



Young, wild and free

A mid-week stay at The Stables Apartments reveals a more intimate side of Perisher, *writes Lisa Wagstaff.*



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A red-hot, horse-themed snowcat is idling in the snow as we step out of Perisher’s Ski Tube terminal. We load our bags and climb into the cab to be transported over the snow to The Stables Resort Perisher. The snowcat’s scarlet horse head decal dances through its snow-covered mountain backdrop as we charge up the rise to the hotel perched adjacent to Perisher slopes. Named after the horses housed here until 1974, The Stables’ 33 fittingly styled apartments are one of only a handful of retreats in Perisher Valley. My friends and I are staying in The Lodge Apartment, a spacious and modern three-bedroom, three-bathroom retreat for up to six guests. The Stables’ equine theme is carried throughout, with art depicting cowboys cantering bareback through the snow, sculptural horse-head bookends and vintage skis mounted on the wall. Overnighting in Perisher Village is an intimate affair, as cars clear out, snowcats

crawl the snow-covered roads and people gather in cosy pubs. Only a small group of snow enthusiasts remain, keen to share this exclusive experience together.

STRAP IN

I am in my happy place. I wake at first light with butterflies spinning in my stomach. I can see Perisher’s thickly frosted slopes from our lounge room, the white peaks painted pink in the reflection of the rising sun. The lifts open at 8:30am and I am dressed and strapped into my snowboard faster than you can say powder day. The Stables offer complimentary transfers to the Perisher footbridge, but why ride when you can slide? My friends and I ski and snowboard down the snow-covered road. While this is commonplace, it still feels like a guilty pleasure to be snowboarding down an actual road. My heart races as I weave through the snow gums at Happy Valley, the possibility of spotting a wombat or sugar glider at the front of my mind. With 1245 hectares of



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01 Blue Cow fun 02 The Stables
Resort Perisher Lodge Apartment
03 The Stallions Restaurant and Bar
04 The Stables Lodge Chalet
05 Rustic charm at The Stables

“Perisher is the largest ski resort in the southern hemisphere and I love it here.”



06 Snowboarding the slopes of Perisher



07 The Stables is a warm and welcoming retreat at the end of an action-packed snow day



08 Conquering runs together



09 A snowcat clears the way

terrain and 47 lifts, Perisher is the largest ski resort in the southern hemisphere and I love it here. Perisher’s four interlinked resorts – Perisher Valley, Smiggin Holes, Blue Cow and Guthega – merged in 1995. Sometimes, you can’t become the biggest without a little teamwork. I love exploring the valleys, each with its own character: steep and open at Mount Perisher, weaving and rolling at Blue Cow, secret runs at Guthega and short and playful at ‘Smigs’. The interconnecting lift system makes it a breeze to get around. I was warned that Perisher was a flat resort for snowboarders to navigate, however, except for the traverse from Perisher Valley to Smiggin Holes, I didn’t find that to be the case. It does help when you have skier friends to tow you by a ski pole!

The 2025 season saw the opening of the Mount Perisher 6 chairlift, halving the time of the previous lift and stealing the title of the Highest Lifted Point from Thredbo. (I’m sure Thredbo is already planning the reclamation). We are whisked

up the mountain in a seat so comfortable it could be in a sports car, then we proceed to speed down some of my favourite runs – Boomerang, Side Winder and Vista. It’s a bluebird day and carving past trees and boulders plasters a smile to my face. These are runs my friends and I will never forget.

HORSEPLAY

With perfect weather and almost non-existent mid-week lines, we’ve clocked up 24 lift rides (not to mention the mid-week discounts on passes and accommodation). It’s a full-on first day and I can barely walk when we return home – it’s a yes please and thank you to the snowcat ride back up to The Stables. In our apartment, I spend over an hour in the oversized spa bath, soaking my spent muscles. The restoration helps and we make it to The Stallions Restaurant and Bar (yep, everything here is horse related) in time for happy hour, a merry affair with skiers discussing their favourite runs of the day over a pint or across the pool table.

Soaking and sipping checked off my to-do list, we head back to the apartment to cook dinner in the fully-equipped kitchen. My friend Spencer cooks us pasta while we stretch out by the fire with a glass of wine and bowl of microwave popcorn. It is a laidback end to an energetic day.

HAPPY ENDINGS

On our last morning, we have a group breakfast at The Stallions, snow piled halfway up its windows, coffee made by an Italian barista and bacon and egg bagels served hot and fresh. At most ski resorts, you can stay in sprawling villages where you never see the same person twice. Perisher is different. Over just three days, familiar faces appear in snowcats, pubs and lift lines, conversations pick up where they left off and a sense of belonging sets in – The Stables manager even farewells us by name. It’s the kind of place that makes you feel less like a visitor and more like part of the village. thestablesperisher.com.au