

### Portillo, Chile

Portillo, the oldest skiing location in South America, was put on the map when the Alpine World Ski Championships were held there in 1966. Today, the area boasts the challenging Roca Jack and Condor slopes, both frequently covered in fresh powder snow. The Grand Hotel Portillo offers gorgeous accommodation and a perfect place for post-ski drinks. After a pummelling on the slopes, excellent local and international cuisine is available, while those wanting something a little less formal can enjoy sushi or fondue on cosy leather sofas in the bar area. Adrenalin junkies can get their fix with heli-skiing, allowing access to virgin slopes across the mountain, otherwise unreachable by foot or cable car.

[www.skiportillo.com](http://www.skiportillo.com)

### Heavenly, Lake Tahoe, US

Spread across 4,800 acres, Heavenly sits on the shore of Lake Tahoe and has a 3,500 foot vertical drop, the longest in California. An average of 380 inches of snowfall hits Heavenly annually, making for some serious daredevil skiing in stunning, sunny surroundings. Adventure Peak is a 2.4 mile ride up the mountain in a gondola that overlooks Carson Valley,

Desolation Wilderness and Lake Tahoe itself. The Peak has excellent skiing, a fabulous restaurant, a climbing wall and hiking trails. Once you've kicked the ski boots off, taken a hot shower and settled in for the evening, head to Lake Tahoe's casinos, spas, bars, and restaurants, some open 24 hours.

[www.skiheavenly.com](http://www.skiheavenly.com)

### Whistler, Canada

Located in the Coast Mountains of British Columbia, Whistler is consistently ranked the number one resort in North America. Featuring two mountains, Whistler and Blackcomb, it also has four championship golf courses, over 200 shops, 90 restaurants and bars, five-star accommodation, hiking trails and spas. There is, on average, 33.5 feet of snow-fall every year. Being coastal, temperatures are moderate and the resort covers 8,171 acres, with one accessible ski spot at an impressive 7,494 feet. A 90-minute drive from Vancouver, follow the bright lights of the big city as they wind their way up the mountain for a cold beer and a warm seat at night.

[www.ski-whistler.com](http://www.ski-whistler.com)

# SNOW PATROL

Cass Chapman hits the slopes of the chicest resorts to be seen at this season.







Kiroro in Hokkaido has a wide open terrain for skiing, piercing blue skies above and, of course, fantastic Japanese food.

'JAPAN ISN'T THE FIRST COUNTRY THAT SPRINGS TO MIND FOR GREAT SKIING, YET HOKKAIDO HAS ELEVEN RESORTS.'

#### Bjelolasica, Croatia

Bjelolasica is the highest mountain in Gorski Kotar, an area known to Croatians as the country's green heart, with the ski centre of Begovo Razdolje sitting at 1,078m. Skiing has really boosted the area's economy and transformed it into a lively and exhilarating resort. Wolves, boars, bobcats and deer roam the area but fear not, while adding to the unique atmosphere of the area, they leave skiers alone. The culture and cuisine is strictly local and centres primarily on the three main towns of Vrbovsko, Ravna Gora, and Ogulin; all are quaint, authentic and very pretty but full of lively littler restaurants and bars. The curvaceous mountain creates a series of slopes covered in thick forest, each area interspersed with idyllic meadows. The beauty is breathtaking and the fresh, mountain air as pure as it gets. The relatively new Croatian Olympic Centre is now situated at 620m and offers seven ski runs so, while the setting may look something like the Sound of Music, the skiing is action packed.

[www.bjelolasica.hr](http://www.bjelolasica.hr)

#### Arosa, Switzerland

Arosa offers what few ski destinations can: virtually guaranteed snow all season long. Set in alpine Graubunden where sun shines from between eight and ten hours a day it is a northerly location that receives lots of fresh powder. Arosa promotes itself as a 'wellness' resort. Start with the mountain fresh air, add some seriously luxurious hotels such as the Tschuggen Grand Hotel, complete with

a sumptuous spa, and you've got the ingredients for a serious detox programme. But if wellness by day, party by night is more your motto, you won't be left with carrot juice in hand – a wealth of restaurants dot the mountain top serving everything from fondu to chateaubriand and the drinks flow from dusk until dawn. The quality of air at Arosa is unbeatable so, no matter how much damage you do at night, a fast blast down one of the slopes the next morning will completely clear your head.

[www.arosa.ch](http://www.arosa.ch)

#### Hokkaido, Japan

Japan isn't necessarily the first country that springs to mind for great skiing, yet Hokkaido, the northernmost and least developed of Japan's main islands is littered with no less than eleven ski resorts. Kiroro is generally considered to have the deepest snow in the area, with a wide open terrain for skiing, piercing blue skies above and, of course, fantastic Japanese food and Saki to chill out over at the end of the day. With several five-star hotels that are quintessential, picturesque wintertime resorts, spas offer every massages and facials and all the latest therapies and techniques. Shinrin-no-yu spa has a natural hot spring that will revitalise those weary legs after a day on the slopes. The natural beauty of this region, coupled with its fantastic attitude to the sport make for an exhilarating slope action.

[www.skiing-hokkaido.com](http://www.skiing-hokkaido.com)