

issue 25 // Mar 6 - Mar 19 // 2010

powderlife

NISEKO ニセコ
www.powderlife.com

MARCH THE PEAK

IN THE HOUSE

inside hirafu's biggest mansion

HIRAFU PIG DOG

the pig who thinks she's a dog

IN THE LOOP

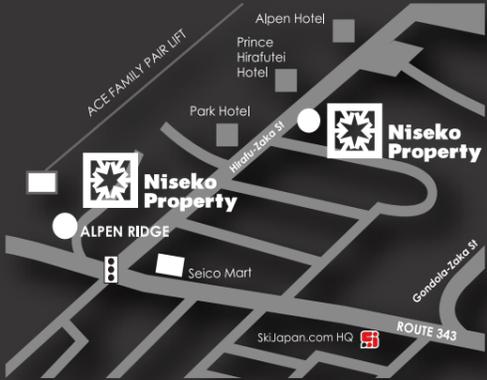
your guide to what's on

Niseko's powder lifestyle magazine fresh every two weeks

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cover March the Peak, Hirafu photo Glen Claydon



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the vale niseko

...bottom of the ace family ski lift

editor's note *issue 25 march 6, 2010*



MARCH has arrived, we're out of the official 'powder season' and heading into spring. The snow was literally relentless this winter, but finally it's backed off and we're enjoying more and more blue skies. It was a super-cold January and February too, with a few days creeping down towards 20 below at village level. We're up above zero quite often now, and it won't be long before it's T-shirt weather again.

After all that snow, all but the most powder-addicted locals are looking forward to spring – experiencing the dramatic changes in the seasons is one of the great things about living in Niseko. And one of the great things about March is you can enjoy a little bit of everything – the mountain still has a huge snow base, there are usually quite a few powder days, and it's a great time to do some backcountry hiking. You could even sneak in a few early green season activities like rafting and cycling... although golf and mountain biking are still a while off yet.

But let's not get ahead of ourselves, winter's still kicking and this issue of the mag is packed with lots of what's going on in sunny March. Our weather correspondent The Don gives us the run down on what Mother Nature has in store for us, we introduce the Hirafu pig who thinks she's a dog, join the *Powderlife* paparazzi as they crash a few parties going on around town, enjoy a traditional sushi meal at new restaurant Shiosai, walk through Hirafu's biggest house, and ogle over some of the awesome images our photogs have been snapping on the mountains.

March is one of the best times to be in Niseko. Enjoy!
Kristian Lund, Powderlife Managing Editor kris@powderlife.com

3月に入り、いわゆる『パウダーシーズン』から春に移行しつつあります。文字通り雪が降り続けた今シーズンでしたが、やっと降雪もおさまり晴天を拝める日々が続いています。1月、2月の寒さは厳しく、ピレージ内でもマイナス20度近くを記録した程でした。しかし、今では零度以上を記録することも頻繁にあり、薄着シーズン到来を間近に感じます。

降雪がおさまった今、パウダーラバーであるローカルの多くは春を心待ちにしている事でしょう。この季節変化を楽しめる事もニセコに住む人たちにとって大きな魅力の一つでもあります。少しずつですが全ての事が楽しめるのも3月の魅力です。リゾートにはまだベースとなる雪が充分に残っていますし、通常パウダーが楽しめますのでバックカントリーにはもってこいですね。ゴルフやマウンテンバイクはまだですが、ラフティングや自転車など、少し早めのサマーアクティビティーは可能かもしれません。

しかし、今号も陽光に満ちあふれた3月の情報が盛りだくさんですし、冬は当分逃げませんからシーズンの早取りはやめましょう。我らの気象予報士である『ドン』による先読み気象情報、パーティーで出会ったパウダーライフ・新パパラッチメンバーになった“ホット?ガール”の紹介、新レストラン『潮彩』のお寿司、ヒラフで一番大きい建物、雪山で撮り集めた最高の写真など、本誌を楽しんでください。

3月はニセコでも最高の季節の1つです。皆さん、楽しんでください!

Photo: Paul Malandain

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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.

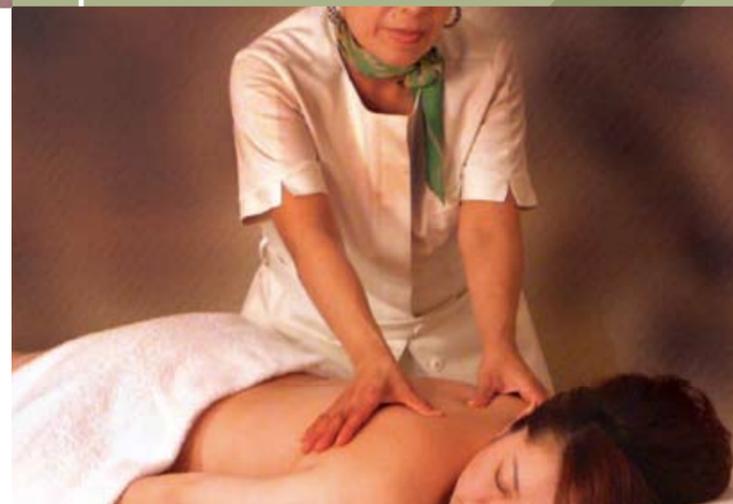
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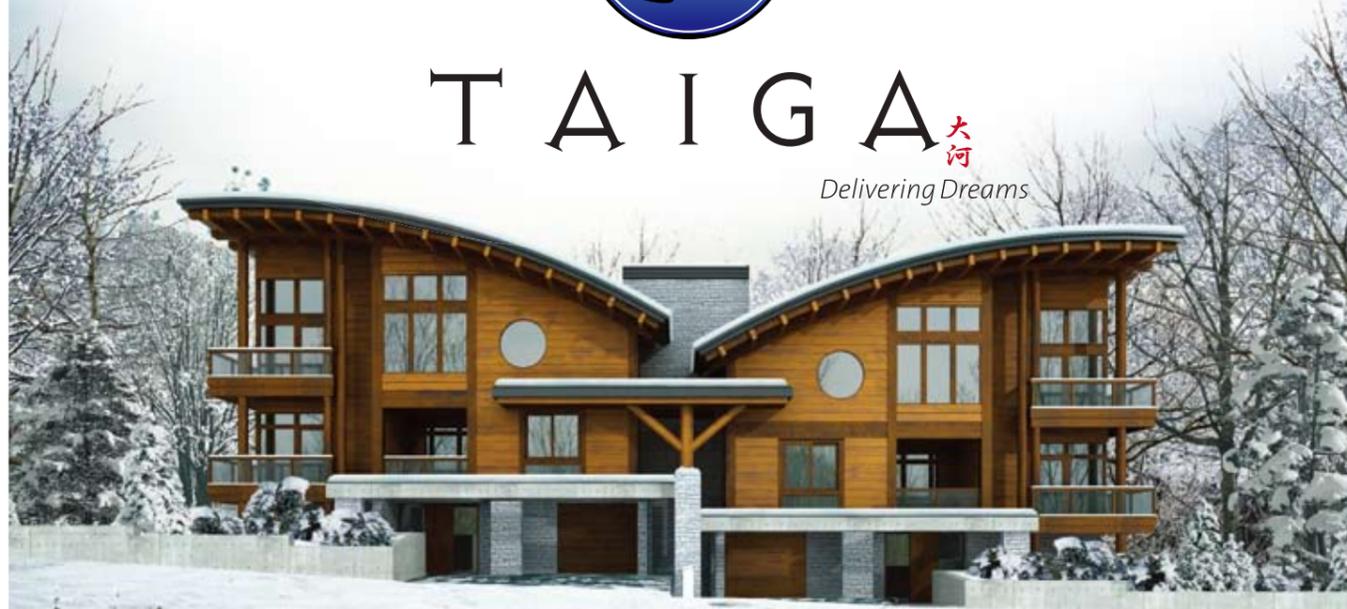
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fluff *light news and stuff from around town*

March outlook: blue skies, more snow

MARCH is here, so what can we expect from the weather? The Siberian high-pressure system which brings us the almost endless days of powder through mid-winter starts to lose its intensity, but it's not like once we tick over into the month it all just turns off. The first couple of weeks generally have weather little different to that experienced in late February. Great falls of snow can still be expected

throughout the month and the mountain averages about 2m of snowfall, an amount most ski areas would be happy enough to receive in the coldest month. The days are getting longer, the sun starts to appear more, and most importantly there's a total lack of crowds competing for fresh tracks after a big dump. It's a bit like Niseko used to be back in the old days, before it was discovered internationally. Temperatures

start to climb but remain below freezing until the end of the month. For the most part though, the upper mountain remains in the firm grip of winter. By the end of the month it's spring conditions, but good snowfalls are still possible into early April. If the continuous snow and cold of mid-winter doesn't overly appeal, then March is the time to visit with plenty more blue sky days to enjoy the powder. – **The Don**



THE wacky and wonderful Japanese have done it again. Kit Kat has come out with a range of flavours ranging from soy sauce to green tea, all based on gourmet specialities from different regions in Japan. Each flavour is only sold in the region it's from – in Hokkaido it's melon and sweet corn. Get yours from the souvenir shop below Paddy McGinty's Irish Pub in Hirafu-Zaka Street! PS. The back of the box makes it a postcard!



Photo: Yasuyuki Shimanuki, Niseko Photography



A PIG'S LIFE... Rum and Katsumi-san pound the pavement.

Pig dog goes 'buhii-buhii'

IF you hear the sound 'buhii-buhii' in the streets of Hirafu, chances are Rum the pot-bellied pig is not far away. That's the sound Japanese use for a pig's 'oink-oink', and Rum's known for sounding off as she waddles the streets alongside her master, Katsumi Uchimaru. The five-year-old pig – or 'buta', in Japanese – has for three years been the mascot for Hirafu's Zoo outside the Alpen Hotel. A favourite in Hirafu, Rum is forever stopping tourists in their tracks, dumbfounded and laughing as they watch her loyally follow Katsumi-san the way a dog would heel to its master. You can also hear Katsumi-san shout out commands to the obedient Rum – 'abunai' (danger) when she walks too close to the road, and 'oide' (come here) when she wanders too far away. "Rum's intelligence is about that of a three-year-old human," Katsumi-san said. "She's not had official training, but she can still sit and shake hands."

Flake Film Fest: take two

AFTER screening to a jam-packed crowd of 150 film lovers last season, the Flake Film Festival is about to return and promises to be another 'reel' winner. Coming up this Wednesday (March 10) at the Après Bar, the Flake Fest's sophomore not-for-profit festival will screen a selection of the best local and international short films by amateurs and pros. They're not just snow films either – comedies, mockumentaries, dramas and animations will hit the screen. One of the most exciting entries is a Car Danchi edit from director Neil Hartmann. Flake Fest started in Jindabyne, Australia, and is the brainchild of founder, director and Niseko local, Anthony 'Chook' Trovatiello (pictured). "After our success last year, we really want to build an international event for the local people, workers and visitors of Niseko," he said, adding that all films will this year have Japanese subtitles. **Entry is ¥1000, ¥700 for locals. Drink specials and audience prizes all night. Doors open at 7.30pm, with films showing from 8.15pm.**



Photo: Glen Claydon

niseko news *tracking down local stories*

By Matthew Thomas + Kristian Lund

Master plan will 'lift' Niseko

NISEKO United is in need of a 'mountain master plan' to reach its full potential, according to a world-renowned, Whistler-based mountain resort planner.

Paul Mathews is founder and president of Ecosign, which since 1975 has directed the planning and design of more than 350 major mountain resort projects in over 32 countries, including Whistler-Blackcomb's record-setting Peak 2 Peak Gondola. The company also drafted the original Niseko Hanazono master plan in 1992.

Mathews cited similarities between the Niseko United and Ecosign's most famous master plan of Switzerland's Zermatt resort, where five operating companies were successfully merged into one.

Ecosign has worked on about 10 European 'resort fusions' to merge big-name ski resorts throughout Switzerland and Austria. "Earnings have grown in Zermatt five-fold due to efficiencies of scale," Mathews said. "This allowed the area to invest more to improve and expand, and this as a consequence has driven up occupancy of all resort hotels and properties."

Mathews proposes that Niseko's four resorts – Grand Hirafu, Hanazono, Niseko Village and Annupuri – be replanned as one resort, so ski lifts, patrol, grooming and maintenance would be governed by one entity.

