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GROOMERS editor's note

WELCOME to the winter of 2013/14 in Niseko, and thank you for picking up the 43rd issue of *Powderlife*. This is the second year we're publishing as a once-a-season mag - before that we churned out an issue every two weeks throughout winter. While it was a heap of fun, doing it just the once allows us to put together a real showcase magazine that richly illustrates life in Niseko. With many thanks to our photographers, contributing writers, advertisers and designer (you know who you are!), we're really proud of the journal we're now able to put together and bring to residents, visitors and future visitors to Niseko.

The response to last year's mag was awesome, but I'm a pretty tough critic of my own work and wanted to make sure I polished it up a bit this year. Each issue I do the same and it's come a long way from the flimsy 40-page rag we started with in 2007. I think there's something in here for everyone - no matter where you're from, how old you are, whether you ski, snowboard, snowbike or monoski, I hope *Powderlife* 2014 takes you on a journey as you turn its pages, and gives you a taste for the visual and sensual feast that is Niseko.

More importantly, if you're not here already, I hope it inspires you to book a ticket soon. It's even better in real life.

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powderlife

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SNOW WONDER

On track to back up records



NISEKO never really has a bad season in a European/North American sense. And the last three have been beyond a powder junkie's wildest dreams, with more than 15m every year.

That trend looks set to continue. After a slow start, the powder soon arrived as it always does. The Japan Meteorological Assn's pre-season forecast was for a 40 per cent chance of above average snowfall for the start of winter, so finger's crossed we're in for another record breaker.

PIC YASUYUKI SHIMANUKI / NISEKO PHOTOGRAPHY

NISEKO ICHI-BAN (no.1)!!

It's not really news to anyone around these parts, but Niseko was named Japan's best ski resort at the 2013 World Ski Awards, part of the World Travel Awards. Other local gongs went to The Vale Niseko for Best Ski Chalet, and the Hilton, Best Ski Hotel.



KI-IN, SKI-OUT

Following the demolition of four ageing hotels at the base of the Hirafu ski runs, year-round onsen hotel Ki Niseko is the first new ski-in/ski-out project to break ground, albeit on a previously undeveloped block by the Hirafu Gondola. Featuring a master-planned Japanese garden, the hotel is expected to attract strong summer business.

BIG DREAM COMING TRUE

Construction of the biggest private home ever built in Niseko is well underway. West Canada Homes tells us the seven-bedroom Hanazono dream pad sits on one of the best blocks of land in Niseko. It comes with an eight-person hot tub and is available to rent next winter!



TOKYO TOWER An exciting new retail building has opened on Hirafu's main street. Project manager Niseko Property says Hirafu 188 brings "a little taste of Tokyo to Niseko" with its glass elevator and stunning design. The building is home to a famous Ikeuchi outdoor brands outlet, boutique grocery store, café, takeaway sushi shop, real estate agency and event space.

OYUKI HEADING YOUR WAY

OVER the past two winters, Niseko has been the testing ground for new ski gear brand, Oyuki, and now Niseko will also play a leading role in the company's marketing campaign as it rolls out across the globe. Founder Matt Hampton is also the man behind Hirafu's Rhythm Snow Sports, and as of this year Beats by Rhythm and Rhythm Hakuba. He says "oyuki" is a word that gets used a lot in Niseko. "It means 'lots of snow,'" he smiles. "Our products have been designed and tested in Niseko. We're proud of the connection we have with Japan and the amazing snow it's famous for. We wanted to develop technical cold weather gear that worked and drew inspiration from classic Japanese designs." Oyuki is setting up a local team, already sponsoring 12-year-old snowboarder Rikuto Ohashi. Check out the Oyuki range at www.oyukisnow.com.



PIC GLEN CLAYDON PHOTOGRAPHY

SLED-CAT-HELI HOKKAIDO

How does 3000m of virgin Hokkaido powder a day sound? The Hokkaido Backcountry Club kicks off operations this year, taking advantage of snowmobiles, snow cats and helicopters to give its customers the ultimate powder experience outside Alaska.



KAMIMURA BRANCHES OUT

Hirafu's resident Michelin-starred chef Yuichi Kamimura has opened a new a la carte restaurant in Kutchan, 10 minutes from Hirafu. Bistro Kutchan Sakaba is headed up by Kamimura protege Tsuyoshi Kawaguchi, serving up some of the boss's signature dishes and a few originals, starting at ¥500 a dish.



SUPER-DELI & IKI AT SHIKI

After a successful first season last year, luxury Hirafu condo Shiki Niseko this year welcomes an upmarket supermarket and deli to its retail offerings. Also opened in the building is a new robatayaki restaurant - slow-grilled skewered meat, seafood and vegetables over hot charcoal.

SHOOTING FOR THE STARS

The big news for food lovers this year is that Niseko has a very flash new "Hokkaido French" restaurant. Asperges Hanazono is headed up by three-Michelin star chef Hiroshi Nakamichi. Read more on page 22.

THE ORCHARDS BEAR FRUIT

Niseko Resorts Group reports seven homes and the communal clubhouse are now complete in their second master-planned community development on the outskirts of Hirafu, "The Orchards". The grand residences range from 200-500sqm. See more at www.theorchardsniseko.com.

RYOKAN ROLLIN'

Landscaping and infrastructure is in place for ZABO, a contemporary take on a traditional ryokan (Japanese-style inn) at Hanazono. ZABO will be 15 individual hotel suites and 10 managed villas. Developer, Sekka's Shouya Grigg, says it will offer guests "a new awareness of not only what Japan used to be like, but also what it has become".

GOGGLE MAPS

Many a husband, boyfriend and probably even the odd father has blamed foggy goggles for getting lost and missing that lunch date. Not any more. New this season is the Niseko Course Map goggle cloth. Navigate Niseko in fog-free style. English map one side, Japanese the other. Available at most Niseko retail shops - ladies, at ¥1500, it's a cheap date!

IN THE PIPELINE

UBER-LUX ECO RESORT

Plans are afoot for an exclusive cat-ski-access-only eco resort deep in the hills beyond Niseko. A small, geothermal-powered riverside village of private cottages surrounding an onsen complex and a boutique ryokan will act as the hub for a handful of secluded forest estates.

LUXURY MALL PLANS?

Sounds like we might be able to buy the latest Armani ski fashion in Niseko soon. Niseko Village couldn't confirm the rumours but it sounds like it's planning a luxury shopping mall to be completed in time for next season.

TOMORROW'S SKI CABIN

A decade ago Hokkaido Tracks built their debut development "First Tracks", and kick-started the modern era of condominium development in Hirafu. Now HT is looking to the future again with these chic ski cabins. The idea is a stylish, modern lodge with a smaller footprint and lower price point. When they put it to creative Hong Kong based architects KplusK & Associates, they came up with some very cool looking concepts! Ask HT to see more.



IN THE LOOP

There's always something on in Niseko

NISEKO NEW YEAR // DECEMBER 31

THE Japanese don't officially celebrate Christmas, so NYE is the biggest event of the festive season. Watch hundreds of skiers form a giant "14" on the slopes, before skiing down in a huge glowing trail. Out on the base of the ski hill there's free live music, taiko drum performances and even free sake served out of huge sake barrels. The only other thing you need to know is, how to say Happy New Year in Japanese... Akemashite Omedetou!



SAPPORO SNOW FESTIVAL//

FEBRUARY 5-11 - Japan's biggest and most famous annual snow festival takes over the centre of Sapporo at the beginning of February every year. Book a tour at Explore Niseko and get driven into town to witness giant multi-story snow sculptures, cartoon characters, temples, ice slides and animals.

FESTIVAL OF JAPAN // JAN 24 - FEB 2

Real, life-size professional sumo wrestlers, traditional artisans, indigenous Ainu ambassadors and karate masters – there's going to be more culture in Niseko during the inaugural Festival of Japan than you can poke a Pocky Stick at. FOJ has been set up by locals with the support of local government and businesses to make sure visitors have a chance to discover Japan's unique cultural experiences in Niseko. The festival will include live performances and interactive arts and craft classes, with the opportunity to meet a wide range of cultural ambassadors. Events will be held throughout the resort. Check out event details and ticketing info at www.festivalofjapan.com.



MARCH MOUNTAIN EVENTS//

As the temperature warms up in Niseko, so do the on-mountain ski and snowboard comps. The Japanese like to go BIG and FAST so make sure you get out on the mountain to check out the action. Hanazono half pipe comps, big jumps, ski and snowboard battles and more. Contact resorts for details.



KUTCHAN YUKITIOPIA // FEBRUARY 18-19

Yuki (snow) + utopia = Yukitopia, the Niseko region's very own celebration of Hokkaido's snow. Held in the local area's major town Kutchan over two days in February every year, Yukitopia is the biggest local festival of winter. There's competitions like skiing across a pool of icy water, giant snowmen, snow sculptures, snow slides, snowmobile rides and "snow" much more. Catch a free bus to Kutchan from outside Seicomart.

ALL SEASON Keep an eye out for taiko drum performances, rail jams and big jumps, and Hanazono's park and halfpipe comps.

APRÉS DRINKS Try Lars Longcox Umbrella Bar and the Vale Bar and Grill in Hirafu, or the Hilton at Niseko Village.

NIGHTLIFE Live jazz and acoustic night at Half Note; Jam Bar psychedelic GuruGuru parties; Japanese mountain-reggae parties; pole dancing and full moon parties at BloBlo; DJs and live music at Wild Bill's; live music at newly refurbished Tamashii Bar.



POWDER TOOLS

Gear to get you going when it's been snowing



GENTEMSTICK TTSD CLOUDLINER

LOCAL legend Taro Tamai aims ever higher, upping the ante on the Superfish Outline Core with this year's Cloudliner. With a slightly wider waist and tail, Tamai-san says its the floatiest board they've ever made. For a Niseko company that's become renowned around the world for epic deep powder boards, that's saying something. **¥138,600 and only available from the Gentemstick Showroom.**



SMITH I/O RECON GOGGLES

Imagine if your goggles could measure how deep in the pow you were. Never happen? We're thinking it might after hearing what the I/O Recon can do. A head-up display inside the goggles shows your speed, altitude, location, the air temperature, tracks where your buddies are, measures the height and distance of jumps, and a heap more. If that's not enough it also hooks up with your phone via Bluetooth. Boom. **¥69,500 from Rhythm.**



4FRNT RENEGADE

The Renegade isn't your usual powder ski, and if you're not on the top of your game, you needn't read any further. The design runs against the grain of popular powder skis that commonly cater toward weaker intermediate skiers - ie soft, sloppy with exaggerated side cut. The Renegade is stiff and made for charging. Instead of giving you that backseat surfy feel it allows you to drive into your turns, getting you deeper than you ever imagined. It'll also blast through any chopped up Hirafu pow, letting you get back to the fresh stuff quicker. Demo them and see if you're in 4FRNT's demographic. **¥5500/day or ¥27,000/week from Niseko Sports.**



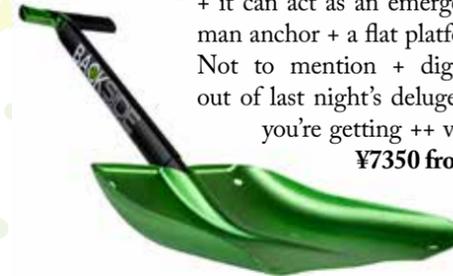
POWDERHORN JOHN JACKET

Not only will the John Jacket pop when juxtaposed against Niseko's super dry pow, it's built for warmth. One nice feature is the big hood which will cover a helmet - you'll appreciate that on the single chairs up to the peak on a cold day. **¥40,000 from Larry Adler.**



SUMOSOXX TANUKI MERINO SOCK

Merino wool has been keeping people warm and snuggly since the middle ages. Now you can add cute to the list too with these Tanuki (Japanese racoon) socks from SumoSox. The Merino provides warmth, breathability and unbeatable antibacterial qualities. **¥1,800 from Rhythm.**



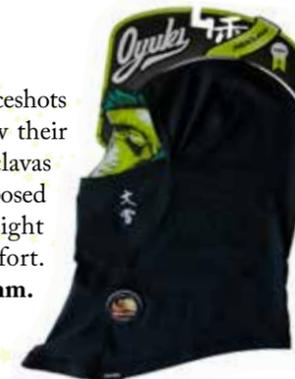
K2 RESCUE SHOVEL PLUS

The Rescue Shovel Plus converts to a hoe + it can act as an emergency sled + a dead man anchor + a flat platform for your stove. Not to mention + digging your Suzuki out of last night's deluge. There's no doubt you're getting ++ value with this one. **¥7350 from Niseko Sports.**



HOTRONIC FOOTWARMER

Hook the battery on to your boots, place the green pads under your feet, and these badboys will keep you warm in the deepest of powder. They've been used on Mt Everest, so you'll be laughing all the way to the bottom of Mt Annupuri. **¥27,000 from Larry Adler.**



OYUKI MERINO BALACLAVA

Oyuki has been getting powder faceshots in Niseko for years, so you know their locally designed and tested balaclavas are going to do the job they're supposed to. Also designed to be lightweight and breathable for added comfort. **¥2900 from Rhythm.**

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MAPPING MARVEL

The creative designer who helped put Hirafu on the map

YES, that's right. Each one of those little buildings on the Hirafu Village Map is very much as it is in real life. Like Gyu+ Bar with its fridge door entrance, the Gentem Café restaurant inside a Mongolian Yurt, and the rainbow-themed snowboard school Teru's Happy Vibrations, the Village Map is another cool and quirky aspect of Niseko that helps make it so fun and unique among resorts internationally, and even in Japan.

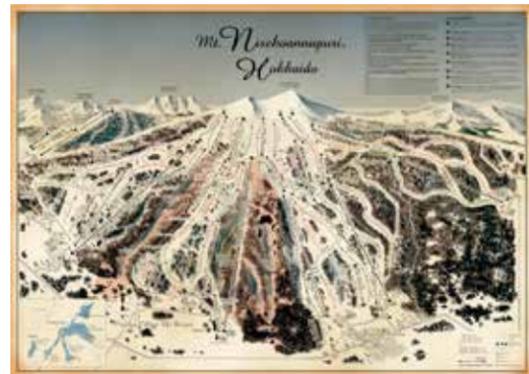
Tatsuo Hayashida is the man behind the illustrations. Originally from Kanagawa near Tokyo, Hayashida-san used to come to Niseko on holidays to snowboard. He experienced a freedom in the rural town he never had on the mainland, and when he saw an ad looking for rafting guides here, he quit his desk job and made the move.

He did a number of odd jobs but tried to make sure he never worked too hard so he could snowboard as often as possible. Word soon got around about his talent for design and the local tourism association asked him to design the village map and the course map.

With all the new development going on in Hirafu in the past few years, Hayashida-san has had his work cut out for him keeping it up to date, and he admits it's kind of cramping his style.

"To be honest I don't like seeing new businesses, because it means I need to draw a new building and do more work!"

With two kids now, he doesn't get out on the mountain as much as he'd like, but still makes a living from design. He sells things like the old-fashioned course map poster (pictured right) as well as handy little "tenugui" towels with designs like the sketch of Mt Yōtei to the right. Check out his stuff in Hirafu at NAC, Yukara and Landmark Café, and in Kutchan at Plat and Sprout Café.



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THE BIG BANG BANG

The creation of one of Niseko's favourite izakaya restaurants

BY TIM BLAKE

MASANOBU Saito has an incredible thirst for life. A native of sub-tropical Kyushu, he travelled the world by cargo ship before he was 20 and moved to Hokkaido shortly afterwards. Unconventional, especially in 1970s Japan, but adventure was in his blood.

A chance visit to Niseko saw him fall in love with the prospect of a frontier existence. At that time there were only a dozen or so buildings. He bought a plot on Hirafu-Zaka Street (the steep hill up from the traffic lights) but his wanderlust remained unquenched and he embarked on a four-year sojourn. He studied the culinary arts in Dijon, skied in Scotland and had a brush with typhoid in Algeria. He then returned to Niseko to build a lodge

By the time he got back, the domestic Japanese ski boom was in full swing, and pensions were everywhere. So he decided to build a restaurant. Bang Bang – one of Niseko's most enduring and legendary izakayas – was born. "I skied every day and worked all night," he smiles. "I hardly slept."

