

## About the Hokkaido Garden Way

### What Makes These Gardens Special?

The Hokkaido Garden Way is a collective of eight privately owned gardens that stretches across 250 kilometers in central Hokkaido. It was formed in 2009 to promote this mountainous region and showcase its agricultural and rural culture, as well as bolster interest in green tourism.

The gardens themselves reflect both the geological makeup of the area and the distinctive social characters of their local communities, owners, and Hokkaido. The Hokkaido Garden Way has brought attention, visitors, and prosperity to the region.

#### *Gardens Near Obihiro*

[Shichiku Garden](#), [Manabe Garden](#), [Tokachi Hills](#), and [Rokka no Mori](#) ring the town of Obihiro. Obihiro is on the eastern side of the larger Tokachi region, an agricultural expanse that reaches far to the west. On the western side of Tokachi is [Tokachi Millennium Forest](#). Tokachi Obihiro Airport is the best way to reach these five gardens and tour them by car.

#### *Gardens Near Asahikawa*

The other gardens are [Ueno Farm](#), [Daisetsu Mori Garden](#), and [the Wind Garden](#). These three are closer to Hokkaido's second-biggest city, Asahikawa, and Asahikawa Airport.

Asahikawa is the industrial and agricultural hub of most of Hokkaido. It is also near the largest national park in Japan, Daisetsuzan, named for the meters-deep snows that cloak its long range of mountain peaks for five months of winter. Many visitors come here in summer, which is the only time to safely climb its many challenging peaks.

Ueno Farm is closest to both the airport and the city of Asahikawa. Daisetsu Mori Garden is farther east, deep in the foothills by some of Hokkaido's peaks. The Wind Garden is the farthest away from both airports, in the mountains between Asahikawa and Tokachi. The Furano area is known for skiing, ski jumping, and other winter sports. This region of Hokkaido is a natural adventure park.

#### *The "Hokkaido Gardens" Concept*

All eight gardens owe much of their fertility to the annual snowmelt that descends the slopes of neighboring mountain ranges, providing an immeasurable supply of pristine water. These waters carry along essential minerals and other nutrients to the meadows, plains, and farmland below.

These gardens project the identity of “Hokkaido gardens” championed by Ueno Sayuki, matriarch of Ueno Farm. Ueno explains that the gardens of Hokkaido are distinct from what many people think of as “Japanese gardens” because they reflect the unique geology, climate, and culture of Hokkaido. Her garden, the flowering wonderland created by Shichiku Akiyo, and the vast naturalistic expanse at Tokachi Millennium Forest, she emphasizes, are all connected, despite their distance from each other, as eminent examples of Hokkaido gardens.

#### *Standing Out*

The eight gardens along the Way are linked, geologically and through the network, but they are different in several respects. Ueno Farm and Tokachi Hills both based their designs on English country gardens but have evolved differently. The first was once a rice farm with terraced paddies, and the second is an agricultural trading company.

Similarly, Shichiku Garden and Rokka no Mori were both created from wild lands, but one is a very personal garden made by a pioneer and the other is essentially a living art installation and gallery.

Daisetsu Mori Garden and the Wind Garden are deep in the foothills of great mountains. One provides a diverse and entertaining environment for flora, fauna, and humans; the other was made as the primary set for a TV drama but is also part of a huge mountain resort. Manabe Garden is a living laboratory and showroom that reveals ways to grow diverse forms of vegetation from different climates. Tokachi Millennium Forest is a fusion of ecosystems made in the hope that nature will still be flourishing a thousand years from now.

#### *Along the Way*

There are many other sights and delights along the Hokkaido Garden Way. They include hot springs, unusual geological phenomena, waterfalls, sweet melons, and distinctive cuisine. The harsh winters comes not from elevation, but by its northern latitude and proximity to Siberia and the Arctic. Farms, livestock, wild produce and

game, and fisheries make for daily feasts anywhere you go. The Hokkaido Garden Way should be a prime destination for garden enthusiasts and gourmets alike.

Follow this link [\[link to Follow the Hokkaido Garden Way page\]](#) to find out why you should you visit all eight gardens, as well as the attractions all around them.