



Custom Trip Guide

Planning Group Ski & Snowboarding Tours

A comprehensive guide to make planning your custom winter adventures with the Outdoor Recreation Center quick and easy. Version - 2016/2017 Winter Season

Misawa Air Base Outdoor Recreation Center Custom Ski & Snowboarding Tours

The Misawa AB Outdoor Recreation Center offers our customers the opportunity to schedule ski and snowboarding tours during weekdays to accommodate those working non-traditional duty schedules and create unit team-building events. Our program staff look forward to working with you to make your trip a memorable success!



Organizations desiring to schedule a custom trip should take the time to review these guidelines and policies carefully. Advance planning is the key to a smooth process and a successful trip! One important thing to remember is no trip is **CONFIRMED** until the required reservation deposit is paid to the Outdoor Recreation Center and a receipt issued. Telephone or email inquiries regarding trip availability dates **DOES NOT MEAN YOU HAVE A RESERVATION!** If at any time you have a question please call the Program Coordinator at the Outdoor Recreation Center, 226-5307 / 5308.

1. Custom Ski Trip Basics

a. Transportation Options. The vehicles we use for our winter tours consist of tour buses (40 seats), a shuttle bus (20 seats), or a micro-bus (8 seats) with driver and tour escorts. Your group size will determine the type of vehicle used.

b. Minimum Passenger Requirements. To charter a 40-passenger bus your group must fill all 40 seats. If additional buses are required each subsequent bus must be filled to seating capacity. The same applies to the 20-passenger bus. The 8 seat micro-bus is for “executive tours” and seating is between 6 and 8 people.

c. Destinations. Destinations are limited to those resorts normally used by Outdoor Recreation. These resorts are: Appi, Geto, Shizukuishi, Okunakayama, Shimokura, Hachimantai Resort, Tazawako, and Naqua-Shirakami (Aomori Spring). Trip times are limited to 7 AM departures and will return between 6:30 and 7 PM (Exception: Geto will depart at 6 AM and return 8 PM). Afternoon and Night Ski trips are available as well and times may vary based on destination. Trips exceeding 14 hours are not available due to Japan driver safety regulations.

d. Custom Trip Pricing. A reservation fee equal to 10 adult passenger regular fares (not ride-along rates) is required as a deposit to confirm a trip reservation date and reserve a bus (20 or 40 passenger). This reservation fee is applied to the final tour price. Individual seat prices for 20 and 40 passenger bus tours are identical to regular outdoor recreation scheduled tours (see ODR’s current year price list). Prices for Executive tours are somewhat higher, and based on number of passengers and destination. For persons wishing to attend but not ski or snowboard a ride-along rate of \$30 is available. Ride-Along passengers receive transportation only.

e. Payment Deadline. Payment in full must be received by the Outdoor Recreation Center NLT 5 business days prior to the scheduled trip date.

f. What's Included? Trips include transportation, driver, a staff tour escort, and lift tickets. Equipment is available for FREE ISSUE to participants in ODR trips (if we have it available – it is not guaranteed!) ODR also has limited quantities of ski & snowboard pants and jackets available to RENT. Helmets, goggles, and gloves are available for purchase only. Some resorts do offer these items for rent and costs vary.

g. Cancellation Policy. Full trip cancellations must be made NLT 8 days prior to the scheduled trip date. In the event of a full trip cancellation groups may elect to apply their deposit to a future trip (must be scheduled NLT 31 March of the current year) with no penalty. The reservation fee is refundable ONLY if the reservation is cancelled more than 7 days prior to the departure date. Cancellations made less than 8 days but more than 48 hours prior to the scheduled trip date/time incur a \$300 cancellation processing fee (per bus). Cancellations made within 24 hours of the scheduled departure time will result in forfeiture of an amount equal to the actual charter fee incurred by the Outdoor Recreation Center.

h. Roster Requirement. Outdoor Recreation requires a roster of personnel for all programs. A full and complete customer roster MUST be provided NLT 48 hours prior to trip departure. A blank MS-Excel format roster file will be provided to trip coordinators for convenience. This must be submitted to the ODR program staff via email. Equipment CANNOT be issued to participants if a roster is not provided.

i. Individual Refunds. The Outdoor Recreation Center can only issue refunds to persons conducting transactions with ODR, therefore, refunds (when authorized) can only be processed through the trip representative who made the actual payment to ODR. Individual customers must coordinate refund requests through their unit trip representative, not directly through the outdoor recreation center. The Outdoor Recreation Center's refund policy (as it applies to custom trips) is as follows:

Refund Policy (note – applies ONLY to individual seat refunds and does NOT apply to entire scheduled reservations)

(A) To receive a 100% refund, the trip representative must cancel your reservation in person at the Outdoor Recreation Center 8 or more days prior to the date of departure (the departure date is not counted).

(B) If the cancellation is made 7 days or less, but more than 1 day prior to the date of departure, a \$25 cancellation processing fee will be charged for each seat reservation affected.

(C) Cancellations made the day prior to trip departure are not entitled to a refund.

(D) No refunds, discounts, or incentives are given to customers missing scheduled departures.

(E) Arrival times at trip destinations may vary depending on winter road conditions. No refunds, discounts, or incentives are offered for delays caused by weather or other unforeseen conditions unless such conditions result in FULL cancellation of the activity.

Refunds are not given for charges in trip destination due to road conditions, closures, etc.

EXCEPTIONS. A memorandum signed by your commander or first sergeant stating that you are required to be present for duty, deployment, or emergency leave/unscheduled TDY etc. Medical emergencies require supporting documentation. Customers transferring trips to other authorized users must notify Outdoor Recreation of the change.

