

ASAHIKAWA INFO

September 2026, Volume 357



Asahidake, Hokkaido's Tallest Mountain (8/9/2026)



Scan to register!



K-Style Day

Fun traditional Korean games as seen on Netflix like Ttakji-chigi followed by a Korean potluck! Enjoy some fun games and some delicious Korean food during this collaboration event by the Asahikawa International Committee (AIC) and the Asahikawa Japan-Korea Friendship Association : K-Style Day!

When: 9/13 (Sun) (11:00 AM~1:30 PM) **Where:** Asahikawa International Center
First Half: Traditional Games (11:00 AM~12:30 PM) **Capacity:** 40 people
Second Half: Korean Food Potluck (12:30 PM~1:30 PM) **Cost:** ¥300
(Bring a dish to share!)

Nihongo Lounge

Looking to practice your Japanese speaking skills? Make new friends with local Japanese? Or just to even chat with new people? Come join us for our monthly Nihongo lounge!



When: 9/16 (Wed) 6:00 PM~ 7:00 PM
Where: Asahikawa International Center, Lounge
Cost: FREE

NOTE: No registrations needed!



Fun Fridays

Connect with the English speakers of Asahikawa! This English conversation event is welcome to beginners and native speakers! Have fun speaking English with us!

When: 9/11 (Fri), 9/25 (Fri)
(final sessions for the summer)
Time: 1:30 PM ~ 2:30 PM; 6:30 PM ~ 8:30 PM
(Evening only on 9/11)
Where: Asahikawa International Center; Conference Room 1
Cost: Only ¥2,000 (for all afternoon OR evening sessions)

NOTE: Fluent English speaking volunteers also wanted!

Check out our website and social media for information regarding the events above.

For further information or to register for events, contact:
Asahikawa International Committee (AIC)
Address: Asahikawa International Center Fesael Asahikawa 7F,
1-jo-dori 8-chome, Asahikawa 070-0031
Tel: (0166) 25-7491 Fax: (0166) 23-4924
Email: asahikawainternationalcenter@gmail.com
Website: <https://asahikawaic.jp/en/>



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One Point Japanese

抜群 (ばつぐん) - outstanding; excellent; unmatched; surpassed; distinguished (slang)

Example Sentence:

レオ: 日本語(にほんご) に関 (かん) して、
カールさんは**抜群 (ばつぐん)** ですよ!

Leo: Carl is quite **excellent** at Japanese!

The opinions expressed in the essays are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the AIC or the City of Asahikawa.

My First Step on the Summit

By Saki M.



Climbing to the Peak



At the Top of Asahidake

Do you like mountain climbing?

Today, I want to share the story of my very first hike.

I've always loved nature; it's my ultimate source of energy. Growing up, family camping trips were my favorite, and back in elementary school, I was the kind of kid who could play forever in a lush green park during summer vacation. Even now, I love going for walks. Whenever I feel mentally drained, I head to a peaceful, nature-filled spot to walk, sit, and refresh my mind.

Despite this deep love for the outdoors, I had never actually tried true mountain climbing. Why? For one simple reason: it seemed dangerous. I always felt like it was a high-stakes activity where you risk your life. I definitely didn't want to lose my life on a mountain, so even though walking on trails sounded fun, I never seriously considered reaching a summit.

But in early August, an unexpected text came from a former coworker: "Want to climb Mount Asahidake?"

When I saw the planned route—an 11-kilometer loop taking nearly seven hours—my instant reaction was, "No way." It looked far too intense for me. However, they skillfully persuaded me, assuring me I'd be fine, and before I knew it, I was standing at the Asahidake Ropeway station. The main reason I decided to take the leap was that my companion was a highly experienced climber. I figured if anything went wrong, he would know exactly what to do.

And so, my seven-hour hike began.

The verdict? It was an incredibly blissful experience. I had the absolute best time!

Of course, my body was exhausted, and my legs suffered from pretty intense muscle soreness for days afterward. But the scenery I saw while walking up Asahidake was breathtakingly beautiful from start to finish. With just our group and the occasional hiker passing by, we had all the space we needed to truly immerse ourselves in nature.

Every few steps, the landscape transformed completely, revealing a whole new side of the mountain. I was so filled with awe that I didn't even have time to feel tired. We scrambled up rugged, rocky paths and carefully navigated loose, sandy slopes that kept my whole body tense. It was seven hours of feeling the mountain with every fiber of my being.

I used my smartphone only to snap photos of the gorgeous surroundings. The rest of the time was spent chatting with my companions and soaking in the environment. It was the perfect digital detox. Nowadays, both our work and personal lives are constantly flooded with the latest digital updates. This trip reminded me just how wonderful it is to occasionally immerse yourself in the natural world.

Oh, and I have to say—eating a rice ball at the summit was absolute heaven!

I hope you all have a wonderful September, whether you're trying something new or heading up a mountain yourself.

Fall in Asahidake and Kurodake

By John M.



