

powderlife

NISEKO ニセコ

Issue 30 // Jan 8 - Jan 21 // 2011

WINTER SPORTS * ENTERTAINMENT * REAL ESTATE

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gyu bar
a.k.a the fridge



Carlsta
12月15日 (木)
Hot Chocolate
& Baileys
Hot! Hakkaido Cheese Cake
SERVED HERE

GYU+ BAR

A Hirafu favourite

GUNKANJIMA

AKA Battleship Island

RESORT GUIDE

Your guide to Niseko - page 42

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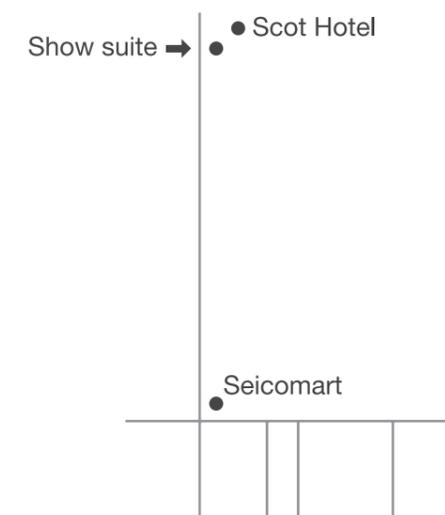
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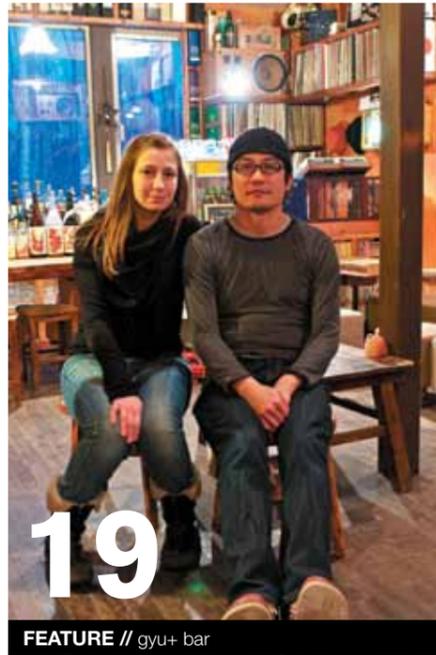
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* CONTENTS // issue 30



19

FEATURE // gyu+ bar



25

RESTAURANT REVIEW // ni's dining



57

TRAVEL // gunkanjima

07 Editor's Note

09 Village News

Local Voices
Niseko local news

11 Discover

Discover the Niseko area

13 In the loop

Events around Niseko

15 Social

Snap and Flash

17 Irrashaimasse

Nichii Syokudou & Yukara

19 Feature

Gyu+ Bar

23 Eat and Drink

Eat and drink news
Restaurant review – Ni's Dining
Taste the Region – Milk Kobo

29 Powder Poster

31 On Piste

Powdertools, 1000 words, Playlist

33 EyeSpy

Satsuki Kitaguchi & Shigaraki Pottery

35 Snow Caves

The Freshwater 502

37 Real Estate News

Real-estate news and information

41 Backcountry & Health

Deep vein thrombosis & backcountry tips

42 Resort Guide

Food, restaurants and bars
Tours and activities
Shopping and retail
Rental and services
Resort maps

55 After the melt

Niseko summer activities

57 Travel

Gunkanjima

powderlife
NISEKO ニセコ

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cover photo // ross cole-hunter

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* EDITOR'S NOTE



photography // niseko photography

ONCE again, Niseko has been transformed into a winter wonderland. The streets are busy, the restaurants are packed and everyone is full of energy. It's great to see so many excited locals and visitors making their way down the mountain.

Niseko wasn't always this busy; it's interesting to hear the stories about the area's transformation from people who have lived here for a long time. Many individuals and businesses have helped Niseko grow over the last few years. Adding their own creative style to the area is Hisashi and Ioanna from Gyu+ Bar, aka Fridge Door Bar (interview page 19). People thought Hisashi was crazy when he bought land in Hirafu's lower village 12 years ago to make a bar. Now, the couple has this and a summer business in Kutchan, Pelican Burger, and live here year round.

During the interview Hisashi mentioned how having a balanced life is beneficial to your business and how he uses skiing/snowboarding as a way to relax. In between all the emails, meetings and social events, sometimes we (myself included) forget why most people live and visit this part of the world – to experience Niseko's powder. Seeing all the visitors in town sure makes us realise how great the area really is.

Our travel story profiles a place that's the very opposite of Niseko – Gunkanjima (Battleship Island). Once a bustling coal-mining island, it is now unoccupied and abandoned. People visit this island to see what is left of a city when people disappear and nature takes over. We hope you enjoy this issue of Powderlife – our third for the season.

Lizzy Hoo, Powderlife, Managing Editor, email lizzy@powderlife.com

今シーズンも再び、ニセコは素晴らしい冬を迎えました。陽気な人々で街は活気付き、多くのレストランは予約でいっぱいです。地元の人、観光客が思い思いにニセコを楽しんでいる様子を見るのは本当に嬉しいことです。

ニセコは昔から今のような世界に名だたる人気スキーリゾートだった訳ではありません。長い間、この地に住んでいる人々にニセコがどのように変化したのかを聞くのも面白いです。ここ数年間に渡って、多くの人々とビジネスの影響によってニセコは成長しました。冷蔵庫のドアを使った入り口で有名な『Gyu+ (ギュータス) バー』のオーナーである仙司さんとイオアナさんはユニークな創造性をニセコに持ち込みました。12年前、仙司さんがバーを開くために店舗となる土地をニセコに購入した時、皆は驚いたそうです。今ではサマービジネスとして、俱知安でペリカンバーガーをオープンし、一年中ニセコに暮らしています (19ページのインタビュー記事参照)。

インタビューの中で仙司さんは、バランスある人生がビジネスにどのような効果をもたらすのか、また、リラックス法としてのスキー/スノーボードについて話してくださいました。これは、特に忙しいスキーシーズン中にニセコで働き、時には山へ行く時間もないニセコの住人にとって素晴らしいアドバイスです。

メール、友だちとの約束、遊び事など、多忙な日常生活の中で、私たちはなぜ自分がニセコに住んでいるのかを時々忘れてしまいます (もちろん、世界一のパウダースノーを経験しに来たのですが)。そして、ニセコを訪れる観光客によって、この地がどれだけ素晴らしいかを教えられます。

今号の"Travel"コーナーでは、ニセコとは両極端な場所を取り上げています。かつては炭坑によりにぎわいましたが、今では無人島となり廃墟と化している『軍艦島』です。島に何が残っているのか、人が島から去ったとき何を残したのかを見る目的で観光客が集まりつつあります。

今シーズンの第3号である今号もどうぞお楽しみください。

リズィー・フー, パウダーライフ, 編集長, lizzy@powderlife.com



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MAINSTREET REMODEL STARTING 2011
THE NEW HIRAFU MAIN STREET coming soon

* VILLAGE NEWS



photo // niseko photography

FIRST TRACKS

SKIING or riding in Niseko is all about getting first-tracks on a perfect powder day.

NISEKO'S mountain life is definitely a different experience. The day is about riding and finding powder stashes more than it is about skiing or snowboarding under sunshine and après ski, like in Europe and North America. Here, everyone is trying to get first tracks and there are a few options that can get you out before

the crowds. Niseko Village's first-tracks cat skiing is an unforgettable experience; rise before everyone else (6:20 am start) and enjoy fresh turns before the lifts start running. There are also selected days in January when there is an early gondola at Niseko Village too, from 7:30 am on January 8, 9, 15, 22, 23, 29 and 30. Annupuri opens early from 7:00 am on January 9-10 and on February 2 and 11. Hirafu will be open from 8:00 am everyday from January 11 to February 13. And at Hanazono there is also a Powder Guides First Tracks Tour for those that want to be shown the best runs.

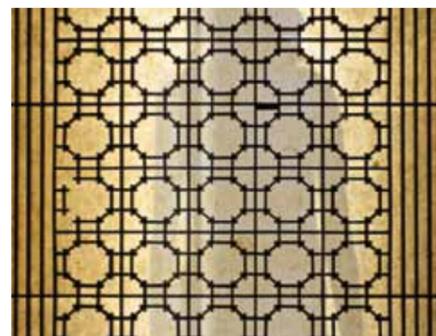


DOOR-TO-DOOR SHUTTLE

OPERATING until February 14th, Niseko Town's free door-to-door shuttle will connect central Niseko Town to resort hotels and vice versa. There are five departures each day and a night service will also operate, connecting hotel guests with restaurants in the area. There is no cost associated with the service, however, your assistance would be greatly appreciated in determining the viability of a permanent service. The service does not directly connect to Hirafu, however, it will intercept with other services that connect to Hirafu. Please ask your hotel reception for further details.

BEAUTIFYING HIRAFU-ITES

Opening this season is Hirafu's first beauty salon. Spa Niseko is offering hair, beauty and massage services to clients wishing to be pampered in 5-star luxury, either within the ambient salon downstairs of the Niseko office, across the road from Seicomart, or within the comfort of your accommodation by one of its mobile beauticians. This is something Hirafu's ladies have wanted for a long time.



LOCAL VOICES

Name Risa Ikee **Age** 22 **Hometown** Sapporo **Time in Niseko** 4 years **Ski or board and for how long?** Snowboard, 4 years **Favourite restaurant?** Mina Mina **Favourite bar?** Jam Bar **Favourite onsen?** Yugokoro-tei **Favourite ski run?** Ura Miharashi **Local secret?** There is a nice yakitori restaurant in the village, come find me! **Your fortune cookie saying?** Got drunk again...

名前 イケエリサ **年齢** 22歳 **出身地** 札幌 **ニセコ年数** 4年 **スキー、スノーボード歴** スノーボード4年 **お気に入りのレストラン** ミナミナ **お気に入りのバー** ジャムカフェバー **お気に入りの温泉** 湯心亭 **好きなゲレンデコース** 裏見晴らしコース **ニセコの秘密** ヒラフには以外にいい焼き鳥屋があるらしいよ **人生の格言** また、飲んじゃったなあ。。。 **死ぬ前にいきたいスキー場** チリ、アルゼンチン



Name Charlie Harrison **Age** 27

Hometown Noosa, Australia **Time in Niseko** 3 winters **Ski or board and for how long?** Snowboard, 9 years **Favourite restaurant?** Vale Bar & Grill **Favourite bar?** Tamashii or Barumba **Favourite onsen?** Niseko Grand Hotel **Favourite ski run?** Gate 5 **Local secret?** Nomihodai is evil! **Your fortune cookie saying?** Carpe Diem **Place to ski before you die?** Gulmarg, Kashmir or Alaska. **名前** チャーリー ハリソン **年齢** 27歳 **出身地** ニューサウスウェールズ **ニセコ年数** 3シーズン **スキー、スノーボード歴** スノーボード9年 **お気に入りのレストラン** ザ・ヴェールバーアンドグリル **お気に入りのバー** 魂バー/バルンバ **お気に入りの温泉** ニセコグランドホテル **好きなゲレンデコース** ゲート5番 **ニセコの秘密** 飲み放題には悪魔が住んでいる。 **人生の格言** がむしゃらに生きる **死ぬ前にいきたいスキー場** インドとアラスカ

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Shiki Niseko offers 69 limited units with contemporary design complete with premium furnishing and fittings. Adding to this is the breathtaking views of Mount Yotei, the Hirafu ski slopes and nearby creek, Shiki Niseko boasts of a strategic location amidst the neighbourhood of restaurants, eateries, bars and retail outlets, all herald a lifestyle well beyond the ordinary...

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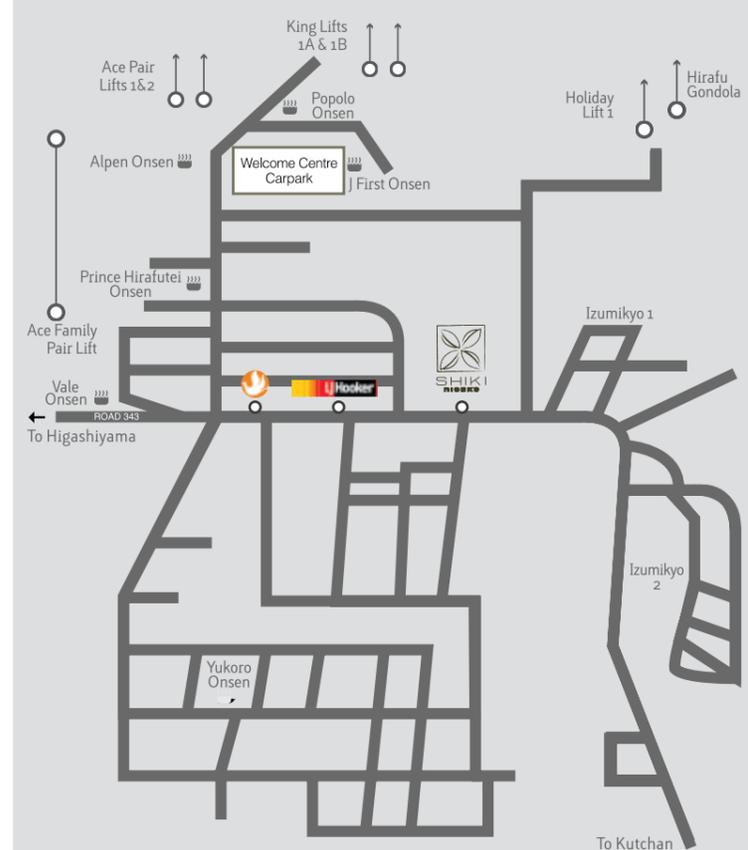
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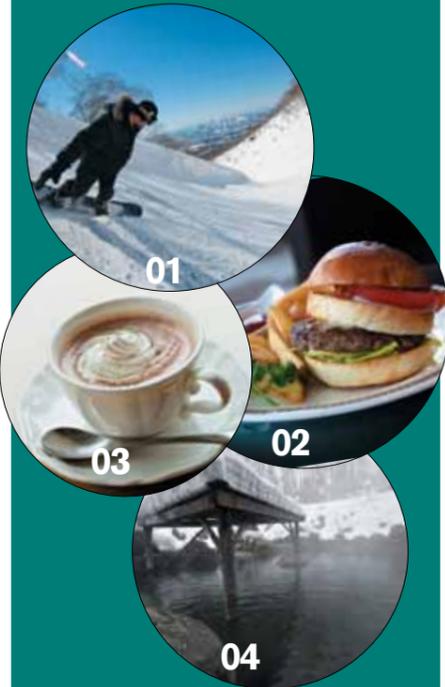


* DISCOVER

EXPLORE ANNUPURI

ANNUPURI is often overlooked by visitors, simply because it's perceived as being too far from Hirafu. It's not, it's very accessible, and getting there can actually be half of the fun.

THE Annupuri area is a lot quieter than Hirafu, both on the mountain and in the village. It has its own village, many onsens, restaurants and some of the most beautiful houses in the area. Buses also link the resorts, if you don't feel like skiing back.



01 SKI or snowboard Annupuri bowl, one of the premier off-piste areas in Niseko, and probably the most easily accessible.

02 REWARD yourself after a hard day in the powder with the giant Mountain Burger from Forester Café within Niseko Northern Resort.

03 WARM your core with an indulgently rich hot chocolate from Forester Café within Niseko Northern Resort.

04 SOAK away the fatigue from tired muscles in Yugokoro-tei onsen, a local favourite. Open late and on the spa-bus circuit.



SNOWMOBILING

150 words to write about snowmobiling is superfluous, as just three letters will suffice – O-M-G!

JUST as skiing and snowboarding trump snowshoeing with the exhilaration of speed – snowmobiling out does the lot. 600cc of two-stroke power, channeled to a fat, powder-specific rear track, capable of hurling you around at speeds that aren't even legal on the roads here in Japan,

snowmobiling is a hell of a lot of fun. With this seemingly limitless power on tap, gravity is no longer your foe. You're free to go where you please, up hills, down hills or just traversing along flats.

Even though the already heavy snowmobile is coupled with your additional weight, the machine still floats three-dimensionally through the powder the same way you do on a snowboard.

It's not just about brute speed though, smaller and tamer snowmobiles are available to those that want to go around a course calmly.

