




Yoichi-Bikuni (plus Candle Rock)

余市〜美国Sea Kayaking Map1:25000







7hrs
Time




25km
Distance




7/10
Difficulty



3.5/5
Remoteness



4/5
Water clarity



Jun-Oct
Best season

The **Shakotan Peninsula 積丹半島** coast from **Yoichi 余市** to **Bikuni 美国** is a 25km stretch of high cliffs, small fishing villages, clear water, and one of Hokkaido’s most iconic coastal features - **Candle Rock 口ウソク岩**. At certain times of the year, the rising sun looks like a flame at the tip of this prominent 16m tall spire protruding directly from the sea’s surface. In particular, the southern section of this stretch of coast, around **Shiripa-misaki シリパ岬** is a gorgeous labyrinth of rocks, reefs, and secluded beaches.

LOCATION
This section of coast is situated at the southeastern end of the Shakotan Peninsula, west of Sapporo City in southwestern Hokkaido. The full 25km section as described here starts at Yoichi Town and finishes at the small fishing village of Bikuni. There are multiple options along the way to shorten the trip.

Put-in location: We recommend putting in at Hamanaka Moire Beach 浜中モイレ海水浴場 just west of the Yoichi River mouth. There’s easy access to the beach, and plenty of parking. Officially, this is a swimming beach, so in the height of the summer season, it may be busy with families and kids.

Take-out location: For the full 25km paddle, take out at the Bikuni Fishing Port Beach 美国漁港海岸緑地広場. If you’d

like to just take in the best of the coast from Yoichi to Candle Rock, we would recommend taking out at the sheltered Yunai Beach 湯内ビーチ at Toyohama-cho 豊浜町. That would give you a paddle of about 12km.

GENERAL NOTES
Take a look on GSI’s topomaps of the area, and you’ll see the eastern portion of this route has about as many capes as you can get in a 10km section of coast. The best part is that they’re all spectacular in their own right – high conglomerate cliffs, caves, and secluded gravel beaches. Just paddling that first 10-15km or so of this route is a treat. When we first paddled the full 25km stretch, however, we opted

to make it an easy overnighter trip, camping along the way on the old abandoned road at the 13km point, just after the iconic Candle Rock (口ウソク岩 *Rosoku-iwa*).

Like the vast majority of sea kayaking locations in Hokkaido, this route is exposed to the open sea. In summer (July-Sept), however, the Japan Sea is very often a calm oasis, with very little swell.

ROUTE TIMING AND NOTES
We recommend allowing about 7hrs+ for this route. It can also make for a nice overnighter, although remote camping spots can be somewhat limited.

Naturally, this section of coast can be paddled in either direction. Here we describe paddling from east to west.

Put in at the Hamanaka swimming/surf beach at Yoichi, and head northwest along the beach and past the large Yoichi Port breakwaters. Soon, you’ll leave the concrete behind for a while as you paddle around the gorgeous Cape Shiripa シリパ岬 (Shiripa-misaki). This cape marks the beginning of a gorgeous 8km section of rocky capes and secluded gravel beaches. There are two caves along the way – one at Shiripa-misaki, and one at Eboshi-misaki. This section of coast culminates at the weirdly famous Ebisu Rock. It’s difficult to understand why this rock is such a tourist attraction if only looking at it from the water. From the road on the coast, it does make a nice photograph, so long as you avoid getting the concrete breakwaters into the shot.

From Ebisu-iwa it’s about 3km to one of the highlights of this section of coast – Candle Rock 口ウソク岩 (Rosoku-iwa). This rock gets its name from the fact that at certain times of the year, the rising sun looks like a flame atop this 46m high prominence. The rock is about 500m from the coast proper, so choose your weather wisely to ensure a safe crossing to the small rocky island. Note also that the sea is relatively shallow between the rock and the coast proper – this can lead to some confused seas when there is wind chop.

If conditions are a bit concerning at this point for the remainder of the trip, it’s possible to take shelter in the well-protected Yunai Beach cove 湯内地区. There’s a nice sandy beach, toilets, and a bus stop (Toyohamacho 豊浜町), here. This is also an OK place to camp if you’d prefer to be closer to civilization.

West along the coast from Yunai beach is Charashinai Cape チャラシナイ岬. This cape is the location of one of Hokkaido’s worst road tunnel accidents, where a large part of the cliff collapsed, punctured the entrance to a tunnel, and crushed a bus that happened to be traveling through the tunnel at the moment it happened. 20 people died. Had we known this beforehand, we may not have chosen to camp on the now-abandoned road in front of the now-closed tunnel. The rocky beach there can make for a nice campfire though, so the less superstitious will find it a perfectly good remote campsite.

The remaining 12km to Bikuni travels past a slightly more populated section of coast, but still has enjoyable capes to round here and there. The take out at Bikuni is a good one – a protected beach, large car park, campground,

toilets, and running water for rinsing off gear.


