



## What's new *in snow business*

WHAT'S NEW ON AUSTRALIAN SKI FIELDS FOR THE 2010 SKI SEASON?  
FIONA HARPER TAKES STOCK AND RECOMMENDS THE BEST  
HIGH-END SKI LODGES FOR LATE SEASON BOOKINGS.

In New South Wales cool thrill seekers are trying to retain indifferent nonchalance as excitement builds pending the arrival of the Thredbo Monster Bagjump in July this year. Akin to landing in a bag full of marshmallows, it's a huge air filled cushion designed for skiers and snowboarders to practice their jumps in safety. Positioned within view of the Kosciuszko Express lift, it promises to add another element for both elite and aspiring alpine athletes, as well as those who just yearn for "big air".

Check in to the four star Denman Hotel for fine food and wine (the degustation dinner at The Terrace Restaurant is to die for) and mountain view balcony rooms. Fly-in ski-out packages include private transfers, equipment hire and a chilled bottle of Veuve Clicquot. Veuve fanciers may want to stick around for an event called Clicquot in the Snow, which involves picnics, exclusive dinners and tastings across the village in late July.

Half an hour away by road on the Alpine Way lies the village of Perisher Valley at an altitude of 1,720 metres. Previously known under the moniker of ►



Ski tubing at Falls Creek



Snowmaking at Mt Hotham



Mt Buller ski lifts



Mt Hotham grind



Boarding at Mt Hotham

*...the lads at Mt Hotham have brand new snowmakers to play with after a multi-million dollar equipment upgrade, ensuring that runs will stay open later in the season.*

Perisher Blue, since 2009 the alpine resort is now simply called Perisher. Comprising the ski fields of Blue Cow, Perisher, Smiggin Holes and Guthega, Perisher is Australia's largest ski resort with almost 50 lifts and tows. There's over 350 metres of vertical terrain to suit all levels of skier along with a halfpipe for boarders and vast cross country trails as well. For those who don't like to drive on icy roads the Skitube Alpine Railway departs from Bullocks Flat, depositing snow bunnies in the heart of the village. Winter Olympics Gold Medal winning snowboarder Torah Bright honed her talent at Perisher from a young age. During the 2010 season the snowboard Superpipe will be renamed in her honour.

Check in to the boutique Perisher Valley Hotel for ski-in ski-out action, personal service, and loft style Alpine Suites just moments from the lifts.

Over the border on the Victorian ski fields at Falls Creek, a compact ski-in ski-out alpine village, skiers are able to ski to lifts and

accommodation from any position in the village (during normal snow conditions). Approximately five hours drive north east of Melbourne, Falls Creek is one of Victoria's most popular ski resorts. Family friendly with plenty of kids activities such as ski tubing, night skiing on beginners run Wombat Ramble and the Magic Carpet experience, designed to teach the young ones the basics while the parents are out carving up the slopes, are new additions for the 2010 season.

Check in to the new-for-last-season Quay West Resort and Spa for five-star apartment style contemporary elegance and indulgent Mii Spa treatments, located at the base of the main ski runs.

At Australia's most elevated village, the lads at Mt Hotham have brand new snowmakers to play with after a multi-million dollar equipment upgrade, ensuring that runs will stay open later in the season. Mountain Kitchen, offering gourmet take home produce, ►



Looking over Falls Creek

opened in time for the 2010 season, while the Mountain Fresh Festival promises a celebration of delicious regional food and delectable cool climate wines over six days in late July. Out on the mountain, a women's ski program offers tuition by women, for women, focusing on the particular way that women tend to learn, aiming to improve skiing confidence. Plus there's Gay Short Ski Week and A La Carte in the Park Series, just two fun filled weeks on the hectic 2010 event calendar.

Check in to Blowhard Mt Hotham, a ski chalet like no other. Spread over ten levels, a masterpiece of architectural excellence, Blowhard is an astounding property featuring handmade furnishings by its filmset interior designer owner, accessed via a heated road (yes, that's right, a heated road, switched on automatically as the temperature drops).

Four hours drive north east of Melbourne, Mt Buller resort has also invested heavily during the off season with big dollars spent on snowmaking and grooming equipment. Early risers are taking advantage of groomed corduroy runs that await each morning. The village sits above the snow line at 1,600 metres, with a network of 22 lifts accessed by chip-enabled smart cards being introduced in 2010. Buller Boomers Bonus Days reward maturity with a buy-one-get-one-free offer for those born on or before 1954.

Check in at the sophisticated Mt Buller Chalet Hotel where Executive Chef Shane Lewis has arrived at the award winning Black Cockatoo Restaurant. Plans are afoot for a Chef's Table degustation menu and matched wines, as are hosted cooking demonstrations when Shane can be enticed from his kitchen. ■



**FLY AND SKI**

Skiers heading to Perisher and Thredbo can fly from Sydney to Snowy Mountains Airport with regular Aeropelican flights, while Mt Hotham airfield is serviced by QantasLink from Sydney and Melbourne during the season.

**STAY**

- 1) THE DENMAN HOTEL  
[www.thedenman.com.au](http://www.thedenman.com.au)
- 2) QUAY WEST RESORT & SPA FALLS CREEK  
[www.mirvachotels.com](http://www.mirvachotels.com)
- 3) MT BULLER CHALET HOTEL  
[www.mtbullerchalet.com.au](http://www.mtbullerchalet.com.au)
- 4) BLOWHARD MT HOTHAM  
[www.blowhardallyear.com](http://www.blowhardallyear.com)