



SKI'S UP

From the Rocky mountains of Colorado to the snowy peaks of the Dolomite Alps, we've rounded up the most exciting places to hit the slopes this winter.

Words: MADELAINE CLARK

ASPEN, NORTH AMERICA

With a boom in cultural offerings and exciting hospitality openings, there's never been a better time to visit Colorado's premier ski resort.

With its concentration of ultra-high-net-worth individuals, a blazing property market and private jets being the preferred mode of transport, today Aspen has become a byword for billionaire's playground. More recently, however, the Colorado town has added a new string to its gilded bow: art hub. Although there's been a healthy supply of culture in the town since the opening of contemporary Aspen Art Museum in 1979 – it was redesigned in 2013 by Japanese architect Shigeru Ban – and the Anderson Ranch Arts Centre, in 2021 things started heating up when the pandemic caused wealthy collectors to move out of big cities. First came the arrival of pop-ups from blue-chip galleries such as Lehmann Maupin

and White Cube, and this summer Aspen Art Week debuted at Hotel Jerome, bringing 30 international galleries to showcase art throughout the property. For the coming ski season, multimedia artist Alex Israel is commissioned to design the lift ticket as part of the resort's new Art in Unexpected Places Initiative, with a solo show also in the works.

There's also buzz around the resort's forthcoming X Games in January and Snow League in March, when visitors can watch world-class skiers and snowboarders competing.

Ski: Aspen comprises four mountains easily accessible from the town – Aspen Mountain, Buttermilk, Aspen Highlands and Snowmass. Lifts run from the end of November to mid-April, and this season Snowmass debuts the Coney Express, a new high-speed chair lift providing wider access to the mountain's 98 trails.

Stay: Hotel Jerome has been a regular on the scene since it opened in 1889 and is known for interiors that combine all the hallmarks of alpine aesthetics with a distinctly Western verve – think antler heads

and cowhide furniture blended with cowboy-style fabrics. The new opening that's got people talking is the boutique Mollie hotel that's a refreshingly down-to-earth addition to the town. The 68-room hotel features modern yet cosy wooden interiors inspired by the natural landscape of Aspen and has an outdoor hot tub with views of the surrounding mountains.

Eat and drink: Cloud 9 on Aspen Highlands remains the top spot for après ski if Veuve Clicquot showers and rubbing shoulders with ski bums is your thing (no judgment). Last year every New Yorker's favourite Italian, Sant Ambroeus, opened a coffee bar on Hyman Avenue and there's a further restaurant and cocktail bar in the works with interiors by Italian design maestro Giampiero Tagliaferri.

Pack: In case the bounty of luxury boutiques didn't already tell you, more is more in Aspen. Make a splash on the slopes with Goldberg's silver ski jacket or in sumptuous shearling via Cordova's Nozawa one-piece or Ulla Johnson's cocoon coat.



Mollie Aspen Hotel lobby



Bedroom at the new Mollie Hotel



CORDOVA



ULLA JOHNSON



MALENE BIRGER



MICHAEL KORS

GOLDBERGH



ISSEY MIYAKE



Shigeru Ban-designed Aspen Art Museum

CORTINA D'AMPEZZO, ITALY

As it's set to host the winter Olympics in 2026, new hotel openings and transport options make this stylish resort one to visit.

The Queen of the Dolomites, Cortina D'Ampezzo, is gearing up to host the winter Olympic and Paralympic games in February 2026, which might explain the stealthy arrival of shiny new hotels. The ever-stylish Italian resort first hosted the games in 1956, which helped establish the town as a glittering winter holiday destination, as did the appearance of Sophia Loren as a slope-side spectator. Today Cortina is as synonymous with its white belltower made from Dolomite stone as the Fendi-clad skiers who uphold the resort's stylishly sophisticated reputation.



Grand Hotel Savoia



Unlike its luxury European counterparts, Cortina excels in quaint charm over champagne-guzzling riff raff. As it's a two-hour drive from Venice, arriving at the water city's airports has always been the best way of reaching the town – until Trenitalia unveiled its new Espresso Cadore sleeper train connecting Rome to Cortina in 10 hours earlier this year. Although no Orient Express, it nonetheless promises three-course dinners served on white tablecloths.

Ski: Unlike other European resorts, snow is guaranteed in Cortina from November to April, thanks to an army of artificial snow systems lining the pistes. Three main ski areas surround the town: Tofana, Faloria-Cristallo and Cinque Torri, which cater to all levels, while Tofano has some great off-piste options for more seasoned skiers. The most famous run is the Forcella Rossa, the steepest slope in the Dolomites.

Stay: The talk of the town is that the palatial Cristallo Hotel, the grand dame of Cortina since its opening in 1901, has been acquired by Mandarin Oriental. The group's facelift of the property will bring its modern-yet-glam touch to the property's 83 rooms and an indoor/outdoor pool. It's set to re-open in summer 2025, just in time to welcome visitors for the Winter Olympics. In the meantime, the stylish newcomer Hotel de Len is worth checking out; its eco-conscious interiors pays homage to the



Rooftop spa at the Hotel de Len



*View of the town's
white belltower*



BALLY



FENDI



GOLDBERGH



FENDI

traditions of Cortina's artisan woodworkers. And the hotel's rooftop spa, which houses a hot tub, sauna and treatment rooms, makes a day on the slopes seem like the second-best option.

