Asahi-dake to Kuro-dake Traverse

Hiking Map 1:25000

1cm on the map equals approx. 250m on the ground
Magnetic declination: 9° 28' W

Map by hokkadowilds.org CC BY-SA 4.0

Japanese Map Glossary

Symbol Key

Route (time between points)
National Highway
Prefectural Road
Municipal Road
Minor Municipal Road
Walkway
Bus route (bus stop)

Contour lines (100m, 10m)
Power transmission lines
Rocks/cliff
Onsen (hot spring)
Fumerole
Highway number
Designated campsite
Hut

Romaji		Kanji		English
bunki		分岐
cho
dake/mine		町
eki
hinangoya
ike
kawa/gawa
koko
ko/mizumi
kyo
numa
onsen
sawa
taira/daira
tani/dani
taki
toge
yama/san/zen

town
peak
station
shelter
pond
river
crater
lake
gorge
pond
hot spring
stream
plateau
valley
waterfall
pass
mountain

National Highway
Municipal Road
Minor Municipal Road
Walkway
Bus route (bus stop)

Trees/shrubs
Rocks/cliff
Onsen (hot spring)

Looking for more context and information? This map draws inspiration from the only English-language printed map of the upper Daisetsu Range - buy on Amazon Japan here: http://bit.ly/daisetsu. Also available in stores.
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With ropeway access at either end, this high-level traverse from Asahidake (旭岳, 2291m) to Kurodake (黒岳, 1984m) is one of the most popular hikes in the national park. Indeed, it is known as the Ginza route (after Tokyo’s famous shopping area) for the numbers of people on the trail at weekends and holidays. But don’t let this put you off; there are expansive views as the trail skirts the rim of the dramatic Ohachidaira crater, beautiful alpine flowers in season, snowfields to negotiate and a mountain refuge to visit as you cross the roof of Hokkaido. The route can be done in either direction.

GENERAL NOTES
This hike can be done in a day in either direction. This description starts from Asahidake and gets the more exposed section done earlier in the day. Alternatively, you could camp at one of the two designated campsites along the way or stay a night in the Kurodake Ishimuro Hut. If starting from Souunkyo and wishing to return there, the walk around the rim of Ohachidaira from Kurodake is a great day out (7-8hrs) which joins the Hokuchindake and Hokkaidake sections described here.

The main season for summer hiking in Daisetsuzan is July and August; before and after this you need to be prepared and equipped for snow on the ground and/or falling from the sky. The base for this climb is at Asahidake Onsen, a small collection of lodgings and hot springs below the ropeway up the mountain. Accommodation options include a youth hostel and a campsite as well as local Japanese style pensions and hotels. The upper ropeway station at Sugatami has toilets and a small restaurant. There are no safe water sources beyond this point.

In high season (June-late October) the ropeway operates every 15 minutes from 06:30 up to 17:30 down (08:00 – 17:00 later in the season – be sure to check the schedule) and costs 1800yen one way (asahidake.hokkaido.jp). The route finishes by taking the Kurodake chairlift and then the ropeway down to Souunkyo Gorge where there are more hotels and hot springs, a Visitor Centre and bus connections to Asahikawa. The ropeway is operated by Rinyu Kanko (01658 53031, rinyu.co.jp) and runs from 06:00 – 19:00 till August 20, and 06:00 – 18:00 into September (but check to confirm current schedule and prices); Cost is 1100yen one way and 400yen for the chairlift (this finishes a bit earlier than the ropeway so check the time beforehand).

If making an overnighter of it then tents can be pitched at the wild and windy Ura-asahi campground behind Asahidake (no facilities, water is obtained from runoff from a snowfield and must be boiled or filtered) and beside the Kurodake Ishimuro Hut. Or you can stay in the hut itself though it may be full in high season.

ROUTE TIMING AND NOTES
The route is well defined with occasional splashes of yellow paint on rocks and roped areas to keep people from trampling rare alpine plants.
Trail junctions are marked by large signposts (in Japanese). From the summit of Asahidake take the trail east heading to Mamiyadake (間宮岳, 2185m, about 1 hour) down past the Ura-asahi designated camping area (no facilities). Early in the season this descent will be over a large snowfield. From Mamiyadake you have a choice of taking either the northern or southern rim of Ohachidaira crater. Views are spectacular from both sides. If going north, take the trail to Nakadake Bunki (中岳分岐) and on to Hokuchin Bunki (北鎮分岐) – from here you can nip up and down Hokuchindake (北鎮岳 2244m), Hokkaido’s second highest peak (about 30 mins round trip). Then continue east to the Kurodake Ishimuro Hut (黒岳石室), descending a large snowfield early in the season (the trail should be marked with red dye but take care in mist). The southern variant is slightly shorter and takes you over Hokkaidake (北海岳, 2149m), and includes a river crossing that could mean wet feet after heavy rain or when the snowmelt is in full swing. Allow about 3hrs to get to the Kurodake Ishimuro Hut via the northern route (including climbing Hokuchindake) and about 2hrs if going via Hokkaidake. Both trails meet again just before the hut. From the hut you make the short 20 min climb up Kurodake (黒岳) then descend the switchback path northeast to the chairlift down to Sounkyo (層雲峡, 50mins). Be careful not to miss the last one from here or the ropeway below. There are big signs warning of how much it will cost you (lots!) if they have to run it again just for you!...

