



Yotei-zan

Shikotsu-Toya National Park

羊蹄山

Ski Touring Map

1:25000



Makkari Route
真狩コース

Kimobetsu Route
喜茂別コース

Kyogoku Route
京極コース

Jinja-no-sawa Route
神社ノ沢コース

Makkimo Route
マッキモコース

Mt. Yotei (i.e., Yotei-zan, 羊蹄山, 1898m) is a near-perfect, free-standing conical volcano just east of the bustling Niseko ski resort area in southern Hokkaido. This impressive mountain is also referred to as Makkari-nupuri in the indigenous Ainu language, or Ezo-Fuji. Yotei-zan's dramatic southeastern aspects offer some of Hokkaido's best backcountry skiing for intermediate- to expert-level backcountry skiers. Here, we outline four established backcountry skiing routes up Yotei-zan. Beyond around 1300m in altitude is solid ski-mountaineering territory, so all times and descriptions here assume skiers will only ascend to the 1300m 'powder line', and descend from there.

Makkari Route

真狩コース



5hrs
Time

1000m
Total Climb

1300m
Highest point

9.5km
Distance

6/10
Difficulty

Dec-May
Best season

Highlights of the south-southwest facing Makkari Route (真狩コース) include skiing from the locally well-known 1000m Terrace, comparatively straight-forward route finding, good access with plenty of parking, and accessibility by public transport.

OVERVIEW
The Yotei-zan Makkari Route is arguably the most popular backcountry skiing route

on this iconic Hokkaido volcano. The route starts climbing in earnest very early, meaning altitude is gained quickly, unlike other routes on the mountain requiring longer flat-land approaches. This comes at the expense, however, of less terrain real-estate for the downhill; on busy weekends, it may be more challenging to find untracked lines. That said, the relatively compact valley makes navigation easy up to the prominent small plateau at 1000m, referred to locally as the Terrace (テラス). Likewise, so long as skiers keep within the main valley below the Terrace, it would be relatively difficult to end up anywhere other than the trailhead on the way down. Like all routes on Yotei-zan, the best skiing is to be had from below around 1300m, just above the treeline.

LOCATION
This ski touring route up Yotei-zan heads up from the Kyogoku Route trailhead on the east-northeast side of the mountain, in Kyogoku town.

Jinja-no-sawa Route

神社ノ沢コース



5hrs
Time

1050m
Total Climb

1300m
Highest point

11km
Distance

6/10
Difficulty

Dec-May
Best season

Highlights of the south facing Jinja-no-sawa Route (神社ノ沢コース) include the world-famous (in Hokkaido) Delta Slope (デルタ斜面), relatively wide-spaced trees right from the outset with an easy forestry road approach, and accessibility by public transport. It's also one of the most direct routes to the crater rim.

OVERVIEW
The Yotei-zan Jinja-no-sawa Route – also known as the Cemetery Route – gives prime access to the locally well-known Delta Slope. This roughly triangular south facing area, fanning out from around 1250m down to 600m, is a smörgåsbord of terrain, with gloriously well-spaced trees. Even on a busy weekend, it is unlikely skiers will struggle to find their own untracked line. Of all the popular routes up Yotei-zan, this route is arguably the most suited to lapping, even if the weather is unsuitable for venturing into the alpine. Invest in a good solid skin track, and lap to your heart's content. Like all routes on Yotei-zan, the most consistent skiing on this route is to be had from below 1300m.

LOCATION

This ski touring route up Yotei-zan heads up from the Makkari Town cemetery, just north of the Makkari village center.

Kimobetsu Route

喜茂別コース



5.5hrs
Time

1000m
Total Climb

1300m
Highest point

10km
Distance

6/10
Difficulty

Dec-May
Best season

Highlights of the Kimobetsu Route (喜茂別コース) include decently wide-spaced trees from the outset, the most direct access to Yotei-zan's highest point (1898m), and wide-open slopes for the downhill.

OVERVIEW
The Yotei-zan Kimobetsu Route (喜茂別コース) is one of this volcano's more popular routes, for good reason – from around 1400m down to 800m is an uncannily plane-like slope that seems to stretch out in all directions. If it wasn't covered in waist-deep fluffy powder, you'd be forgiven to think you're standing on a groomed slope. This route is also the least wooded of all the routes outlined on this page. For the more adventurous, there are also a few gullies to the left and right of the route that will allow for some relatively sheltered couloir-like downhill skiing options in stable snow conditions. Like all routes on Yotei-zan, the most consistent skiing on this route is to be had from below 1300m.

