



# Japan 6 Day Ski Safari

## 2024

*Session 1* January 16- 21 2024

*Session 2* January 25-30 2024

## Suggested Itinerary Below



### Day 1-2 Travel

Jan 13-14/22-23

US to Sapporo, Hokkaido (CTS) Arr  
Between 530-930 PM

### DAY 3 Rest Day

Jan 15/24

Rest, Jet lag and baggage recovery



### Day 4-10 SKI POW!

Jan 16-21/25-30

Backcountry skiing with Mark, Tracy and  
Locations TBD and at guide's discretion,  
but options include Mount Yotei, Mount  
Shiribetsu, Chisenupuri and the Goshiki  
Onsen area. Lift accessed side and  
backcountry: Kiroro Resort, Rusutsu  
Resort, Niseko United Resort



### Day 11-12 Travel to US

Jan 22-23/ 31-1

We recommend that you stay in Niseko after  
the last day of skiing, and then we can take  
everyone to the airport the next morning.



# Japow Ski Safari 2024

## COST

COST PER PERSON: \$2,895

Payment schedule: 50% deposit due upon signup.

Balance due August 1, 2023.

Cancellation policy available upon request

***This is for guiding and ground transfers only-  
please see other expenses below***



## Included:

- 6 days of custom ski guiding
- IFMGA Guide Mark Synnott, and Hokkaido-based local Tracy Lenard.
- Roundtrip airport transfers from Sapporo Airport (CTS) to lodging in Niseko and back.
- daily ground transportation to and from ski objectives
- Get yourself to Hokkaido, we'll take care of getting you around once you get there.

## NOT Included

- Airfare\*
- Accommodations \*\*
- Food and drink\*\*\*
- Lift tickets \*\*\*\*
- See additional notes below regarding expenses



# Japow Ski Safari 2024

## Who What and Where

Join IFMGA guide Mark Synnott and local Hokkaido-based American ski guide Tracy Lenard on the trip of a lifetime to the powder skiing capital of the world. Hokkaido, the northern most of Japan's main islands, is known for its bottomless champagne powder, soaring volcanoes, onsens (natural hot springs), fantastic cuisine and one-of-a-kind culture.

The focus of this trip will be on skiing untracked powder, far from the crowds of the resorts, on volcanoes and mountains in less traveled areas. Tracy is a veteran American guide who has been based in Japan for 20 years. He lives at the base of Yotei, one of the most stunning backcountry objectives in the world, where you can ski powder down into the bottom of a volcanic crater.

Between Mark, who has led trips all over the world, including two previous Japow Ski Safaris in 2017 and 2018, and Tracy, who has been exploring and pioneering new lines in Japan for decades, you couldn't find two better guides to deliver the goods.

And, of course, please rest assured that it is a given that our number one priority is always safety first and foremost. As a group, we will work together to assess conditions and try to always be in the right place at the right time, so that everyone comes home safe, happy, and deeply satisfied with their Japow experience

**If you have any further questions, please contact Mark at  
mark@synnottmountainguides or  
603-986-9607.**



# Japow Ski Safari 2024

## Additional Information and Budgeting

### Airfare and Airport Information

Flights from Boston to Sapporo are currently ranging from a low of \$1500 to \$2000 Roundtrip. It's two days of travel generally with two stops in either Toronto, Atlanta or Tokyo. If you haven't flown to Japan before, please note that there are **two international airports** in Tokyo: Narita (NRT) and Haneda (HND). Ideally, your international flight to Tokyo and your domestic flight to Sapporo would both be to and from the same airport. But, this doesn't always work out. We have done it both ways. Transfer between airports is not overly difficult, but you should allow a minimum of three hours to do so if needed.

### Accommodations

**Always Niseko** is the local Niseko Holiday Inn. Rooms are small and simple but nice. The hotel has a restaurant, bar and is centrally located. Prices for 2024 have not been released yet, but this season rooms are \$75-\$91 **per person, per night based on double occupancy**. Please note that this establishment does not have an onsite onsen. There is one about a 20 minute walk or short taxi ride away.

