

issue 26 // Mar 20 - Apr 2 // 2010

powderlife

NISEKO ニセコ
www.powderlife.com



**SIGN OF A
GOOD SEASON**

SEASON WRAP

well, that was a good one

FIVE OF THE BEST

kutchan dining experiences

POWDER POSTER

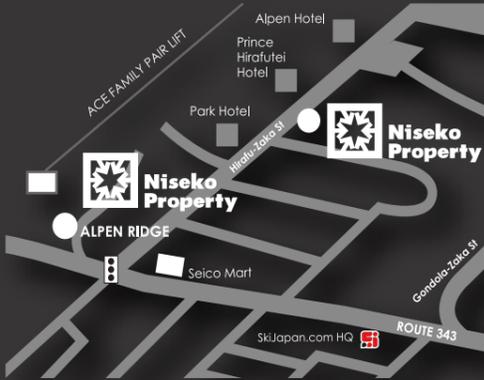
take niseko home with you

Niseko's powder lifestyle magazine fresh every two weeks

Niseko Property are Niseko's leading property specialists.

Our team combines local knowledge and international property experience.

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



ALPEN RIDGE 1.5 BEDROOM

from **¥45,000,000**   



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

ALPEN RIDGE 3 BEDROOM

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

KIRA KIRA

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Stunning property located next to the Ace Family slope. Extremely sought after ski-in, ski-out accommodation.
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Niseko's best location. 3,825m² ski-in, ski-out development opportunity. This site has commanding views of Mt Yotei.

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Land Size 3,825m²

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from **¥3,000,000** LAND 



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

Location: St Moritz
Land Size from 352m²

HIRAFU HOLIDAY HOME

¥29,500,000   



Set in the tranquility of Lower Hirafu Village. This is a tremendous opportunity to own a piece of Niseko at a great price point.

Location: Lower Hirafu Village
Land Size 165m² Floor Area 84m²

MOIWA HOUSE

¥90,000,000   



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

Location: Moiwa
Land Size 992m² Floor Area 233m²

SKI-IN, SKI-OUT

¥449,000,000



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

Location: Upper Hirafu Village
Land Size 1,640m² Floor Area 489m²



CAPELLA™

NISEKO

RESORT AND RESIDENCES



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powderlife
NISEKO ニセコ

公開出售

apartments
for sale

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Niseko's first English language periodical magazine - published every two weeks in Niseko between December and March, once a year as a globally distributed Niseko promotional issue (Powderlife Global Edition).
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Past issues available at the Powderlife office, Lower Ground Floor Australia House (opposite Seicomart).



cover Sign of a good season photo Aaron Jamieson, Niseko Photography



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 - public onsen & pool
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V
the vale niseko
...bottom of the ace family ski lift

Finding the best real estate deals in Niseko

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

Niseko Consulting

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



THERE'S no surer sign that the season is winding down than the sound of snow melting back around the house on a sunny March morning. I think everybody who loves the Niseko winter is always sad to see it go, but there's still spring skiing to be had until early May, and the other great Niseko seasons to enjoy before it's all on again in another eight months time (keep an eye on www.powderlife.com for summer news, events and updates, as well as the snowfall progress from September on).

If you were lucky enough to be here during the 09/10 season it was about as good as it gets in terms of snowfall, visitor numbers and the progress of the resort as a whole. The town was buzzing throughout the winter with more and more nationalities starting to appear in numbers. In particular visitors from Hong Kong, but we also saw plenty more Singaporean, Malaysian, Chinese and Europeans.

As this is our last issue of the winter, we've done a bit of a season wrap, but also have plenty of articles and information for those who are here throughout the rest of March and April. In Fluff, our weather watcher The Don tallies the season's snowfall, and we preview a new winter motorbike race up Mt Moiwa (page 9). We bring you the Best of Niseko 2010 winners (p10), rerun our heart-warming 2008 interview with the wonderful taiko drumming legend Roku-san who sadly passed away last month (p17), review psychedelic bar/restaurant Jam Bar (p20), and much more.

We hope you've enjoyed reading *Powderlife* as much as we've enjoyed covering all the powdery action and bringing it to you this winter. See you next season!

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

季節の終わりを告げるのに、天気の良い3月の朝に聞こえる雪解けの音より確かなものはないでしょう。この春の訪れはニセコラバーにとって悲しいものです。しかし、5月初旬までは春スキーが十分に楽しめますし、8ヶ月後に訪れる冬の前に他の季節を堪能できます(夏のイベント情報、最新アップデート、9月からの積雪情報はwww.powderlife.comで確認してください)。

積雪量、観光客の数、街全体の開発の点に関して言えば、09/10シーズンのニセコを味わう事ができた皆さんはラッキーでした。各国からの観光客でビレッジは活気に溢れていました。今年は特に香港からの観光客が多く、またシンガポール、マレーシア、中国、ヨーロッパからの観光客も多く見られました。

今号はシーズン最終号にふさわしくシーズンのまとめ記事が中心ですが、3月、4月を楽しむためにニセコに来られている皆さんの為にも多くの記事、リゾート情報を掲載しています。Fluff ページでは「The Don」による気象予報、9 ページではモイワ山で行われるモーターバイクレースの予告記事を紹介しています。その他、『Best of Niseko 2010』入賞者紹介(10 ページ)、先月お亡くなりになった伝説の太鼓奏者『ろくさん』の心温まるインタビュー(2008年に掲載、17 ページ)、サイケなバーレストラン『Jam Bar』の紹介(20 ページ)など、話題盛りだくさんです。大いに楽しんで紙面を作ってきた私達と同じくらい、皆さんがパウダーライフを楽しく読まれた事を願っています。また来年会いましょう!

Photo: Paul Malandain

SEKKA DINING

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

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



SEKKA DELI

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

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



MAKI LOUNGE

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

DRINKS 14:00~ LATE T: 21-3070



HERMOSA

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

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

grand hirafu

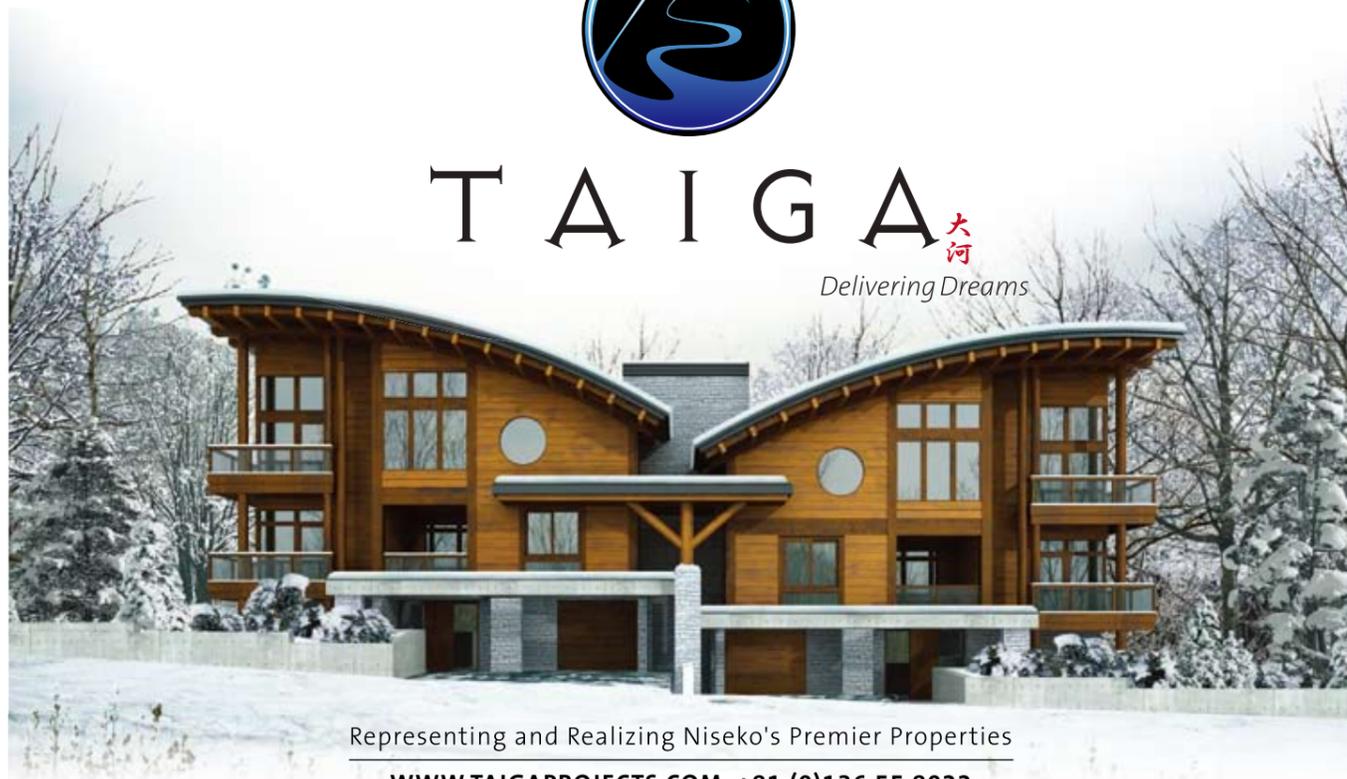
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Tel: 0136 22 0399

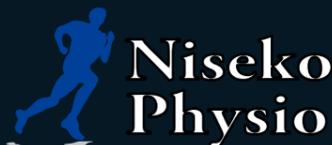
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Professional sports and relaxation massage by highly experienced, professional masseuses. Niseko Massage will soothe your tired muscles and revitalise your body and mind. Appointments are preferred but not essential.