He was also one of Niseko's telemark skiing pioneers. "People laughed at first, but curiosity got the better of them and they wanted to learn too." However it was on regular, pencil-thin wooden skis that he had his most epic powder day. "It must've been 35 years ago," he says, smiling at the memory. "Zero visibility at the peak. The snow was perfect – bottomless, no resistance, and overhead in places... like a Zen experience."

In December Saito-san turns 60. His ambition? To be as good a skier at age 75. With that goal in mind he started weight training this year. I ask him if he can summarise his attitude to life in a sentence. He nails it in a single word: "tanoshimi" – enjoyment.



PIC GLEN CLAYDON PHOTOGRAPHY



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GROOMERS eat + drink

IZAKAYA STYLE

While the West has picked up on plenty of Japanese dining styles, one they can't seem to replicate authentically is "izakaya" - basically pub-style restaurants serving tapas-style food. They're busy, loud, often smoky, and the idea is that a table shares a number of small Japanese dishes.



MORE MICHELIN STARS

SHOOT INTO NISEKO'S ORBIT

NISEKO is packing even more Michelin-star power this year, with the arrival of French restaurant Asperges HANAZONO. We'll have to wait until the Michelin gods are next in town to get an official rating, but the odds are favourable it will get a star, if not more.

The reason we're so confident is that Asperges isn't actually an all-new restaurant. It was established in 2007 by famous Hokkaido chef Hiroshi Nakamichi (pictured right) in Biei, a small town famous for its flower fields at the foot of the Daisetsuzan Mountain Range in the centre of the island.

When Michelin published its first Hokkaido guide in 2012, it awarded Asperges Biei one star. Nakamichi-san also presides over several other restaurants the organisation recognised, including Moliere in Sapporo, one of only four Hokkaido restaurants to be awarded the maximum three stars.

This winter the entire Biei restaurant – chefs, staff, furniture and fitout – has moved its operations to Niseko.

Nakamichi-san told Powderlife Asperges HANAZONO will combine elements and themes from his other restaurants. "Asperges Biei doesn't



serve fish, but will do at Hanazono, adding some of the spirit and elements of Moliere," Nakamichi-san said. "This is a new attempt for us to challenge a different market where foreign visitors are the majority, which we haven't experienced before."

Head chef Kazunori Kato (pictured above right) has headed the Biei restaurant since it opened in 2007. 44-year-old Kato-san has also worked at famous Tokyo restaurants including Auberge Suzuki – whose head chef



Kiyoshi Suzuki appeared on world-famous Japanese TV cooking show Iron Chef – and Maccarina, a one-star Nakamichi-san restaurant in neighbouring Makkari.

Now 62, Nakamichi-san first travelled to France as an apprentice in the 1970s. Using fresh, local, seasonal produce, he now describes his style as "Hokkaido French" (Moliere dish pictured above), and is regarded as one of the island's leading chefs. There's not much more to say except: bon appétit!



IZAKAYA STYLE! EAT, DRINK AND BE MELLY!

THE abundance of izakayas is one of our favourite things about Niseko. Every one of these rustic little restaurants oozes its own particular brand of Japanese atmosphere and charm. They're casual, fun and full of life... oh yeah, and the food is invariably unbelievable. The pics on the left and previous spread were taken at one of our faves, A-Bu-Cha 2. As you can see, plates are plonked down anywhere they'll fit across your table, and come out in a steady stream as they're cooked.

The experience begins when you enter to a boisterous "Irasshaimase!!" welcome by all staff in sight. As soon as you're seated, you should order your first round of drinks and bowl or two of edamame – don't ask, just do it. Then grab some menus and everyone can pitch in and add their favourite dish or three to the order. Be sure to visit A-Bu-Cha and as many more as you can while you're here, 'cos I guarantee you're not going to find an izakaya experience like these back home!

CEZAR FIRES UP THE FERRARI OF PIZZA OVENS

CONSIDERING the number of Michelin-recommended restaurants in and around Niseko, it's fair to say local restaurateurs are serious about making a statement with their food. And long-time resident Cezar Constantin and his Japanese wife Keiko are no different.

This year they imported from Italy what could best be described as the Ferrari of pizza ovens – the Marana Forni revolving-deck, wood-fired pizza oven. While the basic design principle remains the same as ovens from medieval times, with its round-domed oven chamber and front vent, this is far from your ordinary oven. In fact, it's the only one in Japan and had to be installed by two specialist Italian technicians!

Cezar explains a rotating volcanic stone disk inside the chamber can be raised and lowered by a skilled pizza chef, evenly cooking up to 16 pizzas at a time with a perfect thin and crispy crust. "The thin and crispy base or Roman



PIC NISEKO PHOTOGRAPHY

style is the type of pizza specific to the Veneto, Toscana, Emilia Romagna and Lazio regions of Italy," Cezar says. "The Marana Forni is made for these regions, making the pizzas a very exclusive and authentic Italian style."

They're fueling the oven with apple wood shipped from Aomori, Japan's most famous apple growing region,

to add extra character to the pizzas. They've also imported a top-of-the-range Italian pasta machine and worked with a local cheese maker to develop their own unique mozzarella cheese. When combined with other Hokkaido ingredients, Niseko Pizza has to be one of the most authentic Italian dining experiences this side of Okinawa.

Open December 20 – March 10

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YAKITORI YOSAKU

Yaki = grilled, tori = chicken, Yosaku = yummy yakitori

BY MATTHEW THOMAS

WITH some dishes, less is definitely more. Take for instance the offerings of Hirafu yakitori restaurant and bar, Yosaku. It's the unpretentious nature of the yakitori food style – essentially meat (or really, chicken) and vegetables on a skewer – that charms and delights every time I dine here.

Upon entering the smoky, cavernous little hole in the wall in the Middle Village, just off the 343 on Momiji-Zaka Street, you are embraced by its very “local yakitoriya” persona – from a boisterous ‘irashaimasse’ upon entry, to the customary, wooden izakaya bar overlooking the kitchen’s steamy grill.

Eschewing the trappings of more up-market eateries, you even get a glance at the latest skiing videos on a big screen TV to get you amped for your next session up the mountain.

Back to the food, yakitori as a food style comprises mainly bite-sized pieces of meat and vegetables served on a skewer. Yosaku serves their selection accompanied by a range of salts and sauces. I usually go salt with vegetable skewers, and teriyaki sauce with most of the meats, but don't listen to me – mix it up, because at Yosaku, that's the name of the game!

Some of the best meat skewer dishes off Yosaku's grill are the tori (chicken), buta (pork), ramu (lamb) and sagari (beef). My pick of a delectable bunch is the tsukune (minced chicken).

For vegetarians, or just to balance up a meaty meal, you can't go past the shiitake mushrooms or the eringi (trumpet mushrooms). For a mix of meat and veggies, you'd be hard-pressed finding better than the shimeji mushroom bacon skewers, or the nikuzume (shiitake mushrooms with minced meat). Asparagus the size of your finger



wrapped snugly in a bacon blanket also goes down well.

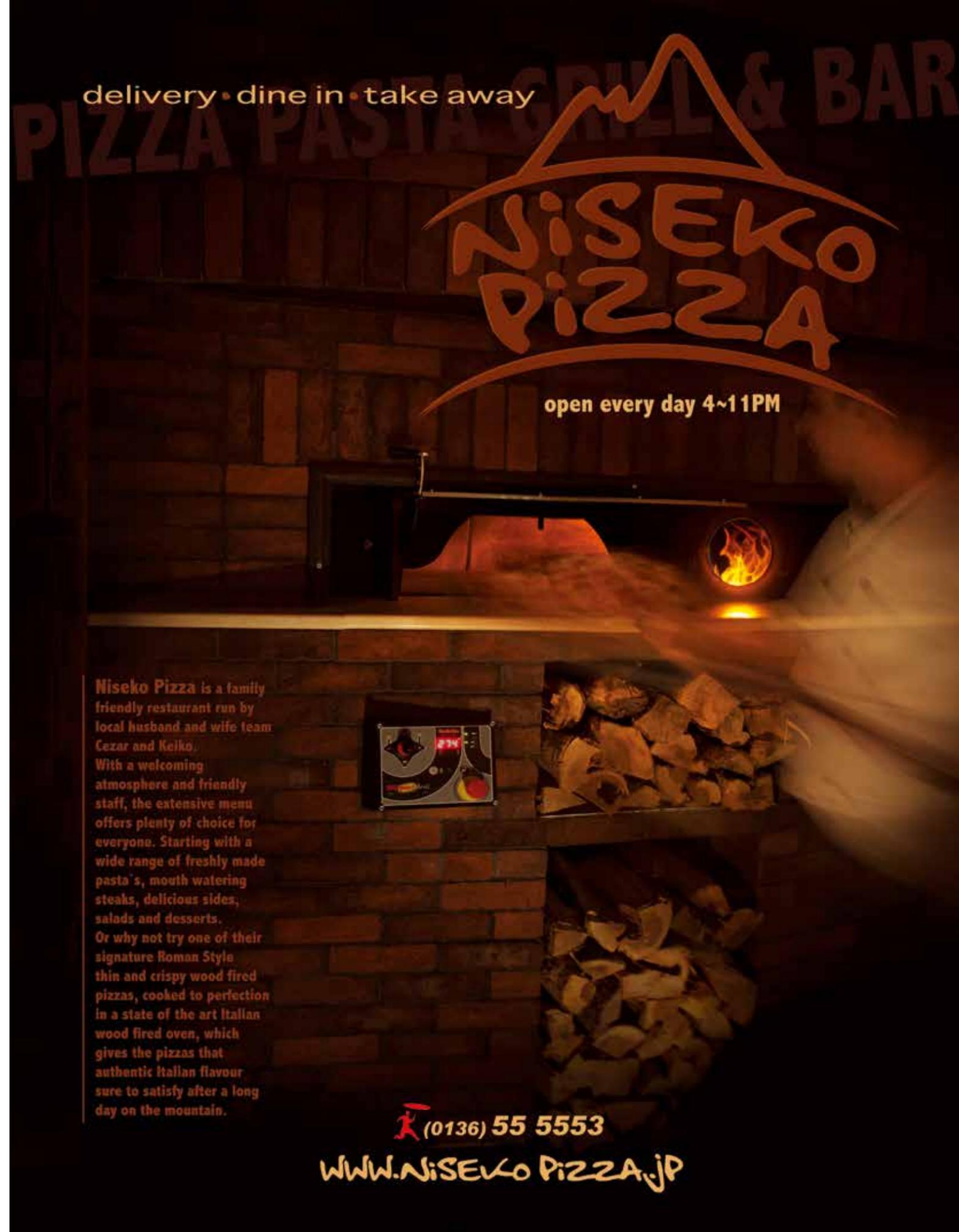
For the more adventurous there is a host of interesting, off-centre Japanese alternatives including kawa (chicken skin), ponpochi (chicken flank), nekku (you guessed it, chicken neck), riba (liver), hatsu (heart), sunagimo (innards), nankotsu (cartilage) and delightfully named tontoro (pork neck).

When ordering, I suggest just piling a plate with a mixture of different skewers and sharing them around the table. It's the Japanese way, and the best option for sampling all that the menu has to offer. All skewers are reasonably priced too (by Hirafu pricing standards) ranging from ¥180 to ¥300.

An izakaya would not be an izakaya without a comprehensive beverage menu. And Yosaku happily obliges. From draft Sapporo Classic to sours, cocktails to hard liquor, red and white wine to wines of the plum variety, there is a suitable poison for everyone.

Finally, Yosaku is open from 6pm till late – usually until around 2am! So you've got no excuse for not making it down for a session while you're here.

WHERE: MOMIJI-ZAKA ST, HIRAFU
MAP: PAGE 97 / D3
OPEN: 6PM-2AM
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RISTORANTE 89

It's not far from farm to fork at this Niseko ristorante

BY KANAMI ANDERSON



HOKKAIDO is famous for its fresh produce, and it doesn't come much fresher than at Ristorante 89. It's the restaurant at Huckleberry Farm, five minutes drive from Hirafu on the way to Niseko Village. Opened in 2011, the French-Italian inspired eatery specialises in organic vegetables complemented with meat, poultry and fish.

The farm was originally the sole supplier to a hotel in Hirafu. After the hotel went out of business, the farm's owners decided to open their own restaurant so they could still make a living from their produce.

Huckleberry is also somewhat of a hobby farm, with imported miniature horses and cows - a guaranteed hit with children summer or winter - and 70 Chinese Silkie chickens. This bird's eggs are believed to promote healing and

have a high omega-3 content. They're so sought after they fetch ¥250 each here in Hokkaido, and up to ¥500 each in Tokyo.

I sit down at the counter inside Ristorante 89 and am served a basket of panfried potatoes for my entre. I also try a custard pudding made with the farm's silkie chicken eggs.

Up next is a very interesting scallop, foie gras, and grapefruit salad. The lettuce comes from the green house beside the restaurant, where they are able to grow their veges and potatoes throughout the winter. Deliciously sweet and fresh.

The mains we shared were sweet carrot and Rutsutsu boiled pork, and Wagyu Hokkaido steak with roasted onion and gobo sauce. The carrot and other vegetables are cooked with exquisite attention to detail.



WHERE: EN ROUTE TO NISEKO VLG
MAP: PAGE 94 / APPROX G8
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IT'S POWDER PLAYTIME

Forget the lifts for a day or three and enjoy everything Niseko has to offer. Take off your ski boots and check this out. We've rounded up the top 10 off-mountain activities.





OUTDOOR ADVENTURE

SNOWMOBILING

Cruise slowly around a groomed track, or plough through the deepest of powder in the Hokkaido wilderness. Snowmobiling is the number one off-mountain activity in Niseko. Costs range from ¥1000 for a quick burn up, to around ¥40,000 for full and half-days tours. The best part is it can be enjoyed by just about anyone from kids to the elderly - and all the big kids in between.



SNOWSHOEING

When you pause in the middle of a snowbound Niseko forest, you'll be struck by how quiet it is. The only sounds out there are the wind in the trees and the sounds of your snow shoes sinking into powder. One of the special walks in Niseko is Half Moon Lake - a caldera lake formed by an explosion on Mt Yōtei several thousand years ago - frozen over and covered in powder in winter.



WINTER RAFTING

Just the thought of getting into a wetsuit in winter is enough to make you shiver, but rafting down the Shiribetsu River gives you the opportunity to experience Niseko's snowbound landscape from a completely unique perspective. Highlights include the snow slide launch and stopping on a snow pillow in the middle of the river.



HANAZONO BOWL

There's fun for the whole family at Hanazono. Endless snow play for kids - riding the "magic carpets" up, sledding or snowtubing down and playing with snow toys. For adults, strap into the zipline, go snowmobiling, or try snow rafting. See the ad on the right for details or just jump on one of the free blue Hanazono shuttles from Hirafu.



REINDEER SLEDDING

We can't guarantee Santa, but this is possibly one of the few opportunities you'll ever have to get up close and personal with a real-life reindeer. Board your very own personal sleigh and jingle bell all the way around the Niseko Village resort. Jump on the Niseko United Shuttle - free with an All Mountain Pass, one lift ticket point, or ¥500/¥300 for adults/kids.

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 — We have moved from J-Sekka to Hirafu188 —
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OUT OF THE COLD

ONSEN TOUR

Niseko is home to many great hot spring onsens. Bathing in these steaming hot baths with family and friends is one of Japan's favourite cultural past times, and the perfect relaxing answer to a long day up the mountain. Onsens vary in price, but average around ¥600-800 per person. Jump on the ¥500 Yumeguri Onsen bus to take a tour of the areas best onsens.



JAPANESE COOKING CLASS

If you weren't a Japanese food convert before you came to Niseko, our guess is you will be by the time you leave. A good Japanese feed might not be as cheap back home, so while you're here it's a perfect opportunity to learn how to cook with an authentic Japanese master of the art. Some classes even include a supermarket tour.



GREEN TEA & KIMONO EXPERIENCE

Ever wondered what it must be like to be snugly wrapped inside a beautiful Japanese kimono? If you're a guy that's a bit strange, but if you're a girl, what better experience to take home from Niseko. Dress up in your choice of kimono and have professional photos taken for posterity. You can also partake in a traditional green tea ceremony.



KARAOKE

You're in Japan. You're on holidays. You haven't got a care in the world. And there are dozens of authentic karaoke bars where you can lock the door of your own private booth and let loose. For those who haven't tried it, there's something strangely liberating about singing - even badly - with a group of forgiving friends for a few hours. Be sure to bring plenty of liquid refreshments.

