

WINTER SPORTS ENTERTAINMENT REAL ESTATE

FREE

issue 24 // Feb 20 - Mar 5 // 2010

powderlife

NISEKO ニセコ

www.powderlife.com

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YOUR LINE

POWDER TOWN

snowiest resort on earth?

IT'S SHOWTIME

ski pros light up niseko

EPIC POSTER

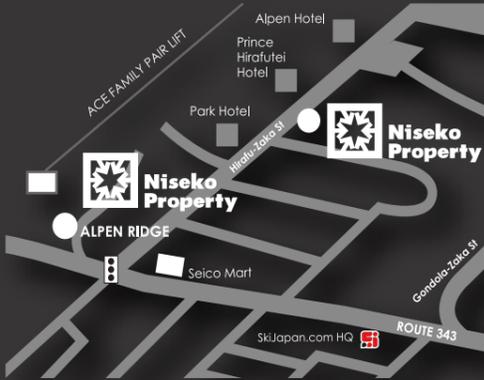
a huge air for your wall

Niseko's powder lifestyle magazine fresh every two weeks

Niseko Property are Niseko's leading property specialists.

Our team combines local knowledge and international property experience.

Niseko Property's Upper Hirafu Village and Alpen Ridge sales offices are open 7 days a week from 9am to 6pm.



ALPEN RIDGE 1.5 BEDROOM

from **¥45,000,000**   



Only a handful of these apartments are available. The best ski-in, ski-out occupancy in Hirafu, returning 3%.
Location: Upper Hirafu Village
Floor Area 59m²

ALPEN RIDGE 3 BEDROOM

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Alpen Ridge is simply the best located ski-in, ski-out accommodation in Hirafu. Premium location offering solid returns for investors.
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Floor Area 119m²

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Stunning property located next to the Ace Family slope. Extremely sought after ski-in, ski-out accommodation.
Location: Upper Hirafu Village
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reduced to **¥590,000,000**



Niseko's best location. 3,825m² ski-in, ski-out development opportunity. This site has commanding views of Mt Yotei.

Location: Upper Hirafu Village
Land Size 3,825m²

ALPEN ESTATE

from **¥2,000,000** LAND



Uninterrupted views of Mt Yotei. Less than 1.2 km from the heart of Hirafu.

Location: St Moritz
Land Size from 352m²

STUNNING VIEWS

¥490,000 per tsubo LAND



Central location with outstanding views that will never be lost.

Location: Middle Hirafu Village
Land Size 976m²

MOIWA HOUSE

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Unique ski-in, ski-out location. Stunning views of Moiwa ski field and Mt Annupuri.

Location: Moiwa
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Prime ski-in, ski-out site. Constructed 2004, this property offers a 3% p.a. fixed return for 2 years.

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Land Size 1,640m² Floor Area 489m²



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RESORT AND RESIDENCES



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apartments
for sale

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winter print run 40,000 estimated readership 100,000+

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Powderlife Niseko Magazine is a Niseko Media Publication
パウダーライフマガジンはニセコメディアが出版しています
170-5 Aza Yamada Kutchan-cho
Abuta-gun, Hokkaido 044-0081
tel 0136 22 2000 fax 0136 22 2011
www.powderlife.com

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Niseko's first English language periodical magazine - published every two weeks in Niseko between December and March, once a year as a globally distributed Niseko promotional issue (Powderlife Global Edition), and once a year as Summerlife.
ニセコ初の定期刊行雑誌。冬季期間(12月~3月)は2週間に1回発行、冬季期間外はサマーライフとして一回発行。



cover Moira skier Nick Franklin-Jones photo Rory Gardiner, Niseko Photography



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Finding the best real estate deals in Niseko

¥24,000,000 - Upper Hirafu studio apartment, 200 m to lifts
¥8,000,000 - 682 m² square land with Mt. Yotei views, Kabayama
¥14,800,000 - 2 BR house in Niseko
¥28,000,000 - Hirafu apartment HELD

Niseko Consulting

NEW OFFICE: Upper Hirafu, Sasayaki-zaka St. (just below Wild Bill's)

V
the vale niseko

...bottom of the ace family ski lift

editor's note *issue 24 february 20, 2010*



IN a 'bad season', there are always plenty of little periods of 'classic Niseko'. But in a good season, it's classic Niseko almost all the time. 2004/05 and 2005/06 have been the barometers of a 'good season' in recent years, but I think after this winter the benchmark will have been refreshed.

So what is classic Niseko? I quizzed a few locals and here are some of their observations: When the snowbanks are nearing twice your height... at the start of February. When you haven't seen the top of Mt Yotei since December.

When you can't really remember the last time you woke up and it hadn't snowed at all. When they've forecast no snow overnight and it still dumps 20cm. When you go back to sleep if there's less than 20cm of fresh. When you don't feel guilty for going back to sleep because you know it's probably going to be better tomorrow.

When you can't see out of your first storey window because of snow piled up outside. When you can open the second storey window and touch the snow piled up outside.

When you brush 40cms of powder off your car to get out in the morning, stop for a coffee, then have to rebrush another 20 to get going again.

When you run up the peak rather than walking. When a day in the backcountry seems like an unnecessary day of hiking. When you need a two-day powder break.

And just when you thought it couldn't get any better, the sun comes out for a 10-minute cameo, just as you get out of a gondola. You're experiencing another classic winter in Niseko. Enjoy!

Kristian Lund, Powderlife Managing Editor kris@powderlife.com

‘悪シーズン’中は少しの期間しか‘伝説的なニセコ’を味わえませんが、好シーズン中は常にそれを味わえるといっても過言ではないでしょう。近年では2004/05、2005/06が好シーズンを記録しました。しかし今シーズン後は水準が高まる事は当然です。

では、伝説的なニセコとは何でしょうか？地元の人たちに質問したところ、以下のような答えが返ってきました。

雪堤が身長の上の2倍以上になったとき(多分2月の始めくらい)、羊蹄山の頂上が12月からずっと見えないとき。

朝起きて全く雪が降っていなかったのは、いつか思い出せないとき、夜間の積雪量はゼロとの予報に反して、20センチもの積雪があったとき、20センチ以下の新雪だと2度寝してしまうとき、明日はもっと良い日になると分かっているから、2度寝しても罪の意識を感じないとき。

豪雪のため一階の窓から外が見えないとき、2階の窓から雪堤に手が届いたとき、朝、車に積もった雪を40センチ取り除き、途中カフェに立ち寄っただけで20cmの雪がきをしなければいけないとき。

待つことがもどかしくて頂上まで駆け上がったとき、バックカントリーハイクが不要だと感じたとき、ゲレンデに戻るのに2日間の体休めが必要だと感じたとき。

まさにゴンドラから出た時に10分間の太陽を拝めたときは、これ以上ない素晴らしい日だと思った瞬間でしょう。

今年は伝説的なニセコの年です。大いに楽しんでください!

Photo: Aaron Jamieson, Niseko Photography

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

www.j-sekka.com

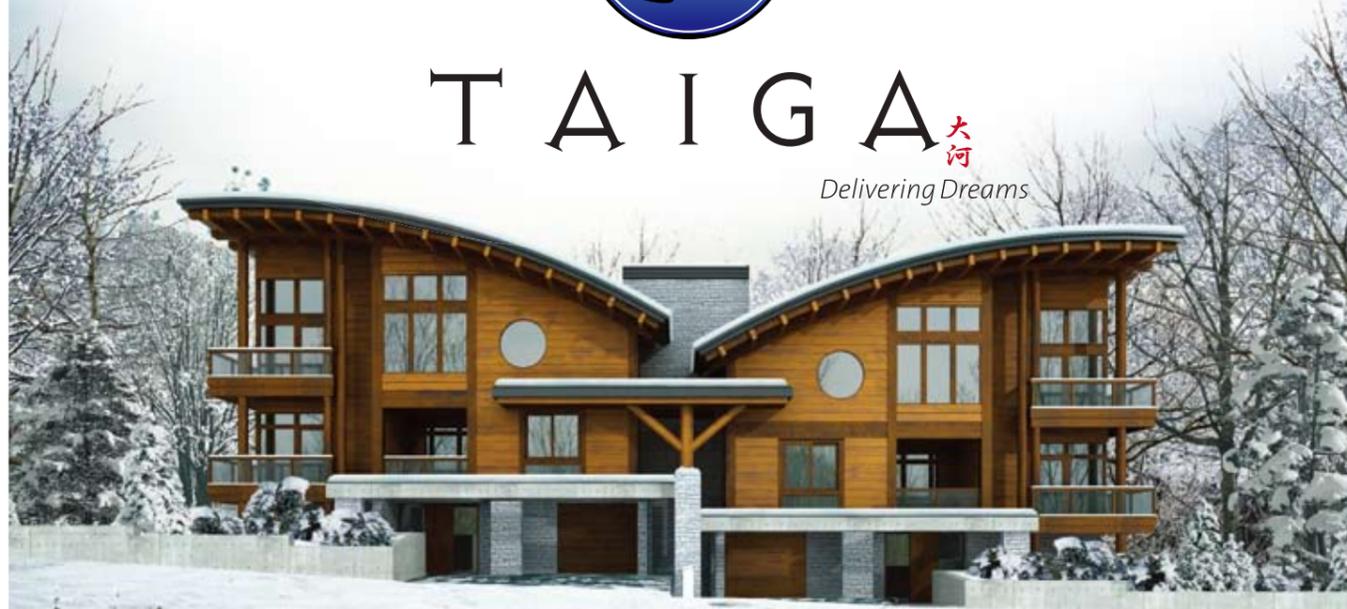
grand hirafu

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fluff light news and stuff from around town

Niseko, the snowiest resort in the world?

