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.
Central Hokkaido

The Italian Route

These peaks lie to the east of Asahidake in the main Daisetsuzan massif. Aka-dake 赤岳 (2078m) is at the edge of a broad stone plateau well known for alpine flowers, while the lower slopes have spectacular autumn foliage in September. Hakuun-dake 白雲岳 (2230m) is the third highest mountain in Hokkaido with extensive views north and south over the whole range. Nestled in a bowl below the southern slopes is the squat red Hakuundake Refuge, a wonderful place to stay or camp if you want to make an overnighter of it. From here you can also loop round to Midoridake 緑岳 (2020m) and thus bag a colourful green (mido), white (haku) and red (aka) circuit – the Italian Route!

LOCATION

This hike starts and finishes at 1500m from the trailhead at Ginsendai 翠嵐台 on the eastern flank of the main Daisetsuzan massif in central Hokkaido, about an hour’s drive from the hot spring complex at Souunkyo (湯雲峽).

GENERAL NOTES

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. September is popular on Akadake for the beautiful autumn foliage and can be busy. This hike starts from the trailhead at Ginsendai, which has no facilities beyond a public toilet, water source (though to be safe it is better to bring enough with you; don’t rely on this trail head water source to be running) and a cabin for park rangers where you can sign the logbook. The nearest accommodation, shops and other facilities are at Souunkyo, about an hour away by car or bus.

ROUTE TIMING AND NOTES

6 hours for the trailhead return trip if only visiting Akadake and Hakuundake, but you’ll need to allow 8-9 hours for the full loop via the three-colored peaks of Aka-dake, Hakuun-dake (and Refuge Hut) and Midori-dake. In the latter option, consider staying over at the Hakuun-dake Refuge Hut and make it a two-day overnight trip. The route is well defined with occasional splash 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 trailhead at 1480m ascend the clear trail via a series of snowfields and flower fields to the summit rocks on the stoney plateau of Aka-dake (赤岳, 2078m; 2.5 – 3hrs). Take the trail that continues on over the broad plateau of Kozumi-dake (6) before 2158m) to the junction at Hakkundane Bunki (白雲岳分岐) 45mins). From here it is a half hour or so to the summit of Hakuun-dake (白雲岳, 2230m). Return back to the junction then decide if you have the time and energy to head south to the Hakuun-dake Refuge Hut (白雲岳避難小屋) and Midori-dake (緑岳, 2020m) – this will add an extra 2-3 hours to the day. If not, or the weather is bad, reverse your steps back to Aka-dake and the trailhead at Ginsendai (翠嵐台) (2.5hrs from the junction). If you decide to extend the day and visit the Refuge, drop down south to the hut in 20mins, then east over a snowfield (careful in mist early in the season though a rope marked the trail when we were there) to the flat ridge of Midori-dake. From here turn south to the summit (about an hour from the hut). From Midori-dake head back north to rejoin the return trail at Kozumi-dake (1.5hrs).

TRANSPORT

By car: Ginsendai is approached by a well-graded gravel road branching on Route 273 south of the junction with the main east-west Route 39 that runs through Souunkyo. There is a large parking area at the trailhead. In the second half of September (autumn leaves viewing season) this road is closed to private vehicles and it is necessary to take the shuttle bus operated by Kamikawa Town that runs regularly from Souunkyo Youth Hostel (950yen one way). You can also catch this from a car parking area by the lake on Route 273 (500yen one way). There is an extra 20yen administration fee. The road may also be closed in periods of bad weather.

Public transport: To Souunkyo: From JR Asahikawa Station and JR Kamikawa Station there are buses (signed 山鹿峡行き) 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. To Ginsendai: Between 1 July and 30 September two bus services run in each direction between Souunkyo and Ginsendai, taking about an hour. In the 2018 summer season, the bus number was 83, leaving the Souunkyo Youth Hostel at 6am and 2:45pm daily, returning from the Ginsendai bus stop at 7:30am and 3:30pm. Up to date timetables are available during the summer season at Dohoku Bus’s website (in Japanese).

SAFETY NOTES

This is a dangerous place in bad weather with real risks of hypothermia for poorly equipped hikers. Conditions and visibility 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. Be aware that bears live throughout the national park.

Onsen Nearby

Kurodake no Yu (黒岳の湯) in Souunkyo (600yen per person). This place also serves delicious Italian food (pasta and pizza) in the ground floor restaurant.

Daisetsuzan Grade System

Grade 2 - Trails to touch beautiful nature | Short-distance trails with good access to and from a trailhead. Grade-2 trails have steps and boardwalks that provide comfort underfoot. A certain level of risk management ability is necessary.

Grade 3 - Trails to experience beautiful nature | Trails with good access to and from the trailhead, which can be done as a day-walk. Grade-3 trails have a priority to conserve a natural atmosphere rather than provide comfort underfoot. A certain level of risk management ability is necessary.

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 from 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/daisetsug)
**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 pages 1-2.

**STEP 7**
Click “Print”.

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**ORIGAMI INSTRUCTIONS**

1. **TITLE**  
   MAP

2. TITLE

3. TITLE

4. TITLE

5. TITLE

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