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NISEKO ニセコ

Issue 35 // December 17 to 30 // 2011

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HIRAFU TURNS 50

High-speed, half-century birthday gift

DISCOVER HOKKAIDO

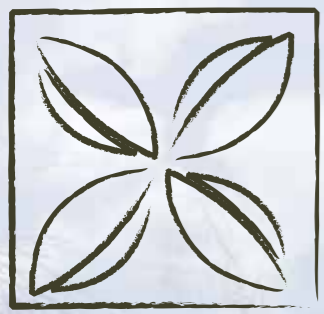
Getaways from Noboribetsu to Tenninkyo

RESORT GUIDE

Your guide to Niseko - page 27

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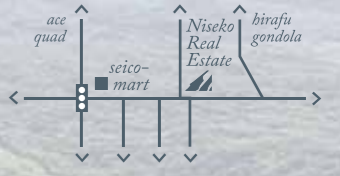
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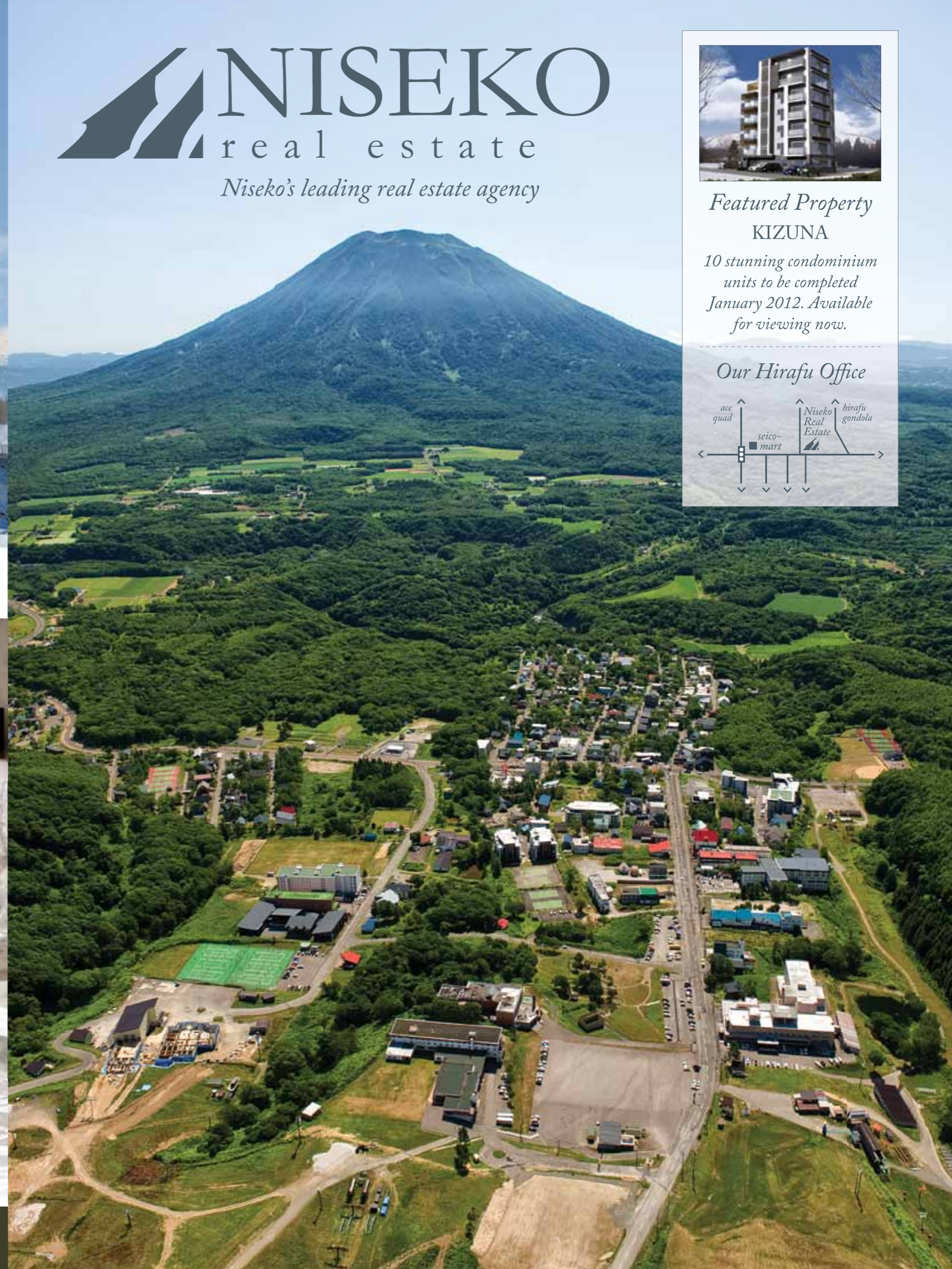
Featured Property
KIZUNA

*10 stunning condominium
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powderlife
NISEKO ニセコ

winter print run 35,000 estimated readership 100,000+
編集長 managing editor Kerstin Winter カーストン・ウインター
出版者 publisher Kristian Lund クリス・ランド,
Bevan Colless ベバン・コレス
副編集長 associate editor Kanami Anderson 加奈美・アンダーソン
デザイナー designer Paul Malandain ポール・マランティン,
投稿者 contributors Chris Chan
写真撮影 photography Niseko Photography, Glen Claydon Photography
翻訳者 translation Michiko Prior フライアー・典子,
Saoko Wakasugi 若杉・さおか
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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

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Niseko's first English language periodical magazine – published every two weeks in Niseko between December and March, once a year as a globally distributed Niseko promotional issue (Powderlife Global Edition).
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 // The new 8-person Hirafu gondola photo // glen claydon

IMAGINE

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HIRAFU-ZAKA MAIN STREET MASTER PLAN

* EDITOR'S NOTE



WELCOME back to a new season with Powderlife magazine and thank you for all the support and ideas the new editing team here has received.

As this is the first issue since the devastating earthquake on March 11, we've swapped some of the regular content pages with our feature "Niseko post-March 11" to reassure worried visitors that Hokkaido was never affected by the earthquake, tsunami or nuclear disaster. At no time has Niseko shown abnormal radiation levels and the community has even functioned as a refuge for families from affected areas. While the number of foreign visitors to Niseko plummeted in the immediate aftermath of the earthquake - mainly due to the sensationalist international media coverage - domestic tourists numbers soared and Niseko saw one of the busiest summer seasons on record.

The return of overseas tourists to Japan is now picking up fast and with Grand Hirafu celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, the coming months will be packed with parties and events on and off the slopes.

Make sure to read our snow reporter Chris Chan's weather updates in every issue and on *Powderlife.com*. While the beginning of last December saw one of the worst snowfalls on record and February was unusually warm, Chris forecasts solid snowfall throughout the 2011/2012 Season.

And with Christmas around the corner, we've compiled some ideas for you on how and where to spend it on our local events calendar "In the loop" and the new sightseeing and activity page "Discover Hokkaido".

We hope you enjoy this issue and wish you a great start to the new season. Merry Christmas!

Kerstin Winter, Powderlife Managing Editor, kerstin@powderlife.com

パウダーライフマガジンのシーズンが到来です!編集チームへの皆様のあたたかいサポートと素晴らしいアイデア、感謝いたします。

今月は創刊号であり、いつもと違うコンテンツを載せることになったページもありました。「3月11日、津波以降のニセコ」においては、北海道は震源地から遠いところもあり、地震や津波そして原発の影響が少なかったという事、そしてニセコでの放射線レベルは全く問題ないという事もお伝えしています。地震直後、国際メディアによる過激な報道が元となりニセコへの訪問者は激減したものの、夏期の国内からの訪問者は今までで一番を記録しました。

海外からの訪問者も徐々に増えていき、なんと今年はグランド比羅夫では50年目を迎えます。これからはイベントやパーティーなどで盛りだくさんの冬となるでしょう。雪の情報については毎号のパウダーライフやPowderlife.comで配信されるクリス チャンさんからの情報を参考にしてください。昨年の12月の雪の状態は今までで最悪、そして2月も異常に暖かかったと記録されていますが、クリスマスによると今年2011年と2012年に渡って最高の積雪が予想されているとの事です。クリスマスがもうすぐでやってきます。どうやって祝おうかと迷っている人もいるのでは。そんな時はローカルイベントカレンダーの"インザループ"そして新しい観光地やアクティビティを紹介しているページの"ディズカバリー ホッカイドウ"を参考にしてください。

創刊号を楽しんでいただけましたでしょうか。素敵なシーズンをお楽しみください! メーリークリスマス!

カースティン ウィンター パウダーライフマガジン編集者, kerstin@powderlife.com



CG Image, Final construction may vary slightly



Proudly supported by the Niseko Community!

絆

KIZUNA

JANUARY 2012 COMPLETION

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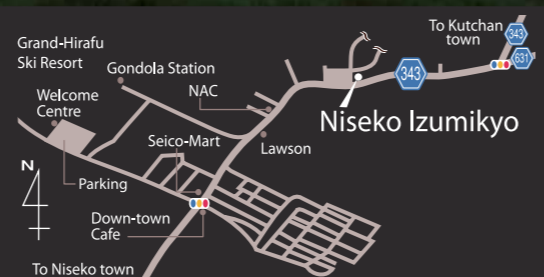
Cottage Lapis Completed in 2011



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* FLUFF // light news & information

SNOW BETTER PLACE



SINCE the first snow on Mt. An'nupuri on October 1st, locals have been pondering the season. Though village level falls were slightly late, since then everything's been good. And as we go to press a sweeping snow system looks set to deliver 2m+ of white gold all the way from Russia!

Hokkaido's snow starts as cold air blowing across Siberia. This picks up moisture over the warmer Sea of Japan and continues southeast until it strikes the Niseko mountains and drops that fluffy pow right here. So with one snow system about to arrive - and another just behind it - we're looking at a better early winter than the last couple. The signs are good that 2011/12 may end up better even than 08/09's epic season!

by Chris Chan

ATTENTION GOURMETS! HOKKAIDO GETS MICHELIN GUIDE

THE world famous Michelin gourmet guide has finally discovered Hokkaido – the food bowl of Japan – and announced the release of a Hokkaido edition in the spring of 2012.

The news that Michelin food experts are currently sampling food across the island is "a huge chance to get exposure for Niseko as a food destination and to attract more high-end customers," says Yuichi Kamimura (right), chef and owner of Kamimura restaurant in Hirafu. Kamimura-san is the protégé of Tetsuya Wakada, a three-star Michelin chef himself heading the kitchen of one of Australia's best restaurants, Tetsuya's. "My restaurant is the style Michelin usually covers. With a Michelin star I could invest more money in the interior and more easily find highly-qualified staff," he says. "I wouldn't change the menu just because Michelin might drop in. The food we do is

very good." Kamimura would be more than satisfied with one Michelin star, which denotes "a very good restaurant in its category". Two would be for "excellent cooking, worth a detour" and three stars "exceptional cuisine, worth a special journey".

Japan now has more Michelin three-star restaurants than France. Michelin has been operating in Japan for five years, not only covering Tokyo and Kyoto but the surrounding areas of these big cities as well. With Hokkaido finally getting some exposure an influx of tourists is expected. According to a Japanese government survey, more than 70 percent of foreign visitors in Japan cited food as a primary reason for their visit.

Michelin Japan has confirmed that the first details of the Japanese version will be announced in time for your New Year's Eve dinner. Perhaps it's time to reserve your seats at Kamimura.



SAPPORO CHRISTMAS MARKET & WHITE ILLUMINATION



INSPIRED by one of the biggest and most traditional Christmas markets in the world, Sapporo currently offers the same atmosphere as its sister city Munich in Germany.

Christmas markets originated in Germany during the Middle Ages and have often been copied but rarely equaled as they have in Sapporo. Organisers say this year's event is packed with performances from nativity plays to puppet theatre. Shopping for original and creative souvenirs is made easy with dozens of stalls selling traditional Christmas gifts that are not mass-produced but handcrafted work of real quality. From wood carved toys and nativity figurines to

authentic German mulled wine and baked cinnamon apples, you're sure to find something you haven't seen or tasted before.