**SAFETY NOTES**

On a fine summer day with hordes of other walkers around you’ll wonder what all the fuss is about, but this is a dangerous place in bad weather with real risks of hypothermia for poorly equipped hikers. Conditions can change quickly, it is very exposed to the wind and the upper slopes can be much colder than down at the lower ropeway station. Carry appropriate gear. The ridges are broad and open so it is possible to become disoriented in mist. Below Hokuchindake the route descends a snowfield and is marked in season with red dye. On the Hokkaidake variant you cross the river that flows out of Ohachidaira crater. This is normally straightforward but could be difficult in periods of peak snowmelt or after heavy rain. Be aware that bears live throughout the national park. There are usually rangers at the upper ropeway station at Sugatami who can offer advice on trail conditions etc.

**ONSEN NEARBY**

Both trailheads have a number of hot springs that take day visitors, including the Shirakabaso (白 trava) youth hostel in Asahidake Onsen (location | 800yen per person) and Kurodake no Yu (黒岳の湯) in Sounkyo (location | 600yen per person). This place also serves delicious Italian food (pasta and pizza) in the ground-floor restau rant.

**TRANSPORT**

By car: Easy road access to both ropeway terminals from the Asahikawa direction. There is ample parking in the large car parks by the ropeway stations, some may charge fees.

**Public transport** | To Asahidake Onsen: From JR Asahikawa Train Station, there is a bus (Ideyugo いわ湯号), operated by the Asahikawa Denki Kido Bus company (tel: 0166 23 3355), that runs to the Asahidake-Onsen spa area. As of November 2018, there were four buses per day there (07:11, 09:41, 13:11, 16:24) and four returning (09:30, 12:00, 15:30, 18:00). The fare is around 1430yen one way, and it takes around 1 hour 40 minutes. To Sounkyo: From JR Asahikawa Station and JR Kamikawa Station there are buses (signed 層雲峡行き) operated by Dohoku Bus company (0166 23 4161, dohokubus.com). There are seven buses a day in each direction and the journey takes about 2 hrs from Asahikawa, 2100yen one way.

**DAISETSUZAN GRADE SYSTEM**

**GRADE 4** - Trails with challenging terrain. Trails with difficulties in predicting sudden changes of weather due to topography. Grade-4 trails require an overnight stay in the mountains due to long distance from the trailhead to the nearest hut, of one hut to another. The trails require hikers/trekkers to have a high-level of skill in negotiating storm winds on trails above the timberline and crossing torrents along valley. Grade-4 trails have a priority to conserve a natural atmosphere, so hikers/trekkers need to have risk management ability and a high-level of risk assessment ability.

(From http://bit.ly/daisetsu-g)
**PRINTING INSTRUCTIONS**

**STEP 1**
Load your printer with A4 printer paper (210mm x 297mm). If you've only got Letter size (215.9mm x 279.4 mm), just follow the instructions below. You'll achieve an accurate scale, but the map will be clipped a little at the top and bottom.

**STEP 2**
Open the print window by clicking on File > Print (or hitting Ctrl + P on your keyboard).

**STEP 3**
Make sure “Actual Size” is selected.

**STEP 4**
For double-sided printing, select "Print on both sides of paper”.

**STEP 5**
For best results, select the highest quality print option available on your printer (settings will vary).

**STEP 6**
You won't need this instructions page, so just select the pages that don't include this instruction sheet.

**STEP 7**
Click "Print".

**ORIGAMI INSTRUCTIONS**

**Figure 1.** Ensure "Actual Size", and Pages 1-4 are selected (Windows).

**PLEASE PRINT AT ‘ACTUAL SIZE’ (NO SCALING)**

The 1:25,000 scale used in the map is accurate if the PDF is printed without scaling (i.e., ACTUAL SIZE). Follow the instructions on this page to ensure an accurate rendering of the scale.

1. Title
2. Map
3. Title
4. Title
5. Title