

issue 22 // Jan 23 - Feb 5 // 2010

powderlife

NISEKO ニセコ

www.powderlife.com



**PEAK
SEASON**

CAPELLA NISEKO

six-star resort shines bright

MOIWA KICKS ON

little brother's back in the game

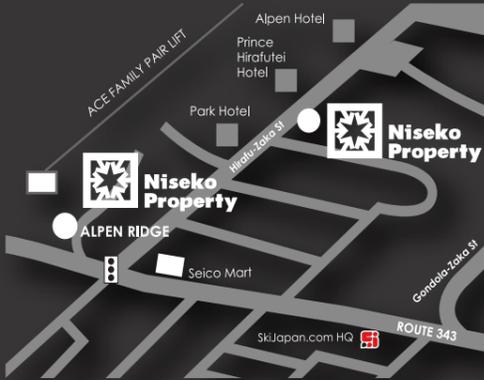
FIVE OF THE BEST

hot ramen to bowl you over

Niseko Property are Niseko's leading property specialists.

Our team combines local knowledge and international property experience.

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



ALPEN RIDGE 1.5 BEDROOM

from **¥45,000,000** 🏠 1.5 🛏 1 🚿 1



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

ALPEN RIDGE 2 BEDROOM

from **¥70,000,000** 🏠 2 🛏 2 🚿 1



Luxury ski-in, ski-out accommodation in the heart of Hirafu. Best location in the village.
Location: Upper Hirafu Village
Floor Area 99m²

ALPEN RIDGE 3 BEDROOM

from **¥90,000,000** 🏠 3 🛏 2 🚿 1



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

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¥80,000,000 🏠 3 🛏 3 🚿 1



Stunning property located next to the Ace Family slope. Extremely sought after ski-in, ski-out accommodation.
Location: Upper Hirafu Village
Floor Area 135m²

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reduced to **¥590,000,000**



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

Location: Upper Hirafu Village
Land Size 3,825m²

ALPEN ESTATE

from **¥2,000,000** LAND



Less than 20,000 yen per tsubo. Uninterrupted views of Mt Yotei. Less than 1.2 km from the heart of Hirafu.
Location: St Moritz
Land Size from 352m²

KIRA KIRA

¥35,000,000 🏠 1 🛏 1 🚿 1



Recently completed development. Great returns and attractive entry point into the Niseko market.
Location: Lower Hirafu Village
Floor Area 46m²

MOIWA HOUSE

¥90,000,000 🏠 3 🛏 1 🚿 3



Adjacent to Moiwa ski field. Unique ski-in, ski-out location.

Location: Moiwa
Land Size 992m² Floor Area 233m²

SKI-IN, SKI-OUT

¥449,000,000



Prime ski-in, ski-out site. Constructed 2004, this property offers a 3% p.a. fixed return for 2 years.
Location: Upper Hirafu Village
Land Size 1,640m² Floor Area 489m²



CAPELLA™

NISEKO

RESORT AND RESIDENCES



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powderlife
NISEKO ニセコ

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cover Peak Season skier Yasuyuki Shimaruki photo Joe Corcoran, Niseko Photography

the vale niseko



WBCG
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step out to the world's best powder

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Finding the best real estate deals in Niseko

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

Niseko Consulting

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



editor's note *issue 22 january 23, 2010*



WHILE the heavens seemed to have delivered an extraordinary amount of snow to Niseko this season, the snowfall stats tell us it's apparently just an average winter here (as our weather guru The Don lays out for us in Fluff on page 9).

The snowbanks on the side of the roads certainly seem higher than usual this time of the season – something I've spent a lot of time pondering while digging the deluge of powder from my driveway.

But it makes me wonder how crazy this place must be to manage in a big month or season, when you see some of the stats that have been recorded at Kutchan. Some food for thought: in December (2009), apparently I shoveled about 2.46m of snow out of my drive. In the January of '69, they shoveled 6.1m out of theirs... that's a two-storey building of snow in just 31 days! Glancing across the records, 3-5m snowfall months used to be pretty commonplace, although they've been pretty few and far between in recent years. Which makes me think we must be about due!

More on snowfall in Fluff, but also in this issue we fill you in on all the action going on at Mt Annupuri's little bro Moiwa this season. We take you inside the local party scene of the past few weeks, introduce you to legendary local character Shukin Moderski, share a meal with you at local favourite izakaya restaurant A-Bu-Cha, and explore plans for a resort that will take Niseko to a whole new level – Capella Niseko.

We're right at the peak of another epic Niseko winter. We're sure you'll be peaking with excitement and good times on the slopes and off!

Kristian Lund, Powderlife Managing Editor kris@powderlife.com

今シーズンの限りなく降り続ける大量の雪は、ニセコにとっては当たり前の天気だったようです!道路脇に積もった雪は確実に去年の今頃よりも多く、我が家の除雪をする度にその事を考える程です。

倶知安の積雪統計を見る限り、どれだけニセコの積雪量が驚異的か一目瞭然です。我が家でも去年の12月には約2.46メートルの除雪をしました。しかし、1969年の1月には6.1メートルの除雪量を記録しています。圧倒的な数字です... この驚異的な数字は近年までは稀でしたが、今シーズンでは3-5メートルの月間積雪量が当たり前のようです。もしかしたら、今シーズンは新記録を達成するかもしれませんね!

今号では、我らニセコの天気予報士である“The Don”が『Fluff』ページにて今季の積雪を予測しています。またアヌプリの弟山であるモイワ情報、過去のパーティーシーン、地元有名人‘Shukin’の紹介、人気居酒屋 A-Bu-Chaのグルメレポートなど情報満載です。そして、ニセコで話題沸騰中の新リゾート『Capella Niseko』の魅力にも迫っています。

ニセコの雄大な冬シーズンも中盤にはいりました。皆が充実したニセコライフを送っていますように!

IN FOCUS... up close and personal with a moody Mt Yotei.

Photo: Glen Claydon

SEKKA DINING

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

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



SEKKA DELI

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

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



www.j-sekka.com



MAKI LOUNGE

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

DRINKS 14:00~ LATE T: 21-3070



HERMOSA

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

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

grand hirafu

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Eco-friendly design combined with modern high-spec furnishings
Completion of first of two buildings winter season 2009-2010:
Luxury 5 bedroom • 6 bathroom private residence with elevator
WWW.EZOVIEWS.COM



fluff light news and stuff from around town

How all this snow stacks up



Photo: Tat Ihara

AS we approach mid-powder season, I thought it might be worth seeing how we're stacking up against the long-term averages. The Japan Meteorological Agency has forecast a warmer and less snowy winter for much of Japan, including Hokkaido. And when winter struggled to get going in December, I was a little worried they might be right. But then the snows came and so

did colder temperatures, and after three below average seasons there was hope that finally another big one could be on the way. Down at the official recording station in Kutchan, which gets less snow than on the mountain, they've recorded a little below average snowfall and temps close to or a little above the norm. November recorded 1.02m (average 1.2m), December 2.46m (average 3.15m),

and to mid-way through January about 1.5m, with a storm set to unload at the time of going to print (January average 3.8m). Despite what look like average stats, it's been incredibly good up there. And for those who've been enjoying waist-deep turns in some of the lightest and driest powder on the planet, what do a few centimetres of snow really mean? Not a damned thing! – **The Don**



IT sounds hopping mad, but the world's first artificial snowflake was created in Hokkaido... on the tip of a rabbit's hair. A local scientist achieved the feat in 1933 in his lab, by adjusting temperature, air pressure and humidity to replicate snow clouds. But we're still not sure why you'd want to make fake flakes in Hokkaido, when there's so many real ones made by Earth's own mad scientist, Mother Nature!



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

Tel: 0136 22 0399

www.nisekomassage.com

info@nisekomassage.com

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

Early Bird Special!
Discount massages pre-2pm!

Our therapists

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

Our sessions

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

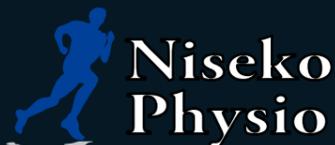
90 minute, full body oil massage: ¥11,000,
Early Bird Price: ¥8,000

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

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

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

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



Physiotherapy is also available



Ice Bar: for a limited time only

IF you're walking up Hirafu-Zaka Street on your way to the slopes, chances are you've spotted the Ice Bar. It's hard to miss a frozen piece of art with titanic towering snow spires and a huge hulking bear out the front. Skillful sculptor Hiro Takenaka (pictured with one of his ice princesses) has carved up another Niseko winter masterpiece next door to blo*blo bar – and it's pretty darn cool, pardon the pun. Inside, walk through a lit-up maze into an ice wonderland, as you try to find your way through an ice labyrinth to the bar for a chilled beverage – literally. Hiro-san has scrawled some philosophical English words on a wooden sign inside the bar: "In spring, this ice will melt and soak back into the ground," he writes. "The water holds the memories of human beings of this winter, and takes them back to the earth. It appears in the ground again to nurture all living things." A lovely sentiment, we think.

Bag big tricks, minus the pain

WANT to grab the longest airtime, bust the tightest tricks and hit the biggest booters, but you're scared of getting hurt? The pain-free answer is right here in Niseko. Hanazono's new Bag Jump – positioned on lower part of the Stairway to Heaven run by late January – will have you bagging stunts off jumps that you never believed possible, right before landing in what can only be described as a giant pillow. It's hailed as the perfect tool for practicing freestyle tricks safely, or just launching for fun. The Bag Jump was invented in Austria, and is popular at ski resorts all around the world, but Hanazono has the only one in Japan. While only skiers and snowboarders can hit the Hanazono Bag Jump this winter, for a small cost in summer, Hano says there will be a dry ramp for skis, snowboards and even bikes. But for winter it's completely free-of-charge, so go big! Then all you have to worry about is landing the tricks for real on the snow...



niseko news *tracking down local stories*

By Matthew Thomas

Little brother Moiwa kicks on

OWNERSHIP of Niseko-Moiwa changed hands last season, and already we're seeing signs of a more progressive and successful future for the resort.

Although Moiwa has been bought and sold several times in recent years, it has for the most part never really taken off. However, this season it seems 'Niseko's younger brother' is out to claim a bigger piece of the Niseko pie, which consists of 'elder siblings' Grand Hirafu, Niseko Village, Annupuri and Hanazono.

