

Maetokachi (Kabawara Ridge)















Maetokachi (前十勝, 1,790m) another classic staple for backcountry skiing in the Tokachi Ranges. Its broad, plank-like north-western face is a veritable playground of wide gullies and snow-fields. Here, we outline the classic Kabawara Ridge route, which is the most-traveled route on the mountain for backcountry skiing. Like Sandan-yama nearby, the route is accessed from the hopelessly amazing Hakuginso Lodge - a mountain lodge boasting to be the "mecca of powder" with everything you could possibly want: onsen hotsprings, a large communal kitchen, a large basement drying room, friendly staff, and only 3,250yen a night.

LOCATION

Maetokachi is situated in the Tokachi mountain range, in central Hokkaido. The start location - the Hakuginso Lodge - is about 3 hours drive east from Sapporo, or 5hrs by train and bus.

ONLINE ROUTE GUIDE

Please visit the full route guide for GPS file, interactive map, and extra safety notes: https://hokw.jp/maetok



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MAP, TEXT, PHOTOS I Rob Thomson

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GENERAL NOTES

The broad northwest facing face of Maetokachi is a veritible playground in the winter. It has endless options for scoping out nice powder staches, with multiple gullies running down the slope. This route climbs along the Kabawara Ridge (カバワラ尾根), through the scorched stumps of a has-been forest. At the top of the ridge, it is up to the skier as to how they get down. Take the ridge as a safest-of-the-lot option. Head further to the skiers's right to find some of the more protected gullies.

ROUTE TIMING AND NOTES

This route is not marked. About 3 hours from Hakuginso Lodge to the Sandan-yama summit, and another one hour back down. From the Hakuginso Lodge, take a hard left at the base of the main ski slope through the forest on the left. This will lead to a steep drop down a gully before the climb up the Kabawara Ridge starts in earnest. Follow the ridge up to around the 1700m mark. Don't approach the crater - the gases can be fatal. Take the ridge back down, or scout out your own fresh tracks in any of the countless volcanic gullies to the skier's right.

TRANSPORT

By car: Hakuginso Lodge has ample parking in their carpark. If not staying at the lodge, cars/campers can be parked overnight at the lodge carpark for a nominal fee.

Public transport: From JR Kami-Furano Train Station (上富良野駅), there is a bus, run by the Kami-Furano Town Bus company, that runs to the Hakuginso Lodge at Fukiage Onsen. You'll want to catch the *tokachidake-onsen-yuki* (十勝岳温泉行き) bus from the train station and get off at the Hakuginso (白銀荘) bus stop. As of February 2019, there were three buses per day there (08:52, 12;49, 16:31). The fare is around 500yen one way, and it takes around 30 minutes.

SAFETY NOTES

As mentioned above, the entire face of Maetokachi is somewhat of a playground. Just watch out for exposed rocks on the northern end of the face and near the ferrules. The altitudes in these areas are much higher than the snowy playgrounds elsewhere in Hokkaido – be extra respectful of mother nature here. As with any above-the-treeline winter routes in Hokkaido, this route is particularly susceptible to high winds and bone-chilling temperatures. At the lodge it is regularly below -15°C, so with wind-chill at Maetokachi's peak, it will quite happily get to below -25°C. Don't take this mountain lightly.

ONSEN NEARBY

The Hakuginso Lodge is an onsen – a very nice one at that. They charge 600yen for day visitors. 10 minutes walk down the road from the lodge is the natural, free, mixed-gender Fukiage Onsen (吹上温泉露天風呂). The Ryounkaku Onsen (凌雲閣, 600yen per person – accessible by same bus that gets you to Hakuginso Lodge) has an incredible view, and they also offer lunch. ■



Details: Fully serviced mountain lodge. Massive onsen attached with mixed bathing area (swimsuits OK). Full self-catering kitchen, bunk beds, basement drying room and ski racks. Basic foodstuffs available.

Capacity: 70 persons. Cost: 3,250yen per night.

Contact: Hakuginso Lodge (吹上温泉保養センター 白銀荘), TEL: 0167-45-4126.

Booking details: Lodge busy on weekends - booking highly recommended.

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 achive 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).

STFP 3

Make sure "Actual Size" is selected.

STFP 4

For double-sided printing, select "Print on both sides of paper".

STFP 5

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

STEP 6

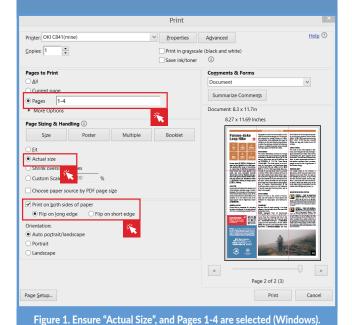
You won't need this instructions page, so just select the pages that don't include this instruction sheet.

STEP 7

Click "Print".

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.



ORIGAMI INSTRUCTIONS