No need to be disappointed if you are not in Sapporo before the market shuts on December 24th – the equally spectacular "White Illumination" runs until February and has been hailed as one of the most beautiful winter illuminations in the world by several foreign travel guides. On the snow-covered Odori Park, dozens of landmarks and installations are glistening in streams of thousands of lights after dark. Over the years the White Illumination has evolved and this year creators have prepared some experimental artwork.

* NISEKO NEWS // tracking down local stories

HIRAFU RESORT CELEBRATES 50 YEARS

PREPARE for a string of parties and events in the coming weeks – Grand Hirafu is celebrating its 50th anniversary.

It kicks off with a party on December 17th and *Powderlife Magazine* and *powderlife.com* will keep you in the loop on the upcoming related events and celebrations. To get you started, we've listed several anniversary events in this issue's "In the loop" (page 12).

Tokyu Resort Service say their entertainment program has something for everyone – including those who want to enjoy Japanese culture.

For skiers and snowboarders the most exciting news must be the brand new eight-person

gondolas, which travel at speeds of up to 6m/second. They will be up on Mt Annupuri in just five minutes as opposed to the eight minutes the previous four-person gondola took.

The high-speed gondolas and new ski centre opened exactly half a century after the very first ski lift began operating in Hirafu resort.

The first gondolas installed in 1961 were part of the reason Japan experienced its first ski boom. Only one year later Grand Hirafu hosted the All Japan Ski Championships.

The resort and the whole Niseko area have come a long way since and if you would like to know more about the history you can purchase the 50th anniversary history book in Japanese or English at the Alpen Hotel gift shop.



photo // glen claydon

HIRAFU-ZAKA ROAD WORKS UNDER CONSTRUCTION!

THE long-awaited renovation to Hirafu-Zaka Street broke ground this summer, starting at the top of the street with workers making preparations to bury power lines.

We all relate to the delight of coming across new changes in Niseko each winter. In the seven months between each season, building projects rise up into the air, signs vanish and new ones pop up, and the mountain and its trails provide a new experience year-to-year.

Even checking the new trail map offers a small thrill. Imagine the thrill of stepping off a bus into a Hirafu unobstructed by power lines. Freestanding lights will shine on a road and sidewalks cleared of snow at all times of day by underground heating. This year, workers buried 100 meters of conduit and cable boxes for power lines that will be moved underground. As work progresses, these workers

will continue burying the bright orange conduits down to the traffic lights. Once complete, the current power lines weaving overhead on Hirafu-Zaka Street will be replaced with new, underground lines. Simultaneously, workers will install 3.5-meter-wide heated sidewalks and curbs on either side of a newly paved road, also with its own underground heating system. Finally, the former power poles along the main street will be permanently removed, replaced by trees and numerous streetlights illuminating the road and sidewalks.

From its inception, the Hirafu-Zaka project has been a community effort, and although the time donated is impossible to calculate, we all look forward to a manicured summer street and safer, more attractive winter thoroughfare in the near future.

by Max Friedman, Niseko Promotion Board



Hirafu-Zaka as it is now



Hirafu-Zaka proposed look after completion

NISEKO CULTURAL SCHOOL OPENS

FOR those interested in discovering the hidden cultural gems of Niseko and learning about Japanese Arts, Niseko Cultural School is offering a very diverse program.

Owner Margo Bartley has just opened the school above her gallery, Momiji Art Gallery. "We can show visitors so many great authentic Japanese places in Niseko and Kutchan and all our classes are run by English speaking teachers from the area," she says.

Gourmets can learn how to make authentic Japanese food like sushi and sukiyaki and for the outdoor enthusiast there are regular tours of Shinto Shrines and Buddhist temples. Small classes on the traditional tea ceremony, calligraphy and on how to wear a Kimono are also held every week. For accompanying partners who don't take part in the classes, on the ground floor, Momiji Art Gallery has different exhibitions throughout the season.



Thank you!
NISEKO HIRAFU
50th

NEW! Hirafu Gondola

NEW! Grand HIRAFU Mountain Center

Cafe&Bar 9:30-20:00 Meals 11:00-16:00

NEW! Tanta•an
(Grand HIRAFU Mountain Center 2F)

NEW! Kids Lesson Area

NEW! Web booking

Grand HIRAFU

<http://www.grand-hirafu.jp>

Restaurant Slalom
(Dinner ¥4,300)

Shokusai Hirafu
(Sashimi Chirashi ¥3,200)

Cafe Edelweiss
(Handmade Sweets ¥500~)

Swimming pool

Open air hot spring bath

Bedrock sauna bath

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← ¥10,000 return	← ¥7,000 return	

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Niseko - New Chitose Airport		New Chitose Airport - Niseko		Niseko - Sapporo City	
Departs Niseko	Arrives Airport	Departs Airport	Arrives Niseko	Departs Niseko	Arrives Sapporo
08:00	10:30	12:00	14:30	09:30	12:00
09:00	11:30	14:00	16:30	Sapporo City - Niseko	
10:00	12:30	15:00	17:30		
11:00	13:30	16:30	19:00	Departs Sapporo	Arrives Niseko
15:00	17:30	19:00	21:30	12:30	15:00
17:00	19:30	21:30	23:59		

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* IN THE LOOP // what's on around town

DEC 2011

<p>17 50th Anniversary Hirafu Special Birthday ニセコグラン・ヒラフ 誕生50周年 "Kiki and Willie soulful vocal night" at Tanta-an, 2nd floor of the New Mountain Centre. Kiki and Willie ソウルフル・ナイト。 www.grand-hirafu.jp/50th/new_en.html</p>	<p>18 Tamashii Movie Night 魂ムービーナイト Kick back and watch a movie on Tamashii's big screen with a cold Sapporo in hand. 冷たいサッポロビールと大きいスクリーンで映画を楽しもう。 Start // 8pm Place // Paddy McGinty's Irish Pub Contact // 0136-55-8020</p>	<p>19 Acoustic Music night 魂アコースティックナイト Every Monday come and watch different bands playing live. 毎週月曜日 バンド演奏あり。 Start // 7:00 pm Place // Tamashii Bar Contact // 0136 55 8505</p>	<p>20 Snow Candles at Niseko Annupuri Ski Resort ニセコアンヌプリスキー場の雪のキャンドル Come and enjoy candlelight by the ski lift. From Dec 17-25. ナイターリフト乗り場をキャンドルでライトアップ。 chuo-bus.co.jp/annupuri/english.php Start // After dark Place // Niseko Annupuri Ski Resort Contact // 0136 58 2080</p>
<p>21 Lady's Special Lunch Pack レディーススペシャルランチパック ¥ 3,500 for a 5-hour Annupuri lift pass, lunch, and a hot spring visit! アンヌプリ5時間券 + 温泉 + ランチ 3,500円 chuo-bus.co.jp/annupuri/english.php Start // All Day Place // Niseko Annupuri Ski Resort Contact // 0136 58 2080</p>	<p>22 Island Vibes Night at blo*blo アイランドパイブ Awesome tiki cocktail specials. Soul, dub and calypso tunes. チキカケテル スペシャル ソウル、ダブ、カリブソ チューン www.blowhardallday.com/japan Start // 7:00 pm Place // blo*blo Contact // 0136 22 1269</p>	<p>23 Live Christmas Jazz music クリスマス ジャズ ミュージック ライブ Masato Jaiko and Miho Jonishi Christmas Jazz set. サクソフ奏者、蛇池雅人とジャズシンガー、上西美帆 クリスマスライブ。 grand-hirafu.jp/50th/new_en.html Start // 6:00 pm Place // Restaurant Tanta-an Contact // 0136 22 0109</p>	<p>24 Grand Hirafu Xmas Eve Fireworks グラン・ヒラフ 花火大会 After night skiing there will be a fireworks display in Hirafu Village. グラン・ヒラフの夜をキャンドルの灯りで照らします。イヴ(24日)の夜には打上花火が上がります。 grand-hirafu.jp/50th/new_en.html Start // Shortly after night skiing Place // Grand Hirafu Contact // 0136 22 0109</p>
<p>25 Grand Hirafu's Santa Present Day グラン・ヒラフ メリーメリークリスマス Santa will be on Grand Hirafu's pure white slopes all day giving out sweets and gifts. 毎年恒例! サンタさんがゲレンデでお菓子を配ります。滑りながら探してね。 Start // 10:00 am Place // Grand Hirafu Contact // 0136 22 0109</p>	<p>26 Suibokuga demonstration at Momiji Gallery 水墨画デモンストレーション A two hour demonstration of traditional monochrome Japanese ink painting by Nishimura-Sensei. 墨を使った水墨画のデモンストレーション(2時間)、西村 先生。 www.momijinisekogallery.com/ Start // 2:30 pm Place // Momiji Gallery Contact // 0136 55 8585</p>	<p>27 BBQ night at blo*blo バーベキューナイト ¥ 1500 for a huge BBQ plate + salad + a delicious fruit cocktail. バーベキュープレート、お肉、サラダとフルーツ付 1500円。 www.blowhardallday.com/japan/ Start // 7:00 pm Place // blo*blo Contact // 0136 22 1269</p>	<p>28 Snow Event at Niseko Village Ski Resort スノーイベントニセコビレッジ スキーリゾート Disk golf target strike out event. ディスクゴルフ ターゲット ストライクアウト。 www.niseko-village.com/en Start // 4:00 pm Place // Niseko Village Contact // 0136 44 2211</p>
<p>29 Paddy's DJ Party DJ パーティ http://paddymcgintyirishpub.com/en/ Start // 8pm Place // Paddy McGinty's Irish Pub Contact // 0136-55-8020</p>	<p>30 Snow Event at Niseko Village Ski Resort スノーイベントニセコビレッジ スキーリゾート Snag golf target. スナッグ ゴルフ ターゲット。 www.niseko-village.com/en Start // 4:00 pm Place // Niseko Village Contact // 0136 44 2211</p>	<p>31 Paddy's Christmas Turkey Dinner パディーズクリスマスターキーディナー Book in advance for a special turkey dinner in this homely Irish pub. ターキーディナーは御予約をお願いします。 http://paddymcgintyirishpub.com/en/ Start // Dec. 24th & 25th Place // Paddy McGinty's Contact // 0136 55 8030</p>	<p>32 Live Music at Half Note Jazz Bar and Café ジャズ・バー&カフェ ハーフノート Esmie from Sapporo sings a wide range of jazz, pop, gospel, soul and R&B. ジャズ、ポップス、ゴスペル、ソウル、R&Bとレパートリーは広く。 www.nisekohalfnote.com/index.html Start // 9pm Place // Half Note Jazz Bar & Café Contact // 0136 23 2727</p>
<p>33 Paddy's Christmas Turkey Dinner パディーズクリスマスターキーディナー Book in advance for a special turkey dinner in this homely Irish pub. ターキーディナーは御予約をお願いします。 http://paddymcgintyirishpub.com/en/ Start // Dec. 24th & 25th Place // Paddy McGinty's Contact // 0136 55 8030</p>	<p>34 Live Music at Half Note Jazz Bar and Café ジャズ・バー&カフェ ハーフノート Esmie from Sapporo sings a wide range of jazz, pop, gospel, soul and R&B. ジャズ、ポップス、ゴスペル、ソウル、R&Bとレパートリーは広く。 www.nisekohalfnote.com/index.html Start // 9pm Place // Half Note Jazz Bar & Café Contact // 0136 23 2727</p>	<p>35 Paddy's Christmas Turkey Dinner パディーズクリスマスターキーディナー Book in advance for a special turkey dinner in this homely Irish pub. ターキーディナーは御予約をお願いします。 http://paddymcgintyirishpub.com/en/ Start // Dec. 24th & 25th Place // Paddy McGinty's Contact // 0136 55 8030</p>	<p>36 Live Music at Half Note Jazz Bar and Café ジャズ・バー&カフェ ハーフノート Esmie from Sapporo sings a wide range of jazz, pop, gospel, soul and R&B. ジャズ、ポップス、ゴスペル、ソウル、R&Bとレパートリーは広く。 www.nisekohalfnote.com/index.html Start // 9pm Place // Half Note Jazz Bar & Café Contact // 0136 23 2727</p>



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NISEKO ニセコ

* SNAP



GRAND HIRAFU OPENING

LOCATION // GRAND HIRAFU WELCOME CENTRE

GRAND Hirafu's opening ceremony was blessed with snow this year, and even before the annual ritual began there were people on the hill enjoying the fresh powder. A Shinto priest performed a traditional ceremony on November 26, asking the gods to grant a safe and prosperous 2011-12 winter season. More than a hundred spectators joined in on the prayers for safety and good fortune. Later on 30 local and business leaders cut the ceremonial ribbon to mark the opening of the season, followed by a taiko drum performance.



photos // yasu - niseko photography

FIRST TRACKS IN NOVEMBER

LOCATION // GRAND HIRAFU

WOODLEY the dog and 10 riders set off to take advantage of the first significant snowfall of this winter season on November 16, ringing in the Niseko First Tracks for 2011. It was a beautiful sunny morning with knee-deep snow and photographer Glen Claydon was able to snap some epic powder shots. After their run most of the group had to take off to work, but the Alpen ski run was still untouched, so Woodley and four riders hiked back up to carve some more first tracks in Grand Hirafu.



photos // glen claydon



* FLASH



Excited to have snatched one of the last boards on sale after battling through the crowds of bargain hunters.



