



WHAT TO BRING ON YOUR **HIKE BIKE JAPAN** ADVENTURE

FIRST SUNRISE HIKE • START THE 2021 NEW YEAR IN EPIC STYLE

This is a tough snow hike in what will most likely be full-on winter conditions, totaling nearly 21km with +/- 2,071m of elevation over the two trail days. Winter hikes necessitate having the appropriate gear more than any other season since conditions and temperatures can be extreme and consequences steep should something go wrong. The key to staying as warm and comfortable as possible is proper layering. Perhaps you have a decent understanding of what is needed and what isn't. Perhaps you don't. Either way, this guide is a good resource to help you plan, pack and prepare for the conditions we will encounter on this specific hike. Of course, feel free to contact us with any general questions or detailed inquiries about specific items! Your safety and comfort is our priority, and we take our job seriously.

REQUIRED GEAR

Headlamp w/ fresh batteries	We will start and finish day one in daylight, but headlamps are useful around the hut when going to the bathroom, etc. after lights out. Furthermore, we'll begin day two in pre-dawn darkness, climbing to the nearby summit before the sunrise, so a good, bright headlamp is a must for safety on the trail.
Spare batteries for headlamp	It is always good practice to carry an extra set of batteries.
Rainwear or Winter Shells <i>(jacket and pants)</i>	Fully windproof & waterproof, full-body wear is essential. Even if the forecast is good, precipitation can fall suddenly and unexpectedly in the mountains. In winter, even if the precipitation falls as snow, it can easily melt and dampen or soak down, fleece or other layers - which could lead to dangerous hypothermia. In the absence of rain and snow, winds can be fierce and having a layer to block them can make all the difference. Having zippers for ventilation is a definite plus, though not a necessity.
Warm hat <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed black;"/> Warm gloves with liners	A warm hat and gloves are required, even if you are using a jacket that has a hood and pockets. Don't underestimate the cold. Ideally you should have a separate pair of liner gloves to add more flexibility and insulation, and the outer shell glove should have some water resistance or waterproofness.
Neck warmer / Buff / Balaclava	If the neck is cold, the body is cold. Keeping your neck warm, especially when stopped or sleeping, can make a huge difference in ensuring your comfort. And when the wind is really whipping, having something to cover and protect your face is priceless even if not completely necessary.
Down jacket <i>(or warm synthetic jacket)</i>	Temps will likely be well below freezing at higher elevations, and could be as cold as -25 degrees C as we are stopped and awaiting the sunrise in darkness. A thick, high-quality insulating layer is an absolute must. Down is recommended for its lightweight and compactness. If you don't have a proper winter down jacket, it is also possible to stack summer and/or three-season jackets to increase their insulating value.
Insulated mid-layer <i>(fleece, sweater or similar)</i>	As we climb higher and higher, or stop along the way you will want to add another layer. A simple fleece or sweater will do the trick. If you get cold easily, bringing two is a good idea.

