

# The Museum of Volcanic Activity

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**Mount Yotei** This mountain's stand-alone conical shape is impressive. The lack of erosion on the mountain and its crater indicates that it is still a relatively young volcano. Old lava flows of Mount Yotei are widespread on the eastern side, and it is thought to have been active before, although there are no historical records of its eruptions.

Mt. Yotei

## Lake Shikotsu and the Three Mountains in the Vicinity

Lake Shikotsu has a surface area of 77.3 square kilometers, making it the eighth largest lake in Japan. The Shikotsu caldera was formed by an enormous eruption that took place about 40,000 years ago. Large amounts of igneous rocks and volcanic ashes were released during this eruption, and its pyroclastic flow reached the outskirts of Sapporo and Mount Yotei. Mount Fuppushi, Mount Eniwa, and Mount Tarumae became active after the caldera formed. All three of these impressive mountains can be viewed from the shore of Lake Shikotsu. Mount Tarumae emerged 9,000 years ago and its prominent lava dome was created by the eruption in 1909. In recent years, there was a small eruption in 1978.

Mt. Eniwa

Lake Shikotsu

Mt. Fuppushi

Mt. Tarumae

**Lake Toya** Lake Toya has a surface area of 70.7 square kilometers and is roughly circular. It is the ninth largest lake in Japan. It is a caldera lake of 8-11km in diameter, formed after an enormous eruption about 110,000 years ago. The pyroclastic flow subsequently spilled into the Pacific Ocean and the Sea of Japan, creating a plateau in the area. The islands, comprised of seven lava domes concentrated in the center, were formed by volcanic activity about 50,000 years ago, after the formation of the caldera. Mount Usu on the south bank became active about 20,000 years ago.

Lake Toya

Nakajima

Mt. Usu

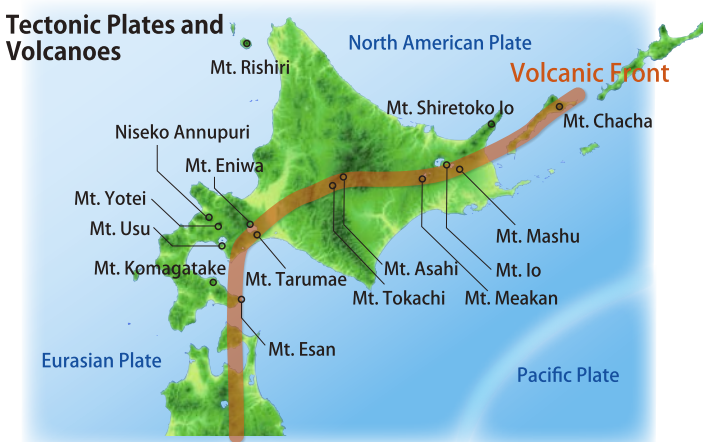
Mt. Showa Shinzan

## Nature Created by Volcanoes

On a map of the volcanoes in Hokkaido, this highly concentrated region forms a belt. This volcanic belt connecting Chishima Islands and north-east Japan arises from the sinking of the Pacific tectonic plate into the oceanic trench, causing magma to rise from the depths. Hokkaido is located at a point where two arched archipelagos, the Chishima Arc and the Northeast Japan Arc,

meet. Shikotsu-Toya National Park is located where this volcanic belt bends. In this national park, Mount Usu and Mount Tarumae are still active and continue to transform the landscape. The three caldera lakes (Lake Shikotsu, Lake Toya, and Lake Kuttara) that emerged from past volcanic activities, and many hot springs combine to create unique scenery, rendering this national park diverse and dynamic.

## Tectonic Plates and Volcanoes



**Lake Kuttara and Noboribetsu** Another caldera lake, Lake Kuttara, was also formed by ancient volcanic activity. Having a diameter of about 2km, it is smaller than both Lakes Shikotsu and Lake Toya. In Noboribetsu, Jigokudani Valley and Oyunuma, both filled with hot steam vents and sinters, arose about 10,000 years ago through a series of eruptions of Mount Hiyori.