



powderlife

NISEKO ニセコ

Issue 32 // Feb 5-18 // 2011

WINTER SPORTS * ENTERTAINMENT * REAL ESTATE

www.powderlife.com



NOBUO SUZUKI

On science, education and life

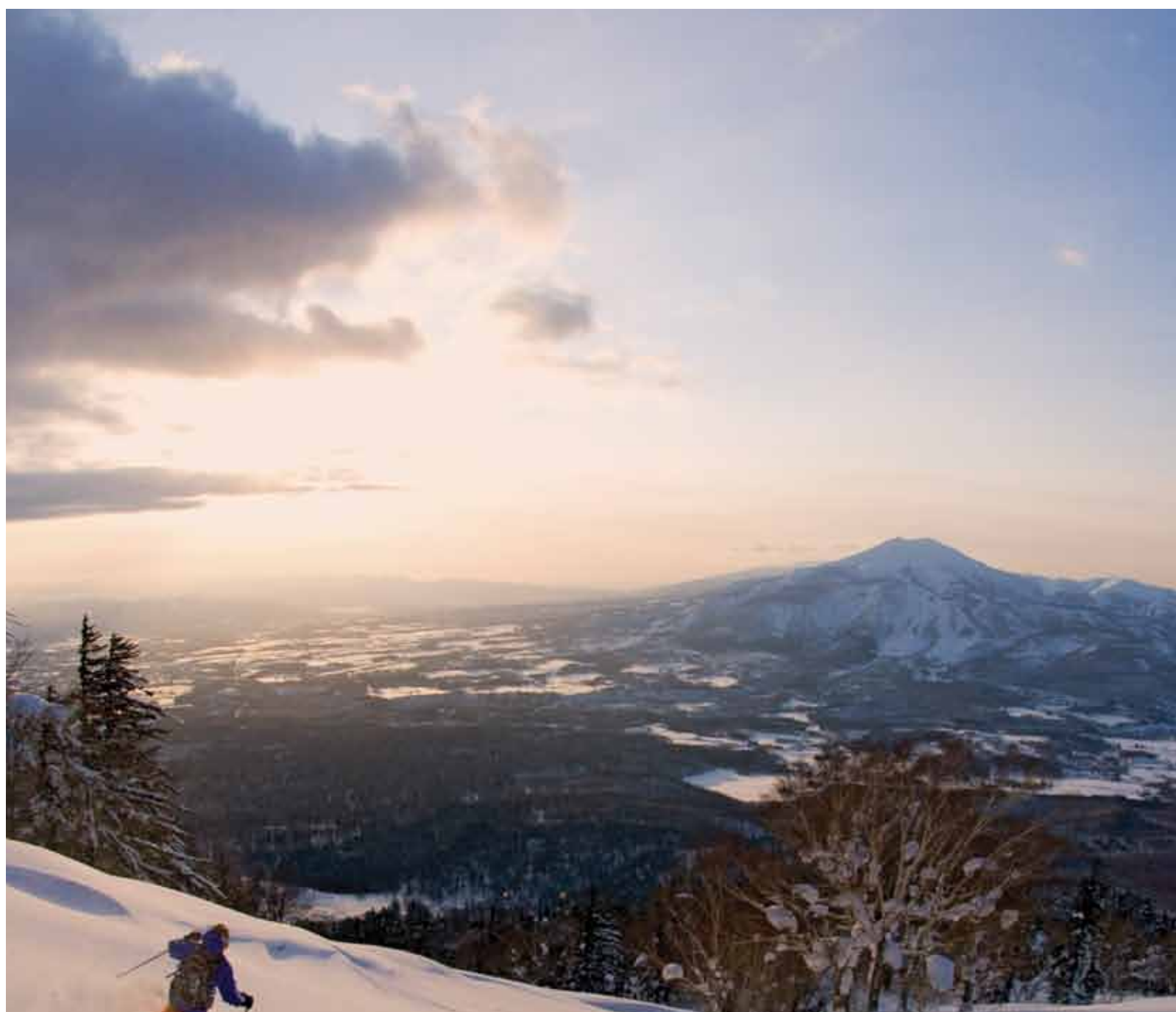
CLIMBING MOUNT FUJI

Japan's most iconic landmark

RESORT GUIDE

Your guide to Niseko – page 42

FREE
NISEKO'S POWDER
LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE
FRESH EVERY
2 WEEKS



NISEKO
real estate

Niseko's No. 1 Real Estate Agency

NRE Exchange Evenings
Every Thursday from 5:30pm in the
Niseko Real Estate Sales Office

info@nisekorealestate.com • +81 (0)136 21 7722 • www.nisekorealestate.com

ski in, ski out luxury at the top of the village



THE ROCKS

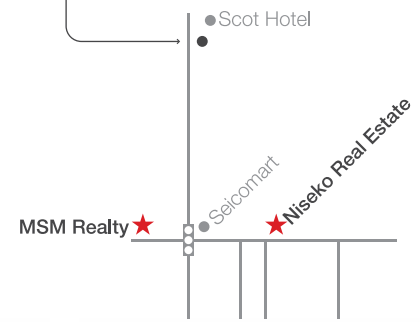
niseko resort

REGISTER AT WWW.THEROCKSNISEKO.COM
0136-22-0221

THE ROCKS EDGE, NOW ON SALE



Show Suite, Open Daily 4pm - 6pm



Exclusive Agents

MEIKLE & ASSOCIATES

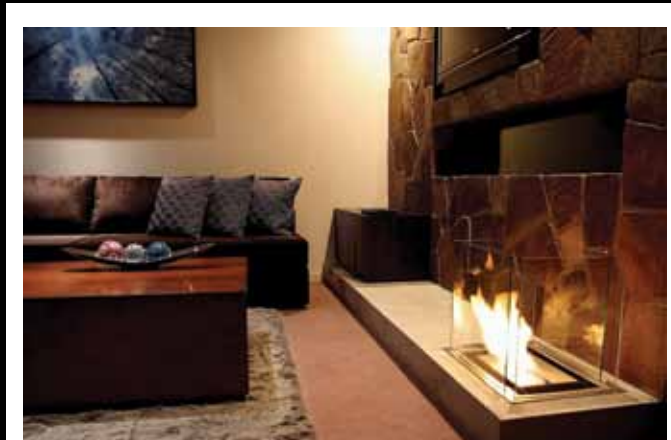
NISEKO
real estate



Indulge



Immerse



Unwind



Rejuvenate

...tomorrow, another perfect powder day.

the vale furano

20 apartments · ski in ski out · 5% returns guaranteed · completion december 2011



Experience Niseko's Finest

NISADE
NISEKO ALPINE DEVELOPMENTS

HOKKAIDO TRACKS
RESORT PROPERTIES

our residences

the freshwater

the
seisu
mon

V
the vale furano

V
the vale niseko

thevalefurano.com · +81 (0)136 21 6960

+81 (0)136 22 0038

www.nisade.com



19

FEATURE // nobuo suzuki



25

RESTAURANT REVIEW // lupicia



57

TRAVEL // climbing mount fuji

07 Editor's Note

09 Village News

Local Voices
Niseko local news

11 Discover

Discover the Niseko area

13 In the loop

Events around Niseko

15 Social

Snap and Flash

17 Irrashaimasse

Yummy's and Tairyo-ya

19 Feature

Nobuo Suzuki

23 Eat and Drink

Eat and drink news
Restaurant review – Lupicia
Taste the Region – Eto Cabbages

29 Powder Poster

31 Eyespy

ST Gallery and Kobo Oriza

33 Snow Caves

Akari

35 On Piste

Powdertools, playlist, 1000 words

37 Real Estate News

41 Backcountry & Health

Backcountry Tips
Exercise other than snowsports

42 Resort Guide

Food, restaurants and bars
Tours and activities
Shopping and retail
Rental and services
Resort maps

55 After the melt

Niseko summer activities

57 Travel

Climbing Mount Fuji

powderlife
NISEKO ニセコ

winter print run 35,000 estimated readership 100,000+
編集長 managing editor Lizzy Hoo リズィー・フー
出版者 publisher Bevan Colless ベバン・コレス,
Kris Lund クリス・ランド
副編集長 associate editor Ross Cole-Hunter ロス・コールハンター
企画運営アシスタント editorial assistant Kisato Kurihara 栗原季里
デザイナー designer Paul Malandain ポール・マランティン,
Shane Agard シェイン・エイガード (conceptual designer)
投稿者 contributors Chris Chan
写真撮影 photography Niseko Photography, Glen Claydon Photography,
Paul Malandain, Ross Cole-Hunter

広告掲載に関するお問い合わせ advertising inquiries
ads@powderlife.com
予約購読/既刊 subscriptions / past issues
info@powderlife.com

Powderlife Niseko Magazine is a Niseko Media Publication
パウダーライフマガジンはニセコメディアが出版しています
170-5 Aza Yamada Kutchan-cho
Abuta-gun, Hokkaido 044-0081
tel 0136 22 2000 fax 0136 22 2011
www.powderlife.com

©2011 Niseko Media KK
Contents of Powderlife are subject to copyright. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission of the publisher is prohibited. The publication of editorial does not necessarily constitute an endorsement of views or opinions expressed. The publisher does not accept responsibility for statements made by advertisers.

Niseko's first English language periodical magazine – published every two weeks in Niseko between December and March, once a year as a globally distributed Niseko promotional issue (Powderlife Global Edition).

ニセコ初の定期刊行雑誌。冬季期間(12月~3月)は2週間に1回発行、冬季期間外はグローバルエディションとして一回発行。
Past issues available at the Powderlife office, Lower Ground Floor Australia House (opposite Seicomart).



cover // tim myers photo // glen claydon

2011 COLLECTION NOW AVAILABLE

NEW PROJECTS COMPLETING DEC 2010



FINE NISEKO RESIDENCES DESIGNED
TO ELEVATE YOUR STATE OF MIND. FOREVER.

WWW.ODIN-PROPERTY.COM

ODIN

MEIKLE & ASSOCIATES
TEL +81 (0)136 55 5338
WWW.MSMREALTY.COM

NISEKO REAL ESTATE
TEL +81 (0)136 21 7722
WWW.NISEKOREALESTATE.COM

TAIGA REAL ESTATE
TEL +81 (0)136 55 8022
WWW.TAIGAPROJECTS.COM

* EDITOR'S NOTE



photography // niseko photography - aaron jamieson

WELCOME to Powderlife's 32nd issue and fifth for the 2010/2011 winter. As I write this, Niseko is experiencing its 20th day of non-stop snowfalls, which are expected to continue. February is one of the best times to come to Niseko because you're guaranteed quality snow and Gate 3 (The Peak gate) will most likely be open, allowing you to explore some of the best terrain Niseko has to offer.

Our mountains are some of the most pristine environments in the world and they provide enjoyment for many locals and tourists, as well as livelihoods and jobs for mountain communities. In this issue we have tried to highlight a few businesses and people and what they do to contribute to sustainability of this small mountain town. See *Powderlife's* feature story on Niseko local Nobuo Suzuki - a man who has devoted his life to the study of the Alaskan wolf (page 19); the 'eco' Powdertools section (page 35); the eco-flavoured 'We Love' (page 23); and our restaurant review of Lupicia (page 25), which like a lot of restaurants in the area, is concerned with using as many local ingredients as possible. *Powderlife's* travel story takes us on the journey to one of Japan's most iconic natural monuments - Mount Fuji.

We hope you enjoy this issue of *Powderlife*. Enjoy the powder!

Lizzy Hoo, Powderlife, Managing Editor, email lizzy@powderlife.com

パウダーライフは、今季で4年目のシーズンを迎え、今号第32号で、シーズン5号目の発行となります。今まさに、この編集後記を書いている中、ニセコは20日連続の降雪を記録しています。このまま雪は降り続け、2月のベストシーズン突入となることは間違いありません。そして、皆さんが期待しているアンヌプリのピークへの登山口3番ゲートも、きっと多くの日数オープンし、ニセコの自然を思いっきり楽しめることでしょう。

ニセコには世界でも手つかずの山々が残り、地元の人々や観光客たちを魅了してやみません。今号ではニセコのサステナビリティ(持続可能性・人間活動、特に文明の利器を用いた活動が、将来にわたって持続できるかどうかを表す概念)にかかわる事業や人々に焦点をあてています。特集では、本誌19ページ、彼の生涯をアラスカオオカミの研究に捧げた鈴木延夫さんのインタビュー記事をご覧ください。そのほか、エコ特集(Powdertools 35ページ、We Love23ページ)、地産地消を提案するレストランルビシアの紹介記事(25ページ)などをお楽しみください。また、Travelコーナーでは、日本を象徴する富士山についての記事を掲載しています。

今号も皆様がパウダーライフを楽しまれることを願っています。皆さんが思い思いにパウダースノーを楽しめますように!

リズィー・フー、パウダーライフ、編集長, lizzy@powderlife.com

HEATED SIDEWALKS AND ROADWAY, BURIED LINES, FESTIVAL-READY, CUSTOM LIGHTING, FURNITURE & PAVING, LANDSCAPING, LOW CARBON



Final construction may vary slightly from image

Copyright 2010, designed by Riccardo Tossani Architecture



MAINSTREET REMODEL STARTING 2011
THE NEW HIRAFU MAIN STREET coming soon

* VILLAGE NEWS



YUKITOPIA

KUTCHAN'S Yukitopia (yuki is Japanese for snow) is a community-orientated festival with great events.

YUKITOPIA is a full weekend of activities from February 18-19 in Kutchan's central park (S3E4). For all the Hirafuites that are interested in attending the event, a free shuttle-bus is operating between the Welcome Center in Hirafu (Saturday: 9:50, 11:05, 13:20, 14:35,

15:50, 16:55 Sunday: 9:00, 10:17, 11:34, 13:52, 14:54) and returning from the Yukitopia site (Saturday: 11:48, 14:03, 15:18, 16:22, 17:27 Sunday: 11:02, 13:20, 14:22, 15:40). If you wish to come later, Kutchan Night Bus will be operating.

There are events ranging from the tame *nabe* (hotpot) making competition (Saturday 11:30) and gumboot kicking competition (Saturday 11:00), through to snowball fights (Saturday 12:00) and a crazy competition to glide across a pool of icy water to share a piece of the prize money (Sunday 13:00).



POWDER YOGA

FOR those who wish to stretch out and improve their flexibility, yoga is now available at J-Sekka, Kushi room. Powder Yoga, run by Kanami, is on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings at 9:30 am (please meet in the reception at 9:15 am). There is also a Friday practice group for those more experienced. First-timers are encouraged to participate in the Tuesday and Wednesday classes. The strength, flexibility and concentration will not only help your skiing and snowboarding but also your whole mental well being. Cost: ¥500 (mats available for rent).

NISEKO IN THE PRESS

IT'S always interesting to see what the press says about this little mountain town in Japan. Recently, two articles in the world's media rated Niseko quite highly: Forbes Traveller lists Niseko as the second snowiest resort in the world, behind Mount Baker in Washington and in front of Snowbird in Utah. What's really exciting is that the New York Times has listed Niseko as number 12 of its '41 places to visit in 2011'. With news like this, visitation rates are expected to intensify.



LOCAL VOICES

Name Jon Barlow **Age** 29 **Hometown** Wellington, New Zealand **Company** Niseko Design **Time in Niseko** Three years **Ski or board and for how long?** Snowboard, 6 years **Favourite restaurant?** Karabina, Annupuri **Favourite bar?** Torimatsu, Kutchan **Favourite onsen?** Goshiki **Favourite ski run?** Annupuri Back Bowl **Local secret?** Hangetsu-ko in Summer **Place to ski before you die?** Alaska.

名前 ジョーン バロー 年齢 29 歳 出身地 ウィリン トン、ニュージーランド 職場 ニセコデザイン ニセ コ年数 3年 スキー、スノーボード 層 スノーボード 6年 お気に入りのレストラン 唐火七、アンヌプリ お気に入りのバー 鳥松、倶知安 お気に入りの温泉 五色温泉 好きなゲレンデコース アンヌプリ ニセコの秘密 夏の半月 湖 死ぬ前にいきたい スキー場 アラスカ



Name Saori Kurishima **Age** 25

Hometown Osaka **Company** Hanazono Park **Time in Niseko** 3 seasons **Ski or board and for how long?** Snowboard, 4 years **Favourite restaurant?** Wai Wai in Kutchan **Favourite bar?** Manana in Kutchan **Favourite onsen?** Yugokoro Tei **Favourite ski run?** Hanazono Park **Local secret?** There is a cute girl at Manana **Place to ski before you die?** Somewhere with a giant kicker

名前 クリシマ サオリ 年齢 25歳 出身地 大阪府 職場 花園パーク ニセコ年数 3シーズン スキー、スノーボード 層 スノーボード 4年 お気に入りの レストラン わいわい(倶知安) お気に入りのバー Manana(倶知安) お気に入りの温泉 湯心亭 好きなゲレンデコース 花園パーク ニセコの秘密 Mananaにかわいい女の子がいる 人生の格言 仕方ない、しょうがないは言わない 死ぬ前にいきたい スキー場 大きいキッカーのあるスキー場

The Ultimate World-Class Year-Round Destination



Shiki Niseko offers 69 limited units with contemporary design complete with premium furnishing and fittings. Adding to this is the breathtaking views of Mount Yotei, the Hirafu ski slopes and nearby creek, Shiki Niseko boasts of a strategic location amidst the neighbourhood of restaurants, eateries, bars and retails outlets, all herald a lifestyle well beyond the ordinary...