Early Bird Special!
Discount massages pre-2pm!

Our therapists

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



Physiotherapy is also available

Our sessions

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

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

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

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

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

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



fluff light news and stuff from around town

We're looking at 15m+

BEING the last issue of the season it's time to look back at how it all went. The first snowfall at village level was back on October 31, which is reasonably early, and it sure got hopes up for a big season ahead. But November ended up being rather disappointing, with regular warm periods between snowfalls. This fickle weather continued through into early December, however from December 14, the snows came and barely stopped till the end of the month. For much of January, Niseko just kept doing what it does best – snowing almost continuously every day, totalling well over 5m throughout the month. February started out well, with very cold temps and ongoing snowfalls. It all came to a rather abrupt end, though, in the third week, and on February 25 the temperature got up to near 10 degrees, followed by rain. The snow returned on March 1, and we've seen a nice mix of sun and snow thus far. Total snowfall up on the mountain from the start of November is now up around 15m, with another big snow system bearing down on us as I write. So overall a pretty good season, it was a bit late to really get going but when it did it barely stopped until the little warm period in the last week of February. It's now been over 100 days since the start of the season, and so far we've had snow falling on about eight out of every 10 days, and close to half of those days had 20cm or more. That equates to more than enough powder days to keep even the most avid powder hounds very, very happy. – **The Don**

Photo: Aaron Jamieson, Niseko Photography



THIS is what happens when Hokkaido's leading brewery and chocolate makers spend far too much time together – chocolate beer. Sapporo beer and Royce chocolates joined forces to brew a limited edition beer that's apparently 'bitter with the smell of chocolate everywhere'. In other beer news, Japan's beer consumption has dropped by 13 per cent. That can't be the case in party town Niseko, so kanpai!



Photos: Glen Claydon

Kite-skiing takes off in Niseko

CHANCES are you've seen kite-surfing before, but kite-skiing? It's a craze sweeping the world, and Hirafu's Base Lodge manager Steve Roth is flying the... well... kite for Niseko. On the right day, Steve can be spotted floating through Kutchan's farmlands with his skis and kite – a pastime he's enjoyed here for the past three winters. "I love kite-surfing back home and skiing here, so the two go perfectly together for me," he says, adding that he'd like to take it further in the future. "Kiting is getting very big everywhere now – whether it's on waves, land, ice or snow. Snow-kiting is getting quite popular around the world, but I am the only one I know of who is kite-skiing in Niseko." All you need to kite-ski is similar equipment to kite-surfing – lines and a parachute – then all that's left is for the weather conditions to be just right. "The wind can't be too strong, or too light, and unlike skiing and boarding, the snow should ideally not be too deep!"

Most ride down the mountain, they ride up

TACKLING a snowy mountain on skis or a snowboard might be extreme enough for most of us... but how about on a motorbike?

That's what's going down – or up, actually – at the King of the Hill Snow Hill Climb, a free all-day spring event at Moiwa on April 11. The high-adrenaline motocross meet started in Sapporo in 2008, and has been moved to Moiwa for the first time this year. Organiser Iida-san said motorbike hill climbs had become very popular in Europe in the last few years – and they were just starting to rev up in Japan. "It's a crazy, fun experience for spectators and riders," he said. "Here you will see beginners to professionals and even Japanese motocross champions riders in their funky and original bike wear, on a wide range of machines from 50cc to cross bikes. There will even be four-wheelers racing to make this crazy event even more awesome!"



niseko news *tracking down local stories*

By Matthew Thomas

Looking back, what a winter!

WHEN it comes to a Niseko season, they don't come much better than this.

There was snow (and lots of it!), tourists swarmed in the streets and on the hill, and business was booming everywhere – bars were packed, you couldn't get into many restaurants unless you booked, and at times there was barely a spare bed in all of Hirafu.

Newbie hotspot Herbie's Umbrella Bar (*right*) opened its doors this season and was a huge après ski hit. "The town took a liking to Herbie's right from the get-go because Niseko is lacking in the European-style après ski atmosphere," manager Dan Morgan said. "Most afternoons it was jam-packed with people having their final ski run of the day at Herbie's."

Just down the road, Yuki Bar did a roaring trade this season, hosting plenty of live music, DJs and themed revelries that saw raging 'J-parties' spilling out into the street. Manager Miyazaki-san said more than 300 party-goers squeezed into Yuki Bar in peak season. "We want everyone to enjoy the local music scene," he said. "There is more that just great snow in Niseko – that was the key to our busy season," he said.

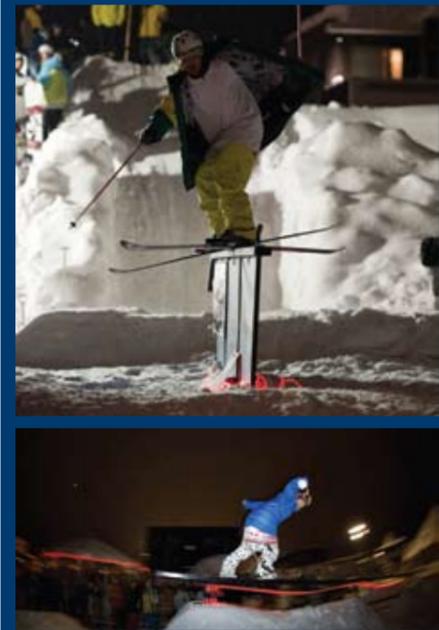
But it wasn't just the party scene that was heaving. Owner of Holiday Niseko Ashley Nicholls said that after offering some great deals, occupancy rose to as high as 90 per cent, and 60 per cent during the quieter periods.

"Last season was a bit of a blip because of the recession, but we have bounced back this winter," he said.

Niseko Management Service (NMS) marketing manager Ben Thorpe said NMS had also enjoyed a fruitful year, with bookings about 20 per cent up on the 2008/09 season. "We believe these markets will continue to expand and look forward to introducing people to the Niseko experience," he said.



Photos: Glen Claydon



Herbie's rail jams a big hit

THE thrills and spills at the newly opened Herbie's Umbrella Bar rail jams drew some of the biggest crowds this season. Hundreds flocked to two massive jams in January and February, watching amateur, semi-pro and super-skilled local Japanese competitors hit rails set up in the small car park behind the popular new Austrian-themed après ski bar in Hirafu's main street. "People were stopping in the middle of the street to watch the rail jams, and we had to keep telling them to get off the road or they'd get hit by a car," Herbie's manager Dan Morgan said.

"There were heaps of skier and riders at a higher level than we expected, nailing a whole heap of tricks. Semi-pro guys rocked up, and there were some super-skilled Japanese 'J-Crew' at a really high level that we were stoked with."

Dan said Herbie's was looking forward to holding bigger and better rail jams next season.

Best of Niseko winners!

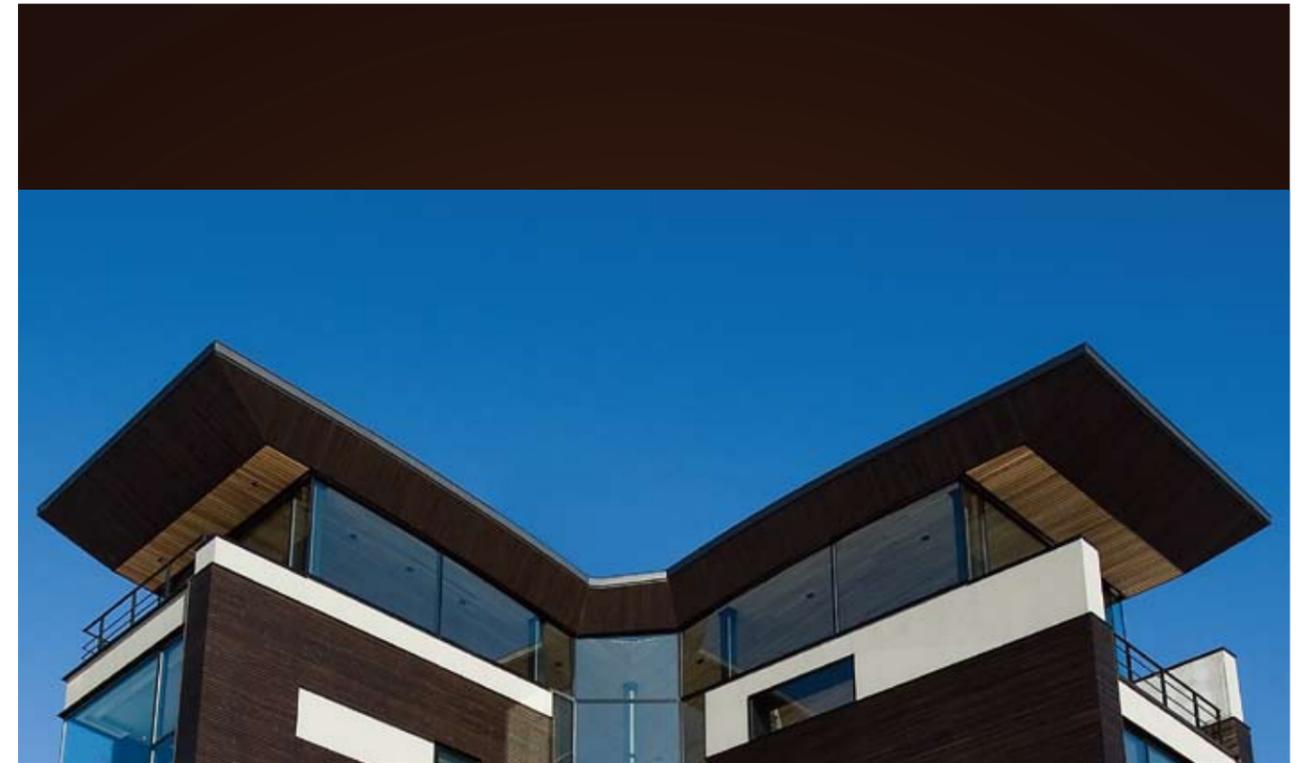
THE votes are in, the people have spoken, so here are the winners of Powderlife's 2009/10 Best of Niseko voting poll. Thanks to those who voted and congrats to the winners!

