

issue 19 // Dec 12 - 25 // 2009

powderlife

NISEKO ニセコ

www.powderlife.com

**FRESH TRACKS
ARE BACK**

MIZUNO NO SAWA

niseko's gnarly new terrain

THE ODIN PROJECT

house sets five-storey standard

RESORT GUIDE

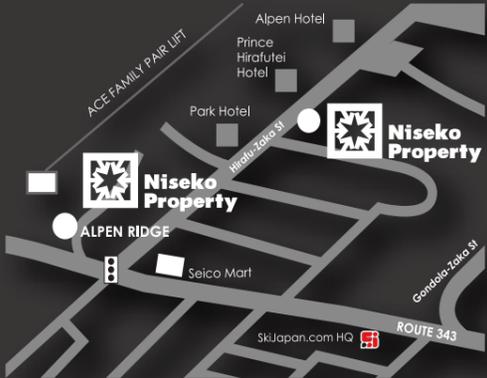
restaurants, bars and more

Niseko's powder lifestyle magazine fresh every two weeks

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Location: Upper Hirafu Village
Land Size 3,825m²



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the vale niseko



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editor's note *issue 19 december 12 2009*



AS the sun rises on another winter in Niseko, welcome back and thanks for tuning in for another season of Powderlife! Following what was a pretty tough winter for Niseko in 08/09 with the world economy and some pretty crazy currency fluctuations, Niseko is back – bigger and better than ever this season. Accommodation bookings are way up, there is a bunch of new high profile developments and businesses in town, and a surprising number of exciting new bars and restaurants. Niseko has bounced back in a big way, and it's shaping up to be another exciting season in Hokkaido.

While the resort opened on time this year and we had some really big early snowfalls, at the time we put this magazine to print at the start of December we'd barely had a flake in 10 days. The handful of tourists who arrived at the end of November had to make do with just a few top runs. While it was a bit frustrating seeing that freshly waxed and tuned board waiting ready in the racks for days upon days of deep powder, one of the great things about Niseko is no matter how slowly the season starts, you just know it's going to get good.

We're looking forward to getting all your pics, story ideas and suggestions for the mag, so contact us anytime. On behalf of the team at Powderlife, we're glad to be exploring another season in Niseko with you. Have a great one on the mountain and off!

Kristian Lund, Powderlife Managing Editor kris@powderlife.com

今シーズンもニセコへおかえりなさい!また、今年もパウダーライフをご愛読いただきありがとうございます。世界の経済状況の悪化により昨年は非常に厳しいシーズンでした。それに続き未だに不景気の影響下ですが、今シーズンのニセコは今まで以上に良い年となりそうです。宿泊施設の予約状況は幸先の良いスタートを切り、リゾート内では新しいハイクラス施設建設やビジネスが見受けられ、驚くほど多くの数の新しいバーやレストランがオープンします。ニセコは、道南地域のスキーリゾートの中で、大きく飛躍し、素晴らしいシーズンをもたらすことでしょう。

今年はスキー場も予定通りオープンし、すでに大きな積雪量を記録しました。パウダーライフを印刷する12月初旬には、残念なことに10日間積雪がないと予想されています。11月終盤に訪れた少数の観光客は少しだけリゾートを楽しめたようです。完璧に手入れをされたボードが寂しく壁にかかっている様子を見るのは少し辛いですが、どんなに積雪が遅くとも必ず素晴らしいシーズンの到来があるのがニセコの魅力の一つです。

パウダーライフマガジンで、雑誌に関するご提案、記事に関するアイデア、写真がある方はご連絡お待ちしております。パウダーライフのチームを代表して、今シーズンもパウダーライフをどうぞ宜しくお願い致します!今シーズンも沢山ニセコの生活を楽しみましょう!

Photo: Chris Chan

SEKKA DINING

SEKKA Dining is an experience in modern international cuisine fusing Hokkaido's fresh seasonal fish, herbs, vegetables and meats with admired culinary traditions from around the world.

DINNER 18:00~22:00 (LO) T: 21-5022



MAKI LOUNGE

Cultivate your knowledge of Japan's best sakes and the world's finest single malts at the Maki Saki Lounge. Perfect for fire-side drinks after dinner as the snowflakes drift down.

DRINKS 14:00~ LATE T: 21-3070



SEKKA DELI

Get set for the day ahead with Sekka's famous house made Granola or wile away the afternoon with the delicious Hokkaido flavours of a SEKKA Deli lunch. Ready to eat or takeaway immediately if there are pressing engagements on the slopes.

BREAKFAST 7:00~21:00 T: 21-3088



HERMOSA

Chida-sensei and his team provide the ultimate in relaxation and recovery with their traditional massage techniques, perfect for refreshing body and mind after a day on the slopes. Call and reserve your session, whether to ease the toll of a day in deep powder or as a simple luxury on your Niseko holiday.

BY APPOINTMENT 15:00~24:00 T: 21-6133

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fluff all the good stuff up front

» Early falls whet the tastebuds



Photo: Glen Claydon

BIT of a funny start to the season this one. There have been some really early and generous pre-season snowfalls, but as soon as it came to crunch time and the resort opened, the tap stopped running. The first snow at village level was October 31, and two days later the biggest storm so far this winter dumped non-stop for two days, burying the village and depositing about 60cm up high. Jess Ripper and local photo guru Glen Claydon hiked up to score waist-deep pow and got the pics to prove it (that's Jess on the left!). However, the next significant snowfall came a couple of days before official resort opening day, and dumped enough to open on time. It's since barely dropped a flake, but the forecast was starting to ripen as we went to print. We're pretty sure as you're reading this, all concerns about the slow start to the season will be long gone!



WE'RE not sure what's going to happen on December 18, but we'll be checking the West Canada Homes website just in case. The site was recently replaced by the spread partly captured above, simply stating: "December 18, We're dropping the gloves". All backed by a rocking Elvis Presley soundtrack. Not sure how all this links up... but now they've got our attention!

» J-Sekka's beer with Christmas kick



OTARU Beer's brand new Christmas brew at J-Sekka will surely be on many beer lovers' Christmas wish lists this winter. Because J-Sekka has exclusive rights to Otaru Beer on tap in Niseko, it's the only place in town where you can sample the draft-beery goodness. Available now for a limited time over the Christmas-New Year period, it's a Dunkel Bock beer, perfect for Niseko's chilly climes with a high 8% alcohol content, and an intense, very sweet, malty flavour. The Otaru Dunkel Bock – of which J-Sekka has five 12L kegs – range from ¥450 for 300ml to ¥1200 for a giant 1L stein. Otaru Beer say their German-style Dunkel Bock is 'excellent for sipping late in the evening in front of the fire, for matching with specialty desserts, or gift-giving and enjoying with guests'. Perfect anytime, we reckon. And because the beer's known as 'drinkable bread' for its high sustenance, get down to J-Sekka to break some 'bread' with you and yours this Chrissie.

» Niseko signs up for international film exposure

AN award-winning snow movie made predominantly in Niseko last year has been carving its signature identity into film circles around the world. Sweetgrass Productions' *Signatures* is an artistic, cinematic masterpiece with a chilled out folk soundtrack and poetic narration, focused on the dynamically different seasons in Niseko and greater Hokkaido, along with personal expression and relationships, both on the mountain and off. In a refreshing diversion from the snow film norm, *Signatures* – which features jaw-dropping hi-def skiing, boarding, no-boarding and dropknee-boarding – concentrates on the style, art and personality of riding snow, instead of extreme, technical riding. The film's unique approach has resonated well with Niseko powderhounds – many of whom say *Signatures* achieves the difficult task of summing up on film the feeling of riding deep powder in the backcountry.

The organic, natural and fluid theme of *Signatures* gelled with the ideals and philosophies of Niseko snowsurfer and Gentemstick snowboard founder, Taro Tomai, who also featured heavily in the film. ***Sweetgrass and Powderlife are giving readers the chance to win a copy of *Signatures*. Send us a haiku about the art of riding and the deep powder sensation for a chance to win. Best three haikus win a DVD and get published in the mag. Send entries to ed@powderlife.com.**



niseko news *niseko's gnarly new terrain*

By Matthew Thomas

AFTER years of tirelessly deliberating with the government, national parks and other affiliated parties, Niseko Village will this season finally open the epic Mizuno no Sawa terrain to the public.

Access to the controversial run has been at the centre of debate for years, but this year's opening will undoubtedly offer 67ha of the best rideable terrain in Niseko.

Mizuno no Sawa is located to the skier's right of the Niseko Gondola, marked in yellow as 'Avalanche Control Operation Area' on this season's course map.

The much-anticipated run will offer smiles all-round this winter, thanks to its delicious bowl of long, steep and deep terrain, from open walls to tight tree runs, giant mushrooms, fallen trees and natural booters.

Despite huge public pressure to open the terrain within Mizuno no Sawa, it has for years been a 'no-go zone', off limits to the public due to avalanche risks and government regulations.

Niseko Village general manager Luke Hurford said the resort would open the run after appropriate snow coverage, and with certain conditions and restrictions.

"If you want to ski or board Mizuno no Sawa you will be allowed access after a 20-minute safety and awareness lecture to give a rundown on the area, dangers, and off-piste safety tips," he said, adding the area would be governed differently to Niseko United's backcountry gates system.

"Once you have that understanding and a high



BOOM... Ski patrol avalanche blasting keeps Mizuno no Sawa safe

enough skill level, one of the ski patrollers will allow a restricted number of skiers and boarders into the area at a particular single entry point.

"This is not a guided tour, but an educational program. After the safety lecture, ski patrol will be there to make sure you enter and exit at the correct points and enjoy the area safely, but will not get in the way of a great ski or ride."

For continued access throughout the season, skiers and riders can pay ¥2000 for a season pass card once they have attended the safety lecture.

Mizuno no Sawa will only be accessible at certain times of the day, and this will be dependent on the right safety conditions.

Hurford warned that just because the area was open did not mean it was open slather for those who wished to duck ropes instead of entering and exiting correctly.

"It is still very black and white. If you are caught ducking ropes and breaking the rules, the same penalty applies – your pass will be taken," he said.

Hurford said increased ski patrollers in the area, dynamite blasting, skiers and boarders compacting the slopes, and the public obeying the Niseko Rules should ensure the area is safe to ride this season.

Hurford said the opening of Mizuno no Sawa was a huge step forward for Niseko, adding that success with this project would lead to further terrain expansion at other ski resorts where possible.

hirafu main street redevelopment *on the road*

THE Hokkaido Government has given the green light to fund a complete facelift of Hirafu's main street.

The Department of Roads recently approved the principle and appropriated funds for a master-planned project to redevelop Hirafu-Zaka Street which, once implemented, will set a platform for Niseko's growth as an international ski resort.

Riccardo Tossani Architecture has been commissioned to design the project, which was originally commissioned by the Niseko Promotion Board (NPB). Tossani said the master plan would bring considerable economic benefits to the local business community and provide better and safer amenities for visitors and the general public, as well as establish a stronger brand image for Grand Hirafu.

"The project consists of under-grounding all infrastructure, road and sidewalk heating, and landscaping with trees and themed paving," he said.

"There will be custom-designed street furniture including light poles, directional signs, benches, kiosks, bus shelters and other characteristic elements."

Hokkaido Government roads sub-section chief Kyouno Hidetaka said the master plan meant good things for the future of Hirafu and Hokkaido in general.

"Hokkaido's tourism industry is as important as farming for the local people," he said. "The economy is improving because of people visiting this area. We believe providing a maintained road for locals and visitors and improving the appearance of the main street will help us gain more tourism in the area."

Kyouno-san said the street redesign would see Niseko become a showpiece for Hokkaido tourism.

"This area is gathering attention from overseas because of the great powder snow," Hidetaka said. "We'd like this area to be Hokkaido's tourism symbol. We want to keep the original uniqueness of the area."

"We also wanted to make sure that both pedestrians and motorists on Hirafu's main street are safe. This is a busy main road and it is important to have a footpath for pedestrians, while keeping an efficient road for smooth traffic flow."

Detailed presentations on design and schedule will



EYE INTO THE FUTURE... An artist's impression be made by RTA and the Hokkaido Government to the local communities in spring 2010.

Tossani said detailed design was underway with engineering consultants, and permitting is expected to be completed in 2010.

He said construction would begin in 2011, and it was hoped the project would be completed by winter 2011, or soon thereafter.

Tossani encouraged the Niseko public and business community to continue to show enthusiasm and support for the Hirafu master plan.



ODIN FINE RESIDENCES HAVE NOW ARRIVED.



ODIN

WWW.ODIN-PROPERTY.COM

in the loop your guide to what's on

SAT 12 Restaurant and Wine Bar Dragon Opening Night

レストラン&ワインバー ドラゴン オープニングナイト

¥300 for beer and wine. DJ Daisei and DJ Osank will play from 9pm. Enjoy adult night with gentle, relaxing music.

ビール&グラスワイン ¥300にてお出しします。21:00からは、DJ Daisei と Osank が、ゆるやかな音を楽しむ大人の夜を演出します。

start: 6pm
contact: 0136 21 7700
www.dragon-nf.com

SUN 13 Ninja Dinner Night @ Freedom Inn (Hanazono)

忍者ディナーナイト @Ninja Soul Food

You can get a photo in a Ninja uniform and chat with some genuine (?) ninjas.

忍者が登場!お客様も忍者コスプレでの写真をプレゼントします。

start: 6pm
contact: 090-8274-1489

MON 14 Ladies' Night @ Paddy McGinty's Irish Pub

レディースナイト @パディー マクギンティーズ

¥300 for a draft beer, wine and sparkling wine, house spirits or soft drinks.

ドラフトビール、赤白ワイン、スパークリングワイン、スピリット、ソフトドリンクを300円にて女性限定で提供いたします。

start: 6pm-9pm
contact: 0136 55 8020

TUE 15 Tsubara Tsubara Opening Day

つばらつばらオープニングサービス!!

Bring the first issue of *Powderlife* to get two free toppings for your curry from December 15-17.

パウダーライフの雑誌を持ってきて頂いたお客様に、トッピング2つ無料サービスいたします。17日までの3日間。

start: 11am
contact: 0136 23 1116
www.tsubaratsubara.com

WED 16 Early Season Discount at Yosaku

シーズン先駆けディスカウント @与作

Bring the first issue of *Powderlife* for a 10% discount from whole menu for one night only.