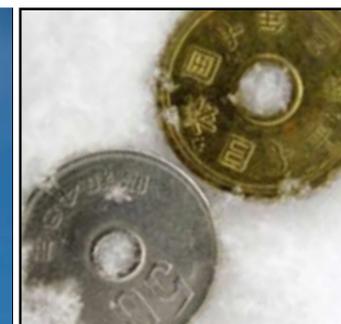


SO just how much snow does Niseko actually receive each year? The answer is that no one really knows. The only official local snowfall recordings are from Kutchan – in the shadow of the Annupuri Range and at only 173m above sea level. Kutchan still averages a phenomenal 12m of snow each year, making it one of the snowiest towns on the planet. We all know that precipitation is greater on mountains

than on plains due to the orographic effect. And of course, with higher altitude more precipitation is likely to fall as snow for a longer period. Unofficial reporting of daily snowfall from the resort has generally shown annual snowfalls of around 1.5 times those recorded in Kutchan. So, say up around 1000m on the mountain, I think it's fair to say the average snowfall would be close to 18m, which would put

Niseko up there with Forbes Traveler's 'snowiest resort in the world', Mt Baker in Washington (Niseko was No. 2). And unlike most other high-snowfall regions, which usually have maritime climates with very variable snow conditions, Niseko is mostly influenced by continental air masses consistently deep, light and dry powder conditions we're famous for. – **The Don**

Photo: Yasuyuki Shimanuki, Niseko Photography



EVER wondered why ¥5 and ¥50 coins have holes in the middle? Well, in the days before paper money, some Japanese used to string them together like beads on a necklace to make them easier to carry. Nowadays, the holes – along with serrated edges on some coins – help the visually impaired distinguish between various denominations. For the romantics, the ¥5 is also considered the lucky in love coin.



Conveniently located with Niseko Physio in Australia House, opposite the Seicomart; right in the heart of the village.

Tel: 0136 22 0399

www.nisekomassage.com

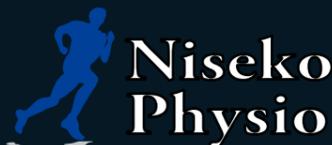
info@nisekomassage.com

Professional sports and relaxation massage by highly experienced, professional masseuses. Niseko Massage will soothe your tired muscles and revitalise your body and mind. Appointments are preferred but not essential.

Early Bird Special!
Discount massages pre-2pm!

Our therapists

Our Massage Therapists at Niseko Massage Murray, Chika and Melissa are all Australian trained specialising in oil sports and relaxation massage.



Physiotherapy is also available

Our sessions

From deep and strong sports massages to gentle relaxation styles, we can cater the strength of your massage to your individual requirements.

90 minute, full body oil massage: ¥11,000,
Early Bird Price: ¥8,000

60 minute full body oil massage: ¥8,000
Early Bird price: ¥6,000

45 minute express full body massage ¥7,000
Early Bird price: ¥5,000

30 minute express full body massage ¥5,000
Early Bird price: ¥3,500

Beautifully presented gift voucher cards are also available.
Credit cards accepted



Pros light up Niseko for Matchstick film



Photo: www.mattiasfredriksson.com

HUGE airs over roadside avalanche barriers. This is some of the extreme action the world's best pro-skiers have been enjoying while filming in Niseko this season. Free-skiing Canadian child prodigy Sean Pettit, 17, was snapped here by Mattias Fredriksson, senior photographer at No. 1 skiing mag Powder. All this and more was caught on film as Matchstick Productions filmed their upcoming international release. Also along for the ride were Swedish freeskiing big names Henrik Windstedt and Jacob Wester, all spotted during a Grand Hirafu night session, and riding hard through the trees in Hanazono's Strawberry Fields. "The main reason we came here is for the powder snow – and to shoot some of the best stuff caught on film in Japan," Windstead told Powderlife. "We're hoping to enjoy all things Niseko and Japan – deep powder, cool scenery, lots of pillow lines and mushrooms, and the culture, great food and onsens."

Beanies hand-made for hot heads

IF you could warm to the idea of having your own one-of-a-kind beanie, Niseko's has a head start on the rest. All local and hand-made, this trendy, customisable head gear comes in pretty impressive styles, including interchangeable face masks, neck warmers and scarfs. Yoshi Aida – a.k.a 'Grandma Grandma' because he knits a lot – is the ideas man behind the beanies and started Lade Clothing. And one of the only places they're available is Niseko Photography. Yoshi-san has knitted and sewn the beanies for eight years, and they come in 12 designs and around 60 different colours. "But you can ask me to make you your very own special design that no one else in the world has," he said. "My beanies are the best quality and all hand-made, not mass-produced in a factory," he said. Made from everything from wool to boar fur, the beanies range in price from ¥4500 to almost ¥20,000, with complicated designs taking a single person three days to make.



niseko news *tracking down local stories*

By Matthew Thomas + Kristian Lund

The start of the Finnish

THE call of Niseko's world-famous powder snow has made its way to the far northern reaches of Scandinavia – and apparently that call is particularly loud in Finland. There are so many Finnish skiers and boarders here in Niseko that there's a need for a guiding company that caters solely to tourists from Finland.

For three years, Finnish company Elämymatkat – which translates roughly to 'Adventure Tours' – has been guiding holidaymakers from Finland around the slopes of Niseko, and greater Hokkaido.

Finnish guide Linda Karlsson said that she alone had guided more than 40 guests around Niseko this winter, with more Finnish tourists expected to arrive in numbers of up to 10 at a time later in the season.

She added that she met an estimated 10-15 independent Finnish skiers and boarders per week who also visited Niseko without guidance from Elämymatkat.

"I think the Finns are coming to Niseko first of all because of the powder snow," said Linda, who has spent two seasons in Niseko herself.

"Niseko has a good reputation in the Finnish ski world – and word is travelling fast."

Linda said skiers and boarders from Finland – and, to a lesser extent, other Scandinavians from Norway, Denmark and Sweden – were bypassing the nearby European Alps for a taste of something different.



"Many Scandinavians have already been to the Alps, and this is a way to discover something new," she said.

"The Niseko snow is amazing, and you can't compare the snow here to the Alps or Scandinavia.

"They also want to experience new cultures and something totally new – they are loving everything here: not just the snow, but the friendly people, delicious food, onsens and atmosphere."

Linda said the universal comment from Finnish tourists before going back home was that they wanted to come back for another holiday.

"But it doesn't stop at Niseko," she said. "Some are also heading to Sapporo, but most are staying a couple of nights in Osaka, Tokyo or Nagoya on their way home. They are all saying Niseko was their best holiday ever."

In doubt? Don't just throw it out!

NEXT time you're separating garbage into one of the many bins in your house or accommodation, spare a thought for these guys.

Just a Sapporo beer can's throw from the Hanazono ski fields, this team of hardworking local folk are doing their bit for their country – and the beautiful Hokkaido environment – separating garbage for disposal and recycling.

You've probably noticed things are a little (or a lot) different than home when it comes to throwing out your household rubbish. That's because Kutchan – Niseko's neighbouring service town – has quite a comprehensive garbage separation and recycling system, when compared to many places around the world anyway.

If you're feeling confused, you're not alone. Even those of us who have lived here for many years – including Japanese people – sometimes get confused.

The council tells us that because of the high transient population in Hirafu who don't understand how things work, the village is causing some problems for the Kutchan garbage separation team... and, in turn, the environment that we all came here to enjoy.



Plus, the 'gomi' huts (those cute little green garbage sheds on the side of the road poking out from under big mushroom-shaped snow, pictured right) are in a state of disarray.



A council spokesperson tells us that while this system might seem 'confusing and troublesome', it means the whole town is working together to save the environment.

"Japan is small, so recycling is very important to save and use our limited resources efficiently. Plus, we don't have big land to bury garbage," they said.

"We also have to reduce the amount of burnable garbage to lessen carbon dioxide. We know this system

can be confusing and troublesome, but this is why we separate garbage."

The council is so serious about the situation they've even come up with a slogan to highlight the issue – 'Mottainai' – basically meaning 'it's a waste if you just throw your garbage away'.

"What happens if you just throw garbage away? The trash that could be recycled has to be burnt or buried instead," they said.