- Restaurant** – Abucha
- Izakaya** – Rin
- Bar** – Gyu+ (Fridge Door Bar)
- Café** – J-Sekka
- Onsen** – Hilton / Yugokorotei
- Resort** – Annupuri
- Convenience Store** – Lawson
- Shop** – Rhythm
- Activity** – Skiing



RHYTHM

CONGRATS to seasonal worker Tim Haines who takes home the Armada ARGs, thanks to Rhythm Snow Sports!



THE SHAPE OF INTELLIGENT LUXURY.



ODIN

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in the loop your guide to whats on

By Kisato Kurihara + Lizzy Hoo

SAT
20 Niseko Village Wonder Festival @ Niseko Village
ニセコビレッジワンダーフェスティバル @ ニセコビレッジ

Photo contest, down-hill cup, snow-cart race, ski and snowboard slush cup, six-hour endurance race and closing party @ Ezo Pub.

豪華賞品満載のコンテストや競技、そして楽しいパーティーなど、とびきりの春スキーになること間違いなし。ぜひご参加ください!

start: 8am March 20-22
contact: 0136-44-2211
www.niseko-village.com

SUN
21 Niseko Annupuri Festival @ Annupuri Ski Area
ニセコアンヌプリフェスタ@アンヌプリスキー場

Treasure-hunt and potato-digging games in the snow, as well as tube race. Suitable for both adults and children.

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 13, 14, 20, 22
contact: 0136-58-2080
www.cks.chuo-bus.co.jp/annupuri

MON
22 New Ski Test-Ride Events @ Annupuri Ski Area
ニセコアンヌプリフェスタ@アンヌプリスキー場

Trial as many kinds of new-model skis as you want. Just head on down to the bottom of the gondola station.

恒例の来シーズンモデルの最新スキーを体験試乗できる人気のイベント。

start: 9am-3pm
contact: 0136-58-2080
www.cks.chuo-bus.co.jp/annupuri



Fri 26th - Pool comp @ Splash
ワッフルナイト @ blo*blo gyoza bar



MON
22 Free Ride Contest @ Moiwai Ski Resort
モイワフリーライドコンテスト@モイワスキーリゾート

This race is open for everyone - alpine-ski racers, snowboarders, local guides and more. ¥3000 for adult (includes lift ticket).

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

start: 7pm-9pm
contact: 0144-82-2216
www.niseko-moiwa.jp/english/

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

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

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

start: 6pm
contact: 0136-22-1269

WED
24 Kutchan Art 2010 @ Shu Ogawara Museum of Art
くっちゃんART展2010 @ 小川原修記念美術館

Colourful exhibition of local artists' work in a small museum. Exhibition period February 24 - March 28. ¥500.

小さな美術館で、多くの作家が集う華やかな展覧会。展示期間2月24日から3月28日 入館料500円

start: 9am-5pm
contact: 0136-21-4141
www.town.kutchan.hokkaido.jp

THU
25 National Waffle Day @ blo*blo gyoza bar
ワッフルナイト @ blo*blo gyoza bar

Why not waffle Wednesday (national waffle day)? Come and have a hot tasty waffle and ice cream.

ナショナルワッフルデーです。焼きたてワッフルとアイスクリームと共にどうぞ。ゴーゴーBlobo bar!

start: 6pm
contact: 0136-22-1269

FRI
26 Pool Tournament @ Bar Splash
ビリヤードトーナメント @ Bar Splash

Doubles tournament on Tuesday 25th and singles tournament Friday 26th. Entry ¥1000. House rules apply.

ビリヤードのトーナメントをスブラッシュでやっちゃいます。腕前を披露できるこの時をお見逃しなく。

start: 8pm - March 25 and 26
contact: 0136-55-8228

SAT
27 Weekend Fireworks @ Grand Hirafu
ウィークエンド花火 @ グランヒラフ

View fireworks from the ski slopes every Saturday in March. Come to see beautiful fireworks with the 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
28 Reggae Season Final Party @ Yosaku
Season Final Irie Dance Party @ 与作

The last party of the season @ Yosaku. Celebrate for the end of Splash Bar and Yosaku's third season. Entry ¥1000.

今シーズン最後のイベントはSonicwall結成4周年記念とスブラッシュ、与作の3周年記念企画。ダンス、サウンド陣共に超豪華!

start: 10pm
contact: 0136-23-4390

SUN
28 Hokkaido Old Boys Slalom Competition @ Grand Hirafu
全道オールドボーイ大回転大会@ニセコグランヒラフ

Join the Hokkaido old boys aged 50 years and older keeping fit on the snow in Hirafu.

まだまだ、若い者には負けませんの精神で、ゲレンデにターンを刻みます。

start: 9:30am
contact: 0136-22-0109
www.grand-hirafu.jp

Sun 28th - Old boys slalom comp.
スキースノーボードセッション @ ニセコビレッジ



SUN
28 Ski & Snowboard Session @ Niseko Village
スキースノーボードセッション @ ニセコビレッジ

Entry ¥4000. Entrants under-18 years need permission. Participants must be insured and wear a helmet. Apply by March 25.

ニセコビレッジで熱いバトルが繰り広げられます。ゲストライダーも来場。参加費4000円受付3月24日までです。
start: 8am on March 27 and 28
contact: 0136-44-2211
www.niseko-village.com

WED
31 Closing Night Party @ blo*blo gyoza bar
ラストナイトパーティー @ blo*blo gyoza bar

National Potato Day and closing party. Kutchan local potato and toppings. Drink specials all night.

ナショナルポテトデーです。倶知安の特産品のジャガイモをトッピングと共にどうぞ。ゴーゴーBlobo bar!ドリンクスペシャルやっています。
start: 8pm
contact: 0136-22-1269

APRIL EVENTS

THERE'S unlikely to be much more powder, but there is still a lot of action going on in and around town. Check it out!

Niseko Pleasure Camp, Grand Hirafu
Stay at Hotel J-First and watch pro-riders showing off tricks. www.grand-hirafu.jp
どのレベルのスノーボーダーでも楽しめるキャンプ。フリーランからパークまでプロの技を伝授!
April 2-4

Niseko Moiwai Cup GS, Moiwai
Slalom and giant slalom ski competition. 3000 for adults. www.niseko-moiwa.jp
回転、大回転のコンビ競技。参加費、一般3000円。翌日お楽しみ抽選会あり。
April 3 from 9.30am

KEI-SKI Cup GS, Moiwai
Super Giant Slalom ski competition. ¥3000 for adults. www.niseko-moiwa.jp
スーパージャイアントスラローム競技。参加

費、一般3000円。お楽しみ抽選会あり。
April 4 from 9.30am

Super Bumps Niseko Cup, Grand Hirafu
Freestyle ski mogul competition. Open to everyone. Details at www.grand-hirafu.jp
今年で20周年を迎える日本最大級のモーグル草大会。
April 4 from 10am

Hirafu Classic, Grand Hirafu
Ski, snowboard and telemark race. Check www.grand-hirafu.jp for more details.
タイム差順位、ラップ賞、飛び賞など、全員に参加賞あり。
April 11 from 9am

King of the Hill 2010, Moiwai
Beginners, professionals and Japanese motocross race uphill. www.niseko-moiwa.jp
雪の上をバイクで上まで駆け上がって行くファンキーでクレイジーなイベント。
April 11 from 9am



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SNAP

Powderlife took to the slopes one sunny day to ask skiers and boarders what they like about being in Niseko in the springtime ...



Misaki, Takashi, Minakofu and Miyuki – who all work in Chiba (in the greater Tokyo area) – love it in Niseko in spring because our iconic volcano, Mount Yotei, peeks out and says hello more often on nice sunny days.



"We can't believe the powder is this good in spring," say Angela and Geoff from Australia. "But it doesn't snow the whole time – on a beautiful blue-sky day like today, it's nice to get out and enjoy the amazing views."



Sapporo university students Yusuke, Syugo, Miyako and Asumi prefer spring to practice their snowboard jumps and tricks in spring, because the snow gets soft and slushy on warmer days.

InSki's Wipeout of the Week

TODD Kennedy thought he could ski his way through this Niseko mushroom. He thought wrong.