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start: 6pm
contact: 0136 23 4390

Sat 12th - Party hardy at Dragon



FRI 18 bloblo bar Opening Night

blobloバー オープニングナイト

A big BBQ and taking the wraps off the new pole dancing lounge. Pole specialists and live music to welcome in the new season.

BBQ と新たに出来たポールダンスラウンジを楽しんでください。

start: 6pm
contact: 0136 :22 1269
www.blowhardallyear.com

SAT 19 Shichirin-style Char-grilled Genghis Khan Niseko Souan Opening Night

七輪炭火焼きジンギスカン ニセコ草庵

All-you-can-eat special price offer ¥1500 for the fellas, ¥1000 for the ladies.

オープニングスペシャル食べ放題男性1500円、女性1000円!!!!

start: 5pm
contact: 090 2059 6701
www.noasc.com

SUN 20 ¥100 Drink Discount Night @ Mina Mina

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start: 6pm
contact: 0136 23 3437
www.minamina.me

MON 21 Annupuri Snow Candles December 19-25

アンスプリスノーキャンドル 12月19日~12月25日

Christmas Snow Candles at night-skiing area in Annupuri.

ナイターリフト乗り場をスノーキャンドルでクリスマスモードを演出いたします。

start: 4:30pm-9pm
contact: 0136 58 2080
www.cks.chuo-bus.co.jp

TUE 22 Grand Hirafu Christmas Candles Street Show

グランヒラフXmasキャンドルストリート

Romantic nights on the Grand Hirafu streets.

グラン・ヒラフの夜をキャンドルの灯りでロマンティックに照らします。最終日の24日には打上花火が上がります。モイワスキー場 レストランにて、ニセコ雪崩ミーティングを開催いたします。

start: 6pm
contact: 0136 22 0109
www.grand-hirafu.jp



Thu 24th - Fireworks extravaganza

WED 23 Niseko Avalanche Meeting in Moiw

「第16回ニセコ雪崩ミーティング」

This season's avalanche info is due to start in mid-December, depending on snowfall. Meeting at Moiw will be in Japanese, no translation is planned.

今シーズンのニセコ雪崩情報は12月中旬頃より開始予定です。モイワスキー場 レストランにて、ニセコ雪崩ミーティングを開催いたします。

start: 7pm-9pm
contact: 0136 59 2522
niseko.nadare.info/



Mmmerry Christmas!

CHRISTMAS DINNERS IN NISEKO 2009

Christmas Special Turkey Dinner at Paddy McGinty's Irish Pub

Date: December 24-25
Includes: Six-course turkey dinner, glass of sparkling wine, two starters, turkey and roast vegetables, Christmas pudding, and more. Meals limited to 20 serves a night.
Price: ¥4,000 / Time: 6.30pm-8.30pm
Reservation: by December 23
Call : 090 8897 6288

Jojo's Christmas Dinner

Date: December 24-25
Includes: Appetizer, soup, tender oven-grilled calf, dessert and coffee.
Reservation available until December 25.
Meals limited to 30 serves per evening.
Price: ¥2,800 / Time: 5pm
Reservation: Same day okay, but meals limited / Call: 0136 23 2220

Christmas Pizza Dinner Niseko Pizza

Date: December 25
Includes: Tasty pizza, hot wine, Christmas presents for the kids Price: Varies /

Time: 11am-11pm / Reservation: None required. / Call: 0136 55 5553

Christmas Dinner Ninja Soul Food, Hotel Freedom Inn, Hanazono

Date: December 24-25
Includes: Sukiyaki & Shabushabu dinner with Christmas cake. Get a present from Santa, and Ninja will come to say hi to you.
Price: ¥3,500 / Time: 6pm
Pick-up service available.
Reservation: Okay on the day.
Call: 090 8274 1489

Dragon Christmas Dinner

Date: December 24-25
Includes: Sparkling wine, entrée (steamed fresh green veggie soup), pasta, grilled fish, main meat dish, cake, dessert, coffee.
Price: ¥8,000 / ¥3,000 for kids plate.
Time: 6pm, 8.30pm last order. / From 9pm is a DJ party for adults. Free entry for diners.
Reservation: December 23
Call: 0136 21 7700

THU 24 Grand Hirafu Fireworks Night

グランヒラフ打ち上げ花火ナイト

Christmas candles in the streets in Hirafu and fireworks display in December after night-skiing is finished.

イベント最終日には打上花火が上がります。

start: 9pm
contact: 0136 22 0109
www.grand-hirafu.jp

FRI 25 Annupuri Christmas Presents for Kids December 24-25

アンスプリ クリスマスプレゼント 12月24・25日

Find Santa Claus and Nikky!

【サンタクロース】とニセコ町のマスコット【ニッキー】が子供達にクリスマスプレゼント。

start: 10am
contact: 0136 58 2080
www.cks.chuo-bus.co.jp



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SNAP

Powderlife hit Hirafu to ask this season's earlybirds why they like skiing and snowboarding in Niseko in early winter...



This crew from Noboribetsu (south-west of Sapporo) came to Niseko as part of a high school snowboarding club. They all arrived in Niseko early because they are training to be pro-snowboarders and couldn't wait to get started!



Australian Tori and Hirafu local Wanaka both go to school in Kutchan, and like Niseko in early winter because there are less crowds and more fresh tracks. But both say they love skiing, so any time - early, late or in between - is fine by them!



Masanori, Noriko and their adorable son Kenya, 6, say even though it is early in the season, they are impressed with the snow. This is the family's first day skiing this season, but because they are from neighbouring Kutchan they will be in Niseko many times this winter.

InSki's Wipeout of the Week

WE at Powderlife never thought it was possible to be too deep in Niseko's powder, but this guy proved us wrong - see right. Wiped out up to his goggles in the white stuff - looking like a snow bomb has exploded, with powder chunks all around him - this anonymous skier was snapped by Niseko Photography's newest recruit, 'The Yas Man', and sets a high stack standard now that InSki's Wipeout of the Week has returned for another season. It's this simple. Send a hi-res wipeout pic with a short blurb to ed@powderlife.com. If yours is published, you win a helmet thanks to InSki in Hirafu. A new helmet should hopefully prevent future incidents!



Powderlife can't wait to see all your stacks, so start sending them in! Until then, may all your wipeouts be public, excessive and captured on film!



Seasonal workers Tom, Briony and Kana think early season in Niseko is awesome because you get to know all the great new friends you're going to spend the rest of the winter with. Aw shucks!

Mountain Style

AS a pro alpine snowboarder, Muneshige Henmi says he doesn't really care if he looks good on the mountain or not. He prefers to let his riding do the talking. But that doesn't stop him from looking pretty darn stylish anyway, as he travels around Japan for competitions all winter. The high school student from Ogasaka likes to keep it real with a local-made alpine board from Ogasaka Snowboards in Nagano. Muneshige's rainbow jacket and sky blue pants are courtesy of Special Blend, which he chose because bright colours are the in thing this season. He wears G-Style alpine boots, Oakley goggles, and keeps his hands warm with Burton gloves. If Muneshige rides as good as he styles, look out!



Uni students Tsuyoshi and Tatsunori from Muroran (a nearby port city on the other side of Hokkaido) came to Niseko early because it offers the best snow close to their home



Sydneysiders Aidan and Mark must be some of the first holiday makers this season. They came early to beat the crowds and for the cheap rates. "It's better in Niseko early in the season than Perisher and Thredbo in peak winter. We may just extend our stay!"

FLASH

Wild Bill's opens the choke for another season, and Niseko celebrates two awesome new locally filmed snow flicks premiered at the Hilton.



New part-timer Kana-chan didn't want to risk getting dehydrated during the Wild Bill's nomihodai (all you can drink for ¥2000!).



Yuki and Shizuka are two of many who turned up in droves to the Tex-Mex restaurant and bar hot spot.



Al, Tracey, Cameron and Yayoi were hanging out by the dart board, but Bill's was too packed for a game.



The smirk says it all as Koji the Ninja sneaks a couple of cheeky kisses from Mika and Maia.



With Eri, Becs and Nicole by his side, Joely's workin' hard fo' da money, dontcha think?!



Season opener @ Wild Bill's

Party pics by Niseko Photography



T-Roy's the man, while Amy's put to sleep by some of Brett and Co's boozey, late-night concoctions. Zzzzzzz...

Car Danchi 4 & Signatures premiere @ Hilton



Eisuke, Tai and Yumi were all cocktails and smiles while enjoying the lavish partying - Hilton-style!



Photographer Key and Car Danchi director Neil Hartman showing off some movie merch in the Hokkaido Ballroom.



Pommy lovebirds Marika and Bobby snuggle up and party down at the Ezo Pub after party.



Car Danchi stars past and present Hayato, Yusuke and Yama get genki (happy) for the premiere.



No thorns here, as three roses Karen, Tina, Lisa beam for the camera.



Chris, Ed, Tim, Story and Morgan are tallying up quite the bottle count during their pre-season training.

meet the locals introducing niseko ski resort staff



CHEF Kent

name Kent Prior **age** 30
hometown Noosa, Sunshine Coast
how long have you been in Niseko 1 year **ski/board?** Board **how long?** 6 years
why did you come to Niseko? The powder trips overseas? Middle East, Europe, New Zealand
favourite... food Japanese, especially oden **restaurant** Izakaya Rin **bar** Wild Bill's **onsen** Yugokorotei **ski run** Back bowls **Annupuri**
how long will you be in niseko Hopefully a long time
best niseko secret Be nice to Officer Digglar
what's your life philosophy Make everyday count, and don't piss off Officer Digglar



LIFTIE Mango-san

name Kazunori Suzuki **age** 26 **hometown** Kutchan
how long have you been in niseko? For my whole life so far **ski/board?** Board **how long?** 9 years **why did you come to niseko?** I worked for another ski resort, then came to Niseko for more fun **trips overseas?** Australia **favourite... food** Meat, meat! **restaurant** Hanayoshi **bar** Be onsen **Annupuri** **onsen** ski run Hanazono **park how long will you be in niseko** I hope for my life because Kutchan is my hometown **niseko secret?** It is really good in summer in Niseko **what's your life philosophy?** Don't put off until tomorrow what you can do today



SKI PATROL Tomo-san

name Tomoari Ito **age** 36 **hometown** Sapporo
how long have you been in Niseko? 12 years **ski/board?** Ski **how long?** 30+ years
why did you come to niseko? The powder, of course! **trips overseas?** Europe **favourite... food** Ramen noodles **restaurant** Old Hanazono **restaurant bar** A-Bu-Cha **onsen** Yukichichibu **onsen** ski run Huriko **how long will you be in niseko** Only God knows **niseko secret?** You will find your own secret! **what's your life philosophy?** If you don't want something, it will never happen for you. You can make anything you want real

By Kisato Kurihara

in focus with yukihiro 'the hero' takahashi

WHETHER it's for his ski guiding, management of hotels, restaurants and festivals, or promoting and marketing Niseko to the world, everyone seems to know family man, businessman and downright nice guy, Yukihiro-san.

You are known around town as 'The Hero' and 'The Snow Doctor'? Please explain...

'Yuki' means snow in Japanese, 'hiro' means 'doctor'. Because of this name, I thought my parents knew my future when I was born. I am 'The Doctor' or 'The Hero' because I help ski guests who stack it in deep powder snow! Many guests have already said 'you are a hero at powder snow!'

How long have you been involved with Niseko?

I've lived in Kutchan for six years. I moved from Sapporo with my wife Midori after my baby Rio-chan was born.

Why did you come to Niseko?

At first I was interested in a new ski resort project in Niseko. My motivation changed from an engineering job to customer service for international ski guests. I thought I could learn many things from tourism and international customers, and maybe pick up some investment projects.

What is it that you think makes Niseko special?

It is an amazing experience! Snow, beautiful nature and friendly local people will always make a great experience for winter holidays.

You recently received a government grant to promote the area, can you please tell me what will you do with the money?

We are making an Animation Promotion Video (www.youtube.com/watch?v=KW8E8lph4To). We made a cute character 'Chelsea-chan' as the main character. We are talking about Niseko with very interesting people, such as university professors, government and tourism staff, and also locals.

What are your top three tips for visitors?

1. Go to an onsen after a big day of skiing or boarding.
2. Try local Japanese food.
3. Sample less popular forms of Japanese culture such as wearing a kimono, cooking tofu and playing some taiko drums.

What do you think Niseko will be like in 10 years?

Niseko will be more like big international ski resorts. There will be a world cup competition and winter olympics. Niseko summer also will be popular for



mountain and road biking, golfing, fly fishing and also trekking in the beautiful mountains. Our colourful four seasons – spring's pink, summer's green, autumn's red and winter's white – will offer more impact to international tourists.

What was your first job in Niseko?

Ski instructor for Ski Association of Japan for Tokyo ski school.

What was Niseko like when you first arrived here?

I could see only a few hundred foreign skiers in total. There were more Japanese ski tourists than foreign tourists. There were not many international restaurants either. But one thing was the same – the powder snow that was there when I first arrived in Niseko!

irrashaimasse! welcome! great little local businesses

Lawson, Hirafu

LAWSON is the second biggest convenience store (konbini) chain in Japan, but Hirafu's Lawson is run by local small businessman, Seiji Ichien, and managed by his son Hiroyuki (pictured). The Ichien's have run a liquor shop in Kutchan for four generations (and still deliver liquor to local bars and restaurants). Because they had a liquor license, it was easy for them to make it a convenience store when they became popular in the 1990s. When Lawson decided they wanted to open a franchise in a ski resort, they asked Ichien-san to do it in Hirafu. He's done a great job stocking a range of foreign products for international visitors.

