

Daisetsu Mori Garden

Hokkaido's Deep Snow Country Garden

Daisetsu Mori Garden is located deep in snow country in Hokkaido. This hillside garden at the foot of the Daisetsuzan mountain range is actually a collection of themed gardens. It offers outdoor and hands-on activities, including crafts workshops, an area for kids called the Play Forest, and a large outdoor expanse. Its restaurant, Fratello di Mikuni, is run by world-renowned owner-chef Kiyomi Mikuni, and offers Italian cuisine using Hokkaido ingredients (reservations required).

In this region spring, summer, and fall unfold in only seven months. The garden reflects that seasonal compression: spring and summer start late, but fall overlaps with midsummer, with summer flowers still in full bloom as the leaves begin to turn.

The work of preserving this garden is hard and constant. For example, the gardeners use thick blankets of leaves to protect the roots of plants from warmer climates. Even *Gunnera manicata*, a plant from Brazil that grows up to three meters tall, thrives alongside alpine vegetation.

Picnic tables and benches, parasols, open lawns, and wooden decks are scattered throughout this country garden. The Forest Living area features an outdoor kitchen with a stone oven, bar, and large wooden deck, and can be reserved for family use.

Daisetsu Mori Garden is open daily during daylight hours between the end of April and mid-October.