



# Santo-san (Horokanai)

幌加内三頭山 Ski Tour Map 1:25000



0 250 500 750 1000 m

1cm on the map equals 250m on the ground  
Magnetic declination: 9° 44' W

Map by [hokkaidowilds.org](http://hokkaidowilds.org) CC BY SA 2019/12/07

## Symbol Key (some may not be present)

	Route (time between points)		Contour lines (100m, 10m)
	National Highway		Power transmission lines
	Prefectural Road		Trees/shrubs
	Municipal Road		Rocks/cliffs
	Minor Municipal Road		Onsen (hot spring)
	Walkway		Fumerole
	Designated campsite		Highway number
			Hut



**ONLINE ROUTE GUIDE** - Please visit the full route guide for route description, GPS file, and safety notes: <https://hokw.jp/santo>

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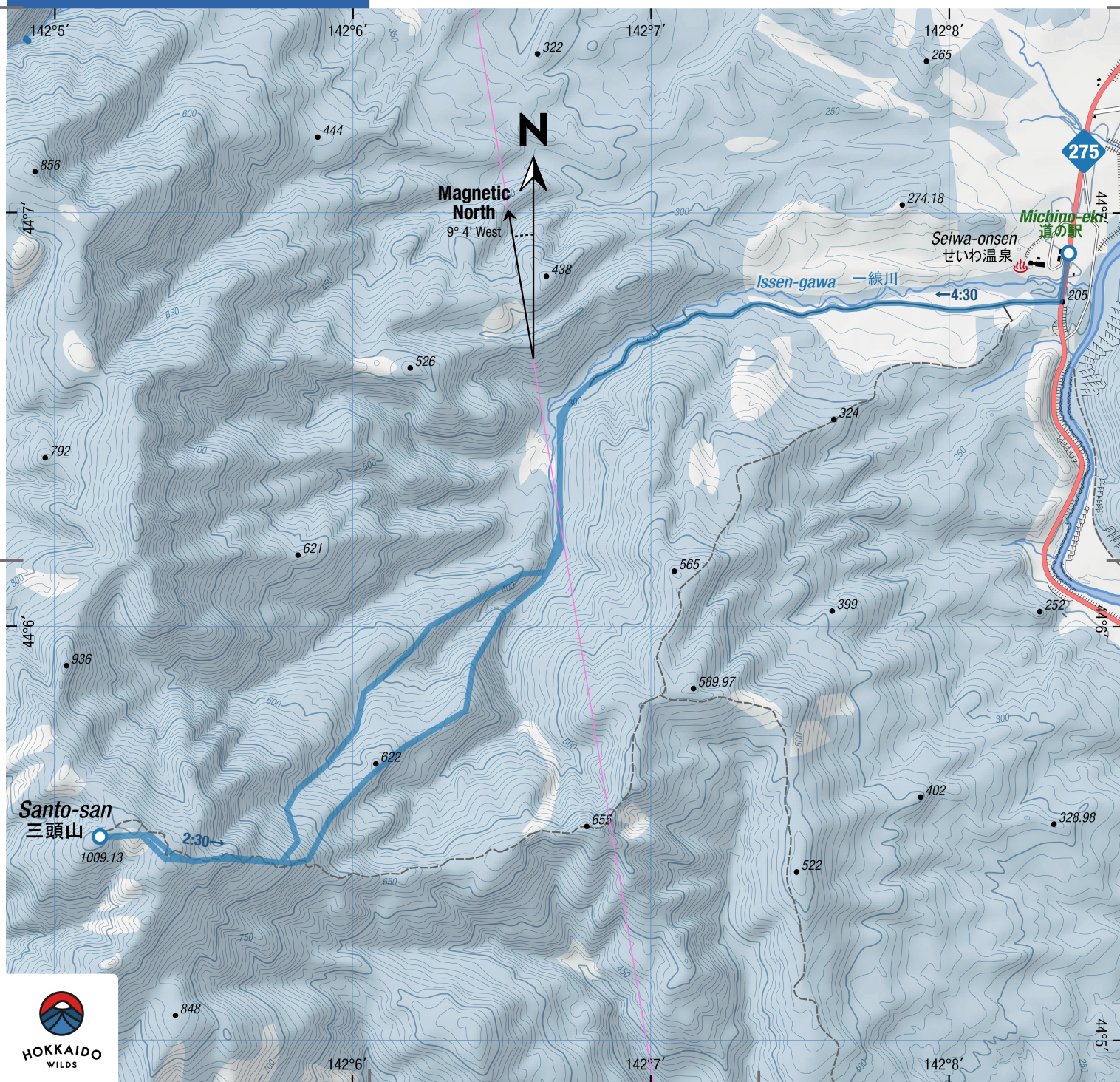