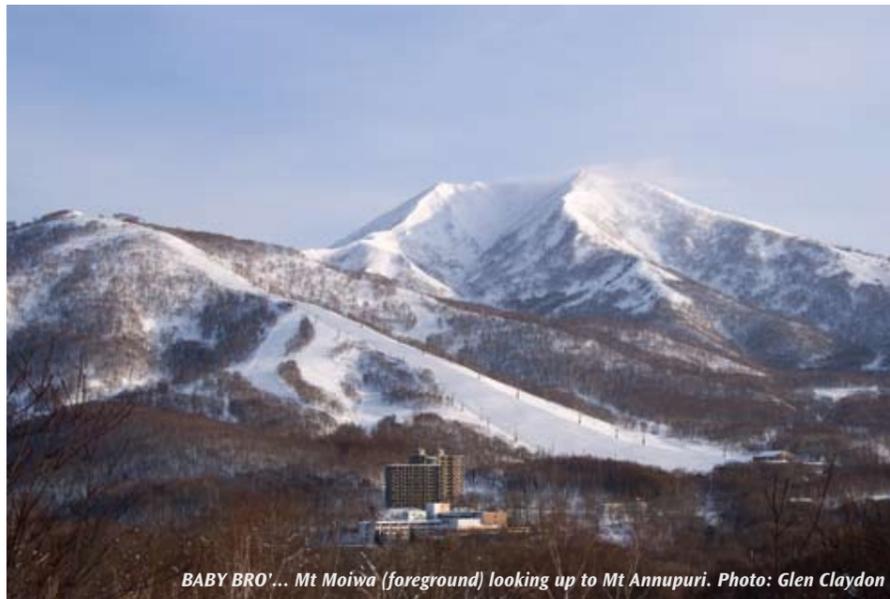
Moiwa is on the skier's right of Annupuri, separated by a valley, and about 1km by road from Annupuri.

Since changing ownership, it has already experienced its best percentage increase on lift usage in years, said Eyal Agmoni, fund representative for Moria Mountain Holding GK, which purchased the resort last year. He said that, along with more people on the mountain, visitor traffic and general interest on Moiwa's website has even increased dramatically.

Additionally, there's a certain buzz and interest about town from tourists and locals alike when it comes to Moiwa – something that hasn't existed in past years. This is certainly a plus for the resort... but a little bit of a minus for locals, who have long enjoyed Moiwa's uncrowded, untracked, locals-only status.

Agmoni said the positive results could be linked to several new strategies, including cross promotions and free passes for Hokkaido Tracks guests, children riding for free or ¥500, and 'First Pow', which allows a maximum of 30 skiers and boarders early access to the resort on weekends and public holidays.

Besides strategies from the resort this season, medium-and-long-term visions are also in the pipeline.



BABY BRO'... Mt Moiwa (foreground) looking up to Mt Annupuri. Photo: Glen Claydon

Medium-term, Agmoni would like to see a connection between Moiwa and other resorts on the mountain, and also outside Niseko United.

"We have launched a joint pass between us and Annupuri this season, so skiers and boarders can cross between the sites and ski both of them with attractive ski lift rates," he said.

"What it means is that holders of a valid ski pass for any of the two resorts can show their pass and purchase at the other resort for a discount so they can ski both sites. Final rates will be published on our website shortly."

In the long term, Agmoni hinted at a first-class resort status with ski-in-ski-out facilities.

All you need to know about Moiwa

Open: Daily, 8.30am-4pm

Lift pass: 1 day (¥4200); 4 hours (¥2800); 12 point (¥3500); 1 point (¥350); 60 years + (¥2500); season pass (adult - ¥38,000, u15 ¥35,000, u12 ¥30,000).

'First Pow' Promo: Sat, Sun, public holidays, 7.30am-11.30am; ¥3500 (¥700 for season pass holders); limited to first 30 customers.

'Kids Run' Promo: Free child's pass (middle school age or younger) with every Adult 1-day/4-hour/12-point pass. ¥500 for each additional child.

Transport: Free Hirafu shuttle. Timetable online.

Web: www.niseko-moiwa.jp **Tel:** 0136 59 2511



FIRST BIBS... One of the earliest to track Niseko Village's Mizuno no Sawa.

Mizuno no Sawa a big hit

NISEKO Village says public response to Mizuno no Sawa has been 'overwhelmingly positive' since opening the formerly off-limits run this year.

Head of ski patrol at Niseko Village, Nobuyuki Nomura, said that in less than two weeks, about 150 skiers and boarders participated in the daily educational lecture, and then rode the run with the guidance of ski patrol. "Some participants have said they look forward to when it is more easily accessible, but they all understand the effort it has taken to bring it to this point, and respect the rules that are in place for their safety."

Meanwhile, Niseko Village's gondola has been fitted with 30 test racks for fat skis and snowboards, meaning the days of carrying them in the gondola could be nearing an end.



ODIN FINE RESIDENCES HAVE NOW ARRIVED.



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in the loop your guide to what's on

SAT **23** **Reggae Night @ Sports & Good Food Yuki Bar**
レゲイナイト パーティー @ 雪場

Local Kutchan Rockers play cool Niseko style reggae tunes. Dance and sing together with the local mountain crew! All drinks 500yen.

おなじみの倶知安ロッカーズが今回もやらかしてくれま。歌って踊って汗かきましよう。ドリンク全て500円です。

start: 10pm - Late
contact: 0136-55-8228

SUN **24** **Taiko Performance and Sausage Sizzle**
羊蹄太鼓保存会鼓流 パフォーマンス

Featuring the famous local Taiko team "Koryu" in front of The Vale Niseko. Enjoy a sizzling sausage & sake on the outside deck.

地元で伝わる伝統芸能である羊蹄太鼓保存会鼓流。地域文化・地域振興の発展を目的とし、日々活動を行っています。ぜひ、ニセコ文化に触れてください。

start: 3:30pm-4:30pm
contact: 0136-22-0038
geocities.jp/youteidaiko_koryu_top/

MON **25** **Mountain staff special @ Java Bar**
シーズンスタッフスペシャル @ Java Bar

Every Monday, seasonal mountain staff can get 2 for 1 basic spirits.

仕事帰りのうれしいサービスです。シーズンスタッフスペシャル 2 For 1 Basic Spirits

start: 8pm-10pm
contact: 0136-23-0788
www.niseko-info.com/javabar



Sun 24th/31st - Taiko at The Vale Niseko

Tue 26th - Ainu Fair @ Kogen Hotel



TUE **26** **Shiraoi AINU Fair Niseko @ Niseko Kogen Hotel**
白老アイヌ民族博物館フェア・イン・ニセコ

Traditional Ainu Dance, recognised by UNESCO. Experience first hand an introduction to Ainu culture.

SAJ公認キスマークカップジュニアオープン。29日公式トレーニング、30日ハーフパイプ競技。国内トップクラスのライダー達が参加予定。翹べ!世界の頂点へ!

start: 7pm-9pm
contact: 0144-82-2216
www.shiraoi.net/english/

WED **27** **Jasper @ Half Note**
ジャスパー @ Half note

Come and listen to Jasper from Australia play a range of popular acoustic covers in Niseko's most chilled out bar.

オーストラリアからジャスパーがニセコで最もリラックスしたハーフパイプでアコースティックナンバーの数々をお届けします。

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

THU **28** **JAM NIGHT @ Java Bar**
ジャムナイト @ Java Bar

Every Thursday night is JAM NIGHT from 8pm. Join us for an open jam night with instruments like djembe, guitar, and maracas etc.

毎週木曜日はJAVA JAM NIGHT! ジャンベイ、ギター、マラカスなどでライブを行っています。入場無料。一緒に音楽やりたい方はJAVA BARまでご連絡ください!

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

FRI **29** **Kiss Mark Cup @ Hanazono**
キスマークFISスノーボードジャパンカップ 2010 @ Hanazono

Official training on 29th. Preliminary halfpipe contest and final on 30th. Top-class domestic riders will feature in this event. ¥1500!

SAJ公認キスマークカップジュニアオープン。29日公式トレーニング、30日ハーフパイプ競技。国内トップクラスのライダー達が参加予定。翹べ!世界の頂点へ!

start: 9:20am
contact: 011-530-9121
www.harmonyresorts.com

SAT **30** **YAWARA Reggae Night @ Yawaraya**
鉄板酒宴 やわらや Presents やわらNIGHT!

Join Yoikichi Myers, Red Dragon and Zon-B-Master plus local Kutchan rockers, Sigma Sound and Sonic Wall.

今回のやわらNIGHTは、酔吉 札幌、Myers's 函館、Red Dragon 苫小牧、Zon-B-Master 酔吉をSpecial Guestに。迎えよう! 倶知安 Rockers, Sigma Sound & Sonic Wall!

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

SUN **31** **Hokkaido Half Pipe Competition @ Hanazono**
北海道スノーボードハーフパイプ競技 @ Hanazono

International snow boarders from SAJ and FIS-approved class. Official practice on the 30th and final on the 31st at 9:30 am.

SAJ, FIS公認クラスの選手が繰り広げる世界規模の国際スノーボード大会。公式練習が30日、予選・決勝が31日の9時30分より、開始いたします。

start: 9:30am
contact: 0136-21-6655
www.harmonyresorts.com

MON **01** **Girls Night Out @ Paddy McGinty's Irish Pub**
レディーズナイト @パディー・マクギンティーズ

Don't miss ¥300 drinks (for a draft beer, wine and sparkling wine, house spirits or soft drinks). Boys welcome!

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

start: 6pm
contact: 0136 55 8020

WED **03** **Japanese Cultural Tour in Kutchan**
日本文化体験ツアー 倶知安

Celebrate Setsubun, the beginning of the spring season, by scattering roasted soy beans and wishing for good health. The tour starts with a tea ceremony, then martial arts, Taiko drum performance, Niseko Sake Brewery tour then dinner in Kutchan.

start: 3pm-7:30pm (bookings essential)
price: ¥3000 (dinner included)
contact: 0136-23-0222

Wed 3rd - Japanese Cultural Tour



THU **04** **Shot Night @ The Bunker in the Vale**
ショットサービスナイト @ The Bunker in the Vale

On the 4th and the 28th of Feb The Bunker will have 2 for One Shots from 9 to 11 pm.