SIGHTSEEING TOURS

Hire a car, jump on a bus and get out and about and see rural Japan while you've got the opportunity. Choose from the local towns Kutchan or Niseko, a little further afield to Lake Toya, try Sapporo, especially in February when the snow festival is on, or one of the local favourites Otaru, a port town famous for its seafood. Try exquisite fresh sushi, visit a sake factory and lots more.

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WAIST DEEP photography

A THOUSAND WORDS

If a picture says 1000 words, there's no better way to describe skiing and snowboarding in and around Niseko than the next 10 pages.



THE sharp shooters from Niseko Photography had a busy season last year. It was hard for Yasuyuki Shimanuki to pinpoint the highlight of his season, but if we had to take our pick we'd say it was the images we used on the previous spread and on the left from the Tokachi backcountry in central Hokkaido.

Aaron Jamieson also had a few tough gigs, not least of which was hosting Euro and US skiers Sandra Lahnsteiner (*above*), Caja Schöpf (*right*) and Rachael Burks. The hard-charging ladies were in Niseko shooting for upcoming ski flick *Shades of Winter*. Az tells us they got the goods in Niseko so keep an eye out for it.

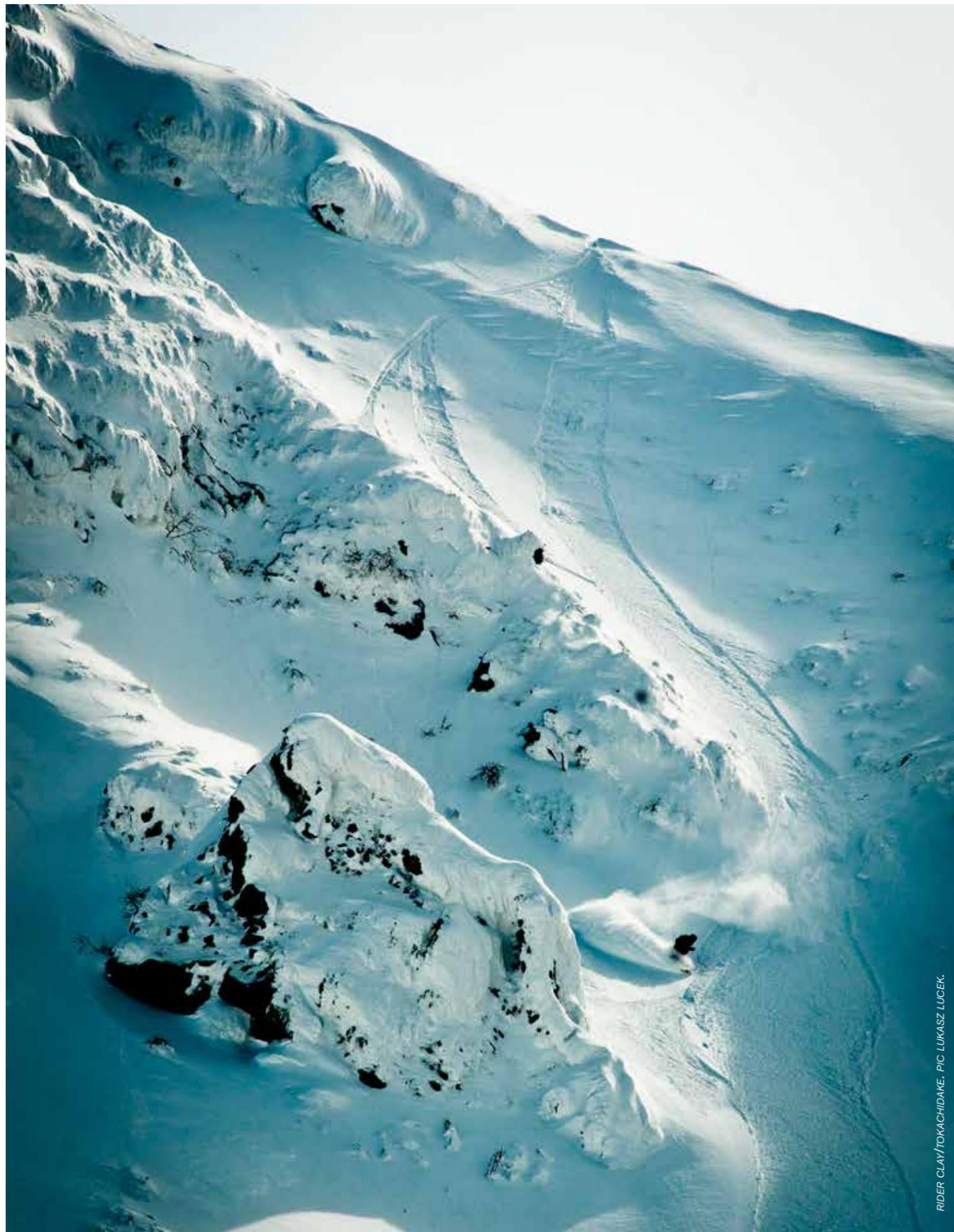




The boys at Black Diamond Tours know how to have fun, and there's nothing more fun than hitting Hokkaido's magic mushrooms. Not the variety your parents said they never tried in the 70s, but the massive powder pillows that build up on rocks, trees, roots and anything else poking out of the ground when the powder starts to fall. BDT have been showing pros around Hokkaido for years, and now run a tour dedicated to introducing clients to the biggest local 'shrooms.

LEFT: BDT'S CLAYTON KERNAGHAN BOUNCES OFF A SERIES OF AVI BARRIERS ON A CLOSED ROAD. PIC GLEN CLAYDON, POWDERSHOTS.

ABOVE: IF YOU PLAN TO DO THE TOUR, BE PREPARED TO TAKE TO THE AIR, LIKE JOEY CORCORAN ABOVE. PIC AARON JAMIESON, NISEKO PHOTOGRAPHY.



RIDER: CLAY/TOKACHIDAKE, PIC: LUKASZ LUCEK

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Apart from getting his usual quota of epic action shots, longtime Niseko photog Glen Claydon from PowderShots spent a bit of time experimenting after dark last season. Anyone who's tried to take a good photo in low light knows how hard it is, but to get an action shot, in the snow, at night? If anyone was going to do it, it was GCP, as the photo on the left and the cover of this issue of *Powderlife* can attest.

ABOVE: DYLAN KERNAGHAN FINDS A FAULTY SPEED BUMP ON MT YOTEL. PIC JOSEPH PURDAM, POWDERSHOTS.

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POWDER SHOTS



There's no denying skiers can get themselves deeper in the pow. Every year we get dozens of photos of twin-plankers up to their armpits in snow. We see so many we sometimes get a bit blasé about how good it is to see a straight up deep powder shot. So here's a few of our faves that came across our desk last season.

*FAR LEFT: ANON/MOIWA. PIC MIKE RICHARDS.
LEFT: MIKE RICHARDS/HIRAFU. PIC GLEN CLAYDON.
ABOVE: J-S L'HEUREUX . DARREN TEASDALE,
NISEKO PHOTOGRAPHY.
RIGHT: IAN MACKENZIE/KIRORO. PIC MIKE RICHARDS.*



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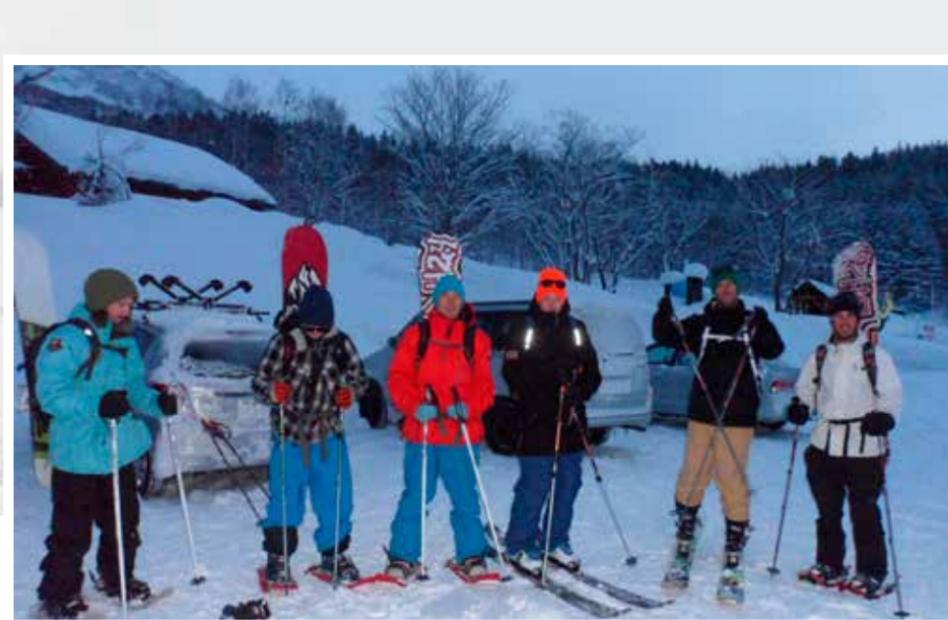
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WAIST DEEP adventure

THE ALLURE OF MT YŌTEI

You've tracked out every square inch of powder in the Niseko United. Hell, you've even done Moiwa, Rusutsu and cat skied the backcountry. But there's one thing you can't stop thinking about, it's there in the forefront of your mind everywhere you go...





CRATER PIC NISEKO PHOTOGRAPHY

THE Japanese affix “san” to a person’s name as a sign of respect. They do the same with mountains. Yōtei-zan (the “z” inserted for euphonic purposes) stands nearly 2km high. It’s a big, beautiful, living, breathing beast of a mountain. A “semi-dormant” volcano, it seems there’s something almost magical about it. Its character changes from season to season, day to day, and even hour to hour.

I never get tired of taking photos of it. I’ve taken thousands of them, all slight variations on the same theme but each one unique. I think its presence is one of the main reasons Niseko has become so famous. Locals and visitors alike fall in love with Yōtei-zan and form their own individual bond with it.

Of course, it’s beautiful, steep, powder-covered slopes are an almost irresistible lure for skiers. Those up for a challenge can hike it in a good part of a day, ski into its crater, hike out and drop back off the other side, enjoying one of the longest top-to-bottom descents in Hokkaido.

One thing people new to snow don’t often realise though, is that skiing anywhere outside the designated ski resort boundaries can be extremely dangerous. That light fluffy powder you kick with your boots changes character when tonnes of it fall at once.

For all its beauty, Yōtei-zan is a dangerous mountain in skiing terms. It’s only “safe” to ski a handful of times a year when conditions are just right. It gets buffeted by weather from all directions, and is ringed by exposed icy ridges and deep erosion gullies. These gullies capture huge amounts of snow and when conditions are right, offer epic powder skiing. But if conditions have caused that snowpack to become unstable and slide, the gullies act like giant funnels, channelling all that snow down in one violent, concentrated movement.



PIC MIKE RICHARDS

THE FORCE IS STRONG

Kristian Ventura says he didn’t show Mt Yōtei the respect he now realises it deserves. Last season the 26-year-old Australian experienced the full force of a major avalanche in one of Mt Yōtei’s gullies just after starting his descent down the mountain. Hearing his story, it’s hard to believe he survived.

Kristian is a keen rock climber first, and snowboarder second. In 2011, he set off on a rite of passage, with a plan to seek out challenging new climbs and experience a northern ski resort winter working holiday. The plan was for a nine-month trip, but after 11 months working, climbing and snowboarding in Canada, he decided to keep the dream alive and headed to Niseko for the winter of 2011/12. In a story that sounds very similar to my own experience, he describes that first season in Niseko as, “undoubtedly the best four months of my life - the people, the place and the powder were absolutely magic,” he says.

After that winter he travelled up through South America. While climbing limestone cliffs in Mexico, he had a strong feeling he should stay there for the climbing season. But even in the heart of Central America, the lure of Mt Yōtei was too strong.

“While I was backpacking through Central America, my desire to ride Yōtei’s crater had become the top item on my must-do list. Apart from seeing my friends again, Yōtei was the main reason I decided to come back.”

Kristian grew up skiing once or twice a year in Australia, and was in his third full northern hemisphere winter. He had done avalanche courses, understood the theory, and almost always took the appropriate precautions. But in another sentiment I can relate to, he’d done so much skiing in similar situations before without consequence, in one fateful instant, he dropped his guard. He triggered a massive avalanche that dragged him more than a kilometre and 600 vertical metres down the mountain.

THE JOURNEY BEGINS

His crew had planned to do the trip several times before but cancelled due to bad weather. It was his second time climbing it that season - the first time he got to the top of the trees, about two thirds of the way up, and got turned back by the weather.

This time the weather was perfect, bluebird skies and excellent conditions. They made it to the summit in an easy 4.5 hours. They took a few happy snaps at the peak and finally rode the crater that had drawn him back to Niseko. Conditions inside the crater are typically some of the best on the mountain as the wind deposits snow from all directions.

After they climbed back out it was time to find a safe line to ski down. One of the unique hazards of skiing Mt Yōtei though, is that it’s difficult not to ski in a “terrain trap” - an area where the terrain is conducive to avalanche. This is due to the series of ridges and gullies ringing the mountain as described previously. The ridgelines are raked clean by the wind leaving mainly hard packed ice which is a nightmare to ski. The gullies can hold fantastic snow but if the snow pack is unstable, then your route needs to be calculated and chosen very carefully.

This is exactly what happened to Kristian and his crew that day and a momentary lapse of judgement on Kristian’s part had extreme consequences.

“The ice at the top was obviously pretty ruthless,” he says. “We’d just ridden past one ridge and got cut off by a cliff band on the other ridge. So we just decided to turn back around and go



KRISTIAN AT THE SUMMIT. AND ABOVE, 5AM AT THE TRAIL HEAD.

down the previous ridge. My mate went first and headed down over to the safe zone on the ridge we just passed. I was looking about 10 to 15m in front of me and the ice just turned to powder. All of a sudden my brain switched off and I got powder hungry. I thought I’d just take a couple of turns and get into the safe zone further up.

“And that was it, the whole face just took off on me and I was right in the middle of it. I felt the snow move and I turned around and I was about 30m from the crown. It was 30m either side of me, so I was right bang in the middle and I just started hammering down this gully. As soon as I saw the crown and

turned back around and saw each side I had completely accepted I was not going to come out of it, I am going down with this avalanche. When I saw the sheer size of it I knew I was in serious trouble straight away.

“It was funny because everything went in super slow motion as soon as I felt the avalanche. Everything I’d learned about in avalanche training courses went through my head. As soon as it set off I was put on my bum and I was sort of sitting on the slab. I looked down at my bindings and thought maybe I can take my board off and that would be better. But then I looked up and I was too close to a fast approaching wave of snow and I

thought, maybe I'll only get one off and that will absolutely stuff me.

After about 200m of doing the swimming technique ("swimming" in an attempt to stay above the surface) I got swallowed under and even though I had told myself to hold my breath, I started breathing in snow straight away. I was pushing my hands against my face to make an air pocket for when the snow stops but I just couldn't physically keep them there. It was like getting hit by a wave in the ocean, but 10 times as powerful. It was getting flipped really hard and my board was always leading the charge. I had all this weight on me and everything was dark.

"It sounds funny but I was telling myself to relax and go with it, so I wasn't all tensed up. As soon as I went under I thought I was done, just because of the sheer size of the avalanche, I knew I was pretty well done for.

"I hadn't actually had that much pain other than just being ragdolled around, then all of a sudden it felt like my whole lower body just got obliterated. I'd hit a rock or a tree and I actually thought my legs had been ripped off. My initial reaction was, 'Wow, there goes my legs'. A part of me was upset it hadn't killed me because I thought now I was going to slowly drown in pain. I said to myself 'That's it, that was my life.'

"But after that I wasn't being flipped as hard anymore. It was kind of strange, I just started floating through the snow and in actual fact what had happened



was I'd come to the end of the gully and it spread out. All the snow debris from the avalanche spread out so it got thinner, it wasn't following over itself. Another reason was that my board actually got ripped off."

At this point Kristian takes a deep breath, almost as if reliving the moment he got his life back.