Chook & Christina discuss whether or not she needs another jacket.

FUSION

OPENING PARTY//

Fusion kicked off the season with a busy opening party. Offering 50% off 2011 stock, rental skis and boards for cheap, and free drinks, it was the most happening place in town!

Photos// azza - niseko photography



Teruko shows off her new snowboarding outfit for this winter.



Just enough elbow room to grab a free beer and check out all the deals on last year's gear.



We found Katsuya, Misako, Sachiko and her son Ryoma checking out the jackets upstairs at Fusion.

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* FEATURE // niseko post-march 11

words by // kerstin winter translation by // michiko prior



photos (this page) // azza - niseko photography

“IS NISEKO safe from radiation”? The international media coverage of March 11 and its aftermath may have fuelled doubts abroad. “If it bleeds, it leads” is the mantra in the news media. But in view of March 11 scaremongering and sensationalism has been extraordinary.

Constantly referring to the earthquake in “Northeast Japan”, some foreign media might have created the impression that Hokkaido was part of the disaster zone.

With the earthquake, tsunami and Fukushima plants all in one news story backed up by “experts”, it’s time to stop the international hysteria and look at what has been going on here post-March 11. Niseko experienced a massive 65 per cent increase in domestic visitors coming from outside Hokkaido in July and August when compared to last year. Five per cent account for residents from Fukushima who had been invited to Niseko for a much needed break.

In short, it was one of the busiest summers for the area in terms of domestic visitors.

Overseas visitors were down 38 per cent in July and August. The strong yen and faltering global economy have to be taken into account, but the headlines in the foreign press would have scared the bravest foreign tourist. Government and independent sources have released figures that show air radiation levels here have no abnormalities and that there have been no traces of radioactive

“

The biggest dose of radiation that anyone will get on a skiing holiday to Hokkaido is in the plane coming over here.

cesium or radioactive iodine found in the tap water. Hokkaido is safe, with Japanese tourists flocking here from all over the country to enjoy the nature and fresh air. There is one summer story everyone in the community is proud of – the “Niseko Tsunami Relief Summer Program”.

“All these little boys running around going crazy. Obviously they hadn’t been outside in so long and were just really throwing themselves

into it. And just seeing that action made it worthwhile,” says Program Coordinator Keith Rodgers from Taiga Projects.

Well over 400 people from Fukushima and Miyagi prefectures came up to Niseko this summer for a much-needed break from the stress they’d experienced on March 11 and its aftermath. The pictures of Tohoku’s people searching for their loved ones in the rubble and small

children wearing protective suits and masks, had quickly lead to the idea that Niseko could function as a refuge and bring people from Fukushima back to a sense of normality.

The “Niseko Tsunami Relief Program” was born. Niseko’s foreign property owners provided free accommodation in their apartments and houses and local management companies helped coordinate the participants’ stay. The Hokkaido



www.powderlife.com

* FEATURE // ニセコ3月11日以降の現状について

government paid for transportation from Fukushima to the island.

“It was an unprecedented level of collaboration between different competitors really. All working towards the same thing without monetary objectives, I felt that was a wonderful thing,” Rodgers says. “All efforts were centralized and this really is an example of the strength of this area and its tourism expertise.”

In June the first guests moved into the free accommodation with some staying up to three months. A key part of making the Fukushima people feel welcome was a 5-week activity schedule.

From July 15 to August 31, more than 120 events and dozens of

activities were organised to make the Fukushima people feel welcome. The children enjoyed everything from rafting to “English fun time”. Volunteer Hana Jones coordinated the twice-weekly English lessons and says the support for all activities was phenomenal. “I was really impressed to see how selfless the locals were. A lot of people felt proud to be from Niseko and live here because it made you realise how strong the community is. And it was great to see the village full of happy children”.

For the parents it was a relief to see their children smile again. “We regained not only a normal summer vacation, but also a normal life,

such as playing in the dirt, picking flowers and eating local vegetables,” Yoko Wakisaka from Iwaki city in Fukushima prefecture says. Indeed, there is nothing to worry about when eating local Hokkaido food or playing outside.

“At no time have I heard anything to give me the slightest concern that my family’s health is in danger here in Hokkaido because of what happened in Fukushima. The secret here is proper risk assessment,” says Professor Philip Seaton from Hokkaido University in Sapporo. “The biggest dose of radiation that anyone will get on a skiing holiday to Hokkaido is in the plane coming over here: and that would have happened

with or without Fukushima.”

Seaton has been lecturing about the media hype and says it would be “impossible” to carry on a nationwide conspiracy of covering up radiation levels with so many international and domestic experts monitoring the situation.

Hokkaido University has been inviting international nuclear experts to Sapporo to tell the foreign community that there aren’t any health risks. Prof. Seaton told his students to ignore the international media hysteria and look at the facts - Hokkaido is not “Northeast Japan”. It’s safe.

For more information on radiation monitoring and related issues go to:

原子力についての状況や関連問題においては以下をクリック

www.pref.hokkaido.lg.jp/sm/gat/zenndoumonita_eng.htm

www.ocw.hokudai.ac.jp/OpenLecture/Symposium/2011/SecondSpecialLecture/www.city.sapporo.jp/kokusai/news/quake_english7.html

www.360niseko.com/blog/niseko-radiation/

Tsunami Relief Summer Program:
「津波救助サマープログラム」については以下をクリック

www.taigaprojects.com/about/niseko-tsunami-relief-program/

3月11日に起こった関東地方太平洋沖地震の際、“ニセコは放射線の問題があるなか、いったい大丈夫なのだろうか”と思われんばかりの報道が世界では流されてきていた。「血が流れればトップニュースになる」この言葉は報道業界ではスローガンとされているが、3月11日の地震はすべての人々を含め、不安のどん底へと突落とす光景となりました。

今回地震は「北東での地震」とされているが、海外のあるメディアによると北海道もその被害の地域に入っていると報道。

津波、地震、そして福島原発。これらの言葉に加え、人々を恐怖に陥れるのが「専門家の言葉」である。狂乱のヘドッラ

イン、かつ「原子力」そして「メルトダウン」。もうそろそろ、それらの騒がれている部分ではない現実に向け、3月11日以降、何があったかを見つめてみるでしょう。去年と今年の7月及び8月のニセコへの国内外訪問者は、なんと65パーセントもの増加があった。そのうち5パーセントが福島からの移住者であり、今までの中でも、ニセコが最も賑わった夏となった。

逆に、海外からの7月、8月の訪問者は38パーセント減少。円高と世界的経済の不安定そして決め手となったのが、恐怖を煽る報道。そのなかで、行政と独立機関が発表した内容として空気内には異常数値にあたる量の放射能はまったく見られない。また、セシウムや放

射能イオダインにおいても水道水から発見されていないということだ。北海道は安全な場所であり、国内において訪問者の群れができるほど安全と言われており、新鮮な空気を楽しんでいる。ここで、私たちが誇りをもってお伝えできるこの夏のストーリー「ニセコ 津波救済サマープログラム」についてお伝えしよう。

「小さな子供達が真っ裸になってはしゃいでいるのを見て、今回の活動はやりがいがあり、価値のあるプログラムだった」とTAIGAプロジェクトのプログラムコーディネーター、キースロジャースさんは語る。

420人も福島県人と宮城県人がニセコに移住をしてきた。3月11日の地震

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* FEATURE // ニセコ3月11日以降の現状について



の経験やその後の余波で体と心を休める場所が必要だった為である。東北の方々が愛する人を瓦礫の中を探している場面や、小さな子供達が保護スーツやマスクをつけて歩いている姿を見た瞬間に、ニセコはそんな大変な思いをされている方々の心よりどころになれると確信した。

「ニセコ 津波救済サマープログラム」についてお話ししよう。ニセコに所有物件をもっているオーナーがその物件を宿泊先として福島で被災した方に提供するという行為に賛同。また、北海道政府が福島から北海道への交通費を負担。ロジャースさんは「今回は予想外に素晴らしい同業者内での共同作業/コラボレーションとなり、金銭的な目的は全く持たず、心から真に助けたい一心と、この地区ならではの強みで出来上がったプロジェクトで素晴らしい結果となりました。」と語っている。6月には初めてのゲストが宿泊先に到着し最長で3ヶ月まで滞在した。福島

の方々が滞在する上で重要な点となったのが5週間満喫できるアクティビティである。7月15日から8月31日まで121ものイベントや多数のアクティビティが行

北海道に休暇でスキーをしに来ようと考えている人で放射線を心配している人がいるならば、最大限の放射能は福島の件とはまったく関係なく、飛行機に乗っている自体が一番浴びているでしょう。

われ、福島からの人々を歓迎した。また子供達はラフティングや“イングリッシュ ファン タイム” (英語で楽しもう) に参加。1週間に2度の英語レッスンをボランティア担当したハナ ジョーンズさんは当時の事をこう語る。「地元に住んでいる私たちが無私無欲で物事に取り組んだ事。そしてこのコミュニティがこんなにもすごい影響力があり自分達がどれだけ活躍できるかという事に気が付いたと思う。また、子供達が

の底から楽しそうにしているのをこの目で見る事ができて本当に幸せだった。」子供達だけではなく、親にとっても子供の笑顔を見る事で心安らく時間となった。「夏休みを取り戻したという以上

に、普通の生活を送る事が出来る事、例えば砂で遊んだり、花を摘んだり、地元の野菜を食べたりする事が幸せに感じた」と福島県いわき市の脇坂 洋子さんは語る。彼女の言う通り、北海道は安全そのものであり、地元の食べ物や外で遊ぶということをエンジョイできる場所である。札幌にある北海道大学のフィリップシートン教授は「福島で起こった事件後、私たち家族が北海道に住んでいて

健康が危機にさらされているという感じは全くありません。」と語る。また「北海道に休暇でスキーをしに来ようと考えている人で放射線を心配している人がいるならば、最大限の放射能は福島の件とはまったく関係なく、飛行機に乗っている自体が一番浴びているでしょう」とも語る。

シートン教授はメディアの誇大広告についての講義を行っており「もし原子力のレベルを隠そうとする国内陰謀があったとしても国際的そして国内の専門家が必ず状況把握/監視をしているので隠す事は不可能でしょう。」と語っている。北海道大学では学者を招待し、原子力や原子力が体に及ぼす影響を北海道大学に留学している学生や留学生コミュニティに説明をしている。「国際メディアの誇大広告に惑わされず現実に目を向けて欲しい。“日本の最北”である北海道は安全です」とシートン教授は語る。



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* EAT & DRINK // restaurant review - usagiya



THE Kutchan locals want to keep Usagiya a secret to prevent overcrowding, says owner Mie Uemura, but visitors from as far as Sapporo have discovered this authentic Soba restaurant and the word has spread.

Soba noodles are traditional Japanese noodles made from buckwheat flour and are about as thick as spaghetti. Mie and her husband Hirohito are up in the early hours to make the noodles.

Everything served from broths to sauces and even the drinks are freshly prepared onsite the same day, giving Usagiya its great reputation.