- Room service • Restaurants and Bars
- Relaxation Spa • Gymnasium • Retail Outlets

To find out more

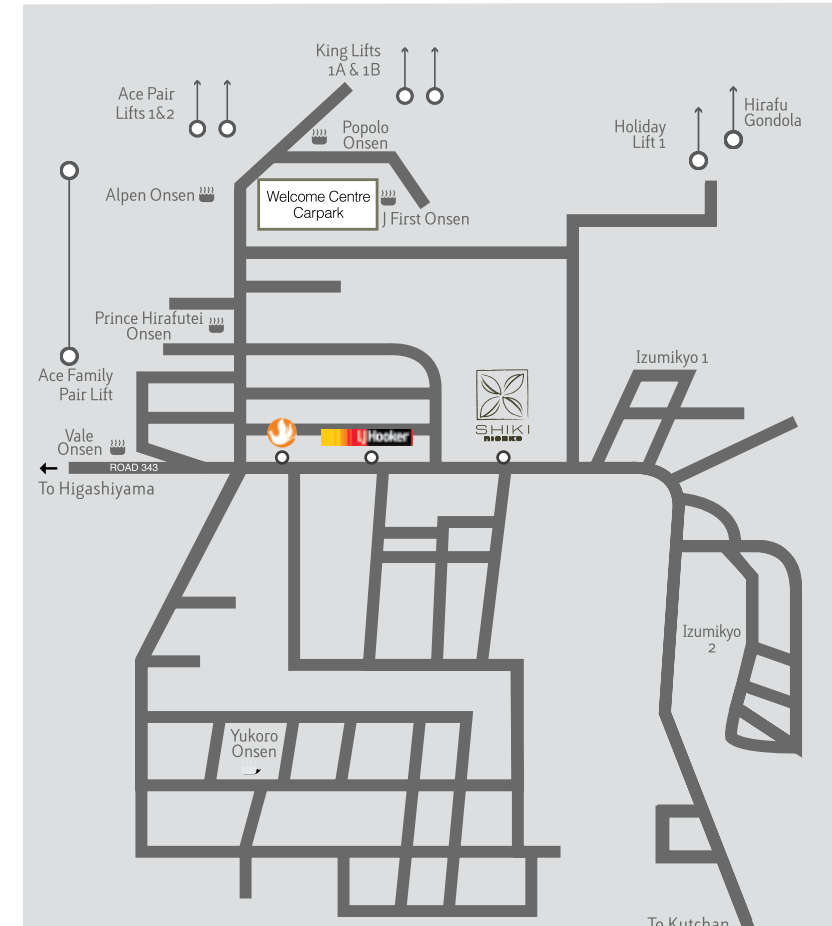
Please visit one of our Central Village sales offices or our website to reserve your luxury condominium today!

Mobile +81(0)90 9434 2580
 Telephone +81(0)13 655 8880
 Email discovery@shikiniseko.com
 Online www.LJHookerNiseko.com

Sales Agent:



Developer:



* DISCOVER

EXPLORE SAPPORO

CAPITAL of Hokkaido, and Japan's fifth largest city, Sapporo is a fun place to visit and spend a day or two, either en-route to or from Niseko, or just for a getaway. With the combination of endless shopping options, and even more bars, there is enough in Sapporo to entertain most.

The city is quite modern and even European in appearance, with its wide, tree-lined main boulevards set out in logical grids. Even some of the older buildings have architecture that is strikingly reminiscent of Europe.



01 SHOP at one of the hundreds of shops and dozens of giant department stores in the centre of town.

02 GO and check out the amazing Snow Festival. Don't forget to check out the ice sculptures in Susukino, some have real seafood inside!

03 EAT Sapporo's most famous food, Miso Ramen. Look for the Ramen Alley in Susukino, or the Ramen Village top-floor of Sapporo Station.

04 DRINK the internationally exported Sapporo Beer, one of the top beers in Japan. Indulge in Sapporo's entertainment district, Susukino.



ICE AND SNOW FESTIVALS

MULTI-STORY sculptures created from thousands of cubic metres of snow and an equally impressive number of man-hours.

THERE are several large annual snow festivals in Hokkaido in early February, thanks to the consistent sub-zero temperatures and high annual snowfalls. The biggest of which is undoubtedly Sapporo's Snow Festival, with dozens of

sculptures spread across several city blocks.

But biggest doesn't have to equal best. Asahikawa has a similar snow/ice festival, though somewhat smaller and minus the crowds. Sounkyo near Asahidake has a giant ice festival with huge illuminated caves, spires and other structures made from ice. Lake Shikotsu has something similar, though on a slightly smaller scale. Otaru's Snow Light Path, with thousands of candles illuminating ice lanterns, as well as lots of small cute sculptures is a favourite and makes for a very nice (slightly early) Valentine's Day excursion.

MANDAI



IF you've ever travelled to Sapporo via Nakayama-toge, you'll no doubt have come across an enormous black building called 万代 (Mandai), with giant yesterday movie poster billboards. For those who have never ventured inside, this veritable treasure trove of secondhand memorabilia, clothing, electronics, games, books and sporting goods, you're missing out. It can be quite daunting and claustrophobic walking through the narrow, crowded aisles, but if you look, you're bound to find something you didn't realise you needed. Not the cheapest secondhand store around, but it's certainly the most eclectic.

JAPANESE SNACK - TAKOYAKI

COVERED in Japanese mayonnaise, bonito flakes, green onion and okonomiyaki sauce, Takoyaki is a great Japanese snack. First popularised in Osaka, these delicious fried (*yaki*) balls of octopus (*tako*) are now found everywhere in Japan. Just outside of blo*blo at the top of Hirafu-zaka (main street in Hirafu), you'll be able to sample one of Japan's favourite bite-sized snacks. Be careful not to bite into it too soon – underneath the crunchy outside, the gooey batter and octopus pieces are steaming hot.



No one knows Niseko like we do.

Operating throughout Niseko's four wonderful seasons, our friendly, bilingual staff ensure the best experience for visitors to Niseko.

With extensive local knowledge and partnerships and a diverse range of accommodation, we can tailor a 'Niseko Discovery' to suit all budgets.

Your Journey Begins Here...



Niseko
Discovery Holidays

www.nisekodiscoveryholidays.com

Japan: +81 (0)136 23 4843 | Australia: +61 (0)2 8005 4843 | Hong Kong: +852 8125 4843

PROSKI
SKI AND SNOWBOARD HIRE

We Pick you up
from your accommodation,
Fit your gear and
Drop you back!



First Class
WINTERSTEIGER
Ski & Board Tuning

OPEN
8AM TO 9PM

FREE PICK UP AND DROP OFF
無料送迎

レンタル用品を御利用のお客様は御宿泊先からの無料送迎サービスを行っております。

PROSKI SKI / SNOWBOARD / HIRE

PH: 0136 224199 MOBILE: 080 3233 3443

PROSKI NISEKO "At the traffic lights"



* IN THE LOOP

<h1>FEB</h1>	
<h1>2011</h1>	
<p>05 Flax Showcase pt. 1 DJナイト</p> <p>DJ Takeshi, Daisuke Act 2, Momo, Fabio and Yukio from Sapporo's best nightclub, Precious Hall, are coming. ¥1,000 entry (inc. one drink)</p> <p>DJが札幌からやってきます。プレシアスホールがワイルドビルズで、ダンスミュージックをお送りします。入館料1000円(ワンドリンク)</p> <p>Start // 10:00 pm Place // Wild Bill's</p>	<p>06 Waitangi Day ワイタンギデイ</p> <p>Come celebrate Waitangi Day at The Brick, and get your fix of Kiwi-ana with Kiwi tunes, food and drinks.</p> <p>ブリックで、ニュージーランドの祝日を一緒に祝いましょう。ニュージースタイルをあなたにも〜!</p> <p>Start // 9:30 pm – very, very late Place // The Brick</p>
<p>07 Bob Marley Day ポップマーリー デイ</p> <p>It may be a day late (due to a clash with Waitangi day) but come celebrate Bob Marley's Birthday at Yeti Bar, with cheap drinks and Bob Marley tunes. ポプマーリーの誕生日のお祝いにポプマーリーのミュージックとお得なドリンクをお楽しみください。</p> <p>Start // 7:30 pm Place // Yeti Bar Contact // 080 4040 4470</p>	<p>09 Meat Day 肉の日</p> <p>Black-hair Wagyu and the Shiraori Wagyu steak of Hokkaido for half the price (limited steaks per person). Enjoy delicious Hokkaido wagyu. 北海道の黒毛和牛、白老牛ステーキが全品半額です。無くなり次第終了とさせていただきます。この機会に是非白老牛の美味しさを味わってください。</p> <p>Start // 6:00 pm Place // Yawaraya Contact // 0136 55 8228</p>
<p>11 MeMe8 Live MeMe8 ライヴ</p> <p>Sapporo jazz soul and funk fusion 8 piece are coming to Tamashii for its album launch, Ascension is Everywhere. 札幌からジャズファンクのバンドが、新たなアルバムを演奏します。クールなサウンドをお楽しみください。</p> <p>Start // 6:00 pm Place // Tamashii Bar</p>	<p>10 Kutchan Art Exhibition くつちゃんART展2011</p> <p>Colourful exhibition featuring many artists gathering in this small museum. Exhibition period February 9th – March 27th. Admission fee: ¥500. 小さな美術館で、多くの作家が集う華やかな展覧会。展示期間2月9日から3月27日。入館料500円。</p> <p>Start // 9:00 am to 5 pm // Feb 9th – Mar 27th Place // Shu Ogawara Museum of Art Contact // 0136 21 4141</p>
<p>12 Early Gondola アーリーゴンドラ</p> <p>If you are a fan of fresh tracks, don't miss the chance to ride the early Niseko Village Gondola. Also 5th, 6th and 13th of February. ¥1,000 Adult // ¥500 Children. 札幌からジャズファンクのバンドが、新たなアルバムを演奏します。クールなサウンドをお楽しみください。</p> <p>Start // 7:30 am – 8:30 am Place // Niseko Village Gondola Contact // 0136 44 2211</p>	<p>13 Kenji Matsumoto Quartet 松本健司カルテット</p> <p>Kenji Matsumoto is performing swinging Jazz numbers with his robust tenor sax sound, accompanied by Kanako Hayashi(Piano). 札幌のテナーサクソ奏者、松本健司がピアノの林加奈子とともに豪快なサウンドでジャズスタンダードを奏でます。</p> <p>Start // 9:00 pm Place // Half Note Contact // 0136 23 2727</p>
<p>14 Cocoroya Glass Grab おちよこつかみ取り</p> <p>If you spend more than ¥3,000 at Cocoroya, you are given the chance to grab as many saké glasses as you can pick up with one hand. こころやでは、3000円以上お買い上げの方全員に1050円にておちよこつかみ取りを権利を差し上げております。(シーズン中開催します。)</p> <p>Start // 11:00am - 7:30PM Place // Cocoroya Contact // 0136 23 0008</p>	<p>16 Free Karaoke Night 無料カラオケナイト</p> <p>Every Wednesday night at Après Bar there is free karaoke and ¥400 drinks to help break the ice. 毎週水曜日にアプレーバーで無料カラオケと400円で飲み物をご提供。</p> <p>Start // 7:30 pm Place // Après Bar Contact // 080 6081 4242</p>
<p>18 Japanese Cultural Tour 日本文化体験ツアー</p> <p>Take a tour of Japanese culture and experience Kutchan's cultural heritage on a four-and-a-half-hour bus tour that will take you to various cultural attractions in Kutchan and give you an opportunity to participate in some traditional activities. For more information, see p. 53</p> <p>Start // 3:00 pm Place // Meet at Seicomart Carpark Contact // 0136 23 0222</p>	<p>19/20 Yukitopia 雪トピア</p> <p>Kutchan's biggest winter event. Spread over two days, with several events, including a competition to ski across a pool of water. See p. 9 for more information. 毎年恒例の倶知安雪トピア。たくさんイベントあり。9ページを参照ください。</p> <p>Start // Sat –10:00 am / Sun –9:30 am Place // Kutchan Central Park (S3E4) Contact // 0136 56 8009</p>
<p>SAPPORO SNOW FESTIVAL Details: Giant multi-story snow sculptures and intricate ice carvings. Biggest of the annual snow festivals. When: February 7 – 13</p> <p>OTARU SNOW LIGHT PATH Details: Hundreds of glistening snow and ice sculptures. Very romantic. When: February 4 – 13</p> <p>ASAHIKAWA SNOW FESTIVAL Details: Similar to Sapporo's, but smaller. When: February 8 – 13</p>	<p>TOYAKO WINTER FESTIVAL Details: Fireworks from 8:30 pm. When: February 3 – 10</p> <p>SOUNKYO ICE FESTIVAL Details: Huge ice caves, spires and buildings, all beautifully illuminated. When: January 22 – March 27</p> <p>SHIKOTSUKO ICE FESTIVAL Details: A village of illuminated frozen structures on the shore of Lake Shikotsu. When: January 28 – February 13</p>



nw
JAPAN'S No.1
INTERNATIONAL
SNOW SPORTS SCHOOL
niss@harmonyresorts.com
+81 (0) 136 21 66 88

HANAZONO POWDER GUIDES
NISEKO'S FINEST
BACKCOUNTRY
GUIDING SERVICES
niss@harmonyresorts.com
+81 (0) 136 21 66 88

demo
NISEKO'S LARGEST
- 3 LOCATIONS
THE VALE, HIRAFU-ZAKA & HANAZONO
demo@harmonyresorts.com
+81 (0) 136 21 66 77

fusion
HANAZONO
GEAR FOR THE ELEMENTS
- 2 LOCATIONS
HIRAFU-ZAKA AND HANAZONO
demo@harmonyresorts.com
+81 (0) 136 21 66 33

npc
FOR THE BEST NISEKO
ACCOMMODATION PACKAGES
info@niseko-hirafu.com
+81 (0) 136 21 2500

www.hanazononiseko.com

LET US
INSPIRE
YOU



HANAZONO
NISEKO JAPAN

* SNAP



Name // Deguchi Miyuki

WHAT are you wearing today? Miyuki just arrived in Niseko from Ishikawa for a weekend of snowboarding in her new Yonex outerwear. First stop, Strawberry Fields.



Name // Kamigaki Yoshinobu

WHAT are you wearing today? Yoshinobu from Sapporo has been riding the park at Hanazono in this bright pink 686 jacket and faux denim 686 pants.



Name // Ishioka Reiko

WHAT are you wearing today? Reiko from Aomori just came back from riding the peak and is wearing a vibrant jacket from Japanese label, AA and Special Blend pants.

Question // What do you love about Niseko?



KATE Smith and her gorgeous son Kaito from Brisbane, Australia loves all her great friends in Niseko.



MONIQUE and Nathan Boffa from Sydney, Australia love the powder snow and lack of lift queues in Niseko.



LARA and Steve Batton from Sydney, Australia love Niseko's onsens and the fresh snow that falls daily.



SCOTT Duncan from Perth, Australia loves Niseko's dry powder snow and great food, especially okonomiyaki.

INSKI STACK



WIN
ENTER TO WIN A
HELMET FROM
INSKI

ENTER TO WIN A HELMET FROM INSKI.

SUBMIT your gnarly crash story and the reason why you wear a helmet and/or need a new helmet to ross@powderlife.com. Entries are required to be 100 words or less and must be accompanied with valid contact information. We will be picking a winner every two weeks.


* FLASH



JOJO'S CAFE

OAKLEY PARTY //

A huge party that filled both floors of the NAC building, attended by members of Oakley's professional team. There was a rock climbing and sprint cycling competition that got the crowds up and cheering.

HANAZONO
NISEKO JAPAN

FOR your chance to win a Hanazono Powder Guides First Tracks Tours for two, valued at ¥32,000, answer the following:

"What's your favourite run at Hanazono and why?"

Send your entry to lizzy@powderlife.com

Get creative!

WIN
ENTER TO WIN A
GUIDED TOUR



WILD BILL'S

THREE SKINS LIVE //

Back again after rocking crowds at the Wild Bill's opening party, Three Skins didn't disappoint, playing a mixture of rock classics and some of their own originals songs until late. Then the DJ took over and the packed dance area was heaving.



*** IRRASHAIMASSE // "welcome!" – great local businesses**



YUMMY'S, Hirafu, Tomohisa Fujita

TOMOHISA 'Tomo' Fujita has always been crazy about snowboarding and did alternate seasons in Hakuba and New Zealand during his 20s. He first visited Niseko 15 years ago and fell in love with the area. Realising the need to get a secure job so he could continue to enjoy Niseko, Tomo started Yummy's in Kutchan (where Boroya is now). Snowboarding during the day and making pizza at night was perfect for Tomo. Now, Yummy's is in Hirafu's lower village – he relocated 6 years ago. In the future, this avid snowboarder wants to do what he does now – surfing, skating, snowboarding and making pizza at night, as well as taking photos and creating art, which you can view at his restaurant.

ヤミーズピザ ヒラフ 藤田智久さん

知る人ぞ知る、アーティストのヤミーズともさんこと藤田智久さんは、いつでもスノーボードに夢中だ。20代前半を白馬で、さらにニュージーランドでのシーズンを何度も過ごし、ニセコにたどり着いたのが15年前、そしてここニセコの雪に恋に落ちたのだった。ニセコでスノーボードを楽しみ続けるために安定した仕事を得る必要性を感じ、自らお店を持つことで時間コントロールできる利点から、俱知安に初めてのYummy'sを開店された(現在、Boroyaのある場所にて)。日中のスノーボード、夜のピザ職人と、このスタイルが藤田さんにとっては最高で完璧だという。6年前に、現地ヒラフのお店に移動したが、そのスタイルは今でも変わらない。今が全てです。と言い切った藤田さんの情熱はスノーボード以外にもサーフィン、スケート、写真、アート、そして今夢中になっている二重振り子にも才能を発揮されている。そんな彼の芸術品とこだわりのフードメニューをお店で見かけることができる。

TAIRYO-YA, Hirafu, Kohji Ito

BEFORE coming to Niseko, Kohji Ito was a project marketing manager for 17 years at nearby Rusutsu Resort. After a brief stint in Tokyo, Kohji decided it was time to return to Hokkaido's nature and great food. Last year he opened yakiniku barbecue restaurant Kurobeko in Kutchan before starting seafood barbecue Tairyo-ya in Hirafu this winter. Decorated in *tairyo-bata* (fishermen flags) and with handwritten menus, Tairyo-ya is an authentic Japanese barbecue experience. Kohji wanted to replicate the rustic style of the Hokkaido fishermen he receives local seafood from everyday. In the future, he wants to continue providing great seafood barbecue to Niseko's visitors.

