

issue 23 // Feb 6 - 19 // 2010

# powderlife

NISEKO ニセコ  
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## FIVE OF THE BEST

local restaurant dishes

## BEST OF NISEKO

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## WHITE GOLD

bumper real estate issue

HAPPY CHINESE  
NEW YEAR!

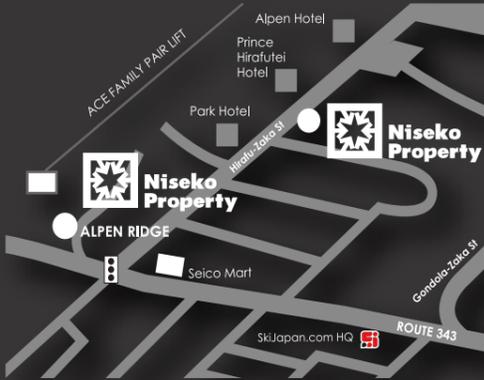


Niseko's powder lifestyle magazine fresh every two weeks

Niseko Property are Niseko's leading property specialists.

Our team combines local knowledge and international property experience.

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



### ALPEN RIDGE 1.5 BEDROOM

from **¥45,000,000** 🏠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 59m<sup>2</sup>

### 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 119m<sup>2</sup>

### KIRA KIRA

**¥35,000,000** 🏠1 🛏1 🚿1



**Recently completed development. Offers great returns and is an attractive entry to the Niseko market.**  
Location: Lower Hirafu Village  
Floor Area 46m<sup>2</sup>

### ALPINE APARTMENTS 2C

**¥80,000,000** 🏠3 🛏3 🚿1



**Stunning property located next to the Ace Family slope. Extremely sought after ski-in, ski-out accommodation.**  
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Location: Upper Hirafu Village  
Land Size 3,825m<sup>2</sup>

### KINOKO PENSION

**¥52,000,000** 🏠7 🛏3 🚿1



**Looking for a lifestyle change? Rare opportunity to own a well established pension in the heart of Hirafu.**  
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Land Size 231m<sup>2</sup> Floor Area 243m<sup>2</sup>

### STUNNING VIEWS

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**Central location with outstanding views that will never be lost.**  
Location: Middle Hirafu Village  
Land Size 976m<sup>2</sup>

### MOIWA HOUSE

**¥90,000,000** 🏠3 🛏1 🚿3



**Unique ski-in, ski-out location. Stunning views of Moiwa ski field and Mt Annupuri.**  
Location: Moiwa  
Land Size 992m<sup>2</sup> Floor Area 233m<sup>2</sup>

### 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 1,640m<sup>2</sup> Floor Area 489m<sup>2</sup>



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NISEKO

RESORT AND RESIDENCES



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powderlife  
NISEKO ニセコ

公開出售

apartments  
for sale

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cover Happy Chinese New Year! photo Matthew Thomas



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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 m<sup>2</sup> 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)



**HAPPY Chinese New Year and a big powder-coated welcome to all those who have chosen snowy Niseko to celebrate the arrival of the Year of the Tiger!**

This time last year we said Niseko was reaching a turning point whereby the traditional Australian customer base would soon be overtaken by Asia. Across the season Aussie visitor numbers are still higher, but Chinese New Year is now well and truly the busiest period of Niseko's winter – surpassing the Christmas-New Year period – and the villages are at capacity.

We've given this issue a special Chinese New Year flavour. In our Niseko News section we get a sneak peek at Hirafu's main street circa Chinese New Year 2012. We fast-forward to summer and have a look at the exciting plans in store for Niseko's Hong Kong-owned Hanazono ski resort. We recommend five of the best dishes from across Niseko's diverse dining scene, although we could have added a couple of hundred more!. We review exciting new restaurant The Barn, created by HK expat Nicolas Gontard. In the real estate section we showcase a range of the biggest and best developments making waves in Niseko this season. We also launch a new column, Powwow, which lets you in on some bite-sized stories and little local secrets only those who live here know about.

As return visitors will notice by the size of the snowbanks on the sides of the roads, it's been an amazing winter so far. And there's plenty more to come. Enjoy!

Kristian Lund, *Powderlife* Managing Editor kris@powderlife.com

中国の旧正月おめでとうございます!豪雪地であるニセコで寅年を祝う皆さんをとっておきのパウダースノーで迎えたいと思います。

去年のこの時期、ニセコでのアジア人観光客の数がオーストラリア人のそれに追いつくかもしれないと言われていましたが、シーズン全体の観光客数は、やはりオーストラリア人の数が圧倒的に多いようです。しかし、まぎれもなく、この旧正月がニセコで一番忙しい時期(クリスマス、年始を凌ぐ程)であり、リゾートはお客様で満杯です。ある新しい大規模宿泊施設は今シーズン3度も完全予約を記録したそうです。2011年の為にメモを取ってください。予約はお早めに!

今号では特別に旧正月に焦点をあて、旧正月をニセコで過ごす方々のために旧正月の情報を提供しています。ニュース項目では大規模なリゾート再開の後、2012年の旧正月までにヒラフの大通りがどのように変化するかを予想しています。大幅な予想として、香港資本である花園リゾートの夏の計画も紹介しています。その他、ニセコが多様なフードシーンから優れた5店舗(あと2、3百店舗紹介できたかも!)を推薦しています。また、香港駐在員である Nicolas Gontard氏による新顔“The Barn”のレストランレビューは必見です。不動産情報ページでは、ニセコに新風を起している大規模で優れた土地開発に注目しています。

ニセコのリピーター客達は歩道に高く積み上げられた雪に驚く事でしょう。今シーズンは驚く程素晴らしい積雪を記録しています。またこれからも雪はどんどん降るでしょう。皆さん、思いっきり楽しみましょう!

Photo: Yasuyuki Shimanuki, *Niseko Photography*

# SEKKA DINING

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

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



# MAKI LOUNGE

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

DRINKS 14:00~ LATE T: 21-3070



# SEKKA DELI

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

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



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

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

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where nature inspires

## fluff light news and stuff from around town

### Why Niseko's snow is so light and fluffy

**MOST of us come to Niseko because of that most sought after commodity in the snow sports world – powder.**

It's certainly not for weeks on end of bluebird days, that's for sure! What is it, though, that makes the powder here so good? Well, good powder is so incredibly dry, loosely packed and light, that when you whoop for joy you're likely to get a mouthful of the stuff!

The absolute best snowflakes for powder are called fernlike stellar dendrites, which are the classic six-sided branching flakes commonly stylised on Christmas decorations. These types of flakes form in temperatures from -8 to -22 degrees – exactly where temperatures sit during winter in Hokkaido. The branching of these flakes mean when they collide they interlock, which is why we often get what

appear to be massive snowflakes falling, but are actually conglomerates of many interlocked flakes. These flakes have large surface areas and trap a lot of air, like down in a jacket. So next time it's snowing, pay closer attention to those flakes on your clothes, and if conditions are right, you might be able to appreciate the intricate beauty of a snowflake right before your very eyes. –**The Don**



Photo: Aaron Jamieson, Niseko Photography



**JAPAN may not follow the Chinese New Year calendar anymore, but the Lunar Calendar still has some significance here.**

Even though Japan has followed the western Gregorian Calendar since way back in 1873, ask any Japanese person what their Chinese zodiac animal is – this year is the Tiger – and nine times out of 10 they will be able to tell you straight away. Go on, try it out!



Photo: Aaron Jamieson, Niseko Photography

### Green means go local

**TO most, Green Lantern is Spiderman's arch-nemesis. Here in Japan a green lantern is the symbol of a new food movement where restaurants use local products.** While glowing red lanterns in Japan signify food and drink, J-Sekka in Hirafu is the only restaurant in Niseko that's part of the pioneering Green Lantern Slow Food Movement. There are about 2100 participating restaurants in Japan and in Hokkaido about 100. Head chefs Katherine Bont and Kim Wejendorp (pictured) were awarded a prestigious four-out-of-five-star rating, meaning they use 80 per cent local ingredients in their restaurant, deli and bar. "Travellers to Hokkaido want to eat foods native to the area, not from back home," Kat says. Kim adds: "The seafood from half-hour an hour away is the best in the world, as is the dairy, cattle and much more. Why would you buy from the other side of the world when the very best is right on your doorstep?"



### Vote for the Best of Niseko

**POWDERLIFE'S Best of Niseko is back for another winter – your chance to vote for a Niseko business that has left an impression.**

Now in its third year, Best of Niseko is an opportunity to give a pat on the back to all those little businesses that make Niseko such a great place. Everyone who votes will go in the running to win a set of the some of the best powder skis money can buy – a set of Armada ARGs (pictured left) thanks to Rhythm Snow Sports. Second place win goggles and gloves and third gets a beanie. To vote, visit our website at [www.powderlife.com/best-of-niseko-2010](http://www.powderlife.com/best-of-niseko-2010)

**Last season's Best of Niseko winners:** Restaurant – Sekka Dining / Izakaya – Rin / Bar – Yuki Bar / Onsen – Hilton / Café – Downtown Café / Convenience store – Lawson / Souvenir shop – Sakura / Resort – Niseko Village / Activity – Snowmobiling.



START THE PARTY... Yuki Bar's beer towers surely secured plenty of votes in last year's Best of Niseko.

## niseko news *tracking down local stories*



By Matthew Thomas

### Native trees inspire master plan groundwork

**SILVER birch trees casting dark shadows on a white, snowy background.**

That's the artistic inspiration for patterns on the road, footpaths and driveways as part of the master-planned facelift of Hirafu's main street – a development that is sure to further Niseko's growth as an international ski resort.

Scheduled for construction in 2011, the master plan for Hirafu-Zaka Street is influenced by Niseko's world-famous snow and native Shirakaba trees.

Besides the groundwork, other aspects of the revamp will also be influenced by Niseko's environmental and cultural setting.

Riccardo Tossani Architecture has been commissioned to design the project, and Tossani said the master plan would transform Hirafu-Zaka from a road to a place to which people would flock.

"The banding of dark paving against a light background across the street and sidewalk and into driveways, patios and public squares will create a sense of open space more akin to a village piazza than just a traffic thoroughfare," Tossani said, describing the unique design as 'zebra-like stripes in the snow'.

"It will be a space for people and social gatherings, rather than just cars, and will also mean the village is kinder to pedestrians and visitors."

Tossani said the design referred to Niseko's 'great



ARTIST'S IMPRESSION... Japan's silver birch trees casting shadows on the snow (below) inspired the Hirafu masterplan.

natural beauty', and would include contemporary additions of banner poles, street furniture and a logo design.

The project also consists of underground power lines, road and sidewalk heating, and landscaping. Custom-designed street furniture will be placed throughout the street, including light poles, directional signs, benches, kiosks and bus shelters.

The implementation of the Hirafu master plan is expected to be completed by the winter of 2011.



SANS SNOW... Niseko is a mountain biker's dream, about to get even better with plans for MTB trails, a BMX track and wakeboard park at Hanazono (below).



### A resort for all seasons

**A STATE-OF-THE-ART bike and wakeboard park will be the centrepiece for Hanazono's year-round sports, adventure and activity resort, set to open this summer.**

Up to 5km of cross country mountain bike tracks, trails and jumps, plus freeride terrain, along with a BMX-style 'pump' arena and a skills development area, will be built at Hanazono to cater for beginner to advanced riders.

Hanazono says the currently unnamed park will be the only purpose-built bike park in Hokkaido, and one of few in the whole of Japan.

The bike park was designed by local mountain bike enthusiasts Martin Tse and Paul Butkovich.

"The park has real scope to expand, and the opening will be a milestone for mountain bike facilities in Niseko and Japan," Tse said. "This is Stage 1 of a potential three stages if all goes well."

A wakeboard park will also be built at the foot of the mountain in a lake near the 308 clubhouse, boasting a hi-tech cable system with boxes to ride up on to.

Features are already being built for the bike and wakeboard park, with the official opening day slated for

June 26 this year.

Marketing director Nigel Abbott said that by expanding the resort, Hanazono had made a significant investment in Niseko during the summer.

"Our key objective is to create a year-round resort, and we know that what we're doing is going to put Niseko on the map during summer," he said.

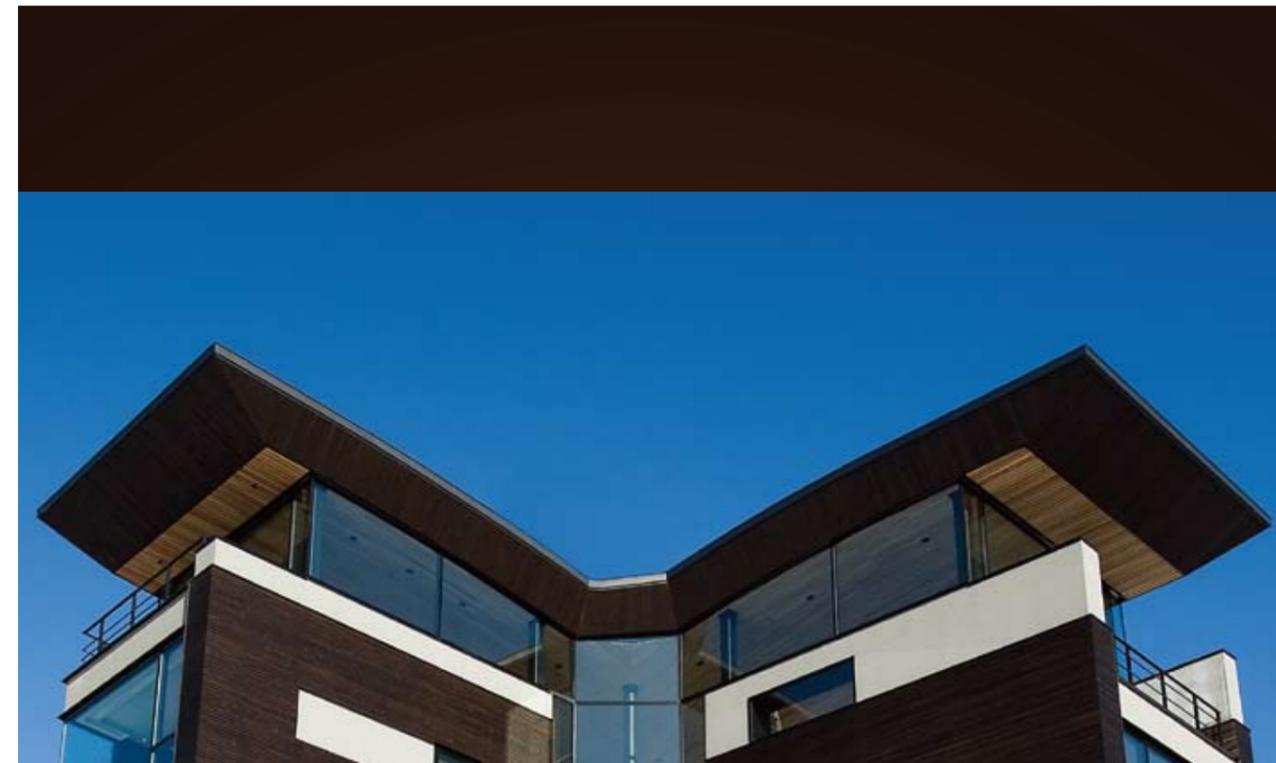
"Our focus at this early stage is on the Japanese market, then we'll move on to other Asian groups like Hong Kong and Singapore, and follow up later on with a wider international demographic."