It's tucked away in a hidden alleyway and has limited parking space, but the locals keep coming back for more – not just for the fresh soba, but also the crunchy tempura. These pieces of battered and deep-fried vegetables, meat and seafood come with some of the popular soba sets. You can choose from hot or cold



photos // niseko photography

soba dishes. Cold soba, a traditional summer dish, is the best way to bring out the buckwheat flavour. It tastes light and fresh and is served on a bamboo plate, whereas hot soba is served in a rich broth together with pork, duck or seafood tempura.

If you choose a tempura dish, it comes with soba-tsuyu, a strong dipping sauce, which contains sake and soy sauce. Wasabi or purple grated hot radish can be added to taste, if you like it hot.

Although there is a variety of different typical Japanese dishes, buckwheat is what this place is all about. Mie makes buckwheat tea and a strong alcohol based drink called sobayu-Wari, which is basically shochu in a hot buckwheat broth. Everything is served in Mie's handmade pottery, which can be purchased in the restaurant's shop. The menu is in English, but should you prefer recommendations by the chef, Mie and Hirohito also speak excellent English. Usagiya has space for 24. One side of the restaurant has Japanese decor while the other the intimate feel of a pub. It gets busy in the evenings, so it's best to make a reservation.

T. 0136 23 1641

Location: North 2 Nishi 1-1, Kutchan.
Get off at bus stop "Information Center/ Plat". Times: 11.30-3.00pm and 5.00pm-8.00pm closed Thursdays.

IRASSHAIMASE // "welcome!" - great local businesses



EBISUTEI, Hirafu, Shingo Sugiyama

A KEEN snowboarder who enjoyed the laid back atmosphere of the Hirafu Lower Village, 30-year old Shingo Sugiyama from Tokyo has been coming to Hirafu for 10 years. Three years ago he fulfilled his dream of opening up his own izakaya, a Japanese pub-style eatery. Named after a Shinto god, it offers a genuine Japanese drinking and dining experience. You can try the true Japanese comfort food oden, a kind of stew dish. Warm up by the simmering oden pot with a hot sake or Ebisu beer. Shingo-san also offers a variety of grilled dishes, sautéed chicken and seasonal fish. He runs the izakaya on his own, which gives it an intimate feel.

ひらふ 煮びす亭 杉山新吾さん

ひらふに住み始めてから10年になるというスノーボードが大好きな30歳の杉山新吾さん。ローアビレッジの、のんびりした雰囲気がお気に入りとのこと。3年前に以前から居酒屋を開きたいという夢を叶わせた。名前の由来は神道からとり、日本独自の「居酒屋」を経験できる場所を作り上げた。日本独特の食べ物の中でも体も心もほっこりとさせてくれる「おでん」。熱燗やエビスビールと最高の相性。また、杉山さんはこの煮びす亭を一人で切り盛りしていて、焼き物やチキンのソテー、季節の魚などもあり、ほっとさせてくれる場所を私たちに提供してくれている。



CHEESE KOBO, Niseko, Takashi Kondo

MONBETSU-BORN Takashi Kondo has been in the dairy business all his life, but it was not until after he had travelled to France to study cheese that he decided to open his cheese shop (Cheese Kobo) in Niseko town. The environment here provides the perfect conditions in which to raise happy cows, which produce tasty milk for the cheese kobo's healthy dairy products. Kondo-san makes a multitude of delicious cheeses strictly from local ingredients and with no additives and as an extra bonus visitors to the cheesery can also enjoy viewing the cheese-making process up close.

ニセコチーズ工房 近藤孝志さん

紋別生まれの近藤孝志さんは今までの人生を酪農/乳製品のビジネスマンとして生きている。その種のビジネスマンになるきっかけとなったのが、フランスでのチーズとの出会い。その出会いをきっかけにニセコに乳製品製造所「チーズ工房」をオープンした。ここで、ニセコの環境は乳製品を作るのには最高の環境であり、「幸せな環境にある牛は健康なミルクを作る」という行程が最高の製品を作り上げるのだ。近藤さんがおいしいチーズを作るにあたって必ずこだわっていることがある。それは地元の材料のみをつかい製品をつくりあげること。そして添加物を使わないということである。またチーズの製造工程を近くで見ることが出来るのもここチーズ工房での醍醐味である。

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NISEKO ニセコ



LOCATION niseko backcountry // PHOTOGRAPHY azza - niseko photography // RIDER alle coates

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PROSKI

* REAL ESTATE NEWS // following the niseko market



NISEKO REAL ESTATE MARKET SAFE AND SOUND

DESPITE a tumultuous year in Japan and around the world, local agents report there is continued interest in the Niseko real estate market.

Niseko Real Estate (NRE) managing director Ben Kerr said buyers were cautious but still active. The company sold an average of two to three properties a month through summer and autumn, which was actually an increase on the previous year. "Despite the strong yen, buyers realise there are some good investments available," Kerr said. "Specifically, undeveloped land has been popular, and vendors who have been flexible in their pricing have achieved results. The strong yen has made purchases appear more expensive, but has also allowed some vendors to discount without losing their margins."

Niseko Consulting director Michael Davenport also reports several land and commercial property sales during the summer. "The market has slowed due to the strong yen and global uncertainties, although sales are still going through," Davenport said. "People are still looking for good deals and there is interest in all kinds of properties. Resale of apartments has probably seen the lowest movement. I'm confident that we'll see a few sales this winter and as the yen weakens we will see more people considering Niseko as a sound place to invest."

Niseko Property director Grant Mitchell said long-

term confidence in Niseko remained strong. "Despite the ups and downs associated with natural and financial upheavals there is very strong confidence in Niseko as a resort destination," Mitchell said. "This was clear over the summer with the sale of a number of strategic development sites along Hirafu-Zaka. There is also strong interest at the other end of the market with a steady flow of sales for reasonably priced land and houses."

Mitchell said while the nuclear disaster initially affected confidence in the market, those fears quickly subsided. "The earthquake injected some uncertainty, but confidence returned fairly quickly as people discovered that radiation levels here were unaffected by events a long way away in Fukushima."

Izumikyo Company president Yoshio Nishimura agrees the Fukushima disaster was not a particularly significant factor. "I think nuclear fears had some impact, but, whether someone buys or not is mostly dependent on other factors," Nishimura-san said. "I think people who've been here before and intend on returning already know there is no risk of nuclear contamination, but maybe less-informed people may still hold some fears."

Davenport said the Niseko investor demographic was still maturing with a continuing trend of people investing in the year-round resort lifestyle. "This is great news for Niseko as more investors are utilising their property and helping establish Niseko as a year-round destination."

Kerr agrees the Niseko story is still just beginning: "The natural resources here are just too valuable and too much fun. This little resort still has a long and exciting future ahead." **-By Kristian Lund**

M HOTEL FILLS MARKET NICHE

A BRAND-NEW hotel with modern Western facilities has just opened on Momiji Street, in the heart of Hirafu.

After a trip to Niseko three years ago and a good look around the area, investor John Ling from Hong Kong got the idea to build M Hotel. "Niseko has the best powder snow and is attracting thousands of skiers from around the world. I wanted to build a place in a great location in the village, where guests feel comfortable," he says. "And our prices are more than reasonable for the market."

M Hotel has three spacious suites, 33 standard double rooms; most of them with Mt Yotei views. Room rates start at ¥20,000 and include breakfast for 2 people. Guest rooms can be self-contained as every room provides a fridge and microwave and all the standard interior of a mid-range hotel, including 32-inch flat screen TVs with cable.

A Western standard hotel would not be complete

without a variety of entertainment and that's perhaps where M Hotel really hits the mark. An amusement arcade in the basement will open in late December with about 25 to 30 machines from motor racing to dancing. And not forgetting kiddie rides. Non-hotel guests are welcome to play there until 10pm every night.

A large gym on the terrace with standard fitness equipment and classes are planned for the future. The reception is not manned until the evening, which means the spacious lobby has a boutique hotel atmosphere where guests can relax while having coffee, wine and non-alcoholic drinks with light snacks.

M Hotel is within a few minutes walking distance from the ski lifts in a very lively area of Hirafu with many bars and restaurants.

Monty's Steak House and Bar in the neighbouring building are operated by the same management, which means all M hotel guests are entitled to a 10 per cent discount for food and drinks.



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Best village price



Niseko Property



Alpen Ridge 501 ¥99,000,000
Upper Hirafu 13

Premium ski-in ski-out apartment with ski slope views, great rental return. Alpen Ridge complex has numerous amenities.



Yama Shizen West 602 ¥79,000,000
Upper Hirafu 13

Luxury 129m² penthouse with magnificent Mt Yotei views. Stunning rooftop balcony, jacuzzi and underground car park.



Yotei Tracks 303 ¥65,000,000
Upper Hirafu 13

Central penthouse-style apartment. Light and airy, Mt Yotei views, 2-key.



Higashiyama Ski-in Development Land ¥67,760,000

Large development site suited to tourist accommodation. Next to Niseko Village.



Doctors' House ¥5,000,000
Moiwa 6

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* BACKCOUNTRY // stay safe on the mountain



photo // azza - niseko photography

WITH the pure adrenaline rush of riding through deep untouched powder, it is easy to forget that this exhilarating experience in the backcountry can quickly turn into a nightmare if you are not prepared.

Niseko has a liberal stance toward backcountry snowboarding and skiing, so you are the one who has to make responsible decisions. You must be aware of the risks and dangers associated with an avalanche and backcountry skiing. When venturing into unpatrolled areas, preparation is vital.

Powderlife has compiled some top tips to keep you safe on the mountain.

1. If the backcountry's closed, it's for a reason! Learn and obey the Niseko Rules. They include limiting access to the out-of-bound areas and restricting entry during hazardous conditions.
2. Read and understand weather and avalanche reports posted in Japanese and English at entries and exits to the backcountry.
3. Know where the ski patrol is located. Once an incident gets to a

certain level, know where to go and who to contact for help.

4. Let someone reliable know where you plan to go, your destination and what time you plan to be home.

5. Explore the backcountry with experienced and reliable people. The least experienced person in the group should still know what to do in case of emergency.

6. Make sure everyone is familiar with equipment, which should include a shovel, beacon, probe.

7. No-go areas include Yu no sawa (between Annupuri and Niseko Village), and Haru no taki (cliff area

west of Hirafu). All no-go areas are well sign-posted and marked on resort maps.

8. We strongly suggest using a qualified guide, especially beginners.

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

10. Always remember YOU are responsible for your own decisions and safety.

Daily Avalanche Report
<http://niseko.nadare.info>

Powderlife's Backcountry Guide
www.powderlife.com

FREE BACKCOUNTRY INFORMATION SEMINAR //

Topics // Niseko Rules, safe backcountry travel, terrain evaluation & search techniques with the guides from Black Diamond Lodge.

Location // Black Diamond Tours head office (Niseko Village) - Catch the free shuttle bus to the Niseko Village area & get off at the Milk Kobo stop.

Time // 6-7pm every Tuesday during winter. First Session Dec. 20th

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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 cafés, 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.39, 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: 0136 555 301
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.bdldodge.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.39, E2
Accepts: All major cards

Kutchan Main Post Office

Map: p.39, E3
Accepts: All major cards

7 Eleven
Map: p.39, 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.39, B3

SHOPPING

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

- Hirafu**
- Seicomart** – Map: p.39, D3
- Lawson (24 hours)** – Map: p.39, E3
- Piz Gloria** – Map: p.39, D2
- Alpen Hotel** – offer a smaller range of snacks and drinks. Map: p.39, E1
- Sekka Deli** – gourmet items from Hokkaido. Map: p.39, F2

- Niseko**
- Maeda Shoten** near the Post Office in Niseko, is a superette and liquor store.
- Hanajizou Bakery** sell fresh bread and pastries in store on Tuesday every week.

- Kutchan**
- For a big shopping trip, it's worth venturing into Kutchan Town.
- Homac** for household products. Map: p.39, G3
- MaxValu** for all your food supplies. Map: p.39, G3
- Best Denki** for all your electrical and technical needs. Map: p.39, C4
- M-Pocket** for imported groceries and alcohol. Map: p.39, A3
- ¥100 store** if you're on a budget. Map: p.39, B4

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

- 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 OFFICE

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

ELECTRICITY

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

MEDICAL SERVICES

- Kutchan Kousei Hospital**
- No appointment necessary. Map: p.39, A3
- T: 0136 22 1141
- Niseko Physio**
- The only acute sports injury specialist in the village. Map: p.39, B2
- T: 0136 22 0399
- Tsuruha Drug** (red signage) pharmacy. Map: Route 5 and Route 343. (p.39, G3)

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.