ローソンニセコひらふ店

二年前、コンビニが一つしかなかった比羅夫地区に、ローソンを観光地に広めようという試みで、店長の一園寛さんが倶知安町でのローソン経営の経験を認められ、オープンしました。父でありオーナーの精司さんが、一園商店として倶知安町で代々酒屋を経営されており、酒屋として今でもニセコにあるBarやレストランに配達もしているという。冬のシーズンには、50%の顧客が外国人で占められることから、海外からの観光客の要望に答え、外国人向け品揃えコーナー、地元のものなど他店では見られない工夫を凝らしている。日本の顔となるような接客、清潔さ、フレンドリーさとオリジナリティーのあるお店を心がけています。冬のイベント情報があれば、どんどん回覧板に貼り付けます。一息つけるお店、社公の場になったらいいなと話す寛さんでした。



Hanko Hiroba, Kutchan

LIKE many people in Niseko, Hiroshi Yamada moved to Niseko for the snow. He and his wife moved here 13 years ago and he still goes skiing every week with his son, an upcoming alpine skier. Yamada-san started a printing and hanko business – a hanko is the Japanese signature seal for signing official documents. Many of the seasonal staff who come to Niseko need to get a hanko to be able to open their bank account and in winter, 80% of his customers are foreigners! If you want your own personalized hanko as a souvenir, Hanko Hiroba is on the corner of Route 5 and Eki Mae Dori in Kutchan. www.hankohiroba-kutchan.com

はんこ市場

誰もが雪を求めて来るように代表オーナーの山田洋さんもまた、自称スキーバカが高じて、住むならここだ!と広島から、13年前に倶知安に大移動。今でも、休日の日曜日には、アルペン選手でもある息子さんと北海道各地のスキー場に行かれていたというスキー好き。クオリティーの高い印鑑印刷の専門店が周辺地域にない不便さを感じ、サラリーマンから一挙転職、晴れて倶知安の北洋銀行前に印鑑印刷専門店、はんこ広場をオープンした。冬には、外国人季節労働者の銀行口座作成などの理由で80%が外国人の顧客で占められるほど、はんこは需要が高く、海外から直接Eメールでも注文がくるほどだ。商品がお客様の手に届き、喜んでもらった時に、仕事のやりがいを感じる笑顔を見せる山田さん。印鑑作製以外にチラシ、T-シャツプリントなども行っている。www.hankohiroba-kutchan.com

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five of the best late night eats



1 A-Bu-Cha

Open till 2am with plenty of Japanese culture and atmosphere to boot, A-Bu-Cha is the king of late night eats. Try the sun-dried squid tempura with a big dollop of mayo; tuna and tofu salad with sesame dressing; and 'kari-kari', little spring rolls filled with chicken and cheese or shrimp with Japanese herb.

Main street, Hirafu-Zaka St (Map C2).
6pm-2am / last order 12.30pm
A-Bu-Cha II last order 11.30pm.
0136 22 5620.

Photo: Glen Claydon

2 Yosaku: Sticks, sticks and more sticks at this cavernous little yakitori joint. Besides skewers, Yosaku has the best crispy chicken skin this side of Tokyo. **Momiji-Zaka St (Map D3) / 6pm-3am / last order 2pm / 0136 23 4390.**

3 Mina Mina: A chilled out, relaxed izakaya, perfect for a few munchies with your mates. Specialities are gobo chips and ja-ja men noodles. **Sasayaki-Zaka St (Map F3) / 6pm-2am / last order 1am / 0136 23 3437.**

4 Jam Bar: One of the funkier late-night bars around, which also serves square pizzas until 1am. Then the special Jam cocktails can start flowing. **Sasayaki Ave (Map E2) / 5pm-late / last order midnight for food 1am for pizza / 0136 23 0700.**

5 Souan Genghis Khan Lamb BBQ: Eat like a starved Mongolian tyrant after a long day on the battle/ski field until 2am with this ¥1700 all-you-can-eat, 90-minute meat-fest. **Momijo-Zaka St (Map C3) / 5pm-2am / last order 1am / Reservation only / minimum four persons. / 090 2059 6701.**

japanese recipe chan chan yaki

IN this issue, top local restaurateur Onii-chan (which affectionately means 'big brother') from A-Bu-Cha shares his recipe for Chan Chan Yaki, a local fisherman's hot pot full of Hokkaido salmon and veggies. Itadakimasu!



Ingredients (serves 2-3 people)

Core ingredients

- 200 gm Hokkaido salmon
- 200 gm thickly sliced cabbage and thinly sliced yellow onions
- 1/4 bunch shimeji mushrooms
- 1/4 bunch maitake mushrooms
- Add any other veggies you like!
- A splash of salad oil
- 2-3 tbsp of sake

Chan miso pesto

- 30 gm red miso paste
- 30 gm white miso paste
- 100 ml sake
- 30 ml mirin sauce
- 1 tbsp sugar
- A splash of soy sauce
- Sprinkle of ichi mi chilli powder to taste

Method

1. Cut and prepare salmon and veggies ready for the pot, and mix the chan miso pesto paste (below left).
2. On a cold fry pan or BBQ add salad oil, followed by the salmon. Put miso pesto on top of the salmon, and then add vegetables and mushrooms.
3. Add 2-3 tbsp of sake covering everything, put on the lid and cook on a high heat.
4. Heat until pot is steaming, cook and mix until the moisture from the vegetables reduces to a thick, creamy hot pot sauce.
5. Mix ingredients again thoroughly, and serve.

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LJ Hooker

restaurant review *yakitori yosaku*

By Matthew Thomas



When ordering, I suggest just piling a plate with a mixture of different skewers and sharing them around the table. It's the Japanese way...

WITH some dishes, it can be the case that less is more. The very same can be understood about Hirafu's yakitori restaurant and bar, Yosaku.

It's the simplistic nature of the yakitori food style – which is essentially meat and vegetables on a skewer – that charms and delights my senses every time I dine here.

Upon entering the smoky, cave-like little hole in the wall in the Main Village, just off the 343 on Momiji-Zaka Street, you are overwhelmed by Japanese culture – from a boisterous 'irasshaimase' upon entry, to the Japanese-style, wooden izakaya bar overlooking the kitchen's steamy grill.

You even get to glance over at the latest snowboarding and skiing videos on a big screen TV to get you amped for your next session up the mountain!

But I digress, so back to the food. Yakitori, as a food style, is comprised mainly of bite-sized pieces of meat and vegetables served on a skewer, accompanied by a selection of salts and sauces.

I recommend salt with mushrooms and other vegetable dishes, and teriyaki sauce with most of the meats. But mix it up to your taste, because that's the name of the game!

And the beauty of this style of eating is you can

graze all night while you nurse your Sapporo Classic (which incidentally is perfectly poured at Yosaku!). Some of the best meat skewer dishes off the grill at Yosaku are the torii (chicken), buta (pork), ramu (lamb) and sagari (beef). My pick of a delectable bunch is the tsukune (minced chicken).

For the vegos, or just to balance up a meaty meal, you can't go past the shitake mushrooms or the eringi (trumpet mushrooms). You also can't leave without trying the healthy crowd favourite, a bowl of salted edamame (green soy beans - ¥350). For a mix of meat and veggies, you'd be hard-pressed finding better than the shimeji mushroom bacon skewers, or the nikuzume (shitake mushrooms with minced meat). Asparagus the size of your finger wrapped snugly in a bacon blanket also goes down very well.

For those who are a little more adventurous than most, there is a host of interesting, off-centre Japanese alternatives on Yosaku's menu. These include, kawa (chicken skin), ponpochi (chicken flank), nekku (you guessed it, chicken neck), reba (liver), hatsu (heart), sunagimo (innards), nankotsu (cartilage) and tontoro (pork neck).

When ordering, I suggest just piling a plate with a mixture of different skewers and sharing them around

the table. It's the Japanese way, and the best option for sampling all that the menu has to offer.

All skewers are reasonably priced too (by Hirafu pricing standards) ranging from ¥180 to ¥220. Those who were here early enough this season would have enjoyed Yosaku's three-day opening party, which featured all skewers for ¥130, and ¥2000 for a three-hour nomihodai (Japanese for 'all you can drink').

An izakaya could not be an izakaya (a Japanese drinking establishment which also serves food to accompany drinks) without a comprehensive beverage menu. And Yosaku thankfully does.

From draft Sapporo Classic to sours, cocktails to hard liquor, red and white wine to wines of the plum variety, there is a suitable poison for everyone.

Finally, Yosaku is probably one of the latest izakayas to close up in Hirafu, usually open until around 3am during the winter.

Now you have no excuse but to try it for yourself!

Yosaku: Momiji-Zaka St (Map D3).

Open: 6pm-3am, last order 2pm.

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powder tools *gear to get you going when it's been snowing*

By Bevan Colless



Stepchild Snowboards OG Powder

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THE Hellbent is fast becoming a design icon for hardcore backcountry skiers.

New-school skis tie themselves up trying to think of new shapes, cambers and side cuts, but they are playing catch up on the Hellbents. While wearing these rockerfied bad boys you might feel like a clown with oversized shoes, but those in the know will give you a level of respect far beyond that of a clown when they see you idling up in these bad boys.

Available from Inski: ¥81,000

Tel: 0136 224 199



Black Diamond QuickDraw Guide Probe 300

BEACON, probe, shovel. If you spend more time hiking for fresh lines than you do in lift queues the B-P-S should be your A-B-C.

When it comes to probes, you want something that assembles quickly, is light weight, sturdy enough to get through any hard pack and long enough to deal with Niseko's massive base. The Black Diamond QuickDraw Guide Probe 300's extra-long length, lightweight aluminium tubes, and one-motion deployment design makes setup extremely fast when seconds count.

Available from Toyru: ¥6405.

Tel: 0136 21 4055.

men who ride mountains *you better believe it – stirls's back, baby*

WELL, here we go again. It's season 09-10, and sure enough, another season of Niseko powder. And what comes with Niseko pow – apart from the usual ladies, beers and hours of deep and steep – is the poverty-stricken punters at Powderlife coming back to old SG, moaning about how their paltry mag can't get by without me. But you can't blame them, as their readers are begging for me (especially their four female readers).

Stirls is not a newbie to being wanted. It's the usual story: "Yes, I'll ski in your pansy mag for the photo shoot...but only on my 210 Blizzards. Yes, I'll be the face of Mt Baw Baw...again. Yes, I'll escort you home and go in for that 'coffee'...again.". And to the boys at Powderlife, "Yes, I'll be back and lift your filthy, dreary mag up from its murky depths."

So, this time of year my numerous adoring fans in Niseko want to know what I've been up to in the off-season. I tell them, there is no real off-season for SG. Ripping up the mountain, downing 48 beers a night and winning over the ladies are duties that are

always calling...and Stirls is the man to front up to that type of commitment. It comes with the territory of an Adonis-like body, flowing locks and an ability to ski like no other. Once the 08-09 Niseko winter wound down, it was a lazy trip to Alaska for filming heli-skiing movies in hi-def on my 210s, and a fling on the side with a governor and her barely legal daughter. Still got it, baby! Then it was back to Baw Baw for the opening of a new ski school they opened in my name, Stirls' Shredding School TM, designed to teach the young punters how to ski with style on some decent skis – 210 blizzards with rear entry Nordicas. For there's no wimpy parabolics allowed at SSS. From there it was off on a sponsor-funded tour of Southern Hemisphere ski resorts: Australia, NZ, Argentina and, of course, Antarctica. Stirls carved his big 'S' in all of them, and their female residents, not to mention their now severely depleted beer supplies.

But when the weather warms up down south, the pull of Niseko becomes stronger and the ladies start chanting. It's back to business as usual. I don't even



need to say what that is. You already know. Welcome back to Niseko, baby!

Q. I've been skiing since I was five years old and I feel like I'm in need of something new. My mates are all snowboarding and I'm thinking about giving it a go. Do you have any advice? Doug 23, London.

Yes Doug, I have advice. Snowboarding is for punters. Do you really want to be like those losers at Powderlife? Do you really want to never attract ladies? Not that you will with me in Niseko. But Dougie, give yourself half a chance at least and stay on the skis. If you learn to ski powder like I do you won't be looking for something new, except a fresh pack of condoms!



Rider: Ashley Nicholls // Photo: Simon Ramsay



Photo: Paul Malandain



Photo: Aaron Jamieson, Niseko Photography

Photo: Aaron Jamieson, Niseko Photography



Photo: Kristian Lund



Photo: Aaron Jamieson, Niseko Photography



Photo: Aaron Jamieson, Niseko Photography



POWDER POSTER

rider Ashley Nicholls // photo Simon Ramsay

To ensure safety, those who wish to employ a backcountry ski guide are advised to employ a member of the Niseko Winter Guide Association. www.nisekoguide.jp/

NISEKO UNITED.



FOR YOUR SAFETY
Regardless of how you enjoy your snow sports, always show courtesy to INHERENT RISKS in all snow recreation activities. These risks include rapid changes in weather and surface conditions, collisions with other people as well as natural and artificial hazards such as avalanches. Observe the ALPINE RESPONSIBILITY CODE and share with others the responsibility for a great experience.

ALPINE RESPONSIBILITY CODE
1. Know your ability and always stay in control.
2. Take lessons from qualified professional instructors to learn and progress.
3. As you proceed downhill or overtake another person, you must avoid people below and beside you.
4. Do not stop where you could obstruct a trail, a run or are not visible from above.
5. Use proper stopping technique. Look back and down to see your position.
6. Always use chairlift restraining devices when provided and always use proper devices to prevent runaway equipment. Ensure equipment is in good condition.
7. Observe and obey all signs and warnings. Keep off closed trails or runs and keep off or closed areas.
8. Be in good physical condition and have the knowledge and ability of how to load and unload safely.
9. Do not ski, snowboard, ride a lift or undertake any other alpine activity if you are impaired by drugs and alcohol.
10. If you are involved in, or witness an accident, alert the Ski Patrol, remain at the scene and identify yourself to them.

KNOW THE CODE: IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

Niseko Rules insists that all resort users respect and obey the instructions of the Ski Patrol and the Shirubeshi Mountain Patrol.

8. RESPECT EACH OTHER
The Niseko Rules have been created with everyone's safety in mind. In order for everyone to remain safe, everyone must respect and follow these rules.

Niseko Rules are official regulations, established by the Niseko Annupuri Avalanche Prevention Committee, the Niseko Free Passport Committee and the Hokkaido Shirubeshi Alpine Accident Prevention Committee.

4. BACK COUNTRY SKIING/RIDING IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED WHEN GATES ARE CLOSED
During extremely hazardous conditions, access gates will be closed and out of bounds riding will be strictly prohibited.

5. AVALANCHE CONTROL INFORMATION
The "Niseko Avalanche Information" is the official information posted by "Niseko Avalanche Institute". This information can be found at <http://www.niseko.nadare.info>

6. BACK COUNTRY RESCUE FEE
YOU are responsible for the cost of your rescue from back country areas.

7. SKI AND MOUNTAIN PATROL INSTRUCTIONS MUST BE OBEYED

2. CROSSING ROPES IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED
Ducking the boundary ropes is prohibited. If you do, your lift pass will be confiscated. Use ONLY designated gates to access out of bounds areas. Crossing ropes at other areas will result in lift pass confiscation.