He said that this fusion would mean an upgrade of fa-



TO THE TOP... Colin Hackworth (inset) says that with better lifts, Niseko could reach new heights. Photo: Yasu, NP

ilities for the entire mountain, a better skiing experience for visitors, and more business for each of the resorts, and the area in general. "Right now there are five operating companies in Niseko fighting each other for market share instead of trying to grow the total pie," Mathews said.

President of Hanazono resort Colin Hackworth (pictured) said he would be in strong support of a unified mountain master plan, adding that Niseko as a whole would benefit from improvements to its lifts in particular.

He said new lifts were cheaper and more efficient to operate, and that one operations system would by definition be healthier and more cost-effective for the future of

Niseko. "Many of the existing lifts are old, ill-positioned, and it is easy to see they were installed with each particular owner's point of view to try and corral their customers as best they could, rather than with a view to uniting Niseko mountain as one ski resort," he said.

"At the end of the day, the customer just wants to be able to ski in a large ski area and travel from side to side in comfort, unfettered and unhindered. In comparison to Europe with its state-of-the-art six-packs, eight packs, gondolas and trams, the ski field infrastructure in Niseko is very dated indeed. Recognition of the issue is certainly a step in the right direction – solving it must be the next."

基本設計がニセコを'lift' - 活気づける

ウィスラーを拠点とする世界有数のリゾート設計者によると、ニセコスキー場は最大限の可能性を広げるためにも『山岳基本設計』を必要としている。ポール・マシューズは*エコサインの創設者であり社長である(*ウィスラー・ブラッコムにある世界記録を打ち立てた有名な「PEAK 2 PEAK」ゴンドラを含め、1975年以来、世界32カ国で350以上の多数のマウンテンリゾートのプロジェクトを指揮してきた企業)。この企業は1992年に花園リゾートの基本設計を計画した。マシューズ氏は、エコサイン社の最も有名な基本設計であるスイス・ツェルマットリゾート(5つの事業会社が首尾よく1つに結合した実績を持つ)とニセコスキー場の類似点を引き合いに出した。エコサイン社はスイスとオーストリア中の有名なスキー場を合併

するために約10のヨーロッパの『リゾート結合』に従事してきた。「ツェルマットでの収益は規模効率により5倍に伸びた。これによって土地価値の向上、発展の為に一層投資され、その結果ホテルを始めとするリゾート建設開発に繋がった」マシューズ氏は述べた。マシューズ氏は、ニセコの4つのリゾート(グランヒラフ、花園、ニセコビレッジ、アンヌプリ)を1つのリゾートとしての再計画を提案する。それによって、1つの独立体下でスキーリフト、パトロール、手入れ、維持を管理することができるからだ。この結合は山全体の施設のアップグレードを意味し、スキー客はより一層スキーを楽しめ、各リゾート、地域の経済発展にも繋がると氏は言う。また、マシューズ氏は、こうも述べた。「現在、ニセコでは5つの事業会社が協力し合う代わりに競い合っている」と。花園スキー場の代表取締役であるコ

リン・ハックワース氏も山岳基本設計の支持を強く表明し、この開発によって特にリフトの改良という利点を期待できると述べている。ハックワース氏は、最新のリフトは安価で効率が良い上に1つの操作システムを導入する事は当然ながら、ニセコスキー場の未来にとってより経済的であると言う。「既存のリフトは古く、状態も良くない。また、ニセコを1つのリゾートとして開発したのではなく、それぞれの管理企業が収益という観点で設計されたものだ」と目撃した。結局、スキー客の望みは大規模なスキー場を楽しみ、自由かつ快適にリゾートを行き来することだろう。ヨーロッパの最新の6人、8人乗りのリフト、最新のゴンドラ、トラムと比較すると、ニセコの基幹施設は確実に遅れを取っている。問題点の認識は確実に正しい道へと導くでしょう。次は問題解決が鍵ですね」とハックワース氏。



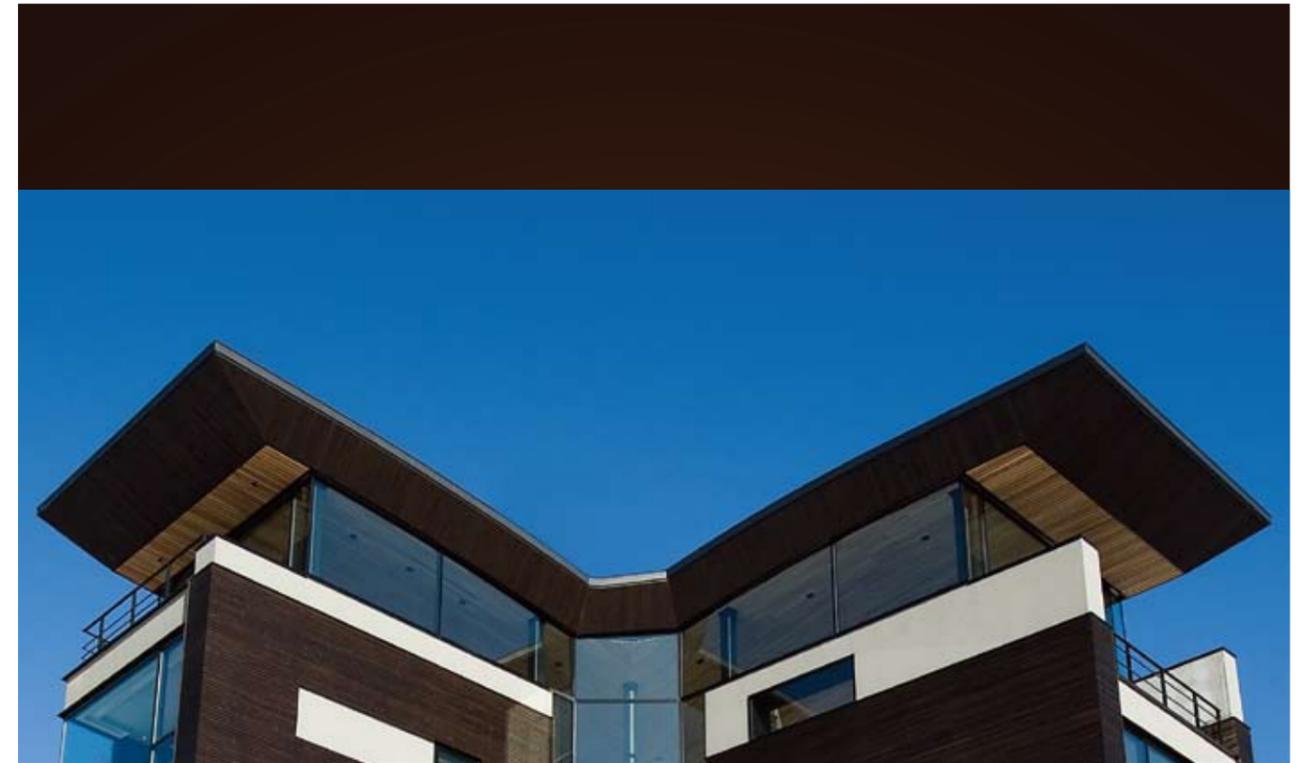
HOT FAVOURITE... will the Hilton win best onsen again? Photo: Niseko Photography

Best of Niseko final call

RHYTHM

ENTRIES are about to close for the Best of Niseko, so be quick and cast your vote for your favourite business in Niseko. Now in its third year, Best of Niseko is an opportunity to give a pat on the back to all those small businesses that make Niseko such a great place. Everyone who takes part goes in the running to win a set of the some of the best powder skis money can buy – a set of Armada ARGs (pictured) thanks to Rhythm Snow Sports. Second place wins goggles and gloves, and third gets a beanie. Entries close at midnight on Wednesday, March 10, and the winners of Best of Niseko and all prizes will be announced in the final edition of *Powderlife* for the season on Saturday, March 20.

To vote, go to: www.powderlife.com/best-of-niseko-2010



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POWWOW *this old-timer on the peak the other day said...*

By Matthew Thomas

RUMOUR has it the six-star Capella Niseko resort has perked the interests of U2's frontman, Bono. This could well be because Capella Niseko – to commence construction in May this year – was designed by one of Japan's greatest living architects, Tadao Ando, who also drew up the plans for one of Bono's houses.



WHILE we're on the topic of rumoured celebs, someone told us they spotted movie star and the Gladiator himself Russell Crowe, in Niseko the other week? Apparently he was en route to Yuki Bar. Did anyone else see him?

SKIING, boarding, biking... been there, done that. The inventor of 3ski Snow Bikes, Kiwi Jason Buckley (pictured), came to Niseko to road test his bikes in our world-famous pow. How did they handle?



The verdict is a big thumbs up, with the 3ski as good as he could hope for in the deep – super-maneuvrable and confidence-inspiring, he says. A fusion of skiing and mountain biking, 3ski are hoping to blast out into the Japanese snow scene next season, so keep an eye out.

SEKKA has a new Otaru Beer on tap. It's a smoky, English-style ale, but be quick, because there are only a couple of kegs left! Sekka's the only place you can get the Bavarian-influenced Otaru Beer on tap in Niseko. Psst! If they're sold out of Smoky Ale, Otaru Beer also makes a very drinkable Pilsener and Dunkel!

EVER wanted to walk on water? Lying at the foot of Mount Yotei, Half Moon Lake is stunning all year round, but you can snowshoe across it during Niseko's winter. Local tour companies run regular trips out there and will provide all the gear, so go check it out. You won't fall in – we promise!

HOKKAIDO Tracks last month kicked off what is sure to become another popular annual event on the Niseko calendar – the Niseko Toboggan Run and Candle Light Walk. Take a dozen toboggans, an equal number of daring participants, one of Hirafu's steepest streets (running from the Fridge Door Bar to HT's The Escarpment development), line the snowbanks with candles, and there you have it. Hang on to your hats... or should that be beanies?



A TENDER, marbled Wagyu steak is a delicacy that must be experienced while in Japan, but for many it's just too darned expensive! Fortunately Downtown Café in Hirafu this season offers a 2cm-thick, 300-500g Wagyu at amazing value for only ¥3800. The Downtown chefs used to work in famous restaurant Makkarina in the neighbouring town of Makkari too. At that price, it would be a crime not to claim your steak today!

KARAOKE is another must-do when you're in Japan. One of the best places to belt out a few tunes Nihon-

style is Northwind, in Hirafu's Middle Village. There's a seemingly endless list of Western and Japanese hits from yesterday and today to help you look the fool. And if you require a little Dutch courage before grabbing the mic, every night Northwind does a three-hour 'nomihodai' (all you can drink) for only ¥3000!

ALONG with renovations last year, Niseko-Moiwa resort has a brand new logo. In case you were wondering, the large 'I' in the centre of 'Moiwa' apparently has three meanings: 'I' (ai) is the Japanese word for 'love'; 'I' also means 'No. 1'; and 'I' as in 'just for mine'. With Moiwa's increased popularity this season, it won't be 'just for mine' for long...



EVER fancied eating a pizza with salad on top? Yummy's izakaya in the Middle Hirafu Village does just that with their very yummy Taco Salad Pizza – but we're still pretty sure pizza's not a health food. Nicely balancing the salad option is a steak pizza with whole slices of tender steak on top!

THIS cute little place on Hirafu-Gondola Street is affectionately known to locals as 'The Smurf House' – for obvious reasons. There's every chance most of the mushroom of snow building up on its roof will have dropped off by the time this edition hits the streets, but this pic was snapped back in the peak of yet another epic winter in Niseko. Like something out of a cartoon, isn't it amazing The Smurf House hasn't collapsed under those literal tonnes of snow?!