浜焼き大漁やヒラフ 伊藤幸治さん

生まれ故郷である蘭越町の程近くここニセコに3年前、伊藤幸治さんは戻ってきた。ルスツリゾートの営業企画にて17年間活躍された後、東京にて数年間都会での生活を経験した結果、地元北海道の大自然、食べ物のすばらしさを再確認したからだ。昨年春より、俱知安町に炭火焼肉くろべこをオープン、さらに12月にここヒラフにて、浜焼き大漁やを晴れてオープンした。お店の中には、ハッピーや大漁旗、墨で手書きされたメニューで飾り付けられ、お祭りに来たような賑やかさだ。そんな中で出されるシーフードは、地元の港でその日に上げられた新鮮な物、伊藤さんが毎日旬なものを地元漁師から直接買い付けている。地元ニセコを知る伊藤さんだからこそ手に入れられる食材はかりだ。今では忘れかけられている日本の本質、庶民の味や成りを海外から来た人々に面白さとして楽しんでほしい。もちろん、日本人にとっても懐かしさを感じずにはいられないはずだ。

Ski in, ski out dining and bar.
Live apres music and happy hour drinks, twice a week!
ヴェイルバーアンドグリル
WBC
VALE BAR AND GRILL
NISEKO JAPAN
Food served all day from 7am.
Ph +81 (0)136 21 5833
nisekoalpineaccommodation.com

RENTALS DELIVERY & PICKUP
STANDARD SKI SET ¥3,900~ TEL 0136-23-0343
7 days 8:00 ~ 21:00
Various FAT skis and BURTON snowboards are available.
www.niseko343.com
HIRAFU-ZAKA ST. MICHIZI-ZAKA ST. KOMANETSUZAKA ST. SAKURA-ZAKA ST.
Mountain Shop
Niseko 343
SINCE 1993

5% Guaranteed Returns
Vendor Finance
Ski In-Ski Out
Hokkaido Tracks Resort Properties
Contact: 0136 21 6960 | htresortproperties.com
Property Inspections
7 days a week
featured property the glasshouse

STAY DINE EXPERIENCE
a taste of hokkaido
J-SEKKA.COM

* FEATURE // nobuo suzuki

PROFESSORS of science are typically viewed as a little eccentric. Nobuo Suzuki is no exception. He smiles from ear to ear whilst giggling during our interview. He is open and honest with his answers and is ardent about the debatable subjects of which he speaks. The way his face lights up when he talks about his five children, his family's trips to the Alaskan wilderness and the elegance of a wolf are sure signs of a man who has found his calling: the study of animals and in particular the Alaskan wolf.



Photo // robert dewar

Taking his wife and five children into the Alaskan wilderness is one of Suzuki-san's fondest memories. "When I brought the whole family to Alaska it was 1987. We spent three months there - my youngest child was 6 and my oldest was 18. We could enjoy so much in Alaska; no people, just a wolf den 100 metres from my family's base camp. There were many bears, caribou and moose around our camp as well."

Living 100 metres from a wolf den seemingly didn't faze his young children as they had been raised alongside animals in their family house in Sapporo. "In my house, there were a lot of different animals from insects to monkeys. Each child of mine had a favourite kind of animal. We had many domestic birds - ducks, geese, chicks - some animals even made nests in my lounge chairs. But each animal was free because I wanted to observe their behaviours."

This passion and devotion to the study of animals is something

科学の教授というと、通常は少しエキセントリックな人物を思い浮かべられるだろう。鈴木延夫氏もまた例外ではない。それは、インタビュー中の豪快に笑う様子からもうかがえる。今回のインタビューで鈴木氏は率直で正直に質問に答えてくださり、ときに論議を交えながらも熱心に自身の事を語られた。氏の5人の子どもたち、アラスカへの家族旅行について話されるときには顔が輝き、氏の動物行動学、特にアラスカオオカミへの強い研究意欲が感じられた。

5人の子どもたちと奥さまと一緒にアラスカの大自然を体験されたことは、鈴木氏の忘れがたき大切な思い出だという。「1987年に家族をアラスカに連れて行ったとき、一番下の子どもは6歳、一番上は18歳でした。3ヶ月をアラスカで過ごしました。もう本当に楽しかったですね。私たちのベースキャンプ野周囲には、100メートルのところにあるオオカミのねぐらだけだった。人間は誰もいませんでした。それに多くの熊、トナカイ、ヘラジカなんかもベースキャンプの周りで見ることができましたね。オオカミのねぐらから100メートルしか離れていないところでキャンプをするということに対して、札幌で動物に囲まれて育ったせいもあり子どもたちは全く動じなかったという。「家の周りには昆虫から猿まで多くの動物が生息していましたからね。子どもたち一人ずつがお気に入りの動物を見つけていました。それにアヒル、鴨、鶏も飼っていました。私のバルコニー用の椅子に巣を作った動物もいましたね。生態観察をしたかったので、動物を自由に生息させていました。」

今、鈴木氏の熱意は若い人へと向かっている。甘くて美味しいトマトを栽培することでも、大企業を経営することでも何でもいから若い彼らに何かを見いだして欲しいと氏は切望される。この思いこそが、去年、氏がニセコに帰り住んだきっかけである。そしてニセコ町長(鈴木氏の父はニセコ町長を以前務められた)にインターナショナルスクール(小学部)、国際観光専門学校(専門学校)の設立を要請された。「良い先生と支援者を集めたいですね」。このプロジェクトにおける氏の役割は学校設立とそれに伴う宣伝である。

何年も大学教授を務めた鈴木氏は教育の重要性について断固主張する。学校設立のプロジェクトの重要性を問うと、氏はこのように答えられた。「若い日本人を育成することによって、彼らはこのリゾート地で質の高いビジネスを貢献できます。ただのサラリーマンになるのではなくビジネスマンになって欲しいですね」。ニセコは世界から注目され続け、この地に外国からの関心は集まる一方である。若い日本人がその状況を把握し、その中で活躍できる

that Suzuki-san wants every young Japanese person to uncover, whether it be growing the juiciest and most flavoursome tomatoes or running a big company. This idea of inspiring young people to find their purpose encouraged him to return to Niseko last year to give a proposal to the Mayor of Niseko, a position that his father once held. This proposal consists of an International Elementary School and an International Hotel and Resort Business College in the Niseko area. His role in both projects is in promoting and setting up the schools. "I will try to gather good teachers and good supporters."

As a university professor of many years, Suzuki-san is adamant about education. When asked why these proposals are important to him, he answers, "I want to train young Japanese people so they can contribute to the higher level of business in our resort country. I want them to be not just salarymen, but



Photo // ross cole-hunter

ようになればと鈴木氏は願っておられる。ここ数年で日本は世界経済の第一線から退いてしまったように見える。日本が占める世界のGDP(国内総生産)率も下がり、我が国は工業国として、中国、韓国、台湾との競争の激化に対応する必要性が生じている。これに加えて教育面での低下も見られる。英語力はアジアの中で最も低いとされている。また中国、韓国人の学生に比べると、留学を希望する学生が少ないそうだ。「ハーバード大学では現在では、ほとんど日本人学生はいないそうです。30年前には多くの日本人留学生がハーバードだけではなくロンドンのオックスフォード、ケンブリッジ大学で勉強をしていました」と、鈴木氏は日本の学力低下について遠回しに言及された。

個々によって成功に対する重要性は違う。野心を抱き、世の中を知ろうとする姿勢こそが国民が持つべき態度であると鈴木氏は言われる。世界から注目される今、ニセコは日本の若い人たちが多文化コミュニティーを体験するには最適な場所である。日本語、英語、中国語、ロシア語などさまざまな言語が学習できる学校施設を持つ事は、日本の若年層がより高い目標を持つように奮い立たすことにつながる。高い目標を持つ事、これこそが氏が若いころもして、北海道大学での科学の教授を退任した後もずっと続けてこられた事

である。「若いころはいつも何事においても一生懸命

words by // lizzy hoo



businessmen." Niseko continues to receive a lot of world attention and as foreign interest will continue to be vested in the area, Suzuki-san wants to make sure that young Japanese people can be a part of this.

In recent years, Japan has seemingly slipped off the radar in the world's economic scene. As an industrialised nation, Japan needs to respond to increasing competition from China, South Korea and Taiwan. Along with this, the academic standard's of Japan's young people has slowed: English proficiency has lowered; and not as many students from Japan want to study abroad when compared to Chinese and South Korean students. Suzuki-san alludes to this occurrence, "There are almost no Japanese students at Harvard University. 30 years ago there were many Japanese students at not only Harvard, but in

でした。アラスカオオカミ、極東・ロシアでの乳類研究(ラッコと鯨)など、厳しい研究にも挑戦しました。これらの研究は大変でしたが、やりがいがありました」と氏は熱心に語られた。現在の鈴木氏の生活は大学教授時代に比べるとより穏やかであると言える。自らが訓練した素晴らしい北海道犬と共にニセコに住み、いわゆる自分なりの北海道生活を楽しまれている。氏がニセコに居る期間は5年と短く、今抱えているプロジェクトが終り次第、最愛のオオカミたちがいるアラスカの家へと戻る予定だそうだ。アラスカへ帰る前までは、日本の若年層を奮い立たせるための教育プロジェクトを実現するにあたっての困難が待ち受けていることであろう。「若い人たちに一生懸命頑張らせて欲しいですね。日本では多くの若い人たちが仕事探しに苦労しています。世界中の大学卒業生のために良い仕事を見つけないです」と鈴木氏は話される。「若い日本人の考え、体、気持ちを取り戻したいです。それに知識と言語能力もそうです。これは私の人生における夢です」と、最後に氏は教育よりも大切な事柄に触れられた。

London, Oxford and Cambridge." Whilst measuring success high aspirations and a craving to see the world is what Suzuki-san believes is good for a nation's morale. With increasing global attention, Niseko provides the perfect place for young Japanese to come and experience a multi-cultural community. Having education facilities in Niseko that teach in various languages will inspire young Japanese people to aim high. Something Suzuki-san did when he was young and still does after retiring as a Professor of Science at Hokkaido University. "When I was young I did my best everyday and did challenges so great, such as researching Alaskan wolves and the Far-East Russian mammals (sea otters and whales). This was such hard work, but it was so rewarding." Today, Suzuki-san's life seems

less chaotic. He lives in Niseko Town with his beautiful dog - a native Hokkaido dog that's been domestically trained by Suzuki-san; it's what he describes as "his Niseko life". This life in Niseko is limited to the next five years then, after his work is done here, he will return to the home of his beloved wolves - Alaska. Before this, Suzuki-san has a hard road ahead to fulfill his commitment to educating and inspiring young Japanese people. "I want them to do their best. Now there are a lot of young Japanese that can't find good jobs. I want to find good jobs for graduate students throughout the world." And to do this, Suzuki-san touches on something much more deeper than an education. "I want to repair the mind, body and heart of young Japanese, as well as their knowledge and language. This is my life's dream."

SEKKASTYLE shop&gallery

ground floor @ J-SEKKA
1pm-7pm

art
gifts
furniture
antiques
photography
bespoke property

sekkastyle.com



NIGHT LIGHTS



PHOTO ESSAY



nisekophotography

Looking for a budget hotel in Sapporo?

Single 3,500 yen
Double 4,200 yen
Twin 6,000 yen
+ including light breakfast

1 min. walk from Nakajima Park sbwy Station
3 min. walk to Susukino Town!

HOTEL SHOW SAPPORO
+81-(0)11-511-2221 (sending mail preferable)
info@sho-susukino.com
www.sho-susukino.com/eng

JAC

- Chartered Accountant
- 'MYOB' Consultant (10 years)
- Customizable & Easy to Use
- 90 Day "Test Drive"
- Niseko Based

Understand your business; Take Control of your accounts; Get Up-to-Date reports at anytime and Peace of Mind with On-Site Assistance, Training & Trouble-shooting.

Bringing 30 years of accounting experience to your Niseko investment, J Amos Consultancy ensures a powerful, easy to use, customizable and affordable suite of Accounting services, backed up by the internationally acclaimed 'MYOB' accounting software package.

www.jonathanamos.com · 090 2650 4909

holidayniseko.com
Affordable Accommodation & Ski Packages

photo: Glen Claydon

INSKI
SKIS, BOARDS & SNOW WEAR

MasterFit University
Certified Master Bootfitters
Boot fit and comfort GUARANTEE on every pair of ski and snowboard boots that we sell.

First Class WINTERSTEIGER
Ski & Board Tuning

GREAT SELECTION, GREAT SERVICE, RENT OR BUY
We have powder skis and boards, snow wear and accessories. We can pick you up from your accommodation, fit your gear and drop you back or deliver your gear to you.

INSKI
OPEN 8AM to 9PM

AT MOUNTAIN SIDE PALACE, CENTRAL NISEKO HIRAFU. Phone: 0136-55 8558

Java Massage

Sports Remedial Relaxation

30 mins 4500Y
60 mins 8000Y

Bookings Phone: 0136 23 0788
Gnd Floor Java House, Sakura-Zaki St, Hirafu
We accept CASH only. Bookings essential. From 12pm to 8pm daily.

Java Bar

Hirafu's Coolest Lounge Bar

Open from 7am til 9pm
FREE Internet Hotspot

Live Music & DJs

Best Espresso Coffee in Niseko!

Sakura-Zaki St. Mid Hirafu Village, Shuttle Stop 4. t: 0136 23 0788

* EAT & DRINK

we

Eating local produce is important to our mountain community. Here is a list of some the best 'eco' meals in the area.

Hokkaido Diver Scallops, Edamame Puree & Otaru Cherry-Wood Smoked Bacon Jam, Sekka Dining, Hirafu
 Makkari Tofu or Makkari Lilybulb Croquettes, Wild Bill's, Hirafu
 Niseko Ostrich Farm Da-Cho Sashimi, Torimatsu, Kutchan
 Rusutsu Pork Kushi, Enya, Kutchan
 Vegetarian lunches made by Yuki at Green House, Hirafu
 Hokkaido Sirloin Steak, Steak Rosso Rosso, Hirafu
 Curry and Chinese Yams with Home-cured Bacon, Nupuri Cafe, Niseko
 Akkeshi Oysters, Ezo Seafoods, Hirafu

RECIPE // Japanese Culture and Cooking School



SOBA TIRAMISU

Ingredients – serves 3-4

- 2 egg yolks (using smaller sized eggs)
- 55ml sugar
- 1pkg (100g) mascarpone cheese
- 100ml whipping cream
- 18-20 soba cookies (sobabouru)
- 1tbs coffee flavored liqueur

Method

1. Place a medium sized bowl to chill in freezer.
2. Combine the egg yolks and sugar in the top of a double boiler. Once the water boils, reduce heat to low and cook for about 2-3 minutes,

stirring constantly until the sugar has dissolved. Be careful not to let the mixture boil and the yolks cook.
 3. Using the chilled bowl, whip the cream to stiff peaks.
 4. In a separate medium sized bowl, combine mascarpone cheese, coffee flavoured liqueur and the yolk mixture. Beat until thoroughly combined. Gently fold the whipped cream into the mascarpone cheese and egg mixture and mix together well.

5. Take half of this mixture and line a small-to-medium sized dish with one layer. On top of this layer place 9-10 cookies. Repeat layering once.
 6. Chill this mixture in the fridge for about 4-5 hours or until the cookies become soft.

MARUKYU-SHOTEN

FRESH this season, Marukyu-shoten is a friendly izakaya (public bar) run by an energetic young team across the road from Boom Sports on Ekimae-dori (the street in front of the train station) in Kutchan. Inside, you'll find it decorated with various fishing paraphernalia, and it's not just cosmetic for cosmetics sake. Marukyu-shoten specialises in fresh seafood-based food, including delicious grilled scallops and fish, as well as the usual assortment of fried meat, sashimi, salads and hotpots that go down perfectly with a few social drinks.



ICE BAR

A GLOWING neon bar between Wild Bill's and Mina Mina made entirely of ice including the very glasses that you drink from. And, it isn't just any water that is used to make the bar, the ice is made from crystal clear spring waters that flow from Mt Yotei, so the glasses are good enough to eat once you've finished your drink. But, don't eat it too quickly, as your first drink is ¥1000. Refills are only ¥500. There is also a channel etched into the icy surface of the bar for anyone that wants to do luge shots. Just don't forget your gloves and warm clothes – for obvious reasons it's quite cold inside!



TUK TUK

TUCKED away in an almost hidden location below Captain Hirafu, this newly opened Thai restaurant is serving up great value Thai dishes and salads. In time, Thai noodles and other dishes are to be added to the menu, to which we eagerly await. For now, Tomoko, who has spent time in Thailand admiring the cuisine as well as working in a Thai restaurant in Tokyo, is taking it slow and making things perfect before rising to new challenges. Surprisingly, this is the first Thai restaurant in Hirafu (unless you count the mobile food vans), and it's bound to become a hit.



KAMIMURA

FIRST FLOOR, YAMA SHIZEN WEST

Open 6:00pm - late
 Reservations essential - 0136 21 22 88
www.kamimura-niseko.com

NISEKO'S ONE AND ONLY ALPINE BISTRO AND BAR.

COME AND ENJOY OUR NEW MENU OF HOME MADE ALL-SEASON ALPINE FOOD AND WINE FARE IN HOKKAIDO'S WARMEST AUTHENTIC BISTRO ATMOSPHERE OR TRY A GLASS OF WINE FROM THE OWNER'S VINEYARDS IN BURGUNDY, FRANCE.

RESERVATIONS
 TEL +81 (0) 136 23 0888

APRES-SKI
 ENJOY WINES & COCKTAILS AT OUR BAR UPSTAIRS

HIRAFU VILLAGE
 SECCOMART
 NISEKO
 THE BARN
 THE BARN
 THE BARN

WWW.NISEKOBARN.COM

KIMAMAYA BOUTIQUE HOTEL.