Eat and drink: The #1224 outdoor terrace at the Wes Anderson-esque Grand Hotel Savoia is the favoured watering hole for the après-ski crowd, while guzzling plates of pasta at alpine-chic Al Camin is a Cortina rite of passage.

Pack: Italian and understated is the vibe. Look to heritage brands such as Fendi to turn heads on the slopes while layering à la Loro Piana will keep you cosy.



MAXMARA



PERFECT MOMENT

HAKUBA, JAPAN

As we await a slew of luxury hotel openings in Niseko in the next few years, the less crowded Hakuba Valley promises world-class powder and Japanese charm.

Every keen skier should seriously be considering a trip to Japan this season, as meteorologists are predicting the likelihood of a record La Niña winter. In other words, thanks to low sea temperatures the Northern Hemisphere can anticipate colder-than-normal weather – and, in Japan's case, record levels of powder. The coming years will certainly be eventful in the Japanese resort of Niseko, with an invasion of luxury hotel groups such as Aman, Six Senses and Hoshinoya slated to open properties from 2026; Rosewood's new La Plume resort is also expected to welcome guests imminently.

Down in the Northern Alps, however, the Hakuba Valley is luring more overseas visitors with its authentic Japanese charm, less crowded slopes and purse-friendly prices. Not to mention that the area receives one of the highest snowfall in Japan each year – its extra-light and dry powder is often likened to skiing on air. Getting there is simple enough: it's a four-hour drive from the closest airport, Tokyo, with efficient public

transport also available.

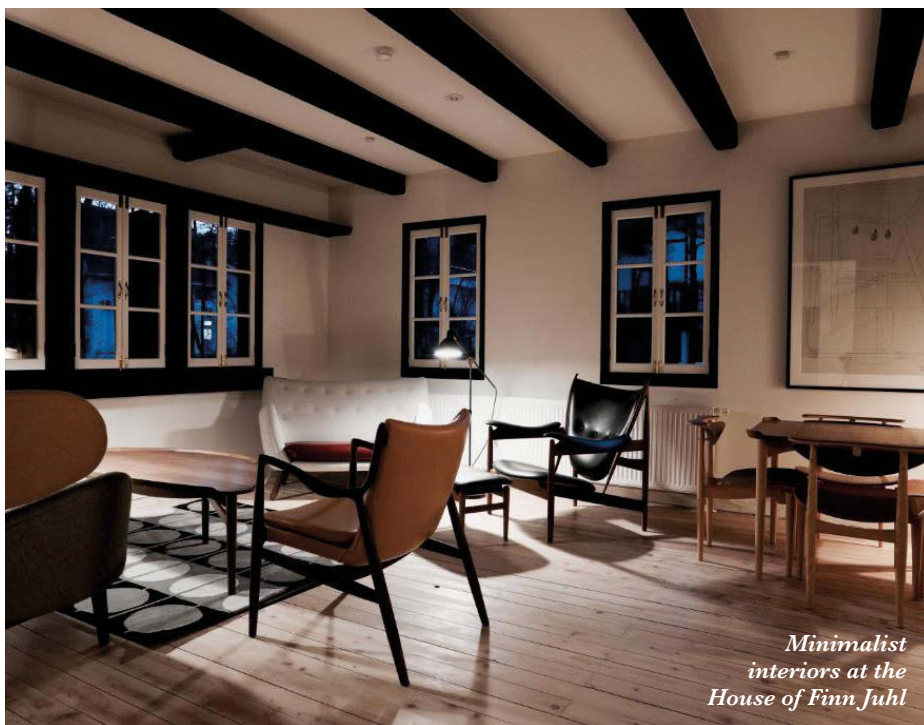
Ski: With 10 different ski areas to choose from – the most popular are Happo, Iwatake, Hakuba 47, Goryu and Cortina – you can never tire of exploring the Hakuba Valley. During the winter season, Goryu offers night skiing with floodlit pistes and lifts staying open until 9.30pm daily.

Stay: While Hakuba may not boast anything close to the number of luxury accommodations as Niseko, there are still quaint and charming digs to discover. One such example is the House of Finn Juhl

Hakuba, a small boutique hotel close to the Happo One area that's part homage to the famous Danish designer, considered the founder of Scandi-style. The ultra-minimalist property, which serves local organic produce, is filled with Juhl's designs with rooms named after his most celebrated pieces. Further down the valley is Kai Alps Hotel, a luxury hot spring ryokan with authentic interiors made by local craftspeople. Rooms are fitted with wood-burning stoves and the hotel's outdoor Onsen is one of the best in the area.



Hakuba Mountain Range in the morning glow



Minimalist interiors at the House of Finn Juhl



Outdoor onsen at the Kai Alps Hotel



PERFECT
MOMENT MENS



COURREGES



CORDOVA



MOLLY
GODDARD

LULULEMON



Eat and drink: Mimi's at the Phoenix hotel is a Hakuba institution, run by husband and wife duo Kazu and Yuki, who specialise in high-end Italian and Japanese cuisine. This year, surfer-favourite Bali restaurant Calico opened an outpost in the Echoland area that will surely become a go-to for easy-going dinners.

Pack: Even if you aren't a serious skier, make an effort to fit in with the professional powder junkies. Dark colours and thermal layers will see you through long and cold days on the slopes. 📌



PERFECT
MOMENT



*House of Finn
Juhl, Hakuba*