3. NO SAFETY CONTROL BEYOND RESORT BOUNDARY
The area outside the mountain resort boundaries (back country, including the peak just west of Hirafu) is not supervised by the Ski Patrol. Niseko Rules prohibits that hiking and riding these areas is dangerous and if you choose to, you do it AT YOUR OWN RISK.

Avalanche Control Area
Various methods of Avalanche Control are in use in this area in the interest of increasing avalanche awareness and safety. Only skiers and riders participating in the program are permitted to use this area.

Contact: Niseko Village 0136-44-2211

Niseko Rules
The Niseko Rules are Niseko's official regulations created for the safety and freedom of everyone using the ski resort and riding beyond the ski area boundary.

1. CERTAIN CLOSED AREAS WITHIN NISEKO ARE STRICTLY OFF LIMITS AND ARE NOT TO BE ENTERED AT ANY TIME
No Sawagully between Annupuri and Niseko Village area, and Hanu no Taki (cliff area west of Hirafu) are "STRICTLY OFF LIMIT AREAS" as stated by the Niseko Rules. Those riding these areas WILL have their lift pass confiscated.

backcountry safety *stay safe on the mountain*

NISEKO is renowned for its liberal, open-minded stance when it comes to its wide expanse of backcountry. But with that freedom comes the responsibility of the skier or snowboarder, because Niseko's powder may look soft and friendly, but it is as deadly and dangerous as it is light and fluffy... Powderlife has collected tips from local experts to help keep you safe out there in Niseko's backcountry. Just remember, all the equipment and knowledge in the world are no substitute for due caution and common sense.

1. Obey the Niseko Rules
These rules are put in place for a reason, and are listed in this magazine on the course map, or in maps available around town.

2. Check weather and avalanche reports
Before venturing out into the backcountry, check the daily local avalanche report at <http://niseko.nadare.info>. Also check weather reports, so you know what to expect for the day ahead.

3. Listen to and obey ski patrollers.
They know what they're talking about and are there to ensure everybody stays safe.

4. Have essential equipment
Make sure everyone has sufficient safety equipment that works well, which should include a beacon, probe and shovel. More importantly, everyone should know how to work their equipment. A first aid kit, studied maps, torch, transceiver, phone, food, a change of clothes and spare gloves may also come in handy.

5. Plan your trip
Know where you're going, let someone know when you're planning to be back, learn the area, and take note of where ski patrol is located in case of emergency.

6. Don't enter closed gates
If the backcountry gates are closed, they are closed for good reason. It's this simple – if the gates are closed or crossed, stay out.

7. No go zones
These include Haru no Taki, and Yu no Sawa, which should not be entered due to high avalanche risks or other dangers. These are well sign-posted and marked on maps available in Powderlife (p26), and on course maps available in town.

8. Don't duck ropes
These ropes signify the boundary between the safe and the unsafe and should not be ducked or jumped in any case. And know that ski patrollers can and will confiscate your pass if you are doing the wrong thing.



KEEPING YOU SAFE...
Local avalanche expert, Shinya-san
Photo: Glen Claydon

9. Hire a guide
If you don't have the knowledge or experience for going off-piste, hire a reputable guide. Watch out for cowboys operating with little experience.

10. Explore the backcountry with reliable people
Know each other's strengths and weaknesses. The least experienced person should still know what to do in case of emergency.

Avalanche info:
Shinya's daily avalanche report
www.niseko.nadare.info
Canadian Avalanche Association
www.avalanche.ca

Powderlife's Niseko Survival Guide:
• Backcountry Basics
• Inside a 2-day Avalanche Course
• Lost in the Backcountry
• How to Build a Snowcave
[www.powderlife.com/magazine/section/Niseko Survival Guide](http://www.powderlife.com/magazine/section/Niseko%20Survival%20Guide)

Wanna go backcountry?

NGWA Niseko Winter Guide Association
www.nisekoguide.jp

Black Diamond Tours
www.blackdiamondtours.com
090 2054 8687

Shinsetsu Mountain Guides
www.smguides.net
090 6214 1065

free safety seminars *make sure you attend before going backcountry*

THEY say there's no such thing as a free lunch, but we can tell you that free snow safety advice exists... well, in Niseko anyway. Black Diamond Tours will be holding free backcountry safety seminars throughout the season, with the first on Tuesday, December 22. The seminars, held below the new BD Tours Hirafu office in Yuki Bar (on Family-Zaka St), will be on weekly on Tuesdays from 6pm-7pm, and aim to inform both locals and tourists on the basics about Niseko and its backcountry. Topics covered will

include Niseko Local Rules, the resort's unique gate system, a discussion on equipment, and basic terrain awareness and assessment, before opening the floor to a Q&A session. Each week, the seminar will conclude with a frantic search for a beacon that has been cunningly hidden in the snow somewhere outside the BD Tours office (whoever finds it first gets a free beer!). After the seminar, Yuki Bar will be putting on drink specials afterwards, so you can drink up and forget everything you just learned!

These backcountry safety seminars are brought to you by Black Diamond Tours, Yuki Bar and proudly supported by Powderlife. For more information call: **BD Tours on 090 2054 8687** or email: info@blackdiamondtours.com



SAFETY FIRST...Black Diamond tour guides Clayton Kernaghan and Andrew Spragg are holding free backcountry safety seminars at Yuki Bar this winter.

real estate news *the vale unveiled, snow crystal lands*

By Chris Chan, property reporter

FOR a regular visitor to Niseko this year's most noticeable addition to the Hirafu landscape would be the recently completed Vale and Snow Crystal developments. Both these well-positioned properties offer central village convenience and great views, yet are only metres from the Ace Family lift – amongst the best locations in the village. Together with the adjacent Alpen Ridge they create a significant new focal point that has already been very well received by investors and holiday makers alike.

Nisade's new flagship, The Vale, dominates this new precinct. 46 apartments and studios offer a sumptuous level of appointment including private onsens, great views of both Mt Yotei and the ski runs, and open fireplaces warming chic interiors. Boasting an in-house restaurant, heated pool, natural onsen, and après ski bar and nightclub, The Vale sets a new benchmark for Niseko accommodation and is Hirafu's freshest self-contained resort. Nisade's Jonathan Martin feels The Vale presents an enduring yet understated elegance that has been well received.

Only metres from the runs, Snow Crystal completes this well-positioned corner and is also aimed at the upper end of the market. This collection of luxury serviced apartments offers floor-to-ceiling windows, one-bathroom-per-bedroom floor plans, and a lavish list of appointments. Snow Crystal is aimed at families



FOCAL POINT...
The Vale, left, and Snow Crystal, right

and small groups seeking luxury and convenience.

Niseko has come a long way in a short space of time, mainly due to the quality and dependability of its snow. The hard-core enthusiasts who first brought Niseko's powder to the world's attention were less

concerned with accommodation standards and more focused on snow quality. Snow Crystal and The Vale illustrate the higher standard of accommodation that the current market demands and add a welcome new facet to Niseko's allure.

2009 real estate wrap *niseko kicks on in style*

WHILE developers and investors the world over fought to stay afloat this year, Niseko managed to defy the trend. This year saw new benchmarks in luxury apartments and private residences completed. Several large, upper-village development sites were acquired, and a number of significant commercial properties changed hands.

The global financial crisis was clearly the single largest factor this year, but while funds may have become harder to access, this had an unexpected positive effect. The global downturn forced investors to step back from the heady boom mentality that preceded it and re-examine their long-term strategies.

Managing director of Niseko Property Ruskin McLennan said: "The GFC obviously had a profound effect, but it may have saved Niseko from over-development."

Buyers and financiers alike are now performing more rigorous due diligence before proceeding, and this can only benefit the entire village as an unsuccessful development hurts everyone.

Some owners, perhaps under pressure from investments elsewhere, accepted prices unthinkable just a year or two ago in the knowledge that the strong yen

would yield foreign exchange profits even where the property transaction had lost.

For those in a position to purchase, some very good deals were available and a number of significant transactions were completed.

As if to highlight the evolution of Niseko's investor profile, three large upper village sites sold were purchased by Asian developers. The centrally located Lodge Ronde also changed hands, as did a number of commercial properties including Sansou and Suzuran

The GFC obviously had a profound effect, but it may have saved Niseko from over-development.

in the Upper Village and Izumikyo's Snowgum Lodge. Hokkaido Tracks completed several commercial and residential sales including two blocks in their Escarpment Estate at the foot of the Lower Village.

Capella Niseko has finished the year strongly, with launches in Singapore and Hong Kong securing a number of sales of both its freestanding residences and apartments.

Although not released to the market yet, Hanazono

has revealed its plans for a four-season resort of two luxury hotels and a number of condominiums over the next 10 years.

Looking forward, Nisade's chairman Jonathan Martin said: "Niseko's foundation is solid and will only get stronger. Rental numbers are up this year which just shows the strengths of this area, and I know that our product and that of every other developer in the area is contributing to those strengths."

"We will see more investment in higher-end luxury apartments and houses," McLennan adds, "with more people moving to Niseko looking for a change of lifestyle."

There's no doubt that the market slowed as investors found funds harder to access, but the region's fundamentals remain sound. Niseko is still up there with the best snow resorts on this side of the globe, prices are realistic compared with similar high-end international resorts, and Asia continues to be the world's go-ahead region financially. In short, Niseko's continuing inflow of investment and development – especially given the global financial crisis – is a resounding vote of confidence in the area, and looks set to continue.



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Deep Tracks 1 🏠 1
Upper Hirafu ¥39,500,000



100 meters from the gondola, this chic and convenient apartment enjoys western alpine styles. Warm, cosy and very light. Great rental property showing excellent returns.

Yama Shizen West 201 🏠 2
Upper Hirafu ¥56,000,000



A large Yama Shizen 2 bedroom apartment enjoying superb mountain views and all-season location. Stylish fit out and furnishings. A very solid rental all year round.

real estate feature

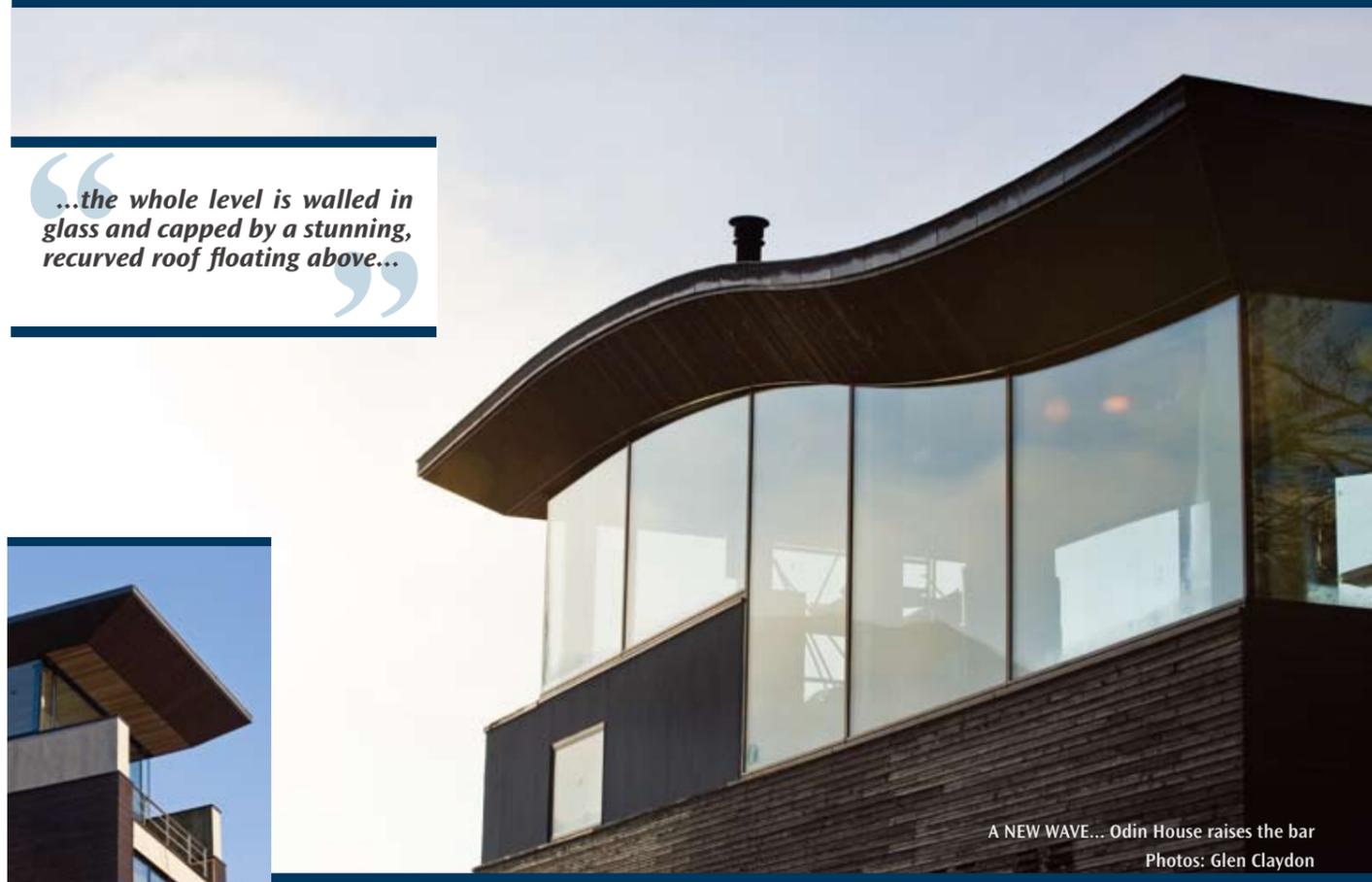
odin house sets five-storey standard

By Chris Chan

MEIKLE & ASSOCIATES



R E A L E S T A T E



“...the whole level is walled in glass and capped by a stunning, recurved roof floating above...”

A NEW WAVE... Odin House raises the bar
Photos: Glen Claydon

NISEKO'S renaissance as a modern ski area with international appeal has been marked by an impressive array of attractive new buildings.

But for sheer opulence, architectural innovation and scale, Odin House – the towering five-storey residence nearing completion in Hirafu's middle village – has raised the bar dramatically to a new level of excellence.

Perched imperiously beneath its distinctive 'wave' style roof on the western edge of the village, this grand villa redefines Niseko luxury and hints at a lot more exciting things to come from its progressive development team.