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in the loop your guide to what's on

SAT 06 Weekend Fireworks @ Grand Hirafu
 ウィークエンド花火 @ グラフヒラフ
 Fireworks on the Hirafu ski slopes every Saturday in March. Enjoy them with your family and friends.
 3月の毎週土曜日は、家族みんなでゲレンデから花火！をテーマに、ゲレンデに打ち上げられる綺麗な花火をご家族、お仲間と一緒に見に来ませんか？
 start: 9:30pm
 contact: 0136-22-0109
 www.grand-hirafu.jp

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 Jazz standard numbers. Enjoy his swinging piano trio sound!
 札幌から若手ナンバー1のピアニスト、有本紀がジャズスタンダードの数々をお届けします。スイング感たっぷりのピアノトリオ演奏をお楽しみください。
 start: 9pm
 contact: 0136-23-2727
 www.nisekofullnote.com

MON 08 Come Après Ski @ Herbie's Umbrella Bar
 ハッピータイムズ @ ハービーズ アンブレラバー
 Traditional European beer, drinks and snacks served in a truly Austrian style après ski atmosphere.
 オーストリアスタイルのニューバーで、雰囲気も気持ちもヨーロッパを感じましょう。スキーショットやネイルゲームなど盛り上がること間違いなし。
 start: Happy Hour 3pm-5pm daily
 contact: 090-7511-5310
 www.umbrellabar.jp



TUE 09 Psychedelic Party Killers Night @ Jam bar
 サイケデリックパーティーキラーズナイト @ ジャムバー
 Cyclecreation from Sapporo presents the party in famous Jam bar! ¥1500 entry includes one drink. Do not miss it!
 サイケレイション from 札幌 プレゼンツ サイケデリックパーティー開催! 1500円/1ドリンクです。
 start: 8pm-3am
 contact: 0136-23-0700



WED 10 Gluhwein Day @ Herbie's Umbrella Bar
 ホットグリューワインディー @ハービーズ アンブレラバー
 Herbie makes the best Gluhwein this side of St Anton. 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、あったか・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 Go Go Gyoza's Night @ blo*blo gyoza bar
 ゴーゴージャン ナイト @ blo*blo gyoza bar
 Taste six delicious handmade gyoza with a beer for only ¥1000 every Thursday.
 毎週木曜日は、餃子ナイト。6種類からなる手作り餃子とビールを1000円にて、ご提供。ゴーゴージャンをお試しください。
 start: 6pm
 contact: 0136-22-1269
 www.blowharddaily.com

FRI 12 Hokkaido University Jazz Circle @ Half Note
 北海道大学ジャズ研 @ Half Note
 Young students with a great sound. Many of these students have been fuelling the jazz scene in Sapporo.
 若い学生ですが素晴らしい音楽を聴かせます。多くの部員が札幌のジャズシーンに寄与しています。翌日13日の早い時間にも演奏します。
 start: 9pm
 contact: 0136-23-2727
 www.nisekofullnote.com

SAT 13 Last night 'Thanks' Party @ Yuki Bar
 ラストナイトパーティー @ 雪場
 It will be last big party for the season @ Yuki bar. You can't miss it! ¥500 for all drinks. night.
 今シーズン最後の雪場パーティーです。オールジャンルで、今シーズン来てくれたサウンドが勢ぞろいします。ドリンク全て500円。
 start: 10pm - till late
 contact: 0136-22-0234

SUN 14 Niseko Annapuri Festival @ Annapuri Ski Area
 ニセコアンヌプリフェスタ @ 雪場
 Treasure hunt game in the snow, potato digging game, and tube race etc. Enjoyable for children and adults.
 期間中は、雪中宝探しゲーム、雪中いもほり大会やチューブレースなど、子供から大人まで楽しめるイベントがいっぱい。ニセコの味を堪能できるコーナーもあります。
 start: 9am March 13th-14th, 20th-22nd
 contact: 0136-58-2080
 www.cks.chuo-bus-co.jp/annupuri



WED 17 St Patrick's Day @ Paddy's McGinty's Irish Pub
 聖パトリックデー @ パディーマクギンティーズ
 Anniversary of Saint Patrick - the patron saint of Ireland. Remember to wear your green and enjoy a pint of Guinness.
 アイルランドにキリスト教を伝えた聖人聖パトリックの命日。カトリックの祭日をパディーズと一緒に祝いましょう。
 start: 8pm
 contact: 0136 55 8020

TUE 16 Red Bar Closing Night Event @ Red Bar
 クロージング ナイト @ RED Bar
 The Red Bar closing party will be hosted by DJ Resh. All drinks will be cheap!
 クロージングナイト。今シーズン最後のビッグパーティーです。早めの来店で、フリーショットゲット。ドリンク全てを破格にご提供します。
 start: 10pm
 contact: 0136-22-6687

MARCH ON-MOUNTAIN COMPS
 AS the temperature warms up in Niseko in March, so do the on-mountain competitions. Make sure you check some out!

Hanazono Slope Style, Hanazono
 The biggest tricks and sticks though The Stomping Ground terrain park.
 March 6 from 9am

Namara Ippatsu, Grand Hirafu
 Niseko's biggest big-air comp at Hirafu's King No.1 Terrain Park.
 March 7 from 8.30am, finals 1.30pm

Gentemstick Bowl Session, Hanzono
 Skate-style airs and slides in a newly carved bowl. Open to the public for free on Saturday, official competition Sunday.
 March 13-14 from 10am until 4pm

Annapuri Ski and Snowboard Cross
 Skiers and boarders battle it out to decide once and for all who's best... or fastest at least.
 March 14 from 9am

By Kisato Kurihara + Lizzy Hoo



SNAP

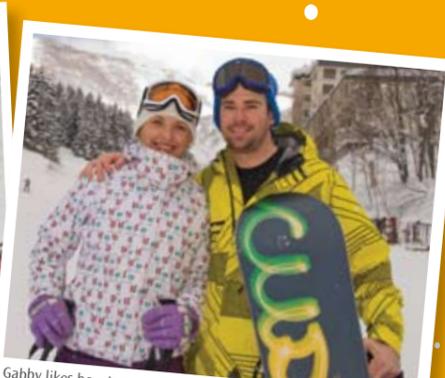
Powderlife hit the mountain to ask tourists what they liked about Japanese culture. And asked the Japanese, what they liked about Niseko as an international resort...



Hiroshi and Yohei are from Sapporo, where there aren't many foreigners at all. They say it doesn't matter who is in Niseko – Japanese or foreigner – they just care about the snow!



Anne from France loves her sashimi because it's 'oishii desu', while Shauna prefers onsens because they are the perfect way to wind down and relax after a big day.



Gabby likes how Japan is 'graceful, beautiful and clean – from the architecture to the beautifully presented food'. Dean is always amazed at how Japanese people are always happy and polite.

InSki's Wipeout of the Week

THE beauty of launching airs into Niseko's super-soft pillows of powder is that most of the time you can go as big as you want and not get hurt. Canadian Adam Teolis (pictured) and a group of housemates decided to hold a 'kicker day' recently. They all hiked to a Hanazono secret spot, built a booter in a clearing, then had a day to remember filming each other hitting the jump all day. Even though Adam's wipeout looks like it might have been painful, the expression on his powder-covered face afterwards says it all. For his troubles, Adam wins a helmet thanks to Inski in Hirafu. *Any reader can send a hi-res wipeout pic with a short blurb to ed@powderlife.com. If yours gets published, you win a helmet. Powderlife can't wait to see all your stacks, so start sending them in! Until then, may all your wipeouts be public, excessive and captured on film!*



Keiko and Ayako, from nearby service town Kutchan, are locals and say Niseko is a special spot in Japan – the perfect place for kids to grow up and meet people from different countries. (especially when they can visit the Hirafu Zoo!).



Mountain Style

JOEL Brown from Mt Buller in Australia doesn't have to pay a cent to look this good. Retail is for suckers. He gets his snow gear for free, and all Joel's got to do in return is come to Japan, ski the mountain and look good. Joel's baggy, loud and busy Sessions jacket and pants – with Obvious outerwear and Full Tilt boots – are just the ticket, and fit right in with the high Japanese mountain style standards. "The boys from Sessions put me in this gear – I just have to get the word out about the brand and catch people's eye in Japan," he said. "It's pretty sweet!" It's all in a day's work for Joel, as he shreds the mountain to bits on his on K2 skis. And he's a vision of style as he sports the classic Oakley Crowbar goggles. We reckon you're doing your 'job' pretty well, Joel, so keep up the good 'work'!



Makoto from Sapporo likes coming to Niseko to meet people from all around the world, and Lucy, from Bromley in England, likes Japan's convenient coffee in a can.



Singaporeans John and Leanne, 9, are having a (snow)ball in Niseko. John can't get enough of Japanese food – ramen, soba, sashimi. Leanne, who was carrying her own personal snowball maker for the day, adds: "I just love snow!"

FLASH

Funky French electro-jazz band No Jazz got everyone dancing at The Barn, and they call it Après Bar for good reason – it's the place to go for some après-ski action...



Chris and The Barn's owner Nicolas still reeling after No Jazz's electric debut gig in Niseko.



Michael, Teegan and Karen make sure they have one of the best seats in the house for the sizzling electro-jazz show from the Parisian four-piece.



Valia scores a peck on the cheek from No Jazz synthesiser player and mixer Balat, as Mick waits for his turn.



The very definition of 'a rose between two thorns', Claire is flanked by 'Sly' and Balat (making yet another appearance!).



Caitlin is starstruck by No Jazz's drummer Bilbo. Or maybe she's just a little taken aback by his fabulous sparkling pink shirt?!



It's hugs all-round as Emmeline from Singapore, German Chris, and Rodion from Australia ski off the hill and into Après Bar for a few wind-down lagers.

Après @ Après Bar



Cute little Erin, 5, lights up Powderlife's lens, with Caitlin, Phil and Paul – all expats from Hong Kong enjoying their Niseko powder holiday.



Après Bar's 'official drinking team' – Fin, Anna, Helen, Meg, Kristina, Nick, Dave and Guy – on their annual pilgrimage to Niseko. They drink at Après Bar so often the owner supplied them with their own bibles!



What better way to get together for Fri, Brandon and Harry from Tokyo, along with Graeme from Australia, than tossing back a few shots and beers at Après Bar?



Hong Kong expats Susan, Lindsey and Grace beam for Powderlife's camera as they soak up the après action at Après Bar.



Underground Tokyo DJ Koji Eguchi providing the thumping soundtrack at one of Niseko's hottest après ski bars.



A big beer after a big day on the mountain for Germans Antje and Claudia, joined here by friend Anne-Mieke from The Netherlands.

meet the locals *introducing niseko ski resort staff*

By Kisato Kurihara



MASSEUSE Narelle

name Narelle Webb **age** 30
hometown Nomadic/born in Canberra, Australia
time in niseko? Four seasons **ski/board?** Both. **how long?** Skiing since little, snowboarding since arrived in Niseko. **why did you come to niseko?** A friend bought a property here and I opened Java Massage in it in 06/07 **favourite...** restaurant? Rin bar? Java, Gyu+ or Baribunba **onsen?** Yukoro ski run? Strawberry Fields **how long will you be in niseko?** End of March **best niseko secret?** Cheata! (Juicy-Fried chicken wrapped in a pizza from Lawson) **what's your life philosophy?** 'Be organised enough to be spontaneous'

名前 ナレル **ウェブ** **年齢** 30歳
出身地 キャンベラ、オーストラリア
ニセコに来てどのくらい? 4シーズン目 **スキーヤー?スノーボーダー?** 両方とも **スキー、スノーボード** 層 **スキーは小さい頃から、スノーボードはニセコに来てから。なぜニセコに来た?** 友人の勧めで、4シーズン前にJava Massageをオープンしました **お気に入りのレストランは?** 居酒屋 リンバーは? J a v a、ギュータス、バルンバ **温泉は?** ゆこる **コースは?** ストロベリーフィールド **この後、どのくらいニセコにいます?** 三月末まで **ニセコの秘密?** Cheata! (ローソンのピザにフライドチキンをラップしたもの) **人生観、モットーは?** 余裕を持って十分に準備する。



PARK STAFF Sao-Chan

name Saori Kurishima **age** 24
hometown Osaka **time in niseko?** Two seasons **ski/board?** Board **how long?** Three years **why did you come to niseko?** For the great snow, great people and great park **favourite...** **colour** Green **brand** Volcom **food** Japanese snack Umaibo **Mentai restaurant** Tsubara Tsubara **bar** Mañana (Kutchan) **onsen** Yugokorotei **ski run** Hanazono Stomping Ground **Park how long will you be in niseko?** I will be here for as long as I want **best niseko secret?** The cool, good-looking park staff in Hanazono **what's your life philosophy?** Don't work too hard - take it easy.