While enjoying some tree runs in Hanazono, Todd tried to hit this soft-looking pillow so his mate could take an epic pow pic, however as it turns out the mushroom was rock-solid. For his efforts, Todd wins a helmet thanks to Inski in Hirafu.

Inski's Wipeout of the Week will return next season, so keep sending your stack pics to ed@powderlife.com and they might just get published next winter.

Powderlife can't wait to see all your stacks, so until next season, may all your wipeouts be public, excessive and captured on film!



Zac and Lucas from Australia were supposed to go to Utah for some spring skiing, but changed their plans and came to Niseko instead. A good choice, they say. "I was in Utah in the springtime last year and I prefer it in Niseko because of amazing snow and no crowds."

Mountain Style

TAKING his name into account, Christ Chan is most definitely a lord of fashion. This is the first time the bright and colourful Hong Kong snowboarder has donned all the colours of the rainbow – but he's religious about his mountain style.

"Rainbows only come out after rain, but instead I'm trying to be a rainbow during a sunny day after lots of Niseko powder," he says. "But in the event of an accident, I also look very sharp and bright, and I'll be easy to spot." Christ's a human rainbow shooting down the hill wearing his vest jacket and outerwear by Korean brand, Shooting Star. His stylish striped pants are by North American brand Four Square. Christ rides a Forum Young Blood board, and keeps Niseko's springtime sun out of his eyes with Anon goggles. Looking as stylish on the mountain as Christ? Amen to that!



This big crew from Hong Kong, Singapore and Australia – Alan, Steven, Eva, Mary, Jackie, Brian, Victor, Quincy and Hann – all agree that spring in Niseko means the best of both worlds: sun and snow!



Kathy, Edmund, Ida, Ricky and May – all from Hong Kong – love spring because they don't have to share all this later-season powder snow with big crowds. "Plus, the temperature in March is much warmer than in the winter."

FLASH

Costumed revellers were dressed to the nines at Yuki Bar's Costume Party, while it was another flighty end to the Niseko darts league at Wild Bill's...



Things got a little foggy for 'The Yas Man' walking from the chilly outdoors into Yuki Bar, where things were heating up, so he made some eye holes in his glasses.



Full-body cartoon character suits and splashes of ghoulish face paint were the order of the evening for this party quartet.



Dancing was the perfect crime for Officer Mika, while Maid Nana cleaned up on the dance floor at Yuki Bar's costume party.



"Cheers to the camera," says Kaz, who was rockin' the party with Lydia and Tom at one of Yuki Bar's biggest nights of the season.



Jess and a couple of mates (yes, we lost the paper with everyone's names on it) enjoy a bevvy or two at Yuki Bar's costume night.

Costume Night @ Yuki Bar

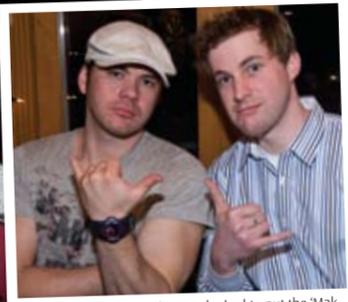
Darts Finals @ Wild Bill's



Mandy, Azza and David pause from partying for a quick happy snap, as Risa gives the crazy eyes from a distance.



No one was safe from MC Lachy on the mic, while the Dart Master himself, Azza, kept a close eye and a chalked hand on the score.



Al's team didn't make the finals, but he had even more fun on the sidelines, spending some quality time with his girl Tracey.



Mak wasn't playing any darts, so he had to put the 'Mak Attack' on hold for a night, while Michael perched himself front-row-centre and checked out the flighty action.



Two's company but three's even better, as Mika, Wennie and Allie have thrice the fun at Wild Bill's for darts finals night.



It was down to the wire, but Dart Vader shafted Shafted in the final family round to take out the 2009/10 Niseko Hirafu International Darts Grand Slam.



Everyone's a winner as Dart Vader and Shafted put their darts differences aside to celebrate another great season of throwing sharp things at a cork board.

Debbie took time out from Niseko Wine Supplies to get into grand finals spirits with Eri, Midori and Lizzie.

meet the locals introducing niseko ski resort staff



T-roy

name Troy Stidolph **age** 30 -something **hometown** Newcastle, Australia **time in niseko?** Four seasons as a local, one on holidays **ski/board?** Believe it or not, I can do both **how long?** Since the '90s **why did you come to niseko?** To ride pow **what do you do in summer?** What's summer? I work in the snow all year round **favourite... food?** Satay rice **restaurant?** A-Bu-Cha bar? Wild Bill's, of course **onsen?** Grand Hotel mixed onsen **ski run?** Super Ridge **how long will you be in niseko?** I live here for about seven months of the year **best niseko secret?** Mina Mina **what's your life philosophy?** Life's short. Stunt it



SKI INSTRUCTOR Tomi

name Hitomi Uranaka **age** 24 **hometown** Kutchan **time in niseko** I am a local. **ski/board?** Skier **how long?** 21 years **why did you come to niseko?** I wanted to be a ski instructor **favourite... colour** White and pink **brand** Neff **food** Chicken, fruits and vegetables. **restaurant** Bagus in Kutchan bar Barunba onsen **Grand Hotel** **ski run** Alpen Course **how long will you be in niseko?** Until I find the place want to go next. **best niseko secret?** I don't want to tell my secret, sorry! **what's your life philosophy?** Continual efforts are a prerequisite to success. **what makes your day at work?** When customers smile at me.



PARK STAFF Takeshi

name Takeshi Iwata **age** 31 **hometown** Hakuba **time in niseko** Two seasons **ski/board?** Skier **how long?** 3 years **why did you come to niseko?** Good mountain with lots of snow and a great park **favourite... food** Takoyaki (battered octopus balls) **restaurant** Hanazono staff accomm **onsen** Onsen in staff accomm **ski run** Hanazono park **how long will you be in niseko?** Until someone kicks me out **niseko secret?** The good looking boys who work at Hanazono park **what's your life philosophy?** Enjoy your life **what makes your day at work?** when everyone's having a fun in Hanazono park

By Kisato Kurihara

irasshaimase! 'welcome!' great little local businesses

Wagyu Dining Sou, Hirafu Middle Village

MANY foreigners come to Niseko for the snow, but some of their best memories are of the traditional Japanese dining experiences. The hands-on hotpot restaurant Wagyu Dining Sou is a standout. Here the ingredients for your chosen dish are brought to the table where you cook them on a gas stove right in front of you. Sou was started five years ago by Atsuyo and Kazumasa Murakami. Atsuyo's parents opened Pension Mo'orea 25 years ago. When more and more foreigners started coming to Niseko about five years ago, Atsuyo's parents suggested they open a restaurant next to the pension. Be sure to cross this one off your dining to-do list! Map C3 (p47).

Wagyu dining 社 ヒラフミドルビレッジ

多くの外国人が雪を求めてニセコを訪れるが、それと同時に、日本の食文化に大いに感動することとなるでしょう。ここ、Wagyu dining 社では、伝統的な日本食に触れることの出来る隠れた名店です。ニセコで育った村上淳葉さんは、サーフィンにハマリ、パリで知り合った大阪出身の和正さんと共に、宮崎県へ移住するが、ニセコに外国人が増え始めた5年前、それを予期していたかのように、淳葉さんの両親が経営するペンションMo'oreaの隣に、お店をオープンさせました。元気にぎやかなお店にしたいと付けられた社。メニューは、すき焼き、しゃぶしゃぶの他、キムチ鍋、みそ鍋から選べ、サラダ、刺身とデザートにアイスが付いてくるコースで、お腹いっぱいになること間違いなしです。テーブルの上で、自分好みに鍋を作って食べるという楽しみもあり、会話も盛り上がることでしょう。今日の鍋奉行はあなたです。



Niseko Ramen Mount, Kutchan

KAZUHIRO Sagara is a diehard powder lover. Originally from Tokyo, he first did a season in central Hokkaido resort Tomamu. That winter changed his life and he decided one day he'd live here for good. He brought his wife Hiromi to show her how beautiful Hokkaido was and try and convince her to move here. The plan worked. They moved to Sapporo before Kazuhiro found a job at a lodge in Niseko. He had always wanted to have his own restaurant so when he heard Ramen Mount was for sale, he jumped at the chance. They revamped the menu and gave the restaurant a new lease on life. Try the miso ramen or Niseko ramen, with local Kutchan potato cream. Route 5, Map F3 (p46).



ニセコラーメンマウント 倶知安

大のパウダージャンキーである、東京都出身の相良和宏さん。全国をめぐり、北海道の雪に惚れ込み、いつか北海道に住みたいと奥さんの広美さんを説得するため、3ヶ月の日本一周旅行を決行。念願がなつて、結婚を機に広美さんと共に、北海道に移住してきた。2006年の夏にニセコでのペンションの仕事を見つけ、札幌からニセコに移り住む。将来は、自らのお店を持ちたいと考えていた、ちょうどその頃に、前オーナーがお店を引き継ぐ料理人を探しており、ラーメン好きの和宏さんが抜擢をされ、2008年10月に新たなラーメンマウントをオープンすることとなった。お勧めは、もちろん味噌ラーメンとニセコラーメン。地元の名産品である男爵いもを使い、地域に根づいたラーメン、インパクトのあるご当地ラーメンをと研究を重ね、出来たニセコラーメンは、見た目もニセコの粉雪のように白く軽やかに盛り付けされている。

in focus with roku-san

By Eriko Mentzos

NISEKO recently said goodbye to local legend Rokuro Takada – the founder of Kutchan's thriving taiko drum culture – who passed away at age 96. Eriko Mentzos interviewed Roku-san back in 2008...

