

BREATHTAKING LANDSCAPES

CREATED BY JAPAN'S WINTER WONDERS

In winter, what is there to see? Snow falling in picturesque streets? Cold mountains turned into storybook worlds? A seaside town blessed with lucky sunsets? Wherever you travel in Japan, innumerable seasonal secrets await you.



LUCKY DARUMA SUNSETS



Balmy Kochi Prefecture on Shikoku Island has spectacular winter sunsets. Seen from the coastline on Sukumo City, just moments before the sun sets over the horizon, another sun seems to rise from the sea and merge with it. Cold winter air refracts the light, causing the mirage. Fondly known as “*daruma* sunsets” for their resemblance to the Japanese lucky doll, those in Sukumo are particularly beautiful, and only coalesce into the perfect shape about 10 times each winter—a truly lucky phenomenon! This amazing three-minute light show is well worth fitting into your travels.



MIRACULOUS SNOW MONSTERS

Snow monsters—world-famous natural sculptures found in Mt. Zao in Yamagata City, Yamagata Prefecture. In specific conditions, snow and hoarfrost transform trees into mysterious white giants. This rare, enigmatic phenomenon, only witnessed high up cold mountains, is now accessible to visitors via ropeways. Everyone can have the opportunity to lose themselves in a fairytale world among these large, sometimes five-meter-high “monsters”—an unmissable experience.

CANDLELIT CANAL

Enthusiastically endorsed by skiers around the world, Hokkaido also boasts historical scenery. Otaru City, once a flourishing maritime gateway during Hokkaido's early development some 150 years ago, is one such place. A group of stone warehouses lining the canal remain to this day, many converted into restaurants and more. A candlelight event is held every February, where pathways leading from the canal are illuminated by lanterns. In the warm, fantastical atmosphere of the townscape, full of snow and gentle light, we can forget the cold.

