

mt ruapehu

The white stuff Mt Ruapehu is four hours drive from Auckland or a mere two hours from Taupo or Palmerston North airports. Covered in an annual average snow base of well over two metres, the natural lava-ridden area of Whakapapa was fittingly used as a backdrop for the Battle of Mordor in *The Lord of the Rings*.

Home to New Zealand's largest alpine snow area, Mt Ruapehu boasts a thousand hectares over two ski fields, Whakapapa and Turoa, which sit on opposite sides of the mountain. With the longest ski season in Australasia (June to November), this active volcano provides plenty of fun – the intrepid can even hike up to the active crater lake at the mountain top. mtruapehu.com

Rest your head Bayview Chateau Tongariro. Honeymooners wanting total privacy bed down at this grand heritage-listed hotel on the Whakapapa side. You'll soon find yourself snuggling up in front of the mammoth open fire in the hotel's foyer, sipping champagne in the elegant Ruapehu dining room and walking the national parkland at sunrise before taking to the slopes for the day. chateau.co.nz

Ohakune on the Turoa side is a quirky ski town of 1246 locals. The Powderhorn Chateau Swiss-style hotel is all exposed

wood with a lush apartment built specifically for Peter Jackson when he was in town filming. Act like a Hollywood celeb and throw yourselves on the possum rug or book into the honeymoon suite's open terrace lodging. The Powderhorn offers the closest accommodation to the Turoa Ski Area and also boasts a heated indoor pool to warm your weary bones after a day on the slopes. powderhorn.co.nz

Eat, drink & be merry Après ski time is spent at Ohakune's renowned watering hole, the Powderkeg, or you can carry on the party along the Thames Street strip of bars for serious cocktails and Asian Fusion Tapas at the industrial glam Projection Room.

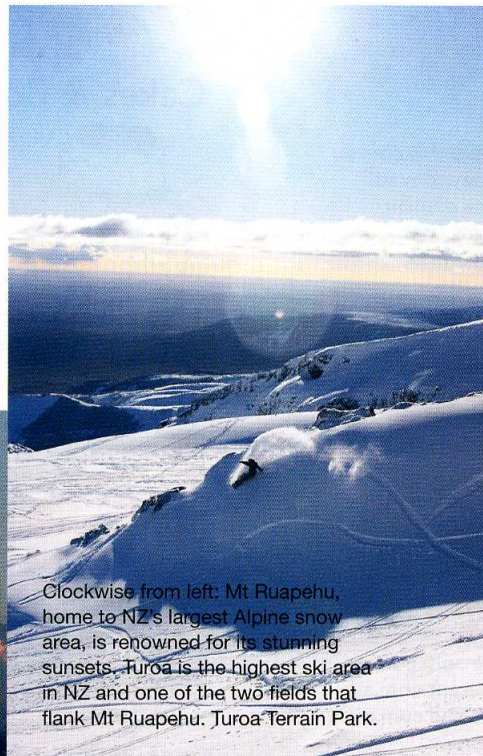
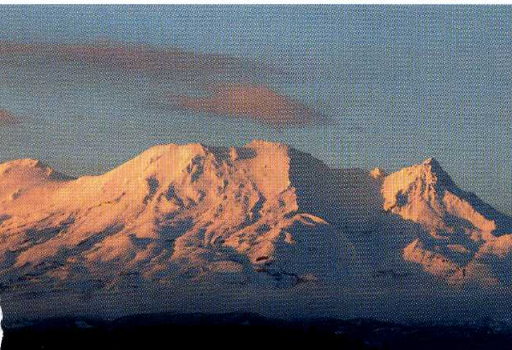
APRÈS SKIING



POWDERKEG This Ohakune drinking institution is the perfect place for a serious session after a hearty meal at the Powderhorn Hotel's Matterhorn Restaurant.

FISHING FANATICS Turangi, 40 minutes from Whakapapa ski area is a trout fishing fairyland, and the number of pools and trout guides will astound. laketauponz.com

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE For further info about skiing and staying in the Mt Ruapehu area, see mtruapehu.com



Clockwise from left: Mt Ruapehu, home to NZ's largest Alpine snow area, is renowned for its stunning sunsets. Turoa is the highest ski area in NZ and one of the two fields that flank Mt Ruapehu. Turoa Terrain Park.



FACT FILES FOR HONEYMOONERS

- **DEALS:** **Ski Express** (skiexpress.com) has a 'Ski Queenstown' deal with 3-day Ski & Activity Pass, 5 days car rental and 5 nights at the St Moritz Queenstown, from \$695. You also get a ski host at your hotel. **Air New Zealand Holidays** (1300 365 524) has a 'Drive/Ski Wanaka' package with 5 days car rental, 5 nights at the Oakridge Resort, 3-day Mountain Hopper Ski & Activity Pass, from \$679. **Skimax** (skimax.com.au) has a Mt Ruapehu deal with 7 nights at the Bayview Chateau Tongariro, 7 days car hire and 5-day ski pass from \$992.
- **CAR HIRE:** Our **Budget Care Hire** Mitsubishi Outlander whipped up winding snowy mountain roads without the tyre chains that come standard with this car. Loads of room and ski gear stows in the spacious boot rather than having to be strapped to the roof racks. See budget.co.nz
- **FLIGHTS:** **Pacific Blue** flies daily from Australia to Christchurch. Snowboards and ski equipment is given extra free baggage allowance. See flypacificblue.com