名前 クリシマ サオリ **年齢** 24歳
出身地 大阪 **ニセコに来てどのくらい?** 2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** 層 3年 **なぜニセコに来た?** ニセコにしようと思ってきました **お気に入りの...** **色は?** 緑 **ブランドは?** ボルコム **食べ物は?** うまい棒 **めんなたい味** レストランは? つばらつばら **バーは?** Mañana **温泉は?** 湯心亭 **コースは?** 花園パーク **この後、どのくらいニセコにいます?** 居るだけです **いつまでニセコにいます?** 好きな限り **ニセコの秘密?** 頑張らない **仕事をしていて幸せを感じる時?** パークが面白いといってもらえた時。



SKI PATROL Gonzo

name Horiyumi Yutani **age** 33
hometown Osaka **time in niseko?** Six years **ski/board?** Ski **how long?** 15 years **why did you come to niseko?** First just through interest, and now I can't leave. **where do you want to go next?** Finland to see the Aurora Borealis **favourite...** **food** Deep-fried chicken **restaurant** China Kitchen, Kutchan **bar** My house **onsen** Goshiki **onsen ski run** Super Course **how long will you be in niseko?** I might be here forever. **niseko secret?** A secret arch tree to hit **what's your life philosophy?** Be not defeated by the rain, nor let the wind prove your better (by Kenji Miyazawa)

名前 ユタニ ヒロフミ **年齢** 33歳
出身地 大阪 **ニセコに来てどのくらい?** 6年 **スキーヤー?スノーボーダー?** スキーヤー **スキー、スノーボード** 層 15年 **なぜニセコに来た?** ぶらっと来ました **次に行きたい国?** オーストラリア **海外旅行に行ったことは?** アメリカ、スイスとネパール **お気に入りの...** **食べ物は?** ザンギ **レストランは?** 広華 **バーは?** 家で楽しく飲んでます **温泉は?** 五色温泉 **コースは?** スーパーコース **この後、どのくらいニセコにいます?** 予定なし **いつまでニセコにいます?** 予定なし **ニセコの秘密?** アーチ型の木がどこかに隠れてます **人生観、モットーは?** 雨にも負けず、風にも負けず **仕事をしていて幸せを感じる時?** 何もなくて一日が終わった時。

irasshaimase! *'welcome!' great little local businesses*

Niseko Foot, Hirafu Upper Village

NOBUO Nakamura was born in Osaka, Japan's second largest city, where he ran an osteopathy clinic for 10 years. During this time he scored a gig massaging the Japanese national team at the Salt Lake City Winter Olympics in 2002. But he always wanted to move to the countryside and heard from a friend that a hotel in Niseko was looking for a tenant. He came in summer and loved it. In 2005 he and wife Chisato-san opened Yakouju-Seikotsuin Osteopathy Clinic, and Niseko Foot which specialises in massage, reflexology and acupuncture. In winter most of his clients are foreigners and he loves the opportunity to meet people from so many different cultures. 1F Alpen Hotel.

ニセコフット・八光寿整骨院 ヒラフアッパーヴィレッジ

大阪で10年間整骨院を営んでいたという大阪出身の中村信雄先生。柔道整復師、鍼灸師、あんまマッサージ師、リフレクソジストの資格所有、経験を披露され、2002年のソルトレークオリンピックでは、日本選手のマッサージトレーナーを経験する。将来は、田舎で暮らしたいと考えていた頃に、知り合いよりニセコのホテルがテナントを探していると話があり、初めてニセコの夏を訪れた。羊蹄山に一目惚れ、こんなところに住みたいと移住を決意し、2005年の冬、奥様のちさとさんとニセコアルペンホテル内にニセコフット・八光寿整骨院を始めた。冬シーズンには、20カ国以上の外国人が訪れるという。いろんな国の人々と触れ合え、それぞれの国の文化の違いを感じられる国際交流の場になっている。5年ぶりでも10年ぶりでもリピーターさんが戻ってきてもらえるように笑顔の通うやさしいお店でありたい。1Fアルペンホテル。



Sweets Factory Bakel, Izumikyō 1

TOKYO-born Yuki Shimizu first came to Niseko for holidays before moving here for good after meeting her now-husband Ken here. Ever since she was a child she loved baking sweets, and used to work as a pâtissier for popular local restaurant Dragon. While working there she got the idea to start her own business, and after Yuki and Ken bought the house in which Kame restaurant used to be, they decided to build the factory into where the old restaurant kitchen was. Her products are sold in Hanazono 308, the Alpen and Kogen Hotels and Randy Wieman's Hot Shots Café, with Ken-san doing the delivery. And keep an eye out in the future for a café factory!

スウィートファクトリーベイクル、泉郷1

子供の頃からお菓子作りが大好きだったという東京出身の清水ゆきさんが、初めて来た10年前のニセコは、まだローカル意識の強いスキーリゾート。そんなニセコで出会った現在の旦那さんのけんさんの勧めで、ニセコに移り住んだゆきさん。カナダ時代にカフェで働いたり、ニセコでもカフェやケーキショップで働いた経験を生かし、2年前にドラゴンにてパティシエとして働く。そこでの経験から、自ら作った物が売れる喜び、思うような物を作りたいと工場をオープンさせた。全てを手作りにて建設したという工場は、以前レストランのあった場所。現在は、花園308、アルペンホテル内カフェ、高原ホテルやホットショットカフェにブラウニーやバナナブレッドなどを卸している。誕生日ケーキの注文も受付けている。将来、工場内に出来る小さなカフェでコーヒーと出来たてスイーツを味わえることが待ち遠しい。

in focus *with brian and wayne parfitt*

BROTHERS in business Brian and Wayne Parfitt own restaurants and bars all over the world, and moved into Niseko in a big way this season with The Vale Bar and Grill, The Bunker nightclub and Lars Longcox Mexican bar...

How did you come to be in Asia and Niseko? Wayne went on a holiday to Hong Kong 20 years ago, saw potential, and decided to open a small pizza restaurant in Sai Kung (Pepperonis). Through many expats living in HK, we heard about the potential in Niseko and came up for a look. Asia offers unlimited potential for a range of opportunities, and Niseko is no different.

Tell us about your bars and restaurants? In Hong Kong we own and operate 12 restaurants - Jaspas, Pepperonis, Cru, Zaks, Sopranos, Wagyu, and Wagyu Lounge. We also operate six Chinese junks (boats) with charters to outlying beaches and islands off Hong Kong. In Vietnam, we have 24 in both Ho Chi Minh and Hanoi - Pepperonis, Jaspas, Al Frescos and Papa Joe's. We also run Lola's restaurant in Broadbeach, Australia, and, of course our Niseko restaurants.

When did you first come to Niseko? Three years ago we took a look around. We then pur-

chased the current Lars Longcox site at Mountain Side Palace, and started exploring additional opportunities, which led to our involvement in The Vale Niseko site.

With your worldwide experience, what was the potential you saw in Niseko?

Niseko has the advantage of snow - and lots of it! While it still has a long way to go, developments like The Vale Niseko apartments, Snow Crystal and Alpine Ridge are the way of the future.

The Bunker is the first nightclub in Niseko. Does Niseko need more nightclubs?

Definitely, but not only nightclubs - restaurants, bars and retail as well. Niseko needs to expand its offerings - more well-operated restaurants, bars and clubs on offer can only benefit everyone. Competition is good - it offers the visitors more choice and this in turn will bring more of them. There are exciting times ahead.

What's it like working as brothers in business?

No problems - each of us has our own unique skills. We are both very different, but that seems to work. Mum would get upset if we didn't play nicely together.

What are your plans for the future in Niseko?

We're currently looking at a few opportunities, but



Wayne and Brian Parfitt

there's still lots to be done at our current outlets. We see potential to develop the summer traffic through the town, although this will take a bit of work and commitment from everyone who is committed to the area. We hope to work closely with everyone involved to help Niseko reach its full potential all year round.

What did you do before you came to Niseko?

We resisted the lure of lucrative modelling contracts and focussed on the food and beverage business while based in Hong Kong. We enjoy the lifestyle there, and travel between Australia, Vietnam, and now Japan.

What makes Niseko special?

The potential, the snow and the people.

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 Book Before 5pm
 (both closed Tuesday)

Hirafu East Village (Stage Izumikyō) - Shuttle Stop 26

Ph: 0136-21-5088
 M: 090-1767-5302
 Email: book@ramatniseko.com
 Web: www.ramatniseko.com

five of the best burgers

J-SEKKA Deli's Hokkaido Venison Burger – If anyone can make a traditionally simple burger a classy dish, it's J-Sekka. Their Hokkaido Venison Burger is a basic yet gourmet alternative to the typical hamburger. Sitting between rye buns is a juicy, thick Hokkaido venison patty with a spoonful of Sekka's homemade beetroot relish. Keeping with the theme of local produce, on the side there's a pot of thick-cut Hokkaido kita-akari potato fries. **0136 21 3088 / Map C2 / ¥1600**



Downtown Café's Downtown Burger – Get on down to Downtown Café for a meal sure to cure those ski-induced hunger pains. Perfect for the big eater, the juicy Downtown Burger has a 100% beef patty covered in melted cheddar cheese, and topped with tomato, lettuce and lashings of ketchup. **0136 23 3354 / Map A2 / ¥1000**

Ezo Pub's Beef Burger – A great place to party, Ezo Pub also serves a top burger. Located in the Niseko Village Hilton, Ezo makes its Beef Burger extra tasty with onion jam, tomato chutney and Hokkaido gouda cheese. If you're famished, upsize for an extra ¥350 and get a double beef patty. **0136 44 1111 / Higashiyama Map G6 / ¥1450 (S) ¥1800 (L)**

Jo Jo's Original Burger – Above Niseko Adventure Centre (NAC), Jo Jo's dishes out plenty of its popular and delicious Original Burgers. It boasts an all-beef patty, garnished with lettuce, tomato, onion, cheese and mushrooms, topped off with a fried egg. All burgers are only ¥790 every month on the 7th, 9th, 17th, 19th, 27th & 29th. **0136 23 2220 / Map E3 / ¥920**

Lars Longcox Nachos Bar's Big Wonderbar Beef Burger – Eat at Lars Longcox and you'll never go home hungry. Like all other dishes at Lars, the Big Wonderbar Beef Burger is so big many may not be able to squeeze it all in. And while the portions are huge and scrumptious, the prices remain very affordable. **0136 21 5833 / Map D2 / ¥950**

local recipe sukiyaki

THIS week's recipe comes to us thanks to Hirafu sukiyaki restaurant Wagyu Dining Sou. Generally cooked in on a gas cooker at your table, sukiyaki consists of thinly sliced beef, vegetables, tofu and noodles cooked in a shallow iron pot in a mixture of soy sauce, sugar, and mirin. Before eating, dip in a small bowl of raw, beaten eggs. Oishii! Choose your own amount of most of the ingredients below based on what you like. (And eat at Sou to get an idea of how the locals do it!)



Ingredients (Serves three)

- 400g thin sliced beef
- Shirataki konnyaku noodles
- Tofu
- Spring onion
- ¼ Chinese cabbage
- Enoki, Shimeji & Shiitake mushrooms
- 100g mizuna (potherb mustard)
- 200g udon noodles
- 3 eggs

Sukiyaki sauce

- 1 cup soy sauce
- ½ cup Japanese sake
- 4 tbsp 'dashi' stock
- 5 tbsp granulated sugar
- ½ cup water (more or less to taste)

Method

1. Cut vegetables, tofu, shirataki noodles and mushrooms and arrange in sukiyaki nabe pan.
 2. Pour the sukiyaki soup into the pan and start cooking on high heat.
 3. When boiling, turn heat down to middle or low, add beef and simmer until brown.
 4. Add vegetables and mushrooms and cook for three minutes.
- *Serving: Break an egg in to a small bowl and mix with chopsticks. Dip ingredients into the egg before eating. If you prefer not to eat raw eggs you can put it into the soup as well.
5. After eating all the meat and vegetables, put the udon noodles into the nabe and cook for 1-2 minutes.

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LJ Hooker

restaurant review

shiosai

By Kat & Kim www.bigfoodsmallworld.blogspot.com



“The counter’s six places were beautifully set with Japanese paper placemats and wooden chopsticks resting on an origami paper crane...”

Photo: Glen Claydon

SHIOSAI is the newest addition to the Senchou dynasty of seafood restaurants in Hirafu. Meaning ‘ship captain’, Senchou has been serving the freshest of Hokkaido seafood since Masaaki Konno opened the first restaurant, Senchou 1, in the Middle Village 15 years ago. Six years later he opened a second, Senchou 2, on Hirafu-Zaka Street in the Upper Village. This year, alongside Senchou 2, Konno-san opened the doors to Shiosai, a more modern, upmarket take on its casual izakaya brothers, this time specialising in superb sushi.

As we stepped into Shiosai, a traditional sushi counter was filled with the day’s premium catch – hairy crab, king crab, lobster, o-toro (the prized fatty tuna belly), sea urchin and fresh wasabi. The counter’s six places were beautifully set with Japanese paper placemats and wooden chopsticks resting on an origami paper crane.

The menu actually includes many items from the Senchou restaurants, but the order of the day at Shiosai is sushi and sashimi. And if you’re at the counter, we recommend you just ask the chef what today’s catch is.

