

About Rokka no Mori

Where Art Is Life

Rokka no Mori has the look of a still-life painting that is constantly and subtly being altered while no one is looking. This is intentional, and what makes this garden different from all the others along the Hokkaido Garden Way.

Natural Inspiration

Rokka no Mori is an installation with elements both natural and artificial. Trees and flowers are used as design and art pieces rather than from a horticultural perspective. Every stone, flower, tree, babbling brook, chirping bird, bumblebee and visitor here is part of a massive and timeless artwork being reinvented each day.

This garden was the idea of Oda Yutaka, the former president of Rokkatei, a popular confectioner founded in nearby Obihiro. Rokka no Mori is designed to be a real-life recreation of the company's famous wrapping paper. The natural world inspired naturalist and alpinist Sakamoto Naoyuki to illustrate landscapes and flowers. In turn, his art inspired Oda to create the garden.

Art Al Fresco

Outside the house in the middle of the woods, a path branches in three directions. One parallels a small creek bordered by wildflowers. From inside the woods a grassy hill is visible, topped by a large object: a metallic sculpture Bando Yu created that was inspired by Auguste Rodin's sculpture *The Thinker*. The garden also features many other pieces of art al fresco, including sculptures of wild animals created by Aoki Sanshiro that are hidden in the forest and alongside the Sanban River.

Radical Transformation

Rokkatei maintains a factory on these premises, which most visitors realize when the scent of fresh cookies and other treats drifts by. A decade ago, the factory was the only substantial structure here. The terrain was mostly flat farmland that had fallen out of use and become overgrown. To create the garden, nearly everything was razed. Outside of some trees and native shrubs, in fact, everything here was planted, grown, or built.

The twin streams and large, grassy hill that is one of Rokka no Mori's most prominent

symbols were constructed. Another example is the entrance to Rokka no Mori: an old, high-ceilinged country house brought over from Croatia.

Rustic Imports

There are nearly a dozen buildings in the garden. Most are rustic homes imported from Croatia, like the one at the entrance to the garden. They are now art galleries. Several of them are devoted to the naturalist art of Sakamoto. One is devoted to his wildflower illustrations. Many are paintings that depict Daisetsuzan National Park and wilderness scenes of Hokkaido.

The Factory

Rokkatei is known throughout Japan for its colorful packaging featuring wildflowers. The café and shop are located within the factory grounds. The massive glass wall of the café provides a wide-angle view of lawn, forest, and garden.

When to Visit

The garden is open from mid-morning to late afternoon every day between late April and the beginning of November. Please follow this link [\[link to What to Do page\]](#) to find out what you can do at Rokka no Mori.