NINE ROOMS. ONE SPIRIT.

KIMAMAYA IS SMALL IN SIZE BUT LARGE IN EMOTION. JUST NINE ROOMS THAT OFFER CHARM, COMFORT AND A DISTINCTLY PERSONAL COSY EXPERIENCE. KIMAMAYA BY ODIN IS ONE OF THE MOST LAID BACK DEFINITIONS OF LUXURY YOU'LL EVER FIND.

KIMAMAYA
 by odin

NISEKO, HIRAFU, HOKKAIDO, JAPAN
WWW.KIMAMAYA.COM
 TEL. 0136 23 2603

DELIVERY MENU

* All major credit cards accepted (add 5%)

(0136) 55 5553
 everyday . 5 pm - 11 pm

House Pizza

M 30cm (2-3 people) L 45cm (4-6 people)

Margherita Pizza M ¥1,500 L ¥2,800
 Original Tomato Sauce . Fresh Basil . Fresh Mozzarella . Black Olives . Parmesan Cheese

Pepperoni Pizza M ¥1,700 L ¥3,200
 Original Tomato Sauce . Double Pepperoni . Double Cheese . Parmesan Cheese

Andy's Pizza M ¥1,900 L ¥3,600
 Original Tomato Sauce . Fresh Mozzarella . Double Pepperoni . Fresh Basil Parmesan Cheese . Black olives

Hawaiian Pizza M ¥2,000 L ¥3,800
 Original Tomato Sauce . Cheese . Ham . Pineapple . Parmesan Cheese

And More! Including 4 NEW House Pizzas for 2010-11
 BBQ Chicken . Meat . Vegetarian . Bacon Lovers ...

Gourmet Pizza

Bianco w Prosciutto Pizza M ¥1,700 L ¥3,200
 Olive Oil & Garlic Sauce . Fresh Mozzarella . Prosciutto . Green & Black Marinated Olives . Parmesan Cheese

Quatro Formaggio M ¥2,200 L ¥4,200
 Gorgonzola . Marinated Feta . Camembert . Buffalo Mozzarella . Fresh Basil

Napolitana Pizza
 Homemade Tomato Sauce . Anchovies . Green & Black Marinated Olives . Buffalo Mozzarella . Fresh Basil . Parmesan . Capers

And More! Including 2 NEW Gourmet Pizzas for 2010-11
 BBQ Ribs . Seafood . Genovese ...

Additional Standard Toppings, All Pizzas ¥150
 Anchovies . Garlic Sauce . Mushrooms . Red Onion . Capsicum . Pepperoni . Italian Sausage . Pork Sausage Ham . Bacon . Pineapple . Black Olives

Additional Gourmet Toppings, All Pizzas ¥220
 Black & Green Marinated Olives . Semi-sundried Tomatoes . Prosciutto . Buffalo Mozzarella . Fresh Prawns . Grilled BBQ Ribs

Visit our website or drop in to see our full menu, including...

Fresh, daily made Pasta . Lasagne . Dessert Pizza . Wine, Beer & Soft Drinks . Desserts & More...

(0136) 55 5553
 everyday . 5 pm - 11 pm

WWW.NISEKOPIZZA.JP

Quad Lit
 Niseko Pizza
 Seicomart 343

* RESTAURANT REVIEW // lupicia



WORDS BY // lizzy hoo PHOTOGRAPHY BY // joey corcoran - niseko photography

LOCAL ingredients are a mainstay for Niseko restaurant Lupicia. A concerted effort to show off the flavour profile of Hokkaido is what makes this restaurant a pleasure to visit.

THE new timber building is open, bright and refreshing. The sign at the front clearly states what to expect – a blend of Japanese and European food. Five minutes from Hirafu, this dining locale is practical but fashionable and is the Lupicia brand's foray into restaurants. Lupicia is a tea company that last year expanded into restaurants with its Niseko flagship – the company has recently opened up another branch in Tokyo.

Leading the kitchen is Akaishi-san who brings to the table a unique menu that perfectly melds naturally intense local Japanese flavours with European cooking techniques. There are a few menu options to choose from at Lupicia: A fixed course for ¥8,000 (9 courses), ¥5,000

(7 courses) or making your own selections from the a-la-carte menu.

With so many options on the menu, you'll be able to visit Lupicia and sample something different each time. This visit (there will definitely be others), we opt to try the chef's recommendations: Kakaimon Oysters and a selection of French cheese for entrée, as well as Fried Angel Prawn Dumplings and Confit de Takikawa Duck.

Chef Akaishi tells us that the oysters from nearby Akkeshi are hand delivered by his close friend. Two plump oysters presented on ice are brought to the table, and when paired with a sparkling white from New Zealand, the start to this meal is close to perfection. Along with the oysters, we are presented with

popular French cheeses Mimolette and Roquefort – the essential accompaniments to a European meal.

Next to arrive is the Fried Angel Prawn Dumplings, which take on more of a Japanese feel. Two prawns are presented with a dumpling made from scallops attached to the prawn. In true Japanese style, each of these prawns should be eaten in their entirety.

Following the prawns is the Confit de Takikawa Duck – a style that's typically French but made using duck from Takikawa, a few hours north of Niseko. This leg of the duck is slow cooked at a low temperature in oil, resulting in a deliciously tender piece of duck leg.

By the end of the meal, we are planning our return. We leave musing over Monkfish Terrine, Lily Bulb Croquette and Surf Clam with Sauteed Mushrooms and Butter. Or the Homemade Bacon with Leaf Bud Flavoured Yuzu Pepper Sauce and the Charcoal Grilled Miso Marinated Foie Gras.



T. 0136 21 7880
Lunch: 11:30 am to 3:00 pm
Tea: 3:00-5:00 pm
Dinner: 6:00-10:00 pm
Pickup service available

Representing & Realizing
Niseko's Premier Properties



TAIGA
REAL ESTATE & PROJECT MANAGEMENT



Yasuragi by Odin
Sales Agent and Project Management
+81 (0)80 3233 0262
www.taigaprojects.com

HGG
Hokkaido Powder Guides

- Mt Yotei ascents
- Avalanche Skills Training Courses
- Custom Resort Ski Trips
- Backcountry Lodge Trips

photo by Takahiro Nakanishi

Ph 0167-22-5655 / 080-3492-0433
http://www.hokkaidopowderguides.com
info@hokkaidopowderguides.com

W

**WD&A Bilingual Taxation
Advisory and Tax Return
Services for Foreign Investors**

Free quotation
Free first consultation (1hr)
Easy and direct communication
Clear information
Guaranteed discretion and high level of professionalism

For details contact WD&A
Certified Public Accountants

Email: yoko@taxservices.jp or waldek@taxservices.jp
Tel: +81 -(0)11-522-5276
Website: www.taxservices.jp

NISEKO
Massage

Call for an appointment or just drop in.
Ph. 0136 22 0399 - info@nisekomassage.com

	30 minute	45 minute	60 minute	90 minute
Early bird (finish prior to 2pm)	¥3,500	¥5,000	¥6,000	¥8,000
Normal Price	¥5,000	¥7,000	¥8,000	¥11,000

Niseko Physio

Your English-speaking sports injury centre in middle Hirafu. Taping, braces, cremes and Australian trained winter sports physiotherapists.

Call for an appointment or just drop in.
Ph. 0136 22 0399 - info@nisekophysio.com

* TASTE THE REGION // eto cabbages

AFTER graduating from Kutchan High School, Niseko local Kyoko Yamashita found employment and her husband at the Japan Agricultural Association (JAA). After getting married, she started farming at Kurokawa in Niseko where she learned how to create market gardens, tend to rice paddies, and grow tomatoes – the latter becoming her main-income crop.

However the sale of tomatoes that didn't reach the JAA's regulations was restricted, so Kyoko sold her smaller tomatoes at her roadside stand. The popularity of these tomatoes, along with her determination and a side trip to visit the farmers market Kyoko's friend

was involved with in Aomori, sparked the idea for a farmers-market movement at the Michi no Eki in Niseko (aka View Plaza).

Today, the popularity of Niseko Town's Farmers Market is best experienced in summer. It's packed full of fresh produce and many locals and visitors coming to take home some of the area's famous agricultural produce.

The life of a farmer in Niseko is limited to summer and most have to look elsewhere for employment as the snow blankets their land. After several part-time jobs in winter, Kyoko found she still wanted to be on her farm during the winter. By chance, she read a small article in a newspaper about Eto Cabbage

(cabbage that ripens in the snow) and thought she would practice this method on her own farm during the winter months.

With Kyoko's 'can-do' approach to life, she soon produced the very first crop of Eto Cabbages by herself, and many years of trial and error later, she perfected the art of ripening vegetables in the snow. Her winter cabbages and the cold of the snow create an incredible flavour profile; sugar levels in the cabbage are increased in the cold, increasing the overall sweetness of the cabbage.

Kyoko's story is an impressive tale of seizing opportunity. The drive and ambition of Kyoko is standout, and so is the sweet taste of her snow-ripened cabbages.



NISEKO
HOKKAIDO JAPAN

CONTACT // Tourism and Industry Division, Hokkaido, Niseko Town, Aza Fujimi47 Japan. T. 0136 44 2121. Ask for Paul.

Hokkaido
Golf Courses

NISEKO IZUMIKYO

Development & Property Sales
Since 1973

Sapporo
Apt Blocks



Private Community
Infrastructure
Specialists



Unique 1 Owner
Exclusive
Listings



Beautiful Build Sites
Direct from
Original Developer



Luxury Property
Research & Design
Consultants

The Local Japanese Firm Dedicated to Finding The Perfect Property
+81 (0) 136 23 3301 -- chris@izumikyo.co.jp -- www.izumikyo.co.jp/sales

→ FIND
→ STAY
→ PLAY

POWDERLIFE.COM
YOUR MAGIC CARPET TO
NISEKO ACCOMMODATION



Book the best place to stay, in the best place to play. Get all the information on rates and dates right here.

www.powderlife.com



WILD BILL'S

Restaurant and Bar

Open every day from 16:00
for happy hour apres ski



The finest Japanese cuisine and the best DJs and live music in town.

Tel: 0136-55-5774

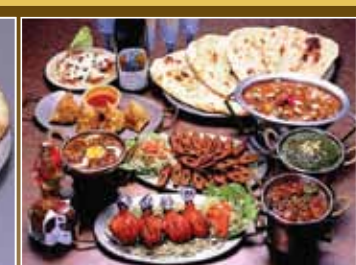
TAJ MAHAL

Niseko Branch

**Tancho Center 1F,
179-8 Yamada
Kutchan, Abuta-gun
Tel: 0136-22-4566**



The only authentic Indian restaurant since 1982 where the owner and chefs are from India. We offer Indian curries, Kababs, Fresh Nans, Vegetarian and Non-vegetarian options. We use no preservatives, lard, pork or beef.



Take-Out orders will receive 10% discount
<http://www.tajmahalgroup.com>

* POWDER POSTER

powderlife
NISEKO JAPAN

LOCATION kambestu - niseko backcountry // PHOTOGRAPHY gien olayoon // SKIER cam mckeay

Brought to you by

PRO SKI

* EYE SPY // art and culture in japan



PAINTING BY // shigeru tokumaru

LOCAL PAINTER

TUCKED away behind tall snow banks on Route 343 sits ST Gallery, the home of beautiful Niseko inspired paintings and photographs.

SOON after Tokumaru-san, a former banker, moved to Niseko he found artistic creativeness in the tangled roots of trees. Overtime, however, his paintings incorporated a deeper spiritual meaning. This led him to experiment with paintings other than those of trees. Looking around the gallery, the walls are decorated with paintings of Mount Yotei, vegetables, fruit, lone trees and people.

Every artist has his or her own form of inspiration. For Tokumaru-san it's the idea and sentiment of 'ki'. Personally he feels that 'ki' is a familiar idea for most Japanese, but he also acknowledges it's a hard concept to completely comprehend. Looking up the Japanese character 'ki' in the dictionary, you'll find words such as 'taiki' (atmosphere), 'tenki' (weather), 'kion' (temperature) and 'shikke' (humidity). Most of these are related to weather and nature. However, you'll also find the words 'genki' (health), 'kibun' (feeling), 'kifuu' (character), 'ninki' (popularity), and 'yuuki' (courage), which are related to mental

and physical situations. To Tokumaru-san, 'ki' is a combination of the physical and natural energy that flows within our universe. Tokumaru-san tries to incorporate his idea of 'ki' into his paintings; often they have feint white spots on them, either above a tree, or above Mount Yotei, which depict the energy flow of 'ki'.

Looking around ST Gallery, Tokumaru-san's paintings are definitely inspired by the Niseko area. He paints trees that stand alone, breathing quietly in the fields. His paintings of Mount Yotei are dreamy and mystical in appearance, and the colours he uses are vivid, but simultaneously soft. Some paintings are life-size and others are smaller, but each shows a clear view of Tokumaru-san's traditional Japanese comprehension of 'ki'.

ST Gallery also houses a selection of his son's photographs, taken mainly of Hangetsu Lake at the base of Mount Yotei.

@ www.nisekostdesign.com/stgallery

KOBO ORIZA

MOST current textile manufacturers use high-speed looms to create woven products.

JAPANESE textile manufacturer in Imabari, Ehime Prefecture – Kobo Oriza – uses a low-speed loom that was commonly used in textile factories up until 1970. By using such a low-speed loom, the crafter is able to make more intricate patterns and produce the stoles for which this company is becoming fast renowned.

Kobo Oriza is a factory located in an area known for its production of cotton textiles. The factory is on its journey of 'returning to the basics of textiles'. Wanting to create textiles that are beautiful, airy and capable of showing the company's distinct taste of ingredients, Kobo Oriza is attempting various ingenious weaving methods with crosses and knots of threads, which can't be achieved with modern high-speed looms.

To achieve this effect, however, president of the company Masatoshi Takeda, had to restore old looms, many of which had been dismantled. After repairing and modifying the old looms, the craftsmen working on the pieces use expert technical skills, an innate sensitivity to beauty and a passion for textiles to craft intricate stoles that are available in a variety of styles and colours.

@ <http://ito.oriza.jp/>



stoles by kobo oriza

NEWLY OPENED

6:00pm - 10:30pm (last orders)

Produced by Lq Andy



We'd like to invite you for a relaxed dining experience and flavours not offered anywhere else in Niseko.

Our menu offers a select range of quality steaks, classic Italian meals, Hokkaido duck and venison, complimented by Italian wines, local and international beers.

Free pickup and drop off service
Reservations appreciated Please call **0136 55 5123**

Bar BAZUNBA

Food Drinks Music

Momiji-zaka Street Hirafu
Open 8pm ~ 3am ☎ 090-3406-6504

Japanese style restaurant & bar
Open 6pm → late
Happy hour 6~7pm
All drinks ¥100 off
tel: 0136-23-0700

Want to get the most out of your powder hunting mission to Japan? Then we here at nisekoExtreme are your *one stop shop* to **POWDER BLISS!**

Come and be taken care of by our experienced and professional team. Make your time in Japan a truly unforgettable experience...

+81 (0)80 4538 0882

sam@nisekoextreme.com

www.nisekoextreme.com



Restaurant Slalom
(Dinner Buffet ¥4,300)

Edelweiss
(Stake Dinner ¥1,890-)

Shokusai Hirafu
(Special Chirashi ¥3,000-)

@open air hot spring bath

Bedrock souna bath

Swimming pool

Niseko Hirafu Ski & Snowboard School

Hotel Niseko ALPEN
ひらふ温泉郷
http://www.grand-hirafu.jp/alpen TEL 0136-22-1105



AKARI

AKARI is a wonderful luxurious chalet situated in East Hirafu, Niseko, which is designed by renowned Japanese architect Kazuhiro Ishide.

OF ALL the accommodation in Niseko, Akari is one of the most luxurious and impressive chalets in the area, with magnificent views of Mount Yotei, accommodating up to 10 people.

The 5 bedroom house has 2 large luxurious en-suite bedrooms on the first floor, and on the ground floor there are 2 luxurious en-suite bedrooms and a beautiful Kyoto style Japanese room, which can be used as an extra bedroom or entertainment room.

The interior is warm and spacious, featuring high ceilings and large floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking fields of snow and stunning Mount Yotei.

The open living/dining area is

characterized by a double-sided stone eco-fire place with Japanese oak flooring throughout.

A large deck terrace leads guests to a beautifully set outdoor hot tub surrounded by Japanese stone. This is truly a ski home of unparalleled luxury.

Akari is one of the very few luxury houses in Niseko that has a secluded setting yet is still within a few minutes drive of the Niseko Hirafu ski lifts.

For families with children, Akari in Niseko is the perfect retreat. It has a large private garden for playing in the snow, whilst inside there are toys and games with plenty of space for the little ones to have fun.



Booking Information

Contact enquiries.akari@luxurniseko.com Telephone Asia: +852 9196 8743 Australia: +612 8011 3878 Japan: +8150 5534 3932 www.luxurniseko.com



PS HEATING

...high standard heating design for world class ski resort NISEKO

Niseko has become one of the most talked about ski resorts in Japan. Not only in Japan, but all over the world. Since 2003, we have participated in designing indoor climates in over 82 condominiums and lodges just in Hirafu alone. Unlike old conventional radiators which have existed over half a century, the modern custom-made radiators are not only beautiful, they are also energy efficient and functional, satisfying holiday makers with high global standard comfort demands.

PS manufactures in Hokkaido, with more than 40 years experience in heating in subzero climate zones.

- designed as partitions
- heating and drying bathrooms and towels
- preventing cold drafts and condensations
- drying ski equipments
- beautiful fire places

PS Company Hokkaido Branch

TEL: 011-372-7605 FAX: 011-372-8886 E-mail: psnrs@psk.co.jp



www.ps-group.co.jp



It's only natural to want to spend your life in luxury. We design to deliver you extraordinary.