We sat down and ordered a round of beer, which reached us accompanied by a little bowl of baby scallops that had been steamed with a little sake and soy.

We started with the chef’s selection of sashimi, which included sweet shrimp, hairy crab and taraba crab legs, slices of tuna, octopus and uni (sea urchin roe).

Next up we ordered some sushi – for those who need some clarification here, sushi has the nigiri (ball of rice) underneath – which was made right before us. A long plate was placed in front of us with a small mountain of pickled ginger, and a little bowl of soy sauce. As each piece is made, it’s placed on the tray. Tonight’s selection included chuu-toro (medium-fatty tuna belly), yellowtail, salmon, grilled eel and egg.

The chuu-toro sushi was so good we decided to order the ‘three types of tuna sashimi’ – a showcase of maguro (the regular lean, red-coloured tuna), chuu-toro and o-toro. Each stepped up in grade, getting more succulent and decadent with each bite. The o-toro in particular was like butter, melting on the tongue.

On this occasion, the chef also recommended we try the live scallops. They’re prepared by removing the meat and roe from the shell, slicing and placing back into the shell with a little soy sauce and a dollop of butter. Then brought to the table before a small flame is lit under the shell. We fish some pieces of flesh from the bubbling butter while still semi-raw, but leave pieces of the roe to simmer a little longer. A beautiful concept that highlights the delicacy and sweetness of the scallop at its finest.

Between Shiosai and Senchou 1 and 2, you can now cross several Niseko dining experience musts – izakaya, sushi, sashimi and Hokkaido seafood – off your list in style.



Photo: Kat & Kim



Photo: Kat & Kim

Shiosai
Open: 12-2pm / 5-10pm
Tel: 0136 55 5009
More reviews at powderlife.com/niseko-restaurants

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

By Bevan Colless



G3 Bonesaw

IF you're more into backcountry than 'slackcountry' you should be packing a saw, and the G3 Bonesaw is a cut above the rest. The offset

teeth can cut snow, ice, and even wood to make a fire or floor for your snowcave. It comes with a durable sheath for easy carrying, and can be strapped onto just about anything (ski pole, probe, shovel, your mate's wrist) to cut cornices or anything at greater than arm's length. The sheath stops it damaging other things in your pack, and it includes several tools, including three grid sizes to make half of your snow research kit obsolete. Don't even consider any other saw.

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Available from: See's Sapporo Price ¥107,100
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Black Diamond Megawatt Ski

WHAT don't Black Diamond do well? Best shovel on the market – check. Best backpacks around – check. Pioneer of the Avalung – check. Awesome fat ski with 125 underfoot that is perfect for Niseko – check.

If you love Niseko enough to come back then you should love it enough to buy a ski that is only for the pow. The Megawatts are a great choice for your Niseko deep day only ski. A zero-camber and long rocker tip and massive underfoot width keep you floating along in a snorkel-puff nirvana.

Available from: Toyru Price ¥78,750
Tel: 0136-21-4055



men who ride mountains *stirling goldman: backpuntry*

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

SO, another fortnight and yet another demand from the nobodies at Powderlife for an article to keep their magazine ticking. That's right... S. Goldman back for your reading pleasure... and other pleasures for the ladies.

This edition, I thought I'd talk about the backcountry. More particularly, punters in the backcountry. A practice I like to call backpuntry. It's a cardinal sin. Last week I was carving a few lines somewhere of the edges of Moiwa. I had a few buddies tagging along for the ride. None of them have my ability nor good looks, but they all want to be like me so I allowed them to cut a few turns with me... at a 50m distance, just so the magazine pictures weren't tainted by them.

Anyway, back to my story. We found a 3m cornice that, after inspection, was deemed safe, stable, and

screaming to be hucked. A bit like the ladies screaming to be pleased after inspection by Goldman during the après. After all, after dropping cliffs in Antarctica and Alaska for years, a 3m cornice is child's play for Goldie. So we decided to hit it, mainly to allow my buddies to hype it up in the bar when recapping the story later than night attempting to do their best with my off-castes.

But I digress, again. Just before I took off, I noticed what I thought were the usual groupies standing on the same cornice waiting. Being a gentlemen, I asked if they were going to hit it first and asked if they would like honours. All I received was an aggressive reply telling me jumping off cornices was too dangerous. They obviously did not know who I am or what I've done, so I hucked and their jaws dropped. Punters in awe again. It's a common theme. But my question is what is it about these punters in the backcountry who have been through a gate in Niseko once and they feel they want to lecture everyone in earshot on backcountry safety? I wonder if they tap on people's windows at traffic lights and tell them to put their seatbelts on, like the helicopter pilot in



Antarctica telling me the slope was 'too steep'?

Now don't get me wrong, Stirls is all about safety when in backcountry, and I was just discussing this over a beer or 48 with Shinya-san last week. "Do these blokes think everyone else aside from them is an idiot," I asked. "They mean well," replied Shinya-san, "...but this is real sport, and there is danger involved as you well know, Goldman-san. You must remember, there are not many who can do the things you can." Shinya-san is always great to pull me back to earth. So SG loves to get deep – with the ladies, and the pow, but has no time for backpuntry. If you aren't up to the challenge, don't take it.

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



rider Teru // photo Glen Claydon



rider Joey // photo Rory Gardiner, Niseko Photography



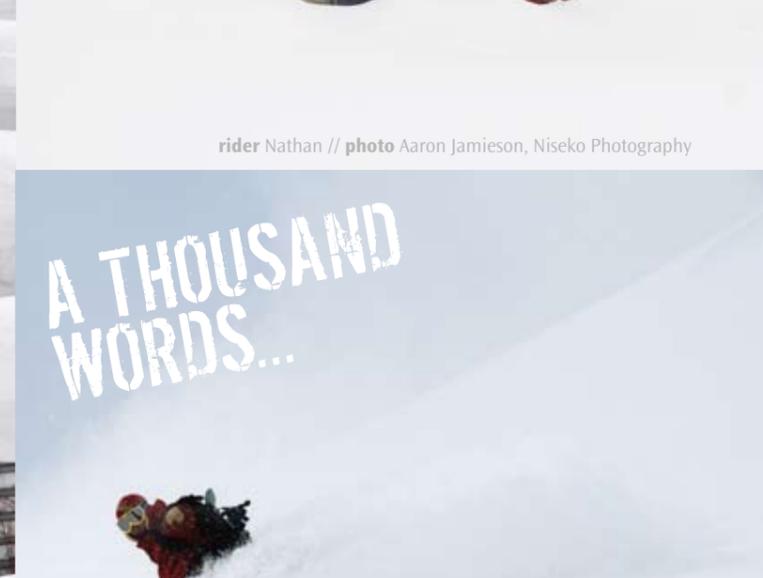
rider Satoru // photo Hirōyuki Sudo



rider Nathan // photo Aaron Jamieson, Niseko Photography



rider Kayle // photo Rory Gardiner, Niseko Photography



rider Tats // photo Aaron Jamieson, Niseko Photography



POWDER POSTER



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, falling rocks, and power lines. Common sense and personal awareness can reduce such risks. 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. Do not stop where you could obstruct a trail, a run or are not visible from above.
6. Always use chairlift restraining devices when provided and always use proper devices to prevent runaway equipment. Ensure equipment is in good condition.
7. Observe and obey all signs and warnings. Keep off closed trails or runs and keep off or closed areas.
8. Do not ski, snowboard, ride a lift or undertake any other alpine activity if you are impaired by drugs and alcohol.
9. 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 Shiribeshi Mountain Patrol.
8. RESPECT EACH OTHER
The Niseko Rules have been created with everyone's safety in mind. In order for everyone to remain safe, everyone must respect and follow these rules.
Niseko Rules are official regulations, established by the Niseko Annupuri Avalanche Prevention Committee, the Niseko Free Passport Committee and the Hokkaido Shiribeshi 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 lift access gates.

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

7. SKI AND MOUNTAIN PATROL INSTRUCTIONS MUST BE OBEYED

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

3. NO SAFETY CONTROL BEYOND RESORT BOUNDARY
The area outside the mountain resort boundaries (back country, including the peak) are not covered by the Ski Patrol or the Shiribeshi Mountain Patrol. Niseko Rules prohibits that hiking and riding these areas 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

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

backcountry safety *stay safe on the mountain*

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

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

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.



- 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-san's daily avalanche report
www.niseko.nadare.info
Canadian Avalanche Association
www.avalanche.ca

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

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

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.

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

NISEKO UNITED.

real estate feature Eco260

By Matthew Thomas

HOW does someone go from being so poor they live with their family in an attic, to owning a collection of magnificent homes around the world? Ask French multi-millionaire Bernard Gauthier – owner-builder of one of Niseko’s most opulent mansions, Eco 260.

As a child, Bernard was raised in the ‘poorest of poor’ Parisian neighbourhoods. However, following success in the textiles industry and other investment, the eccentric, enjoyable entrepreneur now designs homes for himself as a hobby. Bernard’s latest project is the enormous 932sqm, six-bedroom Eco 260, a six-storey mansion in Hirafu Lower Village with a build-cost of US\$6.5 million.

“My mother and I were the poorest in all the area,” Hong Kong-based Bernard says. “It was a nice life, but my family house was in an attic and we couldn’t even afford the simple things in life. Our life started to change as soon as I left school and started to work.”

Eco 260 was named after its environmentally friendly, self-sustaining design and features. That, and for the unparalleled 260-degree views from the huge open-plan living area on the top floor.

The environment is of the utmost importance to Bernard and wife Lily. Eco 260 has 20 geothermal bore holes, all 115m deep, that provide all the heat required for the pool, jacuzzi, driveway and floor heating. When sunny, 54 solar panels produce enough power that it’s sold back to the national grid to offset winter consumption.

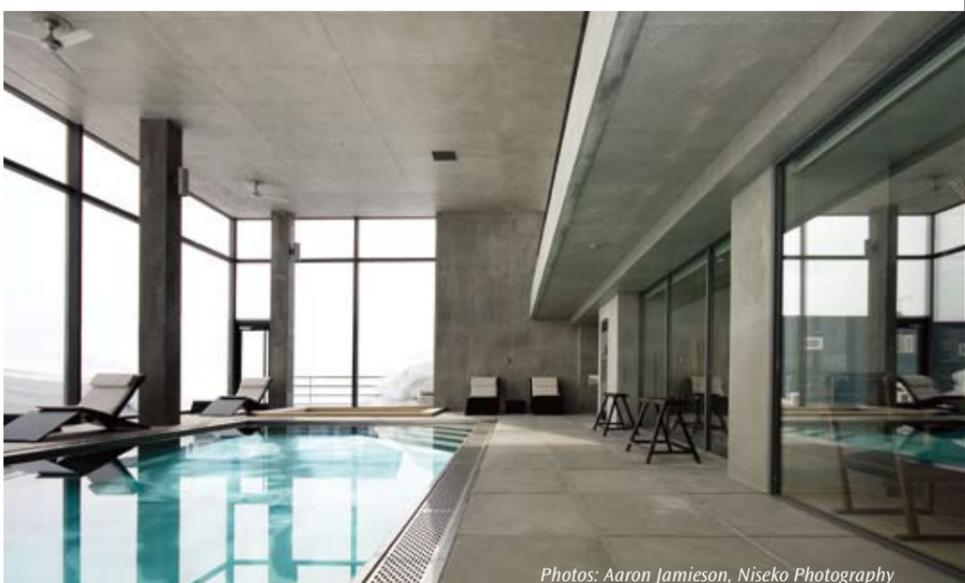
And as for the views, the outlooks from basically every room in the residence are stunning – from Kutchan to Mt Yotei, and over to Hanazono and Mount Annupuri, which is at its most spectacular at night, Bernard says.

“It’s an amazing view of Yotei to wake up to every day, but I find myself eating dinner facing the opposite direction to look at the mountain that is alive with skiers at night.”

The piece de la resistance within Eco 260 is undoubtedly the 10mx4m stainless steel swimming pool, the only pool within a private residence in Hirafu. “What can I say, I wanted a stainless steel swimming pool,” Bernard says. “I have the same pool in Switzerland. I can’t explain it – with stainless steel you feel something great under your feet.”

The pool is lit by multi-coloured LED lights that can be changed to suit the mood, and is housed in a vast room with a two-storey ceiling, boasting uninterrupted views of Mt Yotei through gigantic half-tonne floor-to-

• Continued page 34...



SPACE IS LUXURY... at 932sqm, Eco260 is the largest residence in Hirafu.

Photos: Aaron Jamieson, Niseko Photography

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• From page 32...
 ceiling panes of glass – the largest in a residential home in Hokkaido. A gymnasium on a mezzanine level above shares the same outlook.