RUBBISH GUIDE

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.

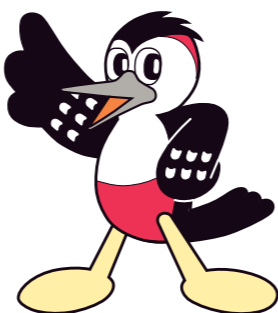
What can you do to help keep Niseko beautiful?

Take a second to be sure you're throwing your garbage in the correct bin

For more information visit www.town.kutchan.hokkaido.jp www.town.niseko.lg.jp



Niseko Town mascots Anniky (above) and Nicky (below) are two brothers based on the Great Spotted Woodpecker - Akagera - that lives in the Niseko area and can be seen on a regular basis.



ONSEN GUIDE

Powderlife's guide and onsen (hot spring) etiquette tips will help you fall in love with this quintessential Japanese experience.

- Yukoro Onsen**
- T: 0136 23 3434 (Hirafu map p.39 B4)
- Hotel Niseko Alpen**
- T: 0136 22 1105 (Hirafu map p.39 E1)
- Hilton Niseko Village**
- T: 0136 44 1111 (Higashiyama map p.39 G7)
- Green Leaf Hotel Niseko Village**
- T: 0136 44 3311 (Higashiyama map p.39 G7)
- Niseko Grand Hotel**
- T: 0136 58 2121 (Annupuri map p.39 A8)
- Kanro no mori** - (private onsen available)
- T: 0136 58 3800 (Annupuri map p.39, A7)
- Niseko Kira no yu** (infront of Niseko Station)
- T: 0136 44 1100 (private onsen available)

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'. Nupuri is 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	
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	
2011	100 years of skiing in Hokkaido and 50 years of ski operation in Hirafu.	

Information courtesy of the Niseko Promotion Board

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 (3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)	'ni' mei desu (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

C2 A-Bu-Cha 2
p.39 UPPER HIRAFU

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



6pm – 2am
Food (L.O) 11.30pm

☎ 0136 22 5620

A wide variety of meals and drinks – top marks

www.abucha.net

E3 Barunba
p.39 MIDDLE VILLAGE

Barunba is a little bar situated on Momiji street. Enjoy your time with local skiers and snowboarders. Have a drink with us, and enjoy our funky, small bar atmosphere here in Niseko!



Open 7 Days
8pm–3am

☎ 0136 55 5615

HAI-CARUMBA! Bar BARUNBA!

C3 Cocoro Okonomiyaki
p.38 KUTCHAN

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



11am – 8.30pm (LO)

☎ 0136 22 1528

Great Food, Great Value!

B3 Downtown Café
p.39 MIDDLE HIRAFU

Downtown Café is open from 7:30am-9:30pm for breakfast, lunch, dinner and takeaways. Locally sourced and organic produce. A great place to relax, be warm and watch the snow.



Open 7 days
8am to 9.30pm
Breakfast, lunch and dinner
☎ 0136 23 3354

We have a warm, cosy atmosphere with coffee & cakes

D2 Bang Bang
p.39 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

We take great pride in our fresh seafood

www.niseko.or.jp/bangbang

E7 Black Diamond Restaurant
p.38 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

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

www.bdlodge.com

D3 Dining Sou
p.39 MIDDLE HIRAFU

Try our popular Japanese nabe hotpot and experience Japanese culture. We recommend Sukiyaki, Shabushabu and Kimuchi hotpots to warm your body up in the cold Niseko winter. Lunch available with reservation, Shabushabu, Sukiyaki or Kimuchi hotpot course from 11am to 2pm. Lunch: ¥1050 - Dessert plate: ¥400



Dinner 6–11pm
Lunch 11am to 2pm
7 days until end of Feb.
☎ 0136 23 3048

Definitely hot pot in Winter! Best ingredients from Hokkaido

www.nisekokabuki.com

A4 Ebisutei
p.39 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
☎ 0136 22 6544

Have fun with our genki and laughing oden bar staff

www.ebcbar.com

D2 GLOORIOUS Coffee
p.39 UPPER HIRAFU

Located inside the Rhythm shop, serving take away premium LAVAZZA coffee. Be sure to drop in and enjoy a delicious brew each morning before you hit the slopes. And for those of you with a sweeter tooth, trying our decadent hot chocolate is a must!



Open daily
8pm–4pm

☎ 0136 23 0164

“it’s the best coffee in town!” Point card - 6th coffee FREE!

www.facebook.com/GloriousCoffee

C4 Half Note
p.39 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

☎ 0136 23 2727

Hirafu’s only jazz bar!

www.nisekohalfnote.com

C3 Kabuki 1 and 2
p.39 MIDDLE HIRAFU

A choice of make-it-yourself or a full service Teppan Yaki restaurant. At Kabuki 1 you can 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)

Okonomiyaki and Teppanyaki Restaurants

www.nisekokabuki.com

E8 M’s Café (Saison Club)
p.38 HIGASHIYAMA

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



Day 10am–3pm
Evening 5.00–9.00pm
LO (8pm)
☎ 0136 44 3380

Warm your body with our big hearty hot-pots

www.saison-club.com

B3 GYU+ (A.K.A The Fridge)
p.39 LOWER HIRAFU

Gyu + (aka Fridge Door) has been open for over 10 years serving single malt whiskeys, hot cocktails and a long menu of original drinks.



Open 7 Days
6pm–1am
(L.O 12.30am)
☎ 0136 23 1432

Hand Selected Vinyl Records, Cocktails & Rare Japanese Whiskey.

www.gyubar.com

B3 J-Sekka Café and Delicatessen
p.39 MIDDLE HIRAFU

For a hearty breakfast to get you ready for the slopes, great coffee and winter warmers to power you through the day or a lazy afternoon spent discovering the delicious Hokkaido produce used in our house-made delicacies.



open from 7am daily

A taste of Hokkaido

www.j-sekka.com

☎ 0136 21 3088

E2 Kamimura
p.39 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

Blessed by land, sea and a creative chef

www.kamimura-niseko.com

☎ 0136 21 2288

B4 Manpukutei
p.39 LOWER VILLAGE

2nd season for Korean restaurant, Manpukutei with new menu. Come in after a day of pow and have a great time at Manpukutei in Niseko!!



6pm–11pm

Pick up service is available!!

www.manpukutei.com

☎ 0136 21 7880

B3 Maki Lounge

p.39 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

C3 Niseko Pizza

p.39 MIDDLE HIRAFU

Visit us at our NEW LOCATION, in the J-Sekka building beside the traffic lights. Enjoy home-made pizza, pasta and succulent beef, pork and other meats from our new grill!



Open 5-11pm weekdays 11am to 11pm weekends, holidays, Chinese New year
☎ 0136 55 5553

www.nisekopizza.jp

Dine in, Take-away and delivery

B1 Restaurant LUPICIA Niseko

p.39 KABAYAMA

LUPICIA offers fine dining experience in Niseko. A modern fusion of European and Japanese cuisine. Enjoy our sommelier recommended wine: French Chateaus and Domains, Australian favorites, and LUPICIA's reserved wine "LA MEIGE VIERGE". Open daily (Winter season)



Lunch 11:30am-2pm
Tea Time 2-4pm
Dinner 5pm - 10pm
☎ 0136 21 7880

www.lupicia.com

Euro-Japanese cuisine to accent the Hokkaido ingredients

D3 Splash Bar Niseko

p.39 MIDDLE VILLAGE

It's party night!! Pool table, darts and yummy drinks. Locals' favorite bar is now equipped with a big screen TV!!



Winter Only - Open Daily 4pm-1am
Happy Hour 4pm-7pm
☎ 080 6096 0698

www.splashbarniseko.com

Upcoming exciting events. Ask our friendly staff for details.

C3 Niseko So-an Yakiniku Restaurant

p.39 MIDDLE HIRAFU

Tasty meat & cold beer! Ideal for groups. Enquire about large group reservations, FREE pick-up service is available. ¥1700 all-you-can-eat BBQ for 60 minutes.



Open daily 11am-3pm (LO 2pm) 5pm - 11pm (LO 10.30am)
☎ 090 2059 6701

www.nisekosoan.net

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

D2 Paddy McGinty's Irish Pub & Restaurant

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
☎ 0136 55 8020

www.paddymcginthispub.com

Value Drinks, Hearty Meals, Live Sports and Music

C3 Steak Rosso Rosso

p.39 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
☎ 0136 21 7100

www.rossorosso.net

A must for steak lovers!

na Sumibi Yakiniku Kurobeko

KUTCHAN

Located on Route 5, catch the Kutchan Night-Go Bus to Keizai Center bus stop. It's a 2-min walk from there. Try the best Authentic Yakiniku!



Closed Tuesday 5pm - 11.30pm (L.O)
☎ 0136 22 2020

50 seats are available. Groups are welcome.

F3 Taj Mahal

p.39 IZUMIKYO 1

Enjoy the best of Indian traditional cuisine & courtesy service. Experience Indian meals with Indian beers & wines at our prestigious restaurant. vegetarians meals are also available. 10% discount on takeout orders. Free local delivery.



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

www.tajmahalgroup.com

Dine in, take-away & delivery

D2 Tozanken Asahikawa Ramen

p.39 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 7 days 11.00am-11.30pm (LO 11pm)
☎ 0136 23 4549

Try Asahikawa Ramen with Gyoza

B2 Wabi Sabi Café

p.39 MIDDLE HIRAFU

Great Value, Healthy Japanese Café. Wabi Sabi Café. We serve Donburi, a classic Rice Bowl cuisine & Cakes, Coffee and Chai. Free WiFi, Daily Specials. 10% Discount will apply between 12pm & payment & departure before 7pm.



Open 7 days 12 Midday -10pm
☎ 0136 21 5115

www.nisekowabisabi.com

Specialty Donburi Rice Bowl Lunch & Dinner Café

E2 Wild Bills

p.39 MIDDLE HIRAFU

We offer a great selection of Japanese izakaya style food in the warm log house setting. Late night a sure spot for a good party!



Open 7 days 5pm-Late
☎ 0136 55 5774

Come and enjoy our great food and music.

C3 The Barn

p.39 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

C2 VBG - Vale Bar and Grill

p.39 UPPER HIRAFU

This year the VBG has taken a step forward with a menu based around a modern French Steakhouse with a wine list to match. The slow roast beef steak is a must try and the 1945 fortified Grenache is an experience of a lifetime. Open from breakfast through to late night.



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

www.nisekoalpineaccommodation.com

The VBG is a casual flavoured field dining highlight.

B2 Wabi Sabi Express

p.39 MIDDLE HIRAFU

Delivery and Take Out. Japanese Rice bowl (Donburi) 1pm - 10pm Daily specials, Salads, Drinks all Delivered. 10% off for Takeout before 7pm. Online Orders given priority.



Take Out and Delivery Good value Japanese. Eat In & Take Out 12 Midday - 10pm Delivery: 1pm - 10pm
☎ 0136 21 5115

www.nisekowabisabi.com

Original Japanese Delivery & Take Out Service

D4 Yummy's

p.39 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!



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

www.yummypizza.com

Yummy homemade crust pizza and western foods restaurant

TOURS & ACTIVITIES

F8 Black Diamond Tours

NISEKO VILLAGE - HIGASHIYAMA

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.



8am-8pm daily
In Niseko Village
across from Milk Kobo
☎ 090 2054 8687

www.blackdiamondtours.com

Niseko's backcountry powder specialists

D2 Japanese Cultural Tours

HIRAFU

Tours will take you to various cultural attractions in Kutchan: Tea ceremony, laido sword demo, Taiko drums, sake-brewery tour and Japanese dinner. ¥5000/¥3000. Departs from Niseko Hirafu Safety & Information Center (Seicomart) ends in Kutchan.



3.00-7.30pm
Bookings essential

Tour Dates: 28 Dec, 8 Jan, 20 Jan, 3 Feb, 17 Feb
www.kutchan-town-st.com/mailjapan.htm

Reservation is required. Experience Japanese Culture !