Abbott said other plans for Hanazono in the summer included summer tubing, 'Euro-bungee', rafting and a 'Spider Web' climbing wall.

A bag jump that is already running this winter will be kept open for the summer, offering a 'dry ramp' for skis and snowboards, and a jump for bikes.

For those who prefer things at a slower pace, the transformation of Hanazono will feature flower gardens to beautify 308, arts and crafts, golf, eco-walks, day tours and a kids' centre.

Abbott said Hanazono was currently in talks to make Hanazono home to Niseko Cycle Week this summer.



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**POWWOW** *apparently a guy in the gondola said...*



**BEFORE** jumping on the Hanazono #1 lift, grab a mug of something steaming from the newly opened 'Hana1' café. The beats are cranked up as you enjoy your cuppa in the snow. Already getting quite popular at this funky little wooden shack.

**THINK** you've been to all the onsens in Niseko? Think again. The Vale Niseko has just lifted the veil on its brand new onsen, opening it to the public. So, what are you waiting for? Go soak it up!

**IN** search of a local drink that packs a punch? Try a 'Jet Li' at Barunba. We're not exactly sure what the ingredients are, but we do know that it is delicious... and it does the job! If you're feeling brave, you can upsize to Jet's bigger, 1L brother named 'Bruce Lee'!

**ONCE** you've been hit a few times by Li and/or Lee, some munchie food will be needed. Lawson – the blue convenience store on the way to Kutchan – is infamous for Juicy-Fried Chicken. Kind of like KFC and tastes greasily great after a few drinks. Not as good an idea in the cold, sober light of day, perhaps.



**FANCY** yourself as Niseko's biggest glutton? Niseko Pizza has pizza-eating competitions every Tuesday at 4pm and 5pm. Prize is 5000 yennies. Someone's just gotta knock town sheriff Digglar off the top spot with a record of two pizzas in 4 mins 37 secs. Have you got the guts? Cezar has also expanded his now cheaper menu this season, for those who wish to eat normally.

**A SNOWBOARDING** lesson where the teacher guarantees you will never, ever fall over, or your money back. No-Fall Snowboarding is what Yankee Steve Schrader does. His progressive, yoga-influenced

technique is taught to Wall Street moguls and Hollywood socialites. He's in Niseko, so email him: [safesnowboarding@gmail.com](mailto:safesnowboarding@gmail.com).

**ONE** of Steve's US mates, Jessica, posted a desperate plea on *Powderlife's* Noticeboard after losing her hot pink and orange fish-shaped wallet in the snow – a direct result of ordering a Bruce Lee instead of a Jet Lee (told you so!). "If you walk by a snow bank and see a neon pink fin sticking out please contact me," she writes. Here's hoping this little fishy swims back to its owner.

**CHANCES** are good that if you have spent any time in Niseko you've experienced super-dry powder, and a super dry beer or two. So keep the dream alive and spread the good word of Niseko snow by taking home one of *Powderlife's* brand new Niseko Super Dry T-shirts. You can buy them for only ¥3000 at the *Powderlife* office at Australia House, directly opposite the Seicomart, and keep an eye out for other sales points around town.



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**Fire in the Hole** (Chicken, Curry and Rice ¥170)

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**Lars Lasagna** (Beef Lasagna ¥950)

**Mexican Nachos** (Small ¥1200 Large ¥2500)

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# in the loop your guide to what's on



**SAT 06** Bob Marley's B'day & Waitangi Day @ blo\*blo  
 ボブマリーバースデー&ワイタンギデー @ blo\*blo  
 Bob Marley's B'day and Waitangi Day. Jamaican BBQ with a Reggae DJ session from Shu (Splash Bar).  
 ジャマイカンBBQとしゅうさん (SplashBar) のレゲエを聞きながら、ボブマリーの誕生日とワイタンギデーを祝しましょう。  
**start:** 6pm  
**contact:** 0136-22-12-69  
 www.blowhardallyear.com

**SUN 07** Toshi Arimoto (Piano) Trio @ Half Note  
 有本紀 (ピアノ) トリオ @ Half Note  
 One of the top pianists from Sapporo, Toshi Arimoto, will play a variety of classic jazz scores. Enjoy his swinging piano trio sound!  
 札幌から若手ナンバー1のピアニスト、有本紀がジャズスタンダードの数々をお届けします。スイング感たっぷりのピアノトリオ演奏をお楽しみください。  
**start:** 9pm  
**contact:** 0136-23-2727  
 www.nisekofullnote.com/halfnote.html

**MON 08** Girls Night Out @ Paddy McGinty's Irish Pub  
 レディースナイト @ パディー・マクギンティーズ  
 Don't miss ¥300 drinks (draft beer, wine and sparkling wine, house spirits or soft drinks) this Monday night. Boys are also welcome!  
 ドラフトビール、赤白ワイン、スパークリングワイン、スピリット、ソフトドリンクを300円で女性限定で提供いたします。  
**start:** 6pm  
**contact:** 0136-55-8020

**TUE 09** Meat Day @ Yawaraya  
 肉の日 @ やわらや  
 Try Black-hair Wagyu and the Shiraai Wagyu steak of Hokkaido for half the price (limited steaks per person).  
 北海道の黒毛和牛、白老牛ステーキが全品半額です。無くなり次第終了とさせていただきます。この機会に是非白老牛の美味しさを味わってください。  
**start:** 6pm  
**contact:** 0136-23-3815

**WED 10** Gluhwein Day @ Herbie's Umbrella Bar  
 ホットグリューワインデー @ハービーズ アンブレラバー  
 Herbie makes the best gluhwein this side of St Anton – so come on in and taste the amazing mix ¥500 gluhwein all day long!  
 ハービーズでは、オーストリアのベストホットワインを500円にてご提供。ぜひ、あつたか・おいしいホットワインをお試しください。  
**start:** 11am-12pm  
**contact:** 090-7500-5310  
 www.umbrellabar.jp



**THU 11** Indigo Jam Unit Party @ Be - Kutchan  
 Indigo Jam Unit パーティー @ 倶知安 Be.  
 Cool Japanese jazzy collective Indigo Jam Unit will appear at a special night in Kutchan. Feeler, DJ Fat Masa and 53 will join in.  
 5th album "Collectivity" を引っさげて、Indigo jam unitがやってきます。寒い冬の倶知安に熱いサウンドを聞かせてくれることでしょう。  
**start:** 8pm ¥3000, Door ¥4000  
**contact:** 011-707-9999 or 0136-55-6905

**FRI 12** Red Bar DJ Friday Night Event  
 DJ フライデーナイト @ Red Bar  
 Great DJ event every Friday with funky beats and a great 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円ワンドリンクつき。  
**start:** 10pm  
**contact:** 0136-22-6687

**SAT 13** Half Pipe Competition @ Hanazono  
 ハーフパイプ大会 @ Hanazono  
 Hanazono Monthly Freestyle Competition Series. Applications close 5pm on 10th February. Entry fee ¥2000.  
 今シーズンのNo.1フリー스타イル決定戦!! 「キングドメイン」・「オブ・フリースタイル」に輝くのは? 応募受付: 2月10日午後5時まで、定員になり次第締め切り。  
**start:** 9.30am  
**contact:** 0136-21-6655  
 www.harmonyresorts.com

**SUN 14** Valentine's Reggae Night Party @ Yosaku  
 Link Up vol.7 Valentine スペシャル @ 与作  
 Reggae Dance Hardcore Valentine's Day night. Entrance ¥1500 for men, ¥100 for girls. Don't miss this event!  
 東京、横浜そして札幌から日本を代表するReggae Soundがニセコに集結! 熱いニセコの夜を与您と、お楽しみください。  
**start:** 9pm  
**contact:** 0136-23-4390

**MON 15** Japanese Cultural Tours in Kutchan  
 日本文化体験ツアーIn 倶知安  
 Take a tour of Japanese culture and experience Kutchan's cultural heritage on a 4.5-hour bus tour. Tour departs Hirafu and starts with a tea ceremony, followed by martial arts, Taiko drum performance, sake brewery tour finishes with a Japanese dinner in Kutchan.  
**start:** 3pm-7.30pm (book by 11am)  
**cost:** ¥3000 (dinner included)  
**contact:** 0136-23-0222

**TUE 16** Jazz Nights @ The Barn  
 ジャズナイト @ the Barn  
 NOJAZZ is a funky, rocking Parisian electro-jazz dance. Explosive display of energy and rhythm. Tix ¥3000 includes 1 drink.  
 フランスからファンキーなJazzバンドNOJAZZが来日。異色な世界へとあなたを連れて行ってくださることでしょう。  
**start:** 16th - 19th February  
**contact:** 0136-23-2603  
 nojazz.net

**WED 17** Ladies Night @ Java Bar  
 レディースナイト @ Java Bar  
 Complimentary champagne on arrival. Enjoy Java Bar's array of cocktails.  
 ウェルカムシャンペンのサービス。数あるJavaオリジナルカクテルをお楽しみください。  
**start:** 6pm  
**contact:** 0136-23-0788  
 www.niseko-info.com/javabar



**THU 18** Pizza and Beer night @ Herbie's Umbrella Bar  
 ピッツァとビール ナイト @ハービーズ アンブレラバー  
 Pizza and Beer night, ¥1000 for 500ml Lowenbrau with a slice of tasty Niseko Pizza!  
 ドイツのビールレーベンプロイとニセコピッツァを一緒に!  
**start:** 11am-12pm  
**contact:** 090-7500-5310

## ICE AND SNOW FESTIVALS 2010



**HOKKAIDO** is home to dozens of spectacular snow festivals. Hire a car, jump on a bus or a train, or find a local tour operator and check them out!

**Sapporo Snow Festival**  
 See hundreds of beautiful snow statues and ice sculptures which line Odori Park and the main street in Susukino. This is one of Japan's largest winter events and attracts a growing number of visitors every year.  
**February 5-11**  
 www.snowfes.com

**Otaru Snow Night Festival**  
 Head to charming nearby port town Otaru to see snow sculptures and 140,000 candles set into the snow along the Otaru Canal.  
**February 5-14**  
 otaru.yukiakarinomichi.org

**Lake Shikotsu Ice Festival**  
 Every year Lake Shikotsuko in Chitose turns into a coloured ice playground as part of the Lake Shikotsu Ice Festival.  
**January 29 - February 14**  
 www.shikotsuko.com

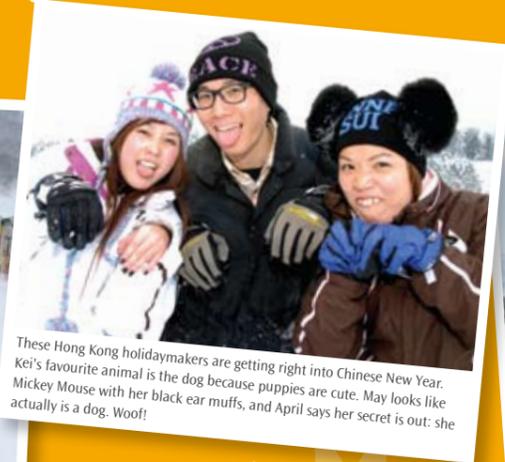


# SNAP

Powderlife hit the slopes to ask skiers and boarders what their favourite Chinese zodiac animal was... and why?! Gong Xi Fa Cai! ('Happy New Year' in Mandarin).



Both from Chiba (near Tokyo), Rie tells us her favourite is the mouse because it's her zodiac sign and they are 'kawaii' (cute), while Ayumi is the cow because cows have 'yummy meat'.



These Hong Kong holidaymakers are getting right into Chinese New Year. Kei's favourite animal is the dog because puppies are cute. May looks like Mickey Mouse with her black ear muffs, and April says her secret is out: she actually is a dog. Woof!



As Murphy lifts his leg he's a dog because 'they get to poo anywhere they want'. Chais is a 'cheeky monkey', and Lachlan chose a dragon because they're 'big and horny'. Cat is a tiger because they are fast and furious... and her name is already Cat!

## InSki's Wipeout of the Week

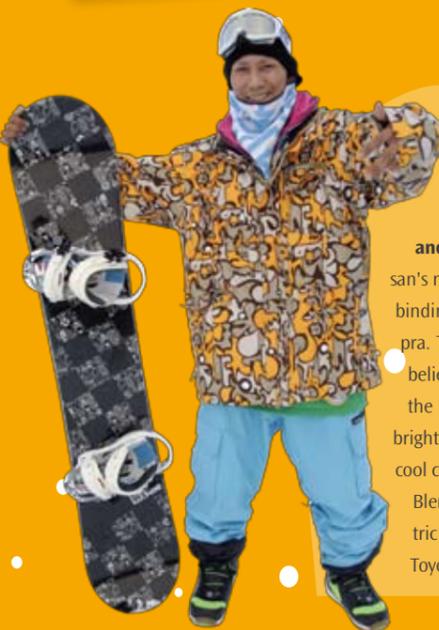
**THIS is Shaun Barry's first day on a kicker, and he won't be forgetting it any time soon!** He and some mates built a booter in the Moiwa backcountry while staying at The Camp skiing and snowboarding progression camp. A pretty massive effort for someone's first ever time hitting a backcountry booter! Lucky all Shaun came away with after landing squarely on his head was a blood nose (inset)... but it's all good because he wins a helmet thanks to Inski in Hirafu. Entering this competition is simple. Any reader can send a hi-res wipeout pic with a short blurb to [ed@powderlife.com](mailto:ed@powderlife.com). If yours gets published, you win a helmet. **Powderlife can't wait to see all your wipeouts, so start sending them in! Until then, may all your wipeouts be public, excessive and captured on film!**



Tiger Takamitsu was born in the Year of the Tiger, so his choice makes sense, and Hitomi loves rabbits because they have cute little button eyes just like she does. Kawaii ne?!