滑った後、夜に繰り出す勢いづくりに欠かせないショット! 一人じゃ寂しいので友達と。一杯のショットで二杯付いてきます。かんばーい!

start: 9pm-11pm
contact: 0136-21-5833
www.nisade.com

FRI **05** **Red Bar DJ Friday Night Event @ Red Bar**
DJ フライデーナイト @ RED Bar

Great DJ event every Friday with funky beats and a party atmosphere. ¥1000 entry fee with one drink included.

パーティー好きの人必見! 毎週金曜はRED Barのスペシャルナイトへ! エントリー1000円ドリンクつき。

start: 10pm
contact: 0136-22-6687

AUSTRALIA DAY CELEBRATIONS 2010

DON'T be a gaijin galah! Remember you're an ambassador for your country while abroad. Celebrate the day in your accommodation or at bars and pubs. Please act responsibly on your way home or between venues, respect local customs, and most of all have a great day!

Australia Day @ Alpen Hotel Grand Hirafu
Enjoy a Nishigo Nabe hotpot, snow-flag comp, Taiko (traditional Japanese drum) performance, live music and fireworks.
Starts 5pm-9.30pm Contact 0136 22 0109

Great Australia Day Party @ Red Bar
Dance to live international and local DJs. Celebrate Australia Day with the best music, great cocktails and shots.
Starts 10pm Contact 0136 22 6687

Yuki Bar Special Daytime Oz Day Party
Yuki Bar will open daytime on Australia Day from 11am to help all the Aussies in the vil-

lage celebrate. ¥500 drinks on offer all day.
Starts 11am-late Contact 0136 22 0234

Australian Day @ Lars Longcox
Beer Pong all day loooong at Lars Longcox!
Start 12am Contact 0136 21 5833

Aussie BBQ @ The Vale Bar and Grill
Enjoy a barbie on the Snow Deck, sipping Aussie beers to the tunes of Triple J's Hottest 100 live all day. VBG serving Aussie food and wine.
Start 7.30am Contact 0136 21 5833

Aussie Bikini & Boardshort Party @ The Bunker
Grab your best bikinis and boardies and hit The Bunker. Prizes for best-dressed. Aussie beats from 8-late. Aussie beers, prizes and shots!
Start 6pm Contact 0136 21 5833

Australia Day @ blo*blo Gyoza Bar
Enjoy Aussie beef on the barbie and join our 3rd annual cricket match which will be a ripper as always.
Start 6pm Contact 0136 22 1269



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SNAP

Powderlife camped out at the foot of the Family Lift to ask people what else they like to do in Niseko – besides skiing and snowboarding...



Dad Ben and kids Nick, 9, and Maddie, 12, are all foodies and love Japanese fare – sushi, sashimi and ramen are favourites. Mum's absent from this shot because she opted out of skiing to have an onsen instead.



Cutie pie sisters Lily, 6, and Sophie, 3, can't get enough of skiing, but they also enjoy playing with the other kids in their lodge, making snowmen and riding the chairlifts.



Kiwi Alex is a chef at Niseko Gourmet, so he loves sampling all the different 'simple and fresh' foods of Niseko. His girlfriend, Miyuki, loves the people in town because they are all happy and genki (in good spirits).

InSki's Wipeout of the Week

IF you are this rider – or know the boarder in this photo – get in touch with Powderlife immediately, because this spectacular Wipeout of the Week has won a helmet thanks to InSki. Snapped by Niseko Photography during the recent Hanazono Rail Jam, this unknown snowboarder was not at all dazed and confused following his head plant, and was too quick for our photographer, shooting off before we were able to take down his details. And with a head-first stack like this, it seems as though this mystery boarder can do with all the helmets he can get. Getting in touch with us to pick up your free helmet... now that's thinking with your head! Entering this competition is simple. Send a hi-res wipeout pic with a short blurb to ed@powderlife.com. If yours gets published, you win a helmet. **Powderlife can't wait to see all your stacks, so start sending them in! Until then, may all your wipeouts be public, excessive and captured on film!**



Twin brothers Dustin and Rance came on holidays from Western Australia with their dad Trevor and friend 'Stemo'. They are fans of 'onsening', playing ping pong at Full Note jazz bar, and sitting in the hot tub to defrost their ears.



Gary and Candice from Hong Kong love shopping around town and trying the many different types of food. "There are lots of really nice restaurants in Niseko, and we especially like the ones that cook the local Hokkaido food."

Mountain Style

THE first time Yoko Ito saw these flashy snowboarding pants, she fell in love with them. And so did we, to be honest. From Kanagawa (part of greater Tokyo), the kawaii (cute) Yoko-chan loves looking her absolute best on the mountain – so much so she carries mountain make-up in a stylish little Seven bag hooked onto her belt. And don't think we didn't notice that her pink inhabitant beanie and Dice goggles match her face warmer and her under layer that doubles as a 'pink powder mini-skirt'. Keeping her hands warm are fluoro yellow Ebis gloves with peace signs and smiley faces drawn all over them. While styling it up the mountain, Yoko rides with the best of them aboard a Sabrina board, as she locks into Burton boots and Flux bindings. But back to the pants, we thought they were so kick-ass that Yoko-chan should throw a kick out for our camera!



FLASH

Niseko skiers and boarders partied alongside Burton Team riders at Black Diamond Lodge, and things got psychedelic at Jam Bar's Guru Guru party.



Adrian from Canada and English Sarah braved one of the biggest snowstorms of the season to check out some of the hot jump and rail action by the Burton Team riders.



Black Diamond guide Andrew and mate Mark chilled out in the gazebo and enjoyed some beers and hotdogs while the party raged on inside to celebrate the Burton Mountain Festival.



Burton's official DJ Fat John took some time out from spinning the decks to hang with trim Tracey from Canada and slim Sayumi-chan.



The Mount Merry crew and a few honorary blow-ins doing what they do best - partying in numbers Niseko's hottest winter parties!



Yui and Misato were super-busy behind the bar that night, but they always have time to stop for a second or two for a Powderlife photo.



Alex and Yayoi were positively glowing – much like Alex's jumper and beanie – as everyone squeezed into Black Diamond Lodge to party the night away. And yes Alex, we noticed how well you match!

Burton On-Snow Party @ Black Diamond Lodge

True to form, Jam Bar's several-times-a-season Guru Guru (Spin Spin) party was going off like a jam jar in the sun. The psychedelic trance music was so loud we couldn't get anyone's name, but here's roughly how it went down...

Guru Guru Party @ Jam Bar



meet the locals introducing niseko ski resort staff

By Kisato Kurihara



OFFICE MANAGER Caitlin

name Caitlin Mitchell **age** 23 **hometown** Brisbane, Australia **time in niseko?** Four winters, one summer ski/board? Both! But prefer boarding **how long have you been skiing/boarding?** Skiing since age 7, boarding since 18 **why did you come to niseko?** Family holiday favourite... **food?** Ice cream! Any sweets, that's how to get to my heart! **restaurant?** Jam Bar bar? Jam Bar onsen? Ikoinomura **ski run?** Annapuri bowls for sure! **how long will you be in niseko?** Two months, back again in October **best niseko secret?** Pssst, it's the Jam Bar **what's your life philosophy?** Travel. Doesn't that classify as a philosophy?



TICKET OFFICE Taeko-chan

name Taeko Hosaka **age** 20 **hometown** Kanagawa **time in niseko** First season ski/board? Snowboarder **how long have you been snowboarding?** Six seasons **why did you come to niseko?** I wanted see how big Hokkaido ski fields are favourite... **food** All kind of meats **restaurant** Dragon bar Splash onsen Hirayu onsen in Gifu (central Honshu, near Nagano) **ski run** Rinkan course **how long will you be in niseko?** I want to stay until I find another place to go. I might even stay over summer?! **niseko secret?** There is an onsen you can ride/ski in to **what's your life philosophy?** Fresh! Life with snow



RENTAL SHOP Aki-chan

name Aki Takahashi **age** 25 **hometown** Sapporo **time in niseko** First season ski/board? Snowboarder **how long have you been skiing for?** Four years **why did you come to niseko?** I wanted to stay for the whole season to snowboard lots favourite... **colour** Green **brand** Inhabitant **food** Sweets and snacks **restaurant** Nuts Café in Sapporo **bar** Dragon onsen Yugokorotei **ski run** Anywhere on a powder day **how long will you be in niseko?** For four months until the season finishes **niseko secret?** I'm still yet to discover my own Niseko secret **what's your life philosophy?** Have fun and do your best!

irasshaimase! 'welcome!' great little local businesses

Nana Iro, Hirafu Upper Village

WHILE most foreigners come to Niseko to ski in winter, many Japanese people come for the green season. At the peak of a Hokkaido summer, the temperature rarely tops 30 degrees, the air is clean and the countryside is lush, pristine, and... green. Nisanori Watanabe came to Hokkaido several times from the mainland to ride his bike around the island, before one day deciding to move here for good. He originally started a café in the nearby town of Makkari, but in winter it's not so busy, so he decided a mobile crepe van might do well in Hirafu. You can find Watanabe-san and his delicious crepes outside Blowhard Lodge, next to the Alpen Hotel, between 8am and 10pm.



ナナイロカフェ

多くの外国人がスキーシーズンに来るとは逆に、三重県出身の渡辺久紀さんが、以前バイク旅行に来た夏の北海道に憧れ、真狩町に移住してきたのが平成17年の秋。手作りのキャンドルの販売、イベントやお祭りの出店、焼き芋の移動販売などを経験し、真狩の道の駅にカフェマッカリズムを立ち上げた。夏のイベントなどに出席できる様にと自家製で移動販売車を製作し、昨年の冬に移動クレプ販売車ナナイロカフェを、オープンされた。お客さんの笑顔がすべてです。地元の食材を使ったメニューがお勧めです。今までお世話になった地域の方々に貢献できるようなお店を目指しています。夏にしか食べられない食材、ロコの味を体験してください、と話すなべさん。ナナイロカフェは冬の間、ホテルアルペン横ブローハードロッジ外にて、朝8時から夜10時までやってます。

Tabi no Kousaten Guest House, Izumikyō 3

ONLY in the past five or 10 years has Niseko become a crossroads of cultures from around the world. But long before, almost 20 years ago, Toshiyuki Shimomura set up his guest house Tabi no Kousaten – which translates to 'crossroads of a journey' – in Izumikyō, just next to Hirafu. Shimomura-san quit his job as a mechanic near Tokyo, and moved to Hokkaido for his very own 'powderlife'. He worked for the Alpen Hotel for eight years before opening the lodge. He loves meeting people from all different cultures now staying in Niseko. All rooms are Japanese-style for a truly cultural experience. www.niseko-tabi.com.