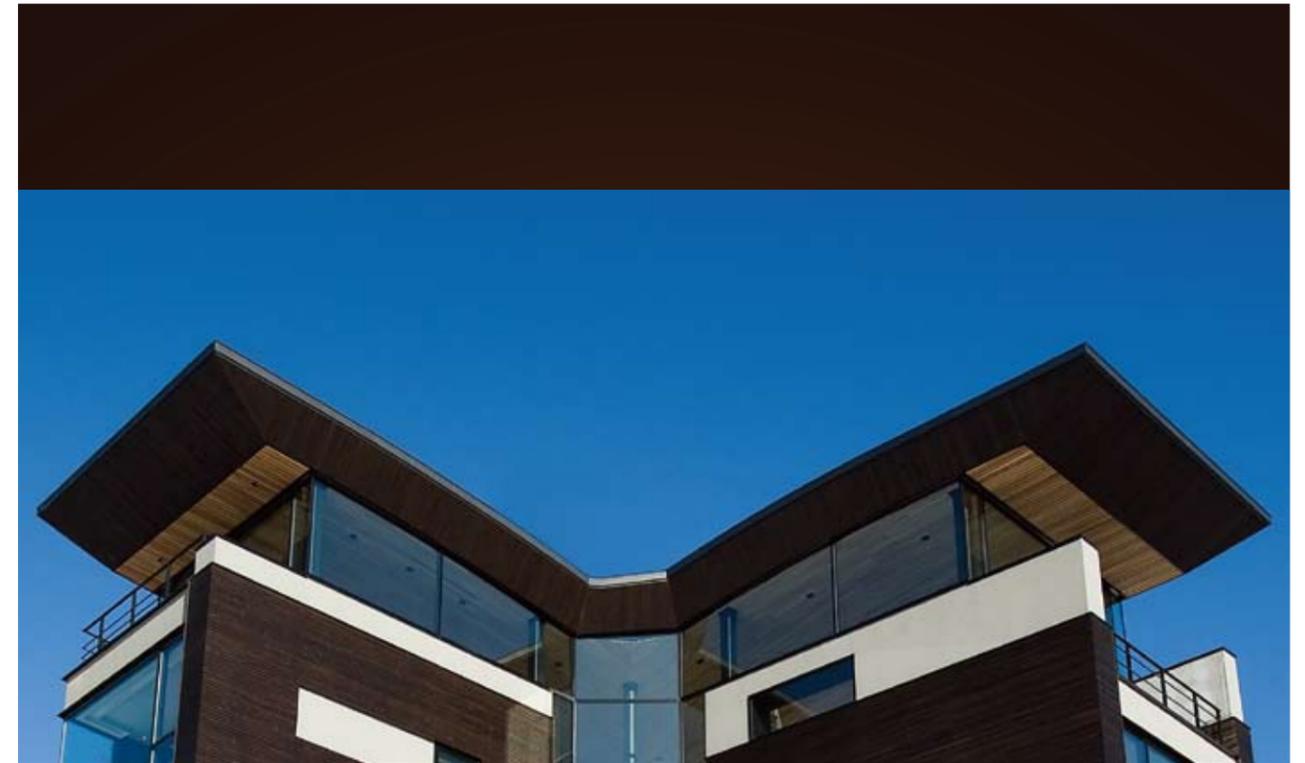
"However, if you separate them, they can be reborn as resources."

So when in Rome – or Niseko – do as they do!

What can you do to help Kutchan in its quest to keep Niseko beautiful?

- If you're staying in serviced accommodation, take a second to be sure you're throwing your garbage in the correct bin.
- If you're staying in a private residence, check the Kutchan Council website, or pick up a 'Rules of Garbage Collection' poster for the wall above your bins!

For more information, call 0136 22 1121, or visit www.town.kutchan.hokkaido.jp.



THE SHAPE OF INTELLIGENT LUXURY.



ODIN

WWW.ODIN-PROPERTY.COM

POWWOW *apparently an irishman at paddy mcginty's said...*

By Matthew Thomas

KOALA Cottage owner Mark France bumped into some Finnish skiers the other day who'd ridden in Alta, Utah, often touted as having the best powder in the world. When asked how Niseko compared they said: "...if you want powder, come to Niseko."

EVER think Niseko's powder looks good enough to eat? Go outside and grab a big bowl full of fresh powder. Sit with a group of friends around the bowl, fill your glass with powder then add a splash of Bailey's Irish Cream. Stir with a teaspoon, eat, and repeat. You'll be surprised how fast a bottle disappears!

FOR those who want to enjoy the Niseko snow by riding powder, not eating it, there are a few places around town to hire powder boards. You can ride a latest model Gentemstick from the local showroom just outside of the village for a whole day for ¥1500. Full Note lodge also hires Burton Fish for ¥2500, and The Powder Company rents out 23 different kinds of the locally-made Gentemstick for ¥2500 a day.

HARTMANN cracked his knee cap in a freak accident while snowmobiling (unfortunately this may delay the making of Car Danchi V!). Now he's got lots of time on his hands to spend the winter at home chilling with his family, and working on a short edit of the Car Danchi series for Niseko's upcoming Flake Film Festival. Hartmann's entry could mean there is some stiff competition at this year's event.

FLAKE Film Festival director 'Chook' is calling for all entries to the March 10 event at the Après Bar. The entries must be up to eight minutes long, and don't even have to be snow films – they can be comedy, drama, animation, documentary, mockumentary, sport... All films welcome. Email 'Chook' at info@flakefilmfestival.com.

IN the last edition of *Powderlife*, we told you about the secret late-night munchie food, Lawson's Juicy-Fried Chicken. Well, after chatting with a night manager we found out that on Australia Day Lawson sold roughly 300 pieces of 'JFC' – that's 140 more than a usual winter's day. Seems the secret is already out! FYI: We hear their fries are pretty good too...

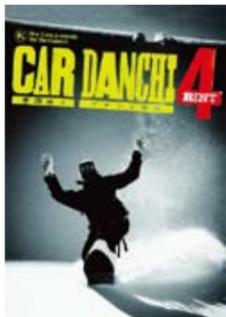
FOR a taste of traditional Japan, every Sunday during winter Java Bar displays products from souvenir store Cocoroya, including kimonos, small gift items and antique furniture. It's held between 7pm-9pm. The aforementioned taste of traditional Japan also includes a sake tasting experience.

POWDERLIFE is now selling its new 'Niseko Super Dry shirts', the perfect souvenir after soaking up the super dry beer and even drier powder in Niseko. They're ¥3000 at the *Powderlife* office opposite Seicomart, but we're giving away five to the first five readers who emailed @powderlife.com to claim their prize. It's first in best dressed – literally!

TO finish on a good note, chances are after a long day of riding powder you'll have worked up quite the thirst, and you'll be after a beer that towers above the rest.



SPEAKING of Gentemsticks, they're generally the board of choice for the skilful riders in the Hokkaido-made Car Danchi snowboarding films. Filmmaker Neil Hartmann has three copies of the Car Danchi 4 Rent DVDs that Neil has graciously offered us to give away.



To win one of the DVDs all you need to do is email ed@powderlife.com and tell us the meaning of the word 'Danchi'.

Voting starts for Niseko's greatest hits

THE votes are rolling in for *Powderlife's* Best of Niseko. And there have already been a few early favourites – especially in the popular restaurant category. Now in its third year, Best of Niseko is an opportunity to give a pat on the back to those little businesses that make Niseko such a great place. To vote, visit our website at www.powderlife.com/best-of-niseko-2010. To give you a better idea, last season's Best of Niseko winners were... Restaurant – Sekka; Izakaya – Rin; Bar – Yuki Bar; Onsen – Hilton; Café – Downtown Café; Convenience store – Lawson; Souvenir shop – Sakura; Resort – Niseko Village; Activity – Snowmobiling. But don't let these influence your vote, because there are plenty of new businesses in town this season doing a fantastic job!

RHYTHM Everyone who votes will go in the running to win a pair of the ultimate Niseko powder ski – a set of Armada ARGs thanks to Rhythm :)



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Check Rates and Availability at powderlife.com

The most comprehensive online accommodation search for Niseko

www.powderlife.com/niseko-accommodation



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in the loop your guide to what's on

By Kisato Kurihara + Lizzy Hoo

SAT 20 **The Scenic Night in Niseko Area**
シーニックナイト in ニセコ羊蹄エリア

Keep an eye out for the beautiful snowbanks lit with candles throughout Niseko. Candles line the road from Shikotsu, Toya all the way to Niseko! 凍った星空の下、無数の灯りが、雪の道と人の心を繋ぎます。手作りされた雪のシェードに守られ、輝くキャンドルの明かりは、誰もがやさしい気持ちに

start: 5pm-9pm
contact: 0136-44-3902
<http://scenic-night.jp/hokkaido/>

SUN 21 **Reggae Night Party @ Yosaku**
Tuff Rider Stage. 2@与作

Reggae Dance Hardcore night featuring the sounds of Power Player, Majestics and Soul Weed. Entrance ¥1500 for men & ¥100 for girls. Guest sound にPowerplayer, Majestics, Soul weedが、Sky dance crew がフロアで日本屈指のダンスを踊ってくれるのでめちゃくちゃ楽しい夜になるでしょう!

start: 9pm
contact: 0136-23-4390

MON 22 **Girls Night Out @ 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

Don't miss ¥300 drinks (draft beer, wine and sparkling wine, house spirits or soft drinks) this Monday night. Boys are also welcome! 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: 8pm
contact: 0136 55 8020



Fri 26th - Place your bets @ Apres Bar



TUE 23 **Après Ski @ Herbie's Umbrella Bar**
ハッピータイムズ @ ハービーズ アンブレラバー

Enjoy traditional European beer, drinks and snacks served in a truly Austrian-style après-ski atmosphere. オーストリアスタイルのニューバーで、雰囲気も気持ちもヨーロッパを感じましょう。スキーショットやネイルゲームなど盛り上がること間違いなし。エ

start: Happy Hour 3pm-5pm daily
contact: 090-7511-5310
www.umbrellabar.jp

WED 24 **Flair bar es presents Flair Party Vol.4 @ Splash**
フレアバーesプレゼンツ フレアパーティー@スプラッシュ

Watch the shaker and sake that Tom Cruise once tossed in the classic 90s movie "Cocktail" at this 'flair' bar tending show. 四回目となるフレアパーティー、盛り上がること間違いなし! 大胆なパフォーマンスは何度見てもため息モノです。

start: 9pm entrance ¥500
contact: 0136-55-8228
<http://flair-bar-es.com/>

THU 25 **JAM NIGHT @ Java Bar**
ジャムナイト @ Java Bar

JAM NIGHT from 8pm every Thursday night. Feel free to join in the fun and show off your djembe, guitar, and tambourine skills. 毎週木曜日はJAVA JAM NIGHT! ジャンベイ、ギター、マラカスなどでライブを行っています。入場無料。一緒に音楽やりたい方はJAVA BARまで連絡ください!

start: 8pm
contact: 0136-23-0788
www.niseko-info.com/javabar

FRI 26 **Casino Night @ The Apres Bar**
カジノナイト @ アプレバー

It's Monte Carlo meets Vegas Baby! Lay down your chips and win big playing Roulette, Black Jack and Poker. ラスベガスに来たように、ゴージャスにカジノナイトを楽しんでください。ルーレット、ブラックジャックやポーカーが出来ます

start: 7pm
contact: 0136-23-2311
www.apresbarjapan.com

SAT 27 **YAWARA Night @ Yawaraya**
鉄板酒宴 やわらや presents やわらNIGHT!

