

travel&co. | Our Quick Guide to Hakuba Honshu, Japan



Hakuba Valley: Japan's Ultimate Ski Playground

With ten ski resorts and a vast range of terrain, Hakuba Valley has it all—from gentle beginner runs to steep, heart-racing descents. Whether you are after variety, challenge, or pure adventure, this is the place



One Mountain Valley - 10 Ski Resorts

Jiigatake

Located at the southern end of the valley and perfect for families and beginners with gentle, uncrowded slopes. It offers seven runs and this includes tree runs at the top. In good weather, the views over Azumina are beautiful. It has an expansive beginner slope, a special kids area with unique easy lift (Troika), snow park, a tree run & night skiing is open on select evenings.

Ski Runs: 7 **Lifts:** 4
Beg: 70% & **Int:** 30%

Hakuba 47

Hakuba 47 boasts the largest terrain park in the valley and one of the longest ski seasons. Its beginner-friendly slopes are located mid-mountain, ensuring more of that famous Japan powder. For thrill-seekers, mogul and tree runs offer an extra challenge. From the summit, you can even access the neighboring Hakuba Goryu ski resort with a dual pass.

Ski Runs: 8 **Lifts:** 6
Beg: 30% | **Int:** 40% | **Adv:** 30%

Cortina

As the most northern ski resort of the Hakuba Valley the resort receives up to twice as much snow as the other resorts and has some of Japan's best tree skiing. This destination also has ski-in, ski-out accommodation including onsen facilities.

Ski Runs: 16 **Lifts:** 7
Beg: 40% | **Int:** 30% | **Adv:** 30%

Kashimayari

A family-friendly ski resort featuring the Pokémon Snow Park, offering a 500m snow tubing course and a kid-friendly ski escalator for easy access to the beginner slopes. The resort has a distinctly Japanese feel and is the second southern most resort.

Ski Runs: 16 **Lifts:** 8
Beg: 30% | **Int:** 50% | **Adv:** 20%

Happo-one

One of the larger ski resorts in the valley. Happo is the perfect spot to carve through fresh powder, with epic conditions and the valley's longest runs—an impressive 8km. Whether you're a beginner or expert, these expansive slopes are a must for more than just one day. One of Japan's steepest resorts. You'll also find a mix of restaurants, cafes and food stops on the slopes and around the base.

Ski Runs: 16 **Lifts:** 21 **Gondola:** 1
Beg: 30% | **Int:** 50% | **Adv:** 20%

Norikura

Interconnected with Cortina, the wide ski slopes here are beginner-friendly, perfect for families to enjoy together. But advanced skiers take note, with the addition of the Alps 11 Pair lift in 2022, steeper backcountry tree skiing opened up. Maintained mogul courses also offer diverse challenges. Both groomed and ungroomed powder conditions await.

Ski Runs: 16
Lifts: 10
Beg: 30% | **Int:** 40% | **Adv:** 30%

Sanosaka

Lake views and family-friendly slopes. Nestled among forests and lakes, this resort is popular with both beginners and intermediates skiers and boarders. On mountain enjoy the cafe-restaurant overlooking the slopes.

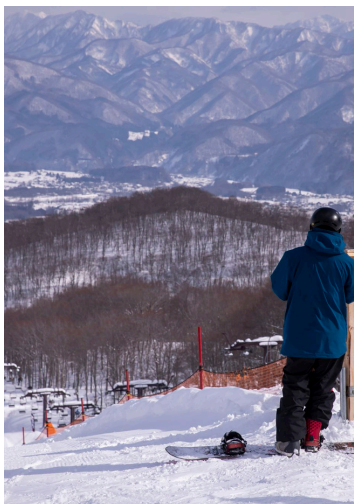
Tip: Take the time to enjoy the lake view from the top of No. 6 lift, or head to the top of No. 5 for steep groomers.