## Mountain Style

**TOYOTA-SAN spent all of his money on this stylish snow gear, so he didn't have any cash left for a cool car. But the car he can afford is an old station wagon, and you guessed it, it's a Toyota! (we had to ask!)** Toyota-san's mode of transport on the mountain is a Ride board with Flux bindings, which help him reach the high speeds of a Toyota Supra. This shredder from Saitama (part of greater Tokyo) is a firm believer that it's better to look good on the mountain than on the road anyway! He digs his Special Blend jacket for its unique bright orange and brown camouflage design. And of course this cool cat wouldn't be caught in anything but matching blue Special Blend pants. Rounding out a pretty darn smooth get-up are Electric goggles, Deluxe boots and a DC beanie. To look as stylish as Toyota-san on the mountain? Oh, what a feeling!



"Cock-a-doodle doo!," crows Aussie Brock, a rooster because they get to hang out with chicks. Peter picked the Tiger because he is an aggressive man, but his roar is bigger than his bite. Alese says she goes at everything like a rabbit, and she likes raw carrots. What's up, doc?



These Aussie young ones had no trouble picking their favourites. Little Henry, 4, likes rats because they crawl up the leg of your pants. His sister Audrey, 8, loves riding horses. Big brother Hudson, 10, was born in the year of the rabbit, but he doesn't like eating his veggies!

# FLASH

Music-lovers tuned in droves to check out live music at Hirafu jazz bar Half Note, while the party flared up for one of Splash's always-fiery flare parties...



Tom, Haru-chan, Yoshika-chan, Aldo & Michael got a front-row seat to the bottle-throwing, fire-breathing action at Splash's Flare Party.



Big Bad Jeff turned into a pussycat as he shared a blissful moment with lovely local lass, Oku-chan.



Niseko Adventure Centre workers Benzou and Rintaro took time out from 'NAC' to Splash around a couple of beers.

### Cocktail Flaring Party @ Splash



With cute bartenders like Nori, Asami, Michiko and Sayaka, many guys find themselves buying more beers than they need at Splash.



Aska, Hiro, Hiroshi & Guy admired some of the cool graffiti art and old-school snowboards adorning the wall at Splash.



Nana-chan showed Nick-san how they party in Japan - beers, reggae music, darts and bartenders juggling spirit bottles.

### Live Jazz @ Half Note



Guitarist Jasper Richards relaxes after his show at Half Note with friend Laura from Melbourne.



Owners of Niseko's new Indian restaurant Taj Mahal, Daniel and Urmila, sneak away from the restaurant for some jazz, washed down with a quiet drink by the bar.



Aussie mates Hugo, 10, and Angus, 16, check out some jazz guitar as a Yotei-zan painting peers over their shoulders.



Scottish gents David, Craig & Andrew assure us there's no underwear beneath their kilts. We weren't game to check, but Niseko's chilly climes must make the walk to and from the bar quite brisk.



Partying in numbers, Caroline, Steve, Craig, Jackie, Chris and Marty thank guitarist Jasper Richards for his gig at Hirafu's only jazz bar.



Anders, Tobias, Mel, Yuka and 'Bradders' take time out for a game of pool to check out Half Note's impressive collection of powder boards for hire.

# meet the locals introducing niseko ski resort staff



FRONT OFFICE MANAGER Rich



LIFTIE Dahon



SKI PATROL Hide

name Richard Blackman age Not too old hometown Victoria, Australia time in niseko? Just over a year ski/board? Pretty bad snowboarder how long have you been skiing/boarding? Second season, and a few trips when the surf got too cold in Victoria! why did you come to niseko? Work and snow favourite... food? Anything Japanese. No natto please! restaurant? Rin bar? Wild Bill's onsen? Hilton ski run? Miharashi at night how long will you be in niseko? Indefinitely best niseko secret? Spring. Blue skies, not many people and still plenty of snow! what's your life philosophy? Work hard, play hard and be good to your mother!

名前 リチャード ブラックマン 年齢そんなに年は取ってないです 出身地 ギブスランド、ビクトリア、オーストラリア ニセコにきてどのくらい? ちょうど1年終ちました スキーヤー? スノーボーダー? 下手なスノーボード スキー、スノーボード 2シーズン 目と何度か旅行で来ました なぜニセコにきた? 仕事と雪 お気に入りの... 食べ物? 納豆以外の日本食なら何でも レストラン? 居酒屋りんバー? ワイルドビルズ 温泉? ヒルトンコース? 見晴らし この後、どのくらいニセコにいる予定? 無期限に ニセコの秘密? 春のせこ人が少なく晴れた日が多く、まだまだ雪は残ってます 人生観、モットーは? 仕事も遊びも頑張るお母さんの言うことは聞くこと

name Masahiko Honda age 32 hometown Chiba (next to Tokyo) time in niseko Four years ski/board? Snowboarder how long have you been snowboarding? 13 years why did you come to niseko? You can get heaps of powder snow, I don't get any good snow in my hometown. favourite... food Yakitori BBQ restaurant Taro bar Bar Eddy onsen Yusenkaku Onsen ski run Superstition, Jyagaimo and Misoshiru how long will you be in niseko? Until there is no snow. what's your life philosophy? I can see the remarkable view of the mountain when I'm at work and I like drinking a beer after work

名前 ホンダ マサヒコ 年齢 32歳 出身地 千葉県 ニセコにきてどのくらい? 4年目 スキーヤー? スノーボーダー? スノーボーダー スキー、スノーボード 13年 なぜニセコにきた? 千葉県でサンディーボーダーをやっているのも味わえないパウダーをニセコではお腹いっぱい喰えるからお気に入りの... 食べ物? 焼き鳥 レストランは? 太郎バー? パーエディー 温泉は? 幽泉閣温泉 コースは? Sステーション → ジャガイモ → 味噌汁 この後、どのくらいニセコにいる予定? ニセコに雪が降らなくなるまで 海外のスキー場で行ってみたい所は? ジャクソンホール (USA) ニセコの秘密? なぜか、NVスキー場は空いている。人生観、モットーは? 自分が法と秩序を守ってれば、自分自身も守られる

name Hidetaka Fukui age 37 hometown Kobe (next to Osaka) time in niseko Four years ski/board? Both how long have you been skiing for? 20 years why did you come to niseko? My friends told me it's really fun in Niseko where do you want to go next? South America favourite... colour Green brand Marmot food I love rice restaurant Dragon bar Jam Bar onsen Sinmi Onsen ski run Superstition how long will you be in niseko? Not sure yet niseko secret? I am looking for new girlfriend! Anyone help? what's your life philosophy? Enjoy your life

名前 フクイ ヒデタカ 年齢 37歳 出身地 神戸 ニセコにきてどのくらい? 4年 スキーヤー? スノーボーダー? どっちも スキー、スノーボード 20年 なぜニセコにきた? 楽しそうだったから 海外旅行に行ったことは? カナダ、アメリカ、オーストラリア、ニュージーランド、メキシコ、タイ、ネパール、インドネシア、中米 お気に入りの... 色は? 緑 ブランドは? Marmot 食べ物? 米 レストランは? ドラゴン バーは? Jam bar 温泉は? 新見 コースは? スーパーステーションコース この後、未定月 海外のスキー場で行ってみたい所は? チリのスキー場 ニセコの秘密? 現在彼女募集中です 人生観、モットーは? 楽しむこと 仕事をしていて幸せを感じるとき 美しい雪のとき

# in focus with tomoko kazama

**WHEN Tomoko Kazama isn't working in marketing for Niseko Village at Higashiyama, she loves hitting the mountain and going big. We get to know the poster girl for Niseko Village a little bit better...**

**When and why did you come to Niseko?**

I came to Niseko in the 05-06 season. I wanted to work somewhere I could use English, and I was looking for a mogul team I could join and sent several emails to the teams and found a team here in Niseko.

**What was Niseko like when you first arrived here?**

So much snow! The year I arrived had the most snow in 50 years as far as I know. Niseko has changed so much since when I was little. It seemed like I wasn't in Japan. There were foreign signs around the town and lots of Australians. There was still perfect fresh powder snow, and it's the terrain and the night skiing that I love.

**What did you do before you came to Niseko?**

I was in University in Utah, enrolled in a sports science degree, and trained for mogul skiing in Salt Lake City.

**What makes Niseko special?**

Snow, nature, local produce, onsen and our landmark, Mt.Yotei. But mainly it's the powder. You can enjoy

every condition here in Niseko – powder, groomed, off-piste, park, bumps, and even corn snow in Spring. It's such an amazing place!

**We hear you're a sponsored skier?**

I am not a big sponsored skier, but K2 and Phenix are supporting me.

**You are the poster girl for Niseko Village?**

The other Niseko Village staff and I went up to the mountain when we had some good snow, and we took several shots of staff that also included me. We had perfect blue sky with perfect white powder snow. It is weird to see me on posters, but an honor to be on them.

**You have have skied at a competition level?**

I was competing alpine skiing until high school, when I switched to moguls in Utah and competed until 2006.

**What is it you like best about skiing?**

Skiing is and will be my lifestyle adventure. It gave me many opportunities and opened up doors in many ways. I truly enjoy this sport. I love to see the people from all over the world and I like to share the exciting moments on the mountain.



**What are your top 3 tips for visitors to Niseko?**

1. Ski hard
2. Eat fresh seafood
3. Go for an onsen.

**What do you do in the off season?**

I started playing golf at Niseko Village Golf Course last summer – there are great golf courses all around Niseko. The Mount Yotei views are amazing from Niseko Village's golf course in particular, and the par six hole is incredibly long for me. Other than that, in summer I do a little bit of bike riding and swimming.

# irasshaimase! 'welcome!' great little local businesses

**Guzuguzu Bakery, Izumikyō**

**IT seems like destiny that Guzuguzu Bakery came to be.** Owner Satoshi Shimizu is from Yokohama but came to Hokkaido to go to uni. He visited Niseko during this time, fell in love with the area and moved here. He started working at a hotel, where he also fell in love with his wife, Emi, a baker. He went on to start the now famous A-Bu-Cha restaurant with his brother. The restaurant was a hit, but the space was vacant during the day. Because of A-Bu-Cha's central location and Emi-san's baking skills, they decided to start a daytime bakery. A couple of years ago he decided he wanted to build his own house with a bakery on the first floor. And Guzuguzu Bakery was born!

ベーカリー&カフェ くずぐず 運命に導かれたようにくずぐずは生まれたのでしょうか。横浜出身の清水聡さんは、大学で札幌に、スノーボードで来たニセコに魅せられ2000年の冬にニセコ移住、奥さんのえみさんと出会い、2005年に兄である司さんのお店阿武茶内に阿武茶ベーカリーをオープンさせた。2年前より新店の計画、一年がかりの建設という準備期間を経て、昨年2009年5月に晴れてオープン。名前の由来は、お店が計画からオープンまでなかなか進まずにくずぐずしていたことから。でもその分いい酵母に出会え、レシピに工夫が出来、また、待望の第一子であるハヤテ君の出産が重なり、よかったことも多かったそう。酵母に5日間、朝も2時半より8時間かけてのパン作りということもあり、仕事も家事も育児も二人で半分ずつ二人三脚。今年は阿武茶ベーカリー、くずぐず共にオープンさせ、ますます忙しくなりそう。



**Ice Art Project, Hirafu Upper Village**

**BE sure to visit the incredible crystal palace-like ice bar that is the Ice Art Project!** The structure's creator, Hirohiko Takenaka, comes from Eniwa City near Chitose Airport, and grew up watching his father create ice sculptures for the nearby ice festival at Lake Shikotsuko – the huge lake that most people pass on their way to Niseko from the airport. From the time he was six years old he knew he wanted to become an artist using natural materials. He built the first ice bar in the Middle Village five years ago, and next to blo\*blo bar three years ago. Check it out, and if you like what you see, buy a drink to help Takenaka-san continue his work! [www.h3.dion.ne.jp/~aloha](http://www.h3.dion.ne.jp/~aloha)

**ザ・アイスバー**

アルペン坂を歩いている誰しも目を留める、クリスタルの美しいアイスアート。作っているのは、恵庭出身の造形作家タケナカヒロヒコさん。5年前、ヒラフベンション街にアイスバーを始めた事がきっかけで、モイワ山や旭川の雪祭りにも出品。ニセコの雪と水と森のバランス、羊蹄山の見える風景、人とのつながりに引かれてきたというヒロさん。今は、このニセコでしか出来ない・見られない・味わえない自然をニセコの文化として育て、発信していきたい。シーズンを通して変わっていく氷の姿、自然の重さで亀裂することで出来るマークを見ることが今年の目標。また、安全性と自然科学を考慮することが一番大切。太陽の向き、気温、雪の積もり方、氷の出来方、全て自然科学で成り立っている。と熱弁してくれた。皆さんもぜひ、幻想的な空間の中、酒を交わしながら、ヒロさんの熱い話を聞きに来てほしい。 <http://www.h3.dion.ne.jp/~aloha/>

## Java Massage

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Email: [book@ramatniseko.com](mailto:book@ramatniseko.com)  
Web: [www.ramatniseko.com](http://www.ramatniseko.com)



## five of the best local restaurant dishes

### Kamimura's trio of confied Niseko potatoes

These colourful potatoes are cooked individually in separate garlic and olive, walnut and grapeseed oils. They're served atop a semi-dried scallop cream sauce, and topped with iberico chorizo sausage, shaved black truffles and a 22-month-old aged mimolette cheese from France.