Special Guest are TKR, Yooh The Vibration, Ride on the Earth, DJ LEGEND, DJ Nao, DJ YuShi and Dancer Browning Sao will make it a special night. 日本全国からたくさんのスペシャルゲストを迎えて、俱知安Rockers, Sigma SoundとSonic Wallがまた楽しませてくれます。

start: 10pm-4am Entry fee: ¥1000
contact: 0136-23-3815
<http://profile.ameba.jp/yawaraya>

SUN 28 **Toshi Arimoto (Piano)Trio @ Half Note**
有本紀 (ピアノ) トリオ @ Half Note

One of the top pianists from Sapporo, Toshi Arimoto, is playing a variety of classic jazz pieces. Enjoy his swinging piano trio sound! 札幌から若手ナンバー1のピアニスト、有本紀がジャズスタンダードの数々をお届けします。スイング感たっぷりのピアノトリオ演奏をお楽しみください。

start: 9pm
contact: 0136-23-2727
www.nisekofullnote.com

MON 01 **Japan Avalanche Network Safety Camp in Niseko**
セイフティキャンプ雪崩講習会 in Niseko

Basic seminar on avalanches, group management, and search & rescue techniques. Includes classroom and field practice. ¥20,000. 雪崩への理解を深め、行動マネジメントによって雪崩リスクを軽減することを目的に雪崩啓蒙を進める日本雪崩ネットワーク (JAN) が主催するCAMP。

start: March 1st and 2nd
contact: 045-430-5736
<http://nadare.jp/>

TUE 02 **Famous Tuesday BBQ Night @ blo*blo gyoza bar**
BBQ ナイト @ blo*blo gyoza bar

Enjoy Chef Liam's delicious salads (his potato salad is getting quite a reputation) and a drink of your choice for only ¥1500.

BBQと二種類のシェフリアムオリジナルの美味しいサラダ(彼のポテトサラダはかなり評判高い!)とお好きな飲み物を付けて1500円で!

start: 6pm
contact: 0136-22-12-69



KUTCHAN YUKITOPIA FESTIVAL



THE world-renowned Sapporo Snow Festival may be all over, but the popular local Kutchan Yukitopia Festival is only just getting started – held from February 20-21.

The 22nd annual festival in Niseko's neighbouring service town is held over two days in Kutchan-Cho Park, behind Kutchan Public Hall.

Kutchan's own Yukitopia ('yuki' means 'snow') is the town's biggest festival of the year, and celebrates all things winter - a snow chapel wedding, a nabe cooking contest, a treasure hunt in the snow, snowball fighting, a flea market, food stands, and much more. Day and night buses to Kutchan leave from the bus stop on the main street (Route 343) near Seicomart about every half-hour.

For more information call the Yukitopia festival committee on 0136 56 8009.

WED 03 **Psychedelic Party @ Jam Bar**
サイケデリックパーティー @ジャムバー

Psycreation from Sapporo presents the party in famous Jam Bar! ¥1000 includes one drink. Do not miss it!

サイクリエーションfrom 札幌 プレゼンツ サイケデリックパーティー開催! 1000円/1ドリンクです。

start: 8pm-3am
contact: 0136-23-0700

FRI 05 **Rubik's Cube Party @ The Apres Bar**
ルービックキューブ パーティ @ アプレバー

Wear your primary colours and be prepared to swap your pants to win prizes all night!

着てきたお気に入りのパンツを勝負に勝ったときにチェンジします。ゲーム開始!!

start: 7pm
contact: 0136-23-2311
www.apresbarjapan.com



SNAP

Powderlife dropped into Hanazono to ask skiers and boarders what they think of Niseko's super-dry powder. And can it be beaten?!



Kane, Kirk, 'Wiggy', Jake, Alex and Diaz eloquently sum up Niseko's powder by saying it's 'fat' and 'totally tits'. Kane adds something a little more helpful: "I've ridden Europe and The States and they're both great, but in Niseko you don't have to worry about if the snow is going to come – it's always here!"



Father and son Jason and Timmy, 6, from Australia's Gold Coast, say they've been loving Niseko's world-famous super-dry powder. "It's been awesome – the perfect place for our first snow holiday as a family," Jason says. Little Timmy thinks the snow is, "nice because you can eat it!"



Hugh, Lachlan and Chris say they're used to chopping away at ice in Australia. "Every morning we wake up in Niseko and we're never disappointed – the pow is better here, and lots deeper as well. And the food is good, too!"

InSki's Wipeout of the Week

THIS photo just screams pending pain. It's Cam from Australia hanging precariously above a rail in Hanazono's mini-park, and he assures us 'it didn't end well'.

With his arms flailing in mid-air, shortly after this frame, Cam soon discovered what metal rail tastes like. Cam says he and his mates have ridden Niseko hard and been punished all week. So for his punishment, Cam is being rewarded with a helmet thanks to Inski in Hirafu. Entering this competition is simple. *Any reader can send a hi-res wipeout pic with a short blurb to ed@powderlife.com. If yours gets published, you win a helmet. 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!*



Before coming to Niseko, Chris and Andrew (a.k.a 'Tad') only ever snowboarded in their home country, Australia. But they've come back to Niseko for three years in a row because of the 'super-soft, perfect powder'. When you're on a good thing, stick with it, right?



Mountain Style

THERE's no doubting that Takashi Yamagutsu is a hardcore punker. When he's riding, Takashi-san rebels against 'The Man' in his Grenade jacket, splashed with deadly artwork of The Misfits – who happen to be one of his favourite punk bands! Not to be outdone, he has matching Grenade pants and even Misfits gloves for when he lifts his two rock fingers to the sky. The soundtrack to Takashi's snowboarding also matches his gear, as he cranks nothing but the most rockin' punk tracks on his iPod. From Aichi in the centre of Honshu, Takashi is a semi-pro boarder, here in Niseko while on a competition tour of Japan. This punk competes on one of the most extreme-looking boards around, from Seattle-based brand Capita, who are renowned for printing radical, controversial artwork and quotes on their boards. Takashi's deck is the latest release from Capita called the UltraFear, and as you can see it screams "Party On!" – something Takashi-san loves doing... every night!



Mutsumi, Keito, Keisuke, Yuta and Rika have boarded at snow fields all around the world – New Zealand, USA, Europe and Korea – and they unanimously say Niseko's powder snow is the best. Especially this season!



Niseko's light, fluffy powder is 'saiko' (the ultimate!), according to Maya, Daisuke, Natsuko and Yuki. "We've been drowning in snow, are addicted to snow, and just love Niseko snow!"

FLASH

It was sayonara to popular live entertainer Patty Campbell at Yuki Bar, and everyone flocked to Herbie's Umbrella Bar for Austrian Gluhwein Day celebrations.



Dressed to the nines for the packed out Yuki event, Kate and 'The Yas Man' look like a couple of smooth criminals out of a gangster film.



Nick couldn't be happier as he enjoys the best of both worlds, flanked by blond beauty Caz and brunette belle Laura.



Patty's Farewell @ Yuki Bar



Powderlife's photographer managed to wade through the capacity crowd to get a quick shot of singer-guitarist Patty chilling with mates Tom and Brett.



All signs point to peace as Mariko and Yayoi let the tunes flow over them at one of Yuki Bar's biggest nights of the season.



'Mezza', Shoko, Meng, James and a few extras thought it was time Powderlife's Matt Thomas got in front of the lens instead of behind it. He clearly had no problem with that.

Gluhwein@ Herbie's Umbrella Bar



Leif sips on a warm Austrian gluhwein after a chilly day up the mountain, while Pistol Pete dwarfs his giant 1L stein of Löwenbrau beer.



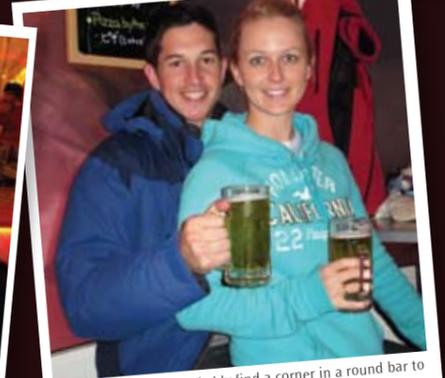
Alexe and Angus set themselves up by Herbie's clear walls, the perfect spot for a beer and some photos of the world passing by.



