



Welcome to Season 2007

AUSTRALIAN ALPINE CLUB newsletter



Now we are six!



'The 'Niseko Club' lodge on the northern Japanese island of Hokkaido has been purchased. AAC Niseko is the first member-owned, not-for-profit Australian snowsports club in one of the most desirable alpine resorts in the world. AAC Niseko is also the sixth Australian Alpine Club project – joining five other projects at Dinner Plain, Falls Creek, Mt Buller, Mt Hotham and Perisher Valley. Welcome to the new members of the 'AAC family'.

The AAC Niseko lodge is on almost one thousand square metres of freehold land and has previously operated as a commercial lodge. It comprises eight guest rooms, all with en suites and accommodates up to 23 guests. The lodge has manager's quarters, dining and bar areas, a commercial standard kitchen and its own 4WD minibus. Similar to most other Niseko lodges, it is also situated on the local shuttle route, with a pick-up from the front door. The purchase has been supported by loans from the Australian Alpine Club nationally and AAC Dinner Plain.

Bookings for the 2007-08 Japanese winter opened for AAC Niseko members in July and members of other projects will be able to use their reciprocal rights to book from 1 August (see the back page for details).



Taking a wide line.

AAC Races

The inter-club AAC races will be hosted by AAC Falls Creek in 2007 on Saturday 8 September. Anton and AAC Falls Creek will continue their traditional rivalry and AAC Niseko is also expected to enter a team for the first time. More details in the AAC booking information sheet.

A great start to season 2007

Good snowfalls in June have established a firm snow base for the 2007 Australian winter season, hopefully erasing memories of the awful drought conditions in 2006. This has been the best start to the season since 1990, with snow at most resorts for the traditional Queen's Birthday opening weekend and over a metre of snow at some resorts by the end of June.

theSKI mag special offer

Exclusive offer for AAC members from theSKI mag, Australia's favourite ski magazine.

theSKI mag is giving AAC members a free copy of the latest edition featuring Australia's biggest ski tests. To receive your complimentary copy simply send in this form or email your details as below to lou.pullar@theskimag.com

BONUS OFFER

Subscribe and get a free boot bag. Full details in theSKI mag #11 or at www.theskimag.com

Yes please send me a free copy of theSKI mag #11 to:

First name:

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AAC Membership:

Your privacy is important to us and your details will only be used by tSm Publishing publishers of theSKI mag, Alpine Style and Untracked magazines to provide magazine promotional offers however if you do not wish to receive any further information please tick here.

(Associate Publisher Lou Pullar is a member of AAC Dinner Plain).

Photo by John Harding



Booking Officers AAC PROJECTS

AAC PROJECTS

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NEW ZEALAND

CHRISTIANIA SKI CLUB

Mt. Ruapehu New Zealand, www.skichristie.co.nz

2007 AAC office-bearers

President:	Ian Farrow
Vice-President:	Margaret Campbell
Secretary:	Mike Gregson
Treasurer:	Richard Tress



Australian ski lift prices now 'world class'

In an annual benchmarking of ski lift prices, Australian ski lift prices now rank among the highest in the world. Adult day ski lift prices at five major Australian alpine resorts were benchmarked against some well-known resorts in six other developed countries. The analysis does not try to compare other factors such as terrain, snow-depths or ski lift capacities.

2007 Lift prices (adult, day)	A\$
Vail (USA)	\$102
Perisher Blue	\$95
Thredbo	\$94
Deer Valley (USA)	\$93
Mt Buller	\$92
Falls Creek	\$90
Mt Hotham	\$90
Alta Snowbird (USA)	\$85
Whistler (Canada)	\$79
Mt Hutt (NZ)	\$75
Val D'Isere (France)	\$67
Arlberg (Austria)	\$66
Niseko (Japan)	\$48

(15/04/2007 exchange rates)

We can consider various issues such as the strength of inter-mountain competition and cost factors influencing ski lift prices in Australia, but international competition for the Australian snowsports dollar is a reality. The challenge for Australian alpine resorts is to remain competitive against the international snowsports destinations. While the recent appreciation of the Australian dollar is a factor, the overseas alpine resorts will become increasingly attractive if these margins continue to widen.