☎ 0136 23 0222

E1 Niseko Foot

UPPER HIRAFU

Visit this popular relaxation salon and sample some of our many treatments at Aplen Hotel 1F and B1F. All different styles of massage are available for body and feet. 30-minutes, 60-minutes and 90-minutes courses are available. Groups are welcomed. Osteopathy and sports injuries are offered.



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

www.grand-hirafu.jp/nisekofoot

Closest healing relaxation therapy spot to Centre 4 lift

F1 NISS

HIRAFU AND HANAZONO 308

Let our instructors inspire you on 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. Hanazono 308, Hirafu Kogen, Fusion Hirafu, The Vale Snowsports.



8.00am-9.00pm

www.hanazononiseko.com

Kids are our speciality Hanazono and Hirafu

☎ 0136 21 6688

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.

E3 NOASC

MIDDLE HIRAFU

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

www.powderlife.com

RETAIL & SHOPPING

F5 Hana Jizoh

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 Wed & Thurs.

Creative and delicious breads from a local baker

☎ 0136 23 0331

D1 Fusion

UPPER HIRAFU/HANAZONO

Try on the latest gear from popular brands like Burton, Volcom, Orage and The North Face. Stop into our main Hirafu shop for a complete selection or the Vale and Hanazono locations for any on-snow accessories.



Hirafu 8am-9pm
The Vale 8am-9pm
Hanazono 8.30am-5pm
☎ 0136 21 6633

www.hanazononiseko.com

Prepare for the pow with the latest gear at Fusion

E3 Niseko Cultural School & Momiji Gallery

MIDDLE HIRAFU

Small classes of tea ceremony, calligraphy, Japanese cooking: sushi /sukiyaki /hotpot, bamboo painting & cultural tours. ¥4,000 to ¥10,000. Perfect on your own or with friends. No kids under 12. Bookings at Momiji Art Gallery & Japanese gift shop on ground floor.



Open 7 days
1.00pm-7.00pm

www.nisekoculturalschool.com

Learn & experience Japanese Culture in Hirafu

☎ 0136 55 8585

D2 Yukara

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 and share with your family and friends.



7 days
9am-10pm

Reopened in 2010 on 2nd floor of Tozanken Asahikawa Ramen

0136 23 4546

www.powderlife.com

E2 Mariposa

UPPER HIRAFU

Sweet Muffin, Savory Muffin and Scones. Delicious Bread available on Thursdays. Cream puff also available on weekends. Enjoy our delicious, freshly baked muffins & scones, homemade daily from a selection of over 50 of our favorite recipes.



Daily
8am-9.30pm
☎ 0136 22 5677

www.mariposa.asia

Delicious muffins, scones and soup

D3 Mountainshop Niseko 343

MIDDLE HIRAFU

Best item selections in Niseko Satisfaction is guaranteed for any skiers to have a great time in Niseko. FAT SKI rental for powder snow has variety selection. Rental delivery and pick up service is available.



Daily
9am-9pm in winter
☎ 0136 23 0343

www.niseko343.com

NISEKO+343 =200%FUN

B3 Niseko Photography Gallery

MIDDLE HIRAFU

Stunning limited edition prints and fine art canvas works. Niseko Photographie's gallery, located in Niseko Cellars, is a showcase of beautiful photography from Niseko's stunning 4 seasons. Prints available in quality frames, or unframed for easy travel.



Open Daily
Midday - 10.00pm

www.nisekophotography.com

Photo gallery - fine-art prints and souvenirs

☎ 0136 22 5764

D2 Sakura

UPPER HIRAFU

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



Daily
1-7pm in winter
☎ 0136 21 7007

www.sakura-niseko.com

Your one-stop Japanese souvenir shop

RENTAL & SERVICES

NA BonTak

Specialist for ski and snowboard tune up & repair.
Pick up and delivery service available to accommodations in Niseko



www.bontak.jp

I ♥ NISEKO

Free pick up 3pm~6pm
Free deliver till 8:30am
☎ 0136-44-1501
☎ 090-7584-5535

D2 Glen Claydon Photography

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 Hokkaido Services

-Construction & Renovations -Project Management
-Independent Property Reports -Property Maintenance(including management of services & taxes) -Discount Glass available - Double glazing from 10000yen/sqm, Summer Ski and Board Storage - humidity controlled - 20000yen per bag
www.hokkaidoservices.com



Call Anytime

Over 30yrs experience

☎ 090 9756 7616

E3 Niseko Realty Sales

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



8:00am to 7:00pm
All year round
☎ 0136 23 2221

Secure your future in Japan's premier powder ski area

D1 Demo Equipment Hire

Situated in three areas, Hirafu main village, The Vale, and Hanazono, Demo offers the latest equipment with the flexibility of renting, exchanging, and returning at any location.



Hirafu 8am-9pm
The Vale 8am-9pm
Hanazono 8.30am-5pm
☎ 0136 21 6677

Multiple locations, wide equipment range, endless possibilities

C3 Hermosa Angel Massage

Offering both traditional shiatsu and relaxing oil massages either in your suite or at our salon, 1F J-Sekka building. Inka Rebeza's skilled practitioners provide truly exceptional service. Chida-sensei's team have a course to suit you, with flexible bookings and a variety of packages available.



Open 7 days
Appointments available from 11am-midnight
☎ 0136 23 2004

Relax and rejuvenate in the heart of hirafu

F7 Niseko Auto Rentals and Sales

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.



9am-9pm
24hr Emergency English
Roadside Assistance
☎ 0136 44 1144

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

D2 Travelplan

Australia's #1 snow holiday specialist with 41 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 4th Jan-8th Feb. For more information contact Travelplan.
www.travelplanski.com



7 days
8am-12pm
3pm-7pm
☎ 0136 21 5354

The world's best ski holidays

www.powderlife.com

NISEKO UNITED.

FOR YOUR SAFETY
Regardless of how you enjoy your snow sports, always show courtesy to others and be aware that THERE ARE INHERENT RISKS in all snow recreation activities. These risks include rapid changes in weather conditions, avalanches, collisions with other people as well as natural and artificial hazards such as rocks, trees, stumps, bare spots, lift towers and snowmaking equipment. Common sense and personal awareness can reduce such risks. Observe the ALPINE RESPONSIBILITY CODE and share with others the responsibility for a great experience.

ALPINE RESPONSIBILITY CODE
1. Know your ability and always stay in control.
2. Take lessons from qualified professional instructors to learn and progress.
3. Don't drink or overtake another person, you must avoid people below and beside you.
4. Do not stop where you could obstruct a trail, a run or are not visible from above.
5. When entering a trail, a run or starting downhill, look uphill and give way to others.
6. Always use chair restraint devices where provided and always use proper technique to board and disembark. Ensure you are in good condition.
7. Observe and obey all signs and warnings. Keep off closed trails or runs and keep out of closed areas.
8. Before using any lift you must have the knowledge and ability of how to load and unload safely.
9. Do not ski snowcovered, side lift or undertake any other alpine activity if you are under the influence of alcohol.
10. If you are involved in, or witness an accident, alert the Ski Patrol, remain at the scene and identify yourself to them.

KNOW THE CODE IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

2. CROSSING ROPES IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.
Ducking the boundary ropes is prohibited. If you do, your lift pass will be confiscated. ONLY the lift attendants are allowed to pass through the ropes. Crossing ropes at other areas will result in lift pass confiscation.

3. NO SAFETY CONTROL BEYOND RESORT
The area outside the mountain resort boundaries (back country, including the peaks) are National forests and parks, and are not controlled or supervised by the resort or the Ski Patrol. Niseko Rules proclaims that hiking and riding these areas is dangerous and if you choose to, you do it AT YOUR OWN RISK.

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

5. AVALANCHE CONDITION INFORMATION
The "Niseko Avalanche Information" is the official information posted by "Niseko Avalanche Institute". This information can be found at lift stations, access gates and on the internet.

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

7. SKI AND MOUNTAIN PATROL
Niseko Rules insists that all resort users respect and obey the instructions of the Ski Patrol and the Niseko Mountain Patrol.

8. RESCUE CHARGE
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 Amputi Avalanche Prevention Committee, the Niseko Mountain Resort Safety Committee, the Niseko Free Passport Committee and the Hokkaido Shirubeshi Alpine Accident Prevention Committee.

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

Avalanche Control Operation 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.

Strictly Off Limits
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.

Un-groomed Slope
Established
More Difficult
Most Difficult

Name of Slope
Maximum Gradient / Average Gradient / Length

Number of seats
Number of Lift

Length - Time required
Half Pipe
Mogul run
Wave
Park/Kicker, jib, etc.)

Lift operating times and courses are subject to change due to weather, snow and light conditions etc.

Legend:
Ski patrol
AED
Light
Gate to controlled area
Mogul run
Wave
Park/Kicker, jib, etc.)
Lift ticket counter
Rest room
Phone
Kids' room
Restaurant
Café
Shop
Information
Rental
Ski school
Onsen (hot Spring)
Shuttle bus stop
Parking lot

Niseko Annupuri
Niseko Annupuri Ski Resort
Niseko Annupuri Ski Resort
Niseko Annupuri Ski Resort

Niseko Grand Hirafu
Niseko Grand Hirafu Ski Resort
Niseko Grand Hirafu Ski Resort
Niseko Grand Hirafu Ski Resort

Niseko Village Ski Resort
Niseko Village Ski Resort
Niseko Village Ski Resort
Niseko Village Ski Resort

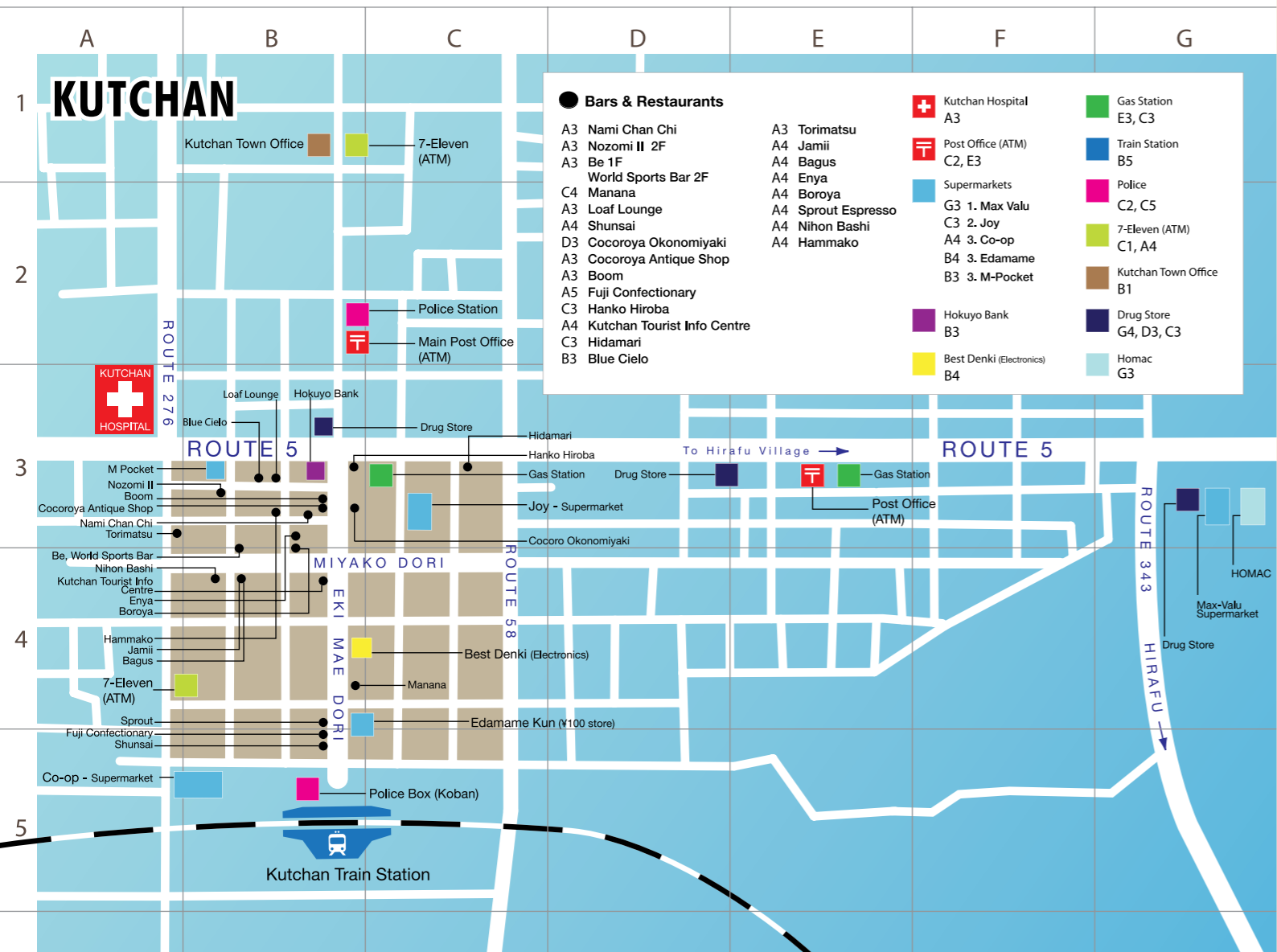
Niseko United Shuttle
The NISEKO UNITED Shuttle conveniently links each of the four ski resorts and is free to holders of the Niseko All Mountain Pass. The bus timetable is on "Niseko Resort Map" at lift ticket counters etc. *Holders of the Niseko All Mountain Pass must present pass on boarding the bus. (15-point ticket holders forfeit 1 point).
*Those without the All Mountain Pass can ride the bus for the regular fare.