On seven and nine-course menu (¥9000 and ¥13,000) / Map E2 / 0136 21 2288 / 5.30pm-11pm



**J-Sekka's venison:** For a notoriously gamey, hard to tenderise meat, J-Sekka's venison is slow-roasted and seared, making it tender, juicy and pink in the middle. Perfectly presented on three types of Jerusalem artichoke, it's doused in wild grape juice sauce stock and served alongside King Edward mushrooms. ¥4200 / Map A2 / 0136 21 5022 / 6pm-10pm

**Ezo Seafoods' oysters:** Hokkaido hauls in some of the best seafood in the world from the Sea of Japan. The pick of a great bunch are Ezo's superb fresh oysters. They're generously sized and delicious au naturale, or just with a squeeze of lemon. ¥220 each t/a, ¥270 each eat-in / Map C3 / 0136 22 3019 / 4pm-9pm

**Rin's hamachi:** Juicy and thick, Rin's grilled hamachi is melt in your mouth stuff. Not too fishy in taste, this type of yellowtail tuna is great value and a delicious, rare and healthy alternative to the more common hokke (mackerel). Price ¥1000 / Map C3 / 0136 22 1444 / 5pm-11pm

**Bang Bang's wagyu steak:** A must for steak connoisseurs, this tender, juicy wagyu is from south-east Hokkaido, home to some of the best beef in the world. Bang Bang sauce the steak with a Japanese-style citrus vinegar, then garnish with ground daikon radish. ¥15,000 (500g), ¥9000 (250g) / Map D1 / 0136-22-4292 / 5.30pm-11.30pm

## local recipe shunsai's japanese style daikon oroshi steak sauce

### Ingredients

- 1 daikon radish
- 1 apple
- 50g ginger
- 1L of dashi (Japanese soup stock)
- Soy sauce to taste
- 200ml orange juice
- 1 tsp Japanese vinegar

### Method

1. Grate daikon radish, apple and ginger, then add to 1L of dashi stock, and place pot on heat until boiling
2. Add soy sauce to taste
3. Then add orange juice and vinegar

### How to make dashi (soup stock)

- Ingredients**
- 1L of water
  - 30g dried bonito (fish flakes)
  - 10g konbu seaweed

### Method

1. Soak konbu seaweed in water for about 30 minutes
2. Place pot on low heat until almost boiling, then remove seaweed from water
3. When soup has boiled, add dried bonito, then remove pot from stovetop
4. When dried bonito has sunk, strain stock through paper towel

### How to make perfect venison steak

1. Carefully select a thick, fresh piece of venison
2. Add oil to a pan and heat until it smokes lightly
3. Briefly grill on a high heat until both sides are seared on the outside, but left rare in the centre

THIS recipe comes to us courtesy of Shunsai's creative chef, Hirotsugu Hashimoto. Using fresh vegetables from his own organic farm, Hashimoto-san specialises in creating fresh, colourful, unique dishes. This classic Japanese daikon radish steak sauce goes beautifully with venison, but just as well with many other meats.



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find us at the traffic lights

restaurant review *the barn*



By Matthew Thomas



A towering, peaked rooftop gives a feeling of space, and the front floor-to-ceiling glass wall brings the outside in...

Photos: Glen Claydon

**THE unique design for new east-meets-west fusion restaurant, The Barn, was interestingly inspired by a real Hokkaido barn that stands just outside Sapporo.** Perfect because the A-frame roof assists in shedding the plentiful Niseko powder, this one-of-a-kind conceptual restaurant also makes for a classy dining experience in Hirafu. How often can you say you've dined in a barn?

A towering, peaked rooftop gives a feeling of space, and the front floor-to-ceiling glass wall brings the outside in, allowing diners to watch the world and weather go by. Should you choose to turn your back to the street and sit at the sushi bar, watch the deft hands of chef Toshitaka Kasseki as he prepares fresh sushi or sashimi.

I must say, it's not a surprise that within The Barn is a recipe for a classy, unique night out. Nestled in the Middle Village – adjoining boutique hotel, Kimamaya by Odin – The Barn is also an Odin creation dreamed up by creative entrepreneur Nicolas Gontard. The charming, passionate Frenchman's local claim to fame is The Odin House, which he has developed with his Scandinavian partners Bjorn and Chris Fjeldahl, an innovation in design and eco-friendly architecture that sets a new high standard for houses in Niseko.

Chef Toshitaka-san (pictured top right) is an asset, too. The friendly cook speaks of his impressive pedigree, with years spent at the Hong Kong Marriot's five-star

restaurant. His time in HK is obvious by looking at the menu, which builds a bridge between the Orient and the western world – ideal for Niseko's international visitors.

We start our night with the spider crab roll containing soft-shell crab, avocado and tobiko caviar, and to follow is the foie gras roll with goose liver, mango, cucumber and blueberry sauce. One particular beautifully prepared California-style sushi, the caterpillar roll, is filled with warm eel and covered with avocado and sweet soy sauce. As delicious as it is humorous!

Next up, the Norwegian salmon carpaccio is swimming in sake, soy sauce, sesame oil and spring onions, followed by toro aburi salad, a blue fin tuna belly flavoured with leek, red miso sauce and exotic truffles.

For mains, pan-fried, mushroom-stuffed chicken breast with crispy noodles and wok-fried vegetables, and a char-grilled sirloin steak on garlic mash with caramelised onions, saute greens and a cabernet jus.

We had room for one dessert, and maintain it's a healthy option – fresh fruit... dipped in rich chocolate.

Be sure to arrive a little earlier and check out the cosy lofted bar that serves a very quaffable selection of wines from Gontard's parents' French vineyards in Burgundy.

Overall, The Barn is a welcome newcomer to Hirafu's bustling restaurant scene. While it's early days for the restaurant, it's a memorable dining experience.



**The Barn:** Momiji-Zaka Street, Middle Hirafu  
**Open:** 6pm-11pm  
**Tel:** 0136 23 0888  
**More reviews at** [powderlife.com/niseko-restaurants](http://powderlife.com/niseko-restaurants)

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

By Bevan Colless



Lib Technologies Skate Banana Original BTX Snowboard

**THE Lib-Tech Skate Banana ruffled a lot of feathers on its release last year, outselling Burton in the US by a reported 10:1.** The upward curve under-foot rocker and magne-traction edge combined to make it unlike any other US-designed board, and it has fast become something of an icon in the evolution of snowboard design. The rocker gives your turns a surfy-style feel, and the magne-traction edges – seven curves on the rail – lets you hold your edge through anything.

**Available from: Murasaki Sports in Sapporo ¥75,600 Tel: 011 219 4231**



Vector Glide Butter Knife

**VECTOR** Glide is one of those brands that most people walk by without a second glance. But those few in the know will give you an acknowledging nod while they think, 'he knows his stuff, I bet he's a gun'. So if you are a gun who knows his stuff then have a good think about the Butter Knife. Boasting a twin rocker with 130mm waist, it'll slice through Niseko's pow like its namesake and float your boat in the backcountry. If you enjoy hucking cliffs it won't let you down.

**Available from: Toyru ¥128,100 Tel: 0136 21 4055**

**Powder tools**

Mammut Pulse Barryvox Avalanche Beacon  
**THE Pulse Barryvox is a great leap in avalanche technology likely to save plenty of lives.**

For all burials, the Pulse uses a 360-degree direction arrow that leads you along the shortest path to the victim, and eliminates the need for a final grid search. For multiple burials, the Pulse beacon can search for up to eight signals at once. A triple antenna eliminates all signals except the one you're following and marks victims once they're located. This beacon even shows you which signals are being searched for by other Pulse users. If you're the one buried, this beacon has a motion sensor that detects vital signs and lets other Pulse users know you're still alive.

**Available from: From ICI Ishii Sports in Sapporo ¥61,590 Tel: 011 726 2288**



## men who ride mountains *stirling goldman: giving back to the community*

**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...**

PEOPLE often ask me is my main focus in life just to ski all day and serenade the ladies? They ask whether that's all Stirling has to offer, and whether he is a self-absorbed, arrogant wanker like his column reads.

Now, while I understand how people may think this, and I admit a large portion of my time is spent juggling ladies, beer and powder, Stirling does give back to the community more than you would think, for a man of such stature has to. The sponsors like it, the ski resorts love it, and the ladies see my emotional side and come flocking... as per usual. So, what is it that Stirls does to be such a good Samaritan? Here's a highlights reel of some

of my finest work (outside of that Swedish swimsuit model from last weekend):

- Teaching disadvantaged Ainu kids to go from snow-plough to lightning speeds whilst knee deep... and backwards. The smile on their faces is all the reward I need.
- Giving lectures to the Japanese locals and seasonal gaijin on the importance of garbage separation for a greater world... particularly the etiquette on used condoms.
- Donating myself for medical research for a liver biopsy (with no anaesthetic) to an alcohol research group looking into how some very special humans have a freakish capacity to down 48 beers in a single evening session. There's talk of a second study from the same research group into how these people manage to be physically active all night and still dominate the powder from first lifts. The chief researcher tells me that while I am suitable, there is an apparent lack of further subjects.
- Planting trees in the Baw Baw off season (during my Niseko powder time, I might add), not to have better tree runs in the winter, but rather to aid the environment.
- Appearing on *The Biggest Loser: Winter Edition* with a



cameo appearance as the personal trainer offering advice how to get in shape. Rumour has it the ratings went through roof and they were trying to sign me up for the next series. Stirls declined, for it's not all about him.

So, as you can see, Stirls is more prevalent in your community than you may have thought. It's not all just poise on the ski fields, finesse with the ladies and strength like no other with the beers. From the rubbish bin to the Ainu kids and the Baw Baw tree runs, a little bit of Stirls is rubbing off on you everywhere. And if you don't feel it is, well, just ask the ladies after midnight, for that is when Stirls is rubbing off on them. Happy skiing, punters.

**Got a question for a man who knows? Fire it to [stirling@powderlife.com](mailto:stirling@powderlife.com).**



skier Tom Costa // photo Glen Claydon



skier Duncan // photo Glen Claydon



rider Aupa // photo Glen Claydon



rider Rich // photo Rory Gardiner, Niseko Photography



rider Max // photo Joey Corcoran, Niseko Photography



skier Nick Franklin-Jones // photo Rory Gardiner, Niseko Photography

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/](http://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. Always use proper downhill, backward, and side-slip techniques.  
6. Always use chairlift restraining devices where provided and always use proper devices to prevent runaway equipment. Ensure equipment is in good condition.  
7. Observe and obey all signs and warnings. Keep off closed trails or runs and keep off or closed areas.  
8. If you are involved in, or witness an accident, alert the Ski Patrol, remain at the scene and identify yourself to them.

**KNOW THE CODE: IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY**

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

Niseko Rules are official regulations, established by the Niseko Anupuri 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) is not covered by the Ski Patrol. Niseko Rules prohibit that hiking and riding these areas is dangerous and if you choose to, you do it AT YOUR OWN RISK.

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

**1. CERTAIN CLOSED AREAS WITHIN NISEKO ARE STRICTLY OFF 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

**Ski area shuttle bus**  
The NISEKO UNITED Shuttle conveniently links each of the four ski resorts and is free to holders of the Niseko All Mountain Pass.  
\*The bus timetable is on "Niseko Resort Map" at lift ticket counters, etc.  
\*Holders of the Niseko All Mountain Pass must present pass on boarding the bus. 125000 ticket holders forfeit 1 point.  
\*Those without the All Mountain Pass can ride the bus for the regular fare.

**Legend:**  
Ski patrol  
AED  
Rest room  
Phone  
Kids room  
Restaurants  
Cafe  
Shop  
Information  
Rentals  
Ski school  
Onsen (Hot Spring)  
Shuttle bus stop  
Parking lot

**Un-groomed Slope**  
Easiest  
More Difficult  
Most Difficult

**Name of Slope**  
Maximum Gradient / Gradient / Length

**Name of Lift**  
Number of seats  
Length: Time required  
Number of lift ticket points

**Other icons:** Meguri run, Wave, Half Pipe, Park (Kicker, jib, etc.)

# backcountry safety *stay safe on the mountain*

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

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



Photo: Niseko Photography

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

**Avalanche info:**  
Shinya's daily avalanche report  
[www.niseko.nadare.info](http://www.niseko.nadare.info)  
Canadian Avalanche Association  
[www.avalanche.ca](http://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](http://www.nisekoguide.jp)

**Black Diamond Tours**  
[www.blackdiamondtours.com](http://www.blackdiamondtours.com)  
090 2054 8687

**Shinsetsu Mountain Guides**  
[www.smguides.net](http://www.smguides.net)  
090 6214 1065

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

**FREE backcountry safety seminars are now held every week in Hirafu – and we highly recommend tourists and locals alike get along and check it out.**  
Hosted by the experienced guys from Black Diamond Tours, the informative seminars are held in the Yuki Bar below the new Black Diamond Tours Hirafu office (on Family-Zaka St), on Tuesdays from 6pm-7pm.  
The meetings cover the basics about Niseko and its backcountry – Niseko Rules, the resort's unique gate system which guides entry points into the backcountry, a discussion on backcountry equipment, and basic terrain awareness and assessment, before opening the floor to a Q&A session.  
Each week, the seminar will conclude with a frantic search for a beacon that has been hidden in the snow (whoever finds it first gets a free beer!).  
But in all seriousness, the life you save with this invaluable new knowledge could be your's, or the life of someone close to you. So please take the time out for one of these seminars before going through the backcountry gates.

These backcountry safety seminars are brought to you by Black Diamond Tours, Yuki Bar and proudly supported by *Powderlife*.