## Japanese Map Glossary

Romaji	Kanji	English
bunki cho	分岐町	junction town
dake/mine eki	岳/峯 駅	peak station
goya/koya	小屋	hut
hinangoya	避難小屋	shelter
ike	池	pond
kawa/gawa	川	river
kako	火口	crater
ko/mizumi	湖	lake
kyo	峡	gorge
numa	沼	pond
onsen	温泉	hot spring
sawa	沢	stream
taira/daira	平	plateau
tani/dani	谷	valley
taki	滝	waterfall
toge	峠	pass
yama/san/zan	山	mountain

この地図の作成に当たっては、国土地理院長の承認を得て、同院発行の基礎地図情報及び電子地形図（タイル）を使用した。（承認番号平30情使、第867号）。また、1/25,000植生図GISデータ（環境省生物多様性センターも使用し、hokkaidowilds.orgが作成・加工したものである）。

We created this map using the Geospatial Information Authority of Japan digital basemap (tiles) and basemap data, with the Authority director's permission (no. Hei-30-joshi, dai-867go). We also modified 1:25,000 scale vegetation map data created by the Biodiversity Center of Japan (<http://gis.biodic.go.jp>).





# Santo-zan Ski Touring (Horokanai)



 7hrs Time	 782m Total Climb	 1009m Highest point
 12km Distance	 8/10 Difficulty	 Dec-Apr Best season

As one of the highest peaks in one of Hokkaido's coldest locales, Santo-zan in Horokanai (幌加内三頭山, 1009m) is a challenging peak for experienced ski tourers seeking an athletic, steep, and engaging day trip. While only just over 1000m in altitude, Santo-zan (literally 'three-headed mountain') requires a good level of fitness, technical uphill skiing ability, and route-finding. The skiing on the northeastern aspect gully is short but steep, the latter aspect a relative rarity in Hokkaido. Expect the same great views as other locales in the area, including across to the majestic Mashike Range to the southwest.

## LOCATION

This winter route up Santo-zan in Horokanai, about 60km north of Asahikawa, starts and finishes at the Seiwa Onsen, about 10km north of central Horokanai Town.

## GENERAL NOTES

As mentioned in other posts about ski routes

in the Horokanai area, backcountry skiers come to this quiet town in winter seeking some of the driest, coldest powder in Hokkaido. The stats don't lie, with the February average low hovering at -15°C. Despite these cold temperatures, on average, 1348cm of snow falls in any given year in Horokanai Town. Compare this to Kutchan's (Niseko) February average low of -10°C. This all adds up to Horokanai and its surrounding hills being one of the most overlooked areas in Hokkaido for great powder skiing.

Most of the action happens in the one long valley, with multiple options in the hills on either side. Santo-zan stands heads and shoulders above all other peaks in the immediate vicinity, but requires a fairly long approach to get to the summit. In summer, there's two routes up to the summit, while the winter route here takes a slightly more ski-friendly approach, only joining with the summer route at around 700m in altitude.

## ROUTE TIMING AND NOTES

This route is not marked. Expect between 4-4.5hrs from Seiwa Onsen to the Santo-zan summit, and another 2.5 hours back down.

If there is enough snow, the Issen-gawa river can be skied over on a snow-bridge, which makes it possible to complete the route without walking along the main road across the bridge. If there is not enough snow to safely cross the river, then walk out the michi-no-eki/onsen main entrance onto the road and walk south along the road to just beyond the bridge (to here). From there, skin along the mostly flat for about 2km. You may be sharing the forestry road with snowmobile tracks. When we did the route, the snowmobile tracks continued up the Issen-gawa river valley, whereas the ski route outlined here climbs on along the gully to the left at around the 3km point, to join with the relatively less steep spur on the climber's left side of the Issen-gawa river gully.

At around the 4km point, kick-turn your way up a short but steep semi-bluff at the head of the main spur which will take you all the way to the summit ridge. After another 1km along this spur, traverse around to the main summit ridge which will take you past a large radio repeater board. Somewhere around here may be a good opportunity to check snow stability for a possible steep descent into the compact Issen-gawa catchment bowl.

Santo-zan literally means 'three headed mountain', and the reason for this name becomes apparent as one approaches the summit. The plateau-like summit area is a mess of topography, with the actual summit at the very distant-far left.

