality seating for out-of-town visitors may be arranged through hotel concierge services.