**For more information call:**  
**BD Tours on 090 2054 8687**  
or email:  
**info@blackdiamondtours.com**

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



POWDER POSTER

**real estate feature** sekka hanazono house



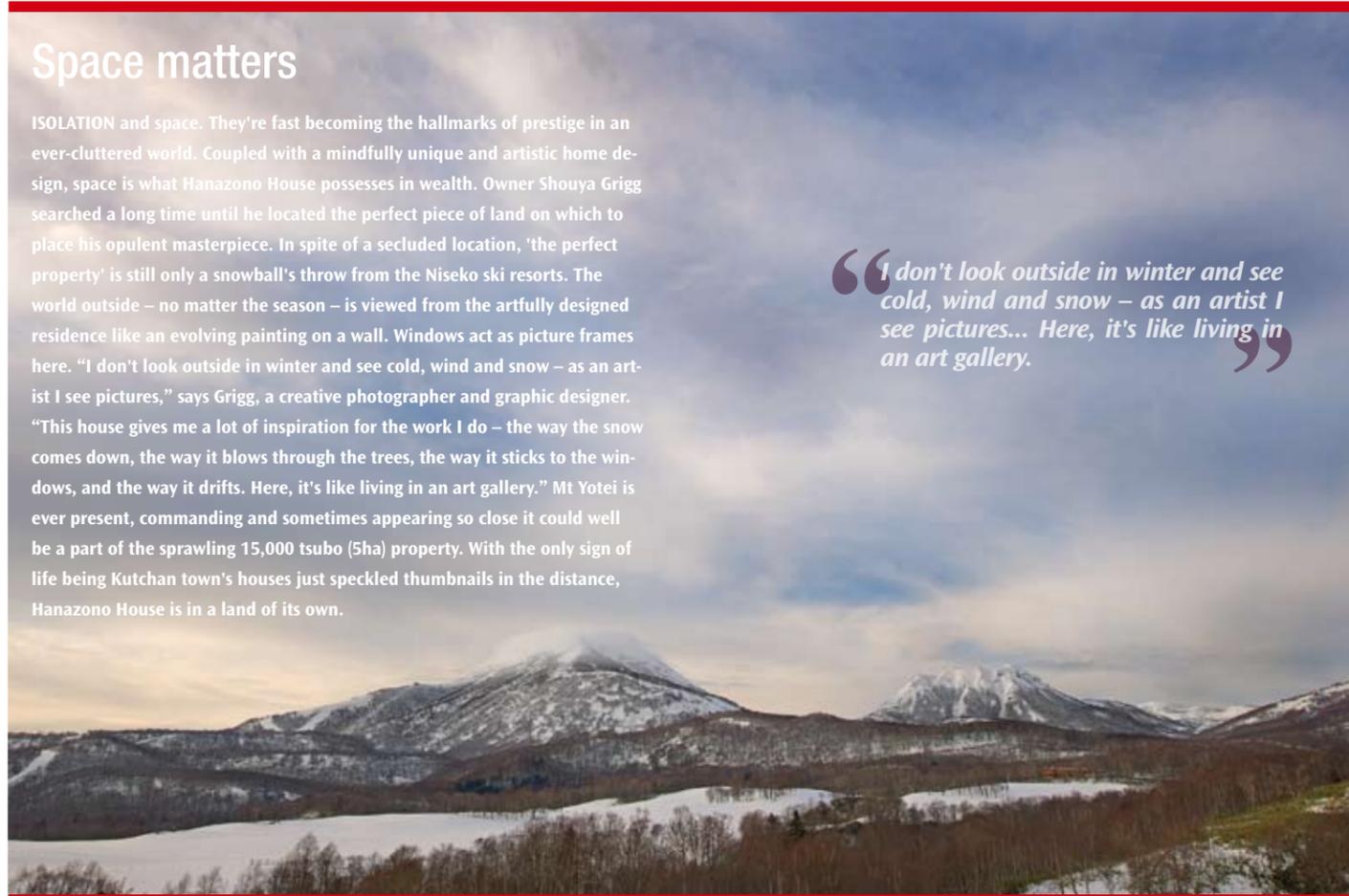
By Matthew Thomas



**Space matters**

ISOLATION and space. They're fast becoming the hallmarks of prestige in an ever-cluttered world. Coupled with a mindfully unique and artistic home design, space is what Hanazono House possesses in wealth. Owner Shouya Grigg searched a long time until he located the perfect piece of land on which to place his opulent masterpiece. In spite of a secluded location, 'the perfect property' is still only a snowball's throw from the Niseko ski resorts. The world outside – no matter the season – is viewed from the artfully designed residence like an evolving painting on a wall. Windows act as picture frames here. "I don't look outside in winter and see cold, wind and snow – as an artist I see pictures," says Grigg, a creative photographer and graphic designer. "This house gives me a lot of inspiration for the work I do – the way the snow comes down, the way it blows through the trees, the way it sticks to the windows, and the way it drifts. Here, it's like living in an art gallery." Mt Yotei is ever present, commanding and sometimes appearing so close it could well be a part of the sprawling 15,000 tsubo (5ha) property. With the only sign of life being Kutchan town's houses just speckled thumbnails in the distance, Hanazono House is in a land of its own.

*"I don't look outside in winter and see cold, wind and snow – as an artist I see pictures... Here, it's like living in an art gallery."*

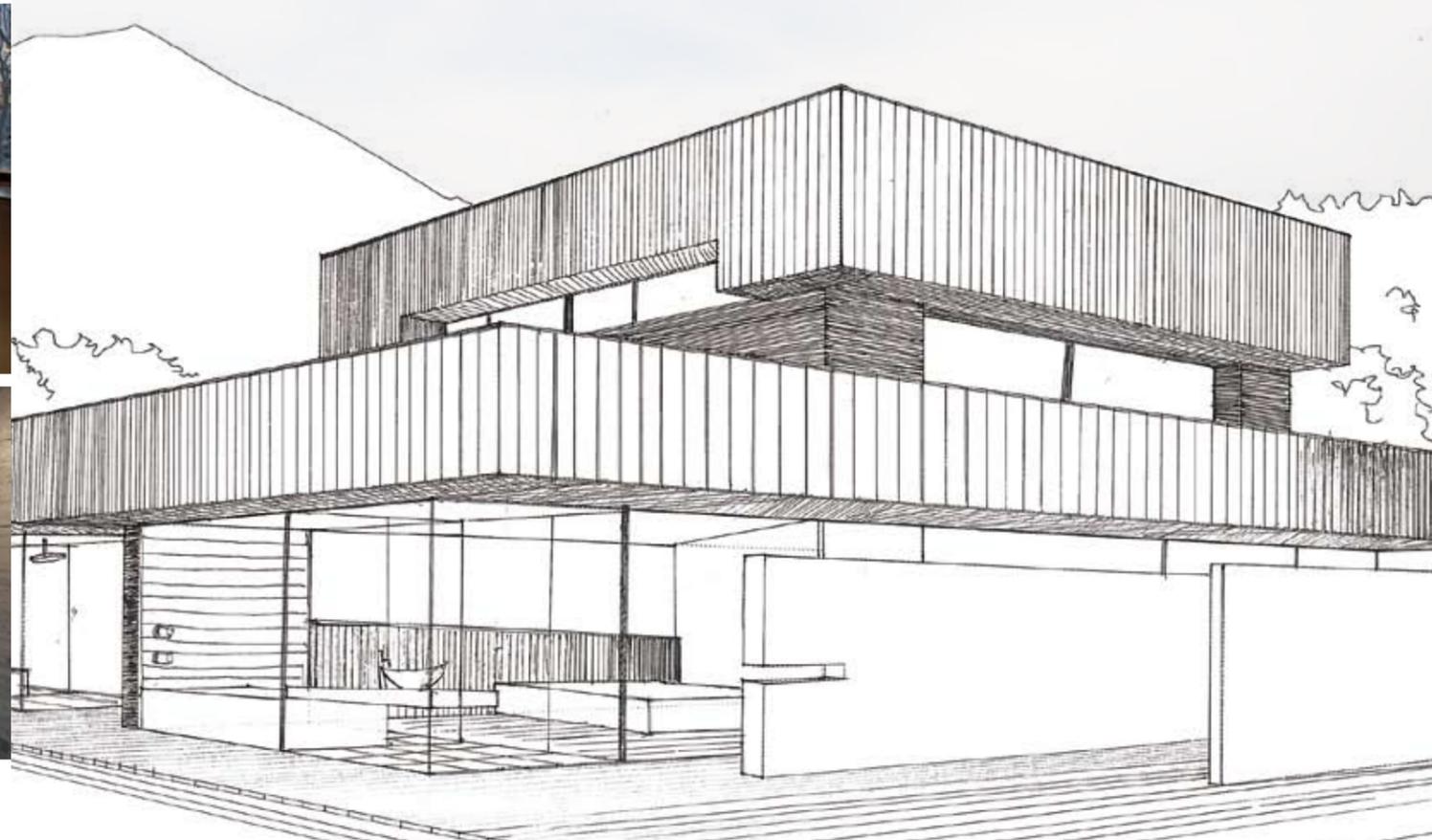
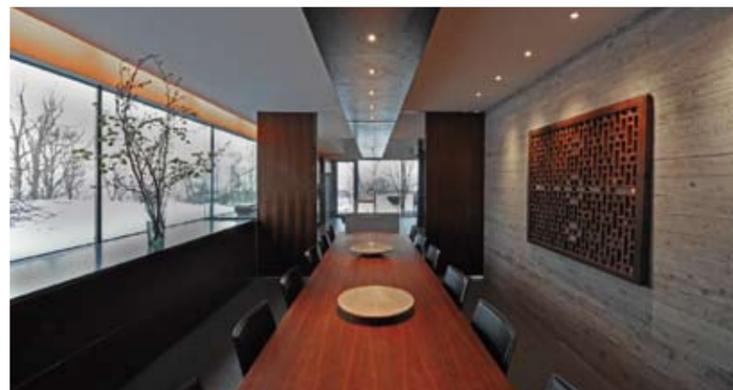
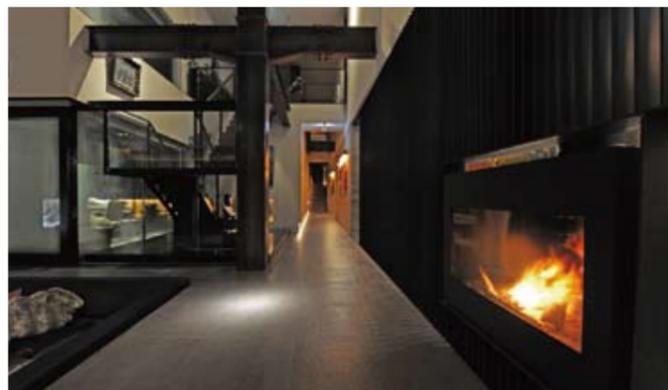


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SEKASTYLE IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE THE RELEASE OF HANAZONO BOKUJO. A COLLECTION OF 7 UNIQUELY DESIGNED MODERN VILLAS ON LARGE PLOTS RANGING IN SIZE FROM ONE TO SIX ACRES.

THIS TRANQUIL RETREAT, SITUATED LESS THAN 5 MINUTES DRIVE FROM THE BASE OF HANAZONO, BOASTS VIEWS AND A LIFESTYLE THAT ARE, HARD TO MATCH - ANYWHERE

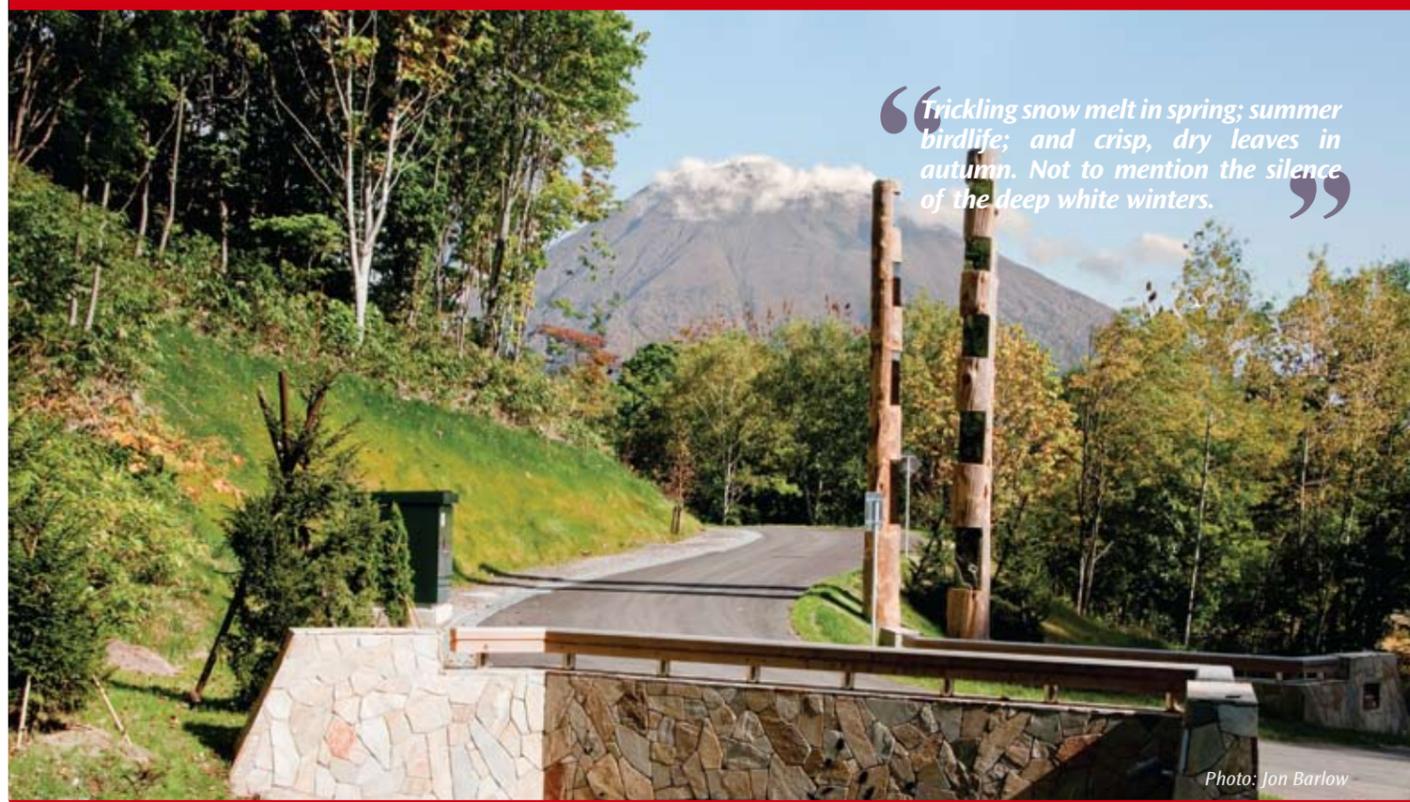
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shouya@sekkastyle.com





By Kristian Lund

## real estate feature *the escarpment*



“Trickling snow melt in spring; summer birdlife; and crisp, dry leaves in autumn. Not to mention the silence of the deep white winters.”