TRANSPORT
By car | There’s plenty of parking at all the put-ins/take-outs.
Public transport | Yoichi Town is accessible from Sapporo by JR train – get off at Yoichi JR train station 余市JR駅. From the train station to the nearest feasible put-in on the coast is a 1km walk. This whole section of coast, along Route 229, is serviced by the Hokkaido Chuo Bus Shakotan-sen bus line 北海道中央バス 積丹線(20). Buses run about once an hour. This makes public transport shuttling relatively straightforward. At the eastern end (Yoichi end)

of the route, there’s the Hamanakacho bus stop 浜中町. At the western end of the route (Bikuni), there’s the Bikuni-bashi bus stop 美国橋. Along the route there’s the Furubira Kazoku Ryokomura 古平家族旅行村 bus stop, Okimachi 沖町 bus stop, Toyohamacho 豊浜町 bus stop and Shiraiwacho 白岩町 bus stop. These are all situated nicely for an early escape from the water if need be.

SAFETY NOTES
In the summer months, this section of coast can be as flat as a millpond. Take care with any strong northerly winds however. There’s a large fetch to the north, so wind swell will whip up quickly. There are a number of escape options along the route, but note that capes are largely inaccessible by land, and there are some remote beaches only accessible by water.


ONSEN NEARBY
Our onsen of choice for this area is the lovely Furubira Onsen 古平温泉 (550yen), nestled in the hills above Furubira Town at the western end of this paddle. It’s about 3.1km from the nearest feasible take out for a kayak, however, so is best considered for a soak on the way back to Sapporo from Bikuni (if driving). Another onsen, this time at the far eastern end of the route in Yoichi, is the Tsurukame Onsen 鶴亀温泉 (850yen). It’s accessible from the beach, and there’s an attached restaurant serving good onsen fare (open for lunch 11:30-14:30, dinner 17:00-19:30). Tsurukame Onsen has a good view of the beach and sea from the outdoor baths. ■

Japanese Map Glossary		
Romaji	Kanji	English
cho	町	town
dake/mine	岳/峯	peak
eki	駅	station
goya/koya	小屋	hut
gyoko	漁港	fishing port
ike	池	pond
iwa	岩	rock
kaigan	海岸	coast
kawa/gawa	川	river
ko/mizumi	湖	lake
ko	港	port
misaki	岬	cape
onsen	温泉	hot spring
sawa	沢	stream
shima	島	island
tani/dani	谷	valley
taki	滝	waterfall
today	灯台	lighthouse
toge	峠	pass
wan	湾	bay
yama/san/zan	山	mountain



ONLINE ROUTE GUIDE

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



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MAP, TEXT | Rob Thomson

PHOTOS | Rob and Haidee Thomson



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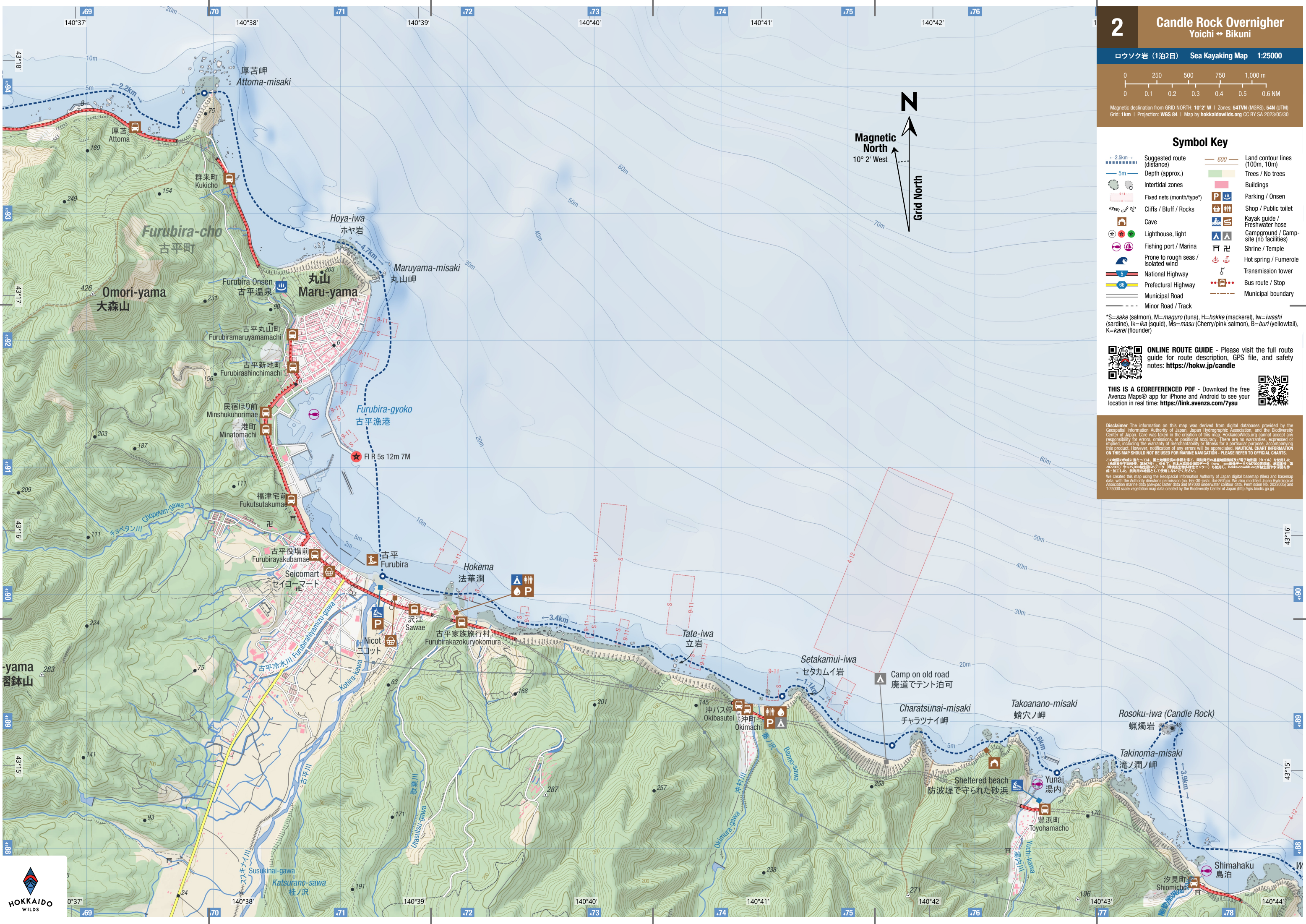
MAP FOLD & LAYOUT CONCEPT | Dominika Gan