When did you start playing the taiko?

When I was still in my mother's stomach. My family's religion is the Nichiren sect of Buddhism - while we chant a sutra, we play a fan drum. I always heard those rhythms when my mother was chanting, and probably drumming in her stomach!

What is the best thing about the taiko?

Well, people say I am too crazy about it, but I just love it! I could overcome anything because the taiko is always with me and encourages me in a great way. I think I forget everything while I'm playing. Now I go to schools and teach taiko to children. I'm so happy to see them enjoying themselves. Taiko is a simple instrument – anyone from a child to an adult and even an old one like me can play the taiko. Four generations of my family now play the taiko. Isn't that great?

Do you ever get tired after playing the taiko?

I never get tired from playing the taiko. I get energy from it. People tell me my hands are moving even

when I am sleeping.

What was your taiko troupe Yotei Daiko Serve Association like in the beginning?

It wasn't big from the beginning. I used to play by myself. I brought my taiko to many events and played. In summer to cheer baseball teams, in winter to cheer skiers in competitions. My children didn't like me doing that – they said they were ashamed. But I kept doing it, and over time my children came to understand my passion. They started to play the taiko with me, and now we have so many people encouraging us to continue.

How much does a taiko drum cost?

It depends on the size and who makes it... but ours were about ¥25 million (\$250,000) for 60 drums (about \$4000 each!). And that was about half price!

Is there any meaning behind the rhythms?

Yotei Daiko's 'Arashi' is about people climbing Mount Yotei during a storm, then seeing a beautiful sunrise at the end. 'Niseko Renzan' describes Niseko's scenes – starting with peaceful nature in spring, then festivals in summer, skiing in winter, then thinking about the approaching spring.

We've been working on a new one called 'Daichi' (the earth) for about 10 years. It's almost ready. We're practicing it now.



Do you have any big plans with Taiko?

Well, we would like to do sennin taiko when I turn 95 years old (drumming with 1000 people – Roku-san managed to reach 600 before he passed away). I will be 93 soon in March. So 95 is not so far from now.

What are your top three tips for visitors to Niseko?

1 I think everyone should try the taiko. Like I said before, it's a very simple instrument. There are some events you can actually try our taikos. **2** As you know, Niseko gets great snow in winter. So I would like everyone to enjoy this wonderful snow while they are in Niseko. **3** The colours are amazing here in autumn. Many people from all over Japan visit to see Niseko's autumn. I would like many people to come back in autumn.

powwow while waiting patiently in line at seicomart i heard a lady say...

By Matthew Thomas

ACCORDING to Wikipedia.com, it's been 3060 years since Niseko's iconic volcano Mount Yotei last erupted. That was in 1050BC, from a cone emerging from the north-west flank of the mountain at Lake Hangetsu. Prior to that, an earlier eruption was also recorded at 3050BC. So with 2000 years separating the previous two eruptions, are we 1060 years overdue for our next one?

SPEAKING of Yotei, it seems the little brother of Mount Fuji has inspired a local artist. Seasonal worker Sarah King from England recently sent a unique piece of art in to *Powderlife*. It's a typographical drawing of Yotei, abstractly illustrated with snow-themed words and sentences. Go on, take a closer look! For more of Sarah's art, check out www.sarahaking.com.



FOR those with a taste for wine and cheese, here's a hot local tip that should keep you happy. Pop into Seicomart and try their G7 range of Chilean wines (a bargain at only ¥500), and also check out the cheese section for some tasty (and cheap!) camembert. A ¥1000 note should easily cover it!

IF you're sticking around for some spring riding, Grand Hirafu has already started moving the park to its lofty new home at skier's right of the Ace Pair Lift #3. The park is moved up higher because the altitude means cooler temps, but we recommend waiting until the snow has softened up by about mid-morning, then heading up there with some good friends, food and drinks. The mountain's usually open until the first week of May, so who knows, you might even get to rock the Ray-Bans, don a hoodie, or even get a goggle tan!

NISEKO has got to have one of the longest winters in the world. After swinging open the gates of Mount Annupuri in late November, Grand Hirafu will finally close on May 5; Hanazono's open until April 6; Annupuri will close on May 5; Niseko Village will shut between April 7-28, then reopens until May 5; and Moiwa will be open until mid-April. All night-skiing will finish on March 27. Happy spring skiing!

WHEN you're next in Max Valu (Kutchan Map G3) in Kutchan doing a shop, try a sweet taste of the sea

with taiyaki, a Japanese fish-shaped cake in the small bakery located near the registers. For those who are a little more experimental, try the takoyaki – dumplings made from fried or baked octopus balls. They always say never go shopping on an empty stomach, right?

SNOWBOARDING

and skateboarding tend to go hand-in-hand, so for those skaters out there, why not visit Niseko's only bar with a skate bowl and mini-ramp, Loaf Lounge (Kutchan Map B3). Everyone is welcome, and they're open daily from 4.20pm until midnight. Drinking and driving is for losers, but drinking and skating at Loaf Lounge... well... that's a different story!



A LEADING Niseko bar owner told us earlier in the season that he was looking into bringing Aussie rock legend Jimmy Barnes over for a 'black tie and ski pants' gig this winter. That didn't quite eventuate this year, but apparently Barnesy's a huge fan of Niseko's pow pow, and we may just see him rocking out here next season!

five of the best kutchan dining experiences

COCORO OKONOMIYAKI – More than just a restaurant, Okonomiyaki Cocoro is an essential Japanese dining experience. Okonomiyaki is best described as a savoury pancake containing a variety of toppings, batters and sauces that vary from region to region. Cocoro doesn't simply cook the meal and serve it to you. In a cute little restaurant seating no more than about 10 people, diners get hands-on as staff teach how to prepare and cook their very own Osaka-style okonomiyaki on a hotplate. A very Japanese night out. 0136 22 1528, 0136 23 0008 (English) / 11am-9pm / Kutchan Map B6



Torimatsu – Yakitori are grilled meat skewers or kebabs, and Torimatsu is one of the best places in town to try them. Along with yakitori, Torimatsu also boasts an extensive izakaya menu. And you may just be the only gaijin (tourist) eating there! 0136 23 2893 / 5pm-12pm, closed Sundays / Kutchan Map A3

Enya – Built by the owners of Hirafu's former izakaya Big Cliff (now Paddy McGinty's), Enya's fast become a hotspot for locals. Breathe in the atmosphere rich with the smoky smells of flame-grilled barbecue, experience the flavours of fresh sashimi and more Japanese delights. 0136 22 3438 / 5.30pm-12pm, closed Sundays / Kutchan Map B3

Hamakko – On show at Hamakko is some of the world's best seafood from the Sea of Japan, contrasted by dishes starring Kutchan's famous potatoes, and a warming hot pot menu. At the end of the meal, staff are known to dress diners up in Japanese costume and take pictures. 0136 22 2430 / 5.15pm-11pm, closed Sunday / Map A4

Shunsai – Shunsai's modern Japanese cuisine boasts sumptuous treats and creative fusion of ingredients from Hokkaido land and sea. Trained in several countries, the expertly skilled chef prepares a delicious, beautifully-presented array of contemporary Japanese dishes. 0136 23 1882 / 11am-9pm, closed Sundays / Kutchan Map B5

local recipe buta no yawatamaki (pork roll with green beans, burdock, carrot and celery)

BUTA no Yawatamaki is a modern healthy dish cooked in many Japanese homes. It's usually accompanied by rice, miso soup and sautéed vegetables as part of a Japanese dinner. When sliced into small pieces it also makes a great canapé for a dinner party. This is one of the 32 recipes in Niseko Gourmet's new cook book, which participants in their Japanese cooking workshops receive free after the lesson.



Ingredients (Serves four)

Sauce

- 700g sliced pork (or beef if preferred)
- 6tbsp soy sauce
- ½ carrot
- 2tbsp mirin
- 50g vegetables (green beans, burdock, celery or spinach) cut into small sticks
- 2tbsp water
- 1clove garlic, sliced
- 1tbsp bonito stock powder
- 4tbsp vegetable oil for frying
- 4tbsp sugar
- 2tbsp salt and pepper
- 2tbsp cooking sake

Method

Bring large pot of water to the boil and blanch vegetables. Place slice of pork on chopping board, vegetables at one end. Roll up. Continue until all pork and vegetables are used. Make marinade sauce by combining all sauce ingredients in a bowl. Heat a little oil in fry pan and add rolled meat. Season with salt and pepper. Brown meat on all sides. Once meat is cooking remove from pan and set aside. In same pan add marinade sauce and turn heat up from medium to high. Allow sauce to simmer while stirring constantly for 2 to 3 minutes. Return meat to sauce and mix well for about 30 seconds. Remove from pan and slice into bite-sized pieces. Serve.

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restaurant review *jam bar*

By Lizzy Hoo



Photos: Aaron Jamieson, Niseko Photography

MANY winter visitors to Niseko will come across Jam Bar. While this legendary Hirafu bar is best known for its late-night antics, Guru Guru parties and hard-dance music it also has a menu worth discovering and, surprisingly, is a great place for a quiet dinner.