COCORO OKONOMIYAKI



ON Eki-mae-dori in Kutchan, this restaurant serves up authentic Osaka-style okonomiyaki that is both cheap and delicious. Goto-san is from Osaka, the birthplace of okonomiyaki. For those who have yet to be acquainted with okonomiyaki, you're missing out on one of Japan's finest cuisines. It's similar to a pancake, but it's savoury and is made with cabbage and an assortment of other ingredients and covered in a delicious sauce. Within this modest shop on Eki-mae-dori in Kutchan, you're able to cook your very own okonomiyaki on the hotplate at your table under expert the guidance of Goto-san.

JAPANESE CULTURAL TOUR

WHILE Niseko can provide a plethora of options for an amazing snow-sports experience, those seeking to taste a little-bit of traditional Japanese culture might have to search a little harder. This four-and-a-half-hour tour run by the Kutchan Tourist Centre gives visitors the chance to witness and participate in several uniquely Japanese cultural activities, including tea-ceremony, taiko drum performance, laido sword-sheathing demonstration and sake brewery tour. This eventually culminates in a delicious Japanese dinner. See p.49 for more details.



No one knows Niseko like we do.

Operating throughout Niseko's four wonderful seasons, our friendly, bilingual staff ensure the best experience for visitors to Niseko.

With extensive local knowledge and partnerships and a diverse range of accommodation, we can tailor a 'Niseko Discovery' to suit all budgets.

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* IN THE LOOP

<h1>JAN</h1> <hr/> <h1>2011</h1>	<h2>08 DJ Party</h2> <h3>DJパーティ</h3> <p>Koji Eguchi from Tokyo (Sound Discovery) playing progressive house, tech house and techno.</p> <p>東京からDJコウジが登場します。ハウステクノミュージックを楽しんでください。</p> <p>Start // 8:00 pm Place // Wild Bill's Contact // 0136 55 5774</p>	<h2>8/9 Early Gondola</h2> <h3>アーリーゴンドラ</h3> <p>If you are a fan of fresh tracks don't miss the chance to ride the "Early" Niseko Village Gondola on select mornings in January and February. ¥1000 Adult // ¥500 Children</p> <p>人数限定で朝一のファーストラックを味わえます。このチャンスをお見逃しなく。大人1000円 子供500円</p> <p>Start // 7:30 am - 8:30 am Place // Niseko Village Gondola Contact // 0136 44 2211</p>	<h2>09 Japanese Cultural Tour</h2> <h3>日本文化体験ツアー</h3> <p>Tour of Japanese cultural activities, including special bonus events to coincide with Japanese Coming of Age Day.</p> <p>For more information, see p.49</p> <p>Start // 3:00 pm Place // Meet at Seicomart Carpark Contact // 0136 23 0222</p>
	<h2>9/10 First Tracks</h2> <h3>ファーストラック</h3> <p>Annapuri is opening their gondola for early morning runs on untracked slopes. ¥1000</p> <p>一般営業前のノートラック・グルーミングバーンを滑走。料金1,000円。</p> <p>Start // 7:00 am - 8:20 am Place // Annapuri Ski Resort Contact // 0136 58 2080 (Japanese Only)</p>	<h2>11 Hirafu Early Morning</h2> <h3>朝一番トラックス</h3> <p>Starting today, every morning until Feb 13, Center Four chairlift will start at 8am. Free for Hirafu Club members, ¥500 non members</p> <p>朝一番のノートラックバーンを滑ろう! あなたが狙うのはパウダー? グルーミング? 料金: ¥500(通常のリフト券では乗車出来ません。</p> <p>Start // 8:00 am Place // Center Four, Niseko Grand Hirafu Contact // 0136 22 0109</p>	<h2>12 Girls Night Out</h2> <h3>ガールズナイトアウト</h3> <p>Beer, basic spirits, wine and sparkling wine - ¥300. If girls come with 6 or more female friends, each girl in the party gets first drink free!</p> <p>ビール、スピリット、ワインとシャンパンが300円でご提供。6人以上の友達と共に来た方は最初の一杯は無料です。</p> <p>Start // 8:00 pm - 10:00 pm Place // Paddy McGinty's Contact // 0136 55 8020</p>
<h2>14 Nomihodai DJ Party</h2> <h3>飲み放題DJパーティ</h3> <p>DJ Darci Ford, (House, Electro, Funky House) and INUNECOX (Psy-Trance, Rock). ¥2500 all you can drink, open bar (that's everything).</p> <p>DJがファンキーなミュージックを演奏します。2500円、3時間飲み放題。</p> <p>Start // 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm Place // Apres Bar Contact // 080 6081 4242</p>	<h2>15 Mikio Egawa Quartet</h2> <h3>江川美喜夫カルテット</h3> <p>Bebop trumpet player, Mikio Egawa used to play in one of the top big bands in Tokyo. He is going to play cool and hot Jazz with his quartet.</p> <p>トランペット奏者です。今回はカルテット編成で「クールでホット」な演奏をお届けします。</p> <p>Start // 9:00 pm Place // Half Note Contact // 0136 23 2727</p>	<h2>16 Funky Church</h2> <h3>ファンキーチャーチ</h3> <p>Every Sunday night, a funkier style of music, live percussion and a chance to get dressed up and get funky. ¥500 Entry</p> <p>毎週日曜日魂バーでファンキーナイトやっています。ドレスアップしてくるもよし。エントリー500円。</p> <p>Start // 6:00 pm Place // Tamashii Bar</p>	<h2>17 Toss The Boss</h2> <h3>トス・ザ・ボス</h3> <p>Toss a coin with the bar staff, if you win, the drink is free! Dance music later in the night.</p> <p>コインゲームでスタッフと対決。勝ったらフリードリンクゲット。ダンスミュージックあります。</p> <p>Start // 8:00 pm Place // Yeti Bar Contact // 080 4040 4470</p>
<h2>19 Brick Club Party Night</h2> <h3>クラブパーティナイト</h3> <p>Regular club party nights held at The Brick every Monday, Wednesday and Friday night. ¥500 Entry.</p> <p>毎週・月・水・金曜日ダンスパーティ。エントリー500円</p> <p>Start // 9:30 pm - very, very late Place // The Brick</p>	<h2>20 Ping Pong Tournament</h2> <h3>ハーフノート卓球大会</h3> <p>Win CRAB (as in the animal) and 5 free drink vouchers. Entry fee: ¥1000 (One drink included)</p> <p>優勝者には毛蟹とハーフノートドリンク券5枚が当たります! 参加費用は1,000円(ワンドリンク付き)</p> <p>Start // 9:00 pm Place // Half Note Contact // 0136 23 2727</p>	 <p>AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER ORCHESTRA</p>	
<h2>21 Friday Night Live</h2> <h3>フライデーナイトライブ</h3> <p>Live music night every Friday night at Tamashii Bar.</p> <p>毎週金曜日。ライブミュージック演奏あります。</p> <p>Start // 6:00 pm Place // Tamashii Bar</p>	<h2>22/23 2ND WINTER MUSIC FESTIVAL</h2> <p>SURFICA, a combination of classical music and surfing will be presented on the 22nd at Hanazono 308.</p> <p>Price: ¥4500 for adults, ¥2000 for children Place: Hanazono 308 Contact: info@nisekotourism.com</p> <p>第2回 ニセコ冬の音楽祭 リチャード・トネッティ、エマニュエル・パコ、ACOの若手奏者 + 鼓流(1/21と1/23) 会場 Hanazono 308 開場 6:30 pm 開演 7:00 pm チケット代 大人4,500円 小中学生 2,000円</p> <p>Time: from 7 pm Details: Richard Tognetti and members of the Australian Chamber Orchestra will be joined by the exhilarating Youtei Taiko Serve Association taiko drummers (23rd only) and one of the world's greatest flute players, Emmanuel Pahud. Award winning documentary, MUSICA</p>		

nw
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HANAZONO
 NISEKO JAPAN

* SNAP



Name // Shogo Kageda



Name // Captain Obvious



Name // Tomomi Yoshida

WHAT are you wearing today? Shogo, from nearby Imakane Town, is decked in a superlong DC jacket and matching DC cargo pants.

WHAT are you wearing today? Captain Obvious is modeling clothing from upcoming Australian clothing company, Obvious. Items include Leather Bomber Jacket, Japanda Tall Tee and model's own brand new Adidas high tops.

WHAT are you wearing today? Tomomi, from Osaka, is wearing some fine threads by Japanese company, REW. On top is a REW Manifesto jacket, and on the bottom, REW Manifesto cargo pants.

* FLASH



JAM BAR

SATURDAY NIGHT //

JAM Bar is known for throwing great parties, and this night was no exception. It was an all-night, ¥2000, all-you-can-drink nomihodai. Bar staff Aki-san spent the night with his giant bottle of cocktail encouraging everybody to drink-up. The party continued well into the morning, with great tunes all night long.



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Question // What do you love about Niseko?



SONG and her monochrome friend from Korea love Niseko's amazing snow and the multi-cultural presence.



GARY and John Cox from Sydney, Australia love Niseko's laid-back Japanese culture.



ROY David and Helen Barcham from Sydney, Australia love Niseko's fusion of Japanese and Western culture.



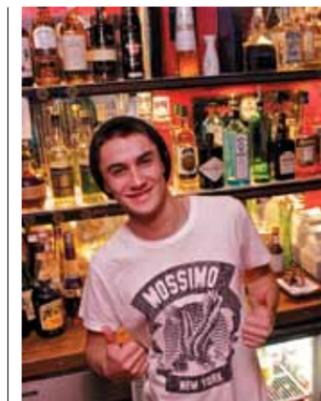
CHRIS, Leanne and Nick from Singapore love Niseko's great off-piste areas and delicious restaurants.

INSKI STACK



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blo*blo

OPENING PARTY //

FEATURING exotic cocktails, belly dancing, pole dancing and cream pies thrown at staff for charity, blo*blo's opening party was as good as always. As with most parties here it was standing room only.



* IRRASHAIMASSE // “welcome!” – great local businesses



NICHII SYOKUDOU, Hirafu, Yasuhiro Yokoi

WHEN Yasuhiro-san realised he wanted to learn how to make pizza, he went to Yuzawa Onsen (Niigata) to work at one of the best pizza places in Japan – Pizzeria La Locanda del Pittore. There is also one of these restaurants at The Windsor Hotel at Lake Toya. This year, Yasuhiro's friend who operated Nakaya Hot Pot Restaurant, offered him the same space for his own restaurant – Nichii Syokudou (Nichi is Japan 日 and I is Italy 伊). This is Yasuhiro-san's first winter owning a business here and he hopes that people come to try his pizza and that the restaurant will be a great place to relax with friends. He also hopes he won't be too busy so he can go snowboarding.

横井康宏さん ニチイ食堂 ミドルヒラフ

新潟県にある、かの有名なイタリアピッツェリア・ピットーレで、大好きなピザの勉強をしたと心に決め、スノーボード中心の生活に終止符を打った、剣路出身の横井康宏さん。ピットーレは洞爺湖ウイングホテルにも姉妹店を構える有名店である。そこでの修行を終え、友人からの提案、サポートと支援が大きな後押しとなり、今年の冬よりここニセコでの新しい挑戦であるニチイ食堂を切り盛りすることとなった。石釜を使い、薪で焼くナポリスタイルの手作りピザが一番のお勧め、イタリアンワインを数多く取り揃え、日本食メニューにもかなりのこだわりが感じられる品揃えとなっている。来たお客さんが心地よく友人と過ごせる安らぎの空間に、またおいしいピザの常連客が沢山できるようにがんばりたいと意気込みを話してくれた。ニセコは北海道でも格別の雪質ですと、大好きなスノーボードが出来ることも一つの楽しみとなっているようだ。

YUKARA, Upper Hirafu, Syozo Hirokawa

SYOZO Hirokawa opened his first souvenir shop in Sounkyo in Daesetsu Zan Kurodake ski area in 1973. He later saw an opportunity in Niseko and opened another souvenir shop here in 1990. He also had a ramen restaurant in Sounkyo, of which his son opened up another branch in Niseko – Tozanken, just below the souvenir shop. His daughter also operates Berg Pension, just behind the new Tozanken and Yukara. Hirokawa-san lives in Niseko in the winter and Sounkyo in the summer and wants to continue this for the rest of his life because all of his family is in Niseko now. He hopes many more people come to Niseko and enjoy their time here.

広川省三さん ユーカラ アッパーヒラフ

広川省三さんが生まれ故郷である層雲峡(大雪山の麓)に、土産屋ユーカラ民芸店を開いたのが1973年。夏には多くの人々が観光で訪れるが、冬には雪に覆われてしまう層雲峡。スノーブームに乗って冬にもたくさん観光客がやってくるニセコに目を留め、1990年に2号店をオープン、そして今年の冬には心機一転、現在の場所に移転を行った。一階にある旭川ラーメン登山軒は息さんが経営、敷地内にあるペンションベルグは娘さんがと、現在はニセコが家族の拠点となっている。今でも夏の層雲峡、冬のニセコと行き来をしている広川さん、老後はニセコがいいですね、羊蹄山の見えるこの景色と自然が本当に素晴らしい。と第二の故郷をようやく見つけられたよう。日本の誇れる観光地となれるような設備を整えていく必要がある、そして国際色豊かなニセコをもっと多くの人たちが訪れ、楽しんでたくさんのお土産と共に帰ってほしいと語った。

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Departs Niseko	Arrives Airport	Departs Airport	Arrives Niseko	Departs Niseko	Arrives Sapporo
08:00	10:30	12:00	14:30	09:30	12:00
09:00	11:30	14:00	16:30	Sapporo City - Niseko	
10:00	12:30	16:30	19:00		
11:00	13:30	19:00	21:30	Departs Sapporo	Arrives Niseko
15:00	17:30	21:30	23:59	12:30	15:00
17:00	19:30				

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* FEATURE // gyu+ bar

intrigued faces wander off the street into the quirky doorway of Gyu+ Bar – aka Fridge Door Bar – in Hirafu's lower village.

Their eyes light up as they duck through the low entrance, pass the piano and look into this endearing bar. Records are neatly stacked on shelves, interesting lights drop down from the ceiling, hand-picked Japanese whisky lines the bar and the glass window at the back perfectly frames the snow-covered tree outside. Gyu+ Bar is really relaxing, warm and comforting – like a friend's lounge room that's been decorated with the things that they care most about. Its owners Hisashi Watanabe and Ioanna Morelli,

ヒラフ・ローワービレッジにある冷蔵庫のドアを使ったバーで有名な「Gyu+ (ギュータス)バー」。この不思議なドアが人々の好奇心をかきたてる。小さなドアの向うに広がるピアノと可愛らしいバーカウンター。お店に入った誰もが喜び目を輝かせる。棚にきちんと並べられたレコード、天井から下がる面白い形のライト、カウンターには、選りすぐりの日本製のウィスキーが並ぶ。そして、窓枠という額の中にあたかも計算されたアートかのように木々に降り積もる雪の情景が飾られている。お気に入りだけの物を集めたインテリア – まるで友達の家にいるように快適でリラックスできるのがギュータスバーだ。オーナーの渡辺仙司さんとイオアナ・モレリさんのヒラフという土地への熱意と情熱が人気バー・ギュータスバーを作った。12年前に仙司さんがヒラフ・ローワービレッジに土

house attached to it himself. If Hisashi had listened to those people around him, he may have never started his bar, met his wife Ioanna or created their summer business, Pelican Burger in Kutchan. Attracted to the tree that you can see through the glass windows in the bar, Hisashi acted on a hunch, and with a bit of luck, creative thinking and the help of his wife, he has created a cult following of visitors and locals in the area.