Niseko Annupuri
Niseko Annupuri Ski Resort
Niseko Annupuri Ski Resort
Niseko Annupuri Ski Resort

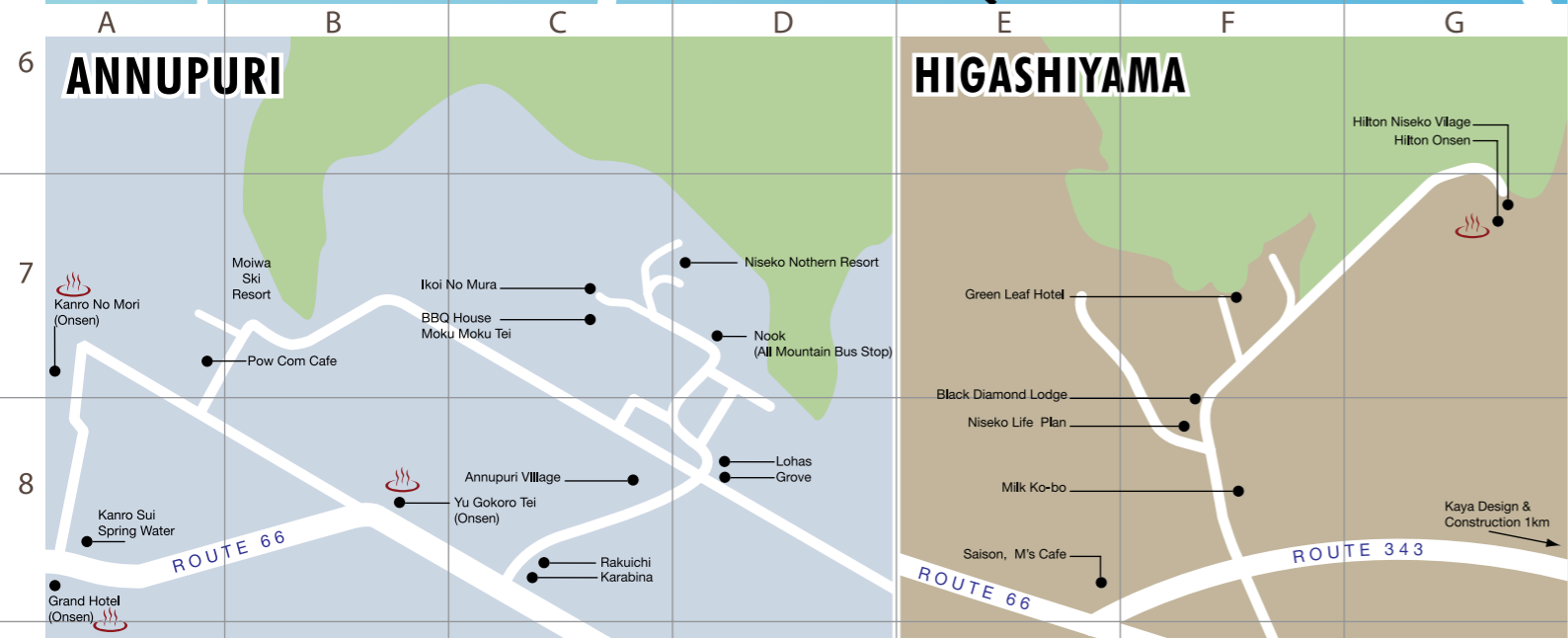
Niseko Grand Hirafu
Niseko Grand Hirafu Ski Resort
Niseko Grand Hirafu Ski Resort
Niseko Grand Hirafu Ski Resort

Niseko Village Ski Resort
Niseko Village Ski Resort
Niseko Village Ski Resort
Niseko Village Ski Resort

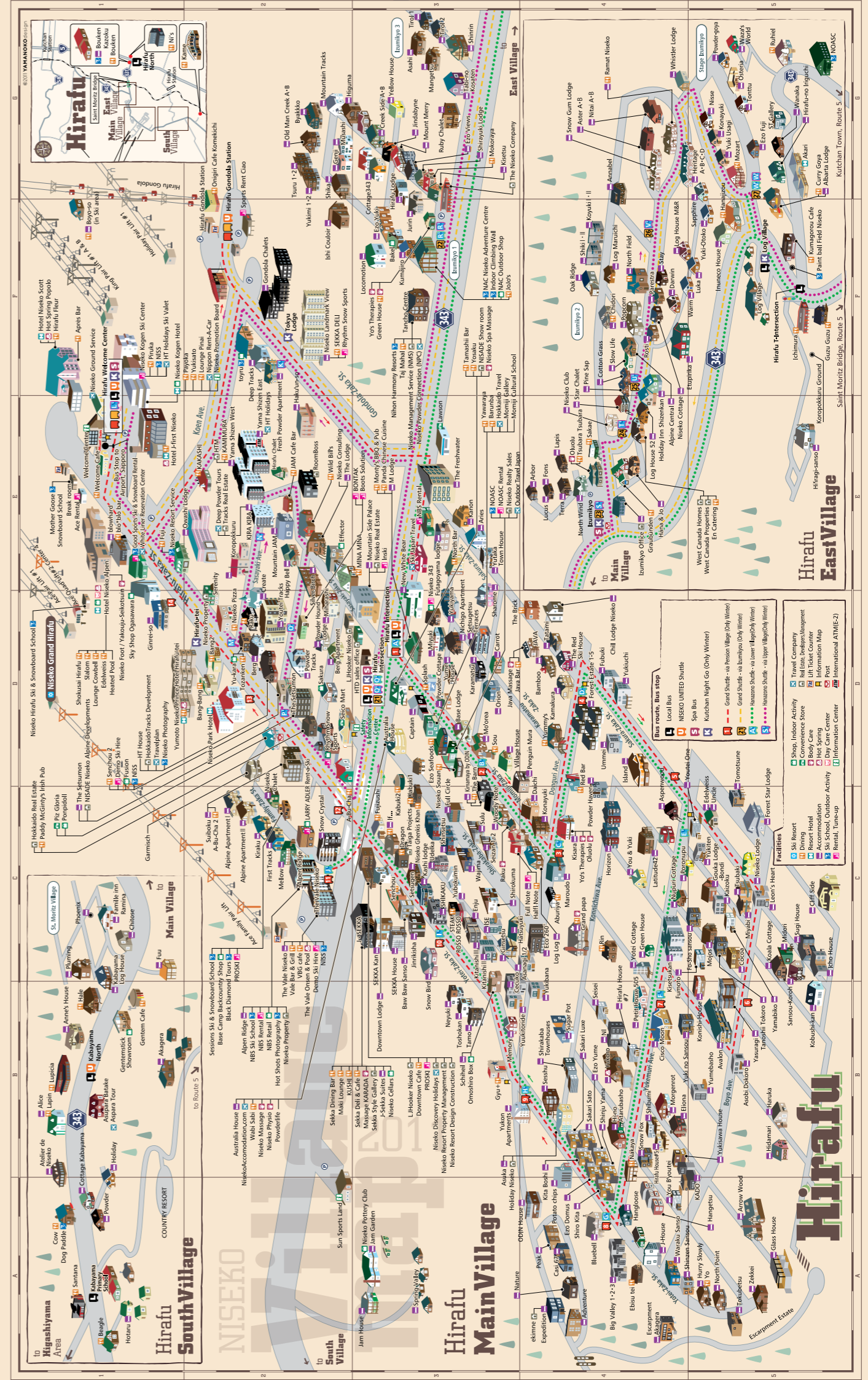
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*Those without the All Mountain Pass can ride the bus for the regular fare.



- Bars & Restaurants**
- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| A3 Nami Chan Chi | A3 Torimatsu | Kutchan Hospital A3 | Gas Station E3, C3 |
| A3 Nozomi II 2F | A4 Jamii | Post Office (ATM) C2, E3 | Train Station B5 |
| A3 Be 1F | A4 Bagus | Supermarkets | Police C2, C5 |
| A4 World Sports Bar 2F | A4 Enya | G3 1. Max Valu | 7-Eleven (ATM) C1, A4 |
| C4 Manana | A4 Boroya | C3 2. Joy | Kutchan Town Office B1 |
| A4 Loaf Lounge | A4 Sprout Espresso | A4 3. Co-op | Drug Store G4, D3, C3 |
| A4 Shunsai | A4 Nihon Bashi | B4 3. Edamame | Homac G3 |
| D3 Cocoroya Okonomiyaki | A4 Hammako | B3 3. M-Pocket | |
| A3 Cocoroya Antique Shop | | Hokuyo Bank B3 | |
| A5 Boom | | Best Denki (Electronics) B4 | |
| A5 Fuji Confectionary | | | |
| C3 Hanko Hiroba | | | |
| A4 Kutchan Tourist Info Centre | | | |
| C3 Hidamari | | | |
| B3 Blue Cielo | | | |



- | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| 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 Mowi Ski Resort | D7 Niseko Nothern 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 Saiso | |
| C7 Ikoi No Mura | A8 Kanro Sui - Spring Water | C8 Rakuichi | | E7 Black Diamond Lodge | E8 M's Cafe | |



* TRAVEL FEATURE // shikoku 88-temple pilgrimage



PHOTOGRAPHY AND WORDS BY // Kerstin Winter

I have been walking up and down hills since sunrise and still I haven't reached my target by midday. It's day seven of my hike, I just want to eat and sleep. "That's part of it," says Matsuyama town worker Junko who picks me up in her car from the road side. "If you don't feel really exhausted at least once, you cannot reach Nirvana".

Nirvana can be reached in Shikoku, the smallest of Japan's four main islands, famous for its pristine nature. The almost sleepy pace of rural life is only occasionally disrupted by a neon-clad, panting cyclist or tour buses loaded with retirees – all trying to trace the steps of one of the most revered and holiest figures in Japanese history, Kobo Daishi. He revolutionised Japanese Buddhism and is widely believed to be the inventor of hiragana and katakana. During his lifetime from 774 to 835, he founded Japan's most famous pilgrim route for ascetic practice, searching for the Truth. You will need good stamina and

general fitness to endure the strains of walking the 88 Temples of Kobo Daishi. The 1400-km long pilgrimage route meanders through some of the wildest terrain in Japan. The only things protecting an "ohenro" - a traditional walking pilgrim - from the often pouring rain and blazing sun are the white cotton jacket, pants and a sedge hat.

Junko drops me at Number 44, Taiho-ji, where my eyes need a few seconds to adjust to the cool blackness of the pine forest. The

“ You will need good stamina and general fitness to endure the strains of walking the 88 Temples ”

temple ground is like a wooden sanctuary. The warm smile of a monk, the smell of resin and the trickle of a small waterfall give you a sense of why people have done the pilgrimage since the 12th century.