旅の交差点

ここニセコが、現在のような国際的スノーリゾートに成長を遂げる以前の19年前に、千葉県出身の下村さんは、ニセコの宿、旅の交差点を始めました。自動車の整備士の仕事をやめ、民宿で住み込みのバイトを始めたのが、北海道に来るきっかけ。それからスキーをしながら仕事出来るニセコに目をとめ、ホテルのフロントマンとして8年勤め、その経験を生かし、念願叶ってスタートしました。人々が旅の途中に交差して行く宿、お客さん同士が仲良くなる宿にしたいという思いから、旅の交差点という名前をつけました。人と関わることが好き。たくさんの人と知り合う機会ができること、リピーターさんたちが戻ってきてくれること、お客さん同士でも関わりが持てることで喜びを感じると下村さん。1階のラウンジでは、毎晩お茶会を開催。泊まるだけではなく、お茶会を通じて人との交流も大事にしている宿です。

in focus with Shukin Moderski

LOCAL Kutchan character Shukin Moderski is a Polish-born former Buddhist monk with an American accent who now lives in Japan and is a skilled swordsman. An interesting background worthy of getting to know him a little better, we thought...

When and why did you come to Niseko?

I first came to the area about nine years ago from Osaka for a 10-day trip.

You are quite involved with the local Japanese community. What kind of things are you involved in?

True, I love living in Japan and learning from the people. Since deciding to settle in Kutchan I have been involved in the martial arts – I train in both Kendo and laido (the art of drawing and sheathing a sword). I volunteer for the city of Kutchan to assist with the Cultural Tour, which is in its second year. Every year in September I return to Osaka to participate in the Kishiwada Danjiri Matsuri (cart-pulling festival), an event I highly recommend people to see live if they get the chance, as I've never seen such a thing elsewhere.

Your past involves time training as a monk. Can you tell us more about that please?

Sure, that is actually what brought me to Japan. I had

trained as a lay Zen practitioner in The States for a while when I realised I wanted to immerse deeper into the practice. So in 1994 I came to Japan to train as a lay monk for a 90-day ango (intense training period) before taking the leap. In the fall of 1997, after spending two weeks with my late master, I asked to be ordained, probably the biggest decision in my life. I trained in a Japanese temple for two-and-a-half years, sitting zazen (zen meditation), farming, chopping wood – a simple life, really. We sat zazen for four hours a day on regular days, twice a month from the 1st through the 5th, and on the 15th through the 17th we sat for 14 hours a day. Funny thing is, it was just 'normal' life for us, we never thought we were doing anything special. I must say it was the best thing I ever did. I have traveled to both Korea and France to train in Buddhist temples as well. **You are in good physical shape. Tell us about your laido and Kendo training, and your fitness regime?** In the temple we grew all our own rice and vegetables, made our own tofu and miso and pickles – a very active, contemplative life. I try to continue that here as well. I train with weights several days a week, and I do both Kendo and laido. Kendo is Japanese fencing, and



laido is drawing and sheathing a sword. If you join the Cultural Tour you can get a better idea.

What is it that makes Niseko special?

The people.

What are your Top 3 tips for visitors to Niseko?

1. Be respectful 2. Be open 3. Be grateful

You are a Kutchan local of some years, what top tips would you give people who visit Kutchan?

Wander off the beaten path, enter shops that have no English signs and see what they're all about. Check out the temples and museums. Half Moon lake is a must see. Most of all chip in to help make Kutchan a great place by sharing a smile.

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five of the best hot bowls of ramen

A BIG bowl of steaming hot ramen is the perfect answer to Hokkaido's cold, cold winters. And it's no surprise that the snowy northern island of Japan is famous for its ramen. Ramen is Chinese noodles, Japanese-style. It originated in China and is widely used in Chinese cuisine, although it's a relative newcomer to Japan. It's basically noodles, toppings and a super-flavoursome soup. The 'Axis of Ramen' is down in Kutchan town, where there are probably a dozen places you can get your ramen fix. But there are also plenty of options to try around the ski resorts. Powderlife's team of ramen-lovers have been busy the past few weeks testing ramen restaurants across Niseko, and here are what we think are five of the best. Grab your spoon in one hand, chopsticks in the other and... itadakimasu!

1 Aji no Tokeidai

Do yourself a favour, before you go shopping at Max Value in Kutchan, first pop into the No. 1 ramen restaurant in town at the opposite corner of the car park. Aji no Tokeidai is a huge Hokkaido ramen chain, and while most chains worldwide are renowned for being fast and cheap, in typical Japanese fashion this one's an exception to the rule. Here you'll get great food, quickly! If you're hungry, try saying in Japanese 'chashu', which means 'five slices of meat on top'; 'omori' translates to 'extra noodles'. We recommend the miso ramen, and for chilli lovers try the spicy red ramen. Don't they always say you shouldn't shop on an empty stomach?!

South 11 West 1, Kutchan / 0136 23 2423 / 11am-11pm / last order 11pm



RAMEN, AMEN... Hot, hearty Hokkaido goodness at Aji no Tokeidai Ramen.

2 Asahikawa Ramen: As the city of Asahikawa is in the heart of Hokkaido, Asahikawa Ramen is in the heart of Hirafu. Asahikawa as a city is well-known for its ramen dishes, and it's also the Asahikawa Ramen head chef's hometown. Need we say more? Out the front of the restaurant, a board confesses: "Our English is not good, but our food is deliciou (sic)." After many visits to Asahikawa Ramen, we can attest to that statement.

Berg Plaza, Hirafu-Zaka St / 0136 23 4549 / 10.30am-11.30pm

3 Ramen on the mountain: You don't even need to leave the mountain to find a steaming ramen in Niseko. At Hanazono try the famous crab ramen in the 308 restaurant (make it snappy!). Cross the road at the foot of Hirafu's Ace Quad lift to the restaurant at Popolo onsen. After shredding the Annupuri bowls, ski on into Hao ramen izakaya in The Nook Annupuri restaurant, on the right as you ski down to the gondola. At Higashiyama try cozy little slope-side restaurant Sanroku.

Mt Annupuri / No need to call / When ski hunger strikes

4 Mount Ramen: On Route 5 in Kutchan (just a snowball's throw from our No.1 choice, Aji no Tokeidai), Mount Ramen makes a hearty ramen. So much so that they say in their advertisement: "Our selling point is taste. If we're sold out, sorry!" You have to admire their honesty, and they also say in their ad: "There is a chance we may close before 8pm if the last drop of soup is gone." If it's necessary to warn diners about the possibility of running out of ramen, it's just gotta be good!

South 10 West 1, Kutchan / 0136 23 3444 / 11am-2pm (lunch) 5pm-8pm (dinner)

5 Sanpachi Ramen: Another one in the 'Axis of Ramen', on Route 5 Kutchan, Sanpachi is again a popular chain restaurant serving up a delicious take on Hokkaido's traditional soup, noodle, meat and vegetable dish. If you're feeling famished after a big day skiing or boarding the mountain, see if you can finish the 'Mega Ramen', which boasts three times the noodles and twice the soup, vegies and pork. We dare you! If you can fit it in, they also give you a free ice cream when you leave :)

South 8 West 1, Kutchan / 0136 22 2238 / 11am-12pm

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restaurant review *izakaya a-bu-cha*

By Kat & Kim www.bigfoodsmallworld.blogspot.com



"This would definitely be grain-fed, massaged with virgin coconut oil, only drank pure Kyogoku spring water and Hokkaido sake, feet never touched the snow, feathers combed daily, free range chicken if we've ever tasted it!"

Photos: Kat 'n' Kim



A-BU-CHA – the cute little cottage perched on the corner of Hirafu's main intersection – is so good Niseko needed a second. Last season, they added A-Bu-Cha 2, located beneath the stylish Suiboku building, just up the street from the original.

A-Bu-Cha is one of Hirafu's most popular izakayas (an izakaya being a casual but traditional Japanese tapas-style restaurant), and every dish is a traditional Japanese delight – from tofu salad to sun-dried squid tempura, hokke (Atka mackerel) to a range of hot pots.

The drink selection is the first thing that requires tackling. The original A-Bu-Cha boasts an impressive 250 offerings, while A-Bu-Cha 2 has an astounding 400. A plate of plump and juicy edamame (soy beans) to accompany our drinks is first on the cards.

Now for some Zangi. We've heard so much about this delight, we're looking forward to trying it for ourselves. It's like a kara-age chicken – big juicy bits of chicken thigh that taste like they've been steamed first, then coated and fried. Some of the best kara-age we've eaten.

Another option on the fried side, tonight we have chosen the shrimp and perilla spring roll. Perilla – or shiso – is a Japanese herb, and is wrapped with plump prawns in a crispy spring roll wrapper.

Meat on a stick never goes astray, so the next to arrive is buta (pork) kushi. Grilled over coal, the outside is

deliciously crisp, just encasing the soft tender meat that is generously seasoned with Hokkaido salt.

We were intrigued by the 'Chicken Wing in Gyoza' on the menu. It arrives and looks to be a beautifully golden, crispy fried chicken wing. But then we bite into it. Oh-my! It is indeed a gyoza (like a dumpling) inside a chicken wing. The gyoza is stuffed with pork mince and garlic chives, and is somehow contained within the deboned chicken wing. Fascinating!

And then the piece de la resistance: the grilled Hokkaido chicken, which can only be described as 'mouth-watering'. This would definitely be grass-fed, grain-fed, massaged with virgin coconut oil, only drank pure Kyogoku spring water and Hokkaido sake, feet never touched the snow, feathers combed daily, free-range chicken if we've ever tasted it!