Team Odin Projects is made up of Frenchman Nicolas Gontard, and Norwegian brothers Bjorn and Chris Fjeldahl, who share a passion for Niseko powder and luxury, eco-friendly homes.

Bjorn sums up the trio's basic philosophy as one of creating 'intelligent luxury' – of 'wanting to marry the best that money can buy with the best that nature can offer'.

This means adding depth to the substance of the residence, rather than a veneer of opulence through flashy inclusions, and demands meticulous attention to design, materials, and environmental issues from initial concept through to completion.

“Going from scribbles on the back of a paper napkin over a bottle of wine, to looking at the site photos now, we are thrilled with the result,” Bjorn says. “All along we had a very strong sense of the Odin 'DNA' of intelligent luxury. This informed our choices and selections in a very real way at just about every twist and turn.”

When viewed from the front, storey upon storey of glass, concrete and timber are an inspiring sight. But while the ground level view is suggestive, the rear view truly reveals the scale and grandeur of the structure.

The kitchen, living room, and dining areas are all located on the top floor to maximize the Yotei and An-nupuri views, and the whole level is walled in glass and capped by a stunning, recurved roof floating above.

The eco-friendly Odin's 545sqm of living spaces include five bedrooms, a media room, a fully-equipped gym and a cypress jacuzzi on an extensive wooden deck. The environmentally-conscious mindset of the project leaders stands out in the list of eco-friendly features throughout the home. Geothermal heating, low-emission glass, renewable timbers and LED lighting all dramatically reduce running costs as well as being eco-responsible.

While many aspire to similar goals, few are prepared to commit to the degree that Odin have in this home.

The successful off-the-plan sale of Odin House amidst the past year's economic climate market is proof that they have a winning formula.

While Odin can be proud of this home, their focus is firmly on the bigger picture. “Our real ambition is to introduce a new tier of super-premium properties to Niseko,” Bjorn says. “We hope Odin will contribute to rejuvenating the resort, and set a design benchmark that will make Hirafu architecture both increasingly pleasing to the eye and eco-responsible.”

“We're very excited about Niseko and what's to come. We have a long-term blueprint which features more design innovation, surprises in styling and scale, and a myriad of product ideas that are brewing or already in the works.

“We are also keen to explore the selection of local materials further – looking in the future for more recycled materials with 'worn-in' charm such as used timber flooring. We would also like to explore more new eco-technology.”

Odin Projects has this season completed a luxury lodge hotel Kimamaya, accompanied by fusion restaurant and bar The Barn, alongside each other in Hirafu Middle Village. They are working on their next project, Yasuragi Apartments.



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Visiting Skier “Saved”

Staff members of local accommodation provider **HolidayNiseko.com** were praised for their recent actions that prevented an almost certain tragedy.

Speaking to reporters, international skier Mr Ty Tass thanked **HolidayNiseko.com** for saving his ski vacation. “If it hadn’t been for Holiday Niseko I certainly would not be here today. Without **Holiday Niseko’s** great deals on accommodation in central locations, I wouldn’t have been able to afford the trip. **Holiday Niseko** saved the day!”

HolidayNiseko.com manager, Ms Annie Buddyhome refused to comment on the incident saying, “We prefer to let our prices do the talking.”

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Dear Mum,
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Tuesday: Ski, Onsen, Massage, Eat, Drink, Sleep.
Wednesday: Ski, Onsen, Massage, Eat, Drink, Sleep.
Thursday: Ski, Onsen, Massage, Eat, Drink, Sleep.
Friday: Ski, Onsen, Massage, Eat, Drink, Sleep.
I think I might extend my stay another week!
See you soon,
Love Johnnie

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niseko resort guide *info to help you get around*

TOURIST INFORMATION

Kutchan Machi no Eki Puratto Information Centre

Located on Eki-mae Dori opposite Best Denki, the Machi no Eki Puratto has plenty of brochures and an excellent English speaking service for visitors

Tel: (0136) 22 1121.

The Niseko Grand Hirafu Welcome Centre

At the main bus stop in Hirafu parking lot, the Welcome Centre has a wide range of brochures and transport information. They can also help with booking accommodation if you've arrived without a booking – you risk-taker you. **Tel: (0136) 22 0109.**

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New Chitose Airport. Tel: (0123) 23 0111

www.new-chitose-airport.jp/language/english

Getting from New Chitose to Niseko

Visitors not on a full travel package have a few options to get to Niseko and back. Although the trip is only 110km, due to icy roads and no direct train route, it takes two to three hours.

Bus For those on a budget, the bus from the airport is a cheap and efficient option, departing about every 30 minutes from the airport to Niseko. They take about three hours, including a rest stop halfway and a drop-off at Rusutsu. Costs about ¥2,300 one-way, and ¥3,850 for a round trip. Bus companies doing the route are: Whiteliner Buses, Chuo Bus, Donan Bus, Hokkaido Resort Liner.

Door-to-Door Transfer Skybus offers door-to-door transfer services to and from the airport to Niseko, or Sapporo. Go to www.skybus-jp.com.

Tel: (0136) 22 2108.

Train Rail is the most scenic way to get to Niseko. Unfortunately there is no direct train from Chitose to Kutchan station (the closest major station), and all trains run through Sapporo and Otaru, requiring change of train/platform. The journey takes about three hours and the cost is about ¥2600. Details at www.japanrail.com.

Airport Station Tel: (0123) 45 7011

Kutchan station Tel: (0136) 22 1310

CAR RENTAL

One way hire from Chitose to Hirafu is about ¥7,000 for six people for 24 hours. Pick up at Chitose airport, Sapporo or Kutchan

Toyota Rent-a-Car ShinSapporo

Tel: (0118) 15 0100. English ok.

<http://toyota.rent-a-lease.com/english>

Black Diamond Lodge

Tel: (0136) 44 1144

*How to drive on snow and important tips and contacts if you do get in an accident at:

www.powderlife.com/niseko-travel-guide

TRANSPORT AROUND NISEKO

For getting around Niseko there are basically three options: taxi, bus and car rental.

Taxis Taxis cost about ¥2000 for a ten minute trip. Drivers probably won't speak English, and you will need a business/place name and map for where you are going – often if you just have the address they may not be able to find it. For best chance of success, take directions/street names in Japanese if possible.

Kutchan hire Tel (0136) 22 1212

Misora hire Tel (0136) 22 1171

Niseko hire Tel (0136) 44 2635

Bus Shuttle buses connect the resorts and different areas of Niseko including nearby Kutchan Town. Some are free or included in the cost of lift passes.

Niseko United Shuttle The Niseko United Shuttle connects the Hirafu, Niseko Village and Annupuri resorts from season open until March and is free for those with an All Mountain Pass. See the timetable on the course map for more information. If you have a 12-point ticket, one point per trip is needed. Others need ¥500 for adult and ¥300 for child per ride.

Grand Hirafu Village Shuttle Bus Free shuttle buses run throughout Hirafu every 15 minutes all day every day until the end of night skiing.

Hanazono Shuttle Bus The Hanazono Shuttle Bus travels throughout Hirafu Village and out to Hanazono 7.50am-6pm for those who don't want to ski over or get first tracks.

Free Kutchan Night Go Bus The Kutchan Night Go Bus runs from Hirafu to Kutchan Station (about 10 minutes away) every night. Enjoy shopping, eating, drinking and karaoke in Kutchan. It leaves Hirafu every hour or so between 5-11.30, and similarly leaves Kutchan every hour or so between 6-11pm. Check local timetables.

Yumeguri Onsen Shuttle Bus Take a tour across Niseko sampling various local onsens (and the attractions around them) all for ¥500 (December – March).

MONEY

Banking There is an international ATM in Hirafu in the Hokkaido Tracks Holidays office, Yama Shizen East building. Open 8am-9pm. There are also ATMs in Kutchan at the post office and 7-Elevens. Check the Kutchan map on p46. You can also use the international ATM on level 3 of the airport when you arrive at in Sapporo (New Chitose Airport).

Credit Cards Lift tickets, ski hire and ski lessons can all be paid for by credit card. Most large restaurants and some small ones also will accept them.

Currency You can exchange most major currencies in Niseko. Ask your accommodation provider or in Kutchan at the main post office or Hokuyo Bank (corner of Eki Mae Dori and Route 5).

SHOPPING

Hirafu There are two convenience stores in town for all your local shopping needs. The famous Seicomart in the heart of Hirafu is arguably king, but Lawson, the blue shop just down the road towards Kutchan, is another option that offers smaller queues and a larger range of international products.

Kutchan Several specialty stores in Kutchan may also come in handy when you wish to expand from the stock in Seicomart or Lawson. Best Denki stocks all your electrical and technical needs (within reason). M-Pocket has imported groceries, specialising in imported alcohol. Homac shelves basically every household product known to man, while Max Value and Co-Op are your major supermarkets. Co-Op is also a department store. The ¥100 Shop stocks cheap groceries, stationery and more, all priced around – you guessed it – ¥100. There are no pharmacies or stationery stores in Hirafu, but several in Kutchan, such as the Tsuruwa Drug.

COMMUNICATIONS

Internet Most accommodation in Niseko will have some form of internet access. J-Sekka and Downtown Café have internet terminals and there are wireless hotspots across town. Try A-Bu-Cha, Downtown Café, Grandpapa and Java Bar.

Mobile Phones Only 3G phones will work in Japan. Some accommodation providers offer mobile hire.

Domestic Calls Green and grey public phones take coins or pre-paid telephone cards. Local calls don't require the '0136', unless made from a mobile phone.

Directory Assistance Dial 104 (toll call) and ask for an English speaker. You must know the location and name to get a number.

International Calls International direct dial can be made using any of the following prefixes, 001 (KDDI), 0041 (ITJ) and 0061 (IDC). They will cost you.

Calling Cards The cheapest way to call overseas is with a calling card available from your accommodation provider or convenience stores.

Post Offices Look for the red 'T' symbol. Stamps and the post office box are at Piz Gloria convenience store. For other services you will need to go to the post office in Kutchan.

When dialled internationally, all phone numbers require +81 in front and drop the "0".

niseko resort guide *info to help you get around*

ELECTRICITY

Standard voltage is 100v AC. You can use many higher watt items without a problem but higher wattage devices such as hair dryers may not run on full power. Plugs are the flat two-blade type. Many recent buildings have 240v with Australian-shaped plugs.

STAY SAFE AROUND TOWN

No skiing/boarding on roads or footpaths!!

It may seem fun and so much quicker and easier than walking, but skiing or boarding home from the hill can be one of the silliest things you can do in Niseko.

Because the roads don't have as much snow on them, and generally a lot of ice, your skis or board won't stop or turn like they do on the mountain, which could see you skidding into an unsuspecting pedestrian... or a bus. *Please, keep your riding on the hill.*

Walking on icy roads About one third of all injuries in Hirafu are caused by people falling on the street. Wear shoes with good grip or buy and attach rubber sole cleats with metal studs. Take small steps, walk slowly and never run, don't carry heavy loads, and keep both hands out of your pockets and free for balance. Also, when crossing the road, factor in that the roads are icy and slippery and that it will take cars longer to stop for you.

Don't walk or park under roofs Believe it or not, heavy snow sliding from rooftops kills people in this part of the world, and can seriously damage cars. So don't stand or park your car beneath roofs.

Drinking dangers If you're going drinking, make sure you leave the bar with someone else and try not to walk home alone. Also make sure you rug up and stay warm. People have been known to fall asleep in the snow on the way home after going out drinking in Niseko, and it has once ended in tragedy.

MEDICAL SERVICES

At present there is no doctor in Hirafu and Niseko Physio is the only medical service available in walking distance of the slopes. For fractures or non-musculoskeletal cases you will need to go into Kutchan. If you can't speak Japanese you will need to bring a translator.

Niseko Physio Located at the ground floor of Australia House, staffed with Australian physiotherapy graduates. Primary care also available. Sports injuries, back and neck pain, braces and taping. Appointments preferred but not essential. www.NisekoPhysio.com **Tel: 0136 22 0399.**

Kutchan Kousei Hospital The major hospital servicing



EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Police Tel: 110

Ambulance and Fire Tel: 119

Emergency Interpretation

Tel: (0352) 85 8185

Japan-English Helpline

(nationwide emergency assistance)

Tel: (0570) 00 0911

the area is located four blocks from the main intersection of Kutchan. They have an X-ray, a slightly aging MRI and medical dispensary. No appointment necessary, orthopaedics cases taken in the morning only. It will take you most of the day.

Address: North 4 East 1-2, Kutchan-cho

Tel: 0136-22-1141

Ueda Orthopedic Clinic A privately run orthopaedic clinic providing more time efficient service than the hospital. X-ray, medical dispensary. 1-4, South 3-jo West 3, Kutchan **Tel: 0136-22-1386.**

More detailed information at:

www.powderlife.com/niseko-resort-guide

local lingo *top ten words and phrases for tourists*

By studio tdes

SO you heard about Niseko's legendary powder, booked the flights, threw the skis/board in a bag, and now you're here... wishing you had taken a few Japanese lessons so you could say something to the person sitting next to you in the chairlift! If you only learn a few words, these are the ones we recommend.

Pronunciation guide

a = u as in but

i = i as in bit

u = oo as in boo

e = e and is bet

o = o as in bot

ou = oor as in door

ii = ee as in bee

– doumo' is the simplest. The next step up from 'doumo' is 'arigatou', and even more polite is 'doumo arigatou'.

3 Douzo どうぞ here you are, go ahead

When you're handing your new friend the drink you've just bought them, or motioning them to start eating the eda mame that's just been delivered to your table, say, 'douzo'.

4 Ohayou おはよう good morning

Use 'ohayou' to greet people before noon, and say it with 'genki' (good spirit). Say 'konnichiwa' in the afternoon, and 'konbanwa' in the evening.

5 Hai はい yes

Useful for answering easy questions and confirming orders. Are you Australian? 'Hai'. Snowboarder? 'Hai'. Table for two? 'Hai'.

6 Onegaihashimasu お願いします please

Use this when ordering or requesting something. 'Biiru onegaishimasu' means beer please. If you go to a restaurant and can't read the menu, try pointing at things that look tasty and saying, 'kore onegaishimasu' (this please). 'Kudasai' also means please, but is a little bit less polite.

1 Sumimasen すみません I'm sorry, excuse me, thank you

This magic word brings forgiveness and beer! Use it when you accidentally bump into someone in the queue for the lifts or inadvertently ski in front of them. 'Sumimasen' is also used to get someone's attention – for example when you want to order a beer.