Bernard's earlier vocation as a carpenter turned him into quite the handyman. So much so that the entire house – which is Bernard's brainchild from the house plan to the custom tap fittings – was designed by the millionaire, who still doesn't mind getting his hands dirty.

"I designed everything in the house because I know what I want," he says. "I like to make things – I even made the bunk beds in one of the children's rooms, and the wooden flooring in the genkan entry way. I don't

want to live in a house of an architect, I want to live in my house that I designed. Now I can spend all day here and not have to go out. I don't need to leave because I have everything I need right here."

Bernard came to Niseko about 10 years ago, but was not particularly attracted to the town because it was 'underdeveloped and boring'. But now he calls today's Niseko 'paradise'.

"Here there is peace and quiet, safety and no worries," he says. "People are nice, polite, courteous. When you are in Niseko, you have peace of mind. For me, this is a paradise, and that's why I built my house here."

Bernard is based in Hong Kong with his wife Lily and daughter Charlotte, and they plan to live in the lap of luxury between Niseko, Hong Kong and Switzerland in the years to come. "I am a very lucky man," Bernard says.

EBISU

EXQUISITE CHALETS FUSING TRADITIONAL JAPANESE TIMBER TECHNIQUES WITH ULTRA WESTERN COMFORT

Located in the Hirafu Ski Village, EBISU offers central location, stunning Yotei views, 6 meter vaulted ceilings, designer interior, Hinoki wood baths, stone fireplaces, heated floors, covered terraces and lockup garages. Fully set up for self use and/or rental, each EBISU house has 255 SqM and 4 en-suite bedrooms.

HOUSE A "MIYABI": SOLD
 HOUSE B "TSUBAKI": 185,000,000 JPY



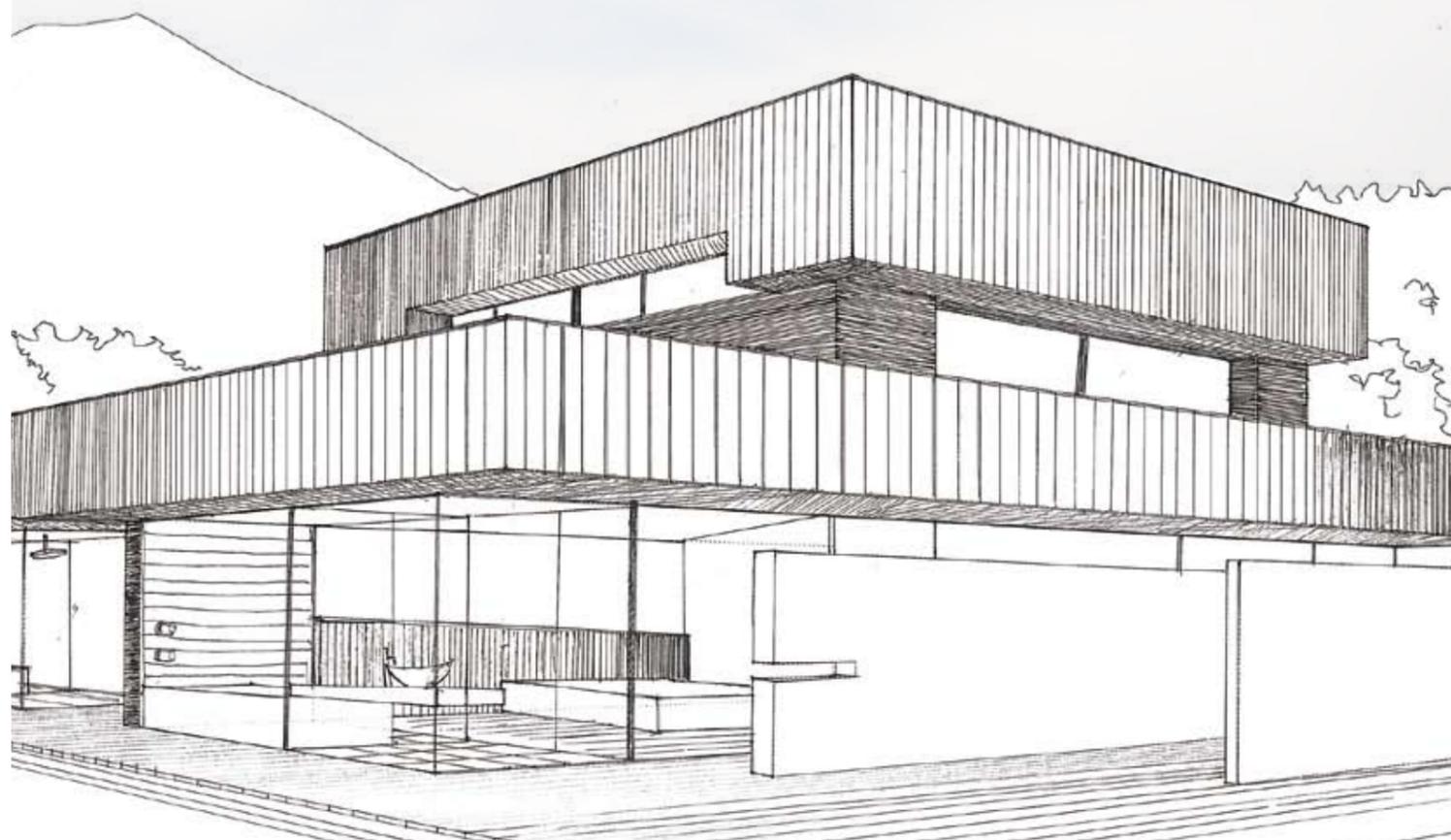
Photos: Glen Claydon

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Freshwater Penthouse 

UPPER HIRAFU

Designed by luxury developer NISADE, 502 is Niseko's best value penthouse. Never built out Yotei views, 3 balconies, ski chic interiors (inc Jacuzzi spa), covered parking & 2 key entry giving solid investment.



¥95,000,000 3 bed / 3 bath / 1 car

www.nisade.com ☎ **0136 22 0038**

Niseko Landmark View 104 

UPPER HIRAFU

- 2BDR/2BA apartment in the popular NLV
- 1 min to the Hirafu Gondola
- Strong rental performance



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HIRAFU

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- Unique Japanese look and feel.
- Handy central Hirafu location.
- Visit us above the Irish Pub for this and another 50 exclusive listings



¥95,000,000 ☎ **0136 21 6211** (office)

www.hokkaidorealestate.com ☎ **080 5587 5052** (Jason King)

Land – Hanazono Site 

HANAZONO

- In front of the Hanazono ski resort
- Immediate access with spectacular resort views
- Level ground for easy construction
- Adjacent site available



¥61,370,000 (¥95,000 p/tsubo) 646 tsubo (2,135 sqm)

www.nisekorealestate.com ☎ **0136 21 7722**

EZO VIEWS
A NEW ERA OF LUXURY LIVING IN NISEKO



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




WWW.EZOVIEWS.COM

MSK JR APARTMENT IN KUTCHAN

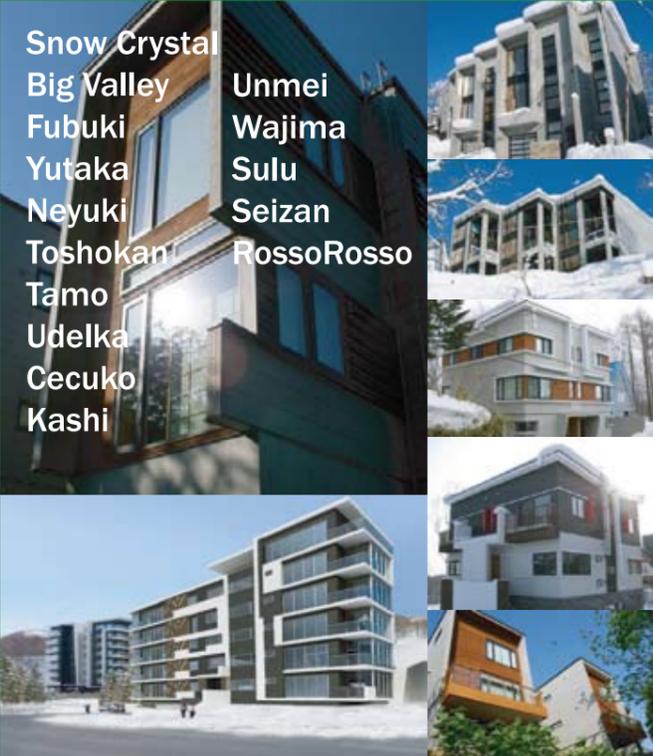


3LDK from 52,000yen Monthly Rent
Share-Room from 35,000yen Monthly Rent

0136-44-3584
Niseko Life Plan

Snow Crystal
Big Valley
Fubuki
Yutaka
Neyuki
Toshokan
Tamo
Udelka
Cecuko
Kashi

Unmei
Wajima
Sulu
Seizan
RossoRosso



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

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¥25,000,000-

Land 1.063m² Building 140m² 3min drive to Hanazono Ski-resort

Soga Land
¥40,000,000-(¥20,000-PER TUBO)

Land 6.612m² 5min drive to Higashiyama and Annupuri Ski-resort

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www.tracksrealestate.com

Premium Niseko Properties

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

niseko resort guide *info to help you get around*

TOURIST INFORMATION

Kutchan Machi no Eki Puratto Information Centre

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

Tel: (0136) 22 1121.

The Niseko Grand Hirafu Welcome Centre

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

GETTING HERE AND AWAY

New Chitose Airport. Tel: (0123) 23 0111

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

Getting from New Chitose to Niseko

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

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

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

Tel: (0136) 22 2108.

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

Airport Station Tel: (0123) 45 7011

Kutchan station Tel: (0136) 22 1310

CAR RENTAL

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

Toyota Rent-a-Car ShinSapporo

Tel: (0118) 15 0100. English ok.

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

Black Diamond Lodge

Tel: (0136) 44 1144

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

www.powderlife.com/niseko-travel-guide

TRANSPORT AROUND NISEKO

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

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

Kutchan hire Tel (0136) 22 1212

Misora hire Tel (0136) 22 1171

Niseko hire Tel (0136) 44 2635

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

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

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

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

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

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

MONEY

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

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

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

SHOPPING

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

Kutchan Several specialty stores in Kutchan may also come in handy when you wish to expand from the stock in Seicomart or Lawson. Best Denki stocks all your electrical and technical needs (within reason). M-Pocket has imported groceries, specialising in imported alcohol. Homac shelves basically every household product known to man, while Max Value and Co-Op are your major supermarkets. Co-Op is also a department store. The ¥100 Shop stocks cheap groceries, stationery and more, all priced around – you guessed it – ¥100. There are no pharmacies or stationery stores in Hirafu, but several in Kutchan, such as the 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-musculoskeletal cases you will need to go into Kutchan. If you can't speak Japanese you will need to bring a translator.

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

Kutchan Kousei Hospital The major hospital servicing



EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Police Tel: 110

Ambulance and Fire Tel: 119

Emergency Interpretation

Tel: (0352) 85 8185

Japan-English Helpline

(nationwide emergency assistance)

Tel: (0570) 00 0911

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

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

Tel: 0136-22-1141

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

More detailed information at:

www.powderlife.com/niseko-resort-guide

local lingo *top ten words and phrases for tourists // numbers and counting*

By studio tdes

IF you learn nothing else in Niseko, you should at least learn how to order a few drinks in Japanese.

Then you'll be able to impress your mates back home when you order a beer in a Japanese restaurant! In today's lesson we'll learn the difference between one hour and one o'clock, and how to order four wine glasses, rather four bottles of wine!

1 Ichi ji – It's one o'clock

You'll need to know the basic numbers to be able to tell the time. One to 10 is: ichi, ni, san, yon (sometimes shi), go, roku, nana, hachi, kyuu, jyuu. 11 is 10 and one: jyuu ichi. 12? You guessed it: jyuu ni. Add ji for o'clock. Ima nan ji? (What time is it?) Ichi ji. (It's one o'clock.) For half past, add han: Ichi ji han (1:30). The word for minutes is either fun or pun. Yo ji ni jyu san fun (4:23).

2 Biiru futatsu onegai shimasu – Two beers, please

Huh?! Futatsu? What about ni? It's just the way it is! Hitotsu, futatsu, mitsu, yottsu, itsutsu, muttsu, nanatsu, yattsu, kokonotsu, too. Mizu mitsu kudasai (Three waters, please).