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Supported by





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Candle Rock Overnighter
Yoichi ↔ Bikuni

ロウソク岩 (1泊2日)Sea Kayaking Map1:25000

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Magnetic declination from GRID NORTH: 10° 2' W | Zones: 54TVN (MGRS), 54N (UTM)
Grid: 1km | Projection: WGS 84 | Map by hokkaidowilds.org CC BY SA 2023/05/30

Symbol Key		
	±2.5km→	Suggested route (distance)
	5m	Depth (approx.)
		Intertidal zones
	9-11	Fixed nets (month/type*)
		Cliffs / Bluff / Rocks
		Cave
		Lighthouse, light
		Fishing port / Marina
		Prone to rough seas / Isolated wind
	5	National Highway
	66	Prefectural Highway
		Municipal Road
		Minor Road / Track
	600	Land contour lines (100m, 10m)
		Trees / No trees
		Buildings
	P	Parking / Onsen
		Shop / Public toilet
		Kayak guide / Freshwater hose
		Campground / Camp-site (no facilities)
		Shrine / Temple
		Hot spring / Fumerole
		Transmission tower
		Bus route / Stop
		Municipal boundary

*S=sake (salmon), M=maguro (tuna), H=hokke (mackerel), lw=iwashi (sardine), lk=ika (squid), Ms=masu (Cherry/pink salmon), B=buri (yellowtail), K=karei (flounder)

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

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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, dis-867/goi). We also modified Japan Hydrographic Association marine data (nautical chart data and M7000 underwater contour data, Permission No. 2022005) and 1:25000 scale vegetation map data created by the Biodiversity Center of Japan (<http://gis.biodic.go.jp/>).



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.



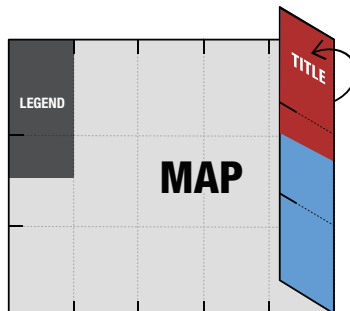
Figure 1. Ensure "Actual Size" is selected (Windows).

ORIGAMI INSTRUCTIONS

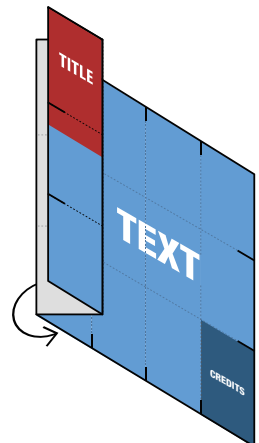
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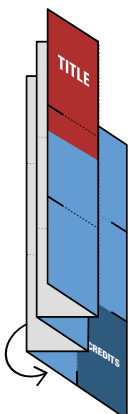
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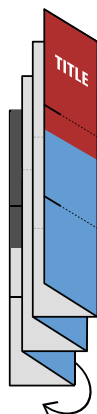
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4



5



6



7