Enjoying the foliage is a must-do in central Hokkaido! The foliage usually takes place from mid-September to mid-October, with the timing varying based on elevation. The Taisetsu Mountain Range is the very first area in all of Japan to be painted in crimson and gold during the fall season.

Asahidake for the Full Outdoor Experience

There is no better way to enjoy the foliage than being right underneath all the beautiful autumn colors at the Higashikawa Youth Campground (東川町青少年野営場). At the campsite, you will be surrounded by beautiful Japanese white birch, Sakhalin firs, and plenty of local vegetation and wildlife. The campsite offers bathrooms and usable faucets, which makes it very beginner-friendly too! What a perfect place to enjoy the foliage and the moon-viewing season. The campground is open until the end of September, so visit while you still can!

To experience the breathtaking views, head up Asahidake via the ropeway or through the hiking trails to see the magnificent mountainscape in colors of amber, lush green, and gold. Once you reach Sugatami Station, there is a 1-hour, 1.7 km roundtrip walking course where you can pass by several ponds, such as Kagami Pond and Sugatami Pond. The fall season offers a fresh view of Asahidake, with many of the alpine flora transforming during this brief season.



Climbing Kurodake in the Fall



Higashikawa Youth Campground

Kurodake and Sounkyo for the Views and More!

A personal favorite of mine is the Kurodake and Sounkyo area. It is so lovely that I cannot help but go back every year just to enjoy it! Sounkyo is a range of gorges in the Kamikawa area where you can admire the massive rock walls and unique geographical features of the region. During the fall season, the area transforms into beautiful hues of orange and red, further enhancing the already majestic scenery. Floating autumn leaves on the Ishikari River, the roar of the Ryusei and Ginga waterfalls dressed in amber and gold, and the picturesque scenes of Kurodake make it an excellent location to enjoy the changing of the season.

After a full day of taking in the wondrous sights of Kurodake, Sounkyo has several resorts where you can soak in an onsen while enjoying the autumn scenery. At night, the hot spring town lights up the surrounding trees to highlight the vibrant colors. Visitors can enjoy this fantastic light-up as well as motion-sensor activated projections, which make for a fun time and an excellent photo spot!

Asahikawa's Largest Food Festival: Tabe Marché

By John M.



This photo was taken by the Asahikawa Tourism Convention Association

Aromas of sizzling meat and seafood fill the air as the streets come alive with vendors and food lovers. With an abundance of delicious meals, desserts, and drinks across three days, this is Asahikawa's annual Tabe Marché

About Tabe Marché

Tabé Marché is a play on words combining the Japanese word taberu (食べる), meaning “to eat”, and the French word marché, meaning “market”. First held in 2010, this annual event attracts around 200 vendors from across Hokkaido and more than 800,000 visitors from around the world!

Stretching over 1.6 km from the Asahikawa Station area down Heiwa-dori Shopping Street, the festival brings together vendors from across the region. You'll find a massive variety of unique foods, from deep-fried jingisukan karaage to sweet kumquats from Minamisatsuma in southern Japan! Head inside Asahikawa Station for an array of drinks and desserts, including treats made with locally sourced honey and milk, alongside artisan cheesecakes and fresh breads. Come visit Tabe Marché for a day packed with incredible eats—and stick around for the evening event, where select stalls stay open until 8:00 PM.

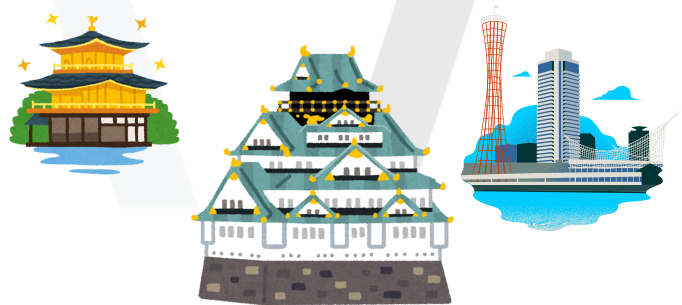
Details

When 9/19 (Sat) ~ 9/21 (Mon)
10:00 AM ~ 6:00 PM
(Until 5:00 PM on the last day)

Where Asahikawa Station Square
Heiwa-Dori Shopping Street

NOTE: Evening Tabe Marché will be available in certain areas for the 19th and the 20th until 8:00 PM

Asahikawa Airport Revives its Airline Route to Osaka



Direct travel to Kansai is getting a major upgrade! Since 2009, direct flights to Osaka were restricted to a brief summer window in July and August. On August 18, 2026, JAL announced it will revive year-round daily service between Asahikawa Airport and Osaka's Itami Airport starting October 25, 2026. The Osaka-bound flight leaves Asahikawa daily at 11:10 AM, following an incoming 8:45 AM departure from Itami.

For travelers in central Hokkaido, this means direct, hassle-free access to Osaka, Kyoto, Nara, Hyogo, and Wakayama—no long drives to New Chitose Airport or layovers in Tokyo required!

Daily service starts on October 25, 2026

ASAHIKAWA→ITAMI 11:10 AM Departure ITAMI→ASAHIKAWA 8:45 AM Departure