Ace and Mac have their work cut out for them with all this beer on the table, but we're sure they're the right men for the job.



Stevo and Deb came down the mountain to prop up the bar during Gluhwein Day celebrations at Herbie's.



Diane and Kobra remarkably find a corner in a round bar to relax and enjoy a quiet beer at Herbie's Umbrella Bar.

five of the best soup curries

TSUBARA Tsubara – Japanese soup curry is yet another specialty little known outside Hokkaido or Japan. Unlike many curries, the base of soup curry is thin, bringing out the flavours of the stock spices and complimenting the variety of ingredients. One of the best local examples of this Hokkaido delicacy, Tsubara Tsubara is *the* place to go in Niseko for soup curry. With fresh, locally-sourced ingredients, this dish is great value for money, and chock full of fresh vegetables accompanying your choice of meat and/or seafood. **Map E3 / 0136 23 1116 / 11.30am-3pm, 6pm-10pm, closed 2nd and 4th Wednesday**



Photo: Paul Malandain

Curry Goya – A long-time local favourite. Curry Goya serves up delicious Japanese soup curry in a quaint cottage just outside Hirafu. You can also take home their prize-winning packets of prepared curry to relive your dining experience at home, or to make friends jealous when they taste what they've missed. **Map F4 / 0136 23 3688 / 11.30am-4pm**

Black Diamond Restaurant – Tucked away in Black Diamond Lodge at Higashiyama, this soup curry is a bit of a local secret. The chef is from Sapporo – the home of soup curry – and makes the soup base from scratch using chicken, pork and beef stock and a variety of secret spices. *Powderlife's* hot tip: go for the super tender chicken option. **Map F7 / 0136 44 1144 / 4pm-midnight, closed Wednesday**

Lumberjack – With a sweeter, cinnamon taste to this dish, it's more like a Japanese soup curry with a hint of Thai. Beautifully prepared, the generous portions of fresh meat and vegetables would satisfy even the hungriest lumberjack. **Map D1 / 0136 22 3086 / 12noon-4pm, 6pm-10pm**

Taj Mahal – An Indian take on a signature Hokkaido dish, Taj Mahal's soup curry is a little different from traditional Japanese soup curry. Served with a side dish of rice and one of Taj's Mahal's signature giant, butter-soaked naan breads. **Map E2 / 0136 22 4566 / 11.30am-10.30pm**

local recipe melon pan

MELON bread or 'melon-pan' is a sweet, soft bread with a biscuit crust. This tasty recipe is courtesy of Jerod McCann from EN in-house fine dining. Take this back home with you so you can make a sweet taste of Japan for your coffee break.



Ingredients (serves eight people)

Bread

200g Bread flour
1 1/3tsp Instant dried yeast
2tbsp Sugar
30g Unsalted butter at room temperature
120ml Whole milk
1 Egg yolk
1/4tsp Salt

Cookie Outside

200g Cake flour
1/4 tsp Baking powder
1/4 tsp Salt
40g Sugar
50g Unsalted butter
1 Egg
1 Bowl Sugar for dipping top of the bread

Method – making the bread

- Put half the flour and all yeast in bowl, whisk, add sugar and salt, whisk again.
- Pour egg yolk and milk into bowl, use large spoon to mix.
- Add remaining flour, and briefly knead.
- Take dough out of bowl and knead until elastic (about five minutes). Add butter, knead for another five minutes.
- Put dough into lightly buttered bowl. Let rise until double in size (1-1.5 hours).

Method – making the cookie

- Sift flour, baking powder and salt together and set aside.
- Beat butter and sugar together until light and pale, add egg, and beat to combine. Then add the flour mixture and fold together.
- Roll the dough into a cylinder shape and cover it with a plastic wrap. Put it in the fridge for 25 minutes and leave it to cool.

Method – putting it all together

- Take bread dough out of bowl and cut into eight pieces, roll into balls and let them rest for 10 minutes.
- Take cookie dough out of the fridge and cut into eight pieces. Roll each cookie dough piece into thin circles, large enough to cover the top of the bread dough.
- Cover the bread dough with the cookie dough. Dip the top of the bread in to the sugar bowl and mark the top of the bread by using the back of a knife.
- Place the dough on oven sheet. Preheat oven to 180°C. Let the dough rise until almost double in size. Bake for 10 minutes.

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restaurant review

steak rosso rosso

By Lizzy Hoo



“The Wagyu has a distinct succulent texture and juicy flavour – the result of the intense marbling for which Wagyu beef is renowned.”

Photos: Rory Gardiner, Niseko Photography

FOR any food lover visiting Japan, sampling Wagyu beef is as much of a priority as visiting Harajuku in Tokyo, catching a glimpse of Mount Fuji or testing out the powder snow in Niseko. Steak Rosso Rosso is a great place to experience affordable Japanese beef, including Wagyu steak, and to help you form your own conclusion on one of the world's most talked about pieces of meat.

Just off the main drag and hidden on a quaint side street, Steak Rosso Rosso is housed in a modern building marked with the restaurant's trademark deep red. This beautiful colour, used throughout the façade and interior of the restaurant, is symbolic of the meat proudly offered here, as well as its excellent selection of wines.

Upon entry, the owner and staff greeted us just as the restaurant was starting to come alive. Sizzling steaks passed by while we looked through the menu, and customers sat up at the bar sipping on wine before being seated at their table. The restaurant was warm and a perfect place for an intimate dinner for two or with friends.

It had been a while since my last steak meal and I was eager to taste the famous Hokkaido Wagyu. There were three types of set menus featuring Hokkaido as well as Australian beef. There were various types of entrees, other side dishes and an extensive wine list to choose from.

To start, we enjoyed the Hokkaido Cream Corn Soup, the Rosso Rosso Caprese and Prosciutto sticks, and a basket

of crunchy garlic bread. After a short break between appetizers and entrees, the Prosciutto Wrapped Scallops with Red Wine Sauce, Asparagus Spring Rolls with Sweet Chilli Sauce, and Pork Sautéed with Red Wine Sauce and Green Peppers impressed us. The scallops were a sure favourite and the perfect prelude to the Hokkaido Sirloin and Hokkaido Wagyu steaks on the way.

Well into the second glass of a heavy, bold and fruity 2004 Evans and Tate Shiraz, the steaks arrived steaming on hot plates with just the right amount of fries on the side. Each was cooked beautifully and left pink in the middle. The Wagyu had a distinct succulent texture and juicy flavour – the result of the intense marbling for which Wagyu beef is renowned. The Hokkaido Sirloin was just as tender and satisfying, but the flavour was much lighter.

After such decadence, the only way to finish was with dessert. To offset the saltiness of the fries and oiliness of the steak, we indulge in the slightly sour Cassis Sorbet and two pieces of dense chocolate cake.

From rich chocolate cake and salty scallops to succulent steaks, Steak Rosso Rosso provided an excellent assortment of meals and tastes for two steak-deprived patrons. Out of the many flavours experienced, the inimitable taste of Wagyu beef was standout. Its juicy fatty flavour was quite special and something that should be savoured along with the many other culinary wonders in Japan.



Steak Rosso Rosso: Hirafu Middle Village
Open: 6pm-11pm
Tel: 0136 21 7100
 More reviews at powderlife.com/niseko-restaurants

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Photos (top, middle): Glen Claydon



j-sekka suites

SLEEK sophistication and functional style – the calling cards of the J-Sekka building’s nine recently refurbished suites. Formerly a 30-room pension, the vision of Sapporo’s Shouya Grigg and architect Nakayama Mokoto saw the grand old building reinvented as six large suites boasting views of Mt Yotei and the Grand Hirafu main street and slope.

The ultimate in comfort, with premium central-village location, the suites are serviced by the building’s in-house massage parlour, a gourmet delicatessen and café, the renowned Sekka Dining fine dining restaurant, and the Maki Lounge Bar, which specialises in Japanese whisky, sake and shochu.

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

By Bevan Colless



Apo Apocalypse

IT'S lucky there are no speed cameras in the backcountry, because the Apo Apocalypse would cost you a fortune in fines. This stick is so fast it's scary. The brainchild of Apo founder Regis Rolland, it's a weapon of mass powder destruction. The Apocalypse is sized at a generous 186cm, and Regis makes it extra stiff with carbon inserts. If you're riding one, make sure you keep a copy of *Powderlife* in your pocket to read while you're waiting for your buddies at the bottom.

For more information, including dealer locations, check www.apo-snow.com.

Bent Chetler

CHRIS Benchetler is one of the top free skiers in the world now and this ski drips with his hard-charging style. The rocker at the tip and tail keep it floating through the powder and make it ski much shorter than the one-size-fits-all 183cm. The rocker provides killer float in deep snow, and the camber lets you increase your pop on take-offs and increases hardpack performance at the resort.

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Canada Goose Chateau Parka

DON'T make the schoolboy error of buying a down parka with extra room for a fleece. Layering is for on the mountain – on the street you want a down coat that you don't need anything else underneath. Canada Goose make only 100% goose down and the Chateau is the pick of their pack: 625-fill power white duck down, slim modern fit, sits below your waist to keep your rear warm, waterproof Arctic-Tech fabric, detachable coyote fur hood and buttons for extra style points.