Photo: Jon Barlow

### First look inside The Escarpment

**THE very first home designed for Hokkaido Tracks Resort Properties' most ambitious project to date, The Escarpment, is complete, offering a glimpse into the lifestyle the estate will offer.**

The Escarpment is the first master-planned resort community of its kind in Hirafu, consisting of 25 spacious sites for residences at the base of the village, with unobstructed views of Mt Yotei which are protected by design and covenants.

With the first home now complete, prospective purchasers can gain an understanding of the overall concept, and a chance to think through their own design.

The central spine of the estate is a paved avenue that begins at a stone bridge over a mountain stream, and features underground power lines, road heating, pocket parks, a community gathering space, and an illuminated staircase to the village above.

Year-round Hirafu resident Julian Bailey, from Hokkaido Tracks Resort Properties, says there are several reasons The Escarpment is unique within Hirafu.

“Firstly, there is no other location where the views are protected not only by zoning, but by nature,” he says. “The Escarpment will be the first and last master-planned estate within Hirafu.”

Another unique aspect is the surrounding natural environment. The Escarpment is a woodland buffer



between the built environment of the village and the surrounding forests. “The protected woodland will provide those enjoying Hokkaido’s spectacular seasons with a natural seasonal soundtrack,” Julian says.

“Trickling snow melt in spring; summer birdlife; and crisp, dry leaves in autumn. Not to mention the silence of the deep white winters.”

While Niseko has largely been about powder snow until now, Julian says it’s this natural environment surrounding The Escarpment that makes it perfectly positioned to make the most of every distinct season.

He’s says Asian-based clients coming to Niseko rave about the summer here as much as Aussies do powder.

“Ask families living in Singapore, Hong Kong or Shanghai why they want to come here in summer and they’ll tell you clean, cool air, natural spring water, locally farmed fruit and vegetables and a chance to explore the beautiful, unspoiled Hokkaido,” he says.

“Ask one of the wave of investors in Capella why they are willing to spend several million US Dollars on a property far from ski lifts even though they can afford something closer – master planning, Mt Yotei views, and a sense of escape from the big city life are a significant part of that appeal.

“That’s what Hokkaido tourism will be all about for the lucky few – escaping an increasingly crowded world. Winter is just the bit that got discovered first.”



COMPLETE... a window into the future of the Escarpment.

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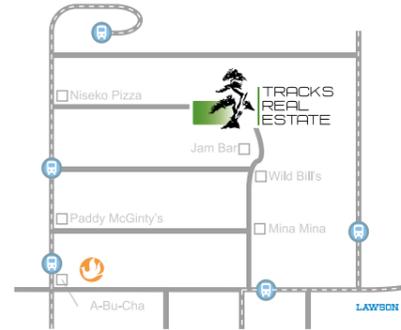
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**Grant Mitchell**  
Manager, Tracks Real Estate | 090-6990-2857



## HIRAFU'S FINEST RESIDENTIAL LAND



¥100,000,000

A stunning block that captures the best of Niseko. It boasts breathtaking Mt Youtei views that can never be built out, a peaceful forest environment and the convenience and resort atmosphere of Hirafu. At 603 sqm (182 tsubo), it is an excellent size for a grand Niseko residence. Blocks of this quality are rarely available, so seize this opportunity now. A scale model of the block is available at the TRE office.

## SKI IN/OUT PRECINCT DEVELOPMENT LAND



¥183,270,000

This large block of land represents a unique opportunity to capitalize on Niseko's on-going development and future growth. Zoned to permit apartment buildings, the 1,008sqm (305 tsubo) site is in Hirafu's ultra-popular ski-in/out precinct. It is just 15 meters from The Vale and Alpen Ridge. A regular shaped block that enjoys views of Mt Youtei, ski slopes and silver birch forest. Adjoining blocks may also be available. Long term settlement dates will minimize holding costs.

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- a variety of land types

### Featured Properties



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Upper Hirafu ¥56,000,000

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**Miharashi 1** 2  
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**Hanazono Residence** 5  
Hanazono ¥99,000,000

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**Mountain Tracks** 6  
Izumikyo I ¥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. 10.6% net return. An excellent opportunity.

**real estate news** *the niseko property market*



By Matthew Thomas and Kristian Lund

**Odin House comes to life**

THE wraps are off Odin House, one of most unique and impressive structures to be built in Niseko to date. Construction of the five-storey, 545sqm eco-conscious residence was recently completed and the keys will soon be handed over to the owner. The marriage of 'Scandinavian design lines and Japanese sense of aesthetics', brought to life by Odin's Norwegian brothers Chris and Bjorn Fjeldahl and Frenchman Nicolas Gontard, has wowed locals and visitors alike. One bemused Japanese man was found looking for the 'public entrance' to the building, which he thought must have been some kind of boutique design museum. Odin's design ambitions are epitomised by its curved floating roof, which was subject of intense debate with the building's architects concerned about being able to achieve the design. Chris says Odin House is a 'visual and emotional feast – great to look at, and great to look out from'. The core bay window, surrounding the split-level upper living, dining and kitchen area, faces Mt Yotei in one direction and over forested hillsides towards Mt Annupuri in another.



*Photo: Glen Claydon*



**Capella sales keep coming**

**SALES of Capella Niseko continue to roll in, with three deposits received for apartments from buyers in Niseko alone this season.**

Outside Niseko, several more deposits were made at a recent trade show in Shanghai, and 45 have been sold in Hong Kong and Singapore.

Capella Niseko will be a luxury boutique resort at Annupuri, comprised of 70 suites and a mix of 149 apartments, houses and villas. Capella is the world's only six-star resort chain.

All sales have been made by Niseko Property, who have a Capella Niseko display in their showroom on Hirafu-Zaka Street, opposite the Park Hotel, and inquiries at the new office in Alpen Ridge.

Ruskin McLennan from Niseko Property said that in spite of its six-star status, Capella Niseko was competitively priced, and a sound investment.

"On a square-metre basis, it's cheaper than Hirafu, which a lot of people don't realise," he said. "Because we're targeting the year-round market, not just winter, the rental returns are planned to be about five per cent."

**Vale Niseko experience sells**

**GUESTS are obviously impressed with The Vale Niseko experience – the complex's two penthouses and seven apartments have gone under contract to people who have stayed there since it opened for business on December 9.** Until then, 28 apartments in the Niseko Alpine Development (Nisade) project had been sold over 16 months, and 12 remain for sale.

The ski-in, ski-out complex comprises a mix of 49 serviced apartments and hotel rooms, a licensed indoor/outdoor onsen (natural volcanic hot spring baths) plus 10 private onsens, outdoor heated swimming pool, saunas, restaurant, bar, and an après ski terrace.

Nisade president Kal Bragg said the clientele now attracted to Niseko demanded a higher level of service, luxury and facilities combined with location.

"Guests are able to enjoy a designer ski apartment with amazing alpine views, utilise Niseko's best serviced facilities, stroll to central village and ski-in ski-out – the perfect combination for alpine living," he said.

The penthouse sales were made by Craig Meikle of Meikle and Associates.

**Eco-smart mansion complete**

**THE finishing touches have been put on Eco 260 – an enormous 850sqm private residence in Hirafu Middle Village.**

Almost every aspect of the modern, chic, high-end mansion – right down to the tiles – has been custom designed by its hands-on Hong Kong-based owners, Frenchman Bernard and Lily Gauthier.

Project manager Matt Jones from Niseko Resort Design and Construction, said Eco 260 took its name from its environmentally friendly design and features, coupled with 260-degree views from the top floor.

The property boasts 52 geothermal bore holes, all 115m deep, that provide all the heat required for the pool, jacuzzi, driveway and floor heating.

In summer, 54 solar panels produce enough energy for Eco 260 to use year-round.

The house also boasts Niseko's only private swimming pool, measuring 10m by 4m and finished with brushed stainless steel.

**Keep an eye out for a more in-depth feature on Eco 260 in a coming edition of Powderlife.**

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*Photos: Glen Claydon*

**Land – Hanazono Site** 

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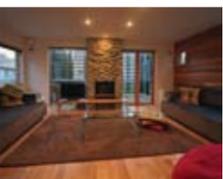
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Hanazono House  
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Land 1.063m<sup>2</sup> Building 140m<sup>2</sup> 3min drive to Hanazono Ski-resort

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## niseko resort guide *info to help you get around*

### TOURIST INFORMATION

#### Kutchan Machi no Eki Puratto Information Centre

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

**Tel: (0136) 22 1121.**

#### The Niseko Grand Hirafu Welcome Centre

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

### GETTING HERE AND AWAY

#### New Chitose Airport. Tel: (0123) 23 0111

[www.new-chitose-airport.jp/language/english](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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 Tsuruho 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](http://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](http://www.powderlife.com/niseko-resort-guide)

## local lingo *top ten words and phrases for tourists // making conversation*

By studio tdes

**APART from the fun you're having sliding down the mountain and eating up a storm, the highlights of your holiday in Niseko are likely to be the interactions with the locals.**

Why not make them even more memorable by trying out some of these phrases? Today's lesson has some essential language to help you in your mission to make friends – or special friends ;)

#### 1. Hajimemashite – Nice to meet you

When you meet someone for the first time, say: Hajimemashite. Depending on the situation and the degree of formality required, you could do some kind of semi-bow or bow when saying this.

#### 2. Onamae wa? – What's your name?

To ask someone's name, say: Onamae wa? After they say their name, you can say your name and add desu. Bob desu (My name is Bob). Note: the suffix '-san' is only for adding to other people's names, you'll sound foolish if you add it to your own name. After you've

exchanged names, say: Yoroshiku onegaishimasu. This doesn't have an English equivalent.

#### 3. Doko kara kitano? – Where are you from?

If you're a Caucasian in Niseko, don't be surprised if people skip this question and ask: Oosutorariya jin? (Are you Australian?)

#### 4. Nan sai? – How old are you?

In Japanese conversation, it's common to ask how old people are – partly to figure out what kind of grammar you can get away with. If you ask someone their age, they might say: Nan sai ni mieru? (How old do I look?)

#### 5. Nihon wa hajimete? – Is it your first time in Japan?

Early on in the conversation, they'll probably want to know if it's your first time here: Nihon wa hajimete? If it is, say: Hai (Yes). If not: Iie (No) + number of times.

#### 6. Shigoto wa nani? – What do you do?

This question relates to specifically to your job. If a fellow resident/seasonal worker finds out you're in Niseko for the season, they'll probably ask: Doko de hataraiteru no? (Where are you working?)

#### 7. Nihongo jyozu! – Your Japanese is excellent!

Japanese will often exclaim: Nihongo jyozu! (Wow, your Japanese is excellent!) This may seem strange, but don't

worry, they're just trying to be nice and encouraging. You can respond by shaking your head and saying: Iie mada mada desu (No, I've still got a long way to go).

#### 8. Nani gata? – What's your blood type?

If someone suddenly asks you what your blood type is – Nani gata? – don't be alarmed. It's just small talk, like asking someone what their star sign is.

#### 9. Karaoke suki? – Do you like karaoke?

If someone starts asking you if you like various things, they could be trying to segue into giving or eliciting an invitation. Karaoke suki? (Do you like karaoke?) Daisuki! (I love it!) Jya kondo isshoni ikou ka? (Let's go together sometime.) Zehi! (That sounds great!) This is the perfect lead-in to exchanging keitai (cell phone) numbers.

#### 10. Shashin issyoni toru? – Can we get a photo together?

Suggest taking a photo with someone: Syashin issyoni toru? And if you're in the photo, don't forget the gesture – in Japan the peace sign is mandatory!

**Next issue: Travel. More lessons at [www.powderlife.com/niseko-travel-guide](http://www.powderlife.com/niseko-travel-guide)**