Ski Runs: 9 **Lifts:** 7
Beg: 50% | **Int:** 30% | **Adv:** 20%

Iwatake

Take in breathtaking 360-degree views of the Hakuba mountain range. The slopes offer a mix of wide, gentle runs alongside more challenging terrain, and a great resort for intermediate skiers. An area renowned for its snow park and cross-country ski trails, providing even more variety for winter enthusiasts.

Ski Runs: 26 **Lifts:** 16
Beg: 35% | **Int:** 50% | **Adv:** 15%



Goryu

The resort offers breathtaking views of the Northern Alps and superb snow conditions. Tohmi and Imori slopes are ideal for kids, beginners and families. It also features the region's largest night skiing area, a terrain park, and an eight-passenger gondola that takes you to the summit, where you can admire Mount Goryu and unwind at Restaurant 360. With a dual mountain pass, you can also access Hakuba 47.

Ski Runs: 15 **Lifts:** 13
Beg: 35% | **Int:** 40% | **Adv:** 25%

Tsugaike

Enjoy stunning views as you ride the gondola from base to summit. For kids and beginners, there are long, wide slopes that provide plenty of space to learn. The resort offers exceptional tree skiing in the off-piste DBD and side-country areas along with a popular terrain park. You can also relax at an onsen conveniently located near the gondola base.

Tip: Arrive early for fresh powder

Ski Runs: 14 **Lifts:** 19
Beg: 50% | **Int:** 30%
Adv: 20%

Tip: The best way to get around the valley is by using the inter-resort shuttle. It's free for those with a Hakuba Valley Lift Pass. If you don't have a lift pass, you can still use the shuttle by paying per ride.

Hakuba

Top Reasons to visit



Hakuba is a destination rich in cultural adventure. Imagine stepping back into Japan's history, exploring ancient castles and temples, taking part in traditional tea ceremonies, and encountering the region's unique wildlife. On the food front, indulge in sushi, ramen, and gyoza, perfectly paired with an ice-cold beer or warm sake. It's the ideal blend of modern comforts and traditional hospitality.

The Japow

Overall Hakuba ski resorts get an average of 11m of snow and experiences more bluebird days than their neighbours — clear skies between snowstorms. The weather in this locations brings big snowfalls with bluebird skies in between. Think waist-deep powder days with bluebird skies vs. knee-deep powder and low visibility.

Onsen, Cultural sites and Snow Monkeys

Onsen: A trip to Japan just isn't complete without a soak in an onsen. Hakuba is blessed with an array of onsen and many hotels even have them for guests.

Top Tip: The Happo area is one of Hakuba's best hot springs spots with six hot spring sources.

Snow Monkey tours: The only monkeys in the world known to bathe in naturally occurring hot springs. The monkeys are located in a beautiful national park roughly 90 minutes from Hakuba.

Ask us about adding on this tour when booking your ski holiday.

Matsumoto: Take the train from Hakuba (2 hours) and enjoy a day off the slopes and head to the city of Matsumoto and Matsumoto Castle. You can walk from the train station to the castle, it is free to enter the grounds and a fee to tour the interior.

Festivals

Festivals are an incredible way to immerse yourself in Japanese culture and there are quite a few phenomenal options in and around Nagano.

Nozawa Fire Festival – 15 January; Happo Fire Festival – mid January

Nagano Lantern Festival – early February

Hakuba Goryu Snow Festival - February

Dining & Authentic Japanese Cultural Experiences

Tour one of the oldest sake breweries and savour a sake tasting paired with a traditional Japanese lunch in Ichinoya, 2.5-hour train ride from Hakuba. Or immerse yourself in tradition with an authentic tea ceremony.

Top Tip: There are countless dining options, ranging from fine Italian dining to affordable Japanese pub fare, and everything in between.

When to go:

Dec: Christmas and New Year's Eve festivities. Book early!

Jan/Feb: Peak snowfall. Great snow and powder.

March: Typically lighter snowfall and late season deals.

Getting to Hakuba

Hakuba is conveniently located just 3–5 hours from Tokyo. You can also take a direct shuttle from the airport straight to your Hakuba hotel. **Nearest airport:** Narita, Tokyo.