Like most people that visit Niseko in the winter, Hisashi and Ioanna came here to ski and snowboard. The access to powder snow and mountains in Hokkaido made Sapporo the ideal place for Hisashi to embark on his life as an economics student 17 years ago. Ioanna tells a similar story: "I came here to snowboard five years ago. My friend wrote me an email

地を購入した時、皆が驚いたという。当時、あまりお金がなかった仙司さんは自宅と小さなバー兼用の建物(「普通のドア」が付いた)を自分で建てた。そして、わらで作る家、ストローベイルハウスに興味を持ったヒサシさんは、日本で唯一ストローベイルハウスを建てていた男性を訪ねた。ワークショップで意気投合した二人はアメリカ・ニューメキシコへ一緒に渡り、ストローベイルハウスについて勉強した。その後、北海道へ帰った仙司さんは新しく学んだ技法を使い建て増しを行った。これが+barという名前の由来だ。また、ゴミ捨て場で冷蔵庫のドアを見つけた仙司さんの友人がそれをヒサシさんにプレゼントしたのが、今のギュータスバーのドアだ。冬場にニセコを訪れる多くの人々のように仙司さんとイオアナさんもスキーとスノーボードをするためにニセコへ来られた。パウダースノーと山々に魅せられ、17年前に経済学の学生として北海道で新しい生活を始められた仙司さん。「日本には驚くほど雪があるから絶対来るべきだって友だちがメールをしてくれました。だから5年前にスノーボードをしにきました。そして夏に仙司さんに会い、2週間付き合った後10月には結婚を決めました。それ以来ず

“ I hope I will inspire other people to start things, especially young Japanese. ”

words by // lizzy hoo // photography by // ross cole-hunter // translation by // yuri pangier

whose enthusiasm and passion for providing something unique to the area, have made Gyu+ Bar one of Hirafu's most popular drinking holes.

People thought Hisashi was crazy when he bought a piece of land 12 years ago in Hirafu's lower village. At the time, Hisashi didn't have much money and constructed the bar and

* FEATURE // gyu+ bar



and said it was just dumping in Japan and that I should come here. I met Hisashi in the summer and we dated for about two weeks then we decided to get married in October and I've been here ever since."

Since their paths crossed the pair jokes that "they've been together for 24-hours a day." Most would warn against getting married after two weeks, but gut instinct seems to work for both of them. This naturally strong partnership has evolved after many overseas trips and working together on their small businesses. This year alone, they have taken trips to Spain, Portugal, Morocco, America and Canada.

It's travel and seeing how other people run their businesses, which fuels their passion. Recently they went to New York's hipster capital Williamsburg, which like Niseko, is frozen in transition. The number of young people who own businesses there and the comfortable scale on which they operate inspires Hisashi and Ioanna. In the future, they would like to see more young people, starting up businesses in the Niseko area. Hisashi says, "I hope I will inspire other people to start things, especially young Japanese people. Niseko has a lot of potential."

Taking time out to enjoy travel, art and mountain life is what Hisashi says is the key to their success: "Don't just own a business you have to be involved in other things and be a part of other things around you. If you only think about your business you won't be successful." Being able to find this time is something Ioanna puts down to scale, "We're happy just having this place. Sometimes, people overestimate what kind of scale is comfortable. This is the scale that works well for us." Hisashi also relaxes by illustrating and writing his own children's books – his first *Tori no Shacho* is proudly on display at Gyu+ Bar.

Controlling scale is a factor they believe will influence the success of the area, and how individuals cooperate both internally and

とニセコに住んでいます」と、イオアナさんは話す。「二人は24時間一緒」と言われる程に仙司さんとイオアナさんは仲睦まじい。たいていの人は2週間付き合っただけで結婚するのは早すぎると思うかもしれない。しかし二人の直感は間違っていなかった。海外旅行や起業によってより深い関係を築いた。今年だけでもスペイン、ポルトガル、モロッコ、アメリカ、カナダへ旅したという。旅行中は、ほかの人がどのようにビジネスをしているのかを見るのだそうだ。それによって多くを学べるからだ。最近ではニューヨークの注目エリア・ウィリアムズバーグを訪れた。ニセコのように過渡期であるウィリアムズバーグでは

「日本人の若い人たちに何か新しいことをやって欲しい」

若年層が自分たちのスケールでビジネスを展開している。これらを目の当たりにすることで仙司さんとイオアナさんは良い刺激を受けたという。「私がやっている事で人々を奮い立たせることができたと思います。特に日本人の若い人たちに何か新しいことをやって欲しいですね。ニセコにはたくさん可能性ががありますから」と、仙司さんは語る。休暇を取り、旅行、芸術、山を楽しむ人生こそ、成功への鍵だとヒサシさんは話す。「仕事だけじゃなく、周囲のことにかかわることが大切。自分が属する環境の一部となることもね。仕事のことだけを考えていると成功はしない」。このような余暇を楽しむ時間を見つけることができる生活、それがイオアナさんの本望だ。「私たちは今の状況に満足しています。時に人々はどんな状況が一番良いのかを考え過ぎです。私たちにとって現状は快適なものです」とイオアナさんは言う。また、イラスト Ioanna puts down to scale, "We're happy just having this place. Sometimes, people overestimate what kind of scale is comfortable. This is the scale that works well for us." Hisashi also relaxes by illustrating and writing his own children's books – his first *Tori no Shacho* is proudly on display at Gyu+ Bar.

continued from previous page

* FEATURE // gyu+ bar

externally with other places in Japan. Ioanna muses, "The town has to try and attract more talent in terms of professionals living in the area. It has to offer something to those people. And the only way that that can happen is to try and attract domestic tourism. As well as people that are doing things other than skiing. People like Kamimura for example; people that are doing something in their field."

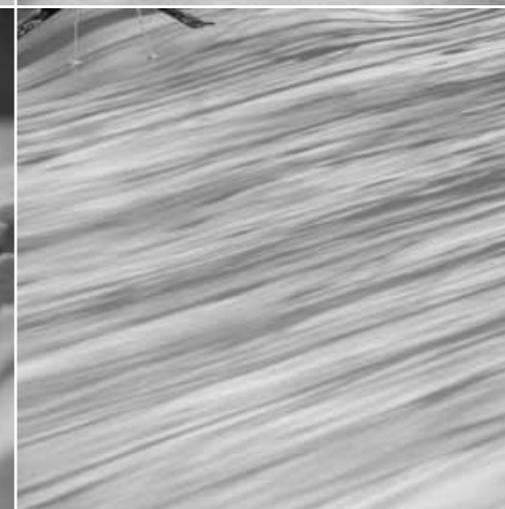
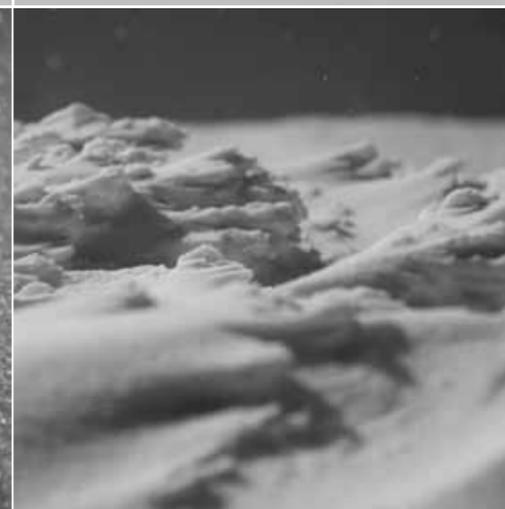
Hisashi would also like to see more art and culture in the area so that more people will stay year round, "like a winter film festival, but not just about outdoor life." They both believe that this outdoor lifestyle needs to be complemented with something cultural. "Niseko used to be a backpacker, skiing place, which was okay because everybody would leave after the season, but now people want to live here, which means people

よって多くの人々が一年を通してニセコに滞在することを考えるからだ。「映画祭なんかいいですね。もちろんアウトドア映画のみに限ることはないですよ。文化面で充実しているからこそアウトドア生活が楽しめるのです。ニセコは以前、冬季のみのバックパッカー旅行者に人気の土地でしたが、今では移住する人が多いです。新しく引っ越してきた人々は生活する上での何かを求めていると思います。キュータスバー(ヒラフ)とペリカンバーガー(倶知安)という二つのビジネスを通して、仙司さんとイオアナさんはすっかりニセコに定着し、倶知安とヒラフの二つの街を結びつける役割を担っている。現在、倶知安は増え続ける外国人によって国際化が進んでいる。「倶知安はヒラフスキーリゾートによって外国とつながっている。ほかの人々にも倶知安でビジネスを始めてもらいたいです」とイオアナさんは話す。最後に仙司さんとイオアナさんは、これからニセコで起業を考えている人々へメッセージを残してくれた。「倶知安は面白い場所。起業をするなら倶知安がオススメです!」

need something more."

With Gyu+ Bar and Pelican Burger, Hisashi and Ioanna have definitely stamped their own style on the area. By having businesses in Kutchan and Hirafu, Hisashi and Ioanna have noticed their role in linking the towns and cultures together. In the future, they believe Kutchan is on the verge of connecting with the foreign community. Ioanna explains, "Kutchan has a great link to the outside world because of the skiing in Hirafu. We hope that other people start businesses here. Not us – we have enough."

Their final words of advice to those who might want to start their own business in the area comes as no surprise then – "Kutchan is an interesting place, so start a business in Kutchan."



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* EAT & DRINK

we 

Kat and Kim from Sekka let us in on their top Niseko eat and drink secrets. For more tips visit their blog www.bigfoodsmallworld.blogspot.com

Buta Kimchi Nabe at A-Bu-Cha with rice & an egg to finish all the soup
Lillybulb croquettes at the new Wild Bill's, made by Denni the Dutchman
Negiyaki Pokka at Okonomiyaki Jyuu in Higashiyama. Kimchi & Beef Tendon Thin Pancake
Hot cocoa at Graubunden, with cream & cinnamon on top
Habenero Ramen at Niseko Ramen Mount
Rillettes, Pate or Terrine & a glass of Gontard Bourgone at The Barn
Late night Ja Ja Men at Mina Mina
Crispy gyoza, in a windmill shape, at Mokokoya

RECIPE // shabu shabu by M's Cafe



SHABU SHABU

Ingredients – serves 3-4 Method

- 1/4 Chinese cabbage diced
- A bunch of Spinach (cut in half)
- 1/2 daikon sliced with a peeler
- 1 carrot sliced with a peeler
- Pack of shimeji mushrooms, enoki mushrooms and king oyster mushroom (sliced thinly)
- 600g of sliced beef for 'shabu-shabu'
- A 5 cm-slice of konbu seaweed
- A dash of sake

1. Place the slice of konbu and a small amount of sake into the pot, add enough water to half fill the pot and boil the 'dashi' soup.
2. When the dashi boils, put the ingredients in the soup. The vegetables will take a few minutes to cook (ponzu sauce recommended with these). Beef will take just 2-3 swift actions. Hold the beef with your chopsticks and dip the beef in the soup – this is where the name comes from – the motion is what's called 'shabu shabu'. Don't cook the beef too much.
3. Add spring onion or Momiji oroshi (grated daikonradish and chili) in your favourite sauce. Enjoy!

J-SEKKA JAM

A FRESH facelift has been given to these local favourites, created by Sekka chefs Kim Wejendorp and Shaun Widger using fruits from nearby Niki Town. There are seven flavours to choose from, starting with selections like Very Berry and Golden Raspberry for traditional palates through to exotic combinations like the refreshing Blackberry & Lemon, the indulgent Raspberry & Vanilla and the unexpected brilliance of Blueberry & Bay Leaf. Needless to say, all combinations are exquisite and unique. They're all available from Sekka Café & Deli for ¥895 for large, and ¥495 for small.



ELVIS KING OF KEBABS

KEBABS served by a guy that speaks with a heavy Welsh accent and whose name is Elvis may seem like a strange combination. But, honestly, it works. On Route 343, just next to White Bear, you will find a small orange hut that's been transformed into Niseko's only kebab joint. Serving Kebab Sandwich, Kebab Wrap, Kebab Curry with Rice and a Potato Kebab, Elvis will no doubt be a popular choice for quick lunches, after-ski hunger and late-night snacks. And when there are no cars parked in front of the building, you can pull up to the window and treat it like a drive through.



BLUE CIELO

BLUE Cielo is nestled snugly within the entertainment district in Kutchan and is a popular restaurant with those who have dined here previously. Cooking up various delicious Italian fare, as well as their specialty, Dutch-oven baked chicken and vegetables, Blue Cielo's chefs manage to squeeze out phenomenal amounts of natural taste without relying on additional flavouring. It's not just about Dutch oven dishes; Blue Cielo's pizzas and pastas also bring the customers back time and time again.



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Original Tomato Sauce . Fresh Mozzarella . Double Pepperoni . Fresh Basil Parmesan Cheese . Black olives

Supreme Pizza M ¥2,000 L ¥3,800
Original Tomato Sauce . Cheese . Mushrooms . Red Onion . Capsicum . Pepperoni . Italian Sausage . Pork Sausage . Ham • Bacon . Black Olives . Parmesan Cheese

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Pepperoni . Meat . Vegetarian . Hawaiian ...



Additional Toppings ¥150
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Gourmet Pizza

Bianco w Prosciutto Pizza M ¥1,800
Olive Oil & Garlic Sauce . Fresh Mozzarella . Prosciutto . Green & Black Marinated Olives . Parmesan Cheese

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* RESTAURANT REVIEW // ni's dining



WORDS BY // lizzy hoo PHOTOGRAPHY BY // ross cole-hunter

JAPAN has always had a strong culinary connection with China. Ni's Dining on the outskirts of Hirafu (intersection of Route 631 and Route 5), is testament to this.

Ni'S Dining is run by Katsutoshi Tada who was born and raised in Kutchan. He spent six years working at The Prince Hotel (now The Hilton Niseko Village), which is where he started learning Chinese cooking, and then 16 years at the Hotel Nikko in Anupuri. Last year, Katsutoshi started his own business.

We think it's best to go with the chef's recommendations: Yakisoba (fried noodles), Yurinchi (fried chicken with spicy soy sauce) and Sanratamen (ramen noodles in hot and sour sauce). We also order a few appetizers, or dim sum, to start.

First to arrive is the dim sum. The spring rolls are crunchy and fresh and served with a sweet sauce, and are essential to any Chinese restaurant visit. The Steamed Seafood Dumplings are served in a bamboo steamer

and perfect when dipped with some soy sauce. Ni's also serve a little Dijon mustard with its dumplings for a bit of bite.

Next to arrive is what Ni's is fast becoming known for – bowls of beautifully made ramen. You can really taste the love in each bowl of Ni's ramen. We are treated to Sanratamen – ramen noodles in hot and sour sauce soup. The sauce in this ramen is a little thicker and a bit spicier than usual. Egg is mixed through the sauce and is served with chicken, tofu, cabbage, spring onions and a drizzle of chili oil. With each bite, you move closer to an inevitable ramen-induced coma.

Other ramen options available include Chashyu Ramen, Tan Tan Ramen and Tan Tan Man (ramen noodles with spicy mince and a rich

sesame soup – highly recommended). The bowls of ramen are around ¥850 and most meals are under ¥1000, with various lunch and dinner-set options available.

Following the ramen is the Yurinchi – fried chicken with spicy soy sauce. This is a classic Chinese style dish, but it tastes lighter and the sauce has a sour element – perhaps this is the Japanese influence coming through. Other a-la-carte options available include classic Japanese/Chinese dishes such as Crab Fried Rice, Mapodofu, Fried Noodles and Fried Prawns in Chili Sauce.

For dessert, you have to try Ni's Chinese Pudding – apricot kernel tofu topped with dry fruits. It's Ni's ichiban (number-one) dessert and is made in true Hong Kong style. Other desserts include, Sesame Balls, Chinese Steamed Cake and Fried Doughnuts.

For those of you that drive past this building and wonder what's inside, you can now imagine people devouring big bowls of steaming ramen, delicious fried Chinese dishes and creamy tofu desserts.



T. 0136 22 6646
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* TASTE THE REGION // milk kobo

CRUNCHY on the outside and filled with creamy goodness on the inside, choux creams are definitely one of Milk Kobo's best sellers.

