

Risoukyo Garden and Tetsukuri Mura (Handmade Village)
thru mid-July irises -- 500 yen admission

Take Rt 10 to Towada, turn left onto Rt 4, then right onto Rt 102 to Lake Towada. At the 8th traffic light by Pony Hotel & Amusement Center, turn right. Go about 3.6 km. There are white signs with purple writing and an iris in the corner indicating the distance. The last such sign points to the left. Turn left at the next road, by a tall brown sign in front of a blue barn. Once you pass the few buildings, you will see a thatched roof ahead on the left. The parking lot is just past this on the left. The garden is open 9-5 daily and includes several stalls with handmade items, restaurants, rock garden and Jomon era-style (several thousand years ago) thatched buildings. Many of the irises are for sale, and there are attendants who will dig them up for you. The signs that indicate the species name are color coded with the price. Ones without a colored dot are 500 yen, while ones with dots range from 1000-7000 yen. There is a sign with the price index posted near the end of one of the bridges over the carp stream. You can take a picnic or buy food there. Some of the items on the menu in the old farmhouse are homemade vanilla ice cream and homemade grape sherbert for 200 yen each, a bowl of mountain vegetables with buckwheat noodles (sansai soba) for 500 yen, a meal featuring chicken rice (torimeshi teishoku) for 1100 yen, and a meal featuring cold buckwheat noodles made from flour ground in the mill on site (suisha soba) for 1200 yen.

Useful terms: shakuyaku (regular peony)
 rupina (lupine)
 ayame (Iris)
 kakitsubata (Iris Laevigata or Japanese Water Iris)
 German iris (Bearded Iris)
 hana shyobu (Iris Ensata or Japanese Iris)

Camera Show

July 13-14 approx 10-4 daily
Misawa Chamber of Commerce, 2nd floor

Come see the latest models displayed by several manufacturers. To get there, from the Main Gate, turn left at the first light then right at the first road. (The one just before Paddie's that goes past the local farmer's market.) Go about 3 blocks to the next traffic light. At that point the Chamber of Commerce is the small brick building on the lefthand corner on the other side of the street. If you continue straight thru the light, there is a small gravel lot on the left just past the building.

Nango Jazz Festival

Saturday, 20 July
gates open at 2; concert begins at 3 and is supposed to end about 2130
tickets are 5500yen at the gate, (2500 for jr/sr high school students)
(advance ticket sales for 4500yen available at Shimoda Mall ticket counter)
Performers include: the Akiko (p) Grace Trio
 Yosuke Onuma (g) Quintet
 akiko (vo) and Kenji Matsumoto Quartet
 Eddie Higgins (p) Trio & Scott Hamilton (ts)
 the Monty Alexander (p) Reggae and Jazz Band

Nango Jazz Festival is one of the biggest musical events in Northern Japan, and it's only a short drive past Hachinohe. Several jazz bands, both American and Japanese, begin

performing at 3 in the afternoon and are scheduled to continue until 9:30 at night... Recommend arriving early to get a good view of the stage. Take a blanket and folding chairs. You can take a picnic or buy food there.

Nango is about 10 km south of Hachinohe. To get to Nango, take Rt 45 or the toll road into Hachinohe, and turn right at the first big pedestrian overpass. Go straight ahead, cross the river, and drive up the hill into town. At the third light, a slanted tee intersection, turn left, and follow the road around the curve to the right. Stay in the middle lane, and go straight through the next light. You're now on Rt. 340, so drive straight ahead. As you head up the hill, you'll pass the Yonekura Hotel on your left (with the Golden Palki Indian Restaurant on the top floor), but keep driving straight for another 10 km. Nango is a small village, and the Jazz concert is in the amphitheater in the middle of town. Follow everyone else into the parking lot, and you're there.

Wildflowers along Tanesashi Coast

around mid- to late July

Looking for a pleasant place to relax? Visit Tanesashi on the coast about 10km south of Hachinohe. Take a picnic to enjoy on the grassy expanses of Tanesashi. Be sure to look for the hiking path above the coastline to the north of the grassy area. The path continues for about a mile of scenic, rocky coastline amid a profusion of wildflowers, including day lilies, irises, and Hamagiku (literally beach chrysanthemums). To get there, take your favorite route to Kabushima (Seagull Island) in Hachinohe and continue south along route 1. In about 10 km you should see a sign in English welcoming you to Tanesashi. The day lilies and wild irises are blooming now, with the sedum just starting and the hamagiku (beach chrysanthemum) just budding...