LOCATION
This ski touring route up Yotei-zan heads up from the Kimobetsu Route Hiking Trail, on the eastern side of the mountain, in Kimobetsu Town.

Kyogoku Route

京極コース



5.5hrs
Time

1000m
Total Climb

1350m
Highest point

9km
Distance

6/10
Difficulty

Feb-Apr
Best season

Highlights of the Kyogoku Route (京極コース) include good access to one of the better crater skiing slopes, great views to the north and northeast, challenging vegetation and ridge-line skiing, and good access from

trailhead to the Kyogoku onsen hotspots.

OVERVIEW
The Yotei-zan Kyogoku Route (京極コース) is home to a plethora of tight spurs and gullies, which will please experienced backcountry skiers seeking variation and excitement on the descent. Down low, however, it's also the most tightly wooded route of the more popular Yotei-zan routes, so we'd only attempt this route again in February, once there is a reliable covering of snow. This would be a very direct route to the good southwest aspect crater ski slope when the weather is good. Like all routes on Yotei-zan, the most consistent skiing on this route is to be had from below 1300m..

LOCATION
This ski touring route up Yotei-zan heads up from the Kyogoku Route trailhead on the east-northeast side of the mountain, in Kyogoku town.

Makkimo Route

マッキモコース



5hrs
Time

970m
Total Climb

1300m
Highest point

8km
Distance

6/10
Difficulty

Dec-May
Best season

Highlights of the Makkimo Route (マッキモコース) include one of the more picturesque white birch glades, lower foot-traffic, and excellent skiing on the upper and lower sections of the route, and plenty of parking.

OVERVIEW
The Makkimo Route マッキモコース up Yotei-zan has some of the most picturesque glades of native white birch on the mountain. This route gets its name because it's situated between the Makkari 真狩コース and Kimobetsu Routes 喜茂別コース on Yotei, the iconic free-standing volcano east of Niseko. With plenty of parking at the trailhead, it offers some excellent skiing on the upper and lower portions of the route. The initial flat-land approach is, however, slightly longer and flatter than other routes on the mountain. Like most popular routes up the mountain, the most reliably good skiing is had below around 1300m. Beyond that, be prepared for icy conditions.

LOCATION
This ski touring route up Yotei-zan heads up the southeastern side of the mountain, with great views of Shiribetsu-dake further to the southeast.

Yotei-zan Ski Touring Practicalities

ACCESS
By car: With the exception of the Makkari Route and Makkimo Routes (with their ample snow-cleared parking areas), routes on this page involve road-side parking. Always park as far to the side of the road as possible and don't block snow-clearing machinery turn-around spaces.
Public transport: The Makkari and Jinja-no-Sawa Routes are accessible by public bus. For both routes, take the Donan Bus Company bus from JR Kutchan train station bound for Rusutsu Resort. Get off at the *Yotei-shizen Koen Iriguchi* (羊蹄自然公園入口) bus stop. There's about one bus every two hours, the trip takes 30 minutes, and costs 670yen one way. As of December 2019, the earliest bus was at 6:50am, arriving at the *Yotei Shizen Koen Iriguchi* bus stop at 7:12am. It's a 15-20 minute walk (or skin) from the bus stop to either the Makkari or Jinja-no-sawa Route trailheads. To return to JR Kutchan train station, as of December 2019, there were buses from the *Yotei Shizen Koen Iriguchi* bus stop at 12:40pm, 3:34pm, 5:35pm, and the last is at 7:45pm. Note that by 5:35pm, it will be dark. Sunset is around 4:30pm during December to February in the Niseko region.

GUIDED TOURS
If you're a seasoned ski tourer with good navigation skills and self-sufficiency in unfamiliar alpine environments, then hiring a guide is not essential for exploring Yotei-zan. If, however, you want to maximize your time in the area, we heartily recommend hiring an experienced, internationally certified local guide. Hiring a guide outsources aspect selection, more or less guaranteeing you'll get amazing skiing - some days it'll be the eastern and northern aspects that are cranking, some days it'll be the


southern aspects. There's also way more to Yotei-zan than just these five popular routes, with some extraordinary gullies and chutes for advanced skiers. Take a look at the Recommended Guides section of each online route overview.