2 Doumo どうも thank you, hi

There are many ways to express gratitude in Japanese

7 Kanpai かんぱい cheers!

You deserve a drink after a hard day on the slopes! Before you start drinking raise your glass and say, 'kanpai!'. Before eating, press your hands together in front of you and say, 'itadakimasu'.

8 Oishii おいしい delicious, yummy

After you've said 'itadakimasu' and started eating, the next thing you'll probably want to say is 'oishii'. This is the most common word for describing food.

9 Kawaii かわいい cute, nice, pretty

'Kawaii' is also the perfect word to use to compliment people on anything from their hairstyle to their boots.

10 Saikou さいこう great, awesome, wicked

How was the powder snow this morning? 'Saikou!' Do you like Niseko? 'Niseko Saikou!'

Next issue: Japanese for the mountain. More lessons at www.powderlife.com/niseko-travel-guide



restaurants

MAP C2 p47
A-Bu-Cha 2

UPPER HIRAFU Try our popular Japanese dishes or hot-pots. Choice of 400 drinks! Japanese seating available. Families welcome. Lunch & Café: various lunch dishes, coffee, homemade dessert.
www.abucha.net



A wide variety of meals and drinks top marks!

Lunch 11am-4pm
Dinner 6pm-2am (LO 3pm/11.30pm)

0136 22 5620

MAP D1 p47
Bang Bang

UPPER HIRAFU This season we welcome our new sister inn Bang 2! Both izakaya look forward to offering you mouth-watering dishes from wide-ranging menus. niseko.or.jp/bangbang
www.niseko.or.jp/bangbang



We take great pride in our fresh seafood

5.30-11.30pm
Occasionally Closed
35 seats

0136 22 4292

MAP F7 p46
Black Diamond Restaurant

HIGASHIYAMA Try Hokkaido soup curry, the best of the west, or an authentic Japanese home cooked meal. Warm atmosphere, friendly staff, great food and billiards.
www.bdlodge.com



Free pick-up from the Hilton and Niseko area

4pm-midnight
LO 11 food/11.30 drink
Closed Wednesdays

0136 44 1144

MAP C2 p47
Bhozan

MIDDLE HIRAFU In Nepali, Bhozan means "delicious food". Our authentic curry is prepared by Nepalese chefs using spices from Nepal. Comprehensive international wine list.



Specialists in authentic Nepalese curry

5-10pm
Open daily

0136 21 2121

MAP B3 p46
Cocoro Okonomiyaki

KUTCHAN Real Osaka-style okonomiyaki and yakisoba cooked by you on your teppan (hot plate). Try our takoyaki (octopus) and chicken balls. Japanese sweets also available.



Try our healthy and great value okonomiyaki

11am-9pm

Jap 0136 22 1528 / Eng 0136 23 0008

MAP A2 p47
Downtown Café

MIDDLE HIRAFU Hugely popular with locals, this top rated café-restaurant offers all-day breakfast, bagels, daily blackboard specials and great coffee. Eat in or take out. Free high speed internet.



Hirafu's finest café, free internet terminal + Wi-Fi

8am-11pm
Open daily
Yamada 167-6

0136 23 3354

MAP D3 p47
EN in-house fine dining

HIRAFU MIDDLE EN is a full service food caterer. Our professional team of chefs and servers bring exquisite cuisine, a wealth of experience, and unparalleled outstanding service.
thenisekocompany.com/content/en-dining



It's all part of going beyond your expectations

7am-11pm daily

0136 55 8100

MAP D1 p47
Hinabe-Ya

HIRAFU Do you believe in eating good food to be healthy and beautiful? Enjoy our "duplex" hotpot with red and white broths containing medicinal herbs and spices to promote youth and longevity.
www.ones-rainier.com/hinabe-ya



Asian hotpot and ethnic cuisine in a Mongolian yurt

11.30am-11pm
Open daily
80 seats

0136 23 2636

restaurants

MAP A2 p47
J-Sekka Café & Delicatessen

MIDDLE HIRAFU For a hearty breakfast to get you ready for the slopes, or a lazy afternoon spent discovering the delicious Hokkaido produce used in our house made delicacies.
www.j-sekka.com



a taste of Hokkaido

Open from 7am
7 days

0136 21 3088

MAP C2 p47
Kabuki

MIDDLE HIRAFU Make-it-yourself okonomiyaki is a Japanese and foreign favourite. Cooked on the teppan (hotplate) directly in front of you. Choose from our okonomiyaki or BBQ menu.



Okonomiyaki and teppanyaki restaurant

11am-10pm
Open daily

0136 21 2233

MAP E2 p47
Kamimura

UPPER HIRAFU Trained by one of the world's top chefs, Tetsuya Wakuda, chef Kamimura uses the abundance of Hokkaido produce to create a memorable degustation dining experience.
www.kamimura-niseko.com



Blessed by land, sea and a creative chef

5:30pm-11:00pm
Occasionally closed

0136 21 2288

MAP D2 p47
Mina Mina

UPPER HIRAFU Junmai saké, shochu and plum wines carefully selected by the owner – a qualified sake and shochu sommelier. Best served with our delicious food!
www.minamina.me



Good music, good alcohol

Daytime 11am-3pm
Evening 6pm-2am
Open daily

0136 23 3437

MAP E8 p46
M's Café (Saison Club)

HIGASHIYAMA Try our huge traditional Japanese nabe hotpots with meat, seafood and vegetables – shabu shabu, sukiyaki and Ishikari hotpot. Karaoke lounge available for ¥1000.
www.saison-club.com



Warm your body with our big hearty hotpots

Daytime 10am-4pm
Evening 5.30-7.30pm
Open daily

0136 44 3380

MAP C2 p47
Restaurant & Wine Bar Dragon

MIDDLE HIRAFU Our wines bring out the delicious flavour of Hokkaido venison, local vegetables and other carefully selected ingredients. Ground floor bar offers a fine selection of drinks.
www.dragon-nf.com



Our sommeliers welcome you

6pm-2am (LO 10pm)
Also course dinners/
Breakfast delivery

0136 21 7700

MAP A2 p47
Sekka Dining

MIDDLE HIRAFU Experience a taste of Hokkaido in style at Sekka Dining with an impressive cellar and a menu that celebrates simplicity, innovation, and absolute delicacy in preparation.
www.j-sekka.com



International style showcasing the best of Hokkaido

6-10pm
7 days

0136 21 5022

MAP C1 p47
Sencho 2

UPPER HIRAFU Founded in 1996. While we have seen many changes, the quality of our fresh seafood remains as good as ever. Try us while you are here. The food is so fresh it will dance on your tongue!
www.senchou.com



Best Choice for Gourmet Seafood

5pm-midnight
Open daily

0136 22 5454

restaurants

MAP C1 p47
Shiosai

UPPER HIRAFU
Dine here this evening for the perfect end to your day. Our new restaurant is on the main street in the heart of Hirafu. Serving Niseko since 1996 with authentic Japanese cuisine and sushi.
www.senchou.com



Daytime 12-2pm
Evening 5-10pm
Japanese phone only
0136 55 5009

Fresh, live, gourmet seafood - the ultimate choice!

MAP B5 p46
Shunsai

KUTCHAN
Having trained in various countries, our expert chef creates a colourful array of dishes. Bread freshly baked after ordering. Vegetarian menu available. Chilean wines from ¥2000.



11am-9pm
Closed Sundays
0136 23 1882

Creative fusion cuisine from land and sea

MAP C3 p47
Souan Genghis Khan Lamb BBQ

MIDDLE HIRAFU
Goes perfectly with beer and makes a great party menu. Bring your family and friends for the ¥1700 all-you-can-eat for 90 minutes offer (reservation only, minimum 4 persons).



5pm-2am
Last order 1am
Open daily
090 2059 6701

¥1700 all you can eat barbecue for 90 minutes!

MAP B3 p47
Steak Rosso Rosso

MIDDLE HIRAFU
Casual steak house with a contemporary flavour. Juicy, tender wagyu and Kobe beef, variety of imported wines. Enjoy yourself to satiation with our stylish cuisine and refined hospitality.
www.rossorosso.net



6-11pm
Occasionally closed
0136 21 7100

A must for steak lovers!

MAP E4 p47
Teuchi Soba Ichimura

IZUMIKYO 2
Try our delicious authentic noodles made from local Rankoshi stone-ground buckwheat flour and natural spring water. We recommend the delicious tempura made from seasonal ingredients.
www.niseko-ichimura.com



11am-3pm
Closed Tuesdays
0136 23 0603

Homemade soba noodles, carefully selected ingredients

MAP E3 p47
Tsubara Tsubara

IZUMIKYO 2
Everyone falls in love with our carefully prepared soup made from delicious ingredients. Restaurant recently renovated to give improved access and a larger seating area.
www.tsubaratsubara.com



Lunch 11.30am-3pm
6-10pm (LO 9.30pm)
Closed 2nd/4th Weds
0136 23 1116

Spicy, flavoursome local Hokkaido curry soup

MAP E2 p47
Wild Bill's

UPPER HIRAFU
Come for dinner, stay for drinks – one of Hirafu's most popular bars is also a gourmet Tex-Mex restaurant. House specialties: Soft Tacos, Quesadillas, Burrito Supremo, House Fajitas
www.wildbillsniseko.com



5.30pm-1am(ish)
Open daily
0136 22 5652

Gourmet Tex-Mex in our beautiful log house

MAP B2 p47
Yakitori Yosaku

MIDDLE HIRAFU
Hirafu locals' favorite yakitori restaurant. Come in after a day of powder and try some of our Japanese barbeque, sukiyaki and hot sake.



6pm-3am
Open daily
0136 23 4390

Serving yakitori every night until 3am

bars

MAP C3 p47
Half Note

MIDDLE HIRAFU
The only jazz bar in Hirafu, check out Half Note's regular jazz events at www.nisekohalfnote.com. Also with billiards, table tennis. There's always something going on at Half Note.



Hirafu's only jazz bar!
6pm-midnight
Open daily
0136 23 2727

MAP B3 p46
Loaf Lounge

KUTCHAN
Make sure you spend a day or night in Kutchan, and make sure you check out the coolest bar around. Bar, skateboard bowl, mini ramp, pool, ping pong, events. Kids, girls, non-skaters welcome.
www.loaflounge.com



The only bar with a skateboard bowl inside!
4.20pm-midnight
Open daily
0136 22 1022

MAP A2 p47
Maki Lounge

MIDDLE HIRAFU
Discover the indulgence imperative of the famous Maki Lounge with its large open fire and great night views of the mountain. Savour the very best of Japanese whiskey, sake & shochu.
www.j-sekka.com



Japanese Whiskey, Sake & Shochu
2pm-late
7 days
0136 21 3088

MAP E2 p47
Wild Bill's

UPPER HIRAFU
If you're partial to Tex-Mex, tequila, mojitos, margaritas and music, step out of the snow and into our gorgeous log cabin. Wild Bill's offers the quintessential apres ski atmosphere.
www.wildbillsniseko.com



Like a House Party Should Be
5.30pm-1am(ish)
Open daily
0136 22 5652

MAP B2 p47
Yosaku Bar

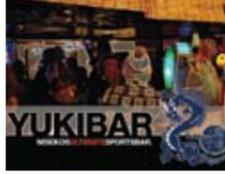
MIDDLE HIRAFU
Great local Japanese bar serving lunch everyday and drinks everynight. Billiard table, foosball, darts and Sapporo beer.



On the main street, across from Seicomart
Open daily
Lunchtime to midnight
090 3111 1131

MAP C2 p47
Yuki Bar

UPPER HIRAFU
Yuki bar is always open for a sports match! Darts, billiards and foosball. Make no mistake – start the party with a 4 litre Beer Tower! Or the famous Okinawa's Snake Sake!



Start the party!
5pm-2am
Closed Mondays
0136 22 0234

MAP C2 p47
Paddy McGinty's Irish Pub

Open all year round midday till late Darts & Live Sports on the Biggest Screen in Niseko
Trivia and Fun Nights
Draft Guinness & Kilkenny
Great Pub Food & Kids' Menu
www.paddymcgintyirishpub.com | Ph 0136 55 8020



tours & activities

MAP F7 p47
Black Diamond Tours

UPPER HIRAFU
Check out Niseko's incredible backcountry or visit Rusutsu, Sapporo Kokusai or Teine Highland. We also have a range of backcountry tours to suit your lung capacity.
www.blackdiamondtours.com



Niseko's Backcountry Powder Specialists

8am-8pm daily
Located above Yuki Bar
Across from Alpen Ridge
090 2054 8687

MAP B4 p46
Japanese Cultural Tours

HIRAFU-KUTCHAN
Experience Japan's cultural heritage in Kutchan. Tea ceremony, iaido sword demo, taiko drums, sake brewery tour, Japanese dinner. ¥3000/¥1500. Departs Seicomart Hirafu, ends Kutchan.
www.niseko.co.jp/plat



Experience Japan's cultural heritage

3-7.30pm
Jan 10/Feb 3/Feb 15
Bookings essential
0136 23 0222

MAP D1 p47
Niseko Foot 'Body & Foot Treatment'

UPPER HIRAFU
Visit this popular relaxation salon and sample some of our many treatments. All different styles of massage are available for body and feet. 45 min, 60 min and 90 minute courses.
www.grand-hirafu.jp/nisekofoot



Closest massage to the Centre 4 Lift

11am-10pm
Free pick up available
0136 22 1224

MAP A2 p47
Niseko Massage

MIDDLE HIRAFU
Australian-trained massage therapists, specialising in oil massage for recovery and relaxation. Early bird special offers discounted rates for massages before 2pm. From ¥6,000 per hour.
www.nisekomassage.com



Sports and relaxation massage in the middle of Hirafu

8am-8pm daily
Home visits available
0136 22 0399

MAP C1 p47
On-Snow Photography & Video Tours

UPPER HIRAFU
From the deepest powder pics to group tours and family shots – Niseko Photography are the local professionals. Book a tour and capture your priceless holiday memories.
www.nisekophotography.com



Niseko's Professional Photographers!