From architectural design to the finest interior finishes, contact us to start living - extraordinary.



(0)136-55-8050 | nisekohomedesign.com

* POWDER TOOLS



LADE WAPITI FUR BEANIE
AVAILABLE @ NISEKO PHOTOGRAPHY, HIRAFU
www.nisekophotography.com



BEAVER WAX ENVIRO-WAX
AVAILABLE ONLINE
beaverwax.com



GENTEMSTICK SUPERFISH
AVAILABLE @ GENTEMSTICK SHOWROOM, HIRAFU
www.gentemstick.com



RIDE SLACKCOUNTRY UL
AVAILABLE @ PROSKI, HIRAFU
www.proski.com



PEAK PERFORMANCE SUPREME PRO JACKET
AVAILABLE @ NISEKO 343, HIRAFU
www.niseko343.com



NISEKO SUPER DRY TEE
AVAILABLE @ NISEKO PHYSIO, HIRAFU
www.nisekophysio.com/

WHAT'S ON YOUR PLAYLIST?

TOM Cole-Hunter (he can thank his big bro for this photo) sent in his playlist "After much thought and frustration (having only 10 to pick ultimately). Here are my ten choices for slope songs in no particular order." If you want to win a ski shot from YETI BAR for you and four friends (or five shots for yourself) email your playlist to ross@powderlife.com

- 1// Iggy Pop // Lust for Life
- 2// Klaxons // Gravity's Rainbow
- 3// Bloc Party // Helicopter
- 4// Q-Tip // Gettin' Up
- 5// Roots Manuva // Let The Spirit
- 6// Booka Shade // The Birds and The Beats
- 7// Cream // White Room
- 8// Beck // Nausea
- 9// Tame Impala // Lucidity
- 10// Arcade Fire // No Cars Go



FIRST IMPRESSION



Name: Vanessa White.

Nationality: Australian.

Ski or snowboard? Snowboard, 3 years.

Why Niseko? I had heard stories about how good the powder was here and it was too good an opportunity to pass up!

First thoughts? It's a very peaceful resort. I'm amazed at how polite the lift queues are here.

Going anywhere else in Japan? I want to travel around on bullet trains and I really want to spend some time in Kyoto.



photo glen claydon // location kanbetsu – niseko backcountry // skier cam mckay



photo glen claydon // location niseko backcountry // skier tim myers



photo glen claydon // location waterfall – hirafu // rider teru yoshioka



photo // niseko photography

YASURAGI UNVEILED

ODIN is fast-becoming known for its boutique developments in Niseko. The unsurpassed Odin House, boutique chalet hotel Kimamaya and dining bistro The Barn are a few of Odin's triumphs.

THE next 'cab off the rank' for Odin (there are a few projects in the works) is Yasuragi, located amidst the tranquility of the lower village.

Anyone walking past this building, with its signature Odin floating roof, stops in their tracks, looks up and simply wanders at this architectural spectacle. Inside, you'll find five unique abodes. The top floor is a 200 square-metre penthouse that is privately owned. Access to the penthouse is via a private lift, which opens up to the 'butterfly' shaped room; the Penthouse is the only apartment to take up two of the building's 'wings'.

There are also two two-bedroom apartments on the middle floor and two three-bedroom apartments on the first floor. Each apartment is mirrored on the opposite side of the building – the main difference between the two and three-bedroom dwellings are the addition of separate bedrooms located on the bottom level, which can be accessed separately.

Each apartment is built around a spectacular spa

capturing the best of traditional Japanese onsen culture within the intimacy of an alpine residence. The 'inside-outside' design features of the spa, with retreating sliding glass walls, allow the occupants to sit in the open air whilst soaking in the tub behind the privacy of blinds and the balcony balustrades.

Odin's standard integration of renewable and recycled materials throughout the building includes LED lighting, high-performance thermal insulation and a low-e argon gas glazing system for the windows. The art installation feature that greets you in the lobby is also built out of reclaimed wood.

At Yasuragi, Odin's 'intelligent luxury' is felt as you wander the halls. The flooring is natural in its appeal and feels raw and organic under foot. The high ceilings create an open atmosphere and the splashes of deep red contrasted with the materials links each residence. This commitment to tasteful alpine-interior design, eco features and a boutique scale is what makes anything with the Odin tag stand out.



AGENT PROFILE

Name Michael Davenport **Agency** Niseko Consulting **How is business in Niseko?** Excellent. We made several sales through the summer and are currently enjoying the busiest sales period since 2007. **What's your forecast for 2011?** I think 2011 will be a great year for Niseko as interest continues to grow in both the summer and winter markets. **What projects in Niseko are you excited about?**

The individual developments on fantastic blocks outside the ski areas are exciting as they show that investors are focussing on Niseko as a destination as well as an investment. Outside the ski areas there are fantastic blocks available with rivers, mountain views and space for a fraction of the price closer to the ski hill.

From what countries are interested buyers coming from? Mainly Hong Kong, Singapore, mainland China, Malaysia, Australia and the UK. **What type of real-estate investment would you recommend to buy in Niseko?**

A large proportion of the real-estate value in Japan is in land so it is wise to base investments on freehold land as well as buildings.

What are your words of wisdom for potential buyers? A buyer should focus on their investment goals and purchase something that will match their lifestyle and return goals. **What do you think will make more people come to Niseko?** The Hirafu-zaka project will further show Niseko as a world-class resort. A few lift upgrades would also be very welcome.

(Image: Land with Yotei views, 1,610 sqm (487 tsubo), ¥12,175,000)



Niseko Property

193-7 Aza Yamada, Kutchan-cho, Hokkaido Japan 044-0081



Alpen Ridge 104
¥35,000,000 5 1 1 1



Split level charming 2 bedroom property within close reach of the ski field, many restaurants and bars. Provides solid returns.
LOCATION: Upper Hirafu Village
FLOOR AREA: 32m²

Alpen Ridge 202
¥45,000,000 1.5 1 1 1



Ski-in ski-out, luxury slope side, one bedroom apartment with spectacular views looking directly down on the Ace Family chairlift.
LOCATION: Upper Hirafu Village
FLOOR AREA: 59m²

Alpen Ridge 504
¥79,000,000 3 2 1 1



Ski-in Ski-out, luxury 3 bedroom apartment. Spacious rooms with finest finishes. Well maintained & managed. The last 3 bed Alpen Ridge apartment for sale.
LOCATION: Upper Hirafu Village
FLOOR AREA: 120m²

Alpine Apartments 2C
¥80,000,000 3 3 1 1



Ski-in Ski-out, Western style bedrooms arranged over two levels with a large lounge and dining space. Has a large ski/snowboard storage on the ground floor.
LOCATION: Upper Hirafu Village
FLOOR AREA: 135m²

Alpen Estate
from ¥5,000,000 LAND



Two minutes drive to the Ace Family Chairlift. These blocks are ready for you to start building. All blocks have great view of Mt Yotei.
LOCATION: St Moritz 2
LAND SIZE: From 353m²

Glasshouse
¥250,000,000 3 3 2 2



An iconic house in Niseko. This property showcases the tranquility & beauty of its environs, yet it is within close reach of the ski field and Hirafu amenities.
LOCATION: Lower Hirafu Village
FLOOR AREA: 270m²

Setsumon Penthouse 502
¥150,000,000 3 3 1 1



Luxury penthouse in the heart of Hirafu Village with a view of Mt Yotei. Highest level of customer care by the on-site property management
LOCATION: Upper Hirafu Village
FLOOR AREA: 224m²

Seseragi Residences
¥130,000,000 4 4 1 1



A new development, designed by Riccardo Tossani, consists of 2 beautiful four-bedroom homes with garages. Within walking distance of all Niseko amenities.
LOCATION: Middle Hirafu Village
FLOOR AREA: 202m²

Alpen Ridge 305
¥45,000,000 1 1 1 1



Luxury one bed Ski-in Ski-out apartment with village views. The best location in the resort and high occupancy rate.
LOCATION: Upper Hirafu Village
FLOOR AREA: 65m²

Landmark View 105
¥45,000,000 2 2 0 0



Spacious apartment, adjacent to the Hirafu Gondola. Restaurants and bars are all within 2 minutes walk. Good returns with repeat customers.
LOCATION: Upper Hirafu Village
FLOOR AREA: 93m²

Yuki Sawa
¥46,000,000 3 3 1 1



Located in a quiet street in Lower Hirafu Village, offers superb views of Mt Yotei. Excellent returns, below replacement cost.
LOCATION: Lower Hirafu Village
FLOOR AREA: 165m²

Yama Shizen East Penthouse
¥99,000,000 3 3 1 1



Superlative location. Fully furnished spacious apartment with basement parking. Long term capital appreciation for the most discerning buyer.
LOCATION: Upper Hirafu Village
FLOOR AREA: 120m²

* REAL ESTATE NEWS

by lizzy hoo

LIFESTYLE INVESTMENTS

SKI-IN/SKI-OUT properties have their obvious perks, but residences on the outskirts of Hirafu are proving a popular choice for city dwellers.

THERE are several types of property available in this area given Niseko's relatively early stage of development. Investors can choose from studio apartments right next to the ski hill, spacious houses in the lower village, quaint cottages and blocks of land a little further afield. And whilst the luxury of skiing into your apartment is idealistic, many investors are searching for a year-round getaway with more space, quieter surroundings and room for the kids.

Located in what is classed as the 'South Village', Country Resort is one of Niseko's quiet achievers. Last summer, five new houses were built, ranging from two-bedroom chalets to five-bedroom custom designs. "One of the first things that gets mentioned about Country Resort is the space. The kids can wander the grounds, play in the snow in winter, dig a flowerbed in summer and get around on bikes. You don't have the noise of the village, your curtains can be wide open and the only thing peering in is a curious fox; you can leave your door unlocked and know that it's perfectly fine." Says Stu Cady, Country Resort manager.

One of Country Resort's closest neighbours – about one kilometer away – is The Escarpment. Closer to the village, The Escarpment developers are noticing a change in the purpose of investment of clients. "Short-term capital gains and high-rental returns were associated with emerging demand for ownership, limited supply and are effectively the reward for early adoption and the 'risk' element of the investment. People want a unique and special place to share in the destination's long-term future." Says Julian Bailey,

Hokkaido Tracks Resort Development.

Both Country Resort and The Escarpment offer flexible home and land packages, however, there is also plenty of room in Niseko to buy your own land close to Hanazono, Moiwā, and Annupuri and build a dream home.

Michael Davenport of Niseko Consulting has noticed more enquiries for 'lifestyle blocks' with privacy, views, rivers and plenty of space. "People are realising that the same amount of money goes a lot further as soon as you leave the close proximity of the ski hills. The largest benefit is the price point – land can be up to 100 times cheaper outside of the village, which means money goes much further: views, space, privacy, rivers, etc. After one visit to Niseko, many visitors realise the benefit of renting or owning a vehicle which makes a short drive to this kind of land much less hassle. As the ski hills become more developed, the demand for spacious blocks nearby will grow, which also offers excellent capital gains potential."

Location, price points, usability and privacy are seemingly the most obvious reasons for owning a property/land outside of the village area. Building a house from scratch where you can specify the number of rooms, how large or small they are, the location of each room, the materials that will be used will help you realise your 'lifestyle investment'. The drawback is the waiting period, construction period and renting/buying a car, which can be outweighed easily by your investment purpose – quick ski-in/ski-out breaks, or lengthier long-term stays.



photo // jon barlow // entrance to the escarpment



photo // niseko photography // aerial of country resort

THE ROCKS STRATA RELEASES IMAGES

The Rocks Strata, the second development of The Rocks project is a collection of six buildings housing 100 hotel condominium-style residences located at the top of Hirafu's main street. This hotel development will be built on the current location of the Scot Hotel and with its prime ski-in and ski-out location and amenities

including gym, onsen, restaurants, bars and cafes, The Rocks Strata will be a high-impact development for the area. Designed, built and operated to ensure compliance with all relevant regulations governing a development in this special location, The Rocks Strata will set a new standard for ski-in ski-out property ownership in Niseko.



image // courtesy of Riccardo Tossani Architects



image // courtesy of Riccardo Tossani Architects

Our long term goal is more than selling property in Niseko. It is to build trust, a solid reputation and strong relationships.

Meikle & Associates
will work for you.

MEIKLE & ASSOCIATES
REAL ESTATE

Please come and visit us in our new showroom in The Vale this winter.

MSM REALTY LTD.
NISEKO

(81) 0136 55 5338
craig@msmrealty.com
www.msmrealty.com

Real Estate License No. Shiribeshi (1) 354

EZO VIEWS A NEW ERA OF LUXURY LIVING IN NISEKO



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

WWW.EZOVIEWS.COM



* BACK COUNTRY



Name Teru Yoshioka **Company** Happy Vibration **Ski or board** Both, skiing since a child, 18 years snowboard **What's your best backcountry experience?** A sunny day at Kurodake **Best tip for backcountry skiers/boarders visiting Niseko?** If you choose a guide, choose one that has been in the Niseko area year round.

FREE BACKCOUNTRY INFORMATION SEMINAR //

Ever hiked the peak? Been through a gate in Niseko? Considered the consequences? Know what you're getting into with Black Diamond Tours free information seminar.

Location // Above Proski Demo shop, opposite The Vale Niseko

Time // 6-7pm every Tuesday during winter

YOU have mastered the groomers, been on ski holidays several times all over the world, and you want to escape the crowds – chances are you're ready to go backcountry.

The satisfaction of hiking peaks and then making your way down in untracked, waste-deep snow is exhilarating.

In Japan, Niseko is renowned for its liberal stance toward backcountry skiing and snowboarding. With that freedom comes the responsibility to respect the mountain. Niseko's powder may look soft and friendly, but don't let its light and fluffy appearance fool you.

Powderlife has collected some tips from local experts to keep you safe on the mountain.

1. **Obey the Niseko Rules: Listed on the course map (p.52)**
2. Check weather and avalanche reports – www.niseko.nadare.info
3. **Respect Niseko's ski patrollers**
4. Use essential equipment:

A beacon, probe and shovel are the bare essentials. Make sure you know how to use them.

5. **Let someone know when you're planning to be back.**

6. If the gates are closed don't risk entering them.

7. **No-go zones include Yu no Sawa (between Annupuri and Niseko Village area), and Haru no Taki (cliff area west of Hirafu).**

8. Ducking ropes may result in you losing your lift pass.

9. **Hire a guide if you're not sure about going off-piste.**

10. Explore the backcountry with experienced riders and skiers.

AVALANCHE INFO //

Shinya-san's daily avalanche report: www.niseko.nadare.info

Powderlife's Backcountry Guide is online – www.powderlife.com

- // 'Backcountry basics'
- // 'Inside a 2-day avalanche course'
- // 'Lost in the backcountry'
- // 'How to build a snowcave'

EXERCISE OTHER THAN SKIING OR SNOWBOARDING //

ONE of the things I love about ski resorts is the type of people they attract. It's great to walk into a restaurant, stop for a second to scan the room and see a collection of smiling, lined and chiselled faces.

FIT, active outdoorsy people - my kind of people. So much so that for many people in Niseko merely skiing or snowboarding is not enough of a workout and many are looking for some other activity to keep fit during their stay here. When I snowboard, I find just riding a lift and doing the occasional peak hike or short hike out of Annupuri gate then sliding down hill is not really much of a work out. So I thought I'd put down a few options for ways people can get a workout in apart from skiing or boarding.

Snow shoeing is one of my favourite activities and doing some short

30-second sprints across an open field is a great way to get the heart pumping and improve leg strength. Hangetsu Lake, a 5 minutes' drive away at the foot of Mount Yotei, and The Escarpment have plenty of wide-open flat plains for snowshoeing. The Niseko Village Hilton has a great gym – for ¥1,000/session you can use top-quality treadmills, exercise bikes and weights. The Kanronomori Hotel in Moiwa has a monthly membership for ¥4725–6090 with a free test day. They have a well-equipped gym and boxing and yoga classes. Powder Yoga in J-Sekka's Kushi bar is on Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 9:30 am and advanced practices on Fridays at 9:15 am. NAC has the great climbing wall and a yoga class on Mondays at 9:30 am (BYO mat).

My wife and I have swam in pools all over the world for our triathlon

training but our favourite of them all is the Alpen Hotel's pool right at the bottom of the Ace Quad 4. The air and water temperature is perfect, it's impeccably clean, you can use plastic paddles and wear a watch (very rare in Japan), you usually get a lane to yourself and they have wet and dry saunas, individual spas and a jacuzzi – just perfect! Even though

I seem to manage it every season, with all these options there's no excuse for piling on weight over a holiday in Niseko.



- **Kutchan gym: Open 9 am to 12 pm 1-5pm, 6 pm-8:30 pm. Closed Every Monday. Cost ¥210.**
- **Fitness club in the Kanro no Mori Hotel in Moiwa. Open 10 am to 9 pm. Cost ¥4725-6090 for a month.**
- **Swim at the Alpen Hotel's pool. Sauna. Jacuzzi. ¥600.**
- **Climb the wall at NAC. Rope climbing ¥1200. Gear ¥500.**
- **Yoga at NAC. Monday 9:30 am (bring your own mat).**
- **Powder Yoga, Kushi – J-Sekka, Monday and Wednesday from 9:15 am. Friday advanced practice 9:15 am.**

RESORT GUIDE

POWDERLIFE is your Niseko Travel Guide – in print and online. With www.powderlife.com and *Powderlife Niseko* magazine, you'll discover the essential information for the perfect holiday.

During your stay, experience Niseko's restaurants, bars and cafes, where you can feast on anything – from the most authentic sushi to beautiful local sake. Make the most of your skiing and boarding with the specialist ski and snowboard stores and mountain guides around town. Inside you'll also find *Powderlife's* onsen guide, short history of the area and village maps. For everything else visit www.powderlife.com/niseko-resort-guide.



TOURIST INFO

Kutchan Information Centre

Plenty of brochures and English-speaking staff. Location: Main Street, Kutchan (map p.53, A4) **T:** (0136) 22 1121.