ONSEN NEARBY
For the Kyogoku and Kimobetsu Routes, the closest onsen to the trailhead is the Kyogoku Onsen (京極温泉 京極ふれあい交流センター, 600yen). They're open from 10am till 9pm (closed the second Monday of each month). The attached restaurant is open 11:30am till 7pm. For the Makkari and Jinja-no-Sawa Routes, The nearest onsen to the trailheads is Makkari Onsen (真狩温泉, 500yen), which is about 5 minutes by car from the trailhead. Open from 11am till 9pm, they have great outdoor baths, and an attached restaurant. Closed on Mondays.

SAFETY NOTES
Yotei-zan is a big mountain requiring good weather, plenty of time, and good backcountry experience. All of the routes outlined here are unmarked, not maintained, and are not avalanche controlled - it is serious backcountry terrain. At the very least skiers should be familiar with avalanche rescue procedures and have the appropriate tools on hand (shovel, beacon, probe). This free-standing volcano is exposed to the weather from all sides and it has the potential to get pretty wild pretty quickly. Like all routes on Yotei-zan, if you're shooting for the summit this may be one of the few times you'll use your ski crampons and boot crampons in Hokkaido. ■

ONLINE ROUTE GUIDES

Please visit the full route guides for GPS files, interactive maps, and extra safety notes: <http://hokw.jp/yoteiski>



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, PHOTOS | Rob Thomson
TEXT | Rob Thomson, Chris Auld
hokkaidowilds.org 2021/01/13
MAP FOLD & LAYOUT CONCEPT | Dominika Gan

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PRINTING INSTRUCTIONS

STEP 1

Load your printer with A3 printer paper (297mm x 420mm). If you've only got Tabloid or Ledger size (279mm x 432 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.

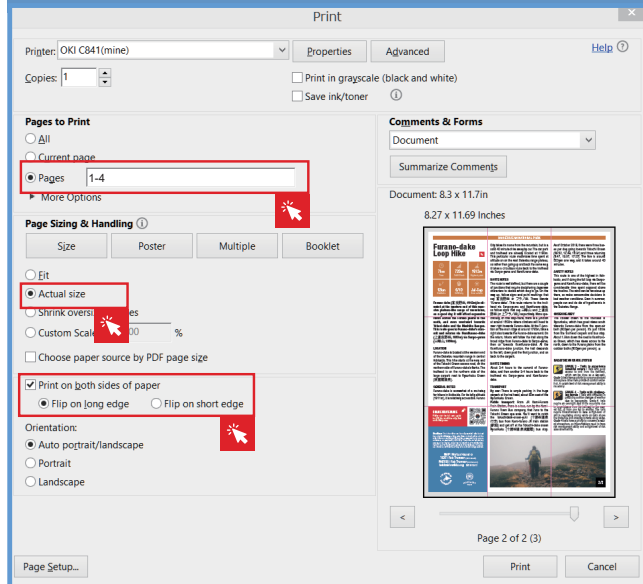


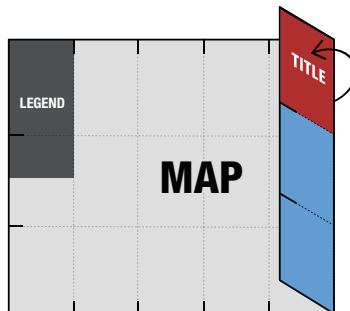
Figure 1. Ensure "Actual Size" is selected (Windows).

ORIGAMI INSTRUCTIONS

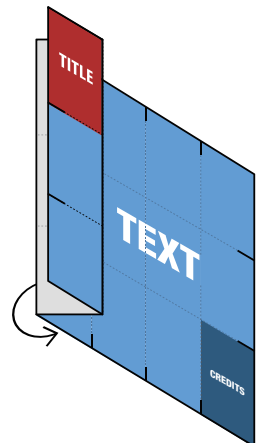
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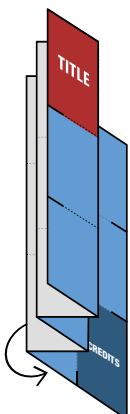
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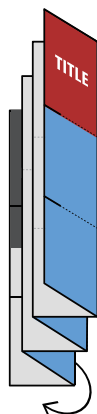
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4



5



6



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