Equally as impressive and new to Milk Kobo for the New Year is 'Manmaru soufflé'. It's a new prod-

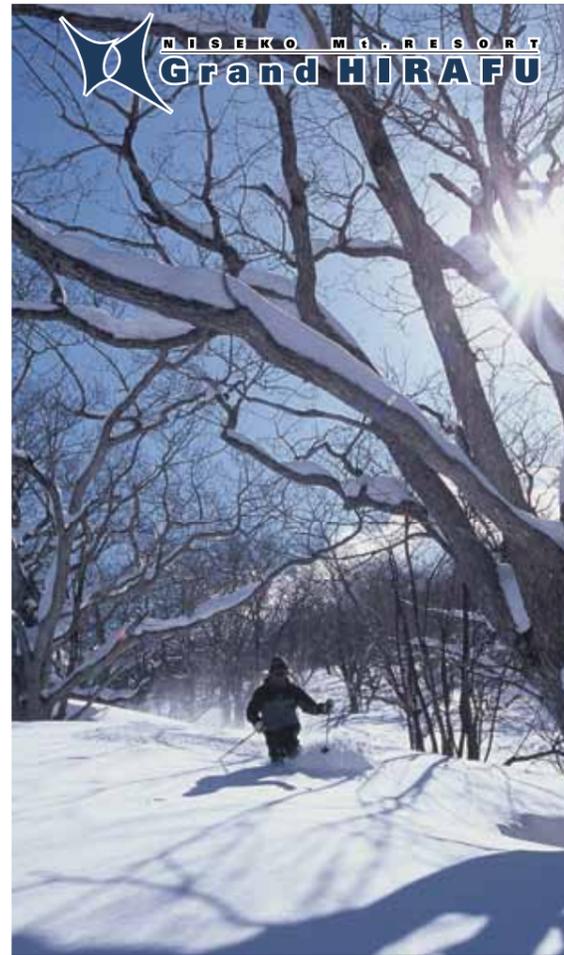
uct with a beautifully soft texture. It's much like a sponge-cake sandwich with tasty fresh cream in the middle that's made with the fresh milk from Takahashi Farm nearby. In this iconic factory, there are also many other milk-made treats such as ice cream, drinking yoghurt, and cream

puffs. Located on the road to Niseko Village on the right, stop by Milk Kobo for a treat. Next spring, Milk Kobo is opening up a new dining area, which will no doubt be a popular choice for summer visitors to Niseko.

Open: 10am to 6pm daily
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CONTACT // Tourism and Industry Division, Hokkaido, Niseko Town, Aza Fujimi47 Japan. T. 0136 44 2121. Ask for Paul.



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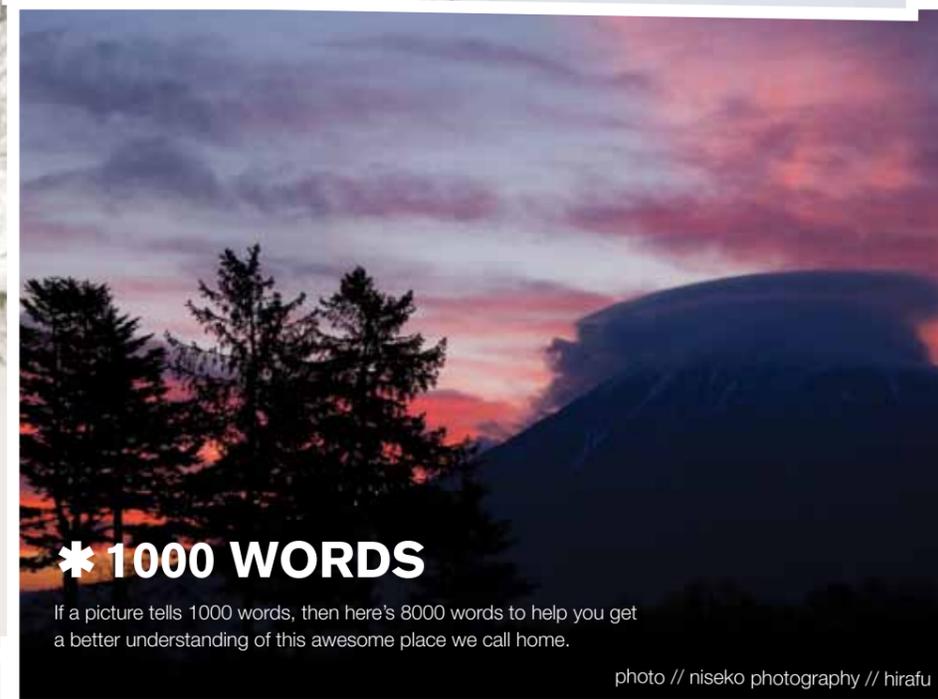
photo // niseko photography // goshiki onsen



photo // ross cole-hunter // kyogoku



photo // glen claydon // hirafu



* 1000 WORDS

If a picture tells 1000 words, then here's 8000 words to help you get a better understanding of this awesome place we call home.

photo // niseko photography // hirafu

WHAT'S ON YOUR PLAYLIST?

NIC Toumayan has been working as an English teacher and DJ in Tokyo for the past three years. He's now living in Niseko and works at Sekka. He guaranteed us that this is the best playlist we'll get all season. Note: The Four Seasons Vivaldi is for admiring views. If you want to win a

ski shot from YETI BAR, send your playlist to ross@powderlife.com

- 1// Paul Engemann // Push it to the Limit
- 2// The Crystal Method // Born Too Slow
- 3// Led Zeppelin // Immigrant Song
- 4// Rob Zombie // Dragula
- 5// AC/DC // Shoot to Thrill
- 6// The Prodigy // Voodoo People
- 7// Antonio Vivaldi // The Four Seasons, Winter
- 8// Daft Punk // Da Funk
- 9// Megadeth // Holy Wars
- 10// Gorillaz // Rhinestone Eyes



FIRST IMPRESSION



Name: Dave Pires. **Nationality:** Canadian.
Ski or snowboard? Snowboard, since I was 5.

Why Niseko? I wanted to board untracked powder everyday and experience a fresh culture.

First thoughts? Niseko isn't the futuristic neon-lit Japan that you see in movies, it's beautiful nature with friendly locals.

Something that made you look/think twice? Feeling out of my element walking around a supermarket, not being able to read labels.

Going anywhere else in Japan? I want to head south towards Kyoto and Tokyo.



photo // glen claydon // hirafu



photo // niseko photography // goshiki onsen



photo // niseko photography // hirafu



photo // glen claydon // hirafu



* 1000 WORDS

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a taste of hokkaido



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* EYE SPY // art and culture in japan



PAINTING BY // satsuki kitaguchi

TRADITIONAL JAPANESE PAINTING

INSPIRED by travel, the human form and Nihonga – a traditional Japanese painting technique – Satsuki Kitaguchi's art is instilled with a bold style that takes on a different look and feel with each work.

IN all her paintings, whether they are of travel memories, nudes, or stills, Satsuki use Nihonga style – paintings that have been made in accordance with traditional Japanese artistic conventions, techniques and materials. The term was coined in the Meiji Period (1868 until 1912) to distinguish such works from Western-style paintings.

Paintings made using Nihonga style present quite an elaborate process for artists. But, this is what makes Satsuki's works so beautiful. Typically executed on washi (Japanese paper) or eginu (silk), Nihonga paintings can take on either a monochrome or polychrome visual. Satsuki's paintings are quite rich in colour and striking.

If Nihonga paintings are monochrome, the artist will typically use sumi (Chinese ink) made from soot mixed with glue derived from fishbone or animal hide. If polychrome, the colours are derived from natural ingredients: minerals, shells, corals and even

semi-precious stones like malachite, azurite and cinnabar.

To make the paint, Satsuki will formulate powder into 16 gradations, from fine to sandy grain textures. A hide-glue solution called nikawa is used as a binder for these powdered pigments. Originally, this style was used for hanging scrolls and hand scrolls or folding screens. However, most paintings done in this style today are now produced on paper stretched onto wood panels, suitable for framing.

Satsuki is quite a prominent Hokkaido artist and a high-school art teacher in Sapporo. She has had her works featured in many galleries around Japan, and has received recognition for her contribution to preserving Nihonga techniques.

A sample of her works can be viewed at Hirafu's new photography, art and antique space Momiji Gallery, located in Momiji Street, Hirafu.
@ www.momijinisekogallery.com

SHIGARAKI POTTERY

JAPANESE pottery and porcelain is one of the country's oldest art forms.

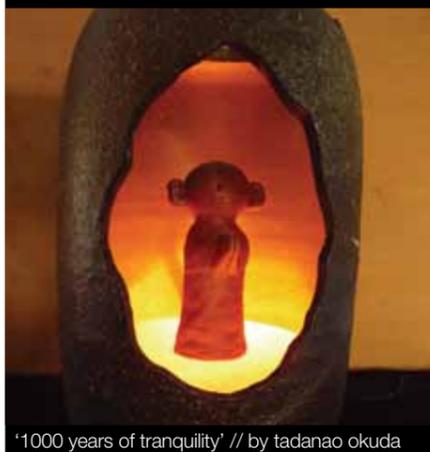
THE art of pottery production in Shigaraki Town, 1.5 hours by train from Kyoto, has a long history, which can be felt when walking down the streets of the village. The pottery here is constantly evolving because of the younger potters learning the skill. Today, alongside the traditional pottery plates and bowls, you can also find everything from bathtubs to stereo speakers.

One young artist, 28-year-old Tadanao Okuda has grown up with pottery and can be found almost daily making works of art at the family kiln – Okuda Chuzemon gama, which has been operational since 1888 (Meiji Period). Today, it produces works that are far different from those made 122 years ago.

The piece below is titled '1000 years of tranquility' (Sen Nen No Yasuragi). An essential element of the pieces is the jizou – one of the most loved of all Japanese divinities. In this work, a very tranquil jizou is standing with his hands clasped and is backlit to create a tranquil mood to all that see this piece of work, which was designed so that people could remember departed family members or pets. Interpretation, however, is up to the individual.

There are many things that stand out in Shigaraki, a short variation in your travels to Kyoto can see you enjoying a totally different world.

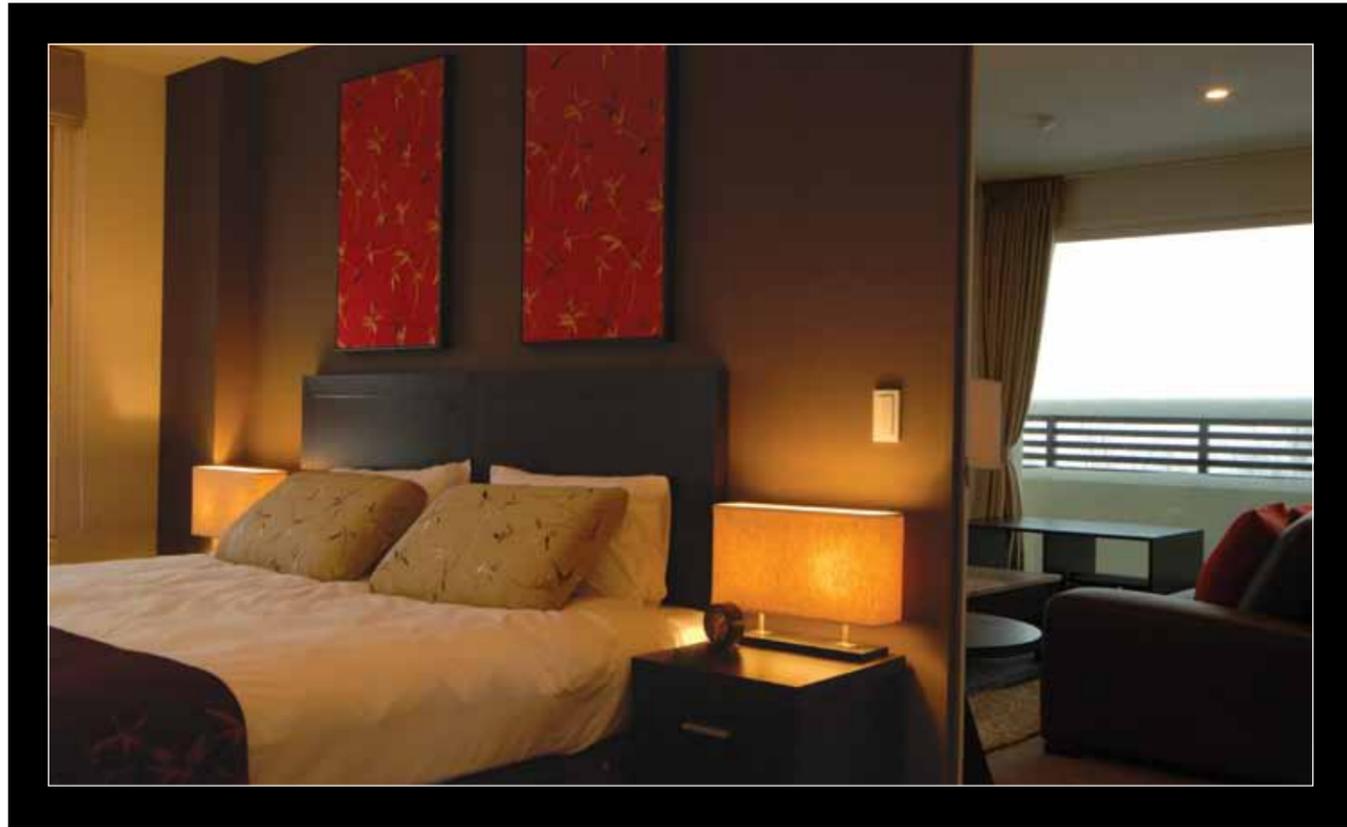
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'1000 years of tranquility' // by tadanao okuda

* SNOW CAVES // the freshwater 502

advertising promotion



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Tastefully appointed in cosy warm surrounds, this snow cave delivers its occupants a sanctuary with vistas sweeping 180 degrees from Kutchan to Niseko.

THE living space utilises the southern aspect to capture the morning sun as it rises off the flanks of Mount Yotei.

On a clear day the inertia to snuggle up on the leather lounges with a cup of coffee and bask in the ambience of all that Niseko offers is hard to counteract. Imagine a day of pure relaxation capped with an immersion in the 6-person spa bath. The use of timbers, stone and leather really

tantalises the senses with an alpine warmth.

As a dual key property it offers the kids their own private space with their own view right across the lower village. Built in 2008 the property is like new and is currently on the market for sale via Nisade. It's a well-priced penthouse offering both guests and owners a wonderful addition to their property portfolio.

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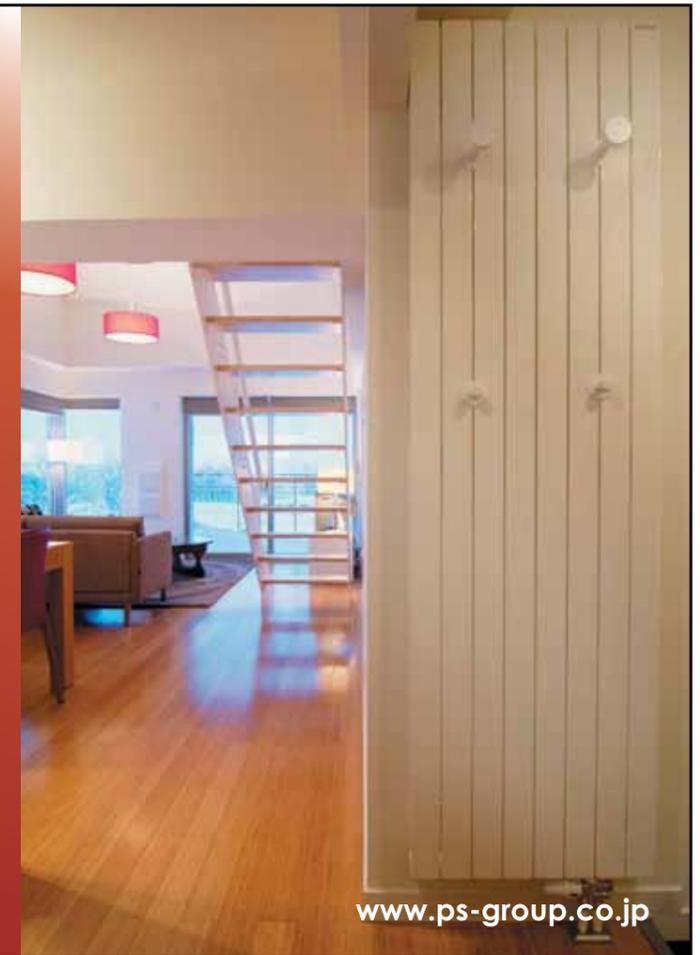
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NISEKO HOME DESIGN

A HOME is only as good as the sum of its parts, and it is essential to look past the glossy finished product. For Niseko Home Design's director Shigeru Uehara, practicability and durability are the main foundations of his design philosophy.