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 p.54, E1) **T:** (0136) 22 0109.

GETTING HERE & THERE

New Chitose Airport.

For departure and arrival times. **T:** (0123) 23 0111 **W:** 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). Companies providing this service: Whiteliner Buses, Chuo Bus, Donan Bus and Hokkaido Resort Liner. Visit the Welcome Centre for bus bookings back to Chitose. ¥2,300 approx. (one way) or ¥3850 approx. (roundtrip).

Door-to-Door Transfer Skybus offers a door-to-door transfer service to and from the airport to Niseko, or Sapporo. See p.18 for details.

T: 011 788 4994 **W:** www.skybus.co.jp

Train This is the most scenic route to Niseko. There is no direct train from Chitose to Kutchan Station (closest major station to Hirafu), and all

trains run through Sapporo and Otaru. You will be required to change platforms. ¥2600 approx.

T: (0123) 45 7011 – Airport Station

T: (0136) 22 1310 – Kutchan station

W: www.japanrail.com

CAR RENTAL

Niseko Auto Rentals

Specialising in large 4wd 7-8 passenger vehicles: Delica Space Gear and Toyota Hiace. **T:** (0136) 44 1144 **W:** www.bdlodge.com

Toyota Rent-a-Car ShinSapporo

One-way hire from Chitose to Hirafu is about ¥7000 for six people/24 hours. Pick up at Chitose airport, Sapporo or Kutchan **T:** (0118) 15 0100 (English ok!)

The Powderlife website has some great tips on how to drive on snow as well as good contacts if you have an accident. www.powderlife.com/niseko-travel-guide

TRANSPORT AROUND NISEKO

Taxis: Drivers probably won't speak English so you will need a business/place name and map for where you are going. **T:** (0136) 22 1212 Kutchan Hire // (0136) 22 1171 Misora Hire // (0136) 44 2635 Niseko Hire.

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 //

¥500 Adult and ¥300 for child.

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: Travels 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. ¥: ¥200 for 1 week pass/¥500 for a season pass

MONEY

ATM Locations

Hokkaido Tracks Holiday's Office, Hirafu Map: p.54, E2 Accepts: All major cards

Kutchan Main Post Office Map: p.53, E3 Accepts: All major cards

7 Eleven Map: p.53, C1

Accepts: Visa Plus, JCB, AMEX, Dinners Club, Discover, China Union Pay

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 with your retailer before purchasing.

Currency Exchange Kutchan Post Office and Hokuyo Bank (Map p.53, B3)

RESORT GUIDE

SHOPPING

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

Seicomart – Hirafu

Location: At the main intersection in Hirafu

Lawson – Hirafu (24 hours)

Location: 5 minutes from Seicomart in the direction of Kutchan.

Piz Gloria and the **Alpen Hotel** offer a smaller range of snacks and drinks, and **Sekka Deli** provides gourmet items from Hokkaido.

Kutchan Shopping

For a big shopping trip, it's worth venturing into Kutchan Town. Here is a list of the major stores stocking the basics, but if you explore a little further you'll find small local fruit and vegetable retailers and great souvenir shops.

Try **Best Denki** for all your electrical and technical needs.

Location: p.53, B4

Rummage through **M-Pocket** for imported groceries and alcohol.

Location: p.53, B3

Visit **Homac**, which shelves basically every household product. Afterwards head next door to major supermarket **MaxValu** for all your food supplies as well as **Tsuruha Drug** (red signage) if you need a pharmacy.

Location: Route 5 and Route 343. (p.53, G3)

Take a trip to the **¥100 store** if you're on a budget.

Location: p.53, B4

SHOPPING

Internet

J-Sekka Deli and Downtown Café have free Internet terminals.

Mobile Phones

Only 3G phones will work in Japan. Some accommodation providers offer mobile phone 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 two post offices in Kutchan. In Hirafu, post-office boxes and stamps are located 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).

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.

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.

Be careful when walking or parking your car under roofs

Heavy snow slides from rooftops in Niseko. The snow slides can seriously damage your cars too.

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 do notice someone who is intoxicated, report them to the police or the safety hut located outside Seicomart.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Kutchan Kousei Hopsital

For anything you think is broken. X-ray, MRI and medical dispensary. No appointment necessary.

Location: p.53, A3

T: 0136 22 1141

Niseko Physio

The only acute sports injury specialist in the village.

Location: p.54, B2

T: 0136 22 0399

LOCAL LINGO

GREETINGS

Good morning	Ohaiyogozaimasu
Hello	Konichiwa
Good evening	Kon ban wa
Goodnight	Oyasuminasai
Goodbye	Sayonara
See you later	Mata ne
What's your name?	Onamae wa nan desu ka?
My name is ...	Watashi no namae wa (insert name) desu
(nice to meet you)	Dozo yoroshiku
How are you?	Genki desu ka?
I'm fine	Genki desu
How old are you?	Otoshi wa Ikutsu desu ka?

BASIC QUESTIONS

Where is ...?	... wa doko desu ka?
toilet	toire
Are you okay?	Daijoubu desu ka?

RESTAURANT TIPS

How many people?	Nan mei sama desu ka?
two people	'ni' mei desu
(3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)	(san, yon, go, roku, shichi, hachi)
What would you like to drink?	Onomimono wa okimari desu ka?
One beer please	biiru 'hitotsu' kudasai
Food counters	
one	hitotsu
two	futatsu
three	mitsu
four	yotsu
Before you eat say	Itadakimasu
After you eat say	Gochisosamadeshita
Cheers	Kanpai
Delicious	Oiishi

OUT AND ABOUT

Great snow	Sugoi yuki
Excuse me	Sumimasen
I don't understand	Nihongo ga
Japanese	wakarimasen
Do you speak English?	Eigo ga hanasemasu ka?
Cute	Kawaii
Japan's great!	Nihon wa sugoi

RESORT GUIDE

ONSEN GUIDE

GOING to the onsen for the first time can be a little daunting. *Powderlife's* guide and onsen etiquette tips will help you fall in love with this quintessential Japanese experience.

Yukoro Onsen

T: 0136 23 3434 (Hirafu map p.54 B4)

Hotel Niseko Alpen

T: 0136 22 1105 (Hirafu map p.54 E1)

Hot Spring Poporo

T: 0136 23 3291 (Hirafu map p.54 F1)

Yumoto Niseko Prince Hotel Hirafutei

T: 0136-23-2239 (Hirafu map p.54 D1)

Hilton Niseko Village

T: 0136 44 1111 (Higashiyama map p.53 G7)

Green Leaf Hotel Niseko Village

T: 0136 44 3311 (Higashiyama map p.53 G7)

Niseko Grand Hotel

T: 0136 58 2121 (Annupuri map p.53 A8)

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 ¥600 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 before entering the onsen. Rinse yourself thoroughly and then your shower cubicle before going into the onsen.
4. Use the modesty towel when walking into the onsen then gracefully slide into the water – never jump.
5. Don't let your towel enter the onsen water – just rest it on your head or on a rock on the side of the onsen.
6. Soak, contemplate and relieve your sore muscles.
7. Dry yourself off before going back into the change room, as best you can.

Many onsens have rooms where you can relax, drink a cold beer or tea, or even sit in a massage chair.

LOCAL HISTORY

WHAT does Niseko mean?

'Niseko' was the name originally given to the area by the Ainu, Hokkaido's indigenous people, and means 'a cliff jutting over a riverbank deep in the mountains'. Meanwhile, Nupuri is a word commonly heard around these parts, namely because it's the Ainu word for 'mountain'. Put it all together and Mt Niseko Annupuri (the mountain that is home to the Niseko United resorts) means 'a mountain which has sheer cliffs and a river below'. Other nearby mountains which have carried their Ainu names until today include Chisenupuri and Iwaonupuri.

SKI RESORT HISTORY

1911	Theodore von Lerch ascends Mount Yotei
1949	Mount Yotei is designated a National Park
1956	Rope tow installed at Asahigaoka ski area
1961	First ski lift in Grand Hirafu ski area completed
1962	40th All Japan Ski Championships (Alpine)
1963	Niseko mountain range is designated a Quasi-National Park
1966	Taiheiyo Club Niseko Moiwa International ski area opens
1970	Kutchan hosts the 25th National Ski Competition
1972	Niseko Annupuri ski area opens
1982	Niseko Higashiyama ski area (currently Niseko Village) opens
1993	Free Passport lift pass system valid at 4 ski resorts introduced
2002	Niseko starts to receive a large number of Australian tourists

Information courtesy of the Niseko Promotion Board



Jagata-kun: Little fat skiing potato boy



Jagako: Jagata-kun's snowboarding girlfriend

GOMI GUIDE

IF in doubt, don't just throw it out!

What is burnable rubbish? (燃えるゴミ moeru-gomi)

Contrary to what most of us are brought up to believe, burnable rubbish includes 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 rubbish (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.

What can you do to help keep Niseko beautiful?

Take a second to be sure you're throwing your garbage in the correct bin
For more information visit www.town.kutchan.hokkaido.jp

C2 **A-Bu-Cha 2**
 p54 UPPER HIRAFU

Try our popular Japanese dishes or hot-pots. Choice of 400 drinks! Japanese seating available. Families welcome. Lunch and Cafe: various lunch dishes, coffee, homemade dessert.



Lunch 11am – 4pm
 Dinner 6pm 2am
 (LO 3pm/11.30pm)
 ☎ 0136 22 5620

www.abucha.net

A wide variety of meals and drinks – top marks

E7 **Black Diamond Restaurant**
 p53 HIGASHIYAMA

Offering a wide variety of food and drink from around the world. Japanese daily specials, Western, Mexican and Italian dishes! Billiards, darts, happy hour and drink specials daily! Free pickup from The Hilton and The Green Leaf for groups of 6 or more.



4pm–midnight
 (LO 11pm food // 11.30pm drink)
 ☎ 0136 44 1144

www.bdlodge.com

Free pick-up from The Hilton and The Green Leaf for 6 or more

A1 **Country Grill**
 p54 COUNTRY RESORT

Unique flavours not found anywhere else in the area, with all local products by La Andy. From Hokkaido-grown beef, country roast chicken, and our specialty Hokkaido Venison, try the new Country Grill, just outside busy Hirafu in the quiet community of Country Resort.



Breakfast 7.30–10.30am
 Dinner 17.00 to late
 Free pick up and drop off
 ☎ 0136 55 5123

www.nisekocountryresort.com

Grilled favourites, relaxed dining, casual atmosphere

A4 **Ebisutei**
 p54 LOWER HIRAFU

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



Open daily
 5pm – midnight

www.ebcb.com

Have fun with our genki and laughing oden bar staff

☎ 0136 22 6544

D2 **Bang Bang**
 p54 UPPER HIRAFU

Ramen lunch at Bang 2 starting this season! We take great pride in our fresh seafood and look forward to offering you mouthwatering dishes from our wide-ranging menus.



Lunch 11am – 4pm
 Dinner 5.30pm – 11.30 pm
 Occasionally closed
 ☎ 0136 22 4292

www.niseko.or.jp/bangbang

We take great pride in our fresh seafood

C3 **Cocoro Okonomiyaki**
 p53 KUTCHAN

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



11am – 9pm
 ☎ 0136 22 1528 (Jap)
 ☎ 0136 23 0008 (Eng)

www.nisekokabuki.com

Great Food, Great Value!

B3 **Downtown Café**
 p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

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



Open 7 days
 8am to 10.30pm
 Breakfast, lunch and dinner
 ☎ 0136 23 3354

www.downtowncafe.com

Hirafu's finest cafe free internet terminal + Wi-Fi

C4 **Half Note**
 p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

Enjoy live weekend jazz nights as well as Dancing and other live music on weekdays. With, jazz, billiards and table tennis, there's always something going on at Half Note. Check out Half Note's regular jazz events at www.nisekohalfnote.com.



6pm–midnight
 Open daily

www.nisekohalfnote.com

Hirafu's only jazz bar!

☎ 0136 23 2727

F5 **Hana Jizoh**
 p54 IZUMIKYO 2

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



8.00am – 4.30pm
 Closed Wednesdays

☎ 0136 23 0331

Creative and delicious breads from a local baker

D4 **Java Lounge**
 p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

Come and relax on the Java Lounge sofas, try our

- Italian coffee • Assorted Panini
- Home baked muffins and cakes • Hot soups
- Iced-cold beer • Daily special lunches
- Quiches or all day breakfast



Daily
 7am to 8pm

Early morning breakfast, lunch and après drinks

E2 **Kamimura**
 p54 UPPER HIRAFU

Trained by one of the world's top chefs, Tetsuya Wakuda, chef Kamimura uses the abundance of Hokkaido produce to create a memorable degustation dining experience.



Dinner 6pm – 11pm
 Occasionally closed

☎ 0136 21 2288

www.kamimura-niseko.com

Blessed by land, sea and a creative chef

B3 **Maki Lounge**
 p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

With an open fire and sweeping views of the Hirafu ski hill, unwind on our leather lounges. Apres drinks include an array of fine Japanese whiskey, sake, shochu and plum wine as well as classic and house-blend cocktails, spirits and glass wine.



Coffee, snacks and games from 10am // bar 2pm–late 7 days
 ☎ 0136 21 6133

www.j-sekka.com

Japanese whiskey, sake and shochu by the fire

☎ 0136 21 6133

B3 **J-Sekka Café and Delicatessen**
 p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

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



open from 7am daily

www.j-sekka.com

A taste of Hokkaido

☎ 0136 21 3088

C3 **Kabuki 1 and 2**
 p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

At Kabuki 1 you can do make-it-yourself Okonomiyaki and Teppanyaki. Kabuki 2 (next door) is a full-service Teppan Yaki Restaurant. Early bird 20% for all meals – in by 6pm out by 7pm.



Open 7 days
 5–11pm
 ☎ 0136 21 2233 (Kabuki 1)
 ☎ 0136 21 2121 (Kabuki 2)

www.nisekokabuki.com

Okonomiyaki and Teppanyaki Restaurant

E8 **M's Cafe (Saison Club)**
 p53 HIGASHIYAMA

Try our huge traditional Japanese nabe hotpots with meat, seafood and vegetables. We have shabu shabu, sukiyaki and chanko hot pots.



Day 10am–3pm
 Evening 5.30–7.30pm
 Open daily
 ☎ 0136 44 3380

www.saison-club.com

Warm your body with our big hearty hot-pots

B4 **NICHII Shokudou**
 p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

Specializing in Japanese food & Italian food cooked with wood-fired oven. Please enjoy our delicious food!



Open daily
 4pm to midnight

http://nichii.pittore.jp/

Japanese and Italian food Iza-kaya with wood-fired oven.

☎ 0136 22 2161

D2 Niseko Pizza
p54 UPPER HIRAFU

Niseko Pizza is a family run restaurant offering a menu with lots of love and the best quality ingredients. You will be delighted by the smell, enticed by the flavours, pleased by the atmosphere and comforted by the staff



Open 4–11pm weekdays
11am to 11pm weekends,
holidays, Chinese New year
☎ 0136 55 5553

www.nisekopizza.jp

Dine in, Take-away and delivery

B2 Sekka Dining
p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

Experience a taste of Hokkaido in style at Sekka Dining, with an impressive cellar and a menu that celebrates simplicity, innovation, and absolute delicacy in preparation.



Open daily
Dinner from 6pm
Occasionally closed
☎ 0136 21 5022

www.j-sekka.com

Showcasing the best of Hokkaido

A5 Shunsai
p53 KUTCHAN

Having trained in various countries, our expert chef creates a colourful array of dishes. Bread freshly baked after ordering. Vegetarian menu available. Chilean wines from ¥2,000.



Lunch 11am–3pm
Dinner 5–9pm
Closed Sundays
☎ 0136 23 1882

Creative fusion cuisine from land and sea

C3 Steak Rosso Rosso
p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

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



Dinner 6pm–11pm
Occasionally closed

www.rossorosso.net

A must for steak lovers!

☎ 0136 21 7100

D2 Paddy McGinty's Irish Pub & Restaurant
p54 UPPER HIRAFU

Enjoy your perfect powder holiday at our popular pub and restaurant with its welcoming fun atmosphere, imported and local beers, wines, spirits and great value meals.



Open daily
1pm till Late

www.paddymcintyirishpub.com

Value Drinks, Hearty Meals, Live Sports and Music

☎ 0136 55 8020

D1 Senchou 2
p54 UPPER HIRAFU

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



Winter only
5pm–midnight
Open daily
☎ 0136 22 5454

www.senchou.com

Best choice for gourmet seafood

C3 Souan Genghis Khan Lamb BBQ
p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

Goes perfectly with beer and makes a great party menu. Bring your family and friends for the ¥1700 all-you-can-eat for 60 minutes offer.



Open daily
5pm–2am
(LO 1am)
☎ 090 2059 6701

¥1700 all-you-can-eat barbecue for 60 minutes

F3 Taj Mahal
p54 IZUMIKYO 1

Experience the best of authentic Indian cuisine and courteous service. Enjoy an authentic Indian meal with Indian beer at our prestigious restaurant. 10% discount on takeaway orders. Vegetarian meals available. Free local delivery.



Open all year, 7 days
11.30am to 10.30pm
☎ 0136 22 4566

www.tajmahalgroup.com

Visit India in Taj Mahal Niseko

C4 The Barn
p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

Come and enjoy our alpine food and wine in Hokkaido's warmest and authentic bistro atmosphere. Drop in on the way back from the slopes for a snack and hot wine in our friendly bar on the upper floor, or stay the evening for dinner in the main restaurant.



Open 7 days 6pm to late
(LO 9.30pm food // drinks 11.30pm)
☎ 0136 23 0888

www.nisekobarn.com

Hokkaido's one and only alpine bistro

E4 Tsubara Tsubara
p54 IZUMIKYO 1

Everyone falls in love with our carefully prepared soup made from delicious ingredients. Restaurant recently renovated to give improved access and a larger seating area. Enjoy our famous Hokkaido soup curry.