Wool or synthetic base layer <i>(top and bottoms)</i>	It is surprisingly easy to get hot while hiking, even in the middle of winter in below-freezing temperatures. It is also extremely important to control your temperature by adding and removing layers to avoid sweating too much. But some sweat is likely inevitable, and a good long-sleeve moisture-wicking base layer can ward off problems from sweating while on the move. You most likely will not need the base layer for your lower body while hiking on day one, but sleeping in it and hiking with it on the morning portion of day two's trail time is a good idea.
Trekking pants	Insulated winter pants for hiking are not necessary, and would likely be too warm. Instead, ordinary trekking pants can be combined with your lower base layer and/or shell to provide enough warmth and element protection while on the trail.
Thick wool socks x 2 pairs	In our experience it is hard to beat wool socks in winter, because of their natural insulating, moisture-wicking and anti-odor properties. Medium to heavy-weight wool socks are recommended, and you should bring at least one spare pair for sleeping and/or if the first pair becomes too damp for comfort.
Winter hiking boots	Proper winter hiking boots feature waterproofing and insulation for warmth and stiffer soles for better grip with crampons. These are ideal for those reasons. Three-season boots MAY be acceptable if they are fully waterproof, feature a semi-stiff to stiff sole that is crampon compatible and are combined with thick socks and disposable foot warmers to warm your feet and toes (available at drug stores throughout Japan).
Backpack	Something in the neighborhood of 30 to 40 liters should be plenty enough space to pack all that you need for this trip since it will not be necessary to carry camping equipment with us.
Crampons	There will likely be snow on the trail from the outset. Having the aid of crampons and trekking poles will greatly aid your balance and grip when climbing and descending on hard snow and ice, and are an absolute must for this hike. Trekking poles need to be equipped with full-size snow (powder) baskets to prevent them from sinking deeply into the surrounding snow. Crampons should be the 10 or 12-point full-foot mountaineering type, to provide enough grip on the potentially icy and wind-whipped summit ridge. Chain spikes are not acceptable.
Trekking poles	
Sunglasses	A must-have for every trip to the mountains, and even more important when there is snow on the slopes. Polarized sunglasses are recommended.
RECOMMENDED GEAR	
Gaiters	Useful in snowy conditions to prevent snow from entering your hiking boots, thereby keeping your feet dry and warm.
Ski Goggles	Earlier we listed sunglasses as an item of required gear, but goggles can be extremely useful in heavy snow or wind. As opposed to sunglasses, hiking with goggles for extended periods can cause them to fog, so they should be brought in addition to sunglasses, and not instead of them - and used for above the trees for shorter duration.
Baseball cap (or hiking hat)	A hat to wear while walking, to shade your eyes and face from the sun, as well as to trap sweat is highly recommended. It is not recommended to spend much time hiking with your beanie, to prevent sweat from dampening your warm hat.
Disposable hand warmers	For those who have poor circulation or otherwise get cold easily, having a few small, disposable heat packs to use if needed can

	be a good idea. Also a good idea if you are unsure about the warmth of your gloves.
Disposable foot warmers	These can be a way to add warmth to 3-season boots while hiking, or to stick on your socks and increase your comfort level around the hut at night if you get cold easily. They come in several types, with some being small rounded patches that stick to your socks around your toes, and others being full size thin pads that are placed over the entire area of your insole and warm the whole bottom of your foot.
Sunscreen	Even though it's winter, sun exposure is more pronounced at altitude, and can be amplified when reflected by snow. It could be particularly useful to apply a dab of sunscreen to your nose and face periodically.
Camera (or cell phone)	We will be sure to take photos and videos throughout the hike and share them with you at the end, but you'll probably want to record the adventure directly with your own camera as well. A tripod is useful to capture the starts at night and for taking photos in the early morning light just before sunrise.
Tripod	
Mobile battery	If you are using a cell phone to take photos or log GPX, you'll want to have a way to top off your battery on the go.
Cell phone charging cable	
Beacon w/ fresh batteries	This route runs a long a ridge and is well-protected from avalanche danger, but playing it safe is never a bad idea. If you are in the country for some backcountry skiing and have a beacon with you, it would be good practice to bring it with you.
FOOD & DRINKS	
Food	We'll be able to stop at convenience or supermarket between picking you up and arriving at our pre-hike lodging if necessary. You can purchase the lunch/snacks you will need for the two days of hiking at that time, or you can prepare them ahead of time and bring them with you. There is nowhere to buy snacks or drinks until our arrival at the hut at the end of the first day, so all food for both days must be purchased before the start of the trip. The foods you choose to bring with you are largely a matter of personal preference, but calorie dense (high-calorie/low-weight) foods provide the most bang for your buck. While you may avoid eating junk foods like chocolate and potato chips in your daily life, they make surprisingly good trail food. Personally, we aim to bring foods that have between 4 to 5 calories per gram for the bulk of our snacks, and try to have at least 1,000 calories on hand for each day.
Drinks	We can refill water at a hut 3/4 of the way to our destination (after approximately 5 to 6 hours on the trail) on day 1, so we recommend that you carry at least 1.5L of drinks with you to start out. On day 2 we can refill water and/or buy other drinks from the hut as we leave to make our way back down.