

POWDER PILGRIMS

野地滑雪



With shovels and avalanche probes strapped to their backpacks and helmets and goggles covering their faces, today's off-piste powder hounds look like they are heading into combat rather than going on holiday. Once they would only be seen in a handful of cult resorts – **Chamonix** in France, **Verbier** in Switzerland, **Jackson Hole** in Wyoming – but over the last decade, everything has changed. New 'fat' skis have made powder skiing much easier, so the number of people heading out into the backcountry has boomed. The result is that in the big-name resorts, the precious virgin snow gets tracked out within hours, so enthusiasts have set out on a quest for new, undiscovered destinations and fresh snow. On one hand this has brought them to tiny, sleepy Alpine villages such as **Zinal**, lost at the dead-end of a remote Swiss valley and surrounded by 4,000-metre peaks, or **Warth** in Austria – little more than a handful of chalets clustered around a church but with a greater annual snowfall than any other resort in Europe. On the other, they are travelling to resorts in increasingly exotic destinations. Top of the wish list for this winter are **Gulmarg** in Indian Kashmir (home of the world's highest ski lift), **Siglufjörður** in northern Iceland for heliskiing, and **Furano**, a farming town in Hokkaido. ☉

現今喜歡挑戰在雪道外作野地滑雪的人士，不但配備頭盔及巨型護目鏡，背包還會帶備雪鏟和雪崩探測器，全副武裝的模樣，看上去像是上戰場多於度假。以往這類滑雪人士只會在幾個較另類的度假村裡出現，例如法國的Chamonix、瑞士的Verbier和美國懷俄明州的Jackson Hole等地。但在過去10年間，情況已有所改變，由於有俗稱「肥仔板」的新一代fat ski滑雪板出現，令在粉雪區域滑雪變得更容易，因此令選擇野地滑雪的人士數目激增。著名滑雪度假村內鋪滿新雪的滑雪道，總是於短短數小時內已被蹂躪得面目全非，令滑雪狂熱分子開始四出尋找不為人知的新雪天地。這個趨勢將滑雪人士帶到阿爾卑斯山的Zinal及Warth等寧靜的小鎮，前者隱沒於偏遠的瑞士山谷的盡頭，四周被4,000米高的山峰包圍；後者則位於奧地利，鎮上只有數間瑞士式小木屋，疏疏落落圍著教堂而建，但這裡的年降雪量卻比阿爾卑斯山脈任何一處都多。此外，亦有愈來愈多的滑雪人士喜愛造訪別具異國風情的國家，入住當地的滑雪度假村。今年冬季，最令滑雪人士趨之若鶩的地點包括印度喀什米爾的Gulmarg，那裡有全球最高的滑雪登山纜車；還有位於冰島北部的Siglufjörður，可在那裡體驗直升機滑雪；以及北海道的農業小城富良野。☉

Ready for action

Powder hounds standing on top of Marmolada in Italy, the tallest mountain in the Dolomites (above)

整裝待發

意大利多洛米蒂山脈(上圖)中最高的馬爾莫拉達山上，野地滑雪人士如箭在弦

INTO COMBAT: THE POWDER PILGRIM'S KIT

迎戰雪峰：野地滑雪必備裝備



Which is the world's best ski resort? It all depends on who's asking. Skiers are an increasingly fragmented bunch and a dream resort for some will be a nightmare for others. Some want maximum piste mileage, some are more interested in the maximum number of Michelin-starred restaurants for lunch. Some are driven by an unquenchable thirst for fresh powder, others want a charming village and somewhere safe to teach their children. There are as many 'best resorts' as there are types of skier – the key is in the matchmaking. ☉

哪個滑雪度假村是全球最佳之選？不同的人會給你不同的答案。熱愛滑雪的人士形形色色，一些人認為宛若天堂的滑雪場，對部分人來說也許是夢魘。有些人認為滑雪道愈長愈好，有些人卻覺得愈多米芝蓮星級餐廳讓他們享用午餐愈好。有人希望每天能見到源源不絕的新降雪粉，但也有人喜歡在環境優美且安全的滑雪村內教小朋友滑雪。每一位滑雪人士的心目中，都會有自己的一座「夢想度假村」；因此，完美的配對才是關鍵。☉



Rocky mountain high
Colorado offers some of the finest slopes
for newcomers to off piste skiing

高山雪坡
科羅拉多州有好幾優美的山坡供
野地滑雪的初哥一試身手