The menu at both A-Bu-Chas has enough to keep you busy for many trips to come. Hokkaido specialties like butter corn and potato butter, as well as inspiring interpretations such as Japanese fish and chips. The Kim Chi and pork hot pot is robust, while the Ishikari version with salmon and corn, a little more delicate.

There's now a small selection of desserts available, that all come from the ever-popular A-Bu-Cha bakery. The cheesecake is definitely a winner. There's sure to be something for everyone at A-Bu-Cha.



A-Bu-Cha: Ground Floor Suiboku, Hirafu-Zaka Street
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Tel: 0136-22-5620
More reviews at powderlife.com/niseko-restaurants

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local recipe *boiled daikon radish*

AFTER hounding Bang Bang's super-busy master chef Masanobu Saito for weeks, he finally found time to pen one of his famous recipes for us. Saito-san tells us he cooks this boiled daikon radish dish on a cold winter's night. Thanks for your time Saito-san!



Ingredients

- 1 daikon radish
- 4 pieces of konbu dried kelp seaweed (5cm x 15cm)
- A few dried surf clams or scallops
- 50 ml mirin sauce
- 50 ml sake
- 100 ml soy sauce
- 1 tsp of yuzu kosho (spicy Japanese sauce)

Method

1. Peel the radish and cut into eight pieces, 2cm thick. On one side of each piece make a cross incision.
2. Using water which is left over from washing rice, boil the radish for about 1 hour until it is soft enough to stick a skewer through it.
3. Put the konbu dried kelp seaweed in 1.5L of water until it softens, then take it out and tie the pieces into a knot. Put the dried clams (or scallops) into the water.
4. Rinse the boiled radish, and put it in the water with 50ml each of mirin, sake and soy sauce. Cook on a low heat for 20-30 minutes.
5. Add another 50ml of soy sauce and cook for another 10 minutes.
6. Serve the radish, konbu and soup in a bowl with the yuzu kosho spice on the side.



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snow caves where you can stay in niseko

advertising feature



Photos: Glen Claydon



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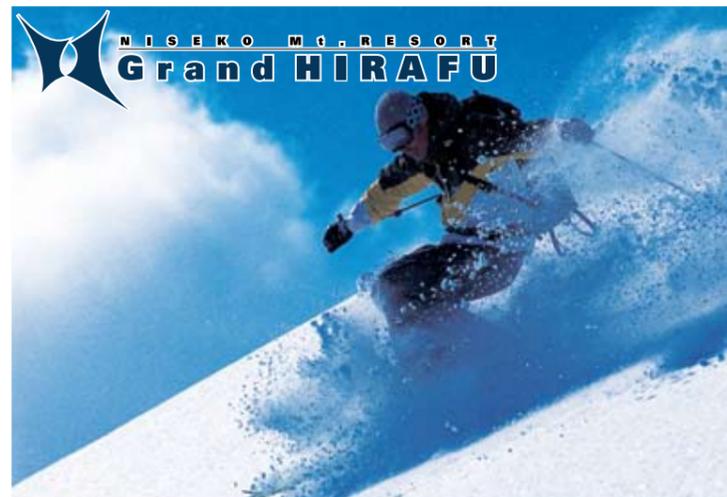
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Niseko Hirafu Ski & Snowboard School

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

By Bevan Colless



Rome Notch Swallow Tail Snowboard

THIS is my kind of board. In fact, this is Niseko's kind of board. A directional shape to make sure you can't stop at a '180', a swallow tail to help the tail bite, a rockerfied front quarter to help the nose rise in the deeps, and a generous 172cm length to give you lift-line cred and gather gasps from wussies. If that didn't close the deal they've thrown in bamboo inserts and a carbon centreline.

Available from **Hasuco Enterprises, Sapporo:** ¥113,400 Tel: 06-4305-2111

Dynafit TLT Vertical FT Z12 Binding

WHEN it comes to touring bindings, most will plump for the Marker Dukes or Black Diamond Diamir – but the Dynafits are the dark horse, and have gained No.1 billing amongst the European hardcore. While the Dukes and Damirs hoist you up and hover you a few centimetres over the ski, the Dynafit pack a super-low profile, allowing your boot to almost sit flat on the ski, giving you unparalleled response and feel. Not only that but they are both ultra-light (538g without stopper) and strong.

Available from **Toyru:** ¥65,100 Tel: 0136 21 4055



Rossignol S7 Barras

THERE'S something about a double-rocker twin tip that just gets your juices flowing. The S7 have a massive reverse-camber tip and tail, a regular-camber midsection and short-radius side-cut under-foot making them possibly the quickest, most versatile, and most intuitive rockered ski on the mountain. The topsheet artwork is by rising star artist Will Baras. Sweet.

Available from **Paddle-Club, Sapporo:** ¥115,000 Tel: 011 890 8777



Photo: Tat Ihara



Photo: Yasuyuki Shimanuki, Niseko Photography



Photo: Grandma Potato (Yoshifumi Aida)



Photo: Yasuyuki Shimanuki, Niseko Photography

men who ride mountains *stirling goldman: don't be a punter on oz day*

HAILING from the extreme terrain of Mt Baw Baw in Australia, Stirling Goldman was bred on waist-deep, man-made powder and extra steep chutes. Stirling has conquered the most beastly mountains across the world, and recently moved to Niseko. He soon sensed that both local and international punters needed to be taught a thing or two and luckily for us, has decided to settle here for good. Stirling Goldman: a man who rides mountains.

EVERY year around January 26th – Australia Day – Stirls' phone starts to run hot with an endless amount of calls inquiring about what his movements are to celebrate the day. Whether it be a ski magazine (usually those punters from *Powderlife*), an old fling, a wannabe fling, or a few guys looking to carve some powder with Stirls, the phone keeps running hot.

But for Stirls, to be honest, it is just another day. While I'm proud of my country and heritage, when I'm in Japan I respect their way, and hence it is just another day of doing what I do here best – being the best there is on powder, dominating the ladies after hours, and knocking

back a cheeky 48 beers. All in a civilised manner. But whenever I am in Japan on Australia Day there are always wankers that think they are super-cool, talking about how Stirls should want to get in on their shenanigans. Why would I want to wear my boardies in sub-zero temperatures traipsing down the road with a flag draped on my shoulders showing off some crappy tatt of the Southern Cross? For we all know, taking my shirt off only melts the snow with my hot aura. Why would I want to do a nudie run? We all know it attracts more ladies, which only creates more dilemmas for me. Why would I want to sing *Aussie, Aussie, Aussie, Oi, Oi, Oi!* in the streets? I don't need a chant to inform people when I'm around. Why would I want to get in a fight? Stirling is a lover (the best there is at that), not a fighter.

To be honest, it is this behaviour that makes Goldman ashamed to be an Australian. And trust me, I am a very proud Aussie. At the end of the day, you are in Japan. Respect the people, respect the polite Japanese way. Sure, have a good time and tear up the powder, do your best with the ladies (you'll only fail with Goldy in the



house) and have a night out. But if you can't drink, then don't drink. If you want to carry on like a clown, go work at the circus. Happy skiing, punters.

Q: Stirls, where is the best party on Australia Day? I really just want to know where you are going to be.

P.S. If it helps, I'm a cougar. -Susie, Australia.

A: Susie, the best party is back at Stirls' place at the end of the night. It's strictly invite-only, but there are usually a lot of tickets reserved for the ladies. Not sure 48 beers is enough to downgrade your cougar stakes, but you never know, 2010 may be your lucky year. As Stirls says: "Once you've touched Gold, you'll never grow old."

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



Photo: Joey Corcoran, Niseko Photography



POWDER POSTER

location Moiwa // rider Dominique Churik // photo Glen Claydon

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

NISEKO UNITED.



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

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

KNOW THE CODE: IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

Niseko Rules

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

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

Avalanche Control Area
Various methods of Avalanche Control are in use in this area in the interest of increasing avalanche awareness and safety.
Only skiers and riders participating in the program are permitted to use this area.
Contact: Niseko Village 0136-44-2211

Niseko Rules insists that all resort users respect and obey the instructions of the Ski Patrol and the Shirubeshi Mountain Patrol.
8. RESPECT EACH OTHER
The Niseko Rules have been created with everyone's safety in mind. In order for everyone to remain safe, everyone must respect and follow these rules.

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

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

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

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

7. SKI AND MOUNTAIN PATROL INSTRUCTIONS MUST BE OBEYED

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

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

backcountry safety *stay safe on the mountain*

NISEKO is renowned for its liberal, open-minded stance when it comes to its wide expanse of backcountry. But with that freedom comes the responsibility of the skier or snowboarder, because Niseko's powder may look soft and friendly, but it is as deadly and dangerous as it is light and fluffy...

Powderlife has collected tips from local experts to help keep you safe out there in Niseko's backcountry. Just remember, all the equipment and knowledge in the world are no substitute for due caution and common sense.

- 1. Obey the Niseko Rules**
These rules are put in place for a reason, and are listed in this magazine on the course map, or in maps available around town.
- 2. Check weather and avalanche reports**
Before venturing out into the backcountry, check the daily local avalanche report at <http://niseko.nadare.info>. Also check weather reports, so you know what to expect for the day ahead.
- 3. Listen to and obey ski patrollers.**
They know what they're talking about and are there to ensure everybody stays safe.
- 4. Have essential equipment**
Make sure everyone has sufficient safety equipment that works well, which should include a beacon, probe and shovel. More importantly, everyone should know how to work their equipment. A first aid kit, studied maps, torch, transceiver, phone, food, a change of clothes and spare gloves may also come in handy.
- 5. Plan your trip**
Know where you're going, let someone know when you're planning to be back, learn the area, and take note of where ski patrol is located in case of emergency.
- 6. Don't enter closed gates**
If the backcountry gates are closed, they are closed for good reason. It's this simple – if the gates are closed or crossed, stay out.
- 7. No go zones**
These include Haru no Taki, and Yu no Sawa, which should not be entered due to high avalanche risks or other dangers. These are well sign-posted and marked on maps available in *Powderlife* (p26), and on course maps available in town.
- 8. Don't duck ropes**
These ropes signify the boundary between the safe and the unsafe and should not be ducked or jumped in any case. And know that ski patrollers can and will confiscate your pass if you are doing the wrong thing.



