



Ski down under

While the rest of the world warms up for summer, Australia is preparing for a stellar 2008 ski season

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When they think of Australia, many people only think of red deserts and white beaches. But those in the know are heading down to Australia to enjoy its five fantastic ski fields. From the spectacular white flanks of the Snowy Mountain Range, to the pretty ski-in ski-out village at Falls Creek, to the society set at Thredbo, to Mt Buller's cardiac chutes, Australia is a surprising snow bunny's paradise. You will never forget your first time skiing between its haunting native snow gum trees.

Riddled with world-class runs, Australia's resorts will raise the bar when they open on 7 June with new snowmaking, new terrain and plenty of new programmes.



ONE OF A KIND

The new six-seater Holden Chairlift is the first of its kind in Australia. Servicing Buller's famous Bourke Street beginner run, the six-seater lift means less time on the lift and more time on the snow, taking skiers and boarders 1,100 metres high in under four minutes.

LET IT SNOW

It will be an all white winter this season as Australian resorts spend big on snow making. Australasia's largest resort, Perisher Blue, has invested AU\$9.75 million upgrading its snow making regime. Expect 34 new snow guns added to its existing 154 to ensure Perisher's impeccable chorduroy delivers.

In Victoria, Hotham is spending \$3.3 million on towers and guns in Heavenly Valley. Quite the environmental champions, Hotham's snowmaking network will run on wind and solar resources. Falls Creek and Mt Buller are also in on the act with increased snow making arranged for their beginner runs.

CHICKS ON STICKS

Australian resorts are turning it up with women's only ski and snowboard camps. You won't find any pesky testosterone-fuelled males fighting it out to get to the bottom of the hill first here. Female instructors take on small groups of women in a safe and friendly environment. You'll have a laugh, meet lifelong friends and improve your skiing. Lattes and champagne optional. Try Hotham's L'Oreal Visible Results Women's Week for five days of serious schussing tuition, spa pampering, social programmes and beauty sessions from 21 – 25 July.

www.hotham.com.au

APRÈS

It's a hard call choosing between Falls' 28 bars and restaurants, Mt Buller's legendary Pension Grimus, or Hotham's General Store. When it comes to après, each resort has it covered, but Thredbo has secured legendary status.

The 50-year-old resort is well known for its fashion conscious clientele and swanky dining; the Denman's Terraces Restaurant offers award-winning alpine cuisine. Pull up a chair at Kareela Hutte's slopeside deck where Prada wearers mix it up with ski bums with attitude. The riverside restaurant Credo has a magnificently extensive wine cellar. Prices are high, but space in this quaint ski village is a commodity. Live it up like the posh set in your own exclusive ski-in ski-out abode on Crackenback Ridge. ■