"Then all of a sudden I saw a bit of light, the snow just stopped around me and my head was poking out. The rest of my body was concreted in, but my head was popping out. So I was able to throw up the snow that I had breathed in and start screaming for help. Unbelievable."

It really is hard to believe Kristian's head was out when the slide stopped. If he'd been just a few centimetres under, he most probably would have suffocated and died. Everyone had avalanche

beacons and transceivers, but he had gone much further than his friends probably would have expected. As it was, with Kristian screaming for help, it took them about 10 minutes to get to him.

There were a few more unbelievable coincidences. Firstly, he somehow missed a giant boulder he could see he was headed straight for when the avalanche first started. Despite usually wearing a helmet, he wasn't wearing one that day. He was also surprised he didn't break his neck or his back with the force he was being thrown around.

Another stroke of luck, in all that vast terrain, an off-duty Japanese firefighter just happened to be hiking the mountain by himself nearby and appeared out of nowhere. "He said 'I firefighter - rescue?'" laughs Kristian. "And I said, 'Hai, hai, absolutely!'"

THE RESCUE

"My mate Cam got the shovel out and dug out my legs, and as soon as he (the firefighter) saw my legs, he started spinning his finger like a helicopter. He pulled out a GPS and a phone, and organised the rescue while he pulled out two space blankets and forced me to eat chocolate to create body heat.

"Mt Yōtei is actually a no-fly zone, and little did we know at the time, but he had to pull strings to convince the police to fly in and rescue me. The alternative was for the medical team to hike up and stretcher me down over a series of hours, in which time I probably would have

bled to death. I don't know what would have happened if it wasn't for him."

It took over an hour for the helicopter to arrive, and the pain was unbearable. "I had snow all in and around me so I was absolutely freezing and my legs were just shaking apart. All my friends took their jackets off and put them on top of me. When the helicopter arrived the policeman only had a fabric stretcher, and my friends had to lift me onto the stretcher by picking me up by my ski pants. My legs sank into them as they lifted me up, all the while I was making non-human noises. Then they lowered me into the stretcher. It bent again when they lifted me up and my friends said they could hear me screaming over the noise of the helicopter as it was flying away. I never thought I could experience that much pain. I was waiting for myself to pass out but it just never came."

Because they were going to have to operate, it was hospital policy not to give any pain killers. For several hours he tried to grin and bear the pain, until they tried to take his snowboard boots off. He refused to let them do it and finally they

put him under. He woke up an hour later after they'd done all the x-rays. He'd broken both his femurs (thigh bones) and his tibia (shin bone) on his left leg, which had broken through the skin.

The first thought that came to him when he woke up was that his insurance might not cover him for backcountry skiing. He asked if he could be flown home for treatment, but was told he needed surgery immediately or he could die from blood loss. He had the surgery and woke up 14 hours later with his legs back in some sort of order. He cried with joy realising that he was alive.

It turned out his insurance didn't cover him. He'd been travelling when he booked it for the second year and had trouble finding full cover. He wasn't allowed to leave the hospital until he'd paid his bills, which was initially estimated at over \$60,000 and what followed was a heartwarming rally among locals to raise money to get Kristian home. Within a few weeks, his friends, and total strangers, had raised ¥2 million (about \$20,000) which covered his bills.

BACK ON TWO FEET

Now back in Australia, Kristian spent a mentally and physically tough year recovering. There have been a few setbacks - he had what's called "delayed union", where his bones weren't fusing as quickly as they should. He says it's been the hardest time of his life.

Now almost a year after the accident, Kristian says he's feeling positive and has a new sense of direction. He's started rock climbing again and is looking forward to hopefully getting back on a snowboard again. He wonders though, how he will feel standing at the top of a big open face again, but wants to learn more about mountains when that time comes around.

"I think my next thing would be to do a serious mountaineering course and become a real man of the mountains. In India they have these full on courses where you go into the mountains with the local army. You live out there and learn all about them. I'd like to do something like that in the future, but that's a way off."



PIC NISEKO PHOTOGRAPHY

Advertisement for Yasuragi by Odin, featuring a modern spa area with a hot tub and a wooden deck.

WHERE THE LOVE OF NISEKO REALLY BEGINS TO SOAK IN.

YASURAGI
by odin
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OWN YOUR LUXURY LOFT APARTMENT IN 2 OR 3 BEDROOM CONFIGURATIONS IN HIRAFU'S LOWER VILLAGE. PLEASE VISIT OUR SHOWROOM AT ODIN PLACE (FORMERLY ABUCHA) AT THE TRAFFIC LIGHT NEXT TO SEICOMART. OR TO VIEW YASURAGI BY ODIN IN PERSON, EMAIL NICOLAS@ODIN-PROPERTY.COM FOR AN APPOINTMENT.

SO YOU STILL WANT TO SKI YŌTEI?

The good news is, you can do it safely and hundreds of people do every winter without incident. My number one piece of advice is: hire a guide. They've done it before, and they know what they're doing. Andrew Spragg (*right*) is the owner of Black Diamond Tours, which leads hundreds of skiers and boarders - including plenty of pros - around Niseko and Hokkaido each winter. Yōtei is one of his favourite hikes and he usually does it several times a season. I asked Andrew for his thoughts on skiing Yōtei safely.

What's it like hiking and skiing Yōtei?

It's a big climb, offers epic views and if conditions are right there is the option to ski the crater. Combine that with one of the longest top to bottom descents in Hokkaido and the result is great skiing. That said, conditions on the upper mountain can be hard wind pack but with the right snow Yōtei offers amazing lines.

How dangerous is it?

On any mountain, the risk and hazards vary every day so you need to be continually assessing conditions both before you head out and during the day. One unique hazard of Yōtei is that it is difficult not to be skiing in terrain traps. Rapidly changing weather is another major concern and visibility can deteriorate surprisingly quickly. This can lead to difficult routefinding and unknowing exposure to unsafe slopes.

If you know what you're doing, can you be 100% sure you're not going to run into any trouble?

There is always an inherent risk in backcountry skiing and snowboarding - or even in-bounds (resort) skiing and snowboarding - regardless of your training, knowledge and skill. It is important to enter the backcountry prepared and make informed decisions to minimise that risk. When in doubt, err on the side of caution and come back another day when conditions are better.

What tips would you give to anyone considering hiking it?

Get as much information as you can before heading up. Buy a map, check the Niseko avalanche report, weather forecast - look for clear days and low winds but be careful on south facing slopes if the sun is out all day - make sure you have the right gear and have a great time. You can also contact local guiding companies for up to date weather info. BDT is happy to share its daily stability forecast with independent backcountry travellers.

There's now an open information sharing Facebook page called "Hokkaido Weather and Snow Observations". Its goal is providing timely observations on conditions in the mountains and to help connect everyone in the community - guides, companies, ski patrol and the public. Japanese resources like this are widely available but there's not much in English, and hopefully this will open the lines of communication.



A FINAL WORD FROM KRISTIAN

"Insurance is important, training is important, but the biggest thing is attitude towards the mountain. I always thought I knew what I was doing. I didn't respect the mountain, I thought I was one of the lucky ones, that stuff doesn't happen to me.

But it's not just knowing what you're doing it's about actually making choices and being smart in the backcountry. I was skiing way out of range of any safe zones and I was at the top of a massive terrain trap. If there was a slide, the chances of me getting out of it, even if I was pro snowboarder, were zero. I'd snowboarded myself into an absolute death trap. Hundreds of times I'd skied lines like that before and nothing had happened. This was the one time where the chances of me coming out alive were crazy, but somehow I did.

Not only am I beyond lucky to come out of that avalanche alive, I'm so lucky so many people showed me compassion even though I didn't deserve it. I am humbled by the amazing response that people showed me in a time of need and without their help I wouldn't be where I am today. I cannot thank them enough and I hope that the people that heard about my accident and the people reading this now will take a hint from my mistakes."



NED ON TOP OF THE WORLD IN THE CRATER. PIC GLEN CLAYDON.

photo by Anna Nagai



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PLACES CALLED HOME

Niseko is no longer just a ski holiday destination. It's a four-seasons lifestyle destination, and hundreds of foreigners now call it "home".



ŌRURI

architect Florian Busch Architects
developer Hokkaido Tracks

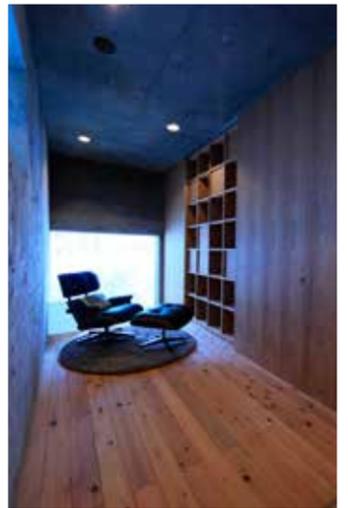
THE owner of Ōruri remembers lying on the cool concrete balcony of his childhood home in Malaysia, gazing up at the night sky or at clouds during the day. A world away from the humidity of Southeast Asia, concrete again provides him with respite from the elements in southern Hokkaido.

“My childhood experience probably provided a subconscious inclination towards concrete as a building material,” he says. “To me, nature is both beauty and beast. I want to be close to nature, yet protected from it. Hokkaido’s winter is hauntingly beautiful but it’s also a really harsh environment. Concrete is a strong material signifying strength, akin to primitive man staying in a cave. I feel protected living inside a concrete house while enjoying the beauty of the nature on the outside.”

While he uses air-conditioning 24 hours a day in Singapore, he says Ōruri remains cool in Hokkaido’s mild summers, and warm enough in winter so he doesn’t need to rug up.

Ōruri is located within The Escarpment, a 25-lot master planned community on the edge of Hirafu Village developed by Hokkaido Tracks. As well as being slightly removed from the hustle and bustle of the village, the Escarpment offers uninterrupted views of Mt Yōtei and the rolling hills and farmland beyond the village boundaries.

It’s these views and the way the Florian Busch-designed house captures them as the seasons change that the owner likes most about the house. Busch attributes this to the staggered, building block design. “Where the topography shifted and slid vertically creating the escarpment with its stunning views, the “L-House” is split and shifted horizontally – a simple gesture that opens up space and views as the building seems to move up the slope.”





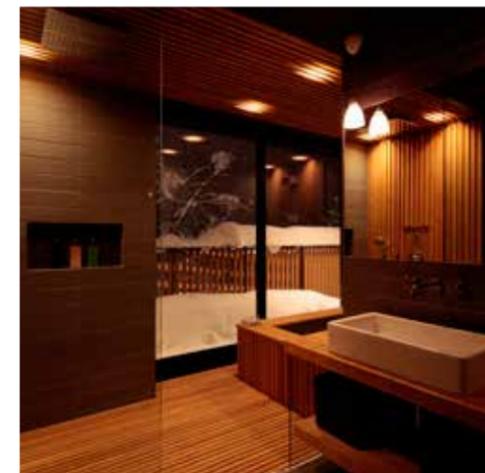
YASURAGI

architect Atelier BNK
developer Odin

SURROUNDED by the world's finest powder snow, it's ironic the Hong Kong owner of the Yasuragi penthouse doesn't ski. Indeed, she'd never been to the snow until a friend convinced her to bring the family to Niseko for Chinese New Year in 2010. "I was immediately captivated by the beauty and serenity of the scenery. The food was authentic, fresh and unpretentious, and the family had a great time skiing." They've come back every Chinese New Year since, have bought their own slice of Hirafu, and also make regular trips during the "equally tranquil" green season.



PIC AARON JAMIESON / NISEKO PHOTOGRAPHY



Yasuragi is the fourth Niseko project by boutique developer Odin – a partnership made up of a Frenchman and two Norwegian brothers, based out of Niseko and Hong Kong. The team worked with local Hokkaido architect Atelier BNK, which counts the gargantuan Sapporo Dome arena as one of its achievements.

Odin partner Bjorn Fjelddahl says the central idea for the design of Yasuragi – meaning “peace and relaxation” – was to give each owner their own onsen-style bath, with retreating glass walls that allow the space to be turned into a private exterior retreat. Other defining features of the structure are its “butterfly wings” shape and “floating roof” design, maximising the views of Mt Yōtei.

The owner worked with Odin to tailor the space to her needs, one of which was to make the living room an extra warm family space, where the family could relax, read and listen to music. “What I like most is gathering around in the evening, toasting marshmallows and catching up on the day. We brought art with us to decorate the place and it is certainly home. The red colour theme was deliberate to give a feeling of warmth in contrast to the cold outside.”



YŌTEI MOUNTAIN HUT

architect Shigeru Uehara
company Niseko Home Design

FOR those up for a challenge, renovating one of Hirafu's quirky older buildings can have surprisingly rewarding results. Such has been the case for the Hong Kong expats who bought this former pension, built in 1978 by Mt Yōtei's park ranger. Over the years he had filled the home with a vast array of irreplaceable memorabilia, much of which he agreed to leave behind when he sold it. One of the new owners says this ingrained wealth of character was a key aspect that appealed to them when they first saw the place.

"We wanted a real mountain chalet," he says. "Modern new build, concrete and stainless steel we can get in HK or anywhere else. It was just beautiful – all the wood, all the period pieces, the 'man cave' bar (pictured top right) – just perfect. This



is how we recall ski chalets and mountain huts from days past. We no longer need to travel to Europe to get that true ski mountain hut feel. We wanted character for ourselves whilst preserving some of the local history."

The original "man cave" bar in the basement is clearly one of the new owner's favourite features, and apart from the addition of carpet and heating, remains exactly as it was before. "One hundred percent character," he says. "It's on par with the best bars in the village, if not richer in atmosphere and ambience."

The owner's brief for project architect Shigeru Uehara was to ensure the original character was retained, while installing all modern amenities, including a working fireplace and a large onsen-style bath that would be big enough to fit their three children.

Uehara-san says he would like to see more local buildings preserved like this one has been. He himself lives in an older house he renovated, complete with imperfections like scratches on the floor from a child playing with a toy in years gone by. "I think we get a different type of happiness from renovation," he says. "You can make it how you want it, while preserving a piece of history."



IZUMIKYO STYLE

For over 30 years, we've been applying our local know-how and experience in Niseko to resort development, real estate sales, property management and rentals.

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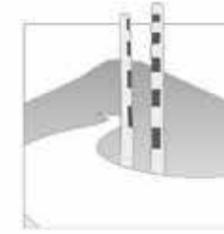


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WAIST DEEP four seasons

THE HOTTEST 100

Thought skiing and snowboarding was the only thing to do in Niseko? Come in the "green season" and discover a whole new world. Here's an inconclusive list of 100 things you can do in Niseko in spring, summer and autumn.



THE LUSH GREEN OF SUMMER. PIC NISEKO PHOTOGRAPHY.



KUTCHAN JAGA MATSURI (POTATO FESTIVAL). PIC PAUL MALANDAIN.



MT YOTEI SUMMIT. PIC KRISTIAN LUND.



FRESHWATER FLY FISHING. PIC GLEN CLAYDON PHOTOGRAPHY.

BREAD & BUTTER FUN

1 GOLF There are five golf courses within 15 minutes of Niseko, all stunningly beautiful and well-maintained.

2 ROAD CYCLING With super smooth, quiet roads and clean mountain air, Niseko is becoming a renowned road cycling and endurance training destination.

3 MOUNTAIN BIKING The local mountain biking crew is dedicated, motivated, and expanding the trails and organisation every year.

4 RAFTING All that snow makes for great rapids in spring before subsiding for quieter rafting in summer.

5 HIKING Dozens of volcanic mountains, nourished by melting snow and spring water makes for endless scenic hiking opportunities.

6 FLY FISHING The local rivers and lakes are home to a wonderful array of freshwater fish species, including salmon and trout and other local species.

7 CAMPING You could camp at a different spot every day for a year around Niseko and you wouldn't find them all.

8 BALLOONING Niseko's scenery is spectacular in winter. It's something else from a hot air balloon in full colour.

9 HORSERIDING Exploring Niseko's lush, dense forests on foot is fun. On horseback is even better.

10 PARK GOLF Invented in Hokkaido, this is a cross between golf and croquet, and is great fun for kids to seniors.



AND FOR SPORTS FANS

11 The **HANAZONO HILL CLIMB** started in 2010 and last year attracted 600 riders from across Japan, sprinting from Kutchan to the top of Mt Goshiki.