On the descent, the choice of where (or indeed if) to drop into the main Issen-gawa catchment bowl will depend largely on steep skiing experience

and snow stability - only attempt to do so if the latter is stable. A slide in this area would bury a victim very deep. Beyond the main catchment area, the valley quickly transforms into a deep gully, so at around 500m in altitude, traverse around to the spur on the skier's left of the gully. Ski this, through relatively dense trees, to its terminus, where a short, steep drop awaits to return the skier to the forestry road. The final 3.5km skin along a mostly flat forestry road is a somewhat bitter comedown from the euphoria of a steep summit descent, but at least you're skiing straight towards an onsen, with the option of a hot meal too.

## TRANSPORT

**By car:** There is plenty of parking at the Seiwa Onsen carpark.

**Public transport:** The JR Hokkaido bus that runs from Fukagawa JR Station to Nayoro Station conveniently makes a stop at the Seiwa Onsen and michi-no-eki. As of March 2019, the earliest bus leaving Fukagawa JR Station was 8:05am. It would take 1 hour 40 minutes on the bus from Fukagawa JR Station to the Reonto-mae (レオント前) bus stop just outside the michi-no-eki at the start of the route, arriving at around 9:45am. This is unlikely to be early enough to safely complete the whole route up to the Santo-zan summit and back. Consider arriving a day ahead and staying at the National Horotachi Ski Area accommodation, the Horotachi-sanso (TEL: 0165-35-3410). The Horotachi-sanso charges 6,500yen per person for one night including dinner and breakfast, or 5,000yen for bed only. They would likely be able to arrange a taxi to take skiers to the onsen early in the morning. The Horotachi-sanso is a 2km walk from the Horokanai bus stop and information center.

## SAFETY NOTES

This route gets an 8/10 for difficulty for good reason. This route up Santo-zan in Horokanai calls for careful and experienced route-finding skills, snow stability assessment knowledge, as well as plenty of fitness and experience to be out in the remote backcountry for up to 7 hours, all in a very cold region of Hokkaido. The route has a couple of very steep sections, one in particular with a long run-out, which will test one's kick-turn abilities and confidence. Make conservative decisions and be quick to turn back if weather conditions deteriorate.

## ONSEN NEARBY

This route starts and finishes at the Seiwa Onsen carpark (500yen per person), so you'll be skiing door-to-door to a natural hot spring. ■

## ONLINE ROUTE GUIDE

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



**Disclaimer** The information on this map was derived from digital databases provided by the Geospatial Information Authority of Japan and the Biodiversity Center of Japan. Care was taken in the creation of this map. HokkaidoWilds.org cannot accept any responsibility for errors, omissions, or positional accuracy. There are no warranties, expressed or implied, including the warranty of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose, accompanying this product. However, notification of any errors will be appreciated.

## MAP, TEXT, PHOTOS | Rob Thomson

[hokkaidowilds.org](http://hokkaidowilds.org) 2019/03/12

MAP FOLD & LAYOUT CONCEPT | Dominika Gan

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## 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".

## 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.

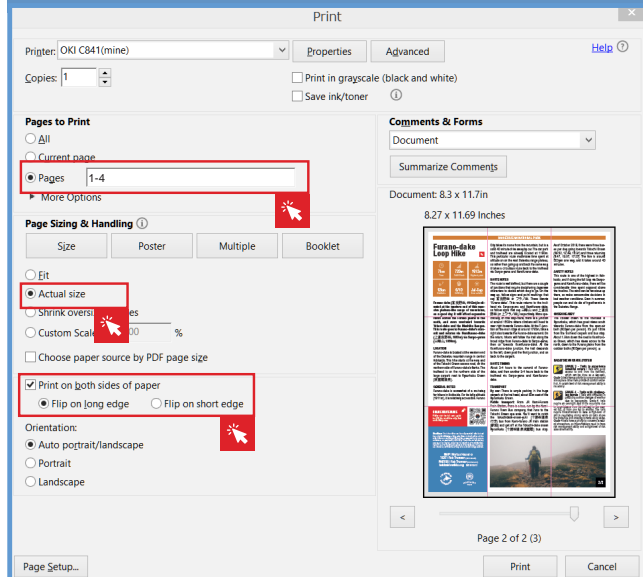


Figure 1. Ensure "Actual Size", and Pages 1-4 are selected (Windows).

## ORIGAMI INSTRUCTIONS