- 9. Hire a guide**
If you don't have the knowledge or experience for going off-piste, hire a reputable guide. Watch out for cowboys operating with little experience.
- 10. Explore the backcountry with reliable people**
Know each other's strengths and weaknesses. The least experienced person should still know what to do in case of emergency.

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

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

Wanna go backcountry?
NGWA Niseko Winter Guide Association
www.nisekoguide.jp
Black Diamond Tours
www.blackdiamondtours.com
090 2054 8687
Shinsetsu Mountain Guides
www.smguides.net
090 6214 1065

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

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

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

The meetings cover the basics about Niseko and its backcountry – Niseko Rules, the resort's unique gate system which guides entry points into the back-

country, a discussion on backcountry equipment, and basic terrain awareness and assessment, before opening the floor to a Q&A session.

Each week, the seminar will conclude with a frantic search for a beacon that has been hidden in the snow (whoever finds it first gets a free beer!).

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



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

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

real estate feature *capella niseko*

By Matthew Thomas

MEIKLE & ASSOCIATES



R E A L E S T A T E



"We want visitors to Capella Niseko to enjoy a true Japanese experience – not in a pseudo European, North American or Australian setting, and not in a Disneyland-ish Japanese design."



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A Capella resort sings out luxury at Annupuri

A GRAND interior water feature and a pantheon-influenced reception will greet guests to the six-star, Tadao Ando-designed Capella Niseko at Annupuri.

Set on 32 wooded acres less than 1km from the base of the mountain, Capella Niseko will be a four-season luxury boutique resort that promises to set a new standard of service not only in Niseko, but all of Japan.

Designs for the resort reveal 67 suites, 94 apartments, 36 houses and 19 villas, and construction is expected to start in May 2010, for completion in 2012.

Mae Loh, spokesperson for the developer said deposits had already been received on more than 40 Capella Niseko residences, attributing much of the momentum to the involvement of Japan's most famous architect.

Ando is an award-winning Japanese designer – billed as 'one of the world's greatest living architects' – famous for designs that follow the landscape and harness natural light. He's designed some of Japan's iconic buildings, and homes for the likes of U2 frontman, Bono.

"We want visitors to Capella Niseko to enjoy a true Japanese experience – not in a pseudo European, North American or Australian setting, and not in a Disneyland-ish Japanese design," Loh said.

The developers have assembled a strong international design team to complete the Capella Niseko project, a hotel brand started by Horst Schulze, famous for building the Ritz-Carlton brand and establishing a benchmark for high-quality hotel industry service.

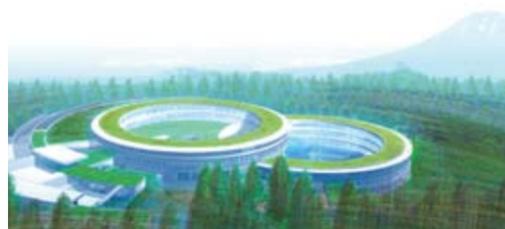
Loh said Capella chose Niseko for its second Asian resort because it was an 'exciting and exotic location'.

"After opening Capella's first hotel in Singapore to much fanfare, Niseko is bound to be the Asian equivalent of Aspen, St. Moritz or Whistler," she said.

Loh said the Capella Niseko resort – hailed as 'the first all-season resort in Asia' – had the potential to shoot Niseko into a higher league. "Look at Whistler for the all-season potential of Niseko," she said. "We have no doubt other operators will want to join in soon."

With apartments starting at ¥70 million, Capella Niseko pre-sales have been strong, already attracting prestigious buyers such as Forbes List members from Korea, Shanghai, Hong Kong and Singapore.

Niseko Property have been assisting Capella with their sales program and are the exclusive agents for Capella in Japan. The Capella Niseko showroom is in the Niseko Property Hirafu office, opposite the Park Hotel.



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real estate news *the niseko property market*

By Matthew Thomas

Boutique cottages planned for Izumikyo 2

IZUMIKYO Company has announced plans to develop the main section of their Izumikyo 2 subdivision into a boutique cottage village.

On track to open its doors by December 2010, the currently unnamed resort will include five to seven cottages and hotel suites or studio rooms, housing a total of 30 beds.

There will be a communal lounge and relaxation library, a management office and a restaurant. The development will be surrounded by landscaped gardens with heated pathways linking the cottages.

Izumikyo Company client advisor Chris Lane said he hoped to better tie Izumikyo 2 to Hirafu Village, while also providing a new commercial hub for Izumikyo.

"Right now there is a bit of a dead space between Hirafu and Izumikyo 2," he said. "This resort will fill in that dark void and make it a pleasant walk between the two areas."

Lane said the development would 'take a step beyond trademark rustic cottages, reintroducing the true meaning of modern Japanese mountain architecture'.



BOUTIQUE... Izumikyo's planned cottage village.

"Our cottages are popular year-round," he said. "We have found the need to expand and create a high-end resort where guests can stroll along the heated pathways to get to their private cottages scattered along the banks of the Oshoro Stream."

"We want it to be a walking resort, where clients

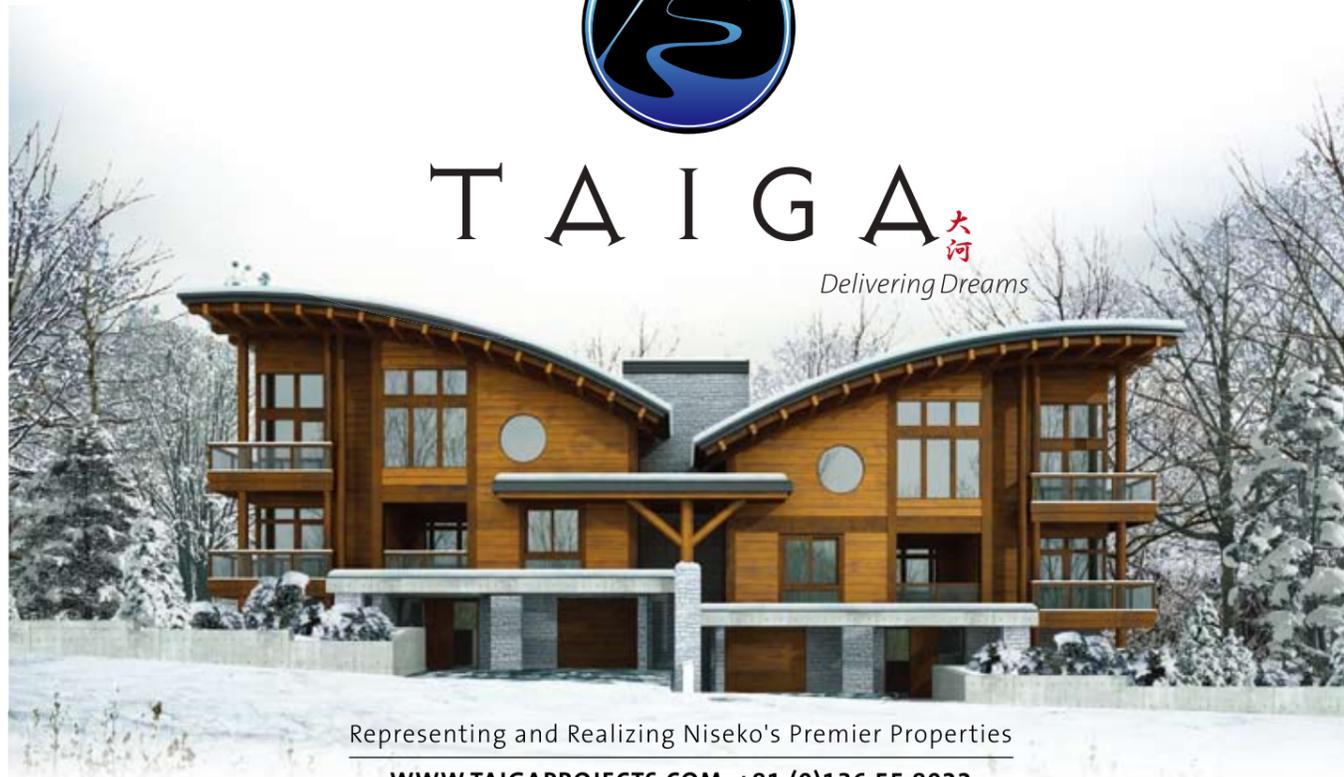
check-in and leave their cars behind in the community parking lot, and meander down these landscaped garden paths to get to their cottages."

The village is planned to be built in two phases over the next two years. Izumikyo Company plans to retain the asset and not sell any of the project at this stage.

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Photos: Glen Claydon

Niseko Landmark View 104 

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Yutaka Sulu
Neyuki Seizan
Toshokan RossoRosso
Tamo
Udelka
Cecuko
Kashi



Niseko Office: Contact: Ikee Architecture Co. Ltd
〒044-0081 Abuta-gun, Kutchan-cho, Yamada 170-138
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Premium Niseko Properties

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Grant Mitchell
Manager, Tracks Real Estate



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LAND

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- a variety of land types

Featured Properties



Yama Shizen West 201  **2**
Upper Hirafu **¥56,000,000**
A large Yama Shizen 2 bedroom apartment enjoying superb mountain views and all-season location. Stylish fit out and furnishings. A very solid rental all year round.



Miharashi 1  **2**
Upper Hirafu **¥32,000,000**
One of Niseko's cheapest apartments. A funky, modern and central two bedroom unit. Light, airy and a popular rental. Priced close to original purchase price!



Yutei Tracks 407  **3**
Upper Hirafu **¥59,000,000**
One of Hirafu's best-priced 3 bedroom units. Built and expertly managed by Hokkaido Tracks. 2-keyed with top quality furnishings can split into 2 bedroom and studio units.



Hanazono Residence  **5**
Hanazono **¥99,000,000**
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Mountain Tracks  **6**
Izumikyo 1 **¥41,000,000**
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Kira Kira 501  **2**
Upper Hirafu **Price on Application**
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Alpen Ridge 105  **2**
Upper Hirafu **¥60,000,000**
Best priced ski-in/ski-out 2 bedroom apartment available. Comfortable fit out with large living areas, village views, two bathrooms. An excellent rental property.