12 Niseko regularly hosts **MAJOR CYCLING EVENTS**, including a stage of the Tour de Hokkaido last year.

13 The **NAC OFF ROAD SERIES** is triathlon and duathlon gone wild – river swim/mountain bike/trail run or just bike and run. Raaaghhhh!

14-15 If you're a one-discipline wonder, try the 3km, 10km, or torcherous 30km crosscountry **NAC TRAIL RUN**, or the **NAC LAKE TOYA BIG SWIM**.

16 More than 30 years old, the autumn **NISEKO MARATHON FESTIVAL** is a fun-run event for families and budding long-distance runners.

17 Japan has one of the world's biggest baseball leagues, so if you're here, head to the Sapporo Dome, catch a **BASEBALL GAME** and cheer on the local Hokkaido Nippon Ham Fighters!

SUMMER FESTIVALS

18 KYOGOKU COLD WATER FESTIVAL
July // Celebrate the region's abundance of spring water at the Kyogoku spring.

19 MAKKARI PORK FESTIVAL
July // That's right a pork festival. Makkari pigs are fed herbs and spices, making them so delicious it's worth celebrating!

20 SAPPORO BEER FESTIVAL
Jul-Aug // Head for the park in the middle of town, buy a beer tower and celebrate summer like they do in Sapporo!

21 KUTCHAN POTATO FESTIVAL
August // The "Jaga Matsuri" (pictured

left) is the local summer headline act for this little potato farming region.

22 HIRAFU MATSURI
August // Yes, there is culture in Hirafu! Don a summer kimono and get festive!

23 RISING SUN FESTIVAL
August // Hokkaido's own Fuji Rock Festival featuring more than 100 acts.

24 FIREWORKS & STAR FESTIVAL
August // Fun summer evening festival in Niseko Town for kids and families.

25 MIKAKU FIESTA
Nov // The best local chefs cook up a storm at the Hilton, and you can try it all!

JUST FOR KIDS!

26-29 There's so much for kids to do at the **HANAZONO ACTIVITY CENTRE** in summer we had to group them all together. Summer tubing, ziplines, giant spiderwebs, inflatable play areas and more. Plenty to keep big kids occupied too, fun for the whole family.

31-35 NISEKO VILLAGE transforms into a summer fun-derland in the green season - tree trekking, zip-lining, inflatable fun park, and more. With golf, onsens and all the amenities of the Hilton - including childminding - it might be a parent's dream come true too.

36 Nearby Rusutsu ski resort is like a Disneyland of powder skiing in winter, but come summer, and the resort has its own fully fledged Disneyland-style **THEME PARK**. Eight roller coasters, thrill rides, ferris wheel, waterpark, train rides and more!

30 Hokkaido International School Niseko will run a series of week-long **SCHOOLS AND CAMPS** this green season. The Seasonal School will be a fun classroom-based program. It also has a Summer Camp Program featuring a number of activities such as rafting, making ice-cream, picking vegetables and much more! Seasonal school enrolments are open (early-bird discounts available). For more information on both programs see website in ad below.



PIC NISEKO VILLAGE.



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- Seasonal programs available –2014 enrolments open!
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Visit our website or contact **Shannon Koga** (School Principal) for more information!



PIC NISEKO PHOTOGRAPHY



PIC NISEKO HANAZONO RESORT

GET EXTREME

- **37 CANYONING** Jump, slide and swim down a network of canyons, creeks and rockpools deep in the mountains. Finish with a 6m cliff jump (*pic left*). Awesome.
- **38 PARAGLIDING** For adrenaline junkies, paragliding is an activity that soars above the rest. Catch the gondola up, fly down like the birds. It's simple physics!
- **39 WAKEBOARDING** Get your wake on either Hanazono's Wakeboard Park, or hire a boat and have a go in the crystal clear waters of nearby Lake Toya.
- **40 ZIPLINING** Strap in and buckle up - Niseko takes ziplining seriously. Fly 230m across the Hanazono bowl, or travel a total of 1.4km along Niseko Village's network of lines.
- **41 BAGJUMP FREEDROP** Experience a few seconds of freefall after launching off an 8m or 12m tower, before landing softly in the massive air filled BagJump bag!
- **42 INDOOR ROCK CLIMBING** In the middle of Hirafu, the Niseko Adventure Centre (aka NAC) has several climbing walls of varying heights and difficulties.
- **43 SURFING** There's a good selection of surf breaks a short drive from Niseko on either side of the island.
- **44 BRIDGE SWING** Finally, for those who have truly lost the plot, tie yourself to a 25m high bridge with a 20m rope, and jump. I'd be checking they don't have their calculations the wrong way around!



SHIKI
NISEKO

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KAMIMURA
RESTAURANT

IKI

The new restaurant and bar "Iki" offers Eurasian cuisine, light breakfast, delicious lunches and sophisticated dinners with a spacious lounge for coffee or an early evening drink.



LOCAL DELIGHTS

- **45 FRESH SPRINGWATER** Every day millions of litres of water gush from springs around the base of Mt Yōtei. It's listed as one of Japan's purest sources. Cup your hands and slurp for instant refreshment, and fill a bottle for later.
- **46 BOULANGERIE JIN** Find the little mountain road behind Niseko Town, drive until you're in the middle of nowhere, then keep driving. A tiny black, steel sign marks the mountain cabin that is Jin, a truly magnifique French bakery.
- **47 MEISUI TOFU** Right beside the Makkari spring is a bustling little tofu shop, whose key ingredient is Mt Yōtei spring water. Sample as many of their dozens of varieties as you like. For tofu sceptics, start with the tofu doughnuts.

- **48 SANSAI** These little fronds, leaves, stems and buds grow everywhere as the snow melts. Get someone in the know to point you in the right direction. They can be fried in tempura batter, marinated, pickled and more. A Hokkaido delicacy.
- **49 MILK KOBO** When the local dairy needed to combat falling milk prices, it started selling ice creams, choux cream puffs and other dairy products. Now it's a sprawling complex complete with restaurant and souvenir shops.
- **50 FARM FRESH PRODUCE** Try to organise a farm visit and taste some fresh produce. You've never tasted asparagus as good as the Makkari variety straight from the ground. If you don't get to a farm, try the Niseko View Plaza farmers' market.



PIC PAUL MALKIN



KAMIMURA

The iconic Michelin-starred French cuisine restaurant, defines exquisite dining in Niseko. An intricate fusion of East meets West, together with stylish and intimate interior offers a truly memorable and special experience.

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URL * www.chaletivy.com



TAKE IT EASY

51 ONSEN An onsen in summer is a different experience to winter, but surprisingly refreshing.

52 GREEN BIKE Niseko has a free "Green Bike" scheme, where bikes can be picked up at one place and dropped off at another.

53 BIRD WATCHING Niseko isn't a birdwatching destination as such, but receives a number of migrants in spring and summer that may be new to visitors.

54 PHOTOGRAPHY Niseko is photogenic all year round with no shortage of sterling subjects. Take a photography tour and get some local knowledge.

55 NATURE TOUR The hills of Niseko are alive with bugs, plants, flowers and animals. A nature tour will reveal just how much life is lurking in them thar hills.



PIC NISEKO PHOTOGRAPHY

AU NATURALE

56 Try to catch a glimpse of **HARU NO TAKI (SPRING WATERFALL)** in the valley beside Hirafu - caused by melting snow higher up the mountain - while it lasts.

57 A month or so after Tokyo and Kyoto's **CHERRY BLOSSOMS** bloom, it's Niseko turn. Take a local photography tour to find the most photogenic spots.

58 Gain a deeper understanding of **MT YOTEI** by hiking it in summer. See what it looks like up close and personal and see inside the crater.

59 Get a local to show you the **SECRET MUD ONSEN** for your own natural mud-pack therapy. It's a hike to get there but the experience is worth it.

60 High in the Niseko mountain range is **SHINSENUMA MARSH**. Stroll along the raised wooden walkway and enjoy the scenery that changes with the seasons.

61 Take a drive out the coast, find a river mouth and watch the ocean swells thick with **SALMON HEADING UPSTREAM** as they return to spawn.

62 Late September is an exciting time - see the first snows dust the mountain peaks, and the hills come alive with the reds, yellows, browns of **AUTUMN**.

BE INSPIRED

TAKE A WORKSHOP IN 63 glass art, **64** jewellery, **65** pottery, **66** woodwork, **67** leatherwork, **68** fishing fly making.

69 Try a Japanese cooking class, **70** make jam from Niseko produce, **71** authentic soba noodles, or **72** ice cream.



Or visit one of the many interesting local galleries and museums including:

73 ST GALLERY A small Hirafu gallery of works by Shigeru Tokumaru.

74 RAM KOBO An interesting wood and metal workshop and gallery.

75 YUNOSATO DESK A unique furniture workshop and gallery in an old school building.

76 SHU OGAWARA MUSEUM OF ART A gallery of works by famous Hokkaido artist Shu Ogawara.

77 KUTCHAN NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM Introducing the history and culture of the local area - lots of fun.

78 ARISHIMA TAKEO MEMORIAL MUSEUM A museum focussing on the early years of Hokkaido's art culture.



PIC NISEKO PHOTOGRAPHY

DAY TRIPS

If you hire a care in Niseko, you'll open up a whole new world. The following places are all within an hour or less from Niseko.

LAKE TOYA is a stunningly beautiful volcanic caldera lake, famous for the onsen resort town on its southern shoreline. **79 GO** for a swim in the crystal clear water. **80 TAKE** a boat out to explore the deer-inhabited island in the middle. **81 VISIT** active volcano Mt Usu, and witness the impacts of its most recent explosions in 1977 and 2000. **82 BATHE** in one of many onsens on the shores of the lake. **83 CHECK** out the Windsor Hotel, host of the 2008 G8 Summit. **84 STOP** for an icecream at the famous Lake Hill Farm.

OTARU is a small, historic port city about an hour from Niseko. **85 EXPLORE** the beautifully preserved old canal area by rickshaw. **86 ADMIRE** the old stone warehouses and other architecture, including mansions built by early herring tycoons. **87 EAT** fantastic fresh sushi straight from the port in a converted warehouse. **88 SHOP** in the malls and galleries of the canal district.

SHAKOTAN is a compact, rugged peninsula that juts out into the Sea of Japan behind Niseko. **89 DRIVE** along the coastline and admire some of the some of the most spectacular coastal scenery in Japan. **90 VENTURE** out along the spine of Cape Kamui. **91 JUMP** in a glass-bottom boat and marvel at the clarity of the Sea of Japan. **92 KAYAK** along the coastline and explore caves in the cliffsides. **93 EAT** live uni (sea urchin) straight from the seafloor. **94 DRINK** a cold beer while soaking in an outdoor onsen and watching the sun sink into the sea.

YOICHI is another seaside village near Niseko, most famous for its apples, apple juice and Nikka Whiskey distillery. **95 TOUR** of the whiskey distillery whose 1987 single malt was voted world's best in 2008. **96 VISIT** the Space Apple Musuem, in honour of the Japan's first astronaut who was born there. **97 WITNESS** the Fugoppe Cave paintings, beleived to be the first signs of prehistoric life in Hokkaido.



PHOTO: PAUL MALANDAIN

SUMMER DELICACIES

98 A really cool thing about coming back to Niseko in summer, is that there's a whole new variety of things on local restaurant menus. Head back to places like Kamimura or A-Bu-Cha and **EXPERIENCE THE BEST SEASONAL PRODUCE.**

A number of Hokkaido delicacies are also at their best at different times throughout the summer. I could list more but I'm out of numbers and space. Get started on: **99 UNI** (sea urchin) in August. **100 IKURA** (salmon roe) in September.

So there you have it. 100 awesome things to do in Niseko in the "off-season". Sounds pretty cool, right? The coolest thing is, that's just the tip of the... no, that's not the right analogy for summer! Let's just say there's so much more to do than I've mentioned here.

With its proximity to Sapporo and a wide-range of excellent modern accommodation, Niseko is the perfect place to base yourself as you explore the wonders of Hokkaido in the green season.

FOR MORE INFO ON ANYTHING MENTIONED IN THIS ARTICLE, EMAIL KRIS@POWDERLIFE.COM.



THE ORCHARDS
NISEKO



YOUR DREAM YOUR HOME YOUR COMMUNITY

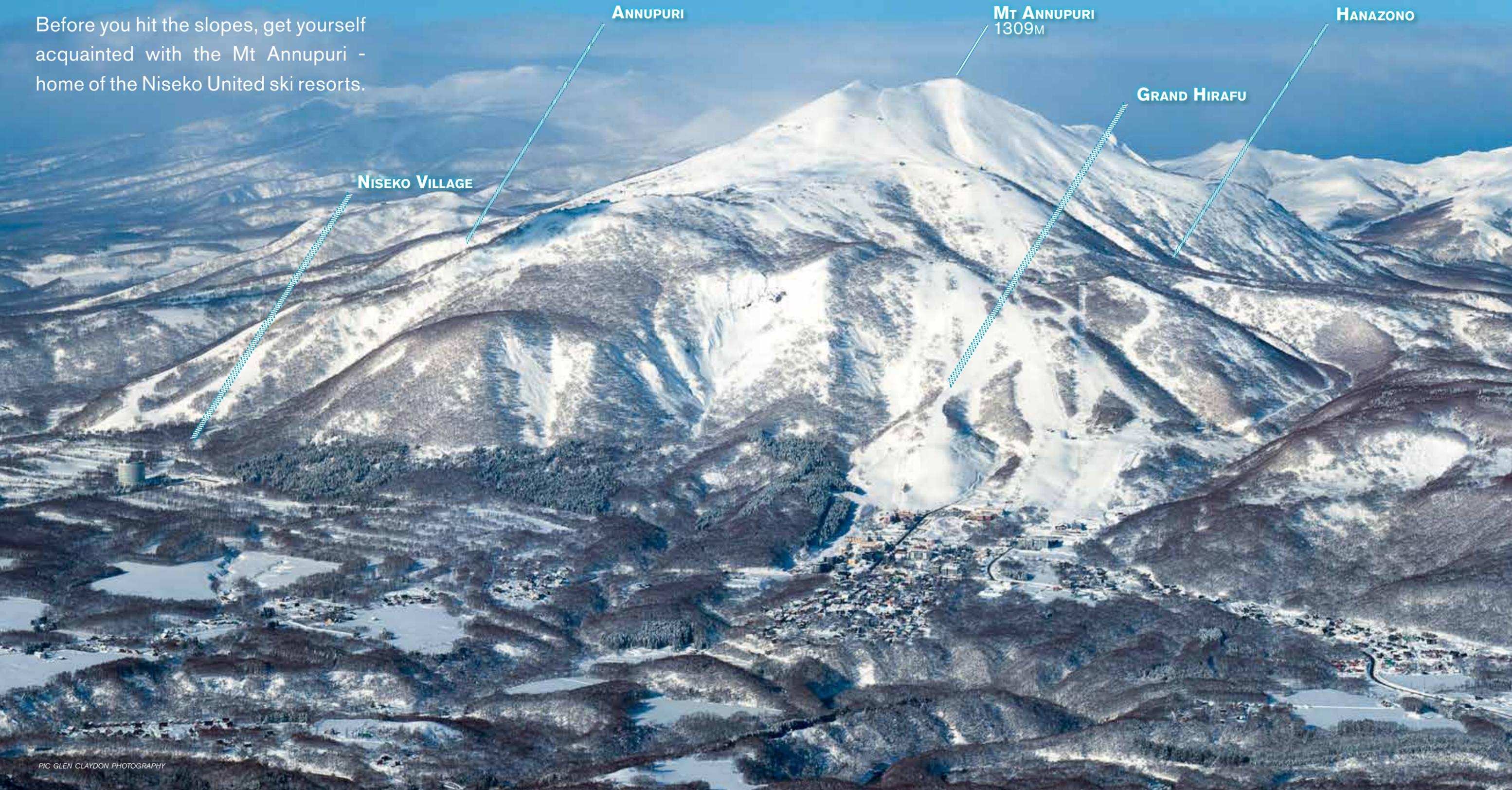


Build your dream home in
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just 1km from downtown Hirafu

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MOUNTAIN GUIDE

Before you hit the slopes, get yourself acquainted with the Mt Annupuri - home of the Niseko United ski resorts.



MT ANNUPURI

Home of the Niseko United

Niseko United is the name given to the four independently owned resorts on the south east face of Mt Annupuri.