# restaurants & food

**MAP C2 p47**  
**A-Bu-Cha 2**

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



**A wide variety of meals and drinks – top marks!**

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

**0136 22 5620**

**MAP D1 p47**  
**Bang Bang**

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



**We take great pride in our fresh seafood**

5.30-11.30pm  
Occasionally Closed  
35 seats

**0136 22 4292**

**MAP F7 p46**  
**Black Diamond Restaurant**

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



**Free pick-up from the Hilton and Niseko area**

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

**0136 44 1144**

**MAP C2 p47**  
**Bhozan**

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



**Bring 4 people, get 1 meal free before 6.30pm**

5-10pm  
Open daily

**0136 21 2121**

**MAP B3 p46**  
**Cocoro Okonomiyaki**

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



**Try our healthy and great value okonomiyaki**

11am-9pm

**Jap 0136 22 1528 / Eng 0136 23 0008**

**MAP A2 p47**  
**Downtown Café**

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



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

8am-11pm  
Open daily  
Yamada 167-6

**0136 23 3354**

**MAP A3 p47**  
**Ebisutei**

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



**Have fun with our GENKI and Laughing ODEN bar staff**

Open daily  
5pm-midnight

**0136 22 6544**

**MAP D3 p47**  
**EN in-house fine dining**

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



**It's all part of going beyond your expectations**

7am-11pm daily

**0136 55 8100**

# restaurants & food

**MAP F4 p47**  
**Hana Jizoh**

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



**Creative and delicious breads from local baker**

**0136 23 0331**

**MAP D1 p47**  
**Hinabe-Ya**

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



**Asian hotpot and ethnic cuisine in a Mongolian yurt**

11.30am-11pm  
Open daily  
80 seats

**0136 23 2636**

**MAP A2 p47**  
**J-Sekka Café & Delicatessen**

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



**a taste of Hokkaido**

Open from 7am  
7 days

**0136 21 3088**

**MAP C2 p47**  
**Kabuki**

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



**Okonomiyaki and teppanyaki restaurant**

11am-10pm  
Open daily

**0136 21 2233**

**MAP E2 p47**  
**Kamimura**

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



**Blessed by land, sea and a creative chef**

5:30pm-11:00pm  
Occasionally closed

**0136 21 2288**

**MAP D2 p47**  
**Lars Longcox Nachos Bar**

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



**Beers from just ¥200 Excellent value meals**

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

**0136 21 5833**

**MAP D2 p47**  
**Mina Mina**

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



**Good music, good alcohol**

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

**0136 23 3437**

**MAP E8 p46**  
**M's Café (Saison Club)**

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



**Warm your body with our big hearty hotpots**

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

**0136 44 3380**

# restaurants & food

**MAP D2 p47**  
**Niseko Pizza**

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



**Dine in, Take-away and Delivery**

Open every day  
Lunch-Dinner  
**0136 55 5553**

**MAP C2 p47**  
**Restaurant & Wine Bar Dragon**

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



**Our sommeliers welcome you**

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

**MAP A2 p47**  
**Sekka Dining**

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



**International style showcasing the best of Hokkaido**

6-10pm  
7 days  
**0136 21 5022**

**MAP C1 p47**  
**Sencho 2**

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



**Best Choice for Gourmet Seafood**

5pm-midnight  
Open daily  
**0136 22 5454**

**MAP C1 p47**  
**Shiosai**

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



**Fresh, live, gourmet seafood - the ultimate choice!**

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

**MAP B5 p46**  
**Shunsai**

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



**Creative fusion cuisine from land and sea**

11am-9pm  
Closed Sundays  
**0136 23 1882**

**MAP C3 p47**  
**Souan Genghis Khan Lamb BBQ**

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



**¥1700 all you can eat barbecue for 90 minutes!**

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

**MAP B3 p47**  
**Steak Rosso Rosso**

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



**A must for steak lovers!**

6-11pm  
Occasionally closed  
**0136 21 7100**

# restaurants & food

**MAP E2 p47**  
**Taj Mahal**

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



**Visit India in Taj Mahal Niseko**

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

**MAP E4 p47**  
**Teuchi Soba Ichimura**

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



**Homemade soba noodles, carefully selected ingredients**

11am-3pm  
Closed Tuesdays  
**0136 23 0603**

**MAP C3 p47**  
**The Barn**

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



**Sushi & Fusion Restaurant Adventurous, fun, exciting**

6-11pm  
Occasionally closed  
**0136 23 0888**

**MAP E3 p47**  
**Tsubara Tsubara**

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



**Spicy, flavoursome local Hokkaido curry soup**

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

**MAP B2 p47**  
**Vale Bar & Grill**

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



**Buffet Breakfast served from 7am daily**

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

**MAP E2 p47**  
**Wild Bill's**

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



**Gourmet Tex-Mex in our beautiful log house**

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

**MAP B2 p47**  
**Yakitori Yosaku**

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



**Serving yakitori every night until 3am**

6pm-3am  
Open daily  
**0136 23 4390**

**MAP D3 p47**  
**Yummy's Pizza**

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



**YUMMY Homemade crust pizza and Western foods restaurant**

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

# bars & pubs

**MAP C3 p47**  
**Half Note**  
 MIDDLE HIRAFU The only jazz bar in Hirafu, check out Half Note's regular jazz events at [www.nisekohalfnote.com](http://www.nisekohalfnote.com). Also with billiards, table tennis. There's always something going on at Half Note.



**MAP B3 p46**  
**Loaf Lounge**  
 KUTCHAN Make sure you spend a day or night in Kutchan, and make sure you check out the coolest bar around. Bar, skateboard bowl, mini ramp, pool, ping pong, events. Kids, girls, non-skaters welcome. [www.loaflounge.com](http://www.loaflounge.com)



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

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

**MAP A2 p47**  
**Maki Lounge**  
 MIDDLE HIRAFU Discover the indulgence imperative of the famous Maki Lounge with its large open fire and great night views of the mountain. Savour the very best of Japanese whiskey, sake & shochu. [www.j-sekka.com](http://www.j-sekka.com)



**MAP E2 p47**  
**Wild Bill's**  
 UPPER HIRAFU If you're partial to Tex-Mex, tequila, mojitos, margaritas and music, step out of the snow and into our gorgeous log cabin. Wild Bill's offers the quintessential apres ski atmosphere. [www.wildbillsniseko.com](http://www.wildbillsniseko.com)



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

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

**MAP B2 p47**  
**Yosaku Bar**  
 MIDDLE HIRAFU Great local Japanese bar serving lunch everyday and drinks everynight. Billiard table, foosball, darts and Sapporo beer.



**MAP C1 p47**  
**Yuki Bar**  
 UPPER HIRAFU Yuki bar is always open for a sports match! Darts, billiards and foosball. Make no mistake – start the party with a 4 litre Beer Tower! Or the famous Okinawa's Snake Sake!



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

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

**MAP C2 p47**  
**Paddy McGinty's Irish Pub**  
 Open all year round midday till late Darts & Live Sports on the Biggest Screen in Niseko  
 Trivia and Fun Nights Draft Guinness & Kilkenny  
 Great Pub Food & Kids' Menu  
[www.paddymcgentysirishpub.com](http://www.paddymcgentysirishpub.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](http://www.blackdiamondtours.com)



**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](http://www.niseko.co.jp/plat)



**Niseko's Backcountry Powder Specialists** 8am-8pm daily Located above Yuki Bar Across from Alpen Ridge  
**☎ 090 2054 8687**

**Experience Japan's cultural heritage** 3-7.30pm Jan 10/Feb 3/Feb 15 Bookings essential  
**☎ 0136 23 0222**

**MAP D1 p47**  
**Niseko Foot 'Body & Foot Treatment'**  
 UPPER HIRAFU Visit this popular relaxation salon and sample some of our many treatments. All different styles of massage are available for body and feet. 45 min, 60 min and 90 minute courses. [www.grand-hirafu.jp/nisekofoot](http://www.grand-hirafu.jp/nisekofoot)



**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](http://www.nisekomassage.com)



**Closest massage to the Centre 4 Lift** 11am-10pm Free pick up available  
**☎ 0136 22 1224**

**Sports and relaxation massage in the middle of Hirafu** 8am-8pm daily Home visits available  
**☎ 0136 22 0399**

**MAP C1 p47**  
**On-Snow Photography & Video Tours**  
 UPPER HIRAFU From the deepest powder pics to group tours and family shots – Niseko Photography are the local professionals. Book a tour and capture your priceless holiday memories. [www.nisekophotography.com](http://www.nisekophotography.com)



**MAP A3 47**  
**Niseko Snowmobile Adventures**  
 LOWER HIRAFU Backcountry Adventures Top Machines Qualified Guides MAXIMUM FUN!! Based in Hangloose Lower Hirafu [www.go-nsa.com](http://www.go-nsa.com)



**Niseko's Professional Photographers!** Gallery: midday-8pm On the mountain: All day, every day  
**☎ 0136 22 5764**

**Guided Snowmobile Adventures** 7 days Bookings essential  
**☎ 090 9757 4083**

**MAP C1 p47**  
**NISS International Snowsports School**  
 HIRAFU/HANAZONO NISS offers a comprehensive range of programs to accommodate every guest's needs and aspirations. Take advantage of Hanazono's excellent new 308 kids facility and group class sizes. [www.harmonyresorts.com](http://www.harmonyresorts.com)



**MAP D3 p47**  
**Shinsetsu Mountain Guides**  
 MIDDLE HIRAFU Qualified guides, dedicated instructors, renowned service. Experience all that Niseko has to offer with Shinsetsu Mountain Guides and Ski School. [www.smguides.net](http://www.smguides.net)



**Kids are our specialty Hirafu & Hanazono** 8.30am-4pm Ticket Sales/Kids Centre Hirafu & Hanazono  
**☎ 0136 21 6688**

**Experience all that Niseko has to offer** Smguides@gmail.com  
**☎ 090 6214 1065**

# shopping & retail

**MAP B3 p46**  
**Boom Sports**

**KUTCHAN**

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



www.boom-snow.com

**Snow goods and Niseko limited souvenirs**

10am-7.30pm  
Open daily

☎ **0136 23 0011**

**MAP B3 p46**  
**Cocoroya**

**KUTCHAN**

Offers antique Kimono, furniture and original hand made gifts. We can also bring a range of goods to your apartment for home shopping. Try our origami lessons, incl green tea ¥3,500.



www.cocoroya.jp

**Take home a unique piece of Japan**

10.30am-7.30pm  
Open every day

☎ **0136 23 0008**

**MAP C3 p47**  
**Ezo Seafoods**

**MIDDLE HIRAFU**

We stock seafood for takeout sourced daily from the coast – oysters, King Red Crab, salmon, and more. We also prepare seafood platters and Fish & Chips.



www.ezoseafoods.com

**Seafood Shop in Hirafu village**

Open from 4pm

☎ **0136 22 3019**

**MAP C1 p47**  
**Fusion Sports Shop**

**HIRAFU/HANAZONO**

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



www.harmonyresorts.com

**Gear for the Elements At 2 Locations in Niseko**

Hirafu 8am-9pm  
Hanazono 8.30-5pm

☎ **Hirafu 0136 21 6633 / Hanazono 0136 23 0911**

**MAP E2 p47**  
**Niseko 343**

**MIDDLE HIRAFU**

NISEKO weather demands special equipment – “Niseko-grade” gear. Find it at Niseko 343. Providing snow gear and impeccable service since 1993. High-grade rentals and tune-ups.



www.niseko343.com

**NISEKO+343 = 200% FUN**

8am-9pm  
Open daily

☎ **0136 23 0343**

**MAP C1 p47**  
**Niseko Four Seasons Photo Gallery**

**UPPER HIRAFU**

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



www.nisekophotography.com

**Photo Gallery - fine art prints and souvenirs**

Midday-8pm  
Open daily

☎ **0136 22 5764**

**MAP C2 p47**  
**Sakura**

**UPPER HIRAFU**

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



www.sakura-niseko.com

**Your one-stop Japanese souvenir shop**

2-9pm daily in winter

☎ **0136 21 7007**

**MAP E2 p47**  
**Toyru**

**UPPER HIRAFU**

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



www.toyru.com

**Really close to the Gondola station!!**

11am-8pm  
Open daily

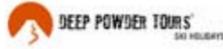
☎ **0136 21 4055**

# travel & accommodation

**MAP E1 p47**  
**Deep Powder Tours Ski Holidays**

**UPPER HIRAFU**

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



www.deeppowdertours.com

**The Ultimate Ski and Snowboard Experience!**

10am-6pm

☎ **0136 21 5827**

**MAP E2 p47**  
**Hokkaido Tracks Holidays**

**UPPER HIRAFU**

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



www.htholidays.com

**Experience exceptional**

8am to 9pm  
Monday to Sunday

☎ **0136 23 3503**

**MAP B3 p47**  
**Holiday Niseko**

**LOWER HIRAFU**

Holiday Niseko - Affordable holidays and ski packages. Saving you more.



www.holidayniseko.com

**Leader of the pack**

8.30am-6pm

☎ **0136 21 6221**

**MAP E2 p47**  
**NPC Niseko Powder Connection**

**UPPER HIRAFU**

Save time, save money. NPC can arrange everything you need including lift passes, rentals, lessons, transfers, mountain tours, guiding, day trips and food hampers.



www.niseko-hirafu.com

**the smarter choice**

1- 6pm  
Monday to Saturday

☎ **0136 21 2500**

**MAP C2 p47**  
**Nisade**

**UPPER HIRAFU**

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



www.nisade.com

**Your Alpine Partner**

7am-11pm

☎ **0136 22 0038**

**MAP E4 p47**  
**Shizenkan Backpacker & Lodge**

**IZUMIKYO 2**

With exceptional facilities and a great atmosphere, Shizenkan Backpacker & Lodge are the pick of the bunch for travellers on a budget.



www.niseko-backpacker.com

**Backpacker and Ski Lodge Accommodation**

7am-10pm  
7 days

☎ **0136 23 4351**

**MAP F3 p47**  
**The Niseko Company**

**IZUMIKYO 1**

Luxury Accommodation Beyond Expectation Let Us Tempt You



www.thenisekocompany.com

**Luxury Mountain Holidays**

8am-8pm  
Monday-Sunday

☎ **0136 21 7272**

**MAP C1 p47**  
**Travelplan**

**UPPER HIRAFU**

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



www.travelplan.com.au

**The World's Best Ski Holidays**

8am-8pm  
7 days

☎ **0136 21 5354**

## rental & services

**MAP C1 p47**  
**DEMO Equipment Hire**  
 HIRAFU/HANAZONO  
 Huge fleet of skis & boots, snowboards & boots, helmets and snow shoes for adults and kids. Deep powder, park, groomed, off piste, back country, we have equipment to suit all conditions and all levels.  
 www.harmonyresorts.com



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

**MAP F7 p46**  
**Niseko Auto Rentals and Sales**  
 HIGASHIYAMA  
 Complement your holiday or home with a 4WD vehicle. Local licensed dealer offering affordable rentals and sales IN ENGLISH. Short and long term rentals available.  
 www.nisekoauto.com



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

**MAP C3 p47**  
**TANA's Healing House RAKU**  
 MIDDLE HIRAFU  
 More than a massage - Get to the root of your problem. Realigning techniques achieve natural healing by balancing skeletal, muscular & nerve systems. Especially good for chronic problems. Est 12 years.