I arrived at Jam Bar with two local regulars who, despite their combined eight Niseko winters, had never eaten there. After our meal they wondered why. Jam Bar is festooned with colourful lights, handmade furniture and quirky fixtures. The menu caters for all tastes and levels of hunger with a hearty mix of traditional Japanese yakitori, rice and noodle dishes, as well as hearty pizzas and burgers. The drinks menu is extensive offering a wide selection of cocktails and a chalkboard menu choice of over 30 shots.

We kicked off our night with a few cold beers, Midori Margherita and a Bend It Like Beckham cocktail. The evening's lengthy procession of food began with Shirasu Oroshi (freshly grated Japanese radish topped with whitebait) and Tuna Poki (raw tuna mixed with soy sauce). The Yudofu arrives just as the final morsel of Yakitori is savoured. Yudofu is fresh, soft tofu boiled lightly and dipped in a Japanese ponzu sauce and is a perfect counter to the yakitori and cheese-laden pizza on the way.

Our pizza of choice from a selection of five was Jam's Knockout Pizza. A Teriyaki Chicken Burger was selected to accompany the pizza and satisfy the beer drinker of the group. The burgers range from ¥700 to ¥850 and are served with thick potato wedges – an excellent choice for budget meal seekers.

There are loads of affordable eating options at Jam Bar including their delicious Yakisoba (¥650), Marinated Chicken Wings (¥650), Miso Salmon Steak (¥850) and Jam's Rice Balls (¥500). After mulling these options we decided they were for another time. Instead we went with the Osaka noodles and the waiter's recommendation – the Shiyaki Bimbimba – rice topped with mixed vegetables, pork and Korean kimchee, served in a hot-stone bowl. This was a great recommendation and definitely a highlight for everyone at the table.

Visitors and locals have their favourite, never-fail places to eat in Niseko – places you can turn up to any night of the week and feel safe in the knowledge you'll get a seat, a drink and good meal at a reasonable price. Jam Bar ticks all of these boxes. And after dinner you can choose your own adventure: work through the cocktail list knowing that the party crowd will soon appear; move on; or retire for the evening and go home.



Jam Bar
Open: 5pm-2am
Tel: 0136 23 0700
 More reviews at powderlife.com/niseko-restaurants

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gondola chalets

THE closest you will get to the Hirafu Gondola.

The name says it all – Gondola Chalets is the closest you will get to the Hirafu Gondola, providing the winter sports enthusiast with unsurpassed access to the world-famous powder fields of Niseko.

These stylish chalets are the envy of the village, offering a fresh, modern layout and unrivalled accessibility to the mountain. The ultra-convenient location and functional layout is ideal for any family or group of friends, ensuring Gondola Chalets is among the most popular properties in Niseko. All chalets are fully self-contained for guest convenience, yet located only a stone's throw from Niseko's best restaurants and bars.

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

By Bevan Colless

Salomon Blog Shoe



ONCE you've been to Japan a couple of times in long lace up boots, you tend to get over the 'please remove your shoes before entering' part of the culture. That's where the Salomon Blog shoes come in. They're easy to slip in and out of; suede uppers that are waterproof so a little moisture doesn't ruin them; and a fuzzy, cozy faux-fur lining makes your feet feel snug and well-loved. Unlike Sorels, that can leave you looking like a lumberjack, the low cut is discreet and Niseko's pow is so dry that wading through it without boots only leaves you with dust-on-cuffs that is easily brushed off. The soles have extra grip so you can leave the studded snow grip sole covers for the tap-dancers.

Available from: www.backcountry.com Price \$85

Lib Tech ReCurve Pow NAS

LET'S face it. Ski technology has been copying snowboarding technology since the mid-'90s. If it hadn't, we'd still be skiing on 220cm pencils. So it's about time a snowboard company made some skis instead of the other way 'round. The Lib Tech ReCurve Pow NAS (Narrow-Ass Snowboard) brings their brand's favoured camber-rocker combo. Built to float in the powder and shave the ice on the groomers and in the crud, the ReCurve Pow NAS helped big-mountain contest skier Tim Dutton win the '09 World Freeskiing Champs. Featuring rocker in the tip and tail, Lib Tech's pioneering Magne-Traction edge, as used on their Banana range, turns ice into powder. This makes the ReCurve Pow NAS perfect for Niseko.

Available from: www.lib-tech.com. Price \$899



Jones Snowboards: The Hovercraft

JEREMY Jones is a true snowboarding legend who has set out on his own to launch Jones Snowboards. Jeremy-san is well aware of what it takes to keep his board floating, and the Hovercraft is his No. 1 powder ride. Borrowing heavily from Gentemstick's Mantaray, it has a blunt nose and directional rockered tip for extra lift. I'm a bit disappointed by the length at 156cm, but it'd make a great rig for riders under 70kgs.

Available from: www.jonessnowboards.com



men who ride mountains *stirling goldman: the season-ending injury*

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 this is Niseko, and what have you done? Another year over... and Goldman's still number one. Yes punters, I'm back by popular demand for the final column of the season, for all those wannabes that wannabe me, and all the ladies that wannabe on me. You know it!

Well, certainly an interesting week in the life of one S. Goldman. Sometimes a king falls from his throne. Yes, that's right punters, Goldman has acquired three new words in his vocabulary: 'season-ending injury'.

So, the task was simple – go into the jump switch in waist-deep snow, pop off the 20-foot mushroom that had Mount Yotei in the background, pull a Rodeo 720, all while smiling for the cameras, giving a thumbs-up and bicep flex. Pretty simple stuff.

My preparation was flawless – 48 beers and satisfying

ladies until the early hours. Another day in the life of... Anyway, all was going well, I pulled the trick, kept the photographers happy with the pose, and landed. But then disaster struck. Upon landing, one of my skis got caught under a tree root that had reared its ugly head. A little bit like a less than favourable lady that hits the perimeter of my dance floor after 2am. I felt instant pain in my knee as it twisted and I released out of my ski. It was at that moment that I knew Mother Nature had brought the world's greatest skier back to reality. I didn't fall, for we all know Goldman never falls. I just kept skiing down to the bottom on one ski – backwards – to keep the crowds happy.

Arriving back in town, I made my way down to my buddies at Niseko Physio. I kept smiling for the crowds, stopping for autographs, and photos with the ladies – for even my immense pain was not going to stop me making someone's holiday. Goldman is a giver, not a taker. The words from the physio table were not good, "...torn ACL, surgery and end of season." I had to have it explained a few times, for in all my years the thought of not being able to ski was foreign to me. The thought of my machine-



like body failing was even more foreign.

The calls started to flood in once the news spread. Newspapers, magazines, sponsors, TV channels, old flings, wannabe flings. All were in shock. It's been a few days and the ladies are flocking in sympathy, so I can't say it's been all bad. Even though I'm off the hill, I have managed to ride a few bumps during the day, if you get my drift? I'm booked for surgery in about a month. The sponsors remain happy as it won't mean stopping any commitments with my modelling. They'll just have to focus on my chiselled upper body for a while – it's just simple logic.

Enjoy your off-season, punters!

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



skier Ryan // photo Yasuyuki Shimanuki, Niseko Photography



rider Paul // photo Glen Claydon



rider Kayle // photo Yasuyuki Shimanuki, Niseko Photography



rider Kayle // photo Yasu Shimanuki, Niseko Photography



rider Miho // photo Glen Claydon



skier Yoshi // photo Yasu Shimanuki, Niseko Photography

POWDER POSTER



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



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

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

KNOW THE CODE IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

Niseko Rules

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

7. 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 Mt. Niseko and Mt. Hanu no Taki) is not supervised by the Ski Patrol. Niseko Rules prohibits that hiking and riding these areas is dangerous and if you choose to, you do it AT YOUR OWN RISK.

backcountry safety *stay safe on the mountain*

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

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

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



Photo: Niseko Photography

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

Avalanche info:
Shinya-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?
NGWA Niseko Winter Guide Association www.nisekoguide.jp
Black Diamond Tours www.blackdiamondtours.com 090 2054 8687
Shinsetsu Mountain Guides www.smguides.net 090 6214 1065

Spring in your step *late season hiking in Niseko*

THERE'S plenty of lift-accessible terrain in Niseko, but for those who like to work a bit harder for their lines, springtime is perfect for hiking.

With several popular hikes within a snowball's throw from Hirafu, wandering off-piste and exploring some of the more uncharted terrain in the area is a must for any visitor to Niseko.

The mother of all hikes is Mount Yotei, Niseko's iconic landmark. Sitting at a mighty 1898m (6230ft), Yotei-zan is an active volcano and the longest, steepest hike in the area. To reach the peak, it usually takes between four and six hours, for a half-hour ski down. You can also ski into the crater!

Iwaonupuri is another popular hike, also located nearby and offering some good, steep rideable terrain after about a one-hour hike to the summit.

Goshiki is another popular run – hike along a ridgeline to the Annupuri peak and drop into one of the steepest runs on Mount Annupuri. The beauty of Goshiki is that after your hike and ride, you can soak your aching muscles in Goshiki Onsen.

As when exploring any new terrain, knowledge of the mountain is paramount, so if you don't know the area, there are plenty of guiding companies in town (turn to our Tours and Activities guide on page 41 for more information).