The most well known and visited of these resorts is Grand Hirafu, commonly known as Hirafu. The resort itself is great, but unless you know your secret spots, the powder quickly disappears due to the traffic it experiences during the day.

But that's the beauty of Niseko – there are four resorts you can ski, board or bus between with ease, all with slopes and terrain to suit complete beginners to professionals.

If you're looking up at the mountain from Hirafu, the family friendly / off-piste powder haven of Hanazono is over a few hills and gullies to your right.

To the left, beyond the massive out-of-bounds avalanche-prone bowl you can see in the pic below, is the up-market and slower-paced Niseko Village, home of the Hilton and formerly known as Higashiyama.

And to its left, bookending the Niseko United is Annapuri, famous for its back bowls and tendency to hide some of the longest runs and secret stashes of premium Niseko powder.

英語/ENGLISH www.niseko.ne.jp

NISEKO UNITED.

One Mountain Four Resorts

- Niseko Annapuri
- Niseko Village
- Grand Hirafu
- HANAZONO

TRAIL MAP 2013-2014

NISEKO RULES

Areas marked in red are strictly off limits by the Niseko Rules, these are dangerous areas and must not be entered under any circumstances. Always use the gates to enter out of bounds areas. Please respect the Niseko Rules to ensure off-piste freedom and safety.

- "Haru no TAKI" and "Yu no sawa" areas (marked in red) are strictly off limits at all times.
- Crossing boundary ropes is prohibited. Those who violate the rules may be refused from using all resort facilities.
- There is no safety control or ski patrol beyond the resort boundaries.
- Do not enter out of bounds areas when gates are closed.
- The "Niseko Avalanche Information" is the official daily info of the Niseko Rules.
- Special charges will be applied for out of bounds search and rescue.
- Ski patrols instructions must be obeyed.
- Children under 12 must refrain from entering out of bounds areas unless accompanied by a proficient adult leader.
- Respect the Niseko Rules- the resort and local community's official regulations created for the safety and freedom of all resort users.

FOR YOUR SAFETY

Regardless of how you enjoy your winter sports, please follow the following code of conduct to ensure your safety and the safety of others.

- Take lessons from qualified professional instructors to learn and progress.
- As you progress beyond an instructor's supervision, you must avoid going to terrain and terrain you are not qualified to ski on.
- When entering a trail, a run or playing area, look uphill and give way to others.
- Always use the lift searching devices where provided and always use proper equipment to prevent runaway equipment. Ensure equipment is in good condition.
- Check and store all ropes and equipment. Keep off roped trails or runs and keep out of roped areas.
- Before using any lift, you must have the knowledge and ability of how to load and unload safely.
- Do not sit, lie down, or sit on a chairlift or other winter activity if your ability is impaired by drugs or alcohol.
- If you are involved in, or witness an accident, alert the Ski Patrol, report the location and identify yourself to them.

KNOW THE CODE. IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.

SKI area shuttle bus NISEKO UNITED Shuttle

The NISEKO UNITED Shuttle conveniently links each of the four ski resorts and is free to holders of the Niseko All Mountain Pass.

*Please see the reverse side for the bus time table.
 *Holders of the Niseko All Mountain Pass must present the pass when boarding the bus.
 *(12-point ticket holders forfeit 1 point each ride)
 *Those without the All Mountain Pass must pay regular fares.

Legend:

- Lift ticket counter
- Restroom
- Phone
- KID's room
- Restaurant
- Shop
- Information
- Floral
- Ski school
- Chairlift/Spring
- Shuttle bus stop
- Parking lot
- Ski patrol
- AED
- Light
- Locker
- Changing room
- Gate to uncontrolled areas
- Mogul run
- Wave
- Hill Pipe
- Park/Kicker, etc.
- Easiest
- More Difficult
- Most Difficult
- Name of Slope
- Night course & lift
- Un-groomed Slope
- Number of seats
- Name of Lift
- Length Time required/Number of lift ticket points
- 1.8 opening times and closures are subject to change due to weather, snow and lift conditions, etc.

Avalanche Control Area

"Mitsuno no sawa" Various methods of Avalanche Control combined with an educational program 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

ANNUPURI

Mellow groomers, badass bowls

Wide, cruisy groomers ▪ The bowls ▪ Long, deep powder runs ▪ Laid back night skiing ▪ Lunchtime dining variety ▪ Yugokorotei



Niseko Annupuri is known for its easy access powder and quiet slopes. Mellow tree runs, powder fields, inbound gullies, groomed runs, park jumps or night skiing and snowboarding – Annupuri's got it all. One gondola and five chairlifts provide access to amazing inbounds terrain and connect to all the Niseko United resorts.

Hiking out from the top gate will get you on top of some seriously steep open faces with beautiful views of the Panorama Mountain Line and Sea of Japan to the west. Skiing out from Annupuri's backcountry gates will give you access to amazing ravines and gullies that funnel you back to the base area. Going out of these gates is not for beginners and most of the area's serious avalanches happen out of bounds here. Backcountry gear, snowpack knowledge and a good riding partner are a good idea when venturing out into Annupuri's massive back bowls.

The in-bounds slopes of Annupuri have terrain for all levels of skiing and snowboarding. Relax and treat yourself to a midday lunch in one of many restaurants at the base before getting the comfortable gondola back to the top.

NISEKO VILLAGE

Your own private resort

Long, fast groomers ▪ Flat beginners runs ▪ Private resort vibe ▪ Family snow activities ▪ Reindeer sledding ▪ The Hilton - eat, drink



Niseko Village sits in between Grand Hirafu and Annupuri and offers something for everyone. Skiable from all the Niseko United resort areas and also on the free shuttle bus line, we highly recommend a day at the village.

Known to be the sunniest area on the mountain, it's easy to find great skiing and snowboarding all day on the expert, intermediate and beginner slopes. The gondola station is right outside the Hilton hotel and you can enjoy amazing scenery out of the gondy's bubble windows when riding to the top. There are four other chair lifts that access everything you want from the base area to the top.

Niseko Village has the only double black diamond slopes in the Niseko United ski area and offers a backcountry awareness course to educate people on the closed bowl under the gondola called Mizuno no Sawa. After taking an educational safety course you are allowed to access the area, depending on snow stability, two times per day under ski patrol's discretion. There are also great winding runs for the family and intermediate skier or snowboarder in between the areas steep terrain.

HIRAFU

The centre of it all

Central convenience ▪ Kids zoo ▪ Terrain for every mood ▪ Hike the peak ▪ Ultimate night skiing ▪ Après drinks and dining



Grand Hirafu's new high-speed, eight-person gondola, 12-chair lift system and ski slopes will fulfil all your skiing and snowboarding dreams. Advanced riders and skiers can cruise the open powder fields from the top lifts to get up to floaty powder speed fast. Hike out of the top access gate to the peak and have your choice of riding down to Hanazono, Niseko Village or Annupuri. Grand Hirafu's in-bounds groomed runs are lined with silver birch trees and powder stashes from top to bottom.

The bottom of the mountain has beginner slopes that are perfect for learning or taking a lesson along with a fun park and halfpipe to get a last hit before catching the lift back up. There is a free shuttle bus system that runs through the entire village to get you around the mountain and village with ease. The Ace Hill mid-mountain chalet and all the restaurants around the base lifts – including the new day centre – give you many options for lunch and a place to rest your legs. Hirafu is a beautiful ski area during the day and just as amazing under the lights, with up to six lifts operating until 9pm every night.

HANAZONO

Powder laps and play time

Family fun ▪ Mellow groomers ▪ Strawberry Fields ▪ Full kids snow sports program ▪ Snow adventure activities



With a particular focus on families and a lot of money spent on infrastructure for kids fun and lessons at the impressive Hanazono 308 base station, Hanazono truly offers something for everyone.

Facing north and east, the snow stays cold and with three high-speed chairlifts there is potential for endless powder laps. For Dad it boasts amazing terrain and steep tree runs (did you say Strawberry Fields?); for Mum the groomed runs are wide, mellow and scenic; and for the teenager it boasts Hokkaido's biggest and best terrain park – the Stomping Ground. Complete with jib lines, intermediate and advanced jump lines, FIS certified competition halfpipe and a bag jump to try new tricks on.

Hanazono has this year expanded its kids and beginner learning areas and made improvements to the kids indoor facilities. There is now a third 'magic carpet' elevator, snow train and dedicated learning areas for each of the NISS ski school products. NISS is the only snowsports school in Niseko to offer a full complement of kid's snowsports school programs in a specialist children's learning environment.

LIGHTS, CAMERA...

When the lights go on, the "kids" come out to play

NOCTURNAL SKIERS AND SNOWBOARDERS IN NISEKO ARE arguably treated to some of the best flood-lit night terrain in the world. After dark, three of the four Niseko United resorts are still open for business – Hirafu, Niseko Village and Annupuri.

The mountain is a completely different world in the hours of darkness. The flood-lit atmosphere and the way the shadows are cast on the mountain make it a spectacle worth experiencing. With the lights pointing in from all directions, it's like a 3D fantasy land.

Many would be surprised to hear that visibility at night is often crystal clear – much better than during the day, when white-outs can make things a little hazy. With a good pair of goggles, clarity at night is constant. The lights also make it easier to see all the lumps and bumps.

Late afternoon and early evening are also often when harsh weather goes to bed, meaning it can be calm and eerily still. And with temperatures lower, it frequently makes for lighter, fluffier, better quality powder.

Hirafu is arguably the all-round king of night skiing. The resort has been offering night skiing for almost 50 years, so it's no wonder they've got it down pat. 1287 metal halide lamps have been erected strategically around the resort lighting everything from the beginners slope to vast swathes of the resort's off-piste powder stashes. In all, there are about 70ha open to explore.



PIC GLEN CLAYDON PHOTOGRAPHY



PIC NISEKO PHOTOGRAPHY

Beginners The beginners runs are very well lit at all three lit resorts – Hirafu, Niseko Village and Annupuri. Take your pick!

Intermediates Annupuri's long, wide runs are almost always empty, meaning some nights you can almost have the resort to yourself.

Powder Hounds Unless you're happy to cruise with the family, head to Hirafu. Literally most of the mountain is lit up either directly or ambiently. If it's snowing hard, your tracks will very often be filled in by the time you get back up. You haven't experienced all Hirafu has to offer unless you've skied it on a night like this.



PIC NISEKO PHOTOGRAPHY

BACKCOUNTRY SAFETY

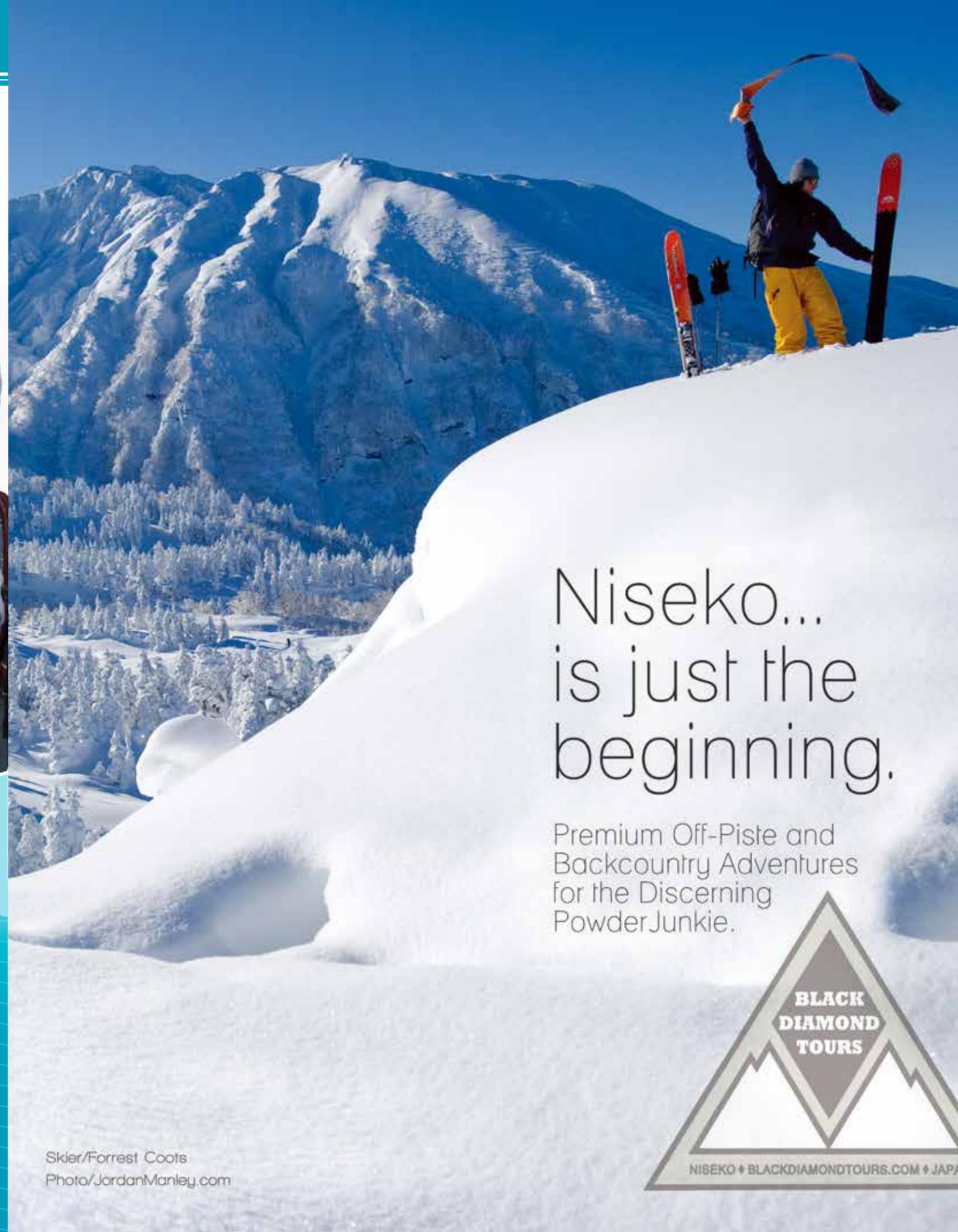
Think you know everything about skiing and snowboarding?

NISEKO IS CERTAINLY A PIONEER IN JAPAN WHEN IT COMES to opening up backcountry to allow more freedom to ski and ride off-piste. To a certain extent, Niseko matches many other forward-thinking, liberal resorts around the world, allowing more mountain access than many international resorts.

Niseko follows the lead of several European and North American resorts – like Jackson Hole, Squaw Valley and Chamonix – by allowing backcountry access through specific gated points on the ski area boundary with careful management and a 'ski-at-your-own-risk policy'. The gate system means those exploring 'out the back' can do so with the knowledge experienced local ski patrollers have checked the mountain and weather conditions and consider it 'safe' (with due caution).

The person who was pivotal in the instigation and implementation of the backcountry gate system and the Niseko Rules is local legend Akio Shinya (pictured right). For 20 years, Shinya-san has been assessing avalanche conditions in Niseko. Without him, Niseko may not have such a liberal backcountry policy, and there would be much less terrain to ride.

If you do venture into the Niseko backcountry, you may well meet Shinya-san at one of the entry gates. He'll advise you in Japanese or English on the day's problematic or dangerous areas, and may even suggest where the best of Niseko's world-famous powder could be found.



Niseko... is just the beginning.

Premium Off-Piste and
Backcountry Adventures
for the Discerning
Powder Junkie.



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

Daily Avalanche Report

<http://niseko.nadare.info>

1. Obey the Niseko Rules

Listed on the course map (p73). Read them and heed them.

2. Check weather and avalanche reports

Know what weather to expect and the avalanche report.

3. Listen to and obey ski patrollers.

They know what they're talking about and are there to ensure everyone on the mountain stays safe.

4. Have essential equipment

Make sure everyone has a working beacon, probe and shovel... and knows how to use them.

5. Plan your trip

Learn the area and let someone know when you'll be back.

6. Don't enter closed gates

If the gates are closed, they're closed for good reason.

7. No go zones

Locals don't even think about skiing these, don't think you can.

8. Don't duck ropes

They are the boundary between safe and potentially unsafe.

9. Hire a guide

If you're inexperienced, hire a reputable guide. They will also put you into much more powder than you'll find by yourself!

10. Explore the backcountry with reliable people

The least experienced person should still know backcountry safety theory and what to do in case of emergency.