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

**MAP G8 p46**  
**Kaya Design & Construction**  
 KABAYAMA  
 Specializing in traditional techniques with a contemporary feel, we are the name behind many of Niseko's iconic properties. All aspects of design, construction & supervision.  
 www.kaya-architect.com



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

**MAP NA**  
**Glen Claydon Photography**  
 HIRAFU  
 Complete photographic services including architectural, landscape, stock, prints and panoramic photography for online virtual tours.  
 www.glenclaydon.com



**Creatively capturing Niseko**  
**080 6098 7244**

**MAP A2 p47**  
**Niseko Physio**  
 MIDDLE HIRAFU  
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niseko maps *kutchan, annupuri, higashiyama*

**KUTCHAN**

**ANNUPURI**

**HIGASHIYAMA**

**Legend:**

- Bars & Restaurants:** A3 Cafe Kaku, A3 Nami Chan Chi, A3 Nozomi II 2F, A3 Be 1F, A3 World Sports Bar 2F, C4 Manana, A4 Loaf Lounge, A4 Shunsai, D3 Cocoroya Okonomiyaki, A3 Cocoroya Antique Shop, A3 Boom, A5 Fuji Confectionary, C3 Hanko Hiroba, A4 Kutchan Tourist Info Centre, C3 Hidamari, B3 Blue Cielo, A4 Hammako, A4 Nihon Bashi, A4 Sprout Espresso
- Post Office (ATM):** C2, E3
- Supermarkets:** G3 1. Max Valu, C3 2. Joy, A4 3. Co-op
- 7-Eleven (ATM):** C1, A4
- Kutchan Town Office:** B1
- Drug Store:** G4, D3, C3
- Homac:** G3
- Gas Station:** E3, C3
- Train Station:** B5
- Police:** C2, C5

**Other Landmarks:** Kutchan Town Office, 7-Eleven (ATM), Police Station, Main Post Office (ATM), Drug Store, Hidamari, Hanko Hiroba, Gas Station, Post Office (ATM), Joy - Supermarket, Cocoro Okonomiyaki, Manana, Miyako Dori, Eki Mae Dori, Police Box (Koban), Kutchan Train Station, Max-Valu Supermarket, Drug Store, HOMAC, Blue Cielo, Loaf Lounge, Nozomi II, Cocoroya Antique Shop, Nami Chan Chi, Cafe Kaku, Be. World Sports Bar, Nihon Bashi, Kutchan Tourist Info Centre, Hammako, Sprout, Fuji Confectionary, Shunsai, Co-op - Supermarket.

- |                     |                             |                          |             |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| A7 Kanro No Mori    | C7 BBQ House Moku Moku Tei  | A8 Grand Hotel (Onsen)   | C8 Karabina |
| B7 Moiva Ski Resort | D7 Niseko Northern Resort   | C8 Annupuri Village      | D8 Lohas    |
| B7 Pow Com Cafe     | D7 Nook                     | C8 Yu Gokoro Tei (Onsen) | D8 Grove    |
| C7 Ikoi No Mura     | A8 Kanro Sui - Spring Water | C8 Rakuichi              |             |
- 
- |                          |                     |                               |
|--------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| G6 Hilton Niseko Village | E7 Niseko Life Plan | G8 Kaya Design & Construction |
| G6 Hilton Onsen          | E8 Milk Ko-bo       |                               |
| E7 Green Leaf Hotel      | E8 Saison           |                               |
| E7 Black Diamond Lodge   | E8 M's Cafe         |                               |

**Hirafu Main Village**

**Hirafu East Village**

**Hirafu South Village**

**Legend:**

- Resort Hotel
- Accommodation
- Restaurant, Food
- Shop
- Rental
- Ski School, Activity
- Travel Company
- Bail Estate, Developer, Management
- Day Care Center
- Information Map
- Post
- International ATM(2)
- Hot Spring
- Lift Ticket Counter
- Factory, Turn-up
- Information Center
- Convenience Store
- Kutchan Hospital
- Post Office (ATM)
- Supermarkets
- 7-Eleven (ATM)
- Kutchan Town Office
- Drug Store
- Homac
- Gas Station
- Train Station
- Police

**speed dial** quick guide to village phone numbers

Restaurants,cafés and eateries

- |   |   |  |   |   |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| ■ A-Bu-Cha<br>阿武茶<br>22 5620  | ■ Ezo seafoods<br>エソ・シーフード<br>090-1203-7879                 | ■ Java Bar and Café<br>ジャバ バー&カフェ<br>090 2871 6781 | ■ Niseko Genghis Khan<br>ニセコ ジンギスカン<br>22-2138        | ■ Shunsai<br>旬彩<br>23-1882                              |
| ■ Aburiya<br>あぶり屋<br>090 7656 5767  | ■ Fujizushi Sushi<br>ふじ鮓<br>23 2661                         | ■ JoJo's Café and Bar<br>ジョジョズ (カフェ&バー)<br>23 2093 | ■ Niseko Gourmet<br>ニセコグルメ<br>080 5584 1313           | ■ Slalom<br>スラローム<br>22 1105                            |
| ■ Bang Bang<br>バンバン<br>22 4292  | ■ Gentem Café<br>玄天カフェ<br>23 3154                           | ■ Jyuu Okonomiyaki<br>じゅう<br>44 2336               | ■ Niseko Pizza<br>ニセコ ピザ<br>55 5553 [MAP D2]          | ■ Souan<br>草庵<br>090-2059-6701                          |
| ■ Bang 2<br>バン2<br>22 1480  | ■ Grandpapa<br>グランパパ<br>23 2244                             | ■ Kabuki<br>カブキ<br>21-2233                         | ■ Paddy McGinty's<br>パディーマギンティーズ<br>55 8020           | ■ Spur Chinese Restaurant<br>シュプール (中華レストラン)<br>22 1105 |
| ■ Barunba<br>バルンバ<br>090 8907 9399  | ■ Graubunden<br>グラウビュンデン<br>23 3371                         | ■ Kakashi<br>かかし<br>23 2622                        | ■ Payoka<br>パヨカ<br>22 0117                            | ■ Steak Rosso Rosso<br>ステーキロッソロッソ<br>21-7100            |
| ■ Bhozan<br>ボーザン<br>21-2121   | ■ Guzuguzu<br>ぐずぐず<br>21-4855                               | ■ Kame<br>亀<br>22 0339                             | ■ Piccolo House<br>ピッコロハウス (カフェ&バー)<br>23 0311        | ■ The Barn<br>ザ・バーン<br>23-0888                          |
| ■ Black Diamond Lodge Restaurant<br>ブラックダイヤモンドレストラン<br>44 1144                        | ■ Hana Jizoh Bakery<br>花地蔵<br>23 0331                       | ■ Kamimura<br>カミムラ<br>21 2288                      | ■ Raku Izakaya<br>楽 居酒屋<br>22 6638                    | ■ Tsubara Tsubara<br>つばらつばら<br>23 1116                  |
| ■ Bouken Kazoku<br>冒険家族<br>22 3759  | ■ Hidamari<br>陽だまり<br>55-5000                               | ■ LumberJack<br>ランバージャック<br>22-3086                | ■ Ramat Niseko<br>ラマッタニセコ<br>21 5088                  | ■ Vale Bar and Grill<br>ヴァイルバー&グリル<br>21-5833           |
| ■ Café KAKU<br>カフェ覚<br>22-5608  | ■ Hinabeya<br>火鍋屋<br>23-2636                                | ■ Lupicia<br>ルピシア<br>21 7880                       | ■ Rin Izakaya<br>りん 居酒屋<br>22 1444                    | ■ Wild Bill's<br>ワイルドビルズ<br>22 5652                     |
| ■ Cocoro Okonomiyaki<br>お好み焼きこころ<br>23-0008   | ■ Hirafu Fleur<br>創作料理ヒラフル<br>23 3306                       | ■ M's Café<br>エムズカフェ<br>44-3380                    | ■ Sakae Izakaya<br>さかえ<br>22-4198                     | ■ Yawaraya<br>やわらや<br>23 3810                           |
| ■ Curry Goya<br>カレー小屋<br>23 3688  | ■ Ichimura Soba<br>蕎麦屋 いちむら<br>23 0603                      | ■ Mina Mina<br>ミナミナ<br>23 4471                     | ■ Sekka Dining<br>セッカダイニング<br>21 5022                 | ■ Yo<br>よ<br>22-6979                                    |
| ■ Downtown Café<br>ダウントウンカフェ<br>23 3354   | ■ if... Café<br>カフェ イフ<br>22 4770                           | ■ Mokoraya<br>もこらや<br>090 8279 0598                | ■ Senchou 1 Izakaya<br>船長 (居酒屋)<br>22 2001            | ■ Yosaku<br>与作<br>23-4390                               |
| ■ Dragon Wine and Food Bar<br>ドラゴン ワイン&バー<br>21 7700                                  | ■ J-Sekka Café & Delicatessen<br>J-セツカカフェ&デリカテゼン<br>21 3088 | ■ Mozart<br>モーツァルト<br>090 2699 6387                | ■ Senchou 2 Seafood Izakaya<br>海山屋 (海鮮居酒屋)<br>22 5454 | ■ Youtei Yakiniku<br>焼肉ようてい<br>22 0109                  |
| ■ Ebisutei<br>えびす亭<br>22-6544<br>EN in-house fine dining<br>宴会ハウスファインダイニング<br>55 8100 | ■ Jam Café Bar<br>ジャム (カフェバー)<br>23 0700                    | ■ Nakaya<br>なかや<br>090-7518-0873                   | ■ Shiosai<br>潮彩<br>55-5009                            | ■ Yummy's<br>ヤミーズ<br>21 2239                            |
|   | ■ Japanese Kitchen Bouken<br>冒険家族<br>22 3759                | ■ Nami Chan Chi<br>波ちゃん家<br>21 2258                | ■ Shokusai Hirafu<br>食彩 比羅夫<br>22 1105                | ■ Yuki Bar and Café<br>雪場カフェ<br>22 0234                 |

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

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

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after the melt *hiking in niseko*

*“Standing on the peak without having used any lifts to get there is a truly satisfying experience.”*

**NISEKO is a stunning place to hike in the summer-time. The landscape is beautiful and the terrain varies from gentle forest walks to challenging mountain climbs. Niseko probably isn't going to give the serious mountaineer too much of a rush, but for your weekend hiker and nature lover, it offers tremendous variety.**

The premier hike is of course Mt Yotei. If you're a keen hiker, this is THE one you want to tick off your list. The accomplishment of reaching the summit and witnessing the inside of the massive, rarely seen crater will be enough for most, but the trek up will be of particular interest to botanists and nature lovers – there are several distinct changes in vegetation as you climb, from forests to fields of flowers (which by the way are at their best in July). There are four paths up Yotei-zan and the ascent generally takes most people between four and six hours

The other big one is Mt Annupuri – the mother of Niseko's four main ski resorts. Standing on the peak without having used any lifts to get there is a truly satisfying experience. The view – including glimpses of both the Pacific Ocean and Sea of Japan – is awe-inspiring.

Other peaks within a short drive of Niseko are Mt Iwaonupuri, Chisenupuri, Shiribetsu-dake and Konbu-dake. Basically, if you based yourself in Niseko for a week, there would be more than enough to keep you busy hiking every day.

*NEARLY THERE... towards the summit of Mt Yotei. Photo: Kristian Lund*

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<p><b>Sekka Kado</b> <b>¥198,000,000</b></p> <p>Ultra stylish and extremely spacious. 6BDR/6BA modern chalet in lower Hirafu. Too many amenities to list. Enquire for details.</p> <p><b>Location: Lower Hirafu</b>  <b>Bld. size: 440 sqm</b>  <b>Land size: 100 tsubo (330 sqm)</b></p> <p>6 6</p>	<p><b>Upper Hirafu Lodge</b> <b>¥48,700,000</b></p> <p>Best deal in Upper Hirafu. Fantastic redevelopment site, while current structure provides short term cash flow. Great location, close to everything.</p> <p><b>Location: Upper Hirafu</b>  <b>Bld. size: 160.37 sqm</b>  <b>Land size: 124.84 tsubo (412 sqm)</b></p>
<p><b>Hirafu cliffside land</b> <b>¥46,080,000</b></p> <p>Rare bluff block with secured Mt.Yotei views across the valley. Highly sought after location. Perfect spot for a luxury vacation home.</p> <p><b>Location: Lower Hirafu Bluff</b>  <b>Land size: 115 tsubo (380 sqm)</b></p>	<p><b>The Vale 402</b> <b>¥136,000,000</b></p> <p>Stunning Mt. Yotei views. 2 key option for strong occupancy and returns. Hotel-grade amenities.</p> <p><b>Location: Upper Hirafu ski-in/ski-out</b>  <b>Bld. size: 152 sqm</b>  <b>Arrange an inspection today</b></p> <p>3 3</p>

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niseko cycle week *2009 event was 'perfect'*

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

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

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

Highlights of the week included:

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

including plenty of non-cyclists, pedalling to work.

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

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

- To promote the area's amazing potential as a mountain biking and road cycling destination.
  - To promote an active lifestyle and health awareness.
  - To contribute to the notion of environmental sustainability through the use of bikes rather than cars.
- Niseko Cycle Week will be back again next summer so keep an eye on [www.nisekocycleweek.com](http://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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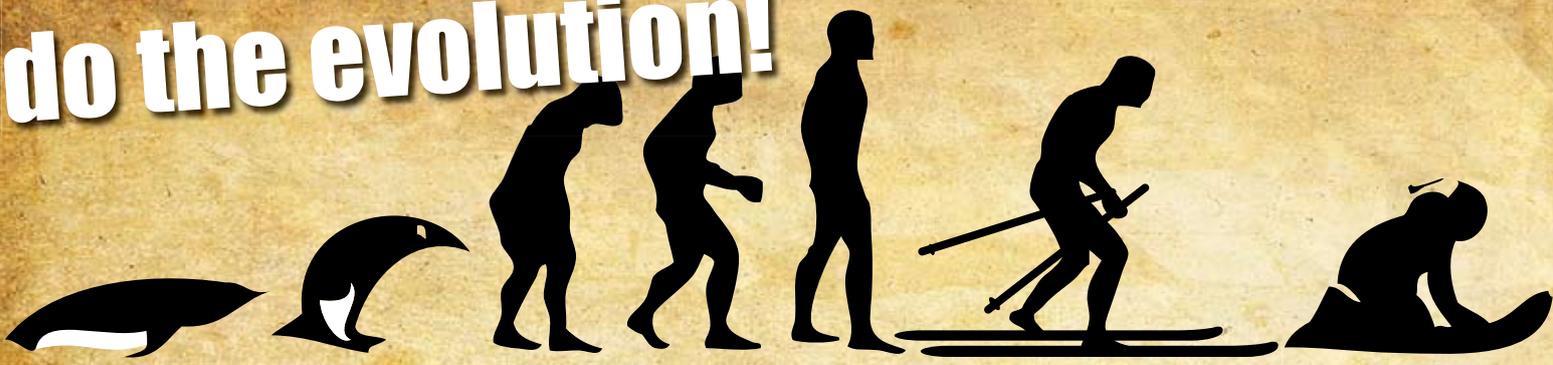
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From 4pm, Thursday February 18<sup>th</sup>

February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2010!

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