Commercial
Upper Hirafu **¥27,100,000**
Blue chip long-term tenant and premium location. Four years left on current lease. Two year old building. 92.96 sqm floor area. 11.6% net return. An excellent opportunity.

niseko resort guide *info to help you get around*

TOURIST INFORMATION

Kutchan Machi no Eki Puratto Information Centre

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

Tel: (0136) 22 1121.

The Niseko Grand Hirafu Welcome Centre

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

GETTING HERE AND AWAY

New Chitose Airport. Tel: (0123) 23 0111

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

Getting from New Chitose to Niseko

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

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

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

Tel: (0136) 22 2108.

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

Airport Station Tel: (0123) 45 7011

Kutchan station Tel: (0136) 22 1310

CAR RENTAL

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

Toyota Rent-a-Car ShinSapporo

Tel: (0118) 15 0100. English ok.

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

Black Diamond Lodge

Tel: (0136) 44 1144

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

www.powderlife.com/niseko-travel-guide

TRANSPORT AROUND NISEKO

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

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

Kutchan hire Tel (0136) 22 1212

Misora hire Tel (0136) 22 1171

Niseko hire Tel (0136) 44 2635

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

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

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

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

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

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

MONEY

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

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

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

SHOPPING

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

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

COMMUNICATIONS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



When dialling from overseas to Niseko, add Japan's international calling code "81" to the front and drop the "0".

niseko resort guide *info to help you get around*

ELECTRICITY

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

STAY SAFE AROUND TOWN

No skiing/boarding on roads or footpaths!!

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

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

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

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

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

MEDICAL SERVICES

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

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

Kutchan Kousei Hospital The major hospital servicing



EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Police Tel: 110

Ambulance and Fire Tel: 119

Emergency Interpretation

Tel: (0352) 85 8185

Japan-English Helpline

(nationwide emergency assistance)

Tel: (0570) 00 0911

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

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

Tel: 0136-22-1141

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

More detailed information at:

www.powderlife.com/niseko-resort-guide

local lingo *top ten words and phrases for tourists // shopping*

By studio tdes

SOME mornings you jump out of bed, get fully dressed and ready – only to find the gondola isn't moving and most of the lifts are closed.

It's too early for pre-dinner drinks. What to do? Shopping! Pick up some omiyage (souvenirs) to take home. Study these words and phrases before you set out on your shopping spree.

1. Kaimono – Shopping

Your friendly lodge manager asks you if you're going skiing/boarding today: You answer: Iie, kyuu kaimono ni ikimasu (no, today I'm going shopping).

2. Boushi arimasu ka? – Do you sell beanies/hats?

Try asking the shop if they have what you're looking for. Boots arimasu ka? is a simple way of asking if they sell boots. If they do, they might say: arimasu. If they don't: arimasen.

3. Ikura? – How much?

Ask how much it is with the verb ikura (how much). Kore ikura desu ka? (how much is this?).

4. Takai – Expensive

Depending on where you're from and the current exchange rate, things in Japan may seem takai (expensive), or yasui (cheap).

5. Shichaku ii desu ka? – Is it OK if I try this on?

It's polite to ask before you try clothes on in a shop: shichaku ii desu ka? If you forget the word for try on – shichaku – just hold up the clothes and motion towards the changing rooms and say: ii desu ka? (is it OK if ...?).

6. Suteki! – Cool

If your girlfriend/boyfriend/friend is trying on clothes, you might need to give them some feedback. Kawaii and suteki both mean cute/cool and are usually used by girls talking to each other, or by guys talking to girls.

7. Onegai shimasu – I'll take this please

If you're buying something at aコンビニ (convenience store), you don't need to say anything, just put it on the counter and start taking money out of your wallet. If you're in a quiet shop, when you put the stuff on the counter, smile and say: onegai shimasu (I'll take this please).

8. Kaado tsukaemasu ka? – Do you take credit cards?

Many small restaurants and shops – and sometimes supermarkets and convenience stores – don't take crejitto caado

or caado (credit cards). Ask before you hand the card over: caado tsukaemasu ka? If they don't, they might say: sumimasen, genkin dake desu (sorry, we only accept cash).

9. Fukuro ii desu – I don't need a bag, thanks

Conbini staff will put almost everything in a bag unless you stop them: fukuro ii desu. Something you often hear at the counter at a conbini or suupaa (supermarket) is: pointo caado omochi desu ka? (do you have a point card?). If you hear a long sentence that sounds like a question, it's a safe bet that they're asking you if you have some kind of loyalty card, so shake your head and say: iie (no).

10. Saifu o otoshimashita – I lost my wallet

If you have the misfortune of losing your wallet and someone asks what you're crying about, say: saifu o otoshimashita. Don't worry, if you give the details to the police, or hotel/resort staff, there's a very good chance someone will hand it in to the local koban (police box) and you'll get it back!

Next issue: Making conversation. More lessons at www.powderlife.com/niseko-travel-guide



restaurants & food

MAP C2 p47
A-Bu-Cha 2

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



A wide variety of meals and drinks – top marks!

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

0136 22 5620

MAP D1 p47
Bang Bang

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



We take great pride in our fresh seafood

5.30-11.30pm
Occasionally Closed
35 seats

0136 22 4292

MAP F7 p46
Black Diamond Restaurant

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



Free pick-up from the Hilton and Niseko area

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

0136 44 1144

MAP C2 p47
Bhozan

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



Specialists in authentic Nepalese curry

5-10pm
Open daily

0136 21 2121

MAP B3 p46
Cocoro Okonomiyaki

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



Try our healthy and great value okonomiyaki

11am-9pm

Jap 0136 22 1528 / Eng 0136 23 0008

MAP A2 p47
Downtown Café

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



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

8am-11pm
Open daily
Yamada 167-6

0136 23 3354

MAP A3 p47
Ebisutei

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



Have fun with our GENKI and Laughing ODEN bar staff

Open daily
5pm-midnight

0136 22 6544

MAP D3 p47
EN in-house fine dining

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



It's all part of going beyond your expectations

7am-11pm daily

0136 55 8100

restaurants & food

MAP F4 p47
Hana Jizoh

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



Creative and delicious breads from local baker

0136 23 0331

MAP D1 p47
Hinabe-Ya

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



Asian hotpot and ethnic cuisine in a Mongolian yurt

11.30am-11pm
Open daily
80 seats

0136 23 2636

MAP A2 p47
J-Sekka Café & Delicatessen

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



a taste of Hokkaido

Open from 7am
7 days

0136 21 3088

MAP C2 p47
Kabuki

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



Okonomiyaki and teppanyaki restaurant

11am-10pm
Open daily

0136 21 2233

MAP E2 p47
Kamimura

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



Blessed by land, sea and a creative chef

5:30pm-11:00pm
Occasionally closed

0136 21 2288

MAP D2 p47
Lars Longcox Nachos Bar

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



Beers from just ¥200 Excellent value meals

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

0136 21 5833

MAP D2 p47
Mina Mina

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



Good music, good alcohol

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

0136 23 3437

MAP E8 p46
M's Café (Saison Club)

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



Warm your body with our big hearty hotpots

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

0136 44 3380

restaurants & food

MAP D2 p47
Niseko Pizza

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



Dine in, Take-away and Delivery

Open every day
Lunch-Dinner
0136 55 5553

MAP A2 p47
Sekka Dining

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



International style showcasing the best of Hokkaido

6-10pm
7 days
0136 21 5022

MAP C1 p47
Shiosai

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



Fresh, live, gourmet seafood - the ultimate choice!

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

MAP C3 p47
Souan Genghis Khan Lamb BBQ

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



¥1700 all you can eat barbecue for 90 minutes!

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

MAP C2 p47
Restaurant & Wine Bar Dragon

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



Our sommeliers welcome you

6pm-2am (LO 10pm)
Also course dinners/
Breakfast delivery
0136 21 7700

MAP C1 p47
Sencho 2

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



Best Choice for Gourmet Seafood

5pm-midnight
Open daily
0136 22 5454

MAP B5 p46
Shunsai

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



Creative fusion cuisine from land and sea

11am-9pm
Closed Sundays
0136 23 1882

MAP B3 p47
Steak Rosso Rosso

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



A must for steak lovers!

6-11pm
Occasionally closed
0136 21 7100

restaurants & food

MAP E2 p47
Taj Mahal

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



Visit India in Taj Mahal Niseko

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

MAP C3 p47
The Barn

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



Sushi & Fusion Restaurant Adventurous, fun, exciting

6-11pm
Occasionally closed
0136 23 0888

MAP B2 p47
Vale Bar & Grill

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



Buffet Breakfast served from 7am daily

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

MAP B2 p47
Yakitori Yosaku

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



Serving yakitori every night until 3am

6pm-3am
Open daily
0136 23 4390

MAP E4 p47
Teuchi Soba Ichimura

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



Homemade soba noodles, carefully selected ingredients

11am-3pm
Closed Tuesdays
0136 23 0603

MAP E3 p47
Tsubara Tsubara

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



Spicy, flavoursome local Hokkaido curry soup

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

MAP E2 p47
Wild Bill's

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



Gourmet Tex-Mex in our beautiful log house

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

MAP D3 p47
Yummy's Pizza

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



YUMMY Homemade crust pizza and Western foods restaurant

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

Half Note

MIDDLE HIRAFU

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



Hirafu's only jazz bar!

6pm-midnight
Open daily

☎ 0136 23 2727

Maki Lounge

MIDDLE HIRAFU

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

Japanese Whiskey, Sake & Shochu

2pm-late
7 days

☎ 0136 21 3088

Yosaku Bar

MIDDLE HIRAFU

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

On the main street, across from Seicomart

Open daily
Lunchtime to midnight

☎ 090 3111 1131

Loaf Lounge

KUTCHAN

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



The only bar with a skateboard bowl inside!

4.20pm-midnight
Open daily

☎ 0136 22 1022

Wild Bill's

UPPER HIRAFU

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



Like a House Party Should Be

5.30pm-1 am(ish)
Open daily

☎ 0136 22 5652

Yuki Bar

UPPER HIRAFU

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



Start the party!