Skier/Forrest Coots
Photo/JordanManley.com

RESORT GUIDE

POWDERLIFE IS YOUR NISEKO TRAVEL GUIDE, ON THE GROUND IN NISEKO AND ONLINE ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD AT — WWW.POWDERLIFE.COM



PIC PAUL MALANDAIN

TOURIST INFO



The Niseko Grand Hirafu Welcome Centre

Wide range of brochures from the area and transport information. Location: Top of the main street (Hirafu Zaka) in Hirafu (map p97/E1). 0136 22 0109.

Kutchan Information Centre

Plenty of brochures and English-speaking staff. Location: Main Street, Kutchan (map p94/B4). 0136 22 1121.

GETTING HERE AND AWAY

New Chitose Airport.

For departure and arrival times. 0123 23 0111. www.new-chitose-airport.jp/language/english

Getting from New Chitose to Niseko

Bus This is a cheap and efficient option. Buses leave every 30 minutes from the airport to Niseko and take about three hours (includes rest stop and drop off at Rusutsu). Whiteliner Buses, Chuo Bus, Donan Bus and Hokkaido Resort Liner. Visit the Welcome Centre for bookings back to Chitose. About ¥2300 one way or ¥3850 return.

Door-to-Door Transfer Skybus offers a door-to-door transfer service to and from the airport to Niseko, or Sapporo. 0136 55 5601. www.skybus.co.jp.

Train The most scenic route. There's no direct train from Chitose to Kutchan (the closest station to Hirafu). All run through Sapporo and Otaru. You'll need to change platforms. About ¥2600 one way. www.japanrail.com.

CAR RENTAL

Niseko Auto Rentals

Specialising in large 7-8 passenger 4wd vehicles: Delica Space Gear and Toyota Hiace. (map p94/F8) 0136 44 1144. www.nisekoauto.com.

Toyota Rent-a-Car ShinSapporo

One-way hire from Chitose airport to Hirafu about ¥7000 for six people/24 hours. Pickup Chitose, Sapporo or Kutchan. 0118 15 0100.

TRANSPORT AROUND NISEKO

Taxis

Sprint Taxi - new bilingual taxi service 5am-11pm. Call 0136 55 5400 or use TaxiCaller app. Kutchan Hire 0136 22 1212. Misora Hire 0136 22 1171. Niseko Hire 0136 44 2635.

Bus

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

¥500 for adults and ¥300 for children.

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

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

Kutchan Night Go Bus Runs to and from Hirafu to Kutchan Station every night. ¥ One ride ¥100 / Season Pass ¥1000.

MONEY



ATMs

Shiki Niseko, Hirafu Map p97/E3. Located in the Supermarket & Deli. Available 7am-9pm.
Kutchan Main Post Office Map p94/E3. Accepts all major cards.
All 7 Elevens Accept some international cards.

Credit Cards

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

Currency Exchange

Kutchan Post Office Map p94/B2.
Hokuyo Bank Map p94/B3).



Accommodation & Ski Packages
Property Management Services
Tel: 0136-21-6221

find out more
holidayniseko.com/management

A woman in a colorful plaid ski jacket and white pants stands in a snowy mountain landscape, holding two bright pink skis. The Bogner logo is in the top right corner.

LARRY ADLER
Exclusive fashion & accessories
Open 8am - 8pm
Located near the Ace Family Pair Chairlift

A close-up of a hand holding a credit card with the Skybus logo and a Toyota emblem visible on the card.

Skybus

Airport <-> Niseko
Niseko <-> Sapporo
Door-to-door private transfers from ¥29,000.

Diverse range of current model vehicles from Toyota Hiace, SUVs to Luxury Coaches.

www.skybus.co.jp
Tel: 0136-555-601

WiFi ONBOARD

Skybus
PRIVATE TRANSFERS

CONVENIENCE SHOPPING

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

Hirafu

Seicomart Map p96/D2
Lawson (24 hours) Map 97/E3
Piz Gloria Map p96/D2
Alpen Hotel Map p97/E1

Kutchan

MaxValu For all your food/drink/grocery needs. Map p94/G3.
Homac For household/hardware. Map p94/G3.
Best Denki For all your electrical and technical needs. Map p94/B4.
M-Pocket For imported groceries and alcohol. Map p94/B3.
¥100 Shop As the name suggests! Map p94/B4.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Internet

Most accommodation will have LAN connections and there are free WIFI spots in businesses all over Hirafu and other areas.

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 public telephone.

International Calls

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

POST OFFICES

Look for the red '〒' symbol. There are three post offices in Kutchan and two in Niseko town. In Hirafu, post-office services are available at Piz Gloria and Seicomart.

ELECTRICITY

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

MEDICAL SERVICES

Kutchan Kousei Hospital

No appointment necessary. Map p94/A3. 0136 22 1141.

Niseko Physio

The only acute sports injury specialist in the village. Map p96/D3. 0136 22 0399.

Tsuruha Drug Pharmacy (red sign)

Map p94/G3. Corner Route 5 and Route 343, next to MaxValu.

STAY SAFE AROUND TOWN

No skiing/boarding on roads or footpaths

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

Snow falling off roofs

Be careful when walking or parking your car below sloped roofs. They shed snow very regularly in very large, heavy loads that can damage cars and seriously injure people.

Drinking Dangers

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

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

RUBBISH GUIDE

Help keep Niseko beautiful

Take a second to make sure you're throwing your rubbish in the correct bin.

Burnable rubbish (燃えるゴミ moeru-gomi)

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

PET bottles and cans (ペット、缶)

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

Compost (生ゴミ nama-gomi)

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

Non-burnable (燃えないゴミ moenai-gomi)

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

ONSEN ETIQUETTE

What to bring?

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

How much?

Most onsens range between ¥500 to ¥1000.

What to do?

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



YUMMY'S

Original homemade thin style Pizza

Pizza 12inc/30cm		Salad	
Margellita	1300 yen	Green salad	700 yen
Ham & cheese	1500 yen	Avocado salsa salad	900 yen
Vegetable Mix	1500 yen	Caesar salad	900 yen
Hawaiian	1600 yen	Tomato mozzarella avocado prosciutto 1100 yen	
Salami Mix	1600 yen	Other	
Chicken Mix	1600 yen	Garlic bread	400 yen
Ham & Bacon	1700 yen	Sweet&spicy chicken wings	800 yen
Tacos Pizza	1800 yen	Taco nachos	800 yen
Seafood Mix	1900 yen	Potato wedges	500 yen
Cheese Mix	1900 yen	Beef stew(with bread)	1300 yen
Avocado with Prosciutto	2100 yen	Potato anchovy cheese cream baked	800 yen
4 Kind of Fungi	2100 yen	Potato chicken cheese cream baked	800 yen
Steak Pizza	2900 yen	3 kind of cheese bread cream baked	900 yen
		Fried chicken leg with potato	1P 900 yen 2P 1800 yen

RESTAURANT & DELIVERY

170-175, Aza-Yamada, Kutchan-cho

0136-21-2239

Before calling for your pizza, please have your phone number and address handy.
 Pizza delivery area: Niseko Hirafu Village only. Please order from 1000yen.

yummyspizza.jp



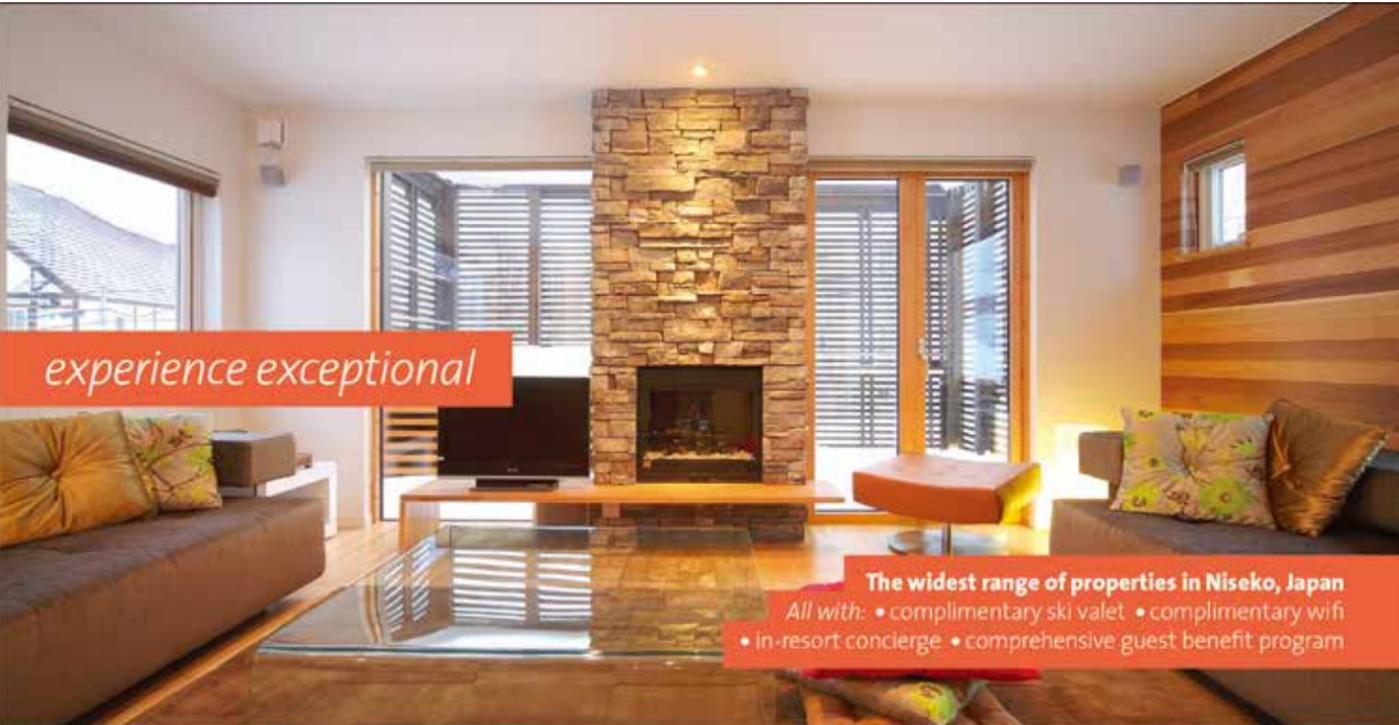


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The widest range of properties in Niseko, Japan

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 • in-resort concierge • comprehensive guest benefit program



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 Hong Kong Toll Free: 800 906 113
 Singapore Toll Free: 800 852 3866
 Japan: +81 (0)136 233 503

A-BU-CHA 2
UPPER HIRAFU VILLAGE
D2 map p97

A wide variety of meals and drinks – Top marks!

Try our popular Japanese dishes or hot-pots. Choice of over 400 drinks! Mouth-watering home-made sweets. Take away menu is available. Authentic Japanese seating. Families are welcome.



Lunch 11.30am – 4pm
Dinner 6pm – 1am

abucha.net

0136 22 5620

BANG BANG
UPPER HIRAFU VILLAGE
D2 map p97

We take great pride in our fresh seafood

We take great pride in our fresh seafood and look forward to offering you mouthwatering dishes from our wide-ranging menus. Come and try our famous yakitori and izakaya menu.



Dinner 5.30–11.30pm
Occasionally closed

niseko.or.jp/bangbang

0136 22 4292

KAMIMURA
UPPER HIRAFU VILLAGE
E3 map p97

The iconic Michelin-starred French restaurant in Niseko!

An intricate fusion of East meets West, we offer an array of degustation menus. This style of dining allow our guests to experience a wide range of flavours with a delicate balance of fresh vegetables, meats and seafood.



From 6pm
Monday to Saturday

kamimura-niseko.com

0136 21 2288

NISEKO PIZZA
HIRAFU INTERSECTION
C3 map p96

The Only Wood Fired Pizza oven in town Fast Delivery! Dine In or Take Away

Thin & crispy Pizzas and fresh Pasta! Salads, sides and a wide menu from our grill. Enjoy a casual beer from our extensive draft selection at our contemporary bar, or a delightful dinner paired with beautiful wine in our family oriented atmosphere. We have something for everyone!



Open 4–11pm/7 days
All year round

www.nisekopizza.jp

0136 55 5553

ASPERGES HANAZONO
HANAZONO
00 at Hanazono

Join us for an ultimate culinary journey led by 3-Star Michelin Head Chef Nakamichi

3-star Michelin Head Chef Hiroshi Nakamichi has opened a new restaurant Asperges in Hanazono this season, integrating fresh, locally grown produce and seasonal ingredients into meticulously prepared French dishes. Lunch ¥4500~ / Dinner ¥15,000~ (+10% service charge).



Lunch 12 – 4pm
Dinner 6 – 10pm
Closed Thursdays

hanazononiseko.com/asperges

0136 55 5632

BD BAR & GRILL (BLACK DIAMOND LODGE)
NISEKO VILLAGE
F8 map p94

Free pick up in the Niseko Village area

BD Bar & Grill offers its own mix of Western, Japanese and Asian fusion cuisine. Billiards, ski/board vids, good tunes, happy hour, daily and weekly specials!! Come and try our signature dish, very juicy & tender "Hokkaido Pork Spare Ribs", Poutine and more!!



4pm–11.30pm
Last order 10.30pm
Last drinks 11pm

www.bdlodge.com

0136 44 1144

KONAYUKI TONTON
ANNUPURI
B8 map p94

Free onsen with your tonkatsu lunch!

Order our Konayuki Tonton tonkatsu (pork cutlet) and enjoy the famous Yugokorotei outdoor onsen hot spring for free*. This is a great chance to have an affordable and delicious meal the whole family will enjoy, and experience one of Niseko's best onsen. *Excludes ¥100 onsen tax.



11.30am - 3pm
Last order 2.30pm
Occasionally closed

niseko-annupurionsen.com

0136 58 2500

YUMMY'S PIZZA
MIDDLE HIRAFU
D4 map p97

Yummy homemade crust pizza and western foods restaurant

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



5–10.30pm / 7 days
Delivery available in the Hirafu area

www.yummypizza.jp

0136 21 2239

COCOROYA JAPANESE ANTIQUES, GIFTS
UPPER HIRAFU VILLAGE
F2 map p97

Japanese Antiques, Gifts & Books in Niseko-Hirafu

We've moved to the Niseko Landmark View building in Hirafu. Our new store is packed with antique and collectable treasures including furniture, vintage kimono, scrolls, woodblock prints, samurai swords, pottery and ceramics, hand-made local gifts & jewellery and books.



10am - 8.30pm
Open 7 days

cocoroya.jp

0136 23 0008

HANAJIZOH BAKERY
IZUMIKYO II
F5 map p97

Creative and delicious breads from talented local baker - you must try!

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



7.30am -4.30pm
Thursday - Monday

hanajizoh.net

0136 23 0331

NISEKO CELLARS
HIRAFU INTERSECTION
C3 map p96

Niseko Cellars is the only international specialised wine store in the Niseko area

We stock current release, organic and biodynamic, rare vintage wines from all over the world. Craft beer & rare Japanese whisky. Local cheese, Hokkaido charcuterie and world sundries. Enjoy a bottle or two in-store anytime. Come see us in the J-Sekka building at the Hirafu traffic lights.



2.30pm - 10pm
Open 7 days

nisekocellars.com

0136 23 1608

SAKURA
UPPER HIRAFU VILLAGE
D2 map p97

Japanese gifts and souvenirs in Hirafu since 1999

Located on the side street just above Rhythm Snow Sports at the Hirafu intersection, Sakura offers a wide selection of gifts including kimonos, geisha hairpins, pottery, paintings, traditional wooden furniture and more.



2 - 8pm
Open 7 days

www.sakura-niseko.com

0136 21 7007

LARRY ADLER SKI & OUTDOOR
UPPER HIRAFU VILLAGE
C2 map p97

Ski & Snowboard Hire Fashion & Accessories

- Ski & snowboard hire
- Biggest range – hottest gear
- Exclusive fashion & accessories
- Kids Ski Free (conditions apply)
- Delivery available
- Burton, Volkl, K2, Atomic, Salomon & more



8am – 8pm
Open 7 days

larryadler.com

0136 21 4050

NISEKO SPORTS
UPPER HIRAFU VILLAGE + HANAZONO
C1 map p97

Three convenient locations in Hirafu and Hanazono

All Niseko Sports offer the all-in-one convenience of NISS Snowsports School, Niseko Sports Rental and Retail under the one roof, visit our stores this winter and head out onto the slopes in style!