Lunch 11.30am–3pm
Evening 6–10pm
Closed 2nd/4th Wednesdays
☎ 0136 23 1116

www.tsubaratsubara.com

Spicy, flavoursome and local Hokkaido curry soup

B2 Wabi Sabi
p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

Quality prepared and cooked Yakitori (various skewered meats, seafood and vegetables barbecued). All food cooked in traditional Japanese style.



Open 7 days
5–10pm

www.nisekowabisabi.com

Specialty Yakitori restaurant

☎ 0136 21 5115

F3 Yakitori Yosaku
p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

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



Open daily
6pm to 3am

Serving yakitori every night until 3am

☎ 0136 23 4390

D2 Tozanken Asahikawa Ramen
p54 UPPER HIRAFU

Asahikawa ramen is made from 100% Hokkaido wheat noodles served in a smooth and rich soup. There is a wide selection of dishes to choose from including Donburi rice bowls. From Asahikawa's original ramen restaurant.



Open daily
10.30am–11pm
(LO 11pm)
☎ 0136 23 4549

New location this winter!

C2 VBG – Vale Bar and Grill
p54 UPPER HIRAFU

Full breakfast available from 7am. Serving an eclectic fusion-style menu all day. Daily Specials. Warm up with our VBG Ultimate Hot Chocolate or something a little stronger in our relaxed après lounge. Shots and cocktails. Live music events.



Open 7 days
7am to late
All-day dining
☎ 0136 21 5833

www.nisekoalpineaccommodation.com

Ski-in ski-out bar and dining

D3 WAGYU DINING SOU
p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

Try our popular Japanese food nabe hotpot for your experience of Japanese culture. We recommend Sukiyaki, Shabushabu and Kimuchi hotpot to warm your body up in the cold Niseko winter. Lunch available with reservation – Shabushabu, Sukiyaki or Kimuchi hotpot course from 11am to 2pm.



Dinner 6–10pm
Lunch 11am to 2pm
7 days
☎ 0136 23 3048

Carefully selected Japanese wagyu beef and special soup

B3 Yummy's
p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

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!



www.yummypizza.com

Yummy homemade crust pizza and western foods restaurant

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

TOURS & ACTIVITIES

C2 Black Diamond Tours

p54 UPPER HIRAFU

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



www.blackdiamondtours.com

Niseko's backcountry powder specialists

8am-8pm daily
Above Proski Demo Shop
Opp. The Vale Niseko
☎ 090 2054 8687

B4 Japanese Cultural Tours

p53 KUTCHAN/HIRAFU

Tours will take you to various cultural attractions in Kutchan: Tea ceremony, laid sword demo, Taiko drums, sake-brewery tour and Japanese dinner. ¥5000/¥3000. Departs Seicomart Hirafu, ends in Kutchan.



www.niseko.co.jp/plat/

"Experience Japan's cultural heritage on Friday 18th"

3-7.30pm
Feb 3, 18
Bookings essential
☎ 0136 23 0222

E1 Niseko Foot

p54 UPPER HIRAFU

Visit this popular relaxation salon and sample some of our many treatments. All different styles of massage are available for body and feet. 30-minute, 60-minute and 90-minute courses available. Big groups welcome. Also osteopathy and sports injuries.



www.grand-hirafu.jp/nisekofoot

Closest healing relaxation therapy spot to Centre 4 lift

Open daily
11am-10pm
Free pickup available
☎ 0136 22 1224

F1 NISS

p54 HIRAFU AND HANAZONO 308

Niseko International Snowsports School is designed to assist your Hanazono/Hirafu snow holiday. With two great locations and a suite of programs we'll help you learn new skills, gain confidence and above all enjoy your time in the powder of Niseko.



www.hanazononiseko.com

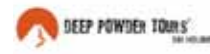
Kids are our speciality Hirafu and Hanazono

8.30am-4pm
Ticket sales/Kids Centre
Hirafu and Hanazono 308
☎ 0136 21 6688

E2 Deep Powder Tours Ski Holidays

p54 UPPER HIRAFU

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



www.deeppowdertours.com

The ultimate ski and snowboard experience

7 days
10am-6pm
☎ 0136 21 5827

D1 Niseko Photography Tours

p54 UPPER HIRAFU

From the deepest powder pics to group tours and family shots - Niseko Photography are the local professionals. Book a private tour and we will capture your priceless holiday memories while you and your friends or family cruise the mountain.



www.nisekophotography.com

Niseko's professional photographers

Gallery: midday-8pm
On the mountain:
all day, everyday
☎ 0136 22 5764

B2 Niseko Massage

p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

Experienced massage therapists, specialising in oil massage for recovery and relaxation. Early bird special offers discounted rates for massages before 2pm. From ¥6,000 per hour. Gift vouchers available.



www.nisekomassage.com

Sports and relaxation massage in the middle of Hirafu

7 Days
8am to 8pm
☎ 0136 22 0399

E3 NOASC

p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

NOASC is Niseko's premier winter adventure company. We offer ski school (skiing/snowboarding/telemarking) lessons for kids through to advanced skiers, powder lessons, mountain guiding, snowshoe tours, CAT skiing, Niseko Explorer Private tours, kids adventure school, and backcountry tours.



www.noasc.com

Just Do It adventure tours - an experience you won't forget

8:00am to 7:00pm
All year round
☎ 0136 23 1688

RETAIL & SHOPPING

B3 Cocoroya

p53 KUTCHAN

Located on Kutchan high street, Cocoroya offers a wide range of Japanese antiques, furniture, Kimono and original handmade gifts. We also stock a selection of high-quality power stone jewellery.



www.cocoroya.jp

Take home a unique piece of Japan

11.00am-7.30pm
Open every day
☎ 0136 23 0008

D1 Fusion Sports Shop

p54 HIRAFU AND HANAZONO

Great gear, good value, friendly staff. Fusion provides all your on mountain and après needs. Popular brands like Burton, Oakley, Dakine, The North Face, Volcom and more.



www.hanazononiseko.com

Gear for the elements at two locations in Niseko

Hirafu 8am-9pm
Hanazono 8.30am-5pm
☎ 0136 21 6633(Hirafu)
☎ 0136 23 0911(Hanazono)

D1 Niseko Photography Gallery

p54 UPPER HIRAFU

Stunning prints and fine art canvas works. Niseko Photography's gallery is a showcase of beautiful photography from Niseko's stunning four seasons. We also stock t-shirts, handmade beanies and souvenirs as well.



www.nisekophotography.com

Photo gallery - fine-art prints and souvenirs

7 days
midday-8pm
☎ 0136 22 5764

B3 SEKKA STYLE Shop & Gallery

p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

A collection of unique photography, antiques and objects d'art selected by Shouya Grigg, the style-impresario behind the SEKKA projects.



www.sekkastyle.com

You can never get enough SEKKS

1-7pm
Closed Mondays
☎ 0908 274 4814

D3 Ezo Seafoods

p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

We stock seafood for takeaway sourced daily from the coast - oysters, King Red Crab, salmon, and more. We also prepare seafood platters and fish and chips.



www.ezoseafoods.com

Niseko's seafood supplier

7 days
Open from 4pm
☎ 0136 22 3019

E3 Momiji Gallery

p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

Gallery is a mix of stunning photography, renowned Hokkaido artists, (working in paint, bronze and plastic), unique antiques and gifts, postcards and gourmet cookies.... An artful fusion of old and new, Japanese and Western.



Art and Photo gallery, gifts and antiques

Open 7 days
2-7.30pm
☎ 0136 55 8585

D2 Sakura

p54 UPPER HIRAFU

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



www.sakura-niseko.com

Your one-stop Japanese souvenir shop

Daily
1-7pm in winter
☎ 0136 21 7007

D2 Yukara

p54 UPPER HIRAFU

Stocking a wide variety of souvenirs, original t-shirts, Hokkaido sweets and more. Remember your holiday and take home a souvenir with you.



Reopen on 2nd floor of Tozanken Asahikawa Ramen Restaurant

7 days
9am-10pm
0136 23 4546

RENTAL & SERVICES

D1 Demo Equipment Hire

p54 UPPER HIRAFU/HANAZONO

New store at The Vale Niseko. Huge fleet of K2 and Salomon skis and boots, Burton snowboards and boots, helmets and snow shoes for adults and kids. Deep powder, park, groomed, off-piste, back country – we have equipment to suit all conditions and all levels.



www.hanazononiseko.com

Free drop off at Hirafu
Free O'night Storage 308

Hirafu 8am–9pm
The Vale 8–10am, 4–8.30pm
Hanazono 8.30am–5pm
(0136 21 6677

C3 Hermosa Angel Massage

p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

Offering both traditional shiatsu and relaxing oil massages either in your suite or at the J-Sekka massage space, Inka Rebeza's skilled practitioners provide truly exceptional service. Chida-sensei's team has a course to suit you, with flexible bookings and a variety of packages available.

www.j-sekka.com



Relax and rejuvenate in the heart of hirafu

Open 7 days
Appointments available from 3pm–midnight
(0136 21 6133

F7 Niseko Auto Rentals and Sales

p53 HIGASHIYAMA

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

www.nisekoauto.com

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



9am–9pm
24hr Emergency English
Roadside Assistance
(0136 44 1144

E3 Niseko Realty Sales

p54 UPPER HIRAFU

Dealing in real-estate sales, property management, and holiday lettings. Our staff are native to the area and know the property market. For trustworthy advice, sales, accommodation contact us at 0136-23-2221, info@nisekorealty.com, or drop by our Hirafu office across from the SPLASH bar.

www.nisekorealty.com

Secure your future in Japan's premier powder ski area



8:00am to 7:00pm
All year round

(0136 23 2221

E3 Glen Claydon Photography

p54 HIRAFU

Complete photographic services including architectural, landscape, stock, prints and panoramic photography for online virtual tours.



www.glenclaydon.com

Complete photographic services

(080 6098 7244

NA J-Build

HIRAFU

- Consulting
- Project Management
- New Homes
- Renovation
- Building Supplies

www.jbuildniseko.com

18 years' experience in Japan



We never close

(090 9380 5729

B2 Niseko Physio

p54 MIDDLE HIRAFU

Australian trained physiotherapists, sports injuries, back and neck pain, rehabilitation, taping, braces, pain relief, managed by Tokyo Physio (est 2002). Massage service also available. Hakuba clinic now open in Phoenix Hotel.

www.nisekophysio.com

Niseko's sports injury centre in the middle of Hirafu



7 days
8am–8pm

(0136 22 0399

D1 Travelplan

p54 UPPER HIRAFU

Australia's #1 snow holiday specialist with 39 years' experience, offering a wide selection of pensions, hotels and quality apartments in Niseko and other resorts. CMH Heli Skiing in Canada – information night every Wednesday at J Sekka.

For more information contact Travelplan.

www.travelplan.com.au



7 days
8am–8pm

(0136 21 5354

www.powderlife.com



Niseko Rules

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

- CERTAIN CLOSED AREAS WITHIN NISEKO ARE STRICTLY OFF LIMIT AND ARE NOT TO BE ENTERED AT ANY TIME** – Snow/Gully between Amurapi and Niseko Village area and Hirafu No. 1 Ski Lift area west of Hirafu are "STRICTLY OFF LIMIT" areas as stated by the Niseko Rules. Those riding these areas WILL have their lift pass confiscated.
- CROSSING ROPES IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED** – Positioning the boundary ropes is prohibited. If you do your lift pass will be confiscated. Use ONLY designated gates to access out of bounds areas. Crossing ropes at other areas will result in lift pass confiscation.
- NO SAFETY CONTROL BEYOND RESORT BOUNDARY** – The area outside the mountain resort boundaries (back country, including the peak) are National Forests and parks, and are not controlled or supervised by the resort or the Ski Patrol. Niseko Rules prohibit that taking and riding these areas is dangerous and if you choose to, you do it AT YOUR OWN RISK.
- BACK COUNTRY SKIING/RIDING IS PROHIBITED** – Back country skiing and riding is prohibited. Back country access gates will be closed and out of bounds riding will be strictly prohibited.
- ALPINE CONDITION INFORMATION** – The "Niseko Avalanche Information" is the official information posted by "Niseko Avalanche Institute". This information can be found at lift stations, access gates and on the Internet.
- BACK COUNTRY RESCUE FEE** – YOU are responsible for the cost of your rescue from back country areas.
- SKI AND SNOWBOARD PATROL** – INSTRUCTIONS MUST BE OBEYED

Niseko Rules insist that all resort users respect the instructions of the Ski Patrol and the Ski Patrol is the authority on the mountain. **RESPECT THE PATROL**. The Niseko Rules have been created with everyone's safety in mind. In order for everyone to remain safe, everyone must respect and follow these rules.

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

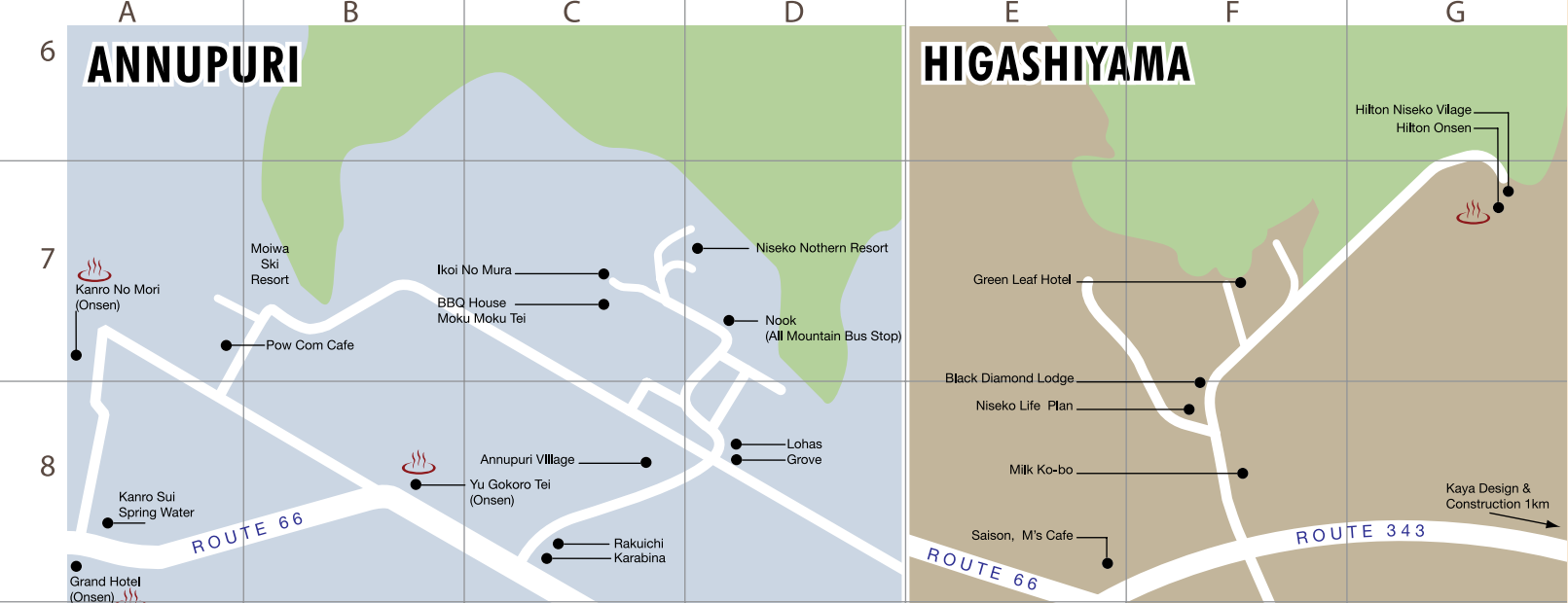
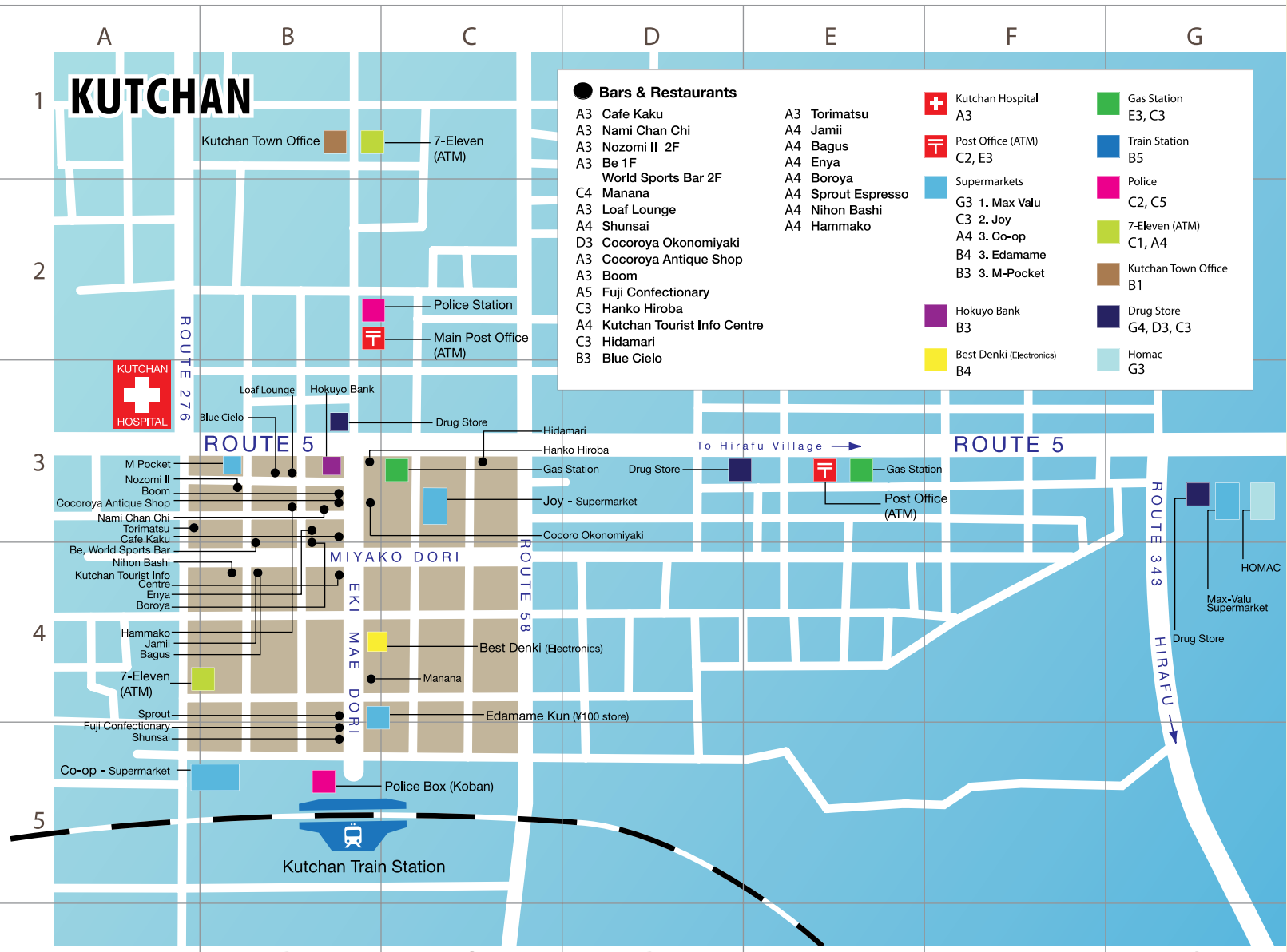
Avalanche Control Area

Various methods of Avalanche Control are in use in this area in the interest of increasing avalanche awareness and safety.