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Associated clubs

Southern Alps Ski Club

http://sasc-aus.com/

Christiania Lodge

http://www.skichristie.co.nz/



AAC Niseko Booking Arrangements 2007-08

WHEN TO BOOK

The booking procedure will broadly follow that used at other AAC projects, with first priority booking given to members of the AAC Niseko project. Members of other AAC projects will be able to book after a later date. Bookings can be made at any time after the relevant booking priority has opened:

- AAC Niseko Members (and accompanying guests) may book from 5 July.
- AAC reciprocal Members (and accompanying guests) may book from 1 August.
- Other guests may book from 25 August (this will include the general public staying at commercial rates booked directly through Outdoor Travel Japan).

HOW TO BOOK

Bookings are being managed by Outdoor Travel Japan, initially on a manual booking system until a web based on line system has been installed and tested. Members and Outdoor Travel Japan will be on a learning curve to begin with, so please be patient. Please note that local time in Japan is one hour behind Australian Eastern Standard Time.

The e-mail address you should use to contact Outdoor Travel Japan staff dedicated to AAC Niseko bookings is reservations@outdoortraveljapan.com. The Outdoor Travel Japan website is www.outdoortraveljapan.com and there is also a link on the www.aacniseko.com website.

Booking Terms and Conditions: www.outdoortraveljapan.com/en/info-pages/hokkaido-travel-info/booking-terms-and-conditions.html

ACCOMMODATION RATES

Accommodation rates are in ¥en and payment has to be in this currency. We use ¥en100 = A\$1.00 for our accounting purposes but the rate does fluctuate. Major credit cards are accepted, but all credit card transactions are subject to a 5% surcharge in Japan. Outdoor Travel Japan can also accept direct bank transfers, but please contact them directly to check the cost of these transactions with them.

AAC Niseko 2007-08 (¥en)						
Winter	Peak			Shoulder		
	Memb.	AAC	Guest	Memb.	AAC	Guest
Week	40,000	48,000	80,000	30,000	36,000	60,000
Night	6,667	8,000	13,333	5,000	6,000	10,000

DETAILS

AAC Niseko members: up to 3 guests at 75% of Guest rate.
Standard rates are based on twin share
Single room: 50% surcharge of applicable rate
Triple room: 75% of applicable rate
Children (under 16) 75% of applicable rate
Breakfast is included in the tariff, other meals by arrangement if desired
All linen is provided
Rates are exclusive of lift passes and transfers
Peak season is January & February
Shoulder season is December & March until lifts close
Entry and exit times are 10.00am book out and 2.00pm book in, but there will be some flexibility to meet plane arrival and departure times.
Only financial members may make bookings at these rates and proof of membership may be required (please specify your project membership). Members must accompany their guests.
The Lodge is non-smoking.

TRANSFERS TO NISEKO

You need to advise Outdoor Travel Japan of your arrival flight details at Chitose in order to coordinate transfer to Niseko. Bus transfers from Chitose airport to Hirafu are about ¥en2,300 / A\$23 each-way and are additional to the accommodation rates

RESORT HANDLING FEE

Outdoor Travel Japan has a ¥en5,000 resort handling fee that covers the 'meet and greet' at Chitose airport, local shuttle transfer from the bus terminal in Hirafu to the Lodge, facilitation of lift pass purchases and other guest service assistance. If you are only booking Lodge accommodation and do not wish to use any other Outdoor Travel Japan services including transfers, equipment rental, lessons, lift tickets, etc (or a combination thereof) you will not need to pay this fee. Our recommendation, particularly for first-time Niseko visitors, is that you should pay for this assistance.

OTHER GUEST SERVICES

Outdoor Travel Japan is able to provide additional guest services detailed here: <http://www.outdoortraveljapan.com/en/info-pages/resort--services/niseko1.html>

AIR TRAVEL ASSISTANCE

It is expected that most members and guests travelling to Niseko will make their own travel arrangements to Chitose airport (the nearest International and National airport). If you require assistance with air travel bookings, Outdoor Travel Japan has made arrangements with Belmore Travel.

Belmore Travel (Jason Brownley), 324 Belmore Road, BALWYN VIC 3103. P: 03 9857 4555, F: 03 9816 3216
e-mail: belmore@belmoretravel.com.au

Disclaimer

Please note that some of the costs outlined above may be subject to change. All costs are denominated in ¥en and the \$A value stated is indicative and may change due to variations in exchange rates. Some of the terms and conditions may also be subject to changes over time, the booking arrangements detailed on the www.aacniseko.com website will be the current version.