8.30am - 8.30pm
Hanazono 8.30am-5pm
Open 7 days

hanazononiseko.com/nisekosports

0136 21 6633

RHYTHM SNOWSPORTS
UPPER HIRAFU VILLAGE
C1 map p96

We'll make sure you're toasty warm and looking good on the hill and around town

As Hirafu's largest rental and retail store, we stock a massive range of goggles, helmets, beanies, socks, balaclavas, thermals, gloves and much more!



8am - 10pm
Open 7 days

skihirejapan.com

0136 23 0164

TY MODE CREATIONS
MIDDLE HIRAFU VILLAGE
D4 map p97

Enjoy a drink while you shop

Ty Mode Creations is located @ Java Bar. Wide range of custom made modern and Japanese style fashion articles for male, female and kids. Come and find unique and original items or choose from a range of fabrics and tailored to suit your needs.



2 - 7pm
Open 7 days

tymode.com

0136 23 0788

BACKCOUNTRY CAT SKIING TOUR
UPPER HIRAFU VILLAGE

00
Meet Hirafu

Pure Backcountry, Deep Pow, Advanced Terrain. The best Niseko has to offer.

With access to some of Niseko's most exciting terrain, a day on the cat will undoubtedly be a highlight of your time in Niseko. Includes transfers, guide, photographer and safety equipment. Central Hirafu pick up location.



9am-7pm
Open 7 days

nisekophotography.com

0136 22 5764

BLACK DIAMOND TOURS
NISEKO VILLAGE

F8
map p94

Niseko's Backcountry Powder Specialists

Check out Niseko's incredible slackcountry terrain or visit another epic nearby resort. Options include Rusutsu, Sapporo Kokusai, Kiroro and Teine Highland. We also have a range of backcountry tours to suit your lung capacity.



8am - 6pm
7 days

0136 55 5953

blackdiamondtours.com

Alternate 090 2054 8687

HANAZONO SNOWMOBILE TOURS
HANAZONO

00
Hanazono

Experience riding a performance snowmobile

Our experienced guides will take you via the lush forests trails of the Niseko Tokyu Golf Course at Hanazono, through snow covered pastures and to some of the most awesome views of the Niseko range and beyond.



9am - 4pm
Open 7 days

hanazononiseko.com/snowmobile

0136 21 6688

NAC CAT SKIING TOURS
IZUMIKYO 1

F3
map p97

NAC Private Cat Ski Resort Niseko Weiss Horn

NAC is running cat skiing tours again this season for the second year at Niseko Weiss Mountain. Our snow cat with its 12 person cabin will take skiers and boarders for a full day of powder tracks. Suitable for intermediate skiers/boarders.



8am - 9pm
Open 7 days
Year round

nac-web.com

0136 23 2093

BLACK DIAMOND SNOWMOBILE TOURS
NISEKO VILLAGE

F8
map p94

*1-hour Introductory Tour ¥8500
1-hour Deep Powder Tour ¥12,600*

Looking for something exciting and different for a day off skiing or boarding? Full throttle action for all ability levels aged 12+. Great on and offtrack terrain, small groups (max 4:1 client/guide ratio) and qualified, safety conscious guides!



8am - 6pm
Open 7 days

0136 55 5991

blackdiamondtours.com/tours-snowmobile.html 080 5586 3490

EXPLORE NISEKO
UPPER HIRAFU VILLAGE

B2
map p96

Niseko's only one stop booking centre

Explore Niseko can provide information and book any tour, activity or service for you in Niseko. Simply call or drop by our office right in the centre of town. We're located between Odin Place and Seicomart.



9am-9pm
Open 7 days

explore-niseko.com

0136 55 8848

HERMOSA ANGEL MASSAGE
UPPER HIRAFU VILLAGE

D2
map p97

Call for an appointment or just drop in

Relaxation massage and esthetic salon. Shiatsu massage from ¥4800. Oil massage from ¥6000. We have two salons on Hirafu Zaka street (up from the traffic lights). Salon 1 at B1 Hirafu 188 Bldg, opposite Niseko Park Hotel. Salon 2 at 1F Serenity Apartments, opposite Hotel Hirafu-tei.



10am - 12 midnight
Open 7 days

0136 23 2004

inkarebaza.com

0136 22 0004

NISS INTL SNOWSPORTS SCHOOL
UPPER HIRAFU VILLAGE AND HANAZONO

C1
map p97

Kids are our speciality Hirafu and Hanazono

Smile and style with our team of experienced instructors for a day of fun, safety and learning. With two great locations and a suite of group, kids and private programs we'll help you learn new skills, gain confidence and above all enjoy your time in the powder of Niseko.



8.30am - 8.30pm
Open 7 days

hanazononiseko.com/niss

0136 21 6688

HOKKAIDO INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
NISEKO TOWN

00
See website

Delivering a high quality international education in Niseko

Hokkaido International School was established in 1958 and is fully accredited by WASC (Western Association of Schools and Colleges). The Niseko campus was established in 2012, offering Kindergarten to Elementary Grade 6 (ages 5-12) and Pre-school (ages 3-4) programs.



8.30am - 4pm
Monday to Friday

0136-55-5252

hisniseko.com

his.niseko@his.ac.jp

J AMOS CONSULTING
NISEKO

ALL
Japan

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MYOB & Xero Certified Advisor*

Niseko's only English speaking, year-round accounting service offering set-up, training & support in MYOB and Xero, management accounting services, tax return preparation, budgets and cash flow forecasts and book-keeping. Remote assistance throughout Japan.



8am - 8pm
Year round

090 2650 4909

jonathanamos.com

jonathan@jonathanamos.com

NISEKO AUTO RENTALS & SALES
NISEKO VILLAGE

F8
map p94

*4WD vans from ¥46,200 / week
or ¥135,000 / month*

Complement your holiday or home with a 4WD vehicle. Local licensed dealer offering affordable rentals and sales IN ENGLISH. Short and long-term rentals available. English navigation available. 24hr English emergency roadside assistance.



10am - 6pm
Open 7 days

0136 55 5991

080 5586 3490

nisekoauto.com

POWDERLIFE ADVERTISING
NISEKO

ALL
Niseko

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貴方のお客様もこの雑誌を閲覧してます:)*

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- Property Maintenance
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- Custom woodwork, doors & windows



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hokkaidoservices.com

090 9756 7616

POWDER SHOTS
UPPER HIRAFU VILLAGE

C1
map p96

*Your Niseko memories forever
Professional photography and movies*

We provide a range of professional, customizable, photography packages and products. Take home your Niseko memories in the form of a printed canvas, image disks or full HD professionally edited video today.



8am-10pm
Open 7 days

powdershotsniseko.com

080 6098 7244

NISEKO OWNERS
UPPER HIRAFU

E2
map p97

*Property & Asset Management
See our website for more details*

Property management company with expertise managing properties economically and efficiently. We manage a large portfolio of residential/commercial properties and undeveloped land. Property details, agreements, statements and invoices all stored online for easy access.



Operating all
year round

www.nisekoowners.com

0136 55 8122

RHYTHM BOOT SOLUTIONS
UPPER HIRAFU

C1
map p96

Looking for the ultimate boot fit in Niseko?

We provide a custom boot fitting for skiers and snowboarders. We are the only service in town with qualified podiatrists on our Masterfit boot fitting team.



8am - 10pm
Open 7 days

skihirejapan.com/retail/boot-fitting

0136 23 0164

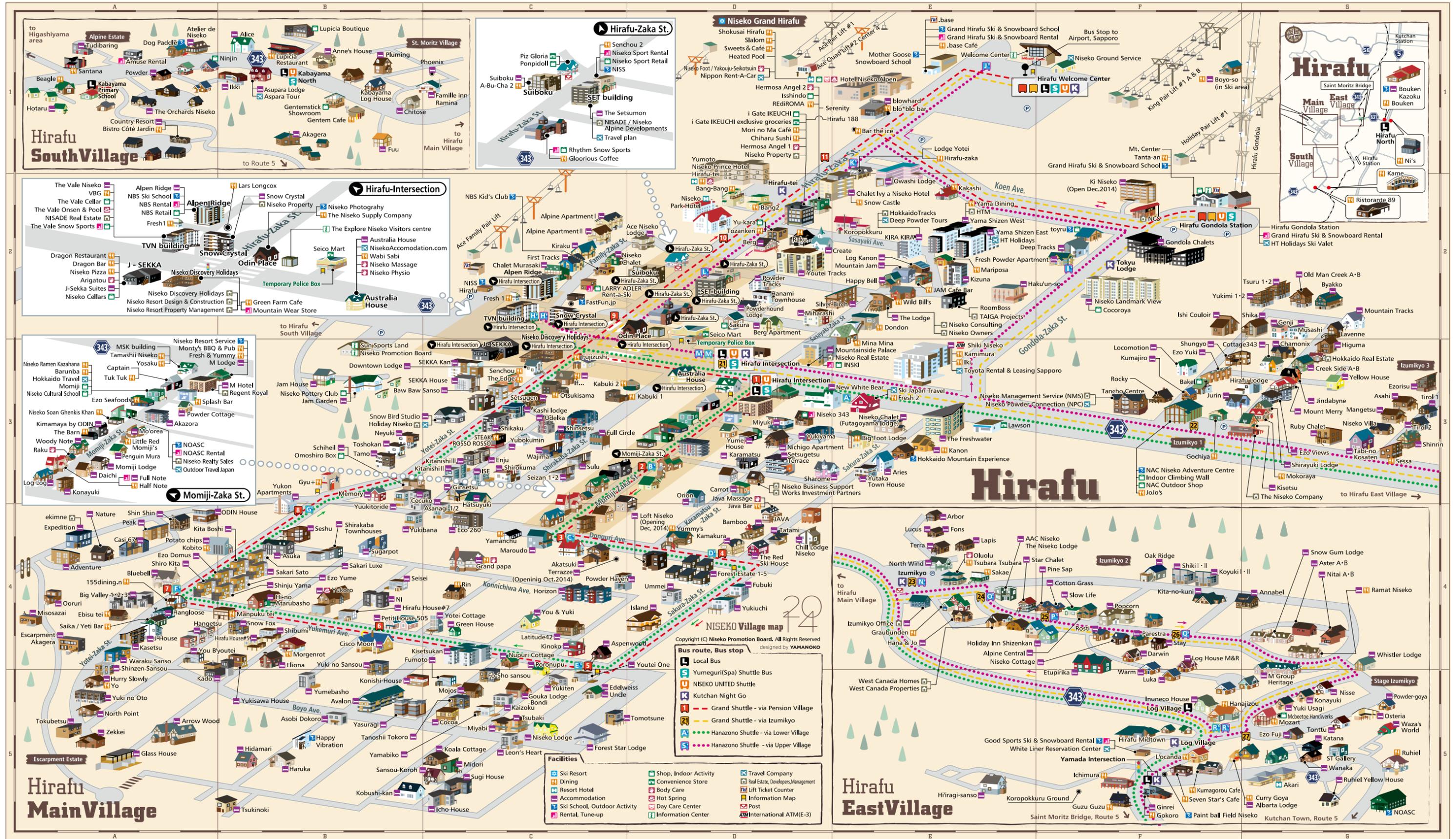


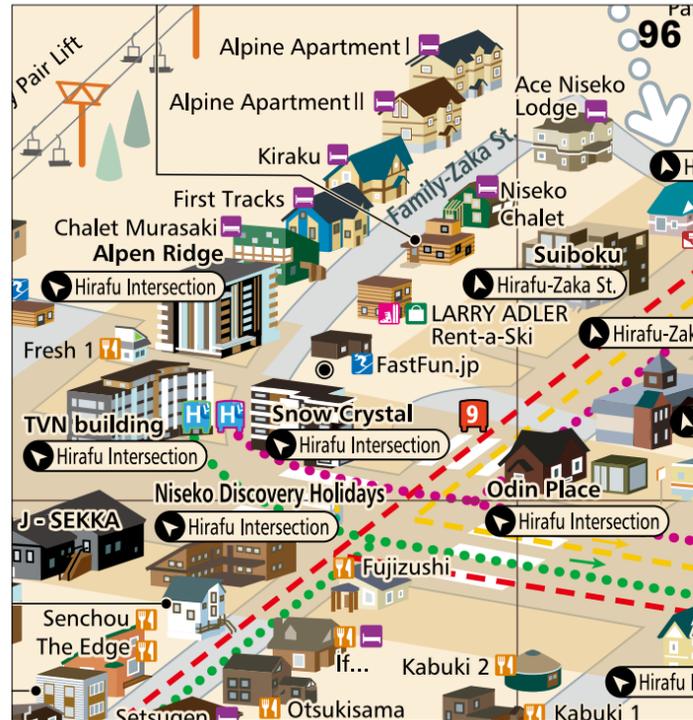
WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?



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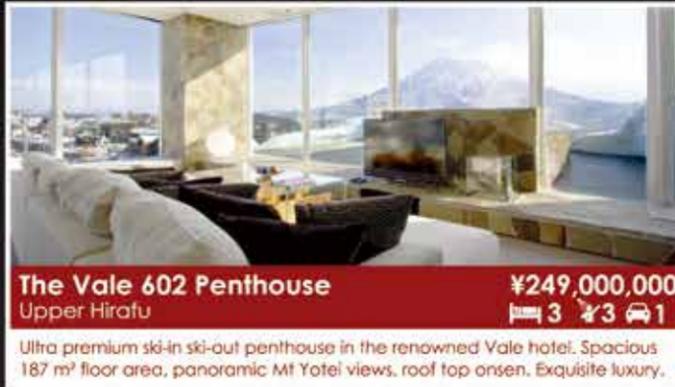


Offering the largest, most varied inventory of property in Niseko

Niseko Property



Alpen Ridge 102
 ¥43,000,000 1 1/2
 Rare ski-in ski-out condominium located on ski-run side. Excellent holiday unit, consistent rental rentals, solid capital gains potential.



The Vale 602 Penthouse
 Upper Hirafu ¥249,000,000 3 3/4 1
 Ultra premium ski-in ski-out penthouse in the renowned Vale hotel. Spacious 187 m² floor area, panoramic Mt Yotei views, roof top onsen. Exquisite luxury.



Toshokan 1
 Middle Hirafu ¥86,000,000 4 3.5
 Stylish holiday home, conveniently-located. Good Mt Yotei and alpine forest views. Carefully designed with a large family or group in mind. Popular rental.



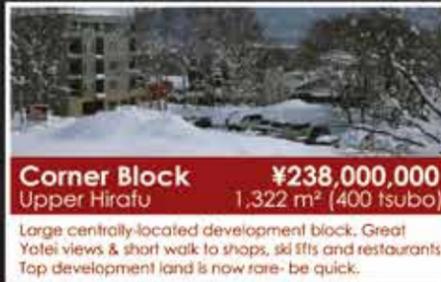
Snow Crystal 202
 Upper Hirafu ¥69,000,000 3 3
 Ski-in ski-out precinct condo at reasonable price. Close to restaurants and shops. Well-considered interior fit-out comfortable living area, spacious bedrooms.



Landmark View 206
 Upper Hirafu ¥38,000,000 2 2
 Comfortable condo within an easy walk of the high speed gondola in blossoming location. In-house staff and shops. Good Yotei views and is popular rental.



Cozy Holiday Home
 Soga (Niseko Village) ¥22,000,000 3 1
 Reasonably-priced Japanese style home with good Yotei views. 7 mins drive to Hirafu & Niseko Village ski fields and ample garaging. All season property.



Corner Block
 Upper Hirafu ¥238,000,000 1,322 m² (400 tsubo)
 Large centrally-located development block. Great Yotei views & short walk to shops, ski lifts and restaurants. Top development land is now rare- be quick.



Peaceful & Scenic
 Lower Hirafu ¥23,600,000 339m² (103 tsubo)
 Well-priced, well-located in peaceful area with good views Yotei & alpine forest views. Short walk to ski shuttle. Can accommodate two houses.



Large Elevated Land
 Kabayama ¥27,900,000 1,164m² (353 tsubo)
 Prices in increasingly-popular Kabayama are rising steadily, especially for larger blocks with good Yotei views, like this one. Backs onto alpine forest.

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