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POWDER tools



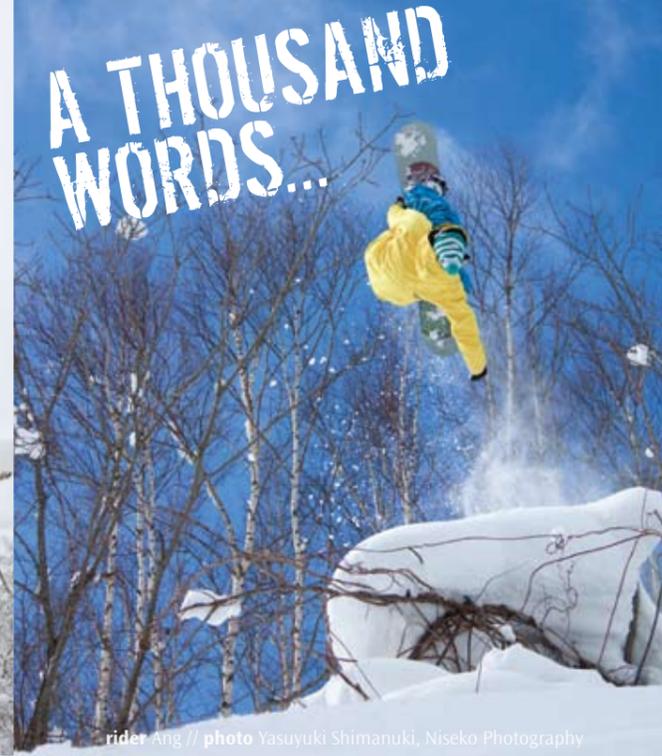
skier Paul Craig // photo Glen Claydon



rider Rachel Darvill // photo Glen Claydon



skier Mitch Dowling // photo Glen Claydon



rider Ang // photo Yasuyuki Shimanuki, Niseko Photography



rider Sue // photo Yasuyuki Shimanuki, Niseko Photography



rider Tats // photo Aaron Jamieson, Niseko Photography

men who ride mountains *stirling goldman: how to pick up chicks*

HAILING from the extreme terrain of Mt Baw Baw in Australia, Stirling Goldman was bred on waist-deep, man-made powder and extra steep chutes. Stirling has conquered the most beastly mountains across the world, and recently moved to Niseko. Stirling Goldman: a man who rides mountains...

So, the duds from *Powderlife* approached me again this week with a question that has been flooding my email: "Stirls, how do you go about picking up chicks?" It's a bit like Colonel Sanders giving away his secret herbs and spices, or Luke Skywalker explaining 'The Force'. Let's just say old Goldy does a combination of both, with some secret herbs and spices to prepare and season, and then a little bit of force with the light saber.

What I am about to pen is virtually religion. So much so that if Jesus was around he would have added it in his Testament and included me as his No. 1 disciple, but the other 12 sheep would probably have started following me. After all it is written by a God of sorts... one S. Goldman. Gentleman prepare and ladies once again be pampered, for here are 10 tips on how Stirls gets the girls.

- 1) Don't go too hard too early. How often have you seen the guy who has had a few too many early on doing seemingly well only to be a dribbling mess by 11pm? So, let some other punter be your fall guy - unless it's me, then you should try another pub.
- 2) Don't leave your run too late. Unless you look like Goldman, who manages to pull the hottie, all you will be left with after 2am is usually tragic... and wide.
- 3) Be arrogant. If that doesn't work be more arrogant. Ladies say they hate it, but secretly they love it. Tell them they want you. For me, it's always the case, but even for the wannabes after a few drinks they'll start to believe it.
- 4) Pretend to listen even if they are boring you senseless. Treat them like they're the only women in the world. For about three hours. Then again for another three hours.
- 5) Once you have locked in some physical touch, work quickly to get horizontal. If you procrastinate one of her less popular friends will be jealous and talk her out of it.
- 6) Always play safe... for you don't want to get itchy and scratchy, or worse. A career-ending injury.
- 7) Never pick up a taken woman. Let it be someone



else's baggage. Conversely, don't cheat. Ask Tiger – the depletion in his savings account ain't due to the GFC.

- 8) Mention you know or have hung with Goldman, even if you don't or haven't. It's bound to get you somewhere. Just look at Turtle and Drama on Entourage.
- 9) If you're bald or a ranga, wear a beanie. If you're fat, keep your jacket on. It's a bar, not a circus freak show.
- 10) If you're rejected, just walk away. No one likes a sore loser. I don't know what rejection feels like, but I've been told walking away is the best option in such a situation.

Hope this helps. While it's gospel, it will never get you as far as me, the real deal. Happy skiing, punters!

Got a question for a man who knows? Fire it to stirling@powderlife.com

JUST

POWDER POSTER

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: downhill, look back and down, and use proper devices to prevent runaway equipment. Ensure equipment is in good condition.
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 clear of closed areas.
8. Do not ski, snowboard, ride a lift or undertake any other alpine activity if you are impaired by drugs and alcohol.
9. Do not ski, snowboard, ride a lift or undertake any other alpine activity 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 Grand Hirafu 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. SAI 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) are not covered by the Ski Patrol or the Niseko Rules. Prohibitions that hiking and riding these areas is dangerous and if you choose to, you do it AT YOUR OWN RISK.

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 Saw/Gully 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.

Avalanche Control Area
Various methods of Avalanche Control combined with an educational program 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

- Lift ticket counter
- Rest room
- Phone
- Kids room
- Restaurants
- Cafe
- Shop
- Information
- Rentals
- Ski school
- Onsen (Hot Spring)
- Shuttle bus stop
- Parking lot
- Ski patrol
- AED
- Light
- Gate to uncontrolled area
- Megur run
- Wave
- Half Pipe
- Park (Kicker, jib, etc.)
- Un-groomed Slope
- Easiest
- More Difficult
- Most Difficult
- Name of Slope
- Maximum Gradient / Gradient
- Length
- Number of seats
- Name of Lift
- Length: Time required
- Number of lift ticket points

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.



Photo: Aaron Jamieson, Niseko Photography

- 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

ski the best niseko has to offer *and live to tell the tale*

FREE backcountry safety seminars are now held every week in Hirafu – and we highly recommend tourists and locals alike get along and check it out.

Hosted by the experienced guys from Black Diamond Tours, the informative seminars are held in the Yuki Bar below the new Black Diamond Tours Hirafu office (on Family-Zaka St), on Tuesdays from 6pm-7pm.

The meetings cover the basics about Niseko and its backcountry – Niseko Rules, the resort's unique gate system which guides entry points into the backcountry, a discussion on backcountry 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 hidden in the snow (whoever finds it first gets a free beer!).

But in all seriousness, the life you save with this invaluable new knowledge could be your's, or the life of someone close to you. So please take the time out for one of these seminars before going through the backcountry gates.

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 feature *ebisu chalets*

By Matthew Thomas

MEIKLE & ASSOCIATES



R E A L E S T A T E



“Ebisu Chalets achieves alpine architecture that is warm, luxurious, and distinctively Japanese.”

Photos: Glen Claydon

Western luxury, Eastern style

THE fusion of western luxury and size, Japanese charm and alpine architecture marks the completion of developer Zekkei Properties' second Niseko project, Ebisu Chalets.

Comprised of two high-end, stand-alone houses in Hirafu's Lower Village – 'Tsubaki' and the already sold 'Miyabi' – Ebisu Chalets is an ambitious follow-up to Zekkei Properties' maiden development two years earlier.

The Ebisu Chalets are virtually a mirror image of each other, but share identical hallmarks of prestige, balanced by the same oriental finishings that lend the western-style chalets their distinctly Japanese flavour.

"Niseko is a very much an international town," said Zekkei Properties' partner Randall Hall. "Our developments blend local tradition with international comfort."

Ebisu Chalets boasts grand vaulted timber ceilings, over-sized living areas, four spacious en-suite bedrooms, and high-end western appliances and comforts.

These western qualities are contrasted by an oriental water feature entry, ancient wall rendering techniques, a hinoki wood spa, traditional shoji doors, and the exemplary design and craftsmanship typical of the Japanese.

Keith Rodgers from Taiga Projects project-managed Ebisu Chalets, and contributed to the overall design of the project. He said the chalets 'pulled off a rare fusion of Western and Japanese elements married to alpine

architecture'. "Coming on holiday in Niseko, people are hungry to feel that they are in Japan and on a ski holiday," he said. "Ebisu Chalets achieves alpine architecture that is warm, luxurious, and distinctively Japanese."

Zekkei Properties moved into Niseko soon after business partners Randall Hall and Andrew Moore heard about the resort's world-famous powder snow. Not ones to waste any time, the Hong Kong and Shanghai-based developers snapped up some property within 24 hours of arriving in Niseko – land on which they built 'Zekkei'.

Australian Hall and Moore, from the United Kingdom, set the bar high with their first self-titled development. It's a hard act to follow – an enormous six-bedroom luxury chalet perched spectacularly on the edge of a picturesque bluff in Hirafu's Lower Village.

Zekkei Properties' is focussed on the potential of Asia, with developments in Thailand, Hong Kong, Singapore and Shanghai. "In Asia, people are getting wealthier and their requirements will mirror the United States and Europe on lifestyle – beaches and mountains," Randall said.

Randall said building houses was 'always an evolution of learning' – adding that to maintain Zekkei's quality of housing, they were only able to design and build one or two residences a year.