SHIGERU graduated from Chuo University, Tokyo in 1989 before moving to Portland, Oregon to further pursue and develop his skills. He then commenced his career as a builder in 1992 for Cross Pacific before attaining his Japanese architect and builder's license. It was then that he realised his passion for combining strong Western structures with contemporary Japanese design and established Niseko Home Design in 2006. Since then he has been applying his design and building skills to a number of varied projects.

He is equipped with both a building licence and architectural design expertise to ensure that the project is perfect from start to finish. Partnering with local Japanese industry partners, Shigeru oversees all aspects of design to satisfy the unique environmental demands of Niseko.

Builders and architects in Niseko have to prepare for many natural challenges such as snow,

cold climate, volcanoes, climate change and earthquakes. There are many practical ways to lessen the impact that the environment has on your home in Niseko. Shigeru does this by using local Japanese wood and materials first, as well as Niseko-area tradesmen. Also by having insulation, climate-control techniques such as proper sealing of corners, windows, doors and vents, as well as a pitched roof to reduce water and weight stress on your home.

Shigeru's houses are synchronic with the natural Hokkaido environment. The houses he designs are typically Japanese in style – clean lines, minimalist décor, and with impeccable attention to detail. Combining this with Western comforts and his quest for beautiful design that's practical and sustainable, Shigeru is committed to making a house that is harmonious with the environment.



AGENT PROFILE

Name Jason King **Agency** Hokkaido Real Estate **What's your forecast for 2011?** Buyer interest is strong at this early stage, and with a backlog of inventory, keen vendors and some excellent pricing, I feel sales will be strong. The handful of GFC-priced properties will sell quickly as diligent buyers sniff out the bargains.

What projects in Niseko are you excited about? The Hanazono site remains the best in my view. PCPD is moving forward aggressively. There are nearby investments for canny buyers including well-priced luxury houses, like the one pictured above. We also have land parcels, some of which are ski-in ski-out development opportunities. **From what countries are interested buyers coming from?** Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, mainland China, Malaysia and Aussies. **What type of real-estate investment would you recommend to buy in Niseko?** Each buyer has a preference depending upon yield versus capital growth, and risk/benefit comparisons. There are some keen secondary sale vendors, so do your homework and search for the best value. **What are your words of wisdom for potential buyers?**

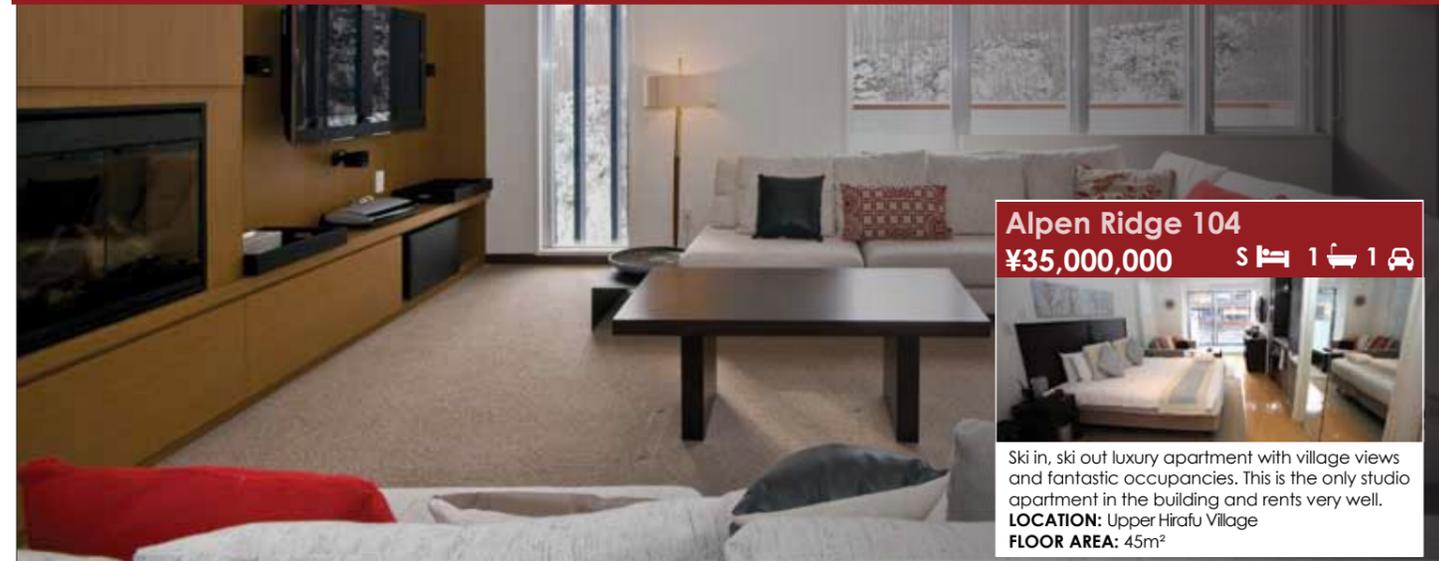
There's a lot for sale. You can afford to be choosy and careful. The old adage applies: location, location, location! **What do you think will make more people come to Niseko?** Streetscapes (underway), more commercial space for businesses, restaurants and better transport. Lift upgrades would be a great shot in the arm.

(Image: Hanazono, 220 sqm house, 5 bed, 2 bath, huge land ¥75,000,000)



Niseko Property

193-7 Aza Yamada, Kutchan-cho, Hokkaido Japan 044-0081



Alpen Ridge 104
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LOCATION: Upper Hirafu Village
FLOOR AREA: 45m²



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 PH 080 60818989



Alpen Ridge 202
 ¥45,000,000 1 🛏️ 1 🚿 1 🚗
 Ski-in ski-out, luxury slope side, one bedroom apartment with spectacular views looking directly down on the Ace Family chairlift.
LOCATION: Upper Hirafu Village
FLOOR AREA: 59m²

Alpen Ridge 504
 ¥79,000,000 3 🛏️ 2 🚿 1 🚗
 Ski-in ski-out, luxury, three bedroom apartment. The views from apartment 504 capture both the ski resort and Mt Yotei in all its glory.
LOCATION: Upper Hirafu Village
FLOOR AREA: 120m²

Alpen Ridge 403
 ¥85,000,000 3 🛏️ 2 🚿 1 🚗
 Ski-in ski-out, luxury, three bedroom apartment. Huge apartment with uninterrupted views of Mt Yotei from 2 balconies and the finest finishes.
LOCATION: Upper Hirafu Village
FLOOR AREA: 122m²

* REAL ESTATE NEWS

by lizzy hoo



YTL ANNOUNCES HINODE HILL

AT last month's reopening of The Green Leaf Niseko Village, its parent company YTL announced a new development in the first phase of Niseko Village's master plan.

HINODE Hill (meaning sunrise in Japanese) is the first residential development in Niseko Village and features 125 fully furnished, ski-in, ski-out apartments. Located next to The Green Leaf Hotel and the ski lift facility, this condominium development features a mix of one, two and three-bedroom apartments, and premium penthouses with private onsens.

Guided by Asian and Japanese architecture principles, Hinode Hill encompasses generous landscaped gardens featuring Japanese-influenced water features surrounding the four apartment blocks. Each apartment has views of neighbouring Mount Yotei.

"With the master plan for Niseko Village, due to be completed within the next 5-10 years, Hinode Hill owners will enjoy a strong first-mover advantage and significant investment returns as we commence the development of further residential and commercial properties in the area," said Kemmy Tan, Director of International Real Estate of YTL Singapore.

YTL also intends to reconfigure the existing resort ski-ways, golf courses and hotels into a comprehensive, mixed-use resort community with residential areas.

The master plan will be designed and implemented by award winning HOK Planning Group which has more

than 50 years of diversified experience in planning, urban design and landscape architecture for projects throughout the United States, Central America, Europe, the Middle East, Asia and the Far East.

The next likely development is a village core with retail and service space for guests. There will be a central street with a vibrant mix of retail, food, wellness, entertainment and recreational establishments. Visitors and residents will enjoy the best of international and local offerings in shopping and dining from top luxury labels and world-famous restaurants to Japanese art galleries.

"We are confident that once the village core pops up this will give guests an alternative recreation area and more will come and spend their time here. We think the local authorities have done a good job in promoting Niseko and with that more people will definitely come," said Kemmy Tan.

Dubbing Niseko as 'The Aspen

of The East', YTL has a long-term vision. Kemmy explains, "The market is in its infancy stage. It's very early. We're not in a hurry to finish it. We have a goal, but we'll like to see how it goes within the master plan that we have in mind. The prices in Aspen have grown by 100% within a span of 7 years. This is just a start. I think in most communities where there is a potential to reach end stage, anyone coming in early would really enjoy the upside in terms of investment."

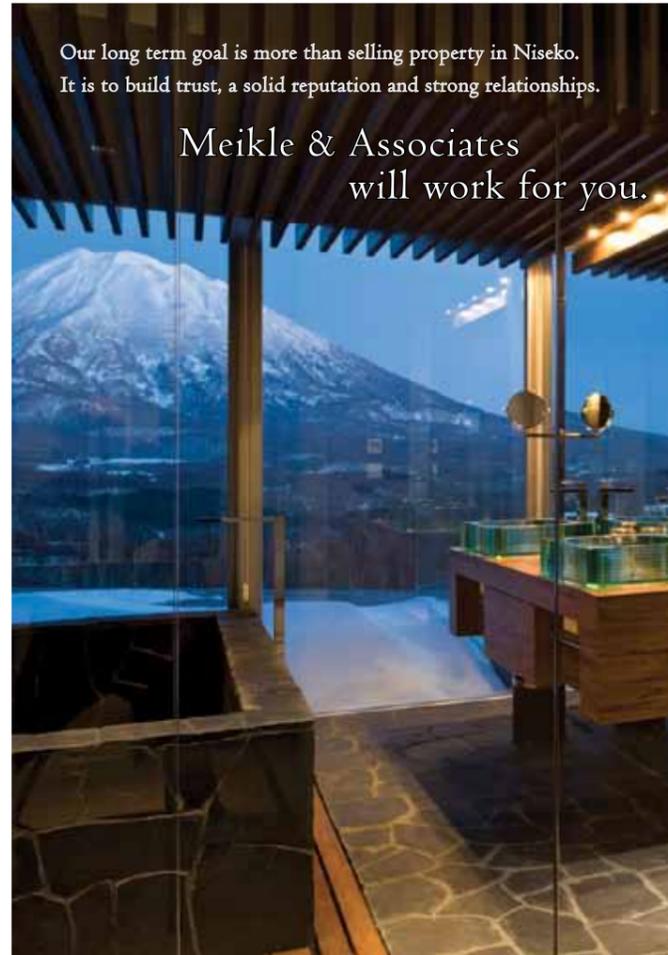
Niseko Village is backed by YTL a company that has a lot of experience in the luxury hotel and real-estate market. Some of its other hotels and resorts include Pangkor Laut Resort, The Chedi Phuket, Tanjong Jara Lumpur and Muse Hotel De Luxe in St Tropez.

Hinode Hill is expected to launch mid 2011. There is a property showcase at Komakusa Room, Level 3 at The Hilton Niseko Village.

@ www.hinodehill.com

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WWW.EZOVIEWS.COM



* BACK COUNTRY



Name Sam Kerr **Company** Niseko Extreme (two prior seasons with Black Diamond) **Ski or board** Both, 20 years **What's your best backcountry experience?** The feeling of joy at the top of a hike, and the anticipation for the ride down **Best tip for backcountry skiers/boarders visiting Niseko?** Know how to use your safety gear, and ride with people that do.

YOU have mastered the groomers, been on ski holidays several times all over the world, and you want to escape the crowds – chances are you're ready to go backcountry. The satisfaction of hiking peaks and then making your way down in untracked, waste-deep snow is exhilarating.

In Japan, Niseko is renowned for its liberal stance toward backcountry skiing and snowboarding. With that freedom comes the responsibility to respect the mountain. Niseko's powder may look soft and friendly, but don't let its light and fluffy appearance fool you.

Powderlife has collected some tips from local experts to keep you safe on the mountain.

1. **Obey the Niseko Rules: Listed on the course map (p.52)**
2. Check weather and avalanche reports – www.niseko.nadare.info
3. **Respect Niseko's ski patrollers**
4. Use essential equipment: A beacon, probe and shovel are

the bare essentials. Make sure you know how to use them.

5. **Let someone know when you're planning to be back.**

6. If the gates are closed don't risk entering them.

7. **No-go zones include Yu no Sawa (between Annupuri and Niseko Village area), and Haru no Taki (cliff area west of Hirafu).**

8. Ducking ropes may result in you losing your lift pass.

9. **Hire a guide if you're not sure about going off-piste.**

10. Explore the backcountry with experienced riders and skiers.

AVALANCHE INFO //

Shinya-san's daily avalanche report: www.niseko.nadare.info
Powderlife's Backcountry Guide is online – www.powderlife.com
 // 'Backcountry basics'
 // 'Inside a 2-day avalanche course'
 // 'Lost in the backcountry'
 // 'How to build a snowcave'

FREE BACKCOUNTRY INFORMATION SEMINAR //

Ever hiked the peak? Been through a gate in Niseko? Considered the consequences? Know what you're getting into with Black Diamond Tours free information seminar.

Location // Above Proski Demo shop, opposite The Vale Niseko

Time // 6–7pm every Tuesday during winter

HEALTH – DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS // by bevan colless

BY now, we've all heard of the increased risk of suffering deep vein thrombosis (DVT) on long-haul flights. As most of you will have two long flights in a relatively short period, I thought some tips on how to reduce your risk would be in order.

Commonly referred to as "economy class syndrome" by the smug who always fly business class (read: bitter small business owner who always turns right on boarding the plane and desperately avoids eye-contact with those on the left), DVT is basically a clot that forms in the veins due to blood not being returned effectively to the heart.

When we remain still for long periods, the veins don't have the muscles around them contracting to help blood travel back to the heart; the de-oxygenated blood can pool in areas of low muscle activity, which

need to work against gravity (below the knee). This is why we always think our shoes have shrunk when we put them back on to land (well at least I used to think that – cabin pressure and time zone changes can do strange things to cognitive function).

Your chances of developing DVT from a long flight are thought to be only one in several million, but if you have been into Niseko Physio with a lower limb injury on your holiday, you are at an increased risk, oh all right – and if you are flying economy class. To help prevent DVT, have a single low-dose aspirin just before you board the plane, which helps to thin the blood. However, do not take it if you have stomach ulcers or suffer badly from indigestion. Wear loose clothing with compression socks and tights, which will help the blood return to the heart. Most importantly,

do not just sit still in your seat during the flight. Wriggling your toes in your seat is of some help but weight-bearing exercises are the gold-standard. Stand outside the toilets doing one-leg squats and heel-raises for as long as you can stand people staring at you. There has been no recorded case of a passenger joining the mile high club and developing DVT on

the same flight, so it's clear activity helps! Do not cross your legs for long periods. Drink plenty of water and avoid alcohol.



- **Have a low-dose aspirin just before boarding the plane, which helps thin the blood.**

- **Wear loose clothing with compression socks and tights, which will help blood return to the heart.**

- **Try not to sit down the whole time. Wriggle your toes while sitting and stand outside the toilets doing one-leg squats and heel raises.**

RESORT GUIDE

POWDERLIFE is your Niseko Travel Guide – in print and online. With www.powderlife.com and Powderlife Niseko magazine, you'll discover the essential information for the perfect holiday.

During your stay, experience Niseko's restaurants, bars and cafes, where you can feast on anything – from the most authentic sushi to beautiful local sake. Make the most of your skiing and boarding with the specialist ski and snowboard stores and mountain guides around town. Inside you'll also find *Powderlife's* onsen guide, short history of the area and village maps. **For everything else visit www.powderlife.com/niseko-resort-guide.**



TOURIST INFO

Kutchan Information Centre

Plenty of brochures and English-speaking staff.
 Location: Main Street, Kutchan (map p.53, A4)
T: (0136) 22 1121.

The Niseko Grand Hirafu Welcome Centre

Wide range of brochures from the area and transport information.
 Location: Top of the main street (Hirafu Zaka) in Hirafu (map p.54, E1)
T: (0136) 22 0109.

GETTING HERE & THERE

New Chitose Airport.

