

Nozawa Onsen Week Checklist

Winter 2026-27 - Independent guide for Australians

By Steve - Best Nozawa - hello@bestnozawa.com

01 - THE MOUNTAIN

One resort, ski-in village

- Nozawa Onsen Snow Resort - 36 runs, village base with thirteen free onsen
- Terrain for beginners to experts; intermediates have the most options
- Night skiing available some evenings (check resort schedule)
- Lift pass: window or online - comparable prices
- > bestnozawa.com/resorts

02 - GETTING THERE FROM TOKYO

Iiyama shinkansen + shuttle (don't buy 7-day JR Pass for Nozawa only)

- Hokuriku Shinkansen Tokyo/Ueno -> Iiyama (1h50)
- Then Nozawa Onsen Liner shuttle (25 min) or local bus
- Highway bus from Shinjuku exists but slower (4.5-5h)
- 7-day national JR Pass usually bad value for Tokyo->Nozawa only (unless adding Kyoto/other legs)
- > bestnozawa.com/get-there

03 - THIRTEEN FREE ONSEN

Village public baths - wash before you soak

- Sotoyu: thirteen free communal hot spring baths
- Maintained by local bath committees (yunakama); donation coins appreciated
- Bring small towel; no towel in the tub
- Hours matter - most close 22:00 or 23:00
- Oyu (big bath) good for first-timers; central location
- > bestnozawa.com/onsens

04 - FIRST-NIGHT DINNER

Book ahead during peak weeks

- Village restaurants fill up during Australian school holidays
- Most places close 14:00-17:00 (lunch/dinner gap)
- Cash still common; cards more accepted at larger spots
- No tipping in Japan
- > bestnozawa.com/eat

05 - ENGLISH SKI SCHOOL

Book November at latest for peak weeks

- Group and private English lessons available
- Kids programs need advance booking
- Peak weeks (Christmas, New Year, Aussie holidays) fill early
- Pick group vs private before paying deposit
- > bestnozawa.com/schools

Best Nozawa - www.bestnozawa.com

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By Steve - Tokyo - Checked 24 Sep 2026