Pronunciation guide

a = u as in but

i = i as in bit

u = oo as in boo

e = e and is bet

o = o as in bot

ou = aw as in law

ii = ee as in bee

3 San shuu kan – three weeks

For a period of time, use kan. San shuu kan (Three weeks). Nan jikan no tour? (How long is the tour?) Ni ji kan (Two hours). If you're talking about minutes, you don't need the kan. Go fun gurai (About five minutes).

4 Wain yon hon – four bottles of wine

If you want four glasses of wine, it's: wain yottsu, but four bottles is: wain yon hon. Like hon for bottles, there are other suffixes used for counting and numbers. For a few examples: yon mai (four flat/thin objects), yon dai (four big objects – like cars), yon ko (four round objects).

5 Go hyaku en – ¥500

To ask how much use ikura. Biiru ikura? (How much is a beer?) Go hyaku en (Five hundred yen). Thousand is sen and Japanese also counts in ten thousands: man. Jyuu go man (One hundred and fifty thousand).

6 Nimotsu rokko – six bags

The counter ko is used for things like parcels or bags. Ni-motsu nan ko? (How many bags do you have?) Rokko (Six). Kids use it for almost anything before they've learnt the correct counter. So if in doubt, add ko for basic numbers.

7 Shichi nin no samurai – seven samurai

When counting people, say nin after the number. That's

why they didn't call the movie Shichi Samurai. Exceptions: hitori (one person), futari (two people).

8. Hachi gatsu – August

Months are easy in Japanese! It's just a number, plus the word gatsu (month). Itsu Nihon ni tsuita? (When did you arrive in Japan?) Jyuu ichi gatsu (November). Itsu kaeru? (When are you leaving?) Shi gatsu (April). Tanjyoubi itsu? (When's your birthday?) Go gatsu (May).

9 Kyuu ka getsu – nine months

When talking about a period of time, change the gatsu to getsu and add ka in front. Kyuu ka getsu (Nine months).

10 Too ka – the 10th

Most dates have ka on the end – but it's a little tricky because the numbers for dates change again. Tsuitachi (the 1st), futsu ka (2nd), mikka (3rd), yokka (4th) itsu ka (5th), mui ka (6th), nano ka (7th), you ka (8th), kokono ka (9th), too ka (10th). The 11th-31st is easier: jyuu ichi nichu, jyuu ni nichu. Although 20 is hatsu ka.

Next issue: Working. More lessons at:

www.powderlife.com/niseko-travel-guide



restaurants & food

MAP C2 p47
A-Bu-Cha 2

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



A wide variety of meals and drinks – top marks!

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

0136 22 5620

MAP D1 p47
Bang Bang

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



We take great pride in our fresh seafood

5.30-11.30pm
Occasionally Closed
35 seats

0136 22 4292

MAP F7 p46
Black Diamond Restaurant

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



Free pick-up from the Hilton and Niseko area

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

0136 44 1144

MAP C2 p47
Bhozan

MIDDLE HIRAFU In Nepali, Bhozan means “delicious food”. Our authentic curry is prepared by Nepalese chefs using spices from Nepal. Come before 6.30pm for an amazing experience.



Best Charcoal Fired Naan, Nepalese Curryhouse.

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. Excellent okonomiyaki and teppanyaki restaurant in town.



Okonomiyaki and teppanyaki restaurant

11am-10pm
Open daily

0136 21 2233

MAP E2 p47
Kamimura

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



Blessed by land, sea and a creative chef

5:30pm-11:00pm
Occasionally closed

0136 21 2288

MAP D2 p47
Lars Longcox Nachos Bar

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



Beers from just ¥200 Excellent value meals

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

0136 21 5833

MAP D2 p47
Mina Mina

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



Good music, good alcohol

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

0136 23 3437

MAP E8 p46
M's Café (Saison Club)

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



Warm your body with our big hearty hotpots

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

0136 44 3380

restaurants & food

MAP D2 p47
Niseko Pizza

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



Dine in, Take-away and Delivery

Open every day
Lunch-Dinner
0136 55 5553

MAP C2 p47
Restaurant & Wine Bar Dragon

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



Our sommeliers welcome you

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

MAP A2 p47
Sekka Dining

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



International style showcasing the best of Hokkaido

6-10pm
7 days
0136 21 5022

MAP C1 p47
Sencho 2

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



Best Choice for Gourmet Seafood

5pm-midnight
Open daily
0136 22 5454

MAP C1 p47
Shiosai

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



Fresh, live, gourmet seafood - the ultimate choice!

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

MAP B5 p46
Shunsai

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



Creative fusion cuisine from land and sea

11am-9pm
Closed Sundays
0136 23 1882

MAP C3 p47
Souan Genghis Khan Lamb BBQ

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



¥1700 all you can eat barbecue for 90 minutes!

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

MAP B3 p47
Steak Rosso Rosso

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



A must for steak lovers!

6-11pm
Occasionally closed
0136 21 7100

restaurants & food

MAP E2 p47
Taj Mahal

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



Visit India in Taj Mahal Niseko

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

MAP E4 p47
Teuchi Soba Ichimura

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



Homemade soba noodles, carefully selected ingredients

11am-3pm
Closed Tuesdays
0136 23 0603

MAP C3 p47
The Barn

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



Sushi & Fusion Restaurant Adventurous, fun, exciting

6-11pm
Occasionally closed
0136 23 0888

MAP E3 p47
Tsubara Tsubara

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



Spicy, flavoursome local Hokkaido curry soup

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

MAP B2 p47
Vale Bar & Grill

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



Buffet Breakfast served from 7am daily

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

MAP E2 p47
Wild Bill's

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



Gourmet Tex-Mex in our beautiful log house

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

MAP B2 p47
Yakitori Yosaku

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



Serving yakitori every night until 3am

6pm-3am
Open daily
0136 23 4390

MAP D3 p47
Yummy's Pizza

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



YUMMY Homemade crust pizza and Western foods restaurant

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

bars & pubs

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



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



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



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 après ski atmosphere. www.wildbillsniseko.com



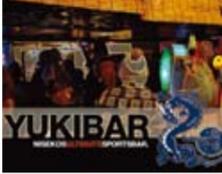
Japanese Whiskey, Sake & Shochu 2pm-late 7 days
☎ 0136 21 3088

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.paddymcgintysirishpub.com | Ph 0136 55 8020



tours & activities

MAP F7 p47
Black Diamond Tours
 UPPER HIRAFU Check out Niseko's incredible backcountry or visit Rusutsu, Sapporo Kokusai or Teine Highland. We also have a range of backcountry tours to suit your lung capacity. www.blackdiamondtours.com



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



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



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



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



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



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



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



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

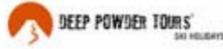
☎ 0136 21 4055

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



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

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



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

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



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

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



Creatively capturing Niseko
080 6098 7244

MAP A2 p47
Niseko Physio
 MIDDLE HIRAFU
 Australian trained physiotherapists, sports injuries, back and neck pain, rehabilitation, taping, braces, pain relief, managed by Tokyo Physio (est 2002). Hakuba clinic now open in Phoenix Hotel.
 www.nisekophysio.com



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

MAP NA
J-Build
 HIRAFU
 • Consulting
 • Project Management
 • New Homes
 • Renovations
 • Building Supplies
 www.jbuildniseko.com



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

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



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

FUSION HOMES
 Quality, innovative building in the Alpine Region of Hakuba.
 • Design • Construction • Renovations • Project management
www.fusionhomes.jp
 info@fusionhomes.jp
 +81 (0)261.75.3073



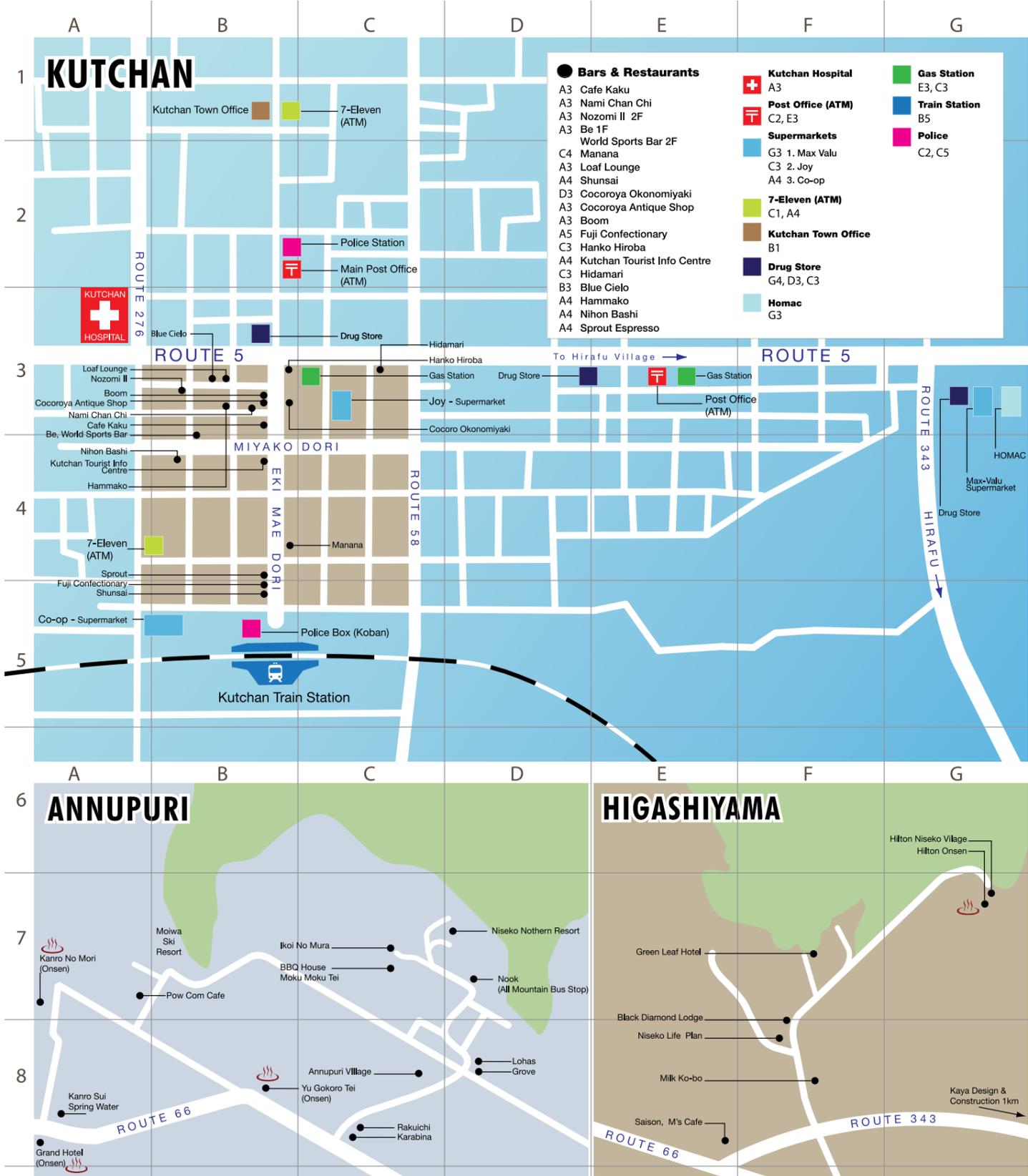
hakuba real estate
 SALES & PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT
 Providing in-depth local property knowledge for your investment or lifestyle choices.
www.hakubarealestate.com
 info@hakubarealestate.com
 +81 (0)261.75.3073