Gallery: midday-8pm
On the mountain: All day, every day
0136 22 5764

MAP A3 47
Niseko Snowmobile Adventures

LOWER HIRAFU
Backcountry Adventures
Top Machines
Qualified Guides
MAXIMUM FUN!!
Based in Hangloose Lower Hirafu
www.go-nsa.com



Guided Snowmobile Adventures

7 days
Bookings essential
090 9757 4083

MAP C1 p47
NISS International Snowsports School

HIRAFU/HANAZONO
NISS offers a comprehensive range of programs to accommodate every guest's needs and aspirations. Take advantage of Hanazono's excellent new 308 kids facility and group class sizes.
www.harmonyresorts.com



Kids are our specialty Hirafu & Hanazono

8.30am-4pm
Ticket Sales/Kids Centre
Hirafu & Hanazono
0136 21 6688

MAP D3 p47
Shinsetsu Mountain Guides

MIDDLE HIRAFU
Qualified guides, dedicated instructors, renowned service. Experience all that Niseko has to offer with Shinsetsu Mountain Guides and Ski School.
www.smguides.net



Experience all that Niseko has to offer

Smguides@gmail.com
090 6214 1065

shopping & retail

MAP B3 p46
Boom Sports

KUTCHAN
Stocking a great variety of souvenirs and original Niseko limited editions. Ski and snowboard hire also available from this season!
www.boom-snow.com



Snow goods and Niseko limited souvenirs

10am-7.30pm
Open daily
0136 23 0011

MAP B3 p46
Cocoroya

KUTCHAN
We have kimono, antiques and hand made original Japanese goods. We can bring a range of goods to your apartment to buy. Also try our origami lessons including green tea ¥3,500.
www.cocoroya.jp



Great souvenirs for your friends and family

10.30am-7.30pm
Open every day
0136 23 0008

MAP C1 p47
Fusion Sports Shop

HIRAFU/HANAZONO
Great gear, good value, friendly staff. Fusion provides all your on mountain and après needs. Popular brands like BURTON, OAKLEY, DAKINE, THE NORTH FACE, VOLCOM and more.
www.harmonyresorts.com



Gear for the Elements At 2 Locations in Niseko

Hirafu 8am-9pm
Hanazono 8.30-5pm
Hirafu 0136 21 6633 / Hanazono 0136 23 0911

MAP F4 p47
Hana Jizoh

IZUMIKYO 2
Amazing sweet and savoury breads and pastries from a friendly local family bakery. Must try! Get the free Hirafu Village shuttle to bus stop 27, near Unitas Log Village.



Creative and delicious breads from local baker

0136 23 0331

MAP E2 p47
Niseko 343

MIDDLE HIRAFU
NISEKO weather demands special equipment – "Niseko-grade" gear. Find it at Niseko 343. Providing snow gear and impeccable service since 1993. High-grade rentals and tune-ups.
www.niseko343.com



NISEKO+343 = 200% FUN

8am-9pm
Open daily
0136 23 0343

MAP C1 p47
Niseko Four Seasons Photo Gallery

UPPER HIRAFU
Stunning prints and fine art canvas works. Niseko Photography's gallery is a showcase of beautiful photography from Niseko's stunning four seasons. BERG HOUSE Main Street, Hirafu.
www.nisekophotography.com



Photo Gallery - fine art prints and souvenirs

Midday-8pm
Open daily
0136 22 5764

MAP C2 p47
Sakura

UPPER HIRAFU
Tucked in behind Paddy McGinty's, Sakura offers a wide selection of gifts including kimonos, geisha hairpins, pottery, paintings, traditional wooden furniture and more.
www.sakura-niseko.com



Your one-stop Japanese souvenir shop

2-9pm daily in winter
0136 21 7007

MAP E2 p47
Toyru

UPPER HIRAFU
Our great line-up features Patagonia, GIRO, POC, SOREL, Vector Glide (skis from Japanese maker). We have everything you need for riding Niseko's powder and a range of backcountry gear.
www.toyru.com



Really close to the Gondola station!!

11am-8pm
Open daily
0136 21 4055

rental & services

MAP C1 p47
DEMO Equipment Hire

HIRAFU/HANAZONO
Huge fleet of skis & boots, snowboards & boots, helmets and snow shoes for adults and kids. Deep powder, park, groomed, off piste, back country, we have equipment to suit all conditions and all levels.
www.harmonyresorts.com



Free Drop off Hirafu, Free O'night Storage 308
Hirafu 8am-9pm
Hanazono 8.30-5pm
Hirafu 0136 21 6677 / Hanazono 0136 23 0911

MAP F7 p46
Niseko Auto Rentals and Sales

HIGASHIYAMA
Complement your holiday or home with a 4WD vehicle. Local licensed dealer offering affordable rentals and sales IN ENGLISH. Short and long term rentals available.
www.nisekoauto.com



4WD vans from ¥45,000/week or ¥135,000/month
9am-9pm
24hr Emergency English Roadside Assistance
090 2055 6074

MAP C3 p47
TANA's Healing House RAKU

MIDDLE HIRAFU
More than a massage - Get to the root of your problem. Realigning techniques achieve natural healing by balancing skeletal, muscular & nerve systems. Especially good for chronic problems. Est 12 years.



Our most consistent comment: "Amazing!"
2pm-8pm
Closed Wednesday
080 6098 1418

MAP G8 p46
Kaya Design & Construction

KABAYAMA
Specializing in traditional techniques with a contemporary feel, we are the name behind many of Niseko's iconic properties. All aspects of design, construction & supervision.
www.kaya-architect.com



Bring your dreams to reality
9am-4pm or by appt
0136 21 5888

MAP NA
Glen Claydon Photography

HIRAFU
Complete photographic services including architectural, landscape, stock, prints and panoramic photography for online virtual tours.
www.glenclaydon.com



Creatively capturing Niseko
080 6098 7244

MAP A2 p47
Niseko Physio

MIDDLE HIRAFU
Australian trained physiotherapists, sports injuries, back and neck pain, rehabilitation, taping, braces, pain relief, managed by Tokyo Physio (est 2002). Hakuba clinic now open in Phoenix Hotel.
www.nisekophysio.com



Niseko's sports injury centre in the middle of Hirafu
8am-8pm
Open every day
0136 22 0399

MAP NA
J-Build

HIRAFU
• Consulting
• Project Management
• New Homes
• Renovations
• Building Supplies
www.jbuildniseko.com



18 years experience in Japan
We never close
www.jbuildniseko.com
090 9380 5729

MAP NA
Niseko Designer Homes

HIRAFU
Make your Niseko retreat special with custom design and project management from an experienced Australian designer. Call for an obligation free consultation.
www.nisekodesignerhomes.com



Award-winning design & professional building services
9am-9pm
080 6097 9765

travel & accommodation

MAP E1 p47
Deep Powder Tours Ski Holidays

UPPER HIRAFU
A licensed I.A.T.A international travel agent. Check out our website for a broad overview of the many ski resorts in Japan that we offer.
www.deeppowdertours.com



The Ultimate Ski and Snowboard Experience!
10am-6pm
0136 21 5827

MAP B3 p47
Holiday Niseko

LOWER HIRAFU
Holiday Niseko - Affordable holidays and ski packages. Saving you more.
www.holidayniseko.com



Leader of the pack
8.30am-6pm
0136 21 6221

MAP C2 p47
Nisade

UPPER HIRAFU
Located on Niseko's best SKI-IN, SKI OUT location, The Vale Niseko offers the comfort and spaciousness of fully equipped luxury apartments packaged with the amenities of a five star hotel.
www.nisade.com



Your Alpine Partner
7am-11pm
0136 22 0038

MAP F3 p47
The Niseko Company

IZUMIKYO 1
Luxury Accommodation Beyond Expectation Let Us Tempt You
www.thenisekocompany.com



Luxury Mountain Holidays
8am-8pm
Monday-Sunday
0136 21 7272

MAP E2 p47
Hokkaido Tracks Holidays

UPPER HIRAFU
A truly international resort in the heart of Hokkaido. HT Holidays will ensure that you get to experience the best that Niseko has to offer whatever the season.
www.htholidays.com



Experience exceptional
8am to 9pm
Monday to Sunday
0136 23 3503

MAP E2 p47
NPC Niseko Powder Connection

UPPER HIRAFU
Save time, save money. NPC can arrange everything you need including lift passes, rentals, lessons, transfers, mountain tours, guiding, day trips and food hampers.
www.niseko-hirafu.com



the smarter choice
1- 6pm
Monday to Saturday
0136 21 2500

MAP E4 p47
Shizenkan Backpacker & Lodge

IZUMIKYO 2
With exceptional facilities and a great atmosphere, Shizenkan Backpacker & Lodge are the pick of the bunch for travellers on a budget.
www.niseko-backpacker.com



Backpacker and Ski Lodge Accommodation
7am-10pm
7 days
0136 23 4351

MAP C1 p47
Travelplan

UPPER HIRAFU
Australia's # 1 Snow Holiday specialist with 39 years experience, offering a wide selection of pensions, hotels and quality apartments in Niseko and other resorts.
www.travelplan.com.au



The World's Best Ski Holidays
8am-8pm
7 days
0136 21 5354

niseko maps *kutchan, annupuri, higashiyama*

1 KUTCHAN

2

3

4

5

6 ANNUPURI

7

8

HIGASHIYAMA

Legend:

- Eat, Drink, Shop**
 - A3 1. Cafe Kaku
 - A3 2. Nami Chan Chi
 - A3 3. Nozomi II 2F
 - A3 4. Be 1F
 - A3 5. World Sports Bar 2F
 - A3 6. Loaf Lounge
 - A4 7. Shunsai
 - D3 8. Cocoroya Okonomiyaki
 - A3 9. Cocoroya Antique Shop
 - A3 10. Boom
- Kutchan Hospital** A3
- Post Office (ATM)** C2, E3
- Supermarkets**
 - G3 1. Max Valu
 - C3 2. Joy
 - A4 3. Co-op
- Gas Station** E3, C3
- Train Station** B5
- Police** C2, C5
- Drug Store** G4, D3, C3
- Homac** G3

Other locations:

- A7 Kanro No Mori
- B7 Moiva Ski Resort
- B7 Pow Com Cafe
- C7 BBQ House Moku Moku Tei
- D7 Niseko Northern Resort
- D7 Nook (All Mountain Bus Stop)
- A8 Grand Hotel (Onsen)
- C8 Annupuri Village
- C8 Yu Gokoro Tei (Onsen)
- C8 Rakuichi
- C8 Karabina
- D8 Lohas
- D8 Grove
- G6 Hilton Niseko Village
- G6 Hilton Onsen
- E7 Green Leaf Hotel
- E7 Black Diamond Lodge
- E7 Niseko Life Plan
- E8 Milk Ko-bo
- E8 Saison
- E8 M's Cafe

Hirafu Main Village

Hirafu South Village

Hirafu East Village

Legend:

- Resort Hotel**
- Accommodation**
- Restaurant, Food**
- Shop**
- Rental**
- Ski School, Activity**
- Travel Company**
- Lift Ticket Counter**
- Day Care Center**
- Information Map**
- Post**
- International ATM(2)**
- Hot Spring**
- Grand Street - bus stop (Oh! Winter)**
- Hazono Shuttle - bus stop (Oh! Winter)**
- Kutchan Night-go - bus stop (Oh! Winter)**
- Local Bus - bus stop**
- NISEKO UNITED Shuttle - bus stop**
- Spa Bus - bus stop**
- Kutchan Hospital**
- Post Office (ATM)**
- Supermarkets**
- Gas Station**
- Train Station**
- Police**
- Drug Store**
- Homac**

phone directory handy guide to local numbers

Six-digit (local numbers) need the prefix 0136 if dialing from mobile phones, pay phones, or outside Niseko.

Restaurants, cafes and eateries

■ A-Bu-Cha 阿武茶 22 562	■ Graubunden グラウビュンデン 23 3371	■ Mokoraya もこらや 090 8279 0598	■ Slalom スラローム 22 1105
■ Aburiya あぶり屋 090 7656 5767	■ Guzuguzu ぐずぐず 21-4855	■ Mozart モーツァルト 090 2699 6387	■ Souan 草庵 090-2059-6701
■ Bang Bang バンバン 22 4292	■ Hana Jizoh Bakery 花地藏 23 0331	■ Nakaya なかや 090-7518-0873	■ Spur Chinese Restaurant シュプール (中華レストラン) 22 1105
■ Barunba バルンバ 090 8907 9399	■ Hidamari 陽だまり 55-5000	■ Nami Chan Chi 波ちゃん家 21 2258	■ Steak Rosso Rosso ステーキロッソロッソ 21-7100
■ B's Café and Bar ビーズ カフェ&バー 22 1480	■ Hinabeya 火鍋屋 23-2636	■ Niseko Genghis Khan ニセコ ジンギスカン 22-2138	■ The Barn ザ・バーン 23-0888
■ Bhozan ボーザン 21-2121	■ Hirafu Fleur 創作料理ヒラフル 23 3306	■ Niseko Gourmet ニセコグルメ 080 5584 1313	■ Tsubara Tsubara つばらつばら 23 1116
■ Black Diamond Lodge Restaurant ブラックダイヤモンドロッジレストラン 44 1144	■ Ichimura Soba 蕎麦屋 いちむら 23 0603	■ Niseko Pizza ニセコ ピザ 21 6888 [MAP D2]	■ Vale Bar and Grill ヴァイルバー&アンドグリル 21-5833
■ Bouken Kazoku 冒険家族 22 3759	■ if... Café カフェ イフ 22 4770	■ Paddy McGinty's パディーマッキンティーズ 55 8020	■ Wild Bill's ワイルドビルズ 22 5652
■ Cafe KAKU カフェ覚 22-5608	■ Jam Café Bar ジャム (カフェバー) 23 0700	■ Payoka パヨカ 22 0117	■ Yawaraya やわらや 23 3810
■ Chidori 千鳥 23 2831	■ Japanese Kitchen Bouken 冒険家族 22 3759	■ Piccolo House ピッコロハウス (カフェ&バー) 23 0311	■ Yo よ 22-6979
■ Cocoro okonomiyaki お好み焼きこころ 23-0008	■ Java Bar and Café ジャバ バー&カフェ 090 2871 6781	■ Raku Izakaya 楽 居酒屋 22 6638	■ Yosaku 与作 23-4390
■ Curry Goya カレー小屋 23 3688	■ JoJo's Café and Bar ジョジョズ (カフェ&バー) 23 2093	■ Ramat Niseko ラマッタニセコ 21 5088	■ Youtei Yakiniku 焼肉ようてい 22 0109
■ DOWNTOWN Cafe ダウンタウンカフェ 23 3354	■ Jyuu Okonomiyaki じゅう 44 2336	■ Rin Izakaya りん 居酒屋 22 1444	■ Yummy's ヤミーズ 21 2239
■ Dragon Wine and Food Bar ドラゴン ワイン&バー 21 7700	■ Kabuki カブキ 21-2233	■ Sakae Izakaya さかえ 22-4198	■ Yuki Bar and Café 雪場カフェ 22 0234
■ Ebisutei えびす亭 22-6544	■ Kakashi かかし 23 2622	■ Sekka Dining セッカダイニング 21 5022	
■ EN in-house fine dining 宴インハウスファインダイニング 55 8100	■ Kame 亀 22 0339	■ Senchou 1 Izakaya 船長 (居酒屋) 22 2001	
■ Ezo seafoods エゾ・シーフード 090-1203-7879	■ Kamimura カミムラ 21 2288	■ Senchou 2 Seafood Izakaya 海山屋 (海鮮居酒屋) 22 5454	
■ Fujizushi Sushi ふじ鮓 23 2661	■ LumberJack ランバージャック 22-3086	■ Shiosai 潮彩 55-5009	■ Niseko Wine Supply ニセコウアインサプライ090 6875 5931
■ Gentem Café 玄天カフェ 23 3154	■ M's Cafe エムズカフェ 44-3380	■ Shokusai Hirafu 食彩 比羅夫 22 1105	■ Seicomart Hirafu セイコマート 23-3271
■ Grandpapa グランパパ 23 2244	■ Mina Mina ミナミナ 23 4771	■ Shunsai 旬彩 23-1882	■ J-Sekka Cafe & Delicatessen ジェイセッカデリ 21 3088

Delis, food, wine

phone directory handy guide to local numbers

Six-digit (local numbers) need the prefix 0136 if dialing from mobile phones, pay phones, or outside Niseko.

