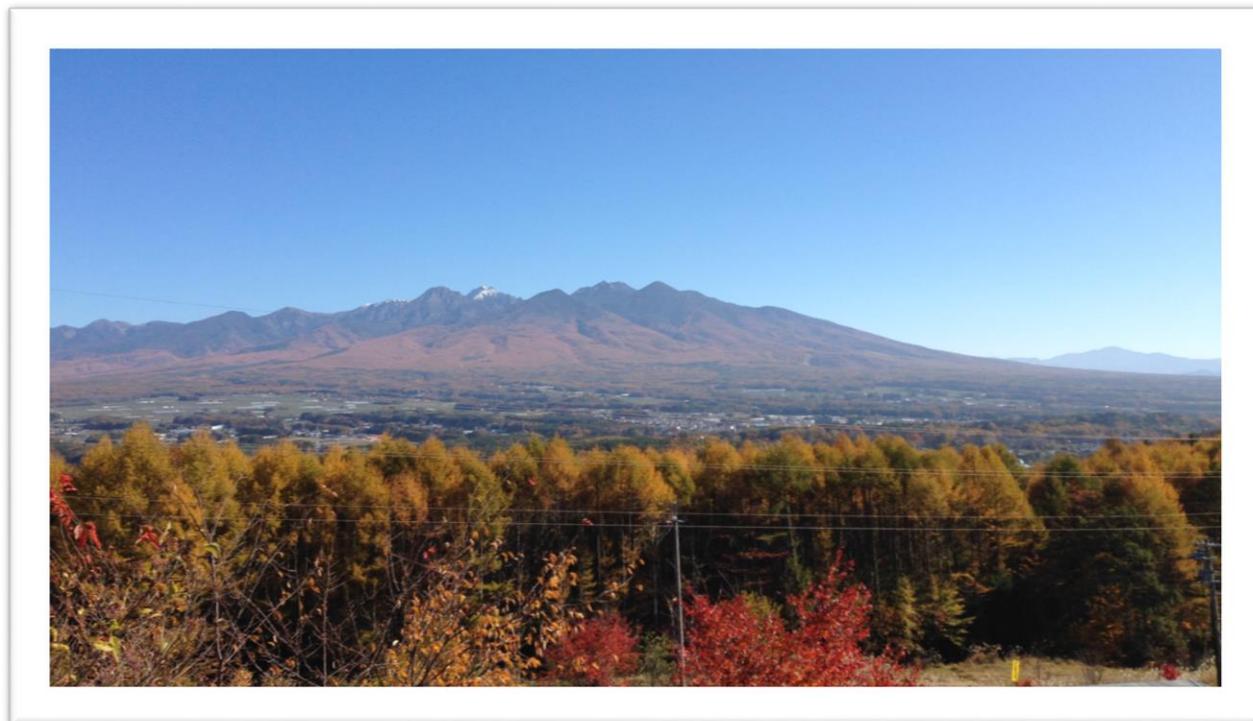




# SHUMI STAY JAPAN

TAKE YOUR HOBBY ON HOLIDAY



View of the Yatsugatake mountain range in autumn. Haramura is in the centre at the foot of the mountains.

## Sample Visit Program

### **Bushwalking Club: 10 days stay in Nagano**

**Day One:** the group arrives in the morning at Chino Station on the JR Chuo Line, and is met by the Leader. The group is taken by mini- bus to the pension in Haramura Pension Village that will be their home for the next 10 days. The group are met by Mr and Mrs H, their hosts, and shown their rooms overlooking the pine forest. After a briefing from the Leader and host couple over lunch, they are taken on an orientation tour of the Pension Village and the surrounding areas, including a short one hour hike up a hill nearby to gain a panoramic view of the spectacular surrounding Yatsugatake range, Southern Alps and Mt Fuji. The rest of the afternoon is free and the group have dinner cooked by their Hosts featuring a variety of seasonal vegetables and local dishes. (1 hour of walking)

**Day Two:** every morning at 7am the Hosts will serve a filling and nutritious breakfast to get the group going. Today, the group will take a pack lunch of sandwiches and climb Mt

Nyukasa, a 1,955m peak in the Southern Alps with 360 degree panoramic views. The group will drive for 20 minutes and then take the gondola for the first section of the climb. Mt Nyukasa is famous for its wildflowers, especially the lilies of the valley in summer, but there are still plenty of other wild flowers to see in the autumn. After walking on duckboards through the fields of wild flowers we make a short steep climb to the summit for our lunch. On the way back to the pension we will stop at a roadside farmers market where we can see and taste a range of local produce. We then return to the pension for a hot Japanese style bath followed by another delicious dinner. (3 hours of walking)