Zekkei Properties has further plans for Niseko, Randall said. "We can't think of a better playground in Asia than Niseko," he said. "We are very bullish that Niseko will become the Aspen of the East."



Our long term goal is more than selling property. It is to build trust, a solid reputation and strong relationships.

Meikle & Associates will work for you.



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real estate news the niseko property market

By Kristian Lund

Chinese stake claim in Hirafu

NEXT winter an upmarket steak restaurant will take up residence in the Lodge Ronde building – one of a handful of prime properties on the main road running through the centre of Hirafu.

Acquired by a Shanghai-based investor in November, Lodge Ronde is comprised of 12 serviced rooms and a restaurant-bar, which ran unsuccessfully for the past two years as The Northern Fox.

Ruskin McLennan of Niseko Property sold the property and said the purchase was one of several large investments made by the buyer in Niseko.

He said it was one of the first major investments by a mainland Chinese buyer, which was positive sign for that market sector. "Our client is at the forefront of what's happening with Chinese-based investment, and he's invested here in a big way," said McLennan.

The owner already runs a successful steakhouse in Shanghai, specialising in high-quality American steaks and buffalo steaks, and featuring an in-house band.

The Hirafu restaurant will be similarly themed and will be open in time for the start of next winter.

Land on the move again

LOCAL real estate agents say land is back on the radar of property investors after a pause following the economic downturn.

While sales of almost everything froze at the start of last winter, any movement was generally established property, often going at below previous market value from vendors looking to liquidate.

Land was put on hold as market values were reassessed and investors waited to gauge which way the market was heading. With renewed confidence back in the market, local agents are reporting land is back in vogue.

"Land is definitely back on," said Derek Kennewell of LJ Hooker Niseko. "A buyer's market allows people to take time and be more discerning with their purchases, making land for a custom construction job very attractive. From buyers looking to build a private winter getaway, to a number of investors looking to take on small to mid scale apartment developments, and all the way through to large scale developments by investment firms."

Many local agents report sales of land ranging from small residential blocks to larger prestige blocks.

\$6m week at Vale Niseko

AFTER Powderlife reported the sale of The Vale Niseko's two penthouses and a further seven apartments since the start of the season, there have been another six apartment sales in the two weeks since.

Meikle and Associates Real Estate president Craig Meikle said he and Nisade chairman Jonathan Martin sold \$6 million worth of property in a single week.

Meikle said the sales were in the upper levels of the ski-in-ski-out building.

"Four of them were three bedroom units facing Mt Yotei and one was an onsen unit on the fifth floor, followed up by another resort room."

"We expect to sell quite a few more over Chinese New Year. There are only 10 left now and then it's a done deal – the biggest success story of Niseko to date."

CORRECTION

LAST issue we published a story on recently completed Hirafu residence Ezo 260. There are in fact 20 geothermal bore holes, not 54, and the property is 850sqm, not 932sqm.

ONLY ONE REMAINING

LUXURY LIVING. DEFINED



Presenting for sale Sesaragi Residences せせらぎ. The name is inspired by the murmuring of a mountain stream.

Sesaragi Residences comprise two luxurious homes, fusing traditional Japanese design with modern western convenience. Located in Hirafu's Middle Village nestled on the edge of a cliff, surrounded by a birch wood forest with protected views of Mount Yotei and overlooking the Reisuigawa River.

Contemporary design by Riccardo Tossani Architecture, these inspired, functional, exclusive residences are each appointed with four bedrooms, four bath rooms, private garden, roof top terrace, fireplace, lock up garage, Yotei views and outdoor Jacuzzi.



Contact:
Ruskin McLennan (Niseko Property)
Phone +81 (0) 136 21 5060
info@sesaragi-residences.com

www.sesaragi-residences.com

SESERAGI RESIDENCES

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HOUSE A "MIYABI": SOLD
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Photos: Glen Claydon

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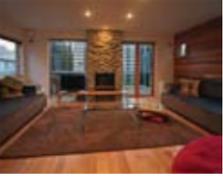
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(office)

080 5587 5052
(Jason King)

www.hokkaidorealestate.com

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0136 22 0038

www.nisade.com

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Niseko Landmark View 104 

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EZO VIEWS
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Prime resort location in Hirafu with ski-out proximity. Floor-to-ceiling windows showcasing views of Mt. Yotei, Hirafu ski resort and Oyaji River. Eco-friendly design combined with modern high-spec furnishings. Completion of first of two buildings winter season 2009-2010: Luxury 5 bedroom • 6 bathroom private residence with elevator.

WWW.EZOVIEWS.COM




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Neyuki
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Tamo
Udelka
Cecuko
Kashi

Unmei
Wajima
Sulu
Seizan
RossoRosso



Niseko Office: Contact: Ikee Architecture Co. Ltd
〒044-0081 Abuta-gun, Kutchan-cho, Yamada 170-138
Tel: 0081-0136-21-2333 Fax: 0081-0136-21-2334
info@ikee-arch.com

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Premium Niseko Properties

| | |
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|  Yama Shizen East 401 2 Upper Hirafu ¥56,000,000 Look at the price! Luxury 2 bedroom apartment enjoying premium Upper Hirafu location and mountain views. 2-keyed for top rental returns. Built by Hokkaido Tracks. |  Miharashi 1 2 Upper Hirafu ¥32,000,000 One of Niseko's cheapest apartments. A funky, modern and central two bedroom unit. Light, airy and a popular rental. Priced close to original purchase price! |
|  Yama Shizen East 402 3 Upper Hirafu ¥78,800,000 Luxury 3 bedroom, 117.3m2 apartment with big mountain views. Stylish Hokkaido Tracks fit-out with quality materials and furnishings. Splits into 2 bedroom and studio units. |  Mori C 3 Middle Hirafu Price on Application Comfortable home with large picture windows and contemporary styling. Open-plan living and dining areas. Built by premium developer Hokkaido Tracks. Vendor says sell! |
|  Mountain Tracks 6 Izumikyo I ¥56,000,000 A large 6 bedroom house with many possibilities. Great rental, holiday home, residence or other commercial options. Sought after location with Youtei views. |  Kira Kira 501 2 Upper Hirafu Price on Application Near-new ultra-chic apartment with excellent mountain and forest views. Large panoramic windows and balcony, generous bedrooms and modern living areas. |
|  Youtei Tracks 503 2 Upper Hirafu ¥110,000,000 Sumptuous penthouse, built by Hokkaido Tracks. Big ski field views and large heated decks with spa. Highest levels of design, style and quality. An excellent rental property. |  Hanazono Residence 5 Hanazono ¥99,000,000 Luxury residence in Hanazono's premium and picturesque North Hills. Built for style, comfort and convenience. Just minutes from Hanazono ski area, big capital gain potential. |

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.**

GETTING HERE AND AWAY

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 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 dialling from overseas to Niseko, add Japan's international calling code "81" to the 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 // travelling and directions*

By studio tdes

EVERYTHING was going so well. Then, you somehow got separated from your friend on the mountain, forgot the meeting place, and now you've just realised the bus you're sitting on doesn't seem to be going in the direction of your hotel. If only you knew how to ask the bus driver where the bus was headed! Well, you've turned to the right page.

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 = aw as in law
ii = ee as in bee

1 Kono basu Hirafu iki desu ka – Is this bus going to Hirafu?

If you want to check if the bus is going to Hirafu, first say sumimasen (excuse me) to get the driver's attention, then ask: Kono basu Hirafu iki desu ka?

2 Doko? – Where?

This is probably the most important word to remember to get around. Seicomart wa doko desu ka? (Where is Seicomart?)

3 Toui? – Is it far?

After asking Toui? (Is it far?), or Chikai? (Is it close?) you might get an answer like this: Sonna ni tookunai (It's

not that far). Or: Totemo chikai (It's really close).

4 Jyuppun kakaru – It takes ten minutes

Kakaru means to take, as in how long it takes to do something or get somewhere. Numbers for time in Japanese aren't too tricky. Try starting by remembering the ones you're most likely to use, such as: go fun (five minutes), juppun (ten minutes), san juppun (thirty minutes), ichi ji kan (one hour), ni ji kan (two hours).

5 Tsugi no bin wa nanji desu ka? – When are you next leaving?

There's a shuttle bus sitting with a driver inside. Ask the driver: Tsugi no bin wa nanji desu ka? (When are you next leaving?) They might say Sugu demasu yo (I'm leaving now), or Ato juppun (In ten minutes).

6 Shuppatsu – departure

To ask the time of departure, ask Basu wa hachi ji ni shuppatsu desu ka? (Does the bus leave at 8 o'clock?)

7 Mou hitori kimasu! – There's one more person coming!

You're getting on the bus and the driver looks like he's about to leave – tell him there's one more person coming: Mou hitori kimasu! Then apologise profusely for keeping the driver waiting by repeating: sumimasen.

8 Hitori, Futari – two people

If you've already had the shock of discovering that the

three Japanese numbers you know – ichi, ni, san – don't actually cover all the bases in Japan, you won't be surprised to hear that you need special words

when counting people. If you're alone, hitori (one person), in a couple, futari, and from then on number + nin, eg san nin (three people), yon nin (four people).

9 Onegaishimasu – please

What do you say to the driver when you get on the bus? You can say ohayou gozaimasu (good morning), konnichi wa (hello), konban wa (good evening). Or you can try this: onegaishimasu. It literally means please – but it's a very natural thing to say to a bus driver in Japanese.