The 88 temple route circles Shikoku and traditionally begins in the mountainous east, in Tokushima Prefecture at Temple 1, Ryozanji. It

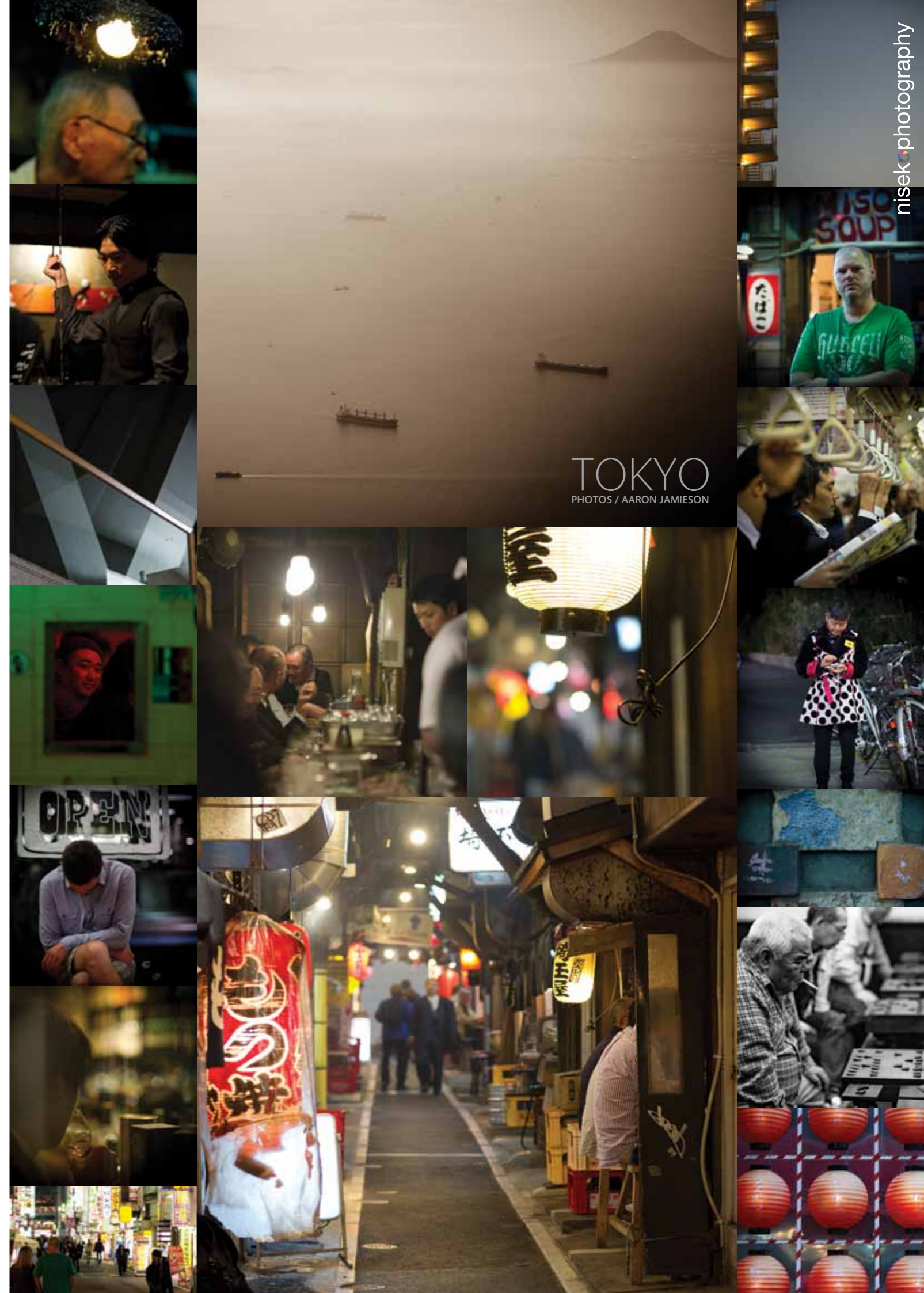
goes clockwise to the south along the rugged Pacific coastline of Kochi Prefecture, up to the western prefecture Ehime through valleys, rice fields and mountain plateaus and winds up in the north at temple 88, Okubo-ji, in Kagawa prefecture. Each prefecture represents a different region on the path to Nirvana or Enlightenment. Tokushima is "Awakening Faith", which starts off as an easy stroll through thatched roofed villages, becoming increasingly difficult

as you make your way through Kochi where the temples can be found in the most remote areas as far as 100km apart. The first "hardships" of rural Kochi, namely the lack of convenience stores, should lead you to "Taking Religious Disciplines". To ease the hardships of Kochi join local surfers at Oki Beach on your way to the most southern temple, Kongo fuku-ji. It's at

Cape Ashizuri, where you can end the day's hike watching the sunset over the Pacific.

There are plenty of signs along the route giving you directions to the next temple so it's hard to get lost. While on the tour I camped at playgrounds and even car park spaces, often fed by locals. Hospitality and moral encouragement will become one of your best pilgrimage experiences.

Ehime prefecture with a high density of temples stands for "Attaining Enlightenment" and if you have reached Kagawa prefecture, you are "Entering Nirvana". This may just be indulging in Sanuki udon - Sanuki being the ancient name for Kagawa. The silky, chewy Udon noodles with a dash of daikon, ginger and scallion are said to be one of Japan's best. I never reached Nirvana, because I started with "Attaining Enlightenment" in Ehime. I then went anti-clockwise, which is fine so long as you complete the 1400km loop and return to the temple where you began. That's when you've become a real "ohenro". I never did.



TOKYO
PHOTOS / AARON JAMIESON

nisek photography

* DISCOVER HOKKAIDO



HOKKAIDO DOG SLEDDING

NAVIGATING a pack of up to 10 powerful dogs on a sled while racing through dense forests and open plains is one of the most exhilarating winter outdoor experiences Hokkaido has to offer. There is terrain for all skill levels, with qualified tour operators for beginners particularly in the areas of Asahikawa and Furano. Even young children can enjoy a relaxing tour with an experienced attendant. You can learn how to assemble a sled team and pick your own leader dogs. For those who would rather watch, Hokkaido hosts several races from sprints to long distance. The biggest one is the Japan Cup National Dogsled Race, which is held on the northern tip of Hokkaido, in Wakkanai. The teamwork between some of Japan's best dogsled racers and their furry friends in this harsh terrain makes a truly thrilling spectacle.



TENNINKYO

FAMOUS for some of the most spectacular waterfalls in Japan and secluded hot springs, Tenninkyō offers stunning scenery in all four seasons. Hike the gorge covered in primeval forest and take your first break at Hagoromo-no-taki, which could be translated as "Angel's Robe Falls". According to legend, a Shinto goddess used to hang her robe there before taking a bath, hence the name. With a 270m drop it is listed as one of Japan's "Best Waterfalls" and is the third largest in the country. Nearby Shikishima-no-taki is also a powerful spectacle, known as the "Niagara Falls of the Orient". It is 50m wide with a 20m drop and has a massive pool, which is good for a swim in summer. In winter you could soak in Tenninkyō's hot springs while looking at the snow-covered surrounding cliffs and forests.



NOBORIBETSU AND HELL VALLEY

NOBORIBETSU is the largest hot spring resort in Hokkaido, renowned for its beautiful volcanic landscapes, with crater lakes and spewing sulphurous streams. One of the main attractions is Jigokudani or Hell Valley. The mineral-rich waters of this fuming crater are the main source of Noboribetsu's hot springs. You can explore the area on several hiking trails and boardwalks even during winter. The brown bear sanctuary on nearby Mt Kuma is home to some of Hokkaido's orphaned bear cubs. It hosts a bear museum and is perfect for entertaining the children. For outdoor adventurers why not go horse-riding where you can enjoy the romantic winter wonderland in the vast snowfields. With the great sightseeing, souvenir shopping and activities, Noboribetsu draws hundreds of thousands of visitors every year.



NIJO FISH MARKET

NIJO Fish Market is to Sapporo what internationally famous Tsukiji market is to Tokyo. While Tsukiji is the biggest seafood market in the world and one of Tokyo's top tourist attractions, NiJo offers a similar experience on a much smaller scale. Hokkaido is rated as one of the top-seafood destinations in Japan and with dozens of little restaurants and food stalls in the market you can try some of the finest fresh seafood the island has to offer. Hokkaido hairy crabs, juicy oysters and scallops are just some of the delicacies that can be enjoyed raw, cooked or grilled. If you want to do some souvenir shopping, there is a huge selection of packed seafood. Best to get there early if you want to sample fish that's just come from the sea!

MARUYAMA PARK

THIS protected nature park in the western suburbs of Sapporo offers an introduction to Japanese culture and wildlife within a 60,000sqm area:

Virgin woods with Japanese Judas trees and more than 1700 cherry trees, one of the oldest Shinto shrines and Hokkaido animals. A 10-minute bus ride from the park takes you to the Okurayama ski slopes, where you can watch ski jump competitions during the season.



- 01 PERFORM** the purification ritual by washing your hands and rinsing your mouth before approaching Hokkaido shrine.
- 02 LEARN** more about Hokkaido's brown bears in Maruyama Zoo, which celebrates its 60th anniversary this year.
- 03 SEE** endangered species there, like the Sichuan Red Panda that is hunted in China for its highly valued bushy tail from which 'good-luck charm' hats are produced.
- 04 SEND** home some fun pictures.

Gourmet Pizzas

DELIVERY MENU (available 5 - 11pm)
NiSEKO PIZZA
 WWW.NISEKOPIZZA.JP (0136) 55 5553

Margherita M ¥1,500 L ¥2,800	Pepperoni M ¥1,700 L ¥3,200	Hawaiian M ¥1,700 L ¥3,200	BBQ Chicken M ¥1,900 L ¥3,600	Vegetarian M ¥1,900 L ¥3,600	Andy's M ¥1,900 L ¥3,600
Meat M ¥1,900 L ¥3,600	Supreme M ¥2,000 L ¥3,800	Bacon Lovers M ¥1,900 L ¥3,600	BBQ Chicken & Bacon M ¥1,900 L ¥3,600	Capriccosa M ¥1,800 L ¥3,400	Cheese M ¥1,500 L ¥2,800
BBQ Ribs M ¥2,300 L ¥4,400	Gamberetti Parmegiana M ¥2,200 L ¥4,200	Genovese M ¥2,400 L ¥4,600	Quatro Formaggio M ¥2,200 L ¥4,200	Bianco & Prosciutto M ¥1,700 L ¥3,200	Napolitana M ¥2,200 L ¥4,200

Additional Standard Toppings ¥150 per topping

- Anchovies . Garlic Sauce . Mushrooms . Red Onion . Capsicum Pepporoni . Italian Sausage . Pork Sausage . Ham . Bacon Pineapple . Black Olives

M 30cm
2 - 3 people

L 45cm
4 - 6 people

Additional Gourmet Toppings ¥220 per topping

- Black & Green Marinated Olives . Semi-sundried Tomatoes . Prosciutto . Buffalo Mozzarella . Fresh Prawns . Grilled BBQ Ribs

Homemade Pasta

Served with fresh, locally sourced produce ... Our pasta is the taste of perfection!

Tomato Cream, ¥1,400	Bolognese, ¥1,400	Cesar, ¥1,000	Caprese, ¥1,200	Greek, ¥1,400
Carbonara, ¥1,400	Feta & Olive, ¥1,400	Siciliana, ¥1,400	Garlic / Cheese Garlic ¥350 / ¥450	BBQ / Sweet-Chilli ¥900 (5 pieces)

Salads & Sides

...& more online!
 Mozzarella Sticks; Fried Potato; BBQ Chicken & Sweet Chilli Chicken Wings (5 pieces); Calamari Rings...

 Soft Drinks; Dessert Pizzas; Italian Wines...



On The Grill...

NEW LOCATION

Visit us at our NEW LOCATION, in the J-Sekka building beside the traffic lights. Enjoy homemade pizza, pasta and succulent beef, pork and other meats from our new grill! See you soon!



INTL' BEERS ON TAP

STELLA ARTOIS
Asahi
LOWENBRÄU
Leffe
Heineken
 AND MORE!



1 – Odin Chair, designed by Jamie McLellan and Gold winner of New Zealand Best Design Awards 2011.

2, 5 – Yasuragi by Odin defines alpine spa-living in Niseko.

3 – The Barn by Odin has achieved recognition as one of Niseko's finest (and funnest) dining venues.

4 – Odin House bears the distinctive pedigree of Odin's design philosophy.

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