



[place] *Located on the mouth of Abashiri River as it runs into the Sea of Okhotsk, Abashiri is host to a number of small museums and ruins, and some rather curious "local cuisine".*

## In a Nutshell

**Abashiri** is a small city (pop. 40,000) centred largely around its **fishing** and **agricultural industries** ; main exports include potatoes, wheat, barley and sugar beet, as well as a variety of **seafood** from both the Sea of Okhotsk and its **inlying lakes** . It is notable in particular for its proximity to the recently discovered **shell mounds** of the **Moyoro people** .



## What to See

At 207m above sea level **Mt. Tendo** provides an excellent view of the Sea of Okhotsk and the lakes surrounding Abashiri; it also hosts the **Okhotsk**

**Ryu-hyo (Drift Ice) Museum**

and the

**Hokkaido Museum of Northern Peoples**

. The

**Abashiri Prison Museum**

is a reconstruction of the Meiji period prison of the same name, while the

**Moyoro Shell Mound Museum**

has relics of the Moyoro people on display. Between February and March

**drift ice**

can be seen on

**boat tours**

and the

**JR Norokko**

special train, which departs twice daily from Abashiri while in season.



## What to Eat

The local tourism association is currently pushing [zangi-don](#) and *moyoro-nabe* ( [see here](#) ) as Abashiri specialities, though the provenances of both are, dare I say, a little suspicious. On the other hand Abashiri is rather favourably positioned - directly off the

**Sea of Okhotsk**

, and surrounded by rich, well-supplied

**lakes**

- and its various

**seafood**

, when in season, may be worth a try.

**Pink salmon**

, in particular, can actually be seen in Abashiri River, and is excellent when in season from

**late August to November**

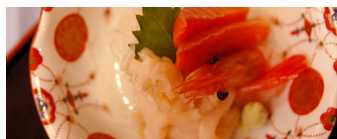
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## Getting There

The **JR Okhotsk Limited Express** runs four times a day from Sapporo (via Asahikawa) and takes **just under 5.5 hours**. A ticket is **¥9,130** (£68.30 / \$107) for an unreserved seat each way, though **free with a JR pass**

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## Transport

Buses operate infrequently from near the train station, providing connections to **most major tourist spots**

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Please check local timetables.

Even the nearest restaurants are a considerable distance from the train station, and walking is not recommended.



## Recommendation

To be honest, it **just didn't click** with me. Although a little more lively than the equally remote (and equally underpopulated) [Wakkanai](#), something about [A](#)

[bashiri](#)

feels off - the attractions feel a little forced and artificial, and the food (

[zangi-don](#)

?) even more so.

[Wakkanai](#)

is

**equally featureless**

, in a way, but there I could enjoy the remoteness, at least - and I did, and it's one of my fondest memories. Here, they've taken even that away. It

**deserves points**

for the effort that's clearly gone into developing the industry, as such, but I rather think it starts to lose meaning if it loses

**authenticity**

while doing so.



## More Information

[Abashiri Tourist Association](#)

Written by Loren  
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*Ever been to Abashiri? What did you think of the attractions, or the food? What do you think of the city's development policy?* [Send in an e-mail](#), comment below or Twitter [twitter.com/foodjapan](#)