For departure and arrival times.
T: (0123) 23 0111
W: www.new-chitose-airport.jp/language/english

Getting from New Chitose to Niseko

Bus: This is a cheap and efficient option. Buses leave every 30 minutes from the airport to Niseko and take about three hours (includes rest stop and drop off at Rusutsu). Companies providing this service: Whiteliner Buses, Chuo Bus, Donan Bus and Hokkaido Resort Liner. Visit the Welcome Centre for bus bookings back to Chitose. ¥2,300 approx. (one way) or ¥3850 approx. (roundtrip).

Door-to-Door Transfer

Skybus offers a door-to-door transfer service to and from the airport to Niseko, or Sapporo. See p.18 for details.
T: 011 788 4994
W: www.skybus.co.jp

Train This is the most scenic route to Niseko. There is no direct train from Chitose to Kutchan Station (closest major station to Hirafu), and all

trains run through Sapporo and Otaru. You will be required to change platforms. ¥2600 approx.

T: (0123) 45 7011 – Airport Station

T: (0136) 22 1310 – Kutchan station

W: www.japanrail.com

CAR RENTAL

Niseko Auto Rentals

Specialising in large 4wd 7-8 passenger vehicles: Delica Space Gear and Toyota Hiace.
T: (0136) 44 1144
W: www.bdlodge.com

Toyota Rent-a-Car ShinSapporo

One-way hire from Chitose to Hirafu is about ¥7000 for six people/24 hours. Pick up at Chitose airport, Sapporo or Kutchan
T: (0118) 15 0100 (English ok!)

The Powderlife website has some great tips on how to drive on snow as well as good contacts if you have an accident.
www.powderlife.com/niseko-travel-guide

TRANSPORT AROUND NISEKO

Taxis: Drivers probably won't speak English so you will need a business/place name and map for where you are going.
T: (0136) 22 1212 Kutchan Hire // (0136) 22 1171 Misora Hire // (0136) 44 2635 Niseko Hire.

Bus

Niseko United Shuttle: Connects Hirafu, Niseko Village and Annupuri resorts. Pickup/drop-off points in Hirafu include Hirafu Gondola and the bus stop near Hirafu intersection.
¥: Free if you have an all-mountain pass // 1 point if you have a 12-point mountain pass //

¥500 Adult and ¥300 for child.

Grand Hirafu Village shuttle bus:

Shuttle buses run throughout Hirafu every 15 minutes, all day, every day, until the end of night-skiing.
¥: Free

Hanazono Shuttle Bus: Travels throughout Hirafu Village and out to Hanazono from 7.50am to 6pm. Look out for the blue buses.
¥: Free

Kutchan Night Go Bus: Runs to and from Hirafu to Kutchan Station every night.
¥: ¥200 for 1 week pass/¥500 for a season pass

MONEY

ATM Locations

Hokkaido Tracks Holiday's Office, Hirafu
 Map: p.54, E2
 Accepts: All major cards

Kutchan Main Post Office
 Map: p.53, E3
 Accepts: All major cards

7 Eleven

Map: p.53, C1

Accepts: Visa Plus, JCB, AMEX, Dinners Club, Discover, China Union Pay

Credit Cards Lift tickets, ski hire and ski lessons can all be paid for by credit. Most large restaurants offer credit card facilities too, however some small businesses are cash only. Check with your retailer before purchasing.

Currency Exchange Kutchan Post Office and Hokuyo Bank (Map p.53, B3)

RESORT GUIDE

SHOPPING

For everything from toothpaste to alcohol and late-night snacks try:

Seicomart – Hirafu

Location: At the main intersection in Hirafu

Lawson – Hirafu (24 hours)

Location: 5 minutes from Seicomart in the direction of Kutchan.

Piz Gloria and the **Alpen Hotel** offer a smaller range of snacks and drinks, and **Sekka Deli** provides gourmet items from Hokkaido.

Kutchan Shopping

For a big shopping trip, it's worth venturing into Kutchan Town. Here is a list of the major stores stocking the basics, but if you explore a little further you'll find small local fruit and vegetable retailers and great souvenir shops.

Try **Best Denki** for all your electrical and technical needs.

Location: p.53, B4

Rummage through **M-Pocket** for imported groceries and alcohol.

Location: p.53, B3

Visit **Homac**, which shelves basically every household product. Afterwards head next door to major supermarket **MaxValu** for all your food supplies as well as **Tsuruha Drug** (red signage) if you need a pharmacy.

Location: Route 5 and Route 343. (p.53, G3)

Take a trip to the **¥100 store** if you're on a budget.

Location: p.53, B4

SHOPPING

Internet

J-Sekka Deli and Downtown Café have free Internet terminals.

Mobile Phones

Only 3G phones will work in Japan. Some accommodation providers offer mobile phone 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 public telephone.

International Calls

Dial (010) and then the code of the country you wish to call. If the number starts with 0 – drop the

0 and dial everything else.

Post Offices

Look for the red '〒' symbol. There are two post offices in Kutchan. In Hirafu, post-office boxes and stamps are located at Piz Gloria and Seicomart.

ELECTRICITY

Standard voltage is 100v AC. You can use most electronic items without a problem, but some high watt devices such as hairdryers may not run on full power. Plugs are the international standard (flat, two-blade type).

STAY SAFE AROUND TOWN

No skiing/boarding on roads or footpaths

While it may seem much quicker and easier than walking, skiing and snowboarding home from the hill is dangerous and is frowned upon by locals.

One third of all injuries in Hirafu are caused by people falling on the street. Wear shoes with a good grip or buy and attach rubber sole cleats with metal studs.

Be careful when walking or parking your car under roofs

Heavy snow slides from rooftops in Niseko. The snow slides can seriously damage your cars too.

Drinking Dangers

Make sure you leave the bar with someone else. Also make sure you rug up and stay warm – people have been known to fall asleep in the snow on the way home. If you do notice someone who is intoxicated, report them to the police or the safety hut located outside Seicomart.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Kutchan Kousei Hopsital

For anything you think is broken. X-ray, MRI and medical dispensary. No appointment necessary.

Location: p.53, A3

T: 0136 22 1141

Niseko Physio

The only acute sports injury specialist in the village.

Location: p.54, B2

T: 0136 22 0399

LOCAL LINGO

GREETINGS

Good morning	Ohaiyogozaimasu
Hello	Konichiwa
Good evening	Kon ban wa
Goodnight	Oyasuminasai
Goodbye	Sayonara
See you later	Mata ne
What's your name?	Onamae wa nan desu ka?
My name is ...	Watashi no Namae wa (insert name) desu
(nice to meet you)	Dozo yoroshiku
How are you?	Genki desu ka?
I'm fine	Genki desu
How old are you?	O toshi wa Ikutsu desu ka?

BASIC QUESTIONS

Where is ...?	... wa doko desu ka?
toilet	toire
Are you okay?	Daijoubu desu ka?

RESTAURANT TIPS

How many people?	Nan mei sama desu ka?
two people (3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)	'ni' mai desu (san, yon, go, roku, shichi, hachi)
What would you like to drink?	Onomimono wa okimari desu ka?
One beer please	biiru 'hitotsu' kudasai
Food counters	
one	hitotsu
two	futatsu
three	mitsu
four	yotsu
Before you eat say	Itadakimasu
After you eat say	Gochisosamadeshta
Cheers	Kanpai
Delicious	Oiishi

OUT AND ABOUT

Great snow	Sugoi yuki
Excuse me	Sumimasen
I don't understand	Nihonga ga
Japanese	wakarimasen
Do you speak English?	Ego ga hanasemasu ka?
Cute	Kawaii
Japan's great!	Nihon wa sugoi

RESORT GUIDE

ONSEN GUIDE

GOING to the onsen for the first time can be a little daunting. *Powderlife's* guide and onsen etiquette tips will help you fall in love with this quintessential Japanese experience.

Yukoro Onsen

T: 0136 23 3434 (Hirafu map p.54 B4)

Hotel Niseko Alpen

T: 0136 22 1105 (Hirafu map p.54 E1)

Hot Spring Poporo

T: 0136 23 3291 (Hirafu map p.54 F1)

Yumoto Niseko Prince Hotel Hirafutei

T: 0136-23-2239 (Hirafu map p.54 D1)

Hilton Niseko Village

T: 0136 44 1111 (Higashiyama map p.53 G7)

Green Leaf Hotel Niseko Village

T: 0136 44 3311 (Higashiyama map p.53 G7)

Niseko Grand Hotel

T: 0136 58 2121 (Annupuri map p.53 A8)

ONSEN ETIQUETTE

What to bring?

Bath towel, modesty towel and toiletries. Most onsens provide body soap and shampoo, and sell modesty towels for about ¥200.

How much?

Most onsens range between ¥600 to ¥1000.

What to do?

1. Enter the changing room through the appropriate door: 女 for women, 男 for men.
2. Remove your clothes and put them in the basket or locker provided.
3. Have a shower before entering the onsen. Rinse yourself thoroughly and then your shower cubicle before going into the onsen.
4. Use the modesty towel when walking into the onsen then gracefully slide into the water – never jump.
5. Don't let your towel enter the onsen water – just rest it on your head or on a rock on the side of the onsen.
6. Soak, contemplate and relieve your sore muscles.
7. Dry yourself off before going back into the change room, as best you can.

Many onsen have rooms where you can relax, drink a cold beer or tea, or even sit in a massage chair.

LOCAL HISTORY

WHAT does Niseko mean?

'Niseko' was the name originally given to the area by the Ainu, Hokkaido's indigenous people, and means 'a cliff jutting over a riverbank deep in the mountains'. Meanwhile, Nupuri is a word commonly heard around these parts, namely because it's the Ainu word for 'mountain'. Put it all together and Mt Niseko Annupuri (the mountain that is home to the Niseko United resorts) means 'a mountain which has sheer cliffs and a river below'. Other nearby mountains which have carried their Ainu names until today include Chisenupuri and Iwaonupuri.

SKI RESORT HISTORY

1911	Theodore von Lerch ascends Mount Yotei
1949	Mount Yotei is designated a National Park
1956	Rope tow installed at Asahigaoka ski area
1961	First ski lift in Grand Hirafu ski area completed
1962	40th All Japan Ski Championships (Alpine)
1963	Niseko mountain range is designated a Quasi-National Park
1966	Taiheiyō Club Niseko Moiva International ski area opens
1970	Kutchan hosts the 25th National Ski Competition
1972	Niseko Annupuri ski area opens
1982	Niseko Higashiyama ski area (currently Niseko Village) opens
1993	Free Passport lift pass system valid at 4 ski resorts introduced
2002	Niseko starts to receive a large number of Australian tourists

Information courtesy of the Niseko Promotion Board



Jagata-kun: Little fat skiing potato boy



Jagako: Jagata-kun's snowboarding girlfriend

GOMI GUIDE

IF in doubt, don't just throw it out!

What is burnable rubbish? (燃えるゴミ moeru-gomi)

Contrary to what most of us are brought up to believe, burnable rubbish includes plastics, as well as paper and food scraps.

PET bottles and cans (ペット缶)

Plastic drink bottles (with lid/label removed) and aluminium/steel drink cans

Compost (生ゴミ nama-gomi)

When available, compost bins are for food scraps. Though be careful, tea bags are not considered compost.

Non-burnable rubbish (燃えないゴミ moenai-gomi)

Non-burnable rubbish is for rubbish that doesn't fit the other categories, including items such as broken glass, ceramics and metals.

What can you do to help keep Niseko beautiful?

Take a second to be sure you're throwing your garbage in the correct bin. For more information visit www.town.kutchan.hokkaido.jp

C2 **A-Bu-Cha 2**
p54 UPPER HIRAFU

Try our popular Japanese dishes or hot-pots. Choice of 400 drinks! Japanese seating available. Families welcome. Lunch and Cafe: various lunch dishes, coffee, homemade dessert.



Lunch 11am – 4pm
Dinner 6pm – 2am
(LO 3pm/11.30pm)
☎ 0136 22 5620

www.abucha.net

A wide variety of meals and drinks – top marks

E7 **Black Diamond Restaurant**
p53 HIGASHIYAMA

Offering a wide variety of food and drink from around the world. Japanese daily specials, Western, Mexican and Italian dishes! Billiards, darts, happy hour and drink specials daily! Free pickup from The Hilton and The Green Leaf for groups of 6 or more.



4pm–midnight
(LO 11pm food // 11.30pm drink)
☎ 0136 44 1144

www.bdlodge.com

Free pick-up from The Hilton and The Green Leaf for 6 or more

A1 **Country Grill**
p54 COUNTRY RESORT

Unique flavours not found anywhere else in the area, with all local products by La Andy. From Hokkaido-grown beef, country roast chicken, and our specialty Hokkaido Venison, try the new Country Grill, just outside busy Hirafu in the quiet community of Country Resort.



Breakfast 7.30–10.30am
Dinner 17.00 to late

www.nisekocountryresort.com

Grilled favourites, relaxed dining, casual atmosphere

☎ 0136 55 5123

A4 **Ebisutei**
p54 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.



Open daily
5pm – midnight

www.ebcb.com

Have fun with our genki and laughing oden bar staff

☎ 0136 22 6544

D2 **Bang Bang**
p54 UPPER HIRAFU

Ramen lunch at Bang 2 starting this season! We take great pride in our fresh seafood and look forward to offering you mouthwatering dishes from our wide-ranging menus.



Lunch 11am – 4pm
Dinner 5.30pm – 11.30pm
Occasionally closed
☎ 0136 22 4292

www.niseko.or.jp/bangbang

We take great pride in our fresh seafood

C3 **Cocoro Okonomiyaki**
p53 KUTCHAN

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



11am – 9pm
☎ 0136 22 1528 (Jap)
☎ 0136 23 0008 (Eng)

Great Food, Great Value!

B3 **Downtown Café**
p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

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



Open 7 days
8am to 10.30pm
Breakfast, lunch and dinner
☎ 0136 23 3354

Hirafu's finest cafe free internet terminal + Wi-Fi

C4 **Half Note**
p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

Enjoy live weekend jazz nights as well as Dancing and other live music on weekdays. With, jazz, billiards and table tennis, there's always something going on at Half Note. Check out Half Note's regular jazz events at www.nisekohalfnote.com.



6pm–midnight
Open daily

www.nisekohalfnote.com

Hirafu's only jazz bar!

☎ 0136 23 2727

F5 **Hana Jizoh**
p54 IZUMIKYO 2

Amazing sweet and savoury breads and pastries from a friendly local family baker. You must try this! Get the free Hirafu Village shuttle to bus stop 27, near Unitas Log Village. Eat in or takeaway.



8.00am – 4.30pm
Closed Wednesdays

☎ 0136 23 0331

Creative and delicious breads from a local baker

D4 **Java Lounge**
p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

Come and relax on the Java Lounge sofas, try our

- Italian coffee • Assorted Panini
- Home baked muffins and cakes • Hot soups
- Iced-cold beer • Daily special lunches
- Quiches or all day breakfast



Daily
7am to 8pm

Early morning breakfast, lunch and après drinks

E2 **Kamimura**
p54 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.



Dinner 6pm – 11pm
Occasionally closed

www.kamimura-niseko.com

Blessed by land, sea and a creative chef

☎ 0136 21 2288

B3 **Maki Lounge**
p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

With an open fire and sweeping views of the Hirafu ski hill, unwind on our leather lounges. Apres drinks include an array of fine Japanese whiskey, sake, sho-chu and plum wine as well as classic and house-blend cocktails, spirits and glass wine.



Coffee, snacks and games from 10am // bar 2pm–late 7 days
☎ 0136 21 6133

www.j-sekka.com

Japanese whiskey, sake and shochu by the fire

B3 **J-Sekka Café and Delicatessen**
p54 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.



open from 7am daily

www.j-sekka.com

A taste of Hokkaido

☎ 0136 21 3088

C3 **Kabuki 1 and 2**
p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

At Kabuki 1 you can do make-it-yourself Okonomiyaki and Teppanyaki. Kabuki 2 (next door) is a full-service Teppan Yaki Restaurant. Early bird 20% for all meals – in by 6pm out by 7pm.



Open 7 days
5–11pm

www.nisekokabuki.com

Okonomiyaki and Teppanyaki Restaurant

E8 **M's Cafe (Saison Club)**
p53 HIGASHIYAMA

Try our huge traditional Japanese nabe hotpots with meat, seafood and vegetables. We have shabu shabu, sukiyaki and chanko hot pots.



