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~Autumn~

■ **Lake of Mystery:** Lake Towada is one of the best places in Japan to see autumn leaves, attracting many tourists from all over the country.

Around 66% of Aomori prefecture is covered by lush forests of broad leaf trees. In Autumn, there are many famous places to see the changing leaves, the most popular being Lake Towada and its effluent Oirase River, both of which are located in Towada-Hachimantai National Park in southern Aomori.

Lake Towada is known for its incredibly clear water, and its natural beauty attracts many tourists every year from all over the country. Situated in the mountains at an altitude of 400m, Lake Towada is a calm and peaceful double crater lake with a depth of 334m, making it the third deepest lake in Japan.

During autumn, the trees and plants on the rim of the lake turn brilliant yellows and reds. There are observation decks at a number of key points around the lake, as well as a walking path along a section of the lake which allows you to walk along the shore enjoying the brilliant clarity of the waters. There are also pleasure boats operating on the lake so you can take in the beautiful scenery from the lake too.



■ **There are a total of 14km of nature trails along the Oirase River for you to enjoy. They are relaxing trails so you will be fine with light walking or hiking gear.**

The Oirase River is 14 km long, and flows out from Lake Towada. The river is surrounded by virgin forest, through which walking trails interweave – making it the perfect place to stroll and take in the autumn leaves. Because of the sudden drop in temperature between day and night, the color of the leaves is truly dramatic: the red leaves are a deep, beautiful red, while the yellow leaves are a bright, brilliant yellow. The character of the river also changes depending on the force of the current; at times it is tranquil and calm, whilst at other times it can be rough and full of life.

There is very little change in altitude over the whole length of the walk, so only light walking or hiking gear will be necessary.



■ **Apples are the thing to eat in Autumn, especially Aomori apples. Aomori makes the most apples in Japan and here you will also find lots of different tastes and things to talk about!**

Aomori is proudly the largest producer of apples in Japan, with the fruit being regarded as an important part of the autumn months. Aomori apples can be eaten on their own, but they are also used in a number of processed foods and drinks, such as juices, jams, sweets, apple vinegar, apple cider, and so on.

Hirosaki City produces the most apples in the whole of the prefecture, and has garnered a reputation as the 'apple town' of Aomori. Recently, the city has started to distribute a guide map which shows all of the local sweet shops that make original apple pies.

Japanese apple trees are shorter and smaller than those in the west: the fruit is hanging at such a height that you can easily pick it by hand. So, depending on the season, you can experience pollination or harvest of the apples for yourself, as well as trying your hand at tie-dyeing, or other crafts using apples. You all know how delicious apples from Aomori are, so now come and get a taste of all the other fun things you can do with apples in Aomori, 'the apple kingdom'!