10 Orimasu! – I'm getting off!

You're the only person who wants to get off at this stop. Shouting one word will do the trick: Orimasu! (I'm getting off!). As you're pushing past people say: sumimasen (excuse me). Then thank the driver: doumo or arigatou.

Next issue: Numbers. More lessons at:

www.powderlife.com/niseko-travel-guide



restaurants & food

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.



Bring 4 people, get 1 meal free before 6.30pm

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 A3 p47
Ebisutei

LOWER HIRAFU Finished skiing? Drop in for great food and a good time! Laugh and drink at this lively Izakaya inn. Enjoy our assorted Japanese hotchpotch.
ebcbar.com



Have fun with our GENKI and Laughing ODEN bar staff

Open daily
5pm-midnight

0136 22 6544

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

restaurants & food

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. Eat in or takeaway.



Creative and delicious breads from local baker

0136 23 0331

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/hinabeya



Asian hotpot and ethnic cuisine in a Mongolian yurt

11.30am-11pm
Open daily
80 seats

0136 23 2636

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
Lars Longcox Nachos Bar

UPPER HIRAFU Great Value Meals. Beers from just ¥200. Big Burgers and Nachos the House special. Play Beer Pong and Darts. Great for the family. Great place to Party! No Need to Book, just come on in.



Beers from just ¥200 Excellent value meals

12 noon-12 midnight
Open Lunch/Dinner (in Mount'side Palace)

0136 21 5833

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

restaurants & food

MAP D2 p47
Niseko Pizza

UPPER HIRAFU
Niseko's finest pizza offering a menu made with love and only the finest ingredients. Gourmet Pizza, Antipasto, Lasagna, Pastas, Salads and more.
www.nisekopizza.jp



Dine in, Take-away and Delivery

Open every day
Lunch-Dinner
0136 55 5553

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

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



Fresh, live, gourmet seafood - the ultimate choice!

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

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.



Creative fusion cuisine from land and sea

11am-9pm
Closed Sundays
0136 23 1882

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).
www.yummy.jp



¥1700 all you can eat barbecue for 90 minutes!

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

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



A must for steak lovers!

6-11pm
Occasionally closed
0136 21 7100

restaurants & food

MAP E2 p47
Taj Mahal

IZUMIKYO 1
Experience the best of authentic Indian Cuisine and courteous service. Enjoy an authentic Indian meal with Indian beer at our prestigious restaurant. 10% discount on takeaway orders.
www.tajmahalgroup.com



Visit India in Taj Mahal Niseko

11.30am-10.30pm
Open daily
(in the Tancho centre)
0136 22 4566

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



Homemade soba noodles, carefully selected ingredients

11am-3pm
Closed Tuesdays
0136 23 0603

MAP C3 p47
The Barn

MIDDLE HIRAFU
Under the guidance of 5-star hotel chef Toshitaka Kasseki, The Barn offers Asian and Western fine dining cuisine coming together around the freshest local ingredients. 50 seats.
www.kimamaya.com



Sushi & Fusion Restaurant Adventurous, fun, exciting

6-11pm
Occasionally closed
0136 23 0888

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



Spicy, flavoursome local Hokkaido curry soup

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

MAP B2 p47
Vale Bar & Grill

UPPER HIRAFU
Hirafu's newest dining and après lounge experience. Superb food relaxed atmosphere and ski in ski out, what more could you ask for?



Buffet Breakfast served from 7am daily

Open all day
Breakfast 7am-11pm
All Day Dining/Bar Service
0136 21 5833

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



Gourmet Tex-Mex in our beautiful log house

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

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 barbecue, sukiyaki and hot sake.



Serving yakitori every night until 3am

6pm-3am
Open daily
0136 23 4390

MAP D3 p47
Yummy's Pizza

MIDDLE HIRAFU
Caesar salad, Avocado salsa salad, Chicken wings, Bacon pepper steak, Baked cream potato, Cheese fondue, Wines and of course Variou pizza! And more more!
www.yummypizza.com



YUMMY Homemade crust pizza and Western foods restaurant

5pm-11pm daily
Delivery available in the Hirafu area
0136 21 2239

bars & pubs

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 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 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 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 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

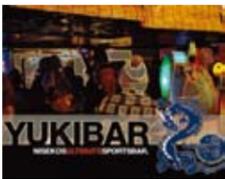


Like a House Party Should Be

5.30pm-1 am(ish)
Open daily

☎ 0136 22 5652

MAP C1 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!

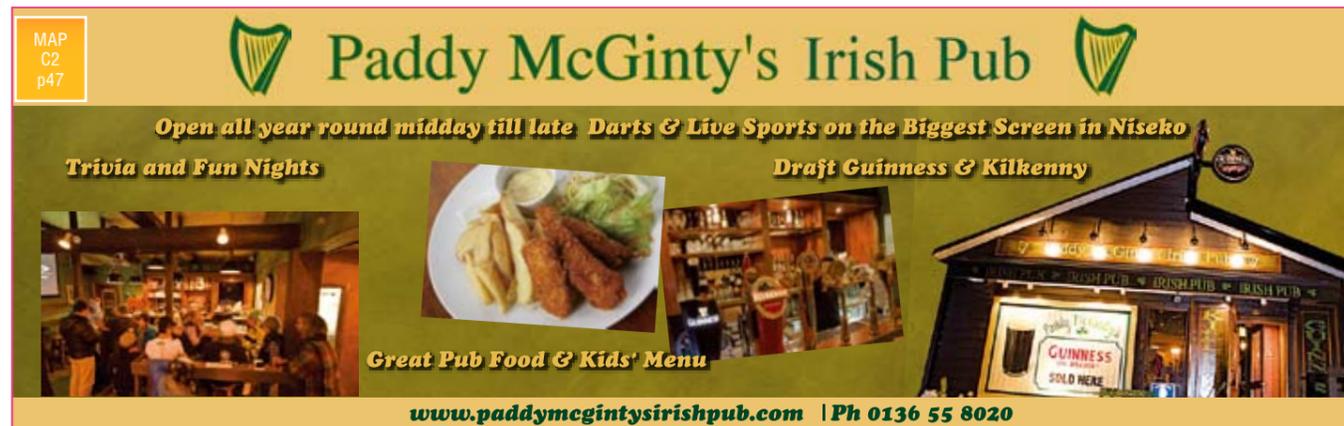


Start the party!

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.paddymcgintysirishpub.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 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 A3 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 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 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 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 A3 p47
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 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
 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 C3 p47
Ezo Seafoods
 We stock seafood for takeout sourced daily from the coast – oysters, King Red Crab, salmon, and more. We also prepare seafood platters and Fish & Chips.
 www.ezoseafoods.com



Seafood Shop in Hirafu village
 Open from 4pm
0136 22 3019

MAP E2 p47
Niseko 343
 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 C2 p47
Sakura
 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 B3 p46
Cocoroya
 Offers antique Kimono, furniture and original hand made gifts. We can also bring a range of goods to your apartment for home shopping. Try our origami lessons, incl green tea ¥3,500.
 www.cocoroya.jp



Take home a unique piece of Japan
 10.30am-7.30pm
 Open every day
0136 23 0008

MAP C1 p47
Fusion Sports Shop
 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 C1 p47
Niseko Four Seasons Photo Gallery
 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

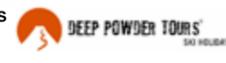
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Visiting Skier "Saved"

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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I think I might extend my stay another week!
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Love Johnnie

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after the melt cycling in niseko

By Bevan Colless

NISEKO and its surrounds boasts some of the best road cycling in Japan. Among locals there is a thriving cycling scene and the number of cyclists and triathletes choosing Niseko as a destination for a training holiday is growing rapidly.

The roads all over Hokkaido are immaculately maintained, with super smooth asphalt and wide lanes. Traffic volumes, especially around Niseko, are very light. Drivers are generally very considerate of cyclist and give ample room when passing.

NAC founder Ross Findlay has been working to make Niseko the centre of road cycling in Japan. The

Tour de Hokkaido is Japan's premiere cycling road race and often passes through Niseko. Niseko hosted the first ever Niseko Triathlon Camp in September 2009, and attendees declared they'd found "Asia's Boulder", in reference to the famous US endurance sports hub.

Summer in Hokkaido is perfect for endurance training, with temperatures in the mid 20's, low humidity and no rainy season. Niseko's air quality is like it's snow - about as good as it gets.

The triathletes are catered for with a great range of running courses and a quiet 25m lap pool in the Alpen Hotel and two picturesque lakes nearby.

Key Events for 2010:
Kutchan to Goshiki Hill Climb, August 8 – A 15km race as part of the Potato festival (Jaga Matsuri) on August 8. The winners get their weight in local potatoes.
Niseko Cycle Week, September 10-20 – See details below and at www.nisekocycleweek.com
Niseko Tri Camp, September 2010 – A four-five day camp for triathletes of all levels run by internationally renowned triathlete athlete and coach, Kevin Clark. See www.nisekotri.com
Tour de Hokkaido, September 16-20 – Amateur and professional stage race. www.tour-de-hokkaido.or.jp



The roads all over Hokkaido are immaculately maintained, with super smooth asphalt and wide lanes.

Photo: Matthew Hollingsworth, Niseko Photography.



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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 from overseas, 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.

On again September 10-20, 2010



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

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