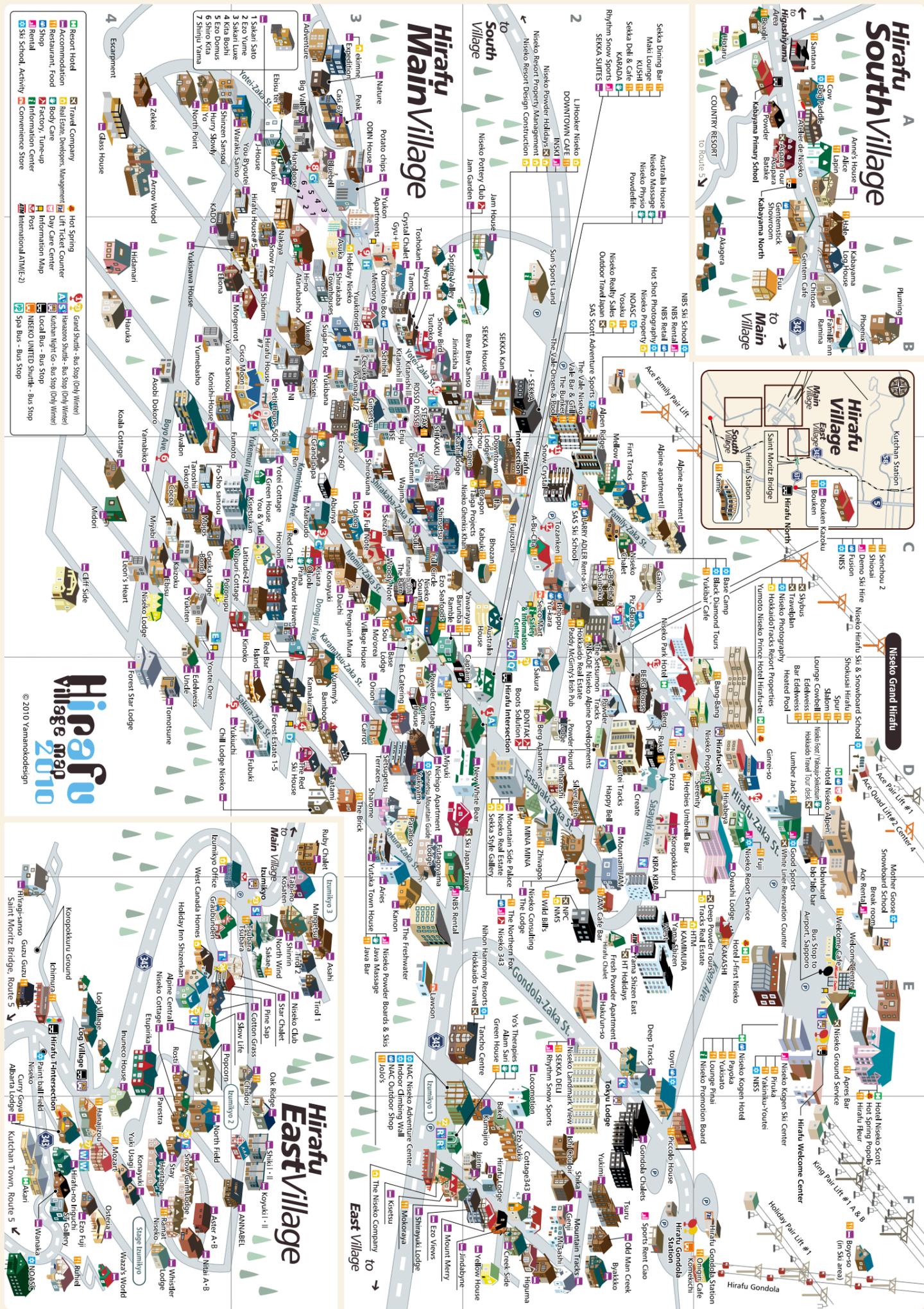




niseko maps *kutchan, annupuri, higashiyama*



- | | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|
| 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 | | |



speed dial quick guide to village phone numbers

Restaurants,cafés and eateries

- | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| <p>■ A-Bu-Cha
阿武茶
22 5620</p> <p>■ Aburiya
あぶり屋
090 7656 5767</p> <p>■ Bang Bang
バンバン
22 4292</p> <p>■ Bang 2
バン2
22 1480</p> <p>■ Barunba
バルンバ
090 8907 9399</p> <p>■ Bhozan
ボーザン
21-2121</p> <p>■ Black Diamond Lodge Restaurant
ブラックダイヤモンドレストラン
44 1144</p> <p>■ Bouken Kazoku
冒険家族
22 3759</p> <p>■ Café KAKU
カフェ覚
22-5608</p> <p>■ Cocoro Okonomiyaki
お好み焼きこころ
23-0008</p> <p>■ Curry Goya
カレー小屋
23 3688</p> <p>■ Downtown Café
ダウタウンカフェ
23 3354</p> <p>■ Dragon Wine and Food Bar
ドラゴン ワイン&バー
21 7700</p> <p>■ Ebisutei
えびす亭
22-6544</p> <p>■ EN in-house fine dining
宴インハウスファインダイニング
55 8100</p> | <p>■ Ezo seafoods
エゾ・シーフード
090-1203-7879</p> <p>■ Fujizushi Sushi
ふじ鮓
23 2661</p> <p>■ Gentem Café
玄天カフェ
23 3154</p> <p>■ Grandpapa
グランパパ
23 2244</p> <p>■ Graubunden
グラウビュンデン
23 3371</p> <p>■ Guzuguzu
ぐずぐず
21-4855</p> <p>■ Hana Jizoh Bakery
花地蔵
23 0331</p> <p>■ Hidamari
陽だまり
55-5000</p> <p>■ Hinabeya
火鍋屋
23-2636</p> <p>■ Hirafu Fleur
創作料理ヒラフル
23 3306</p> <p>■ Ichimura Soba
蕎麦屋 いちむら
23 0603</p> <p>■ J-Sekka Café & Delicatessen
J-セッカカフェアンドデリカテセン
21 3088</p> <p>■ Jam Café Bar
ジャム (カフェ&バー)
23 0700</p> <p>■ Japanese Kitchen Bouken
冒険家族
22 3759</p> <p>■ Java Bar and Café
ジャバ バー&カフェ
090 2871 6781</p> | <p>■ JoJo's Café and Bar
ジョジョズ (カフェ&バー)
23 2093</p> <p>■ Jyuu Okonomiyaki
じゅう
44 2336</p> <p>■ Kabuki
カブキ
21-2233</p> <p>■ Kakashi
かかし
21 2282</p> <p>■ Kame
亀
22 0339</p> <p>■ Kamimura
カミムラ
21 2288</p> <p>■ LumberJack
ランバージャック
22-3086</p> <p>■ Lupicia
ルピシア
21 7880</p> <p>■ M's Café
エムズカフェ
44-3380</p> <p>■ Mina Mina
ミナミナ
23 4471</p> <p>■ Mokoraya
もこらや
090 8279 0598</p> <p>■ Mozart
モーツァルト
090 2699 6387</p> <p>■ Nakaya
なかや
090-7518-0873</p> <p>■ Nami Chan Chi
波ちゃん家
22 2258</p> <p>■ Niseko Genghis Khan
ニセコ ジンギスカン
22-2138</p> | <p>■ Niseko Gourmet
ニセコグルメ
080 5584 1313</p> <p>■ Niseko Pizza
ニセコ ピザ
55 5553 [MAP D2]</p> <p>■ Paddy McGinty's
パディーマギンティーズ
55 8020</p> <p>■ Payoka
パヨカ
22 0117</p> <p>■ Piccolo House
ピッコロハウス (カフェ&バー)
23 0311</p> <p>■ Raku Izakaya
楽 居酒屋
22 6638</p> <p>■ Ramat Niseko
ラマッタニセコ
21 5088</p> <p>■ Rin Izakaya
りん 居酒屋
22 1444</p> <p>■ Sakae Izakaya
さかえ
22-4198</p> <p>■ Sekka Dining
セッカダイニング
21 5022</p> <p>■ Senchou 1 Izakaya
船長 (居酒屋)
22 2001</p> <p>■ Senchou 2 Seafood Izakaya
海山屋 (海鮮居酒屋)
22 5454</p> <p>■ Shiosai
潮彩
55-5009</p> <p>■ Shokusai Hirafu
食彩 比羅夫
22 1105</p> <p>■ Shunsai
旬彩
23-1882</p> | <p>■ Slalom
スラローム
22 1105</p> <p>■ Souan
草庵
090-2059-6701</p> <p>■ Spur Chinese Restaurant
シュプール (中華レストラン)
22 1105</p> <p>■ Steak Rosso Rosso
ステーキロッソロッソ
21-7100</p> <p>■ The Barn
ザ・バーン
23-0888</p> <p>■ Tsubara Tsubara
つばらつばら
23 1116</p> <p>■ Vale Bar and Grill
バールバーアンドグリル
21-5833</p> <p>■ Wagyu Dining Sou
Wagyu Dining 社
23 3048</p> <p>■ Wild Bill's
ワイルドビルズ
22 5652</p> <p>■ Yawaraya
やわらや
23 3810</p> <p>■ Yo
よ
22-6979</p> <p>■ Yosaku
よさく
23-4390</p> <p>■ Youtei Yakiniku
焼肉ようてい
22 0109</p> <p>■ Yummy's
ヤミーズ
21 2239</p> <p>■ Yuki Bar and Café
雪場カフェ
22 0234</p> |
|---|--|--|--|--|

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

Visiting Skier "Saved"

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

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

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

après bar
aceski...
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I think I might extend my stay another week!
See you soon.
Love Johnnie

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after the melt conquering mt yotei

By Caitlin Mitchell

MANY a skier or snowboarder has gazed longingly at the peak of Mt Yotei and dreamed of climbing to the summit, with the reward of enjoying a half-hour descent through untracked powder. The reality is it's a treacherous hike demanding a high level of fitness, a lot of expensive climbing and safety equipment, and an extensive knowledge of mountaineering and local weather conditions. In summer, however, as Deep Powder Tours operations manager Caitlin Mitchell found out, you can climb it in thongs (the rubber footwear that is!). There's no skiing down, but as Caitlin writes, you'll still feel on top of the world.



SWEET VICTORY... Caitlin (pink pants) and crew savouring the moment at the summit after conquering Mt Yotei. Photo: Matthew Hollingsworth, Niseko Photography.

THERE are three main trails up Mt Yotei, and they start in the towns of Kutchan, Kyogoku and Makkari. Despite being the longest, the Makkari trail is the 'easiest' side to hike. It has a smoother incline as it follows a ridge, and isn't as steep in comparison to the Kutchan and Kyogoku trails. This is where we started.

Our hiking party – consisting of four gaijin (foreigners) and five nihonjin (Japanese) – set off at 8am. The trail is divided into 10 sections with nine resting spots, the 10th stop being the summit! Although the temperature was not all that high, everyone was soaked with sweat by the time we were at the third rest stop. As we neared the top, there were still vast amounts of snow scattered around, sometimes making the track slippery and hard to walk on.

Stopping at each resting place (which I found VERY necessary), it took us four hours to conquer Mt Yotei. Upon reaching the top we found there was still a fair

amount of snow in the crater and we decided that it would be a good idea (although a fairly dangerous one!) to slide down on our feet. Some, however, ended up on their rear ends. Despite the very slippery 40-minute hike back up to the ridge, the slide down was the highlight of my hike up Mt Yotei!

We spent 1.5 to 2 hours walking around the crater. It was here I learnt a new Japanese phrase: 'Abunai yo!' meaning, 'dangerous, be careful!'. It was a circle of unstable, jagged, rocky terrain. Quite unnerving at times!

By the time it came to hiking back down to Makkari, we were all very exhausted, but on a mission. It took us only two hours (albeit a very long two hours) with no breaks to get back to the base.

Although I would recommend aspiring Mt Yotei hikers to have a fair level of fitness, we did meet a Japanese man in thongs walking his dog along our journey around the crater... so it can't be all that hard!

Caitlin's tips for conquering Yotei

- Take proper hiking shoes
- Take at least 2+ litres of water
- Take lots of snacks: chocolates and onigiri (rice balls) are perfect snacks
- If there is still some snow – take a probe or collapsible stock... and a warm jacket
- Wearing long sleeves is always a good idea no matter how hot the day seems: temperature at the top can be a little unpredictable
- Go for an onsen after your hike – great for sore muscles! (Recommendation: Kyogoku Onsen)
- Choose your day carefully, make sure the weather is fine (don't want any surprise storms!)
- Start hiking early, you will need an entire day (or at least 8 hours)
- Take some bug spray
- **Don't forget your camera!**

niseko cycle week 2009 event was 'perfect'

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

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

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

Highlights of the week included:

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

including plenty of non-cyclists, pedalling to work.

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

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

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

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

On again September 10-20, 2010



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



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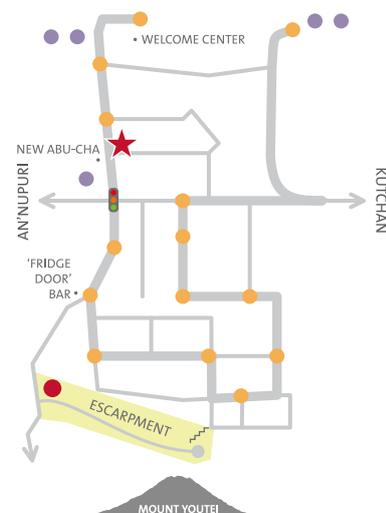
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