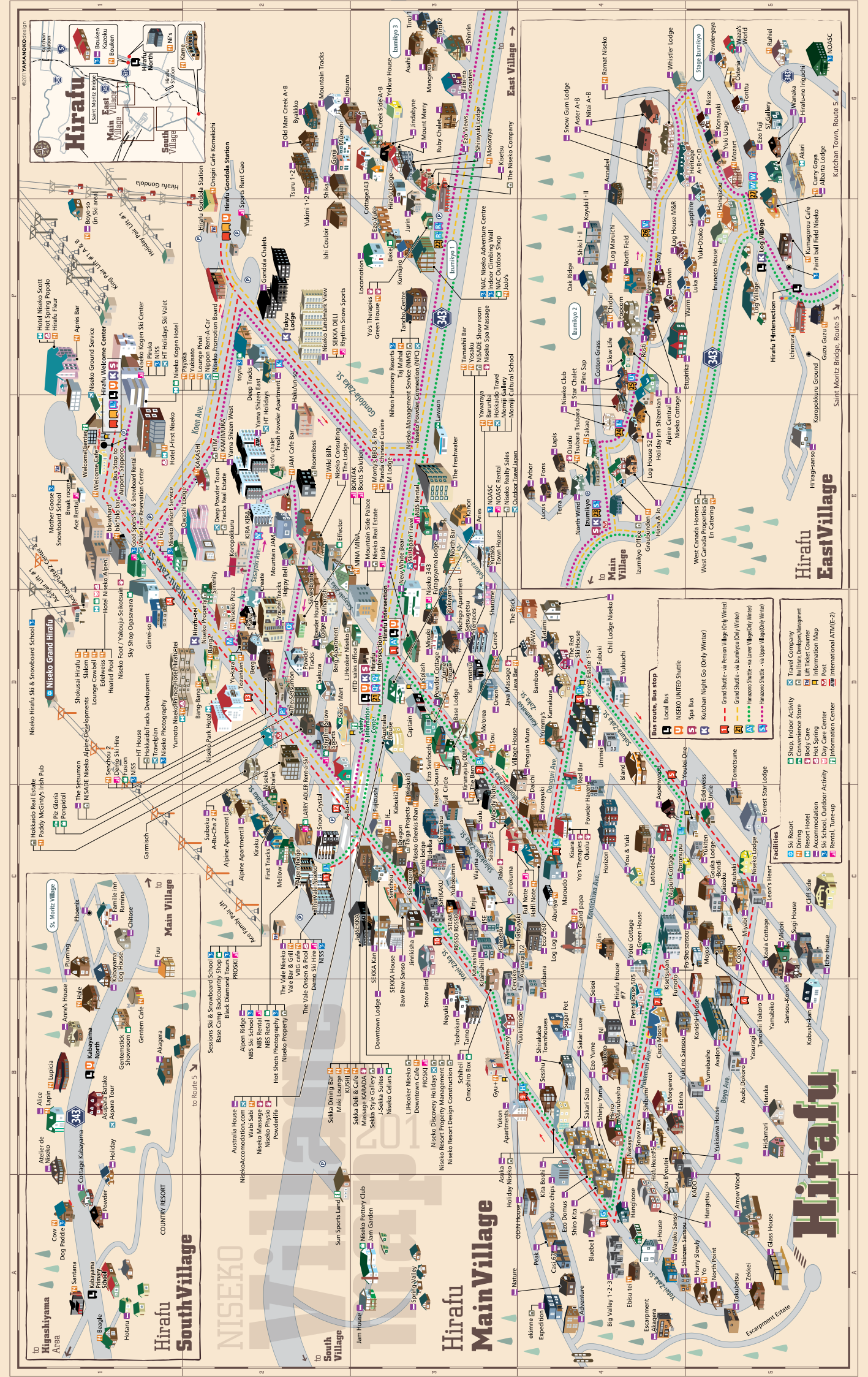
Only skiers and riders participating in the program are permitted to use this area.

Contact: Niseko Village 0136-44-2211

- Un-groomed Slope
 - Easiest / More Difficult / Most Difficult
 - Name of Slope / Maximum Gradient / Average Gradient / Run Length
 - Number of seats
 - Name of Lift
 - Length - Time required
 - Half Pipe
 - Park/Kicker, jib, etc.
 - Ski patrol
 - AED
 - Light
 - Gate to uncontrolled area
 - Mogul run
 - Wave
 - Half Pipe
 - OSN(Hot Spring)
 - Shuttle bus stop
 - Parking lot
 - Lift ticket counter
 - Rest room
 - Phone
 - Kid's room
 - Restaurant
 - Cafe
 - Shop
 - Information
 - Rental
 - SKI school
 - OSN(Hot Spring)
 - Shuttle bus stop
 - Parking lot
- *Lift operating times and courses are subject to change due to weather, snow and light conditions etc.



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



* AFTER THE MELT



NISEKO TRIATHLON CAMP

NISEKO has been described as 'Asia's Boulder' with its excellent climate and training facilities drawing athletes from all over Asia. Run by Nisade and Tokyo and Niseko Physio, the tri-camp is in its 3rd year. Running from September 3-10, triathletes of all levels can enjoy excellent accommodation and scenic road cycling, running trails as well as swimming in pristine Lakes Toya and Hangetsu, and the Alpen Hotel pool. See www.nisekotri.com for details.



PAINTBALL

HUNT the deadliest prey – the human – for fun in this tense and addictive sport. If you're interested in this extreme sport, you're in luck because one of the few paintball fields in Japan is right here in the outskirts of Hirafu. Paintball Field Niseko has a large field, filled with various inflatable obstacles to use as cover as you try to take out the other team, one paint-filled pellet at a time.



FRUIT PICKING

FRUIT picking, or as the Japanese translate it 'fruit hunting', is not only a fun activity to do with friends and family, it's also a great way of acquiring some delicious fruit that you know is fresh, because you picked it. Nearby Niki Town, 30 minutes north of Niseko, has a huge selection of fruit farms growing an equally impressive list of fruit to 'hunt', including cherries, berries, grapes, pears, apples and plums.



HOT AIR BALLOONING

SOAR up high and gain a new and grand bird's-eye perspective on the beauty of the Niseko area. The hot air balloon is tethered, stopping the balloon from drifting away, but still allowing you to feel the silent sensation of floating 30m above the ground. This beautiful service runs early mornings from Niseko Village – advanced bookings are required. Prices start from ¥2,500 (or ¥1,800 for children 12 and under).

photo // niseko-pb.blogspot.com

photo // Niseko Village

SUMMER // niseko green farm

NISEKO Green Farm's mission statement is both ambitious and simple: To grow the best organic produce in Japan.

NISEKO Green Farm (NGF) is a 100-ha farm at the footsteps of Mount Yotei that grows natural organic, open-pollinated produce, including potatoes, onions, eggplants, corn and asparagus. These vegetables are all ideally suited to being grown in the local region and thus thrive without external non-organic influences, like chemical fertilisers. As well as organic, heirloom variety vegetables, NGF also grows an assortment of culinary and aromatic herbs.

Long-term resident and man running NGF Dennis Van Den Brink is no stranger around town – he's often referred to as 'that Dutch guy with dreadlocks'. Dennis is also the chef at Wild Bill's this winter, is a keen green thumb and has great passion for organic produce. With NGF he's able to share his knowledge and

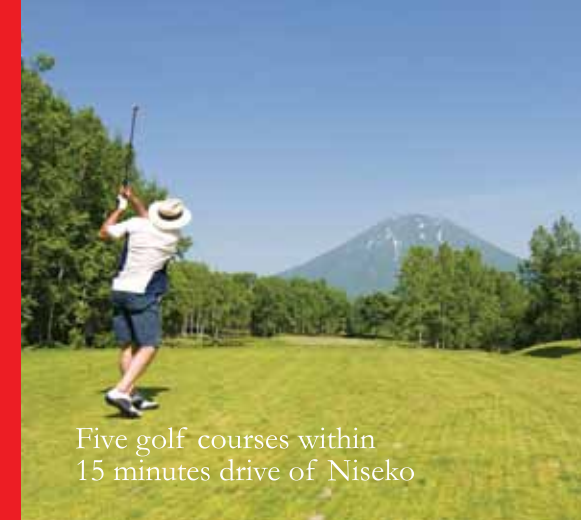
enthusiasm on guided tours around the farm, where he explains and educates about the processes used on the farm and the best ways to cook the produce. He also lets people pick produce fresh from where it is growing. And, because no chemicals are used growing the produce, they can be eaten straight from the plant.

Since crops can't be started until the snow covering the ground melts, seedlings are started in hydroponic greenhouses in early spring. During summer and autumn, there are several stores and markets that stock NGF's produce, including J-Sekka (there is a small honesty stand outside J-Sekka during summer), Sun Green and Yukidaruma in Kutchan, Farmer's Weekend Market at Sapporo Station, The Life Stock in Sapporo and even a few places in Tokyo.



photo // glen claydon

You should see Niseko in Summer!



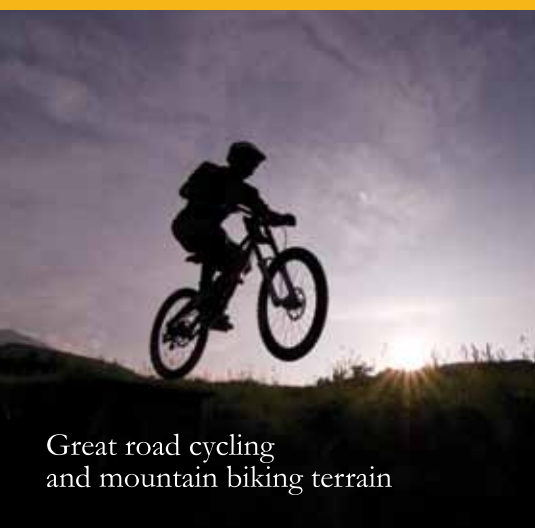
Five golf courses within 15 minutes drive of Niseko



NISEKO
Hokkaido



Chelsea
with Ski Wear



Great road cycling and mountain biking terrain



Comfortable!



Rapid rivers for rafting



Hanazono Adventure Park



Fresh local produce



Visit us online www.nisekochelsea.com

* TRAVEL FEATURE // climbing mount fuji



PHOTOGRAPHY AND WORDS BY // ross cole-hunter

AT 3776 m above sea level, Mount Fuji is not only the highest mountain in Japan, it's also one of the most iconic in the world. The official climbing season is during July and August, and while you're able to climb it at any time, climbing outside of these dates may mean conditions won't be optimal, and the shops and huts on the mountain are likely to be shut.

MY brother and I decided to climb from Fujinomiya-guchi shin-go-gome (Fujinomiya trail, new fifth station) – the quickest and the shortest route to the summit, starting from a car park at 2,400 m. For us the attraction was reaching the summit, not so much the hike itself. However, in retrospect we regret not starting from the bottom, as the trail weaves through an ancient and scenic forest, instead of a barren rocky trail.

It was a little before midnight when we arrived at the car park at shin-go-gome after driving through

impossibly thick fog and clouds up the long, tight, twisty dark road that snakes its way up Mount Fuji.

The car park was empty. Being stuck in a crowded, slow moving congo line of people climbing to the summit was one of our major concerns. But, it seemed that people weren't interested in climbing during a raging storm, as during the entire climb, we saw less than 10 other people – eight of whom were climbing back down. Undeterred,

“**Mount Fuji is the highest mountain in Japan and one of the most iconic in the world.**”

we continued the ascent. Our rain jackets stopped being waterproof, our lights were ineffective and the winds didn't stop howling. But, due to the aggressive pace that we were setting, our bodies were radiating with heat. The only salvation from the infinite darkness came from the huts and shops with their fluorescent lights at regular intervals

along the trail. One even had a vending machine, which I thought was both a brilliant and horrible example of modern Japan.

Three-and-a-half hours of climbing later, we'd reached the top of the trail. Only, it wasn't what we were expecting. The huts were all shut, and it was completely dark. A thermometer we found on the outside of a hut read 2°C – it was 25°C at the base. We were cold, wet and tired and left with no

options other than huddling under emergency blankets within a stone doorway, to escape from the wind. We remained here like this for 45 minutes, until the door we were leaning against creaked open at 4am. We'd been sheltering in front of Japan's highest post office. Yes, there is a post office at the top of Mount Fuji. If you send mail from

here, it will be stamped with a special stamp acknowledging your achievements.

As the sun rose, the clouds started to burn off, and we could see the landscape. It was akin to something from a Mad Max movie, barren rocks, giant craters and extremely weathered buildings. We followed a trail around the crater, to get a better view of the sea of clouds and the now visible sun, which had already been up for an hour.

We didn't get the sunrise that we'd hoped for, but we managed to have it to ourselves. We were tired and satisfied, and in basking sunlight, we made our way down through the tide of Japanese making their way to the summit. Two hours of half-walking, half-sliding down the loose gravel we were back at our car, in the now crowded car park.

Details:

Where: 2.5 hours southwest of Tokyo

Getting there: Buses from Tokyo

When: July – August



LAND

All locations

TRE has a large selection of land in all Niseko locations. These range from 50 tsubo blocks to much larger sites in and around the main resort areas. Many are stunning with unique ambience and panoramic views. We have close contact with many Japanese and foreign owners, and so can introduce land that will never be publicly marketed.



FREERIDE LODGE

12

Higashiyama

from ¥39,000,000

Spacious lodge with separate manager's house, well-located in Higashiyama Village and short distance to ski area. Total floor area approx 500sqm and land 993sqm. The property has been well maintained and was renovated by current owner five years ago with considerable timber finishings. Large parking at the front of the property. The options are considerable.

Featured Properties



EZO 4

Middle Hirafu

4
¥89,000,000

Bold architectural residence with premium furnishings and fittings. Spacious, open plan living and kitchen areas. A private retreat close to fine dining.



MIHARASHI 1

Upper Hirafu

2
¥32,000,000

Vendor finance available! One of Hirafu's most reasonable apartments. A funky, modern, central two bedroom unit. Light, airy and a popular rental.



IZUMIKYO LAND

Izumikyo II

3
¥33,600,000

Substantial 925 sqm block with panoramic Mt Yotei views and a quiet, natural environment. Adjacent 926 sqm block is also available to purchase.



MOUNTAIN TRACKS

Izumikyo I

6
¥39,900,000

Large centrally located six-bedroom house with Mt Yotei Views. Options as holiday home, lodge or other commercial. Adjacent land available.



FUBUKI 2

Middle Hirafu

3
¥80,000,000

Spacious and chic premium property with spectacular Mt Yotei and forest views through large picture windows. A short walk to hot spring and many dining options.



HIRAFU HOUSE 7

Lower Hirafu

2
¥42,000,000

Stylish two bedroom home located in leafy, quiet Lower Hirafu. Close to restaurants and bars, with the hot spring across the road. Value for money.

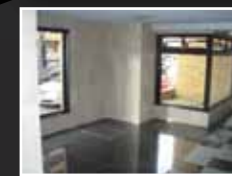


FOREST STAR LODGE

Lower Hirafu

Price on Application

A popular ski lodge in a quiet setting with soothing forest views. Well-equipped for commercial guests but would be easy conversion to family residence.



ASAHI PLAZA 201

Chitose

2
¥6,500,000

Tidy 51.6 sqm two bedroom apartment, rented at 66,000 JPY/pm- a 12.18% net return. Located very close to Chitose train station. Great investment.



+81 (0)136 22 69 77
sales@tracksrealestate.com
www.tracksrealestate.com

Big mountain. Big dream. Big picture.

A property investment in Niseko offers tremendous potential for both lifestyle and financial returns. But the market is complex and dynamic. To invest wisely you need to consider many factors. In other words, you need to accurately see the big picture.

Led by long time realtor Jason King, the Hokkaido Real Estate team boasts over 60 exclusive listings, putting you ahead of the pack right from the start. Having focused on the Niseko market for over six years (a long time for this area), we have comprehensive knowledge from both local and international perspectives. We do not trade in the market, so we remain impartial, allowing us to always keep your best interests at heart.

In short, we'll objectively present you with a wide range of options and considerations so that you can make informed and intelligent investment decisions.

For a private discussion anytime, or to join a Wednesday evening 'Big Picture' seminar, call Jason on +(0136) 21 6211 or email jason@hokkaidorealestate.com



THIS WEEK'S FEATURE



**HOKKAIDO
REAL ESTATE.COM**