***Chalet Ivy*** is Tracy's recommendation for those looking for a higher end boutique hotel. Rates are \$265-\$340 per person, per night based on double occupancy. Same rule for individuals traveling alone applies.

There are lots of other options, so feel free to dig into this and find something that fits your budget, personal tastes, etc. Please check in with us before confirming reservations as we want the accommodations in the Niseko/Grand Hirafu area to keep the amount of driving as efficient as possible. When it does come time to book we recommend Booking.com and hotels.com, as their cancellation policies tend to be reasonable.



# Japow Ski Safari 2024

## Food and drink

**Breakfast** is included at most hotels and Japanese buffet style breakfasts are second to none.

**Lunch** will be what ends up in your pocket after breakfast, plus whatever you want to pick up at the local supermarket or 7-11. 7-11s in Japan are ubiquitous and offer a stellar array of reasonably priced food and drinks.

**Dinner:** There are many excellent restaurants in the Niseko/Grand Hirafu area. In the mornings, or even further in advance, we can poll the team and see who wants to eat out and what kind of food, and then we can make reservations for whoever is in.

**Daily Food Budget- \$60** We believe this is generous, and the food expense could be brought down significantly by not eating out every dinner etc. Of course, you could also blow it out by going big at nicer restaurants, racking up a bar bill, etc.

## Onsens.

Onsens are Japanese natural hotsprings. There may be options to visit public onsens. Costs are small, in the \$5-\$10 range. Some hotels may have them on site.



## LIFT TICKETS

The emphasis for this trip is on backcountry more so than sidecountry, but based on the weather and conditions, the groups wishes, etc, a resort/sidecountry day is always an option and a possibility. If we do opt for a resort day, lift tickets run about \$60 and will be up to the participants.

## Taxis

Depending on where you stay, almost anywhere you may want to go in the evenings for food and entertainment is walk-able. Should you need a taxi to get anywhere, prices are roughly similar in cost to the US.



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<b>Guide Cost</b>	<b>\$2895</b>	includes guiding, airport transfers, all transportation to and from trailheads.
Airfare	\$1500-2000	depending on city of origin, when you book, etc
Food	\$500	*Depending on rest. preferences
Lodging	\$600	*Depending on your choice
Other-Tix/Taxis/Onsen	\$200	*For your own dinner and entertainment. Transportation during the day for skiing is included.
<b>TOTALS-Based on rough estimates</b>	<b>\$5945*</b>	please note that this figure is based on the current exchange rate, which could change - for better or worse



# Japow Ski Safari 2024

## Suggested Equipment List

- Skis (105-120 underfoot)
- AT (or tele) boots
- skins
- poles
- beacon, probe and shovel
- Two sets long underwear
- Wool or fleece mid layer
- Softshell pant
- Thermal jacket (synthetic is better, but down will work)
- Gore-Tex or equivalent outerwear, top and bottom
- Wool/fleece hat/buff
- Three pairs of gloves/mitts including approach
- 5 pairs of ski socks
- Casual clothes for après!
- slippers (most hotels supply them)
- duffel
- sun glasses
- goggles
- Sunscreen and baseball hat
- Swim suit and towel
- Ski pack (30-40 liters)
- Repair kit (SMG will have an extra pair of skis and poles, as well an extra tech binding, in case someone breaks one)
- Personal medical kit
- 1 or 2 liter(s) water bottle and/or thermos
- Camera!
- \*\*\* Take your ski boots in hand luggage (if possible) because skis can get lost in air freight. It's pretty easy to arrange skis but it's better to have your own boots!





# Japow Ski Safari 2024

## **Skiing vs Snowboarding**

We are primarily looking for AT and telemark skiers, but snowboarders with deep experience in splitboarding who are 100% confident they can keep up with a group of skiers at transitions, crossing flats etc are also welcome.

## **Ability Level**

A pre-requisite for this trip is being an expert level skier or rider, with significant backcountry experience, specifically in powder. It is DEEP in Japan. If unsure of your preparedness for this trip, please inquire with Mark to discuss.