Day 10am–3pm
Evening 5.30–7.30pm
Open daily
☎ 0136 44 3380

www.saison-club.com

Warm your body with our big hearty hot-pots

B4 **NICHII Shokudou**
p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

Specializing in Japanese food & Italian food cooked with wood-fired oven. Please enjoy our delicious food!



Open daily
4pm to midnight

<http://nichii.pittore.jp/>

Japanese and Italian food Iza-kaya with wood-fired oven.

☎ 0136 22 2161

D2 Niseko Pizza

p54 UPPER HIRAFU

Niseko Pizza is a family run restaurant offering a menu with lots of love and the best quality ingredients. You will be delighted by the smell, enticed by the flavours, pleased by the atmosphere and comforted by the staff



Open 4–11pm weekdays
11am to 11pm weekends,
holidays, Chinese New year
☎ 0136 55 5553

www.nisekopizza.jp

Dine in, Take-away and delivery

B2 Sekka Dining

p54 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.



Open daily
Dinner from 6pm
Occasionally closed
☎ 0136 21 5022

www.j-sekka.com

Showcasing the best of Hokkaido

A5 Shunsai

p53 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 ¥2,000.



Lunch 11am–3pm
Dinner 5–9pm
Closed Sundays
☎ 0136 23 1882

www.shunsai.com

Creative fusion cuisine from land and sea

C3 Steak Rosso Rosso

p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

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



Dinner 6pm–11pm
Occasionally closed
☎ 0136 21 7100

www.rossorosso.net

A must for steak lovers!

D2 Paddy McGinty's Irish Pub & Restaurant

p54

UPPER HIRAFU

Enjoy your perfect powder holiday at our popular pub and restaurant with its welcoming fun atmosphere, imported and local beers, wines, spirits and great value meals.



Open daily
1pm till Late

www.paddymcginthispub.com

Value Drinks, Hearty Meals, Live Sports and Music

☎ 0136 55 8020

D1 Senchou 2

p54

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.



Winter only
5pm–midnight
Open daily
☎ 0136 22 5454

www.senchou.com

Best choice for gourmet seafood

C3 Souan Genghis Khan Lamb BBQ

p54

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 60 minutes offer (reservation only, minimum 4 persons).



Open daily
5pm–2am
(LO 1am)
☎ 090 2059 6701

¥1700 all-you-can-eat barbecue for 60 minutes

F3 Taj Mahal

p54

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. Vegetarian meals available. Free local delivery.



Open all year, 7 days
11.30am to 10.30pm
☎ 0136 22 4566

www.tajmahalgroup.com

Visit India in Taj Mahal Niseko

C4 The Barn

p54

MIDDLE HIRAFU

Come and enjoy our alpine food and wine in Hokkaido's warmest and authentic bistro atmosphere. Drop in on the way back from the slopes for a snack and hot wine in our friendly bar on the upper floor, or stay the evening for dinner in the main restaurant.



Open 7 days 6pm to late
(LO 9.30pm food //
drinks 11.30pm)
☎ 0136 23 0888

www.nisekobarn.com

Hokkaido's one and only alpine bistro

E4 Tsubara Tsubara

p54

IZUMIKYO 1

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. Enjoy our famous Hokkaido soup curry.



Lunch 11.30am–3pm
Evening 6–10pm
Closed 2nd/4th Wednesdays
0136 23 1116

www.tsubaratsubara.com

Spicy, flavoursome and local Hokkaido curry soup

B2 Wabi Sabi

p54

MIDDLE HIRAFU

Quality prepared and cooked Yakitori (various skewered meats, seafood and vegetables barbecued). All food cooked in traditional Japanese style.



Open 7 days
5–10pm

www.nisekowabisabi.com

Specialty Yakitori restaurant

F3 Yakitori Yosaku

p54

MIDDLE HIRAFU

Hirafu locals' favourite yakitori restaurant. Come in after a day of powder and try some of our Japanese barbecue, sukyaki and hot sake.



Open daily
6pm to 3am

Serving yakitori every night until 3am

☎ 0136 23 4390

D2 Tozanken Asahikawa Ramen

p54

UPPER HIRAFU

Asahikawa ramen is made from 100% Hokkaido wheat noodles served in a smooth and rich soup. There is a wide selection of dishes to choose from including Donburi rice bowls. From Asahikawa's original ramen restaurant.



Open daily
10.30am–11pm
(LO 11pm)
☎ 0136 23 4549

www.tozanken.com

New location this winter!

C2 VBG – Vale Bar and Grill

p54

UPPER HIRAFU

Full breakfast available from 7am. Serving an eclectic fusion-style menu all day. Daily Specials. Warm up with our VBG Ultimate Hot Chocolate or something a little stronger in our relaxed après lounge. Shots and cocktails. Live music events.



Open 7 days
7am to late
All-day dining
☎ 0136 21 5833

www.nisekoalpineaccommodation.com

Ski-in ski-out bar and dining

D3 WAGYU DINING SOU

p54

MIDDLE HIRAFU

Try our popular Japanese food nabe hotpot for your experience of Japanese culture. We recommended Sukiyaki, Shabushabu and Kimuchi hotpot to get warm your body up in the cold Niseko winter.



Dinner 6–10pm
7 days
☎ 0136 23 3048

Carefully selected Japanese wagyu beef and special soup

B3 Yummy's

p54

MIDDLE HIRAFU

Cesar Salad, Avocado Salsa Salad, Chicken Wings, Bacon Pepper Steak, Baked Cream Potato, Cheese Fondue, wines and of course various styles of pizza. And more more!



www.yummypizza.com

Yummy homemade crust pizza and western foods restaurant

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

TOURS & ACTIVITIES

C2 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
Above Proski Demo Shop
Opp. The Vale Niseko
☎ 090 2054 8687

B4 Japanese Cultural Tours

KUTCHAN/HIRAFU

Tours will take you to various cultural attractions in Kutchan: Tea ceremony, laido sword demo, Taiko drums, sake-brewery tour and Japanese dinner. ¥5000/¥3000. Departs Seicomart Hirafu, ends in Kutchan.



www.niseko.co.jp/plat/

Special event - 'Coming-of-Age Day' 9th Jan (Sunday)

3-7.30pm
Dec 28/Jan 9,21/Feb 3,18
Bookings essential
☎ 0136 23 0222

E1 Niseko Foot

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. 30-minute, 60-minute and 90-minute courses available. Big groups welcome. Also osteopathy and sports injuries.



www.grand-hirafu.jp/nisekofoot

Closest healing relaxation therapy spot to Centre 4 lift

Open daily
11am-10pm
Free pickup available
☎ 0136 22 1224

F1 NISS

HIRAFU AND HANAZONO 308

Niseko International Snowsports School is designed to assist your Hanazono/Hirafu snow holiday. With two great locations and a suite of programs we'll help you learn new skills, gain confidence and above all enjoy your time in the powder of Niseko.



www.hanazononiseko.com

Kids are our speciality Hirafu and Hanazono

8.30am-4pm
Ticket sales/Kids Centre
Hirafu and Hanazono 308
☎ 0136 21 6688

RETAIL & SHOPPING

B3 Cocoroya

KUTCHAN

Located on Kutchan high street, Cocoroya offers a wide range of Japanese antiques, furniture, Kimono and original handmade gifts. We also stock a selection of high-quality power stone jewellery.



www.cocoroya.jp

Take home a unique piece of Japan

11.00am-7.30pm
Open every day
☎ 0136 23 0008

D1 Fusion Sports Shop

HIRAFU AND HANAZONO

Great gear, good value, friendly staff. Fusion provides all your on mountain and après needs. Popular brands like Burton, Oakley, Dakine, The North Face, Volcom and more.



www.hanazononiseko.com

Gear for the elements at two locations in Niseko

Hirafu 8am-9pm
Hanazono 8.30am-5pm
☎ 0136 21 6633(Hirafu)
☎ 0136 23 0911(Hanazono)

D1 Niseko Photography Gallery

UPPER HIRAFU

Stunning prints and fine art canvas works. Niseko Photography's gallery is a showcase of beautiful photography from Niseko's stunning four seasons. We also stock t-shirts, handmade beanies and souvenirs as well.



www.nisekophotography.com

Photo gallery - fine-art prints and souvenirs

7 days
midday-8pm
☎ 0136 22 5764

B3 SEKKA STYLE Shop & Gallery

MIDDLE HIRAFU

A collection of unique photography, antiques and objects d'art selected by Shouya Grigg, the style-impresario behind the SEKKA projects.



www.sekkastyle.com

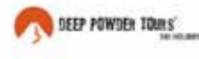
You can never get enough SEKKS

1-7pm
Closed Mondays
☎ 0908 274 4814

E2 Deep Powder Tours Ski Holidays

UPPER HIRAFU

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



www.deeppowdertours.com

The ultimate ski and snowboard experience

7 days
10am-6pm
☎ 0136 21 5827

D1 Niseko Photography Tours

UPPER HIRAFU

From the deepest powder pics to group tours and family shots - Niseko Photography are the local professionals. Book a private tour and we will capture your priceless holiday memories while you and your friends or family cruise the mountain.



www.nisekophotography.com

Niseko's professional photographers

Gallery: midday-8pm
On the mountain:
all day, everyday
☎ 0136 22 5764

B2 Niseko Massage

MIDDLE HIRAFU

Experienced 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. Gift vouchers available.



www.nisekomassage.com

Sports and relaxation massage in the middle of Hirafu

7 Days
8am to 8pm
☎ 0136 22 0399

E3 NOASC

MIDDLE HIRAFU

NOASC is Niseko's premier winter adventure company. We offer ski school (skiing/snowboarding/telemarking) lessons for kids through to advanced skiers, powder lessons, mountain guiding, snowshoe tours, CAT skiing, Niseko Explorer Private tours, kids adventure school, and backcountry tours.



www.noasc.com

Just Do It adventure tours - an experience you won't forget

8:00am to 7:00pm
All year round
☎ 0136 23 1688

D3 Ezo Seafoods

MIDDLE HIRAFU

We stock seafood for takeout sourced daily from the coast - oysters, King Red Crab, salmon, and more. We also prepare seafood platters and fish and chips.



www.ezoseafoods.com

Niseko's seafood supplier

7 days
Open from 4pm
☎ 0136 22 3019

E3 Momiji Gallery

MIDDLE HIRAFU

Gallery is a mix of stunning photography, renowned Hokkaido artists, (working in paint, bronze and plastic), unique antiques and gifts, postcards and gourmet cookies.... An artful fusion of old and new, Japanese and Western.



www.momijigallery.com

Art and Photo gallery, gifts and antiques

Open 7 days
2-7.30pm
☎ 0136 55 8585

D2 Sakura

UPPER HIRAFU

Tucked in behind Paddy McGinty's, Sakura offers a wide selection of gifts including kimonos, geisha hairpins, pottery, paintings, traditional wooden furniture and more.



www.sakura-niseko.com

Your one-stop Japanese souvenir shop

Daily
1-7pm in winter
☎ 0136 21 7007

D2 Yukara

UPPER HIRAFU

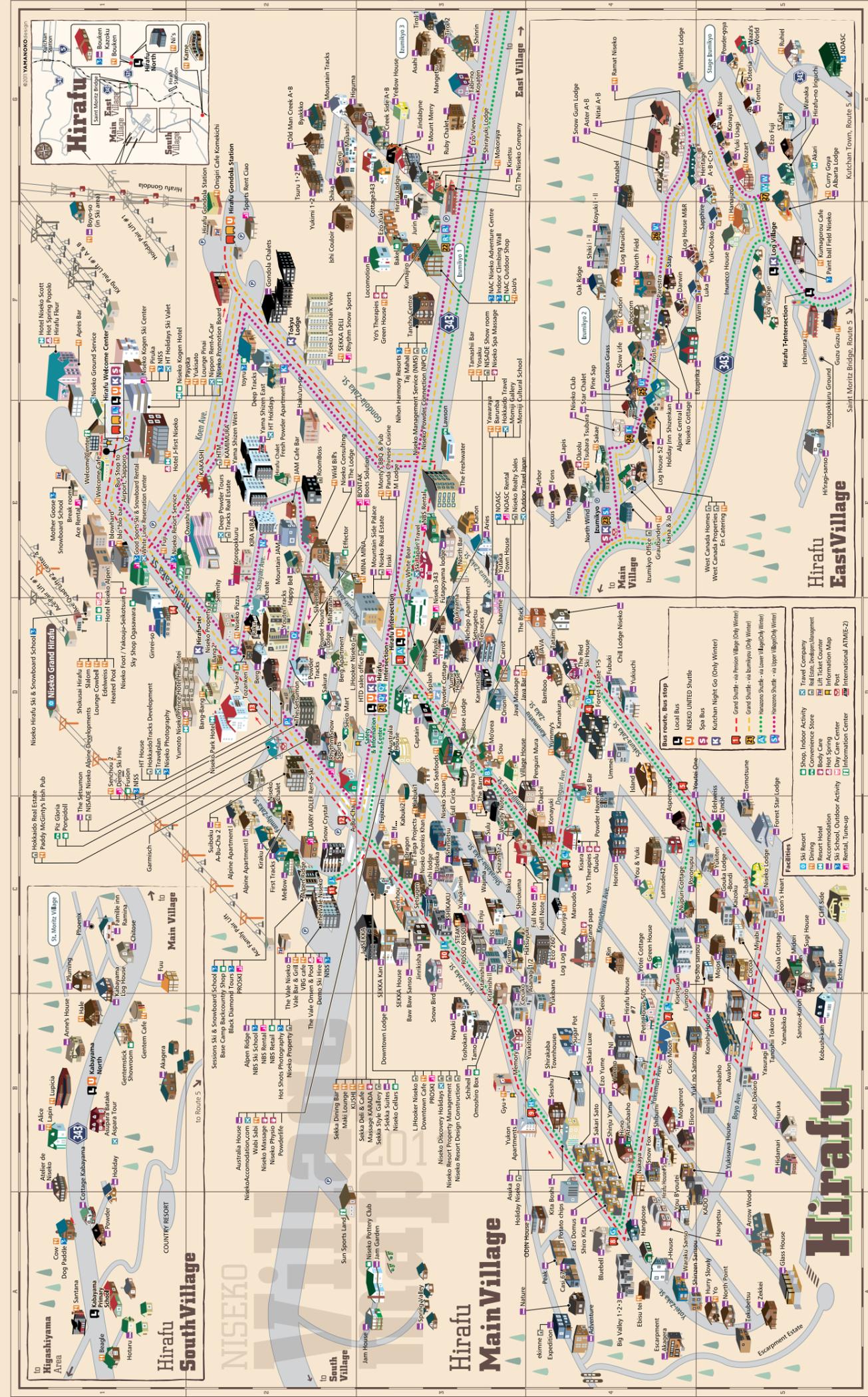
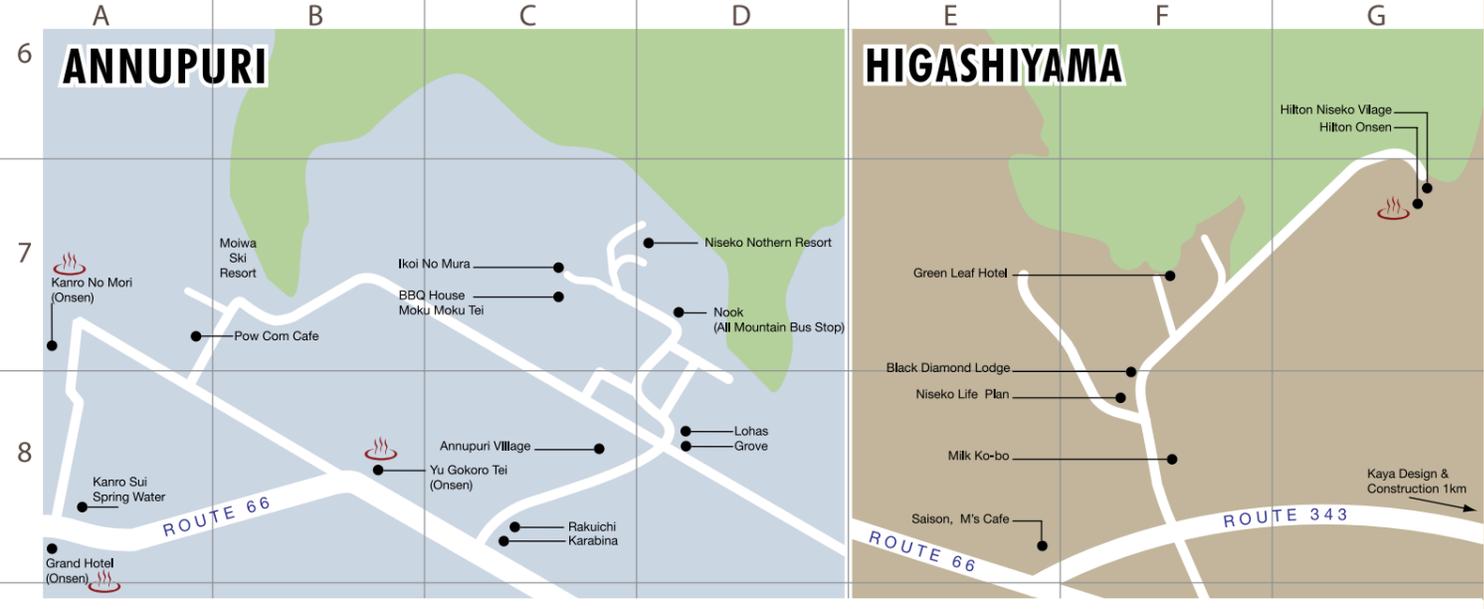
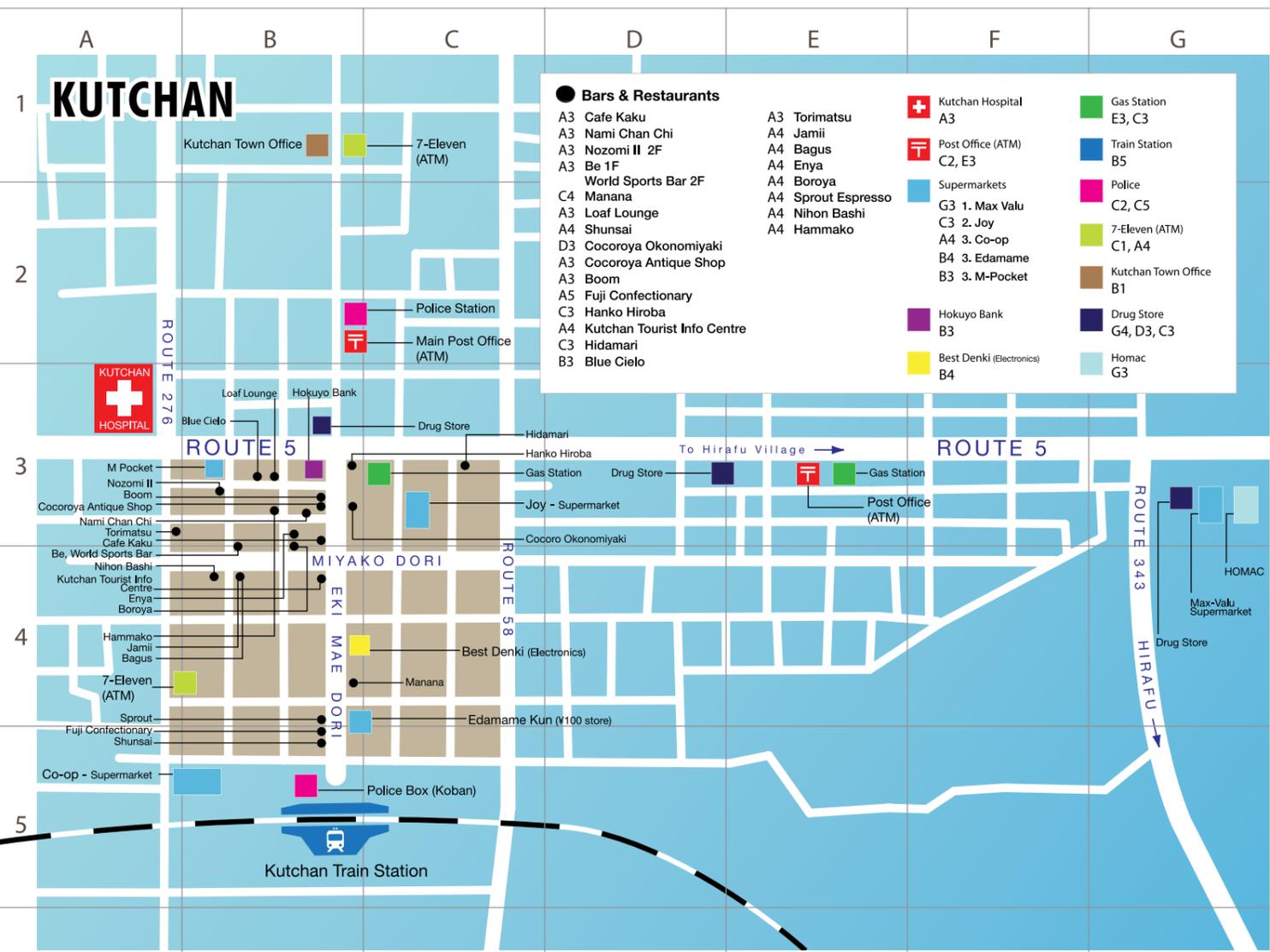
Stocking a wide variety of souvenirs, original t-shirts, Hokkaido sweets and more. Remember your holiday and take home a souvenir with you.



