

LOVE GOOD FOOD

Abbotsford Convent, Melbourne
GET AWAY FOR A WEEKEND
OF FEASTING ON 9 AND
10 SEPTEMBER AT THE MELBOURNE
FOOD & WINE FESTIVAL. TASTE
SLOW FOOD, CHECK OUT THE
COOKING DEMOS AND EXPAND
YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF WINE.

**SUITE TALK**

VIBE HOTEL, RUSHCUTTERS BAY
WHEN THE WEATHER IS THIS CHILLY,
THERE'S ONLY ONE THING FOR IT
— A NIGHT OF PASSION. TAKE
ADVANTAGE OF THE WINTER DEALS
AT THE VIBE HOTELS, WHICH START
FROM \$139 FOR A ONE-NIGHT STAY,
BREAKFAST AND A CD OF SMOOTH
SOUNDS. VIBE IS GIVING AWAY ONE
WINTER DEAL TO A LUCKY 9TO5
READER. SEE T&CS BELOW.

WIN
A MINI
BREAK!



For your chance to WIN simply email your full name, residential address and daytime phone number to 9TOSVibe Hotel Reader Competition at win@9to5.com.au. Conditions of entry/Competition opens 8am 14-08-06; competition closes 16-08-06 at 10am last email received. Winners will be drawn on 16-08-06 at noon, at Suite 201, Level 2, 100 Market Street, Sydney NSW 2000. For complete terms and conditions see www.9to5.com.au



snowpatrol

ON NEW ZEALAND'S PICTURESQUE NORTH ISLAND,
EXTREME SKIERS TAKE ON AN ACTIVE VOLCANO.

Why haven't more girls discovered Ohakune in New Zealand's north island? Ski towns are party towns and all the more when the mountain is epic. The snow calls the boys to come out and play, and when the lifts close the men head out on the town.

The ski mountain here is more than epic, it's an active volcano. But don't be alarmed, you're more likely to experience steam in the sauna than from Mt Ruapehu's crater. Size matters in the centre of the north island, the mountain's two ski areas (Whakapapa on one side and Turoa on the other) make up more than a thousand hectares of terrain.

It's one of the biggest ski resorts in New Zealand and boasts the longest season in Australasia and the deepest snow base, so there's plenty of terrain for all. Beginner's areas are separate to those who already know how to schuss.

Terrain parks offer air for the freestyle skier with views of the Central Plateau, and groomed open runs with no trees keep the cruiser and the racer happy. Extreme skiers head to the pinnacles at Whakapapa, while the not-so extreme can just watch from the warmth of the Terrace Cafe.

You can't stay on the mountain because it's a national park, but the small town of Ohakune at the base provides all the entertainment you need. With only 1200 year-round residents, everyone knows everyone and you will too.

Ohakune is the carrot capital of New Zealand and yes, there's a big carrot, a carrot festival, carrot cake and so on. It's also home to the annual Fall Out music festival (www.falloutfestival.co.nz) from 19 August to 9 September so if you're planning to head to NZ at this time, take your dancing shoes.

words: rachel oakes ash, hannah rand

travel facts

SLEEP

Miro Ridge lodge is just a stiletto step away, with comfy beds and friendly service. There's only nine guest rooms, so you'll get to know folks quick and swap snow stories by the fire for about \$70 a night. See www.miroridge.co.nz.

PLAY

Beer folk head to the Powderkeg, mountain staff party on Tuesdays at Turoa Ski Lodge, and hungry ones love The Projection Room with Polish vodka and DJ mixing. For cocktails, head down town to Altitude 585 on the main road.

FLY

Air New Zealand flies from Sydney to Palmerston North via Auckland or Wellington daily. See www.airnewzealand.com.au. Jump in an Avis rental Rav 4 and make the stunning 110-minute drive to Ohakune.