

140°38

140%39

HOKKAIDO

Nishikonbudake















Nishikonbu-dake (西昆布岳, 804m) is a diminutive western foothill at the base of the iconic Konbu-dake (昆布岳, 1045m) south of Niseko. It's a beginner backcountry skier's dream, with a broad low-angle approach. Even from the summit, the downhill is mellow, but steep enough to have a good time. The summit allows skiers inspiring views across to Oshima Peninsula and the sea in Uchiura Bay.

LOCATION

Nishikonbu-dake sits on Konbu-dake's southwestern reaches in Toyoura Town in southern Hokkaido. It's about 45 minutes drive south from the bustling Niseko resort area. The route starts from just below a prominent rise in Prefectural Road 914.

GENERAL NOTES

This route is as it is on the can – straight forward, relatively quick, and a great route for beginners. It's not likely to have

ONLINE ROUTE GUIDE

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



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TEXT, PHOTOS, MAP I Rob Thomson

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quite enough snow on the broad field on the approach until mid- to late-February, so this is a good route to leave till early March onwards.

ROUTE TIMING AND NOTES

This route is not marked. This simple up-and-back route will likely take most people just under 2 hours on the ascent, and just under one hour on the descent. Starting at the trailhead, clamber up the snowbank to the wide, featureless field. Proceed straight up the field for about 2km, and you'll enter an old-growth white birch forest. The route continues up along the broad ridge, skirting below a prominent (but mostly harmless) cornice near the summit. From the summit, you'll have views of Konbu-dake to the north east, and down to the sea. Return the way you came up.

TRANSPORT

By car: At the trailhead, there's a snow-cleared spot large enough for about three cars to park side by side — park as efficiently as possible to ensure as many cars are parked off the road as possible. If this small area is full, you'll need to spend about 15 minutes to clear

an extra 1-2m in the snow off the side of the road, in order to park parallel with the road – try to get your vehicle as far to the left as possible.

Public transport: There are no public transport options for this route.

SAFETY NOTES

The main broad ridge can be disorienting in low visibility conditions. Make sure you've got a GPS-enabled device (such as your smartphone with a navigation app).

ONSEN NEARBY

The onsen of choice will depend on where you're driving to after the trip. If headed back so Sapporo on the expressway, consider dropping in to the Toyoura Onsen on the coast to the south (豊浦温泉, 600yen). They have a restaurant attached – their best-seller is deep fried scallops. If headed back to Niseko (or Sapporo via Nakayama Pass), try Makkari Onsen (真狩温泉, 500yen). Makkari Onsen also has a restaurant attached.



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.

STFP 4

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

STFP 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