www.yukara.com

Reopen on 2nd floor of Tozanken Asahikawa Ramen Restaurant

7 days
9am-10pm
0136 23 4546



* AFTER THE MELT



photo // niseko photography

WAKE BOARDING



photo // ross cole-hunter

SHAKOTAN



photo // camparkgolf - flickr

PARK GOLF



photo // glen claydon

FISHING

THERE are generally two ways to go wake boarding: one involves being pulled behind a power boat, the other way is to be pulled by something resembling a rope-tow. It's the latter that Hanazono built this year, and it's just another feather in Hanazono's summer activity cap. Unsurprisingly, due to the rarity of cable-ski in Japan, it's been quite popular. Prices start from ¥1500 for 15 minutes of wake boarding action.

RUGGED coastlines and rocky pinacles floating off the shore are some of the things to be seen in this quasi-national park. It's an outdoor lover's paradise, with a huge list of activities possible in this area, from hiking up Shakotan-dake and taking in the amazing views, including Yotei-zan and Niseko-Annupuri; sea kayaking around the spectacular peninsular; glass-bottomed boat tours or just driving along the amazing coastline.

A UNIQUE Hokkaido twist on the golfing formula, park golf takes golf and makes it accessible to more people, both physically and financially. The sport is basically a simplified and shrunken version of golf using oversized golf balls, a single club, and shrunken fairways. Of course, the game still requires practice and skill to be successful. Some liken the sport to what lawn bowls is in Australia or England.

CATCHING fish is only half of the lure of this sport; the other is spending time relaxing in nature. And natural locations don't get much more tranquil and beautiful than the rivers and lakes surrounding Niseko. There are locations and options to suit most anglers, small fresh-water tributaries, large fast flowing rivers, beaches and deep lakes. It would be well advised to hire a fishing guide to get the most value from your time in the area.

SUMMER // niseko cycle week

THE premier annual summer event in Niseko, increasing in popularity and success each iteration.

NISEKO has a lot to offer all cyclists of all different abilities and types. Whether you like the open roads for cycling on clear days with no traffic in sight, or if you're more inclined to take to challenging downhill courses, there is something here to suit.

Recognising this attraction, Niseko now has a week dedicated to cycling. There are organised events over a nine-day period, some on the comfort of bitumen, others far, far from it.

The events have been organised to cater to riders of at least moderate ability, with an emphasis on the social aspect of cycling – not just on outright competition. However, it's in our nature to be competitive, and to satiate those needs, some of the events are races, including a cross-country mountain bike race,

an individual timed event around Mount Yotei and a downhill mountain-bike race. There are also many scheduled group events, sessions where you can brush up on your skills, nutrition seminars, downhill training and special activities for the kids. And, of course, there are a few parties that coincide with the event's start and finish dates.

This year, the Tour of Hokkaido coincided with Niseko Cycle Week, and the last leg of the race started from Hirafu, and after 186 grueling kilometers, the professional riders finished back at the top of Hirafu-zaka – near the Welcome Centre.

For those who come here in summer, cycling is definitely something you should do. If you're not here during Niseko Cycle Week, be sure to hire a bike and test out the area's great terrain.



photo // niseko photography

Looking for a budget hotel in Sapporo?

Single 3,500 yen
Double 4,200 yen
Twin 6,000 yen
+ including light breakfast

1 min. walk from Nakajima Park sbwy Station
3 min. walk to Susukino Town!

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+81-(0)11-511-2221 (sending mail preferable)
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www.sho-susukino.com/eng

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GREAT SELECTION, GREAT SERVICE, RENT OR BUY
We have powder skis and boards, snow wear and accessories. We can pick you up from your accommodation, fit your gear and drop you back or deliver your gear to you.

INSKI
OPEN 8AM to 9PM

AT MOUNTAIN SIDE PALACE, CENTRAL NISEKO HIRAFU. Phone: 0136-55 8558

JAC

- Chartered Accountant
- 'MYOB' Consultant (10 years)
- Customizable & Easy to Use
- 90 Day "Test Drive"
- Niseko Based

Understand your business; Take Control of your accounts; Get Up-to-Date reports at anytime and Peace of Mind with On-Site Assistance, Training & Trouble-shooting.

Bringing 30 years of accounting experience to your Niseko investment, J Amos Consultancy ensures a powerful, easy to use, customizable and affordable suite of Accounting services, backed up by the internationally acclaimed 'MYOB' accounting software package.

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Certified Consultant

photo: Glen Claydon

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Sports Remedial Relaxation

30 mins 4500Y
60 mins 8000Y

Bookings Phone: 0136 23 0788

Gnd Floor Java House, Sakura-Zaki St, Hirafu
We accept CASH only. Bookings essential. From 12pm to 8pm daily.

Java Bar

Hirafu's Coolest Lounge Bar

Open from 7am til 9pm
FREE Internet Hotspot

Live Music & DJs

Best Espresso Coffee in Niseko!

Sakura-Zaki St. Mid Hirafu Village, Shuttle Stop 4. t: 0136 23 0788

* TRAVEL FEATURE // gunkanjima



PHOTOGRAPHY AND WORDS BY // ross cole-hunter

A TINY island in the Japan Sea was for a while one of the most densely populated places in the world. In 1974, the 7000 residents of this once-bustling island were required to leave after the coal that was being mined there stopped being profitable. And so, for the past 36 years this island and its buildings that once housed thousands of people have stood unoccupied and abandoned. Left to the elements, it is slowly being broken as storm after storm breaks against its concrete exterior.

Gunkanjima, meaning Battleship Island, is a nickname given to Hashima due its striking resemblance of a battleship's silhouette. This island was once a very small rock of an island, but over time, the use of concrete has helped it to expand to its moderate 480m length.

Abandoned buildings have always held a fascination to me, though I can't say why, and it's not just me, there is a popular (underground) movement in Japan called *Haikyō*. When I saw a

few photos of an entire island, covered in abandoned and decaying concrete buildings it got me as excited as a child seeing photos of Disneyland for the first time. These photos showed entire apartments that had been left in stasis for decades. There were towering skeletons of apartment complexes mixed with rubble and decay. It was amazing and I had to know more about it. I had to go and see it for myself. I had become somewhat fanatical about Battleship Island.

“ An entire island, covered in abandoned and decaying concrete buildings. ”

The island is a few kilometres off the coast of Nagasaki in south-west Japan and has now recently semi-reopened to the public and is gaining lots of interest from people who want to see what is left of a city when people disappear. Previously the only way onto the island was to charter the use of a fisherman and his boat and sneak over under the cover of fog and darkness,

and hope that the ocean was calm enough to allow you to go ashore. We joined an organised tour and boarded the catamaran. En-route, the captain warned us over the P.A. system that there was a chance that we were not going to be able to land due to unfavourable weather conditions. We hoped that this was his attempt at humour. Slowly, a speck of an island appeared on the horizon. We got closer and closer, and we could start to make out the silhouette of a

battleship. The stillness of the island was eerie; it looked like the scene of an apocalyptic catastrophe. The boat docked at a newly built jetty and we rushed ashore. Once on the island we were confined to a short, fenced concrete pathway and were herded by eagle-eyed tour operators. Their concern for safety isn't unfounded, as several of the buildings

have collapsed, and while I'm no civil engineer, the lean on some of the buildings still standing look ominous. People who previously lived on Gunkanjima ran the tour, and they told an amazing tale (all in Japanese) of what life was like on this remote and crowded concrete island. Work was tough and fraught with danger, there was very little personal space and the island was devoid of vegetation, yet they were happy and relatively wealthy. There was an incredible bond and sense of community between residents, something that is sometimes missing in modern society, and something that they missed after they were forced to leave.

The tour was over, and we too had to leave and watch Gunkanjima fade away into the horizon. It's hard not to be impressed and the eerie feeling is not something I will easily forget.

Details:
Where: Hashima, Nagasaki Prefecture.
Getting there: Ferries leave from Nagasaki Port via Ioshima.
Cost: ¥4500~



LAND

All locations

TRE has a large selection of land in all Niseko locations. These range from 50 tsubo blocks to much larger sites in and around the main resort areas. Many are stunning with unique ambience and panoramic views. We have close contact with many Japanese and foreign owners, and so can introduce land that will never be publicly marketed.



FREERIDE LODGE

12

Higashiyama

from ¥39,000,000

Spacious lodge with separate manager's house, well-located in Higashiyama Village and short distance to ski area. Total floor area approx 500sqm and land 993sqm. The property has been well maintained and was renovated by current owner five years ago with considerable timber finishings. Large parking at the front of the property. The options are considerable.

Featured Properties



EZO 4

Middle Hirafu

4
¥89,000,000

Bold architectural residence with premium furnishings and fittings. Spacious, open plan living and kitchen areas. A private retreat close to fine dining.



MIHARASHI 1

Upper Hirafu

2
¥32,000,000

Vendor finance available! One of Hirafu's most reasonable apartments. A funky, modern, central two bedroom unit. Light, airy and a popular rental.



IZUMIKYO LAND

Izumikyo II

¥33,600,000

Substantial 925 sqm block with panoramic Mt Yotei views and a quiet, natural environment. Adjacent 926 sqm block is also available to purchase.



MOUNTAIN TRACKS

Izumikyo I

6
¥39,900,000

Large centrally located six-bedroom house with Mt Yotei Views. Options as holiday home, lodge or other commercial. Adjacent land available.



FUBUKI 2

Middle Hirafu

3
¥80,000,000

Spacious and chic premium property with spectacular Mt Yotei and forest views through large picture windows. A short walk to hot spring and many dining options.



HIRAFU HOUSE 7

Lower Hirafu

2
¥42,000,000

Stylish two bedroom home located in leafy, quiet Lower Hirafu. Close to restaurants and bars, with the hot spring across the road. Value for money.

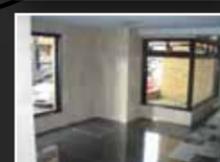


FOREST STAR LODGE

Lower Hirafu

Price on Application

A popular ski lodge in a quiet setting with soothing forest views. Well-equipped for commercial guests but would be easy conversion to family residence.



ASAHI PLAZA 201

Chitose

2
¥6,500,000

Tidy 51.6 sqm two bedroom apartment, rented at 66,000 JPY/pm- a 12.18% net return. Located very close to Chitose train station. Great investment.



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www.tracksrealestate.com

Big mountain. Big dream. Big picture.

A property investment in Niseko offers tremendous potential for both lifestyle and financial returns. But the market is complex and dynamic. To invest wisely you need to consider many factors. In other words, you need to accurately see the big picture.

Led by long time realtor Jason King, the Hokkaido Real Estate team boasts over 60 exclusive listings, putting you ahead of the pack right from the start. Having focused on the Niseko market for over six years (a long time for this area), we have comprehensive knowledge from both local and international perspectives. We do not trade in the market, so we remain impartial, allowing us to always keep your best interests at heart.

In short, we'll objectively present you with a wide range of options and considerations so that you can make informed and intelligent investment decisions.

For a private discussion anytime, or to join a Wednesday evening 'Big Picture' seminar, call Jason on +(0136) 21 6211 or email jason@hokkaidorealestate.com



THIS WEEK'S FEATURE



**HOKKAIDO
REAL ESTATE.COM**