Bars

■ Barunba バルンバ 090 8907 9399	■ Be. ビー 556 905	■ Blo Blo Bar フロフロ・バー 22 1269	■ Dragon Wine and Food Bar ドラゴン ワイン&フードバー 21 7700	■ Fridge Door Bar (Gyu +) ギョウタスバー 23 1432	■ Half Note ハーフノート 090-1307-3792	■ Herbies Umbrella bar ハービーズアンブレラバー 090-7511-5310	■ Jam Café Bar ジャムカフェバー 23 0700	■ Java Bar and Café ジャババー&カフェ 090 2871 6781	■ Maki Lounge Bar @ J-SEKKA マキラウンジバー@ジェイセッカ 21 3080	■ Masukotto マスコット 23 1101	■ Paddy McGintys パディーマッキンティーズ 55 8020	■ Red Bar レッドバー 22 6687	■ Splash スプラッシュ 23 1688	■ Tanuki Bar タヌキバー 090-7511-5310	■ The Brick ブリック 22 3444	■ The Bunker ザ・バンカー 21-5833	■ Yuki Bar and Café 雪場カフェ 22 0234	■ Wild Bill's ワイルドビルズ 22 5652	■ Yosaku Bar 与作バー 090 3111 1131
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Tours, activities

■ Black Diamond Tours ブラック ダイヤモンド ツアー 090-2054-8687	■ Fuga Pottery Factory 陶工房風雅 22 1731	■ Hot Shots Photography ホットショット フォトグラフィー 21-7115	■ NAC Niseko Adventure Centre NAC アドベンチャーセンター 23 2093	■ Niseko Foot ニセコフット 22-1224	■ Niseko Photography Tours ニセコフォトグラフィーツアー 22-5764	■ Niseko Massage ニセコマサージ 22 0399	■ Niseko Pottery Club ニセコ陶芸クラブ 23 4844	■ Niseko Snowmobile Adventures ニセコスノーモービルアドベンチャー 21 5001	■ NOASC ノアスク 23 1688	■ Paint Ball Field Niseko ペイントボールフィールドニセコ 23 2111	■ Raku Healing house 楽ヒーリングハウス 080-6098-1418	■ Shinsetsu Mountain Guides シンセツマウンテンガイド 090-6214-1065
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Rental

■ Demo デモ 21 66 77	■ InSki インスキー 22 4199	■ Larry Adler Rent-a-Ski ラリーアドラーレンタスキー 21-4050	■ NBS Niseko Base Sports ニセコ ベース スポーツ 21 5050	■ Rhythm & Beats リズム&ビート 22-0165	■ Sports Rent Ciao スポーツ レンタル チャオ 22 5178
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Ski schools

■ Image Works イメージワークス 44 1179	■ Mother Goose Snowboard School マザーグーススノーボードスクール 23 3173	■ NAC Niseko Adventure Centre NAC アドベンチャー センター 23 2093	■ NBS Niseko Base Sports NBS ニセコ ベース スポーツ 21 5050	■ Niseko 343 ニセコ 3 4 3 23 0343	■ Niseko Annapuri Ski and Snowboard School ニセコヒラフスキーアドスノーボードスクール 22 0921	■ Niseko Renka ニセコレンカ 22 0532	■ Niseko Sessions ニセコ セッション 080 6070 2780	■ Niseko Ski Service ニセコスキーサービス 58 3568	■ Niseko Toyru ニセコトイル 21 4055	■ Niseko Village Snow School ニセコビレッジスノースクール 44 2211	■ NISS International Snowsports School ニセコインタナショナルスノースポーツスクール 21 6688	■ NOASC ノアスク 23 1688	■ NOC Niseko Outdoor Centre ノックアウトドセンター 44 1133	■ Pro Powder プロパウダー 090 6875 4929	■ Sheesa シーサ 22 3328	■ Teru's Happy Vibrations テルハッピーバイブレーション 080 5651 4656
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Travel & Accom

■ Australian Alpine Club Niseko オーストラリアンアルパインクラブニセコ 223 006	■ Deep Powder tours ディープパウダーツアーズ 21 5827	■ Hokkaido Tracks Holidays 北海道トラックス 23 3503	■ Hokkaido Travel 北海道トラベル 233 327	■ Holiday Niseko ホリデー ニセコ 21 6221	■ J-Sekka Suites ジェイセッカスイートス 21 6133 or 21 7788	■ NISADE ニセード 22 0038	■ Niseko Management Service ニセコマネジメントサービス 21 5020	■ Niseko Powder Connection ニセコパウダーコネクション 21 2500	■ Niseko Powder Holidays ニセコパウダー ホリディーズ 23 4843	■ Outdoor Travel Japan アウトドア トラベル ジャパン 21 2171	■ Ski Japan スキージャパン 22 4611	■ The Niseko Company ザ ニセコ カンパニー 21-7272	■ Travel plan トラベプラン 21-5354
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Resorts

■ Annapuri アンヌプリ 58 2080	■ Grand Hirafu グランドヒラフ 22 0109	■ Hanazono 花園 21 66 55	■ Moiwa モイワ 59 2522	■ Niseko Village ニセコビレッジ 44 1111
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after the melt golf in the green season

GOLF in Japan... crowded and expensive? Not if you're lucky enough to have discovered Niseko. In fact, in Hokkaido it's very much the opposite.

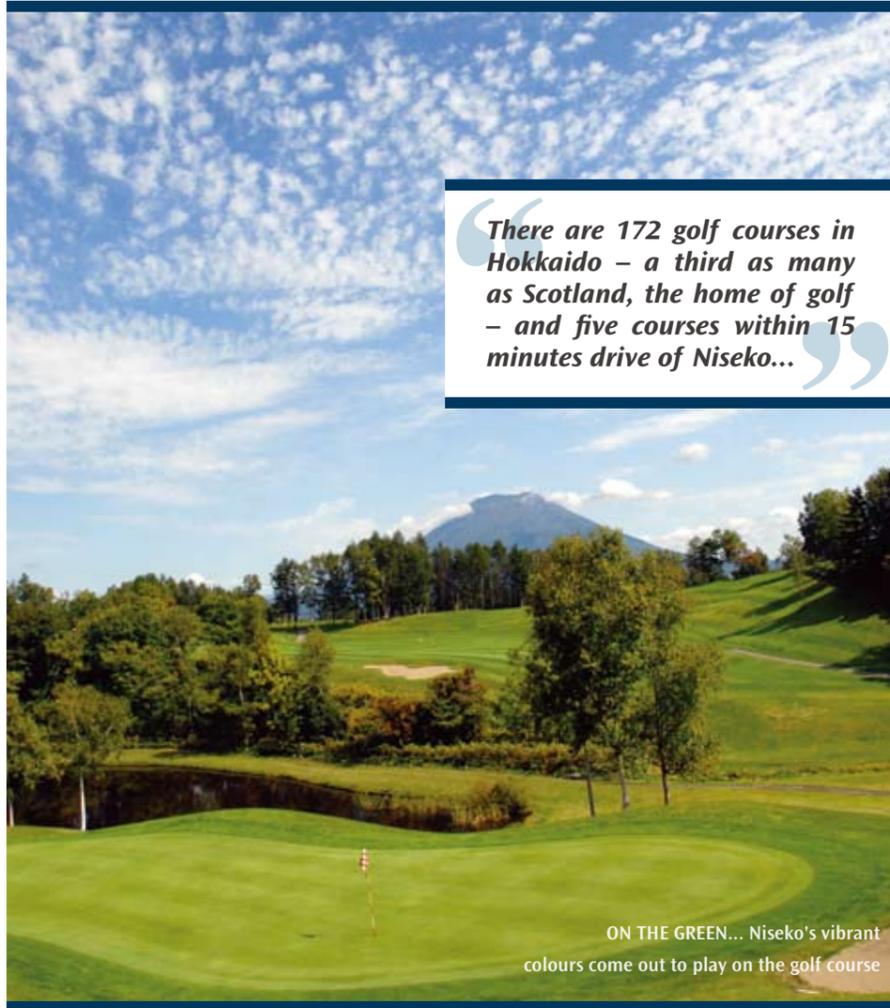
Up here land is plentiful and cheap, and the population sparse. In turn course fees are affordable and fairways are often deserted. Of course, with rolling green hills and snow capped peaks even in midsummer, the scenery is amazing.

Due to the lack of development, every course feels like it's secluded deep in Hokkaido's wilderness. The air is clean, the temperature is mild. Take it all in at the laid back pace Hokkaido is renowned for and you have one of the best golfing setups in Asia, if not the world.

There are 172 golf courses in Hokkaido – a third as many as Scotland, the home of golf – and five courses within 15 minutes drive of Niseko. One aspect local courses share with mainland Japanese resorts is immaculate maintenance – perfectly manicured greens and a fairways barely missing a divot. It really has to be seen to be believed.

Weekends are prime time for golf when businessmen are able to get out on the green themselves. During the week however, it's all yours. If you're on a budget, take note of some of the local specials, such as the early bird session at Niseko's stunning Hanazono Tokyu for just ¥4000. If you really do your research, you'll find a great deal that also includes a free onsen hot spring bath in the price.

The only other advice I can give you is, if you buy a house in Niseko, invest in a good set of golf clubs as well as a set of skis.



There are 172 golf courses in Hokkaido – a third as many as Scotland, the home of golf – and five courses within 15 minutes drive of Niseko...

ON THE GREEN... Niseko's vibrant colours come out to play on the golf course

niseko cycle week 2009 event was 'perfect'

THE second Niseko Cycle Week fulfilled its promise to be bigger and better than the first, with organisers and participants agreeing the event was a huge success.

"It was perfect," declared Jess Ripper, one of the many volunteer event organisers of the September event. "There were definitely more people involved in all the events overall, which is testament to the fact the event is growing, and it's here to stay."

"The response from the people involved this year, especially those who came internationally, was overwhelming – they were blown away by the surroundings, and every event in general ran a lot smoother."

Highlights of the week included:

- The hugely successful opening and closing gourmet barbecues, which were run alongside mountain bike events and attracted plenty of families and non-cyclists, as well as the hardcore pedal pushers.
- Bike to Work Day, which got more than 100 locals,

including plenty of non-cyclists, pedalling to work.

- The night-time social events including the Black Diamond Lodge Fire and Jump Jam, featuring local mountain bikers taking on three massive jumps, and Northfield Lodge's Cranked Movie and Mexican Night.
- Much greater participation in the intermediate level social road rides, which were held almost every day of the week across Niseko.

Jess said one of the most satisfying aspects of the second Niseko Cycle Week was that it had fulfilled its aims laid down before the event:

- To promote the area's amazing potential as a mountain biking and road cycling destination.
- To promote an active lifestyle and health awareness.
- To contribute to the notion of environmental sustainability through the use of bikes rather than cars.

Niseko Cycle Week will be back again next summer so keep an eye on www.nisekocycleweek.com.



WHEELS IN MOTION... Niseko Cycle Week heading towards its third year. Photo: Glen Claydon

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Location: Middle Hirafu
Bld. size: 217.77 sqm

🚗 4 🚗 4

Niseko Fresh Powder Creekside ¥66,000,000



Alpine-style apartment with fantastic occupancy/income track record. Located only 200m from the Hirafu Gondola.

Location: Upper Hirafu
Bld. size: 102 sqm

🚗 3 🚗 2

Upper Hirafu Lodge ¥48,700,000



Best price in Upper Hirafu! Secure this fantastic re-development site while the current building provides cash flow.

Location: Upper Hirafu
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Land size: 124.84 tsubo (412 sqm)

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Youtei Tracks • Yama Shizen • Hirafu Houses

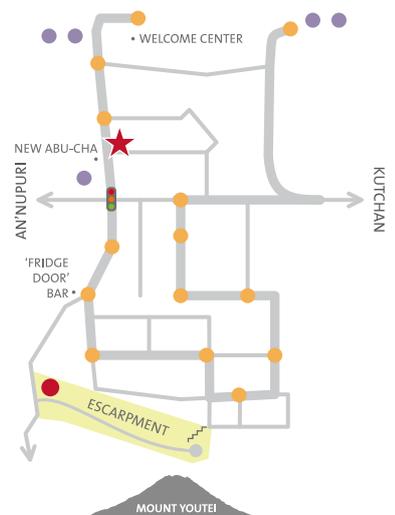
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Hangetsu Apartments • Escarpment Estate

HIRAFU MAP

- ★ PROPERTY SALES OFFICE
- ESCARPMENT ESTATE
- Escarpment Stair Access
- SHUTTLE BUS ROUTE
- GRAND HIRAFU LIFTS



HOKKAIDO TRACKS RESORT PROPERTIES

experience the difference