

.461

40°<mark>3</mark>6'

140°35'

HOKKAIDO

431

NISEKO AREA

Shakunagedake



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Shakunage-dake (シャクナゲ岳, 1074m) is a gorgeous conical peak sitting to the west of the more well known Niseko Range peaks of Iwaonpuri and Chisenupuri. It's more of a commitment to get to the peak, involving a 30 minute skin across the broad col between Shakunage and Chisenupuri. Skiing can be enjoyed on all aspects from the peak, and the broad face down towards Naganuma Pond is also prime skiing terrain. When we visited, Chisenupuri was crawling with skiers, vying for the last remnants of untracked pow, whereas Shakunage and surrounding slopes were largely untouched. On a good day, skiers will often link up both Shakunage and Chisenupuri for a quality day out in the hills.

LOCATION

Shakunage-dake is situated to the west of the popular Chisenupuri peak at the eastern end of the Niseko Range in

ONLINE ROUTE GUIDE Please visit the full route guide for GPS file, interactive map, and extra safety notes: http://hokw.jp/shaku



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TEXT, PHOTOS, MAP I Rob Thomson

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southern Hokkaido. This route starts at the Chisenupuri ski area parking lot.

GENERAL NOTES

Shakunage is Japanese for Rhododendron. Apparently this peak was named Shakunagedake (literally Mt. Rhododendron) because there was a colony of rhododendrons on the mountain. Most commonly approached via the public uptrack next to the Hokkaido Backcountry Club's Chisenupuri ski field, this is a fine fair-weather peak with a couple of good options for downhill skiing in the surrounding area. The route outlined on this page is geared towards bagging the peak, but in stable conditions, the short drop from the ridge next to Venus Hill down to Naganuma Pond is also a great option.

ROUTE TIMING AND NOTES

This route is not marked. Expect about 2.5 hours in total for the skin up, and 1 hour back down. Begin from the Chisenupuri ski area car park and head straight towards the Hokkaido Backcountry Club's wooden catskiing base building. About 50m before the building is a sign and roped off public-use uptrack that the catskiing operation has kindly provided for skiers and hikers accessing Chisenupuri and the surrounding areas. Follow up this uptrack, following the ribbons marking the way along the western side of the ski area. After about 40 minutes, you'll see the uptrack veer to the right. If the cornice above the gully just ahead is not large, it's possible to carry on straight, more or less following the summer trail up to the plateau. If the cornice looks suspect, follow the uptrack markings to the derelict upper lift station, and access the plateau via a small dip just north-northeast of the lift station.

Once on the plateau, veer to the northwest, skirting the south and southwest flanks of Chisenupuri, towards the broad saddle between Chisenupuri and Venus Hill. Once on the saddle, push on to the west, veering left of Venus Hill. Snow conditions can be very firm underfoot on the eastern aspect of Shakunage-dake. Most skiers will approach the summit by wrapping around the northern and western faces. This route descends the way it came.

If time, conditions, and visibility are on your side, there can be good skiing to be had on the broad eastern-facing slope down towards Naganuma, and skiers will often pair this route up with a climb up the western face of Chisenupuri, to ski the southern Chisenupuri face on the descent. Add about 1.5 hours if adding Chisenupuri to the day's route.

TRANSPORT

By car: There is a large carpark at the Chisenupuri Ski Area carpark, but this can be full on busy weekends. Arrive early to avoid missing out on a parking spot. **Public transport:** This route is not accessible by public transport.

SAFETY NOTES

The main point of concern on this route is the broad saddle between Chisenupuri and Shakunage-dake. In low visibility conditions, it would be easy to lose one's orientation here without good navigation tools and experience. Also note that this route is very much the backcountry - it is not patrolled, and there is no avalanche control. All skiers should be proficient in navigating on their own, have their own avalanche rescue equipment, and be versed in its use. Also note that despite its relative low height of 1080m, like other mountains in Hokkaido, temperatures can plunge to -20°C with windchill - always err on the side of bringing that extra puffer.

ONSEN NEARBY

The natural choice of post-ski onsen for this route is the gorgeous Yuki-chichibu Onsen (雪秩父温泉, 700yen). Famous for its outdoor baths and mud-infused waters, this is an onsen that should not be missed. They also have a restaurant, operating from 11:30am till 3pm each day.

PRINTING INSTRUCTIONS

STEP 1

Load your printer with A4 printer paper (210mm x 297mm). If you've only got Letter size (215.9mm x 279.4 mm), just follow the instructions below. You'll achive an accurate scale, but the map will be clipped a little at the top and bottom.

STEP 2

Open the print window by clicking on File > Print (or hitting Ctrl + P on your keyboard).

STEP 3

Make sure "Actual Size" is selected.

STEP 4

For double-sided printing, select "Print on both sides of paper".

STEP 5

For best results, select the highest quality print option available on your printer (settings will vary).

STEP 6

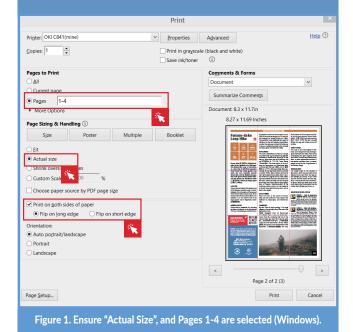
You won't need this instructions page, so just select the pages that don't include this instruction sheet.

STEP 7

Click "Print".

PLEASE PRINT AT 'ACTUAL SIZE' (NO SCALING)

The 1:25,000 scale used in the map is accurate if the PDF is printed without scaling (i.e., ACTUAL SIZE). Follow the instructions on this page to ensure an accurate rendering of the scale.



ORIGAMI INSTRUCTIONS