## **Terrain**

Japan has everything from resort side country to backcountry glade skiing to high altitude above treeline alpine skiing on volcanoes.

## **Avalanche hazard**

The primary avalanche problems are wind slab and storm slab. Your guides will control the risk through careful terrain choices. When in doubt, we will avoid avalanche terrain and find our powder on low angle slopes in the trees.

Hokkaido has an avalanche bulletin, where you can learn more:

[http://nadare.jp/avalanche\\_informations/1611](http://nadare.jp/avalanche_informations/1611)

## **COMMUNICATION**

There is good mobile phone coverage and internet service in Hokkaido. Please inquire with your carrier for rates and fees.

## **COVID 19t**

Currently you do not need to be vaccinated to enter Japan. There is a Japanese Health Declaration that needs to be filled out before entry to the country. We will keep you informed of any changes before travel.





# Japow Ski Safari 2024

## **VISAS**

**No visa is required for trips to Japan.**

## **HEALTH/FITNESS**

All travelers need to be in good physical health in order to participate. If, in the opinion of the guide, any participant is unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to themselves and/or the rest of the group, we reserve the right to exclude them from all or part of a trip, without refund. We therefore ask that you realistically self-assess your physical ability to complete the trip as described. Please consult with your doctor if you have any doubts.

A typical day of touring will be 6-8 hours, and anywhere from 2,000-4,000 feet of vertical. With two guides, there is always the option to make a shorter day for yourself. We have worked with diverse ski groups in the past and we are skilled at using the guides at our disposal to make sure everyone is able to have the experience they are looking for.

## **PREPARATION**

While no specific physical preparation is required for this trip, to get the most out of this once in a lifetime experience, a better than average fitness level is recommended. Of course, the best way to get into shape for skiing... is skiing!





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## ISSUES ON YOUR TRIP

While we always endeavor to provide the best possible experience, due to the nature of travel and the areas we visit sometimes things can and do go wrong. Should any issue occur while you are on your trip it is imperative that you discuss this with Mark straight away so that we can do our best to rectify the problem and mitigate any potential negative impacts during the rest of your trip.

## RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

We believe strongly in low impact, or rather, positive impact tourism. Broadly speaking this means that we try to minimize the negative aspects of tourism on the local cultures and environments that we visit and highlight the positive aspects.

## LAUNDRY

Laundry service is available for a fee at your hotel.

## Tipping

If you feel that any of your guides have gone above and beyond, tipping is appreciated—but never expected.





# Japow Ski Safari 2024

## Booking Conditions and Insurance

We will make our absolute best effort to deliver six days of quality skiing, but participants should appreciate and acknowledge that backcountry skiing is weather and conditions dependent and like any trip to the mountains ***flexibility and a willingness to roll with the punches is essential***. The itinerary may need to be changed without notice for reasons that are beyond our control, such as inclement weather, ice-conditions, avalanche hazard or other unpredictable or unforeseeable circumstances. ***The guides will have the final say on all decisions affecting safety and itinerary and this must be accepted by all participants***. As we all know, backcountry skiing can be dangerous and requires above average fitness and good health. It is the responsibility of all participants to ensure that they obtain proper and detailed medical advice. In case of a medical problem arising during the trip, which results in medical expenses—including but not limited to costs for evacuation with use of aircraft and repatriation—the responsibility for payment of these costs belongs solely to the respective participant.

We STRONGLY SUGGEST that participants ensure that such eventualities are covered by **travel insurance**. We recommend Travel Guard ([www.travelguard.com](http://www.travelguard.com)). Please inquire with them directly for details. If for any reason an incident is not covered by travel insurance, the responsibility still remains with the participant. Be aware that a normal travel policy may not cover you for some geographical areas and there may be exclusions for "hazardous sports," which may include climbing, skiing and mountaineering (especially in remote areas). Before arrival, participants must provide the name, address and telephone numbers for emergency contacts.