**Day Three:** today the group goes to the heart of the Yatsugatake range, to Shirakoma Lake, a beautiful mountain lake surrounded by spectacular mossy forests in full autumn colours. There is 1 hour drive up the mountain, stopping along the way to see some waterfalls, to the start of the walk which is an easy 1.5 hours circumnavigation of the lake, where we have our lunch. On the return drive we stop to see the Jomon era (Stone Age) museum, some Stone Age archaeological sites and a recreated Jomon era village. We return to the Pension in time for our hot bath and a delicious dinner. (2 hours of walking)

**Day Four:** today we drive to the southern and eastern side of the Yatsugatake range and stop along the way at the village of Kiyosato, which is famous for its dairy farms, started by Christian missionaries in the 1920s. We take a 4 hour walk down into and along a deep river gorge and come back for lunch at an outdoor restaurant at the famous Keep Farm. We spend the afternoon exploring the town, which includes a number of interesting museums. We stop at a local restaurant for dinner to enjoy hoto, a hot broth made of wild boar meat, noodles and mountain vegetables. (4 hours of walking).

**Day Five:** today we join a group of local hikers and climb the most southerly peak in the Yatsugatake range, 2,524m high Mt Amigasa. These hikers, some well into their 70s, know these mountains well and hike regularly for fun and exercise. We start early for the 4 hour climb of 1,100m which starts in dense forest and ends up on a large rocky summit with 360 degrees views, including our best view of Mt Fuji. We go down a different ridge and are picked up at the other side where we all go to a local hot spring (onsen) to relax and clean off the day's sweat. After that we all go to a local restaurant to try more of the local dishes for a convivial night out with our new friends. (7 hours walking)

**Day Six:** this is our sightseeing day. We travel half an hour by mini bus to see the most impressive Suwa Grand Shrine – which has wooden buildings over 1,200 years old, and is surrounded by massive cedar trees. Then we drive for one hour to Matsumoto so see the magnificent 400 year old Matsumoto Castle, the Crow Castle (because its black), a national treasure. We enjoy a traditional Japanese lunch in the old part of the castle town which we explore during the afternoon. On the drive back we stop at Lake Suwa, a large natural lake surrounded by mountains. Dinner is with our pension hosts. (no hiking)

**Day Seven:** today we explore the northern part of the Yatsugatake range with our new friends from the local hiking club. We drive to a nearby popular ski resort, and take the gondola up to a plateau which has some interesting lava features. We then climb for 400 meters to the summit of Yoko Peak, which provides 360 degree views, including good views

towards the Central and Northern Alps. We then descend down to the delightfully scenic Twin Lakes, surrounded by yellow autumnal forests, for our obento lunch. We then climb back up Yoko Peak and take the same route back to the Gondola before going back down the mountain and stopping at Paul's Kitchen( run by an Aussie chef) for drinks and a hearty Aussie style dinner. (5 hours walking)

**Day Eight:** today is the hardest hike of the stay. The group has to ascend 1,400m to reach the summit of the highest peak of the Yatsugatake range – 2,899m Aka Peak (Red Peak). We start early with light packs carrying only our lunch and warm clothes, as the mountain lodge where we will be staying, just below the peak, provides full board and meals. We take just under 5 hours to reach the top of Mt Amida at 2,805m, with lunch along the way. It is then only another hour and a half to reach the Mt Aka Hut where we spend the afternoon soaking in the spectacular views from the summit of Aka Peak. (6.5 hours of walking)

**Day Nine:** It is cold and the first snow of the season may have fallen here on the peak but everyone rises early to catch the morning sunrise which is awesome. The sun shines on Mt Fuji before it reaches us and all the surrounding mountains with the valleys shrouded in mist below. After a hearty breakfast the group says goodbye to our mountain hut hosts and heads north along the rugged mountain crest to the next peak, Io Dake (Sulphur Peak), a 2,760m peak famous for its sulphurous smoke vents, a sign that it wasn't that long ago that Yatsugatake was an active volcano. We then descend the mountain on a route that takes us to some natural outdoor hot springs where we can take a quick dip, and from there it's an easy 2 hour walk back to the pension. This is our last night so our pension host family has organised a BBQ with the local hikers and we enjoy a pleasant evening watching the sunset over the Southern Alps. (5 hours of walking)

**Day Ten:** on the last day the group's Shumi Stay in Haramura, the group is free to enjoy the morning relaxing, buying souvenirs and enjoying the atmosphere of the pension village area before being taken to Chino station for the journey back to Tokyo or Nagoya.

**Please Note:** this is a hypothetical program to be used only as an example of what would be possible. Obviously it may need to be adjusted due to the weather, the fitness of the hikers and so on. But that is the advantage of going on a Shumi Stay – you have the time, can be flexible and you have control over how you spend your time.