**Furano**

**Categories**

**Good For**

Beginners

Intermediates

Experts

Snowboarders

Families

Non-skiers

Snow reliability

**Data**

**Beginner Runs**

9

**Intermediate Runs**

10

**Advanced Runs**

4

**Total Runs**

23

**Lifts**

12

**Chairs**

8

**Drags**

2

**Gondola Cable Cars**

2

**Parks**

1

**Pipes**

1

**Weather**

**Annual Snowfall**

8m (24ft).

**Overview**

A classic ski resort and one of Japan's leading destinations, Furano boasts virtually unrivalled views of spectacular volcanic scenery.

Furano ski resort is located at the heart of a network of the country's leading ski centres. From the slopes here, great views can be seen across the valley with its smouldering volcanoes Mount Tokachi and Mount Asahi, the highest peak on Hokkaido Island.

The ski centre, which is located 10 minutes from Furano city, is notable for having hosted more than a dozen FIS World Cup races and for the installation of, what was at the time, Japan's fastest cable car in 2002.

Furano's size means there's lots to do besides skiing, including *onsen* (hot spring baths) to dip into, over 100 bars and restaurants, an annual winter festival and weekly traditional Japanese theatre, music and other cultural performances.

**Location**

The city of Furano is located in the geographical centre of Japan's northern island of Hokkaido.

**Website**

http://www.furanotourism.com

**Piste Map**

http://www.snowfurano.com/photo/FuranoSkiAreaMap.jpg

**Hit The Slopes**

Furano is famous the world over for its huge powder snowfalls, averaging 8m (24ft) each winter, which enable the resort to offer a near six-month-long ski season from November to May in a usual winter.

To make the most of the great terrain, Furano offers a free ski host service that’s unique to Japan. This service employs enthusiastic locals who guide visitors to the best terrain as well as advise on the culture and history of the area and recommend the best bars, restaurants and activities.

Furano's local ski area is divided into two linked ski areas: the Furano Zone and the Kitanomine Zone. Each offers a similar mix of beginner and intermediate terrain, totalling 25km (16 miles) of pistes. On both sides of the ski area, cabin lifts carry skiers over the full vertical from the bottom up to the runs, which are up to 4km (2.5 miles) in length.

The steepest runs include the Furikozawa and Kumaotoshi routes on the Kitanomine side, both recommended for powder hounds. The challenging International Ladies’ Downhill run is also on this side of the mountain, while The Furano Zone has the resort’s longest black, the Challenge run.

Night skiing is popular, with about a third of the terrain floodlit for most of the season. A combined lift pass allows skiers to access the neighbouring resorts of Kamui Ski Links and Tomamu, each about an hour's shuttle bus ride away, at no extra cost.

**Furano**

**Resort**

245

**Base**

245

**Top**

1209

**General**

**Beyond The Slopes**

At heart a small Japanese country town, Furano is proud of its cultural heritage and is enthusiastic about sharing this with visitors and keeping traditions alive. So during the peak of the ski season, the town hosts various events, performances and festivals. During these, visitors are encouraged to try out traditional costumes, watch the resort's professional dance group perform, have a go themselves and then join in the various tea ceremonies.

Lots of other activities are available, including snowmobiling, snowshoeing, ice hole fishing, hot air balloon rides or a visit to one of the traditional *onsen*.

**Family Fun**

Furano's strong community ethos and wide-ranging activity options make it a good choice for families. An international standard kids’ care centre is available at the resort for adults who wish to ski in the knowledge that their little ones will be well looked after. Dedicated English speaking ski schools are also available, and there are special 'children’s slopes' with easy-to-use lifts at the base of the hill.

A trip to Asahikawa Zoo is worthwhile, particularly for its seals, polar bears and penguin parade. The zoo is about a 40-minute drive away by organised bus tour.

**Retail Therapy**

There is a good range of shopping in Furano, including many local shops selling traditional regional goods. The best place to find these is the delightful arts and crafts village, which is great to wander around after the ski day is over. For a wider choice, head to the nearby city of Asahikawa, which can be reached by easily accessible rail and bus links.

**Splashing Out**

Book an unforgettable experience with the Hokkaido Powder Guides (tel: (167) 225 655; [www.hokkaidopowderguides.com](http://www.hokkaidopowderguides.com/)) to really make the most of the incredible – and under-utilised – snow for which the region is famous. Off-piste day tours and powder clinics are available. Alternatively, splash out and sign up for a back-country tour, which includes an option for an overnight stay at the Ryounkaku Hot Springs Hotel.

**Apres Ski**

Strong traditions mean the city is most appealing to families and more mature skiers and boarders rather than the young crowd; although with about 100 bars (including a few Western-style establishments) to choose from, there's still plenty of choice for lively après-ski in Furano.

Indeed, an ever-increasing number of young Australian, European and North American skiers and boarders find their way to the resort each year, bringing some international culture to the area.

For a big night out, take a bus or train to Asahikawa (about 45 minutes away) where there are around 1,500 bars and pretty much every kind of entertainment imaginable around the San-Rokugai area. Sake is brewed on the spot in several establishments here.

**Eating Out**

Dining out is a major pastime in the region and, as such, there are around 100 small restaurants in Furano – most serving traditional Japanese and regional specialities. Among the dishes to try are *shojin ryori*, a vegetarian meal popular with Zen Buddhists; *yudofu*, a low-calorie tofu based dish ideal for winter; and *kaiseki ryori*, an artistic and authentic regional dish.

Visitors can, however, also find Indian, Korean and Chinese restaurants, as well as cuisines from further afield such as Italian pizza and pasta.

**Transport**

**Getting There**

Nearest airport: Asahikawa Airport (AKJ).

Distance to resort: 48km (30 miles).

Driving time: 1 hour.

**Getting Around**

Many facilities in Furano are within walking distance of the accommodation. Hotels typically provide shuttle bus services to the town.

**Hotels**

There is a good selection of accommodation in Furano, from family-run hotels to chain brands, a backpacker hostel for those on a budget, and a good selection of lodges and apartments to rent.

Furano is also home to a range of guest houses for those looking for a more authentic Japanese experience. These include *minshuku* (Japanese inns), where guests can sample home-cooked Japanese food and sleep on traditional futons.

**Furano Youth Hostel**

This is a standard youth hostel with dormitories with communal facilities and two private rooms with en-suite bathrooms.

**Category**

Cheap

**Thoroughfare**

3-20 Okamachi

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Nakafurano

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Japan

**Telephone**

(167) 44 4441.

**Website**

http://www4.ocn.ne.jp/~furanoyh

**New Furano Prince Hotel**

Furano's largest and best known hotel, the New Furano Prince Hotel has more than 400 rooms and provides direct ski-in/ski-out access to the slopes. There are several cafes, bars and restaurants in the hotel, and downtown Furano is just a short shuttle ride.

**Category**

Luxury

**Thoroughfare**

18-6 Kitanomine-machi

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Furano

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Japan

**Telephone**

(167) 22 1111.

**Website**

http://www.princehotels.com/en/newfurano/

**Edel Warme**

Boasting its own *onsen* and a restaurant, Edel Warme is a short walk to Furano’s ski area and around half an hour from the town itself. It is therefore a good option for skiers, but less so for non-skiers.

**Category**

Moderate

**Thoroughfare**

9-20 Kitanomine-cho

**Neighborhood**

XXX

**Locality**

Hokkaido 076-0034

**Sub Admin Area**

XXX

**Admin Area**

XXX

**Postcode**

XXX

**Country**

Japan

**Telephone**

(167) 22 1161.

**Website**

XXX