Also remember to take the right equipment, which should at least include a beacon, probe, shovel, backpack, a change of clothes, and ample food and water.

For plenty more information on backcountry hiking and touring, explore our website at www.powderlife.com.

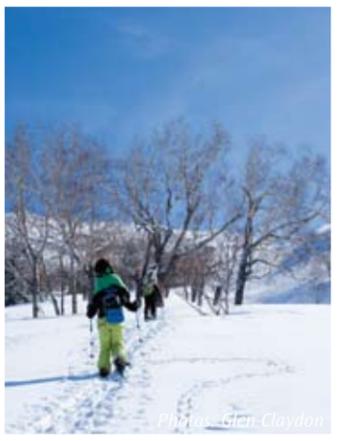


Photo: Sten Clayton

real estate news the niseko property market

By Matthew Thomas and Kristian Lund

Niseko Village changes hands in ¥6 billion deal

NISEKO Village ski resort has been bought out by high-profile Malaysian company YTL Hotels and Properties for ¥6 billion (approx. US\$66 million), in a deal including the Hilton hotel.

YTL bought the resort from American owners Citigroup Financial Products, in the sale of the 506-room Hilton, the 200-room Green Leaf Hotel, and two 18-hole golf courses.

Niseko Village also encompasses 155 ha of ski mountain, with seven ski lifts and 15 ski trails, leisure amenities, natural hot springs, and 462 ha of freehold land.

YTL president James McBride said the company's master plan for the resort included a sophisticated village atmosphere with private houses, ski-in-ski out estates, onsens, and a retail and restaurant centre. He said the plans would be inspired by chic destinations like Aspen and Vail in Colorado, Whistler in British Columbia, and St Moritz – Niseko's Swiss sister city.

YTL has a collection of high-profile luxury properties in its portfolio. Niseko – along with the development of the Muse Hotel De Luxe in the French resort town of Saint-Tropez – is expected to be a highly complementary asset to YTL's growing international portfolio, said McBride.

He said the acquisition would enable YTL to participate in one of Japan's finest ski resort destinations, add-



VIEW OF THE FUTURE... sans snow, you can see all that YTL has acquired. Photo: Niseko Photography.

ing there was huge potential to develop Niseko Village into a world-class, four-season resort through luxury residential and mountain retail development.

"As a company with a very strong financial position, YTL Hotels took advantage of the economic downturn investing in the company's future growth," said McBride.

"The locations of these new hotels and resorts were thoughtfully chosen, so we could integrate the local environment and culture seamlessly into our existing

collection of properties, bringing out the best of each destination."

YTL has expanded significantly in the past year, also acquiring Swatch Art Peace Hotel in Shanghai, China; The Chedi in Phuket, Thailand; and both Pulau Gaya and Pulau Tiga in Borneo.

It is widely known that Citigroup was hit hard during the global financial crisis, and has since been strategically selling off many of its assets around the world.

Season 2009/10 and beyond

THE Niseko real estate market bounced back into favour with investors this year after a slow season last year following the economic crisis. Powderlife spoke to several local real estate figures to get their thoughts on the season and projections for the future.

Grant Mitchell, Tracks Real Estate

Review: The season panned out pretty much as I expected, with decent sales volumes despite lingering global economic worries and the lack of bank financing. There is now a strong base for more sales over the summer and higher sales volumes next winter. Buyers' focus has also broadened from last season's obsession with Hirafu ski-in/ski-out properties to 'walk-in/walk-out' Hirafu properties and other resort locations such as Annupuri this winter.

Projections: The Hanazono, Niseko Village and Capella projects will have a positive impact on Niseko's property market. The development companies' marketing campaigns will access buyers usually beyond local companies and raise general awareness of Niseko. Potential buyers will spill over and buy into other Niseko properties.

Ruskin McLennan, Niseko Property

Review: This season was characterised by the retreat of the Aussie buyers and the rise of HK, SG and Chinese buyers. Property has clearly been divided into ski-in ski-out and the rest. The rise of the prestige market continues with the strongest sales this season being in the \$1 million US range and above in The Vale Niseko and Capella. High points were the sale of 880 tsubos in Izumikyo and the sale of a 5 million USD villa in Capella.

Projections: I see the move to high end property continuing. The success of the restaurants and bars will see more commercial property start to be developed. The sale of the Hilton site will have a strong positive influence on property values in the area.

Derek Kennewell, LJ Hooker Niseko

Review: This season's property market has shown that Niseko is truly finding its feet as a very real and maturing property market with a strong future. Interest from developers and buyers alike is amazingly strong in all budget ranges, however, with the tight purse strings from the world's banks it has been only the higher liquidity buyers able to make purchases and in many cases get

amazing deals.

Projections: Exponential growth in visitor numbers, property offerings and also services available to holiday makers. Major resort companies in Asia have seen this trend and are well and truly on their way. The increased marketing campaigns by these companies also helps to market Niseko as a whole, and will have a flow-on effect.

John Barton, Meikle and Associates

Review: With our location (opposite The Vale Niseko), our customer base has been demanding ski-in/out-property. At the same time, some customers have chosen to land bank in Annupuri and Hanazono with forthcoming developments in mind or to identify opportunities in the current market. We were very pleased with sales we made in The Vale Niseko including both penthouses.

Projections: Developments in the next few months will have a big impact on the rest of the year and we look forward to infrastructure in the area keeping pace. There are some rumours of finance packages becoming available which will have a big impact. It is still an uncertain world in an economic sense but the fundamentals driving Niseko onwards and upwards remain unchanged.

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Niseko Landmark View 104 

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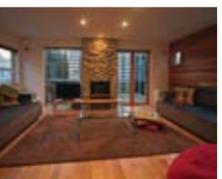
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Niseko Office: Contact: Ikee Architecture Co. Ltd
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Yotei Tracks 504 3
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Miharashi 1 2
Upper Hirafu ¥32,000,000
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niseko resort guide *info to help you get around*

TOURIST INFORMATION

KUTCHAN Machi no Eki Puratto Information Centre

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

Tel: (0136) 22 1121.

The Niseko Grand Hirafu Welcome Centre

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

GETTING HERE AND AWAY

New Chitose Airport. Tel: (0123) 23 0111

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

Getting from New Chitose to Niseko

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

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

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

Tel: (0136) 22 2108.

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

Airport Station Tel: (0123) 45 7011

Kutchan station Tel: (0136) 22 1310

CAR RENTAL

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

Toyota Rent-a-Car ShinSapporo

Tel: (0118) 15 0100. English ok.

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

Black Diamond Lodge

Tel: (0136) 44 1144

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

www.powderlife.com/niseko-travel-guide

TRANSPORT AROUND NISEKO

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

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

Kutchan hire Tel (0136) 22 1212

Misora hire Tel (0136) 22 1171

Niseko hire Tel (0136) 44 2635

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

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

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

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

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

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

MONEY

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

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

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

SHOPPING

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

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

COMMUNICATIONS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

niseko resort guide *info to help you get around*

ELECTRICITY

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

STAY SAFE AROUND TOWN

No skiing/boarding on roads or footpaths!!

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

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

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

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

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

MEDICAL SERVICES

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

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

Kutchan Kousei Hospital The major hospital servicing



EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Police Tel: 110

Ambulance and Fire Tel: 119

Emergency Interpretation

Tel: (0352) 85 8185

Japan-English Helpline

(nationwide emergency assistance)

Tel: (0570) 00 0911

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

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

Tel: 0136-22-1141

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

More detailed information at:

www.powderlife.com/niseko-resort-guide

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

By studio tdes

HAVE you fallen in love with Niseko? Or perhaps in Niseko? Many visitors to Niseko think about how they can afford to come back. If

you can get the appropriate visa, why not spend a season working in Niseko? In today's lesson there's some language for workers to use – and for customers to understand. And remember, smiles and gestures go a long way too ☺

1 Irasshaimase – Welcome

When people walk into your business, greet them with: Irasshaimase! Volume can range from a hearty bellow/squawk to talking level, depending on the establishment.

2 Nan mei sama desu ka? – How many in your group?

When people arrive at your izakaya or restaurant, you'll need to find out how big their group is: Nan mei sama desu ka? If it's obvious, just check: Ni mei sama desu ka? (Two people?)

3 Douzo kochira desu – Please sit here/this way please

When you've decided where the customers will sit, gesture towards the table and say: Douzo, kochira desu.

4 Onomimono wa okimari deshou ka? – What would you like to drink?

The verb to drink in Japanese is nomu. A drink is nomi-nomo (put an o in front of many words to make them more formal). After you've given out the menus, ask them if they've decided what they'd like to drink: Onomimono wa okimari deshou ka? A bit later on ask for the food order: Oshokuji wa okimari deshou ka?

5 Kashikomarimashita – Certainly

When a customer orders something you can say: Kashikomari mashita (Certainly). If you're working behind a bar, you can just repeat the order back to them with a desu ne attached. Biiru futasu onegaishimasu (Two beers, please). Biiru futasu desu ne (Two beers, coming right up!)

6 Moushiwake gozaimasen – I'm terribly sorry

Apologizing is hugely important in the service industry in Japan. Sorry is generally sumimasen or gomen nasai, but when speaking to customers, moushiwake gozaimasen is usually more appropriate. Say it if you have run out of something on the menu, or spill a drink on a customer.

