

# How to Enjoy Hokkaido

How to enjoy Hokkaido on the cheap! Tips for visitors from abroad!



## Hurrah for Hokkaido hotate

Hokkaido *hotate* (scallops) are renowned the world over for their firm texture and sweet flavor. Thanks to the nutritious sea waters of Hokkaido, scallops are rich in the *amino-san* (amino acids) that give them a delicate umami flavor. Because scallops have a natural sweetness, they work well with simple methods of preparation. Scallops retain their delicate flavor whether they are grilled, fried, or eaten raw as sashimi. So even small children can enjoy this seafood. Moreover, *hotate* are not only delicious, but healthy. Scallops are full of *eiyouso* (nutrients), and they even contain an amino acid that helps you recover from fatigue and strengthens the muscles. So, what is the story behind Hokkaido scallops? Traditionally, fishing for wild scallops has been the preferred practice. However, there have been worldwide *genshou* (declines) in wild scallop populations. The result of this has been the growth of scallop *suisan-youshoku* (aquaculture). There are a variety of aquaculture methods that are currently used worldwide, depending on the *tane* (species) of scallop and the local environment. In Hokkaido, there are two main ways of raising scallops. In Hokkaido's Funka Bay and Sea of Japan coastline, scallops are mainly raised through "hanging style" aquaculture. Baby scallops are *tsurusareta* (suspended) in the sea on ropes or in baskets, and they are harvested two years later. In the Sea of Okhotsk and other areas, "bottom culture" aquaculture is used. This method uses one-year-old scallops. These are *chirabatte-iru* (scattered) from ships in fishing areas where the seabed has been divided into fields. The *hotate* are allowed to grow naturally in the sea. Of course, aquaculture is complex and demanding. The fishermen's steady efforts continue over several years, as they check whether there are any problems and whether the scallops are growing properly. I highly recommend visitors to Hokkaido to enjoy Hokkaido's delicious *hotate*, and to silently thank the Hokkaido fishermen for their hard work. The only difficulty will be choosing which scallop dish to eat! *Bon appétit!*

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### 栄養満点でおいしさ抜群! 北海道の「ほたて」

世界的にも有名な北海道のほたてはしっかりとした食感と甘みが特長です。刺身はもちろん、焼きや揚げなど調理法を問わず楽しめるだけでなく、疲労回復や筋肉を増強するアミノ酸も豊富に含まれています。北海道のほたては垂下式と地撒き式の2つの方法があり、垂下式は稚貝をロープやカゴに入れて海中に吊るし約2年後に漁獲するもので、主に噴火湾や日本海で行われています。一方、地撒き式はオホーツク海を中心に行われている方法で、一年育てた稚貝を海に放し、2~4年をかけて海底で自然に育てて漁獲します。水産養殖は複雑で苦労が絶えないもの。この機会に漁師の皆さんが手塩にかけた北海道のほたてを味わってみてはいかがでしょうか。

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