5pm-2am
Closed Mondays

☎ 0136 22 0234

Open all year round midday till late Darts & Live Sports on the Biggest Screen in Niseko

Trivia and Fun Nights

Draft Guinness & Kilkenny

Great Pub Food & Kids' Menu



www.paddymcintysirishpub.com | Ph 0136 55 8020

tours & activities

MAP F7 p47

Black Diamond Tours

UPPER HIRAFU

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



Niseko's Backcountry Powder Specialists

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

☎ 090 2054 8687

MAP D1 p47

Niseko Foot 'Body & Foot Treatment'

UPPER HIRAFU

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



Closest massage to the Centre 4 Lift

11am-10pm
Free pick up available

☎ 0136 22 1224

MAP A3 p47

On-Snow Photography & Video Tours

UPPER HIRAFU

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



Niseko's Professional Photographers!

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

☎ 0136 22 5764

MAP C1 p47

NISS International Snowsports School

HIRAFU/HANAZONO

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



Kids are our specialty Hirafu & Hanazono

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

☎ 0136 21 6688

MAP B4 p46

Japanese Cultural Tours

HIRAFU-KUTCHAN

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



Experience Japan's cultural heritage

3-7.30pm
Jan 10/Feb 3/Feb 15
Bookings essential

☎ 0136 23 0222

MAP A2 p47

Niseko Massage

MIDDLE HIRAFU

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



Sports and relaxation massage in the middle of Hirafu

8am-8pm daily
Home visits available

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MAP A3 47

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MAP D3 p47

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shopping & retail

MAP B3 p46
Boom Sports

KUTCHAN

Stocking a great variety of souvenirs and original Niseko limited editions. Ski and snowboard hire also available from this season!



www.boom-snow.com

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MAP B3 p46
Cocoroya

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MAP C3 p47
Ezo Seafoods

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MAP E2 p47
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MAP C1 p47
Niseko Four Seasons Photo Gallery

UPPER HIRAFU

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



www.nisekophotography.com

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Open daily

☎ 0136 22 5764

MAP C2 p47
Sakura

UPPER HIRAFU

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www.sakura-niseko.com

Your one-stop Japanese souvenir shop

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MAP E2 p47
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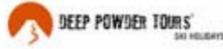
☎ 0136 21 4055

travel & accommodation

MAP E1 p47
Deep Powder Tours Ski Holidays

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MAP E2 p47
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MAP B3 p47
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MAP E2 p47
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MAP C2 p47
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MAP E4 p47
Shizenkan Backpacker & Lodge

IZUMIKYO 2

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www.niseko-backpacker.com

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7 days

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MAP F3 p47
The Niseko Company

IZUMIKYO 1

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 Hanazono 8.30-5pm
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MAP A2 p47
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speed dial quick guide to village phone numbers

Restaurants,cafés and eateries

- | | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| ■ A-Bu-Cha
阿武茶
22 5620 | ■ EN in-house fine dining
宴インハウスファインダイニング
55 8100 | ■ Java Bar and Café
ジャバ バー&カフェ
090 2871 6781 | ■ Niseko Genghis Khan
ニセコ ジンギスカン
22-2138 | ■ Shunsai
旬彩
23-1882 |
| ■ Aburiya
あぶり屋
090 7656 5767 | ■ Ezo seafoods
エソ・シーフード
090-1203-7879 | ■ JoJo's Café and Bar
ジョジョズ (カフェ&バー)
23 2093 | ■ Niseko Gourmet
ニセコグルメ
080 5584 1313 | ■ Slalom
スラローム
22 1105 |
| ■ Bang Bang
バンバン
22 4292 | ■ Fujizushi Sushi
ふじ鮨
23 2661 | ■ Jyuu Okonomiyaki
じゅう
44 2336 | ■ Niseko Pizza
ニセコ ピザ
55 5553 [MAP D2] | ■ Souan
草庵
090-2059-6701 |
| ■ Bang 2
バン2
22 1480 | ■ Gentem Café
玄天カフェ
23 3154 | ■ Kabuki
カブキ
21-2233 | ■ Paddy McGinty's
パディーマッキングティーズ
55 8020 | ■ Spur Chinese Restaurant
シュプルー (中華レストラン)
22 1105 |
| ■ Barunba
バルンバ
090 8907 9399 | ■ Grandpapa
グランパパ
23 2244 | ■ Kakashi
かかし
23 2622 | ■ Payoka
パヨカ
22 0117 | ■ Steak Rosso Rosso
ステーキロッソロッソ
21-7100 |
| ■ Bhozan
ボーザン
21-2121 | ■ Graubunden
グラウブウンデン
23 3371 | ■ Kame
亀
22 0339 | ■ Piccolo House
ピッコロハウス (カフェ&バー)
23 0311 | ■ The Barn
ザ・バーン
23-0888 |
| ■ Black Diamond Lodge Restaurant
ブラックダイヤモンドロッジレストラン
44 1144 | ■ Guzuguzu
ぐずぐず
21-4855 | ■ Kamimura
カミムラ
21 2288 | ■ Raku Izakaya
楽 居酒屋
22 6638 | ■ Tsubara Tsubara
つばらつばら
23 1116 |
| ■ Bouken Kazoku
冒険家族
22 3759 | ■ Hana Jizoh Bakery
花地蔵
23 0331 | ■ LumberJack
ランバージャック
22-3086 | ■ Ramat Niseko
ラマッタニセコ
21 5088 | ■ Vale Bar and Grill
ヴァイルバーアンドグリル
21-5833 |
| ■ Café KAKU
カフェ覚
22-5608 | ■ Hidamari
陽だまり
55-5000 | ■ Lupicia
ルピシア
21 7880 | ■ Rin Izakaya
りん 居酒屋
22 1444 | ■ Wild Bill's
ワイルドビルズ
22 5652 |
| ■ Chidori
千鳥
23 2831 | ■ Hinabeya
火鍋屋
23-2636 | ■ M's Café
エムスカフェ
44-3380 | ■ Sakae Izakaya
さかえ
22-4198 | ■ Yawaraya
やわらや
23 3810 |
| ■ Cocoro okonomiyaki
お好み焼きこころ
23-0008 | ■ Hirafu Fleur
創作料理ヒラフル
23 3306 | ■ Mina Mina
ミナミナ
23 4471 | ■ Sekka Dining
セッカダイニング
21 5022 | ■ Yo
よ
22-6979 |
| ■ Curry Goya
カレー小屋
23 3688 | ■ Ichimura Soba
蕎麦屋 いちむら
23 0603 | ■ Mokoraya
もこらや
090 8279 0598 | ■ Senchou 1 Izakaya
船長 (居酒屋)
22 2001 | ■ Yosaku
与作
23-4390 |
| ■ Downtown Café
ダウンタウンカフェ
23 3354 | ■ if... Café
カフェ イフ
22 4770 | ■ Mozart
モーツァルト
090 2699 6387 | ■ Senchou 2 Seafood Izakaya
海山屋 (海鮮居酒屋)
22 5454 | ■ Youtei Yakiniku
焼肉ようてい
22 0109 |
| ■ Dragon Wine and Food Bar
ドラゴン ワイン&バー
21 7700 | ■ Jam Café Bar
ジャム (カフェバー)
23 0700 | ■ Nakaya
なかや
090-7518-0873 | ■ Shiosai
潮彩
55-5009 | ■ Yummy's
ヤミーズ
21 2239 |
| ■ Ebisutei
えびす亭
22-6544 | ■ Japanese Kitchen Bouken
冒険家族
22 3759 | ■ Nami Chan Chi
波ちゃん家
21 2258 | ■ Shokusai Hirafu
食彩 比羅夫
22 1105 | ■ Yuki Bar and Café
雪場カフェ
22 0234 |

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

Visiting Skier "Saved"

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

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

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

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after the melt *mountain biking niseko*

WHILE summers and winters come and go, one thing that remains constant in Niseko is the mountain. Coupled with amazing powder snow in winter, Mt Annapuri provides an extraordinary range of terrain for skiers and snowboarders to challenge themselves on.

Fast forward to summer, and you can understand why there is such a strong and growing crew of foreign and local mountain bikers. For the past four summers they've been working on an ever-expanding trail network. Cross-country trails cover the length and breadth of Mt Annapuri and there are currently two official downhill courses.

They meet regularly, once mid-week for their Wednesday Night Jam, and inevitably over the weekend to build trails and ride them. Martin Tse, New Zealand-born mountain biker, trail designer (including the Hirafu downhill course), and 2007 Hokkaido Downhill MTB Champion, says the future of mountain biking in Niseko looks bright.

"The grand vision for Niseko is to follow in the footsteps of Whistler, where the summer mountain biking scene rivals skiing in winter," Martin says.

Mountain biking is just one of a range of outdoor activities you can enjoy in Niseko in summer.

Mountain bikes can be rented from Groove Cycles which is based at Niseko 343 in Hirafu.

For more information check out the Niseko MTB Facebook page and www.groovecycles.com.



"The grand vision for Niseko is to follow in the footsteps of Whistler, where the summer mountain biking scene rivals skiing in winter..."

Photo: Paul Malandain

niseko cycle week *2009 event was 'perfect'*

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

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

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

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

including plenty of non-cyclists, pedalling to work.

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

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

- To promote the area's amazing potential as a mountain biking and road cycling destination.
 - To promote an active lifestyle and health awareness.
 - To contribute to the notion of environmental sustainability through the use of bikes rather than cars.
Niseko Cycle Week will be back again next summer so keep an eye on www.nisekocycleweek.com.

On again September 10-20, 2010



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

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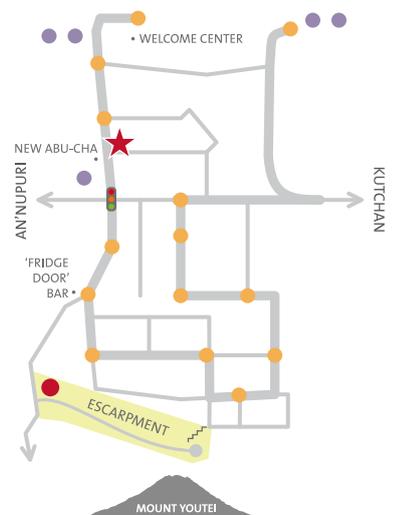
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