

Former Hokkaido Takushoku Bank, Otaru Branch

The Nitori Museum of Art opened in 2017 in the former Hokkaido Takushoku Bank's Otaru Branch. The Takushoku Bank branch was built in 1923 at the height of Otaru's economic prosperity, the same year Otaru Canal was completed. It was one of the largest buildings in Hokkaido at the time, with a bank and rental offices filling four floors, and a basement with a vault.

The bank relocated in 1969 as Otaru's economic vigor diminished, and the building sat empty until it was reopened as a hotel in 1989. The property underwent several changes of ownership before being converted into an art museum. There are around 300 artworks on display over the four floors and the basement. The collection focuses on artists active when Otaru was at the peak of its prosperity, including modern Japanese paintings (*nihonga*) by Yokoyama Taikan (1868–1958) and Kawai Gyokudo (1873–1957), and Western-style paintings by Kishida Ryusei (1891–1929). The basement is used for special exhibitions.

The former first-floor sales area is a large open-plan space with six Grecian-style columns. The marble floor is inlaid with motifs representing Otaru's history as a port city—the decorative floor dates to 1989, when the building was a hotel. The first floor now holds a collection of stained glass windows by Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848–1933), made for St. John's Episcopal Church in New Jersey in 1915 and salvaged when the church closed in the 1990s. The windows are backlit so that viewers can appreciate the opalescent effects that Tiffany captured in his glasswork.