



12-Day Self-Drive Adventure in Aomori & Hokkaido: Day 3, Free Flow Sake and Best Oyakodon

Description

I set my alarm for 4 AM with a single goal: witness the sunrise. Getting out of a warm bed into the 2-degree chill was a jolt, but the silence that greeted me was worth it. It was a quiet that felt different, a surreal calm before the day began.

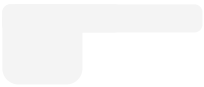


I was the first one up, stepping out of the hotel while everyone else, staff included, seemed to be still in bed. As daylight brightened, I enjoyed watching the hotel staff quietly begin their routines, preparing for the day and getting breakfast ready.





Breakfast time. The service is top notch. After we are done with eating, they sat us by the window and serve us coffee.



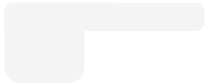
[View this post on Instagram](#)



A post shared by Kevin Yeo (@kevinyeo82)

With a light schedule for the day, we weren't in any rush to depart. We lingered a little longer in the onsen, took some time to explore the immediate surroundings, and then leisurely packed our bags before heading off.

I must say Tae No Yu ranks as one of the top ryokan I've stayed.



[View this post on Instagram](#)





A post shared by Kevin Yeo (@kevinyeo82)

From the ryokan, I drove towards Lake Tazawa.



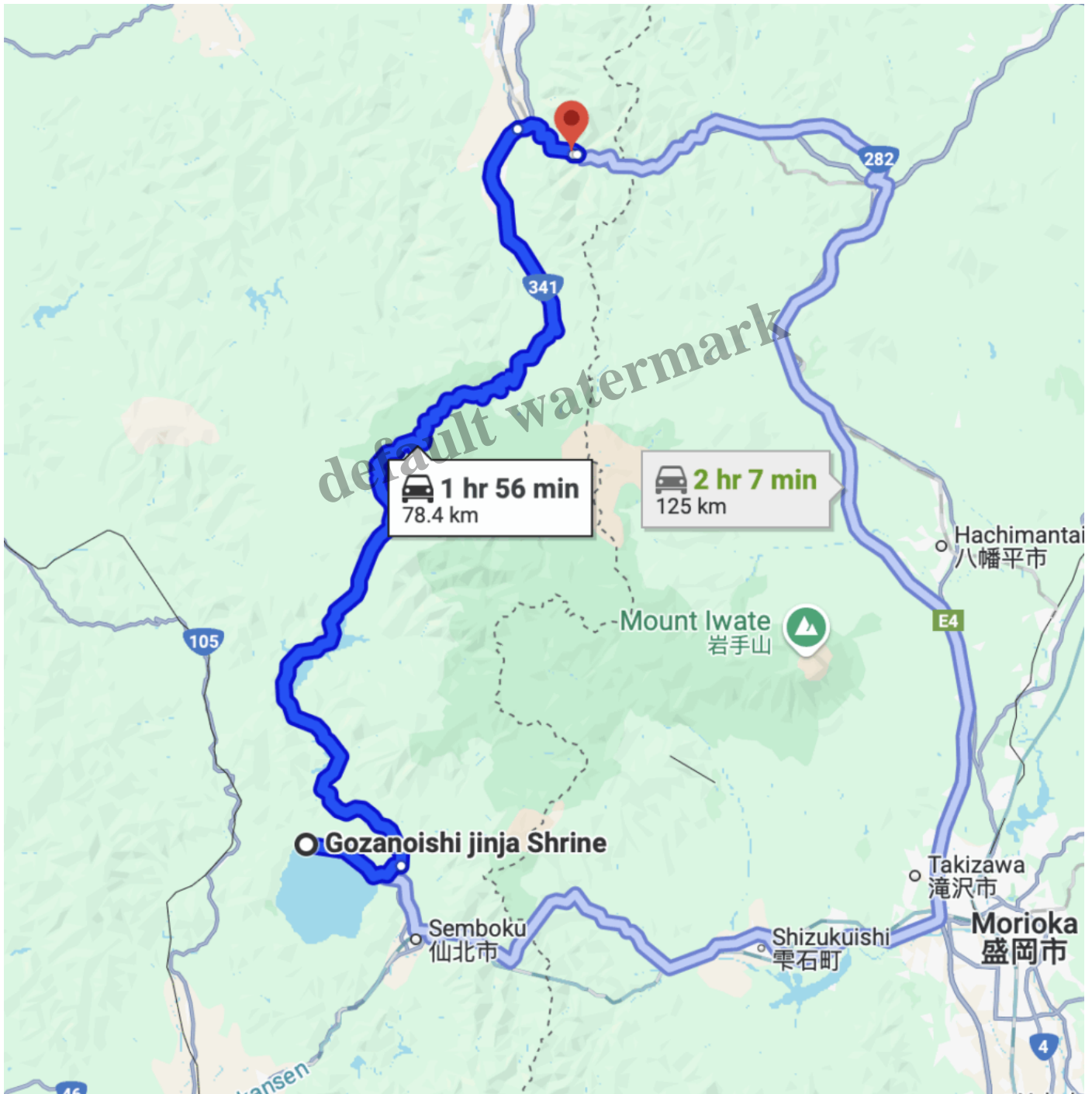
For a picture of this:



Probably could have got a better picture with a nicer weather but well, if you want a picture of a Torii Gate against a lake (less the crowd), remember to check this place out.

It's right in front of a small shrine (Gozanoishi jinja Shrine), with a handful of parking lots.

From one fantastic ryokan, we are making our way to another resort hotel. It will be a 2 hours drive up north.



Our original plan for today included a visit to the ?date-Kosaka Railway Railbike, an experience that

involves pedaling a bicycle-like vehicle along a disused train line. We had hoped to witness the vibrant autumn scenery from the tracks.

However, our early timing meant the autumn colors hadn't yet arrived. We decided our time would be better spent heading to Yuze Resort Hotel earlier instead.

Lets do a small detour to ?date for lunch. ?date is renowned for its high-quality local chicken breed, Hinai Jidori. This chicken is prized for its flavorful meat and is a key ingredient in kiritanpo nabe and other dishes like oyakodon (chicken and egg rice bowl) and yakitori.

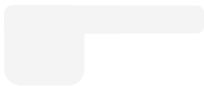


It's a sleepy town. Does not seem that much is going on here.

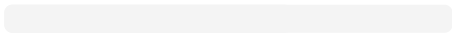


We managed to arrive before they are closed for the day.

Akita Hinai-ya is a renowned restaurant specializing in cuisine featuring **Hinai Jidori**, one of Japan's most prized chicken breeds, native to Akita Prefecture.



[View this post on Instagram](#)



A post shared by Kevin Yeo (@kevinyeo82)

Their core focus is on Hinai Jidori chicken. This includes various dishes, but they are especially well-known for their **oyakodon** (chicken and egg rice bowl) and **kiritanpo nabe** (a hot pot dish with grilled rice tubes and chicken).

default watermark



If you're in Akita Prefecture and want to try the local specialty Hinai Jidori, Akita Hinai-ya is a highly recommended place to experience it in various traditional and popular dishes.

Now, it's almost 230pm by the time we are done. Onwards to our hotel for the night!

Our choice to stay at Yuze Resort Hotel was based on three key factors.

Firstly, its convenient location perfectly situated between Aomori and Morioka meant we could minimize our daily driving time.

Secondly, the hotel came highly recommended by locals and boasted excellent reviews, making us eager to experience it for ourselves.

Finally, and perhaps most enticingly, we had read that during the peak autumn season, the hill outside the hotel transforms into a breathtaking display of fiery red foliage, visible right from the rooms. Alas, the timing of our visit meant we missed this spectacular sight.



Very quickly after settling down, we headed to the lounge. One of the awesome draw of this hotel is their freehold alcoholic drinks.



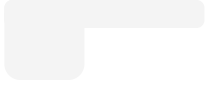


〈米焼酎〉
rice shochu
时空の扉
Zikunotobira
■ALC: 25%
■原料: 酒粕、米麹
Ingredients: Sake lees, rice malt

〈日本酒〉
Japanese sake
千歳盛
Chitosezakari
上撰
Selected
■精米歩合: 70%
Rice polishing ratio
■ALC: 15%
■日本酒度: -2.0
Taste
■原料米: 米、米こうじ
Raw material rice: rice, rice koji

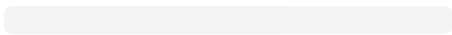
Their dinner was pretty good too. It was buffet style and the variety was good.

And yes, their muscat grapes are on free-flow. Eat to your heart's content.



[View this post on Instagram](#)

default watermark



A post shared by Kevin Yeo (@kevinyeo82)

Date Created

03/05/2025

Author

kevinyeo