7 Douzo – Here you go

When you give customers a plate of food or drink, you can simply say douzo (Here you go). If it's food that is to be

shared (like at an izakaya), just announce what it is when you're putting it on the table: Eda mame desu (This is eda mame).

8 Osageshite yoroshii desu ka? – Can I take these?

At an izakaya you don't need to whip away the plates as soon as customers have finished. When you do want to clear the table ask: Osageshite yoroshii desu ka? (Is it OK if I take this?)

9 Wakarimasen – I don't understand

If you can't understand some rapid-fire Japanese coming at you, you'd better learn this: Wakarimasen (I don't understand). You could also announce: Nihongo dekimasen (I can't speak Japanese).

10 Otsukare sama deshita – Well done, good job etc

This is a very important word to know if you have Japanese co-workers. Say it as they are leaving, or before you leave. There's a short version you can use with friends and co-workers: otsukare! If you're an instructor say otsukare sama deshita to your students at the end of the lesson.

More 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. Choose from our okonomiyaki or BBQ menu.



Okonomiyaki and teppanyaki restaurant

11am-10pm
Open daily

0136 21 2233

MAP E2 p47
Kamimura

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



Blessed by land, sea and a creative chef

5:30pm-11:00pm
Occasionally closed

0136 21 2288

MAP D2 p47
Lars Longcox Nachos Bar

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



Beers from just ¥200 Excellent value meals

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

0136 21 5833

MAP D2 p47
Mina Mina

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



Good music, good alcohol

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

0136 23 3437

MAP E8 p46
M's Café (Saison Club)

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



Warm your body with our big hearty hotpots

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

0136 44 3380

restaurants & food

MAP D2 p47
Niseko Pizza

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



Dine in, Take-away and Delivery

Open every day
Lunch-Dinner
0136 55 5553

MAP C2 p47
Restaurant & Wine Bar Dragon

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



Our sommeliers welcome you

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

MAP A2 p47
Sekka Dining

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



International style showcasing the best of Hokkaido

6-10pm
7 days
0136 21 5022

MAP C1 p47
Sencho 2

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



Best Choice for Gourmet Seafood

5pm-midnight
Open daily
0136 22 5454

MAP C1 p47
Shiosai

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



Fresh, live, gourmet seafood - the ultimate choice!

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

MAP B5 p46
Shunsai

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



Creative fusion cuisine from land and sea

11am-9pm
Closed Sundays
0136 23 1882

MAP C3 p47
Souan Genghis Khan Lamb BBQ

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



¥1700 all you can eat barbecue for 90 minutes!

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

MAP B3 p47
Steak Rosso Rosso

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



A must for steak lovers!

6-11pm
Occasionally closed
0136 21 7100

restaurants & food

MAP E2 p47
Taj Mahal

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



Visit India in Taj Mahal Niseko

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

MAP E4 p47
Teuchi Soba Ichimura

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



Homemade soba noodles, carefully selected ingredients

11am-3pm
Closed Tuesdays
0136 23 0603

MAP C3 p47
The Barn

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



Sushi & Fusion Restaurant Adventurous, fun, exciting

6-11pm
Occasionally closed
0136 23 0888

MAP E3 p47
Tsubara Tsubara

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



Spicy, flavoursome local Hokkaido curry soup

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

MAP B2 p47
Vale Bar & Grill

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



Buffet Breakfast served from 7am daily

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

MAP E2 p47
Wild Bill's

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



Gourmet Tex-Mex in our beautiful log house

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

MAP B2 p47
Yakitori Yosaku

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



Serving yakitori every night until 3am

6pm-3am
Open daily
0136 23 4390

MAP D3 p47
Yummy's Pizza

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



YUMMY Homemade crust pizza and Western foods restaurant

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

Half Note

MIDDLE HIRAFU

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



Hirafu's only jazz bar!

6pm-midnight
Open daily

☎ 0136 23 2727

Maki Lounge

MIDDLE HIRAFU

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

Japanese Whiskey, Sake & Shochu

2pm-late
7 days

☎ 0136 21 3088

Yosaku Bar

MIDDLE HIRAFU

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

On the main street, across from Seicomart

Open daily
Lunchtime to midnight

☎ 090 3111 1131

Loaf Lounge

KUTCHAN

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



The only bar with a skateboard bowl inside!

4.20pm-midnight
Open daily

☎ 0136 22 1022

Wild Bill's

UPPER HIRAFU

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



Like a House Party Should Be

5.30pm-1 am(ish)
Open daily

☎ 0136 22 5652

Yuki Bar

UPPER HIRAFU

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



Start the party!

5pm-2am
Closed Mondays

☎ 0136 22 0234

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

Trivia and Fun Nights

Draft Guinness & Kilkenny

Great Pub Food & Kids' Menu



www.paddymcgintrysirishpub.com | Ph 0136 55 8020

tours & activities

MAP F7 p47

Black Diamond Tours

UPPER HIRAFU

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



Niseko's Backcountry Powder Specialists

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

☎ 090 2054 8687

MAP D1 p47

Niseko Foot 'Body & Foot Treatment'

UPPER HIRAFU

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



Closest massage to the Centre 4 Lift

11am-10pm
Free pick up available

☎ 0136 22 1224

MAP A3 p47

On-Snow Photography & Video Tours

UPPER HIRAFU

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



Niseko's Professional Photographers!

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

☎ 0136 22 5764

MAP C1 p47

NISS International Snowsports School

HIRAFU/HANAZONO

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



Kids are our specialty Hirafu & Hanazono

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

☎ 0136 21 6688

MAP B4 p46

Japanese Cultural Tours

HIRAFU-KUTCHAN

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



Experience Japan's cultural heritage

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

☎ 0136 23 0222

MAP A2 p47

Niseko Massage

MIDDLE HIRAFU

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



Sports and relaxation massage in the middle of Hirafu

8am-8pm daily
Home visits available

☎ 0136 22 0399

MAP A3 47

Niseko Snowmobile Adventures

LOWER HIRAFU

Backcountry Adventures
Top Machines
Qualified Guides
MAXIMUM FUN!!
Based in Hangloose Lower Hirafu
www.go-nsa.com



Guided Snowmobile Adventures

7 days
Bookings essential

☎ 090 9757 4083

MAP D3 p47

Shinsetsu Mountain Guides

MIDDLE HIRAFU

Qualified guides, dedicated instructors, renowned service. Experience all that Niseko has to offer with Shinsetsu Mountain Guides and Ski School. www.smguides.net



Experience all that Niseko has to offer

Smguides@gmail.com

☎ 090 6214 1065

shopping & retail

MAP B3 p46
Boom Sports

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

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MAP C3 p47
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MAP E2 p47
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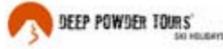
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F7
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A2
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speed dial quick guide to village phone numbers

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 1105</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
ヴァイ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
与作
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."

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

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after the melt *paragliding*

By Matthew Thomas



GLIDER'S EYE VIEW... soaring above the peak of Mt Annupuri. Photos: Glen Claydon

FOR adrenaline junkies visiting Niseko during the warmer months, paragliding is an activity that soars above the rest.

Gliders are able to plunge off peaks at Annupuri and the west-ridge of nearby Rusutsu ski resort, to enjoy a gentle glide and a soaring bird's eye view of the lush, colourful Hokkaido countryside below.

All this is possible with the help of Niseko Flight Park in Niseko Town, run by local paragliding pro, Endo-san.

With an international paragliding license, gliders with their own gear can make a solo jump for around ¥2000. A tandem jump for unlicensed gliders with no equipment will cost around ¥13,000 for a 10 to 20-minute flight, depending on weather conditions.

Local paraglider Dave Mills – who runs pension Kinoko in Hirafu's Lower Village – has been gliding since

1993. He has spent two summers here, and says Niseko looks nothing short of amazing from the sky.

He says paragliding in Niseko is unique, because instead of having to drive or hike to a launch point, all jumps are easily accessed by gondola.

"It's spectacular, all the different greens you can see – you can get a unique aerial view of the drastically different seasons when you're paragliding in Niseko," says Dave, who has had more than 800 glides worldwide, and reaches heights up to 1000m above Niseko.

"From up there on a clear day you can see some amazing things you can't see anywhere else. You can fly above Mount Annupuri and other nearby ranges, and also see all the way out to the ocean. You can even fly back right over the top of Mount Yotei's crater if the conditions and thermals are right."



Niseko Flight Centre
Address: 480 Soga, Niseko Town (on Route 66 between Higashiyama & Annupuri resorts)
Phone: 0136 44 26860136
Email: skysport@nifty.com
Web: http://homepage1.nifty.com/skysports

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



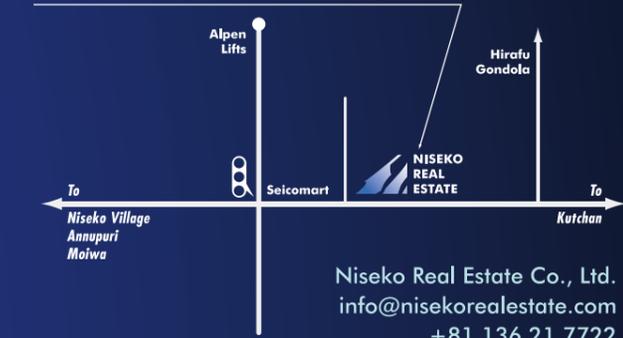
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