



Interview with Ross Findlay of Niseko Annupuri

I travelled to Kutchan, Hokkaido to visit Ross Findlay, known for his global promotion of the world-class ski resort, Niseko Annupuri. Niseko Annupuri's biggest attraction is its powder snow, and the resort is unique for its latitude and altitude as well as its accessibility. Its many foreign guests return repeatedly from Australia, Europe and elsewhere overseas.

Mr. Findlay, the founder and manager of Niseko Adventure Center (NAC)

www.nacadventures.jp, introduced rafting and other summer adventures

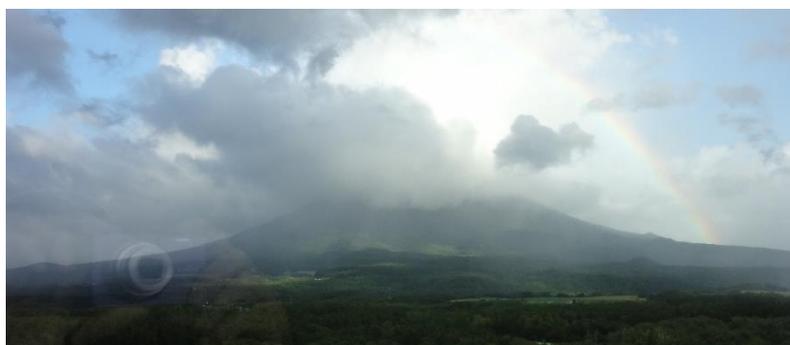
to the area, where visitors had previously enjoyed only winter sports. The town has now been transformed into a year-round attraction for tourists from Japan and abroad. Findlay is highly acclaimed in Japan and is featured on the Japan Tourism Agency website (<https://goo.gl/V9hbqi>). We asked him his views on topics such as regional issues, foreign residents, the younger generation, and education.

To my question “Do you have enough workforce?” he responded “Of course not! We don't have enough housekeeping staff for the hotel. A working holiday is only a 6-month program. Short-term workers tend to cause problems and cannot raise the level of service. If we are to attract foreign workers, we must offer free language courses.”

About our country's younger generation, he commented “Not many Japanese work here. Local companies don't hire Japanese college students because they don't have enough knowledge or experience. We should teach marketing and town planning at colleges.” About the young male demographic who remain single, he thinks this is because they do not have enough money. Japan used to have a traditional matchmaking system. “Maybe we should plan singles camps,” he suggested. On regional revitalization, his comments included “It is important how we create resorts. We need to develop a resort culture”, “We must review people's lifestyles”, “There is not enough awareness at town level” and “There are education issues.” I reflected on his comments on my way back to Tokyo.



Ross Findlay, Representative Director, NAC



Mt. Yotei behind post-typhoon clouds. Niseko Annupuri and Mt. Yotei slough off moist snow blowing from the sea, creating powder snow in the region. An Ezo red fox greeted us with his catch.