2. Reservation Steps

a. Select a date and destination IAW the above information (we recommend an alternate date as well – be flexible) **REMEMBER! WE DO NOT DO CUSTOM TRIPS ON SATURDAYS OR FEDERAL HOLIDAYS! IF SATURDAY OR A HOLIDAY IS YOUR ONLY CHOICE WE RECOMMEND PURCHASING MULTIPLE SEATS ON A REGULAR OUTDOOR RECREATION TOUR.**

b. Appoint a trip representative who will accept responsibility for coordinating with Outdoor Recreation, collecting funds and participant information and making required reservation and booking deposit payments.

c. Get an accurate estimate of participant numbers and collect enough funds to pay the required reservation fee.

d. Contact the Outdoor Recreation program coordinator at 226-9378 or 3480 to schedule an appointment.

e. Once you find out if the date you selected is available be prepared to pay the reservation fee to confirm your trip.

f. Keep an accurate roster of who has paid the trip representative for a seat. You MUST provide outdoor recreation with a roster of names and payment status.

g. When planning your unit's activity please keep in mind Japanese ski resorts do not permit bringing your own food and drink into their dining areas and cafeterias. While we do allow individuals to bring food and drinks on our buses, bringing large amounts for the purpose of group "picnics" inside ski resorts is not permitted. The consumption of alcohol on US Government-owned and operated vehicles is prohibited!

Ski & Snowboard Trip Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can you hold a date for me before I pay the reservation fee?

A: No. We will take your name and contact information as a "pending reservation" but all dates remain open until the reservation fee is paid.

Q: Why can't I have a custom trip on a Saturday or Holiday?

A: We'd love to schedule them for you but it's a matter of resources. On these days the Outdoor Recreation Center already offers multiple ski and snowboarding trips to the entire community. We only have so many vehicles, staff, skis, snowboards etc. We do encourage groups wanting trips on these days to plan ahead and buy the whole trip when they are made available.

Q: I reserved a 40-passenger bus but now I can't get enough people to fill it! What are my options?

A: You have a few options we can recommend. If it's more than 8 days prior to the departure date you may cancel the trip. You can buy the remaining seats at \$30 per seat to help reach the maximum required. You can charge your participants more to cover the cost of unfilled seats. You can also offer the seats (at regular price of course) to people outside your group or organization.

Q: Why is the reservation fee so much?

A: The Outdoor Recreation Center does not own the buses and drivers used for our trips. When a reservation is made we charter these resources and incur a financial commitment to the charter operator. This fee is applied to the overall tour price; it is not an extra charge.

Q: Are refunds available for people who don't show up or can't go because of duty or other reasons?

A: Unfortunately refunds from the Outdoor Recreation Center for custom ski trips are not available unless certain circumstances occur (see refund policy).

For more information on custom trips, or to get started booking a trip, contact the Outdoor Recreation Program Coordinator at 226-5308/5307 (Tue-Fri)

We look forward to making your winter adventures the best part of your time in Japan!

The following page contains a customer information handout with valuable trip information. We ask that you make a copy of this handout available to all trip participants in hardcopy or electronic format as early as possible prior to the date of departure.



Outdoor Recreation Center

Ski & Snowboard Trip - Customer Information

Thank you for participating in an Outdoor Recreation Center Custom Ski & Snowboarding program! To ensure your trip is enjoyable, please take a few moments to review this information handout. If you have additional questions not addressed here, please contact the outdoor recreation center staff at 226-9378 or 3480.

- 1. DEPARTURE.** All ODR regular day ski & snowboarding trips depart from the Hangar 973 (Weasel's Den/ODR) parking lot promptly at 7 AM on the scheduled date. Boarding is available starting at 6:30 AM. The only exceptions are trips destined for Geto Ski Resort in the Iwate Prefecture. These trips board at 5:30 AM and depart at 6 AM. Buses are open seating, no reserved seats are available.
- 2. RETURN.** Return boarding begins at 4 PM and departure for return to Misawa AB is promptly at 4:30 PM. Regular day ski & snowboarding trips are scheduled to return to Misawa AB between 6:30 PM and 8 PM depending on destination. Please be advised that winter weather conditions can change rapidly, causing delays in return.
- 3. TRIP INCLUDES:** All ODR ski & snowboarding trips include round-trip transportation, a tour escort, and lift ticket. Ski or snowboard equipment is available **FREE OF CHARGE** to participants on all ODR ski & snowboarding trips if we have it available (note – it is not guaranteed or reservable) ODR also has limited jacket/pants sets available to rent. Helmets, gloves, goggles etc are available for purchase only. Some, but not all resorts have clothing and other items for rent in limited quantities.
- 4. EQUIPMENT CHECKOUT.** Those customers needing equipment must do so the **DAY PRIOR TO THE TRIP** during our normal operating hours (11 AM and 7 PM). Please keep in mind **THERE IS NO EQUIPMENT RENTAL AVAILABLE ON THE MORNING OF DEPARTURE.** Rental equipment is available at all ski resorts as well.
- 5. ID & SUPERVISION REQUIREMENTS.** All customers must present a valid ID (military, family member, civilian, MLC/IHA, or retiree) at the time of boarding. Guests are required to have a passport or other valid ID as required for access to Misawa AB, and base pass valid through at least midnight on the scheduled return date. Customers under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian age 18 or older. Guardians for minors must be identified by name on trip rosters submitted to ODR and a permission form signed by the parent and identifying the guardian, must be on file at ODR (submit with roster – forms are available at www.35fss.com).
- 6. ALCOHOL ON GOVERNMENT TRANSPORTATION.** Buses used for ODR trips are government-owned vehicles and alcohol is not permitted in open containers in the passenger areas. Coolers containing alcohol for consumption at ski resorts are not permitted.
- 7. FOOD & NON-ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ON THE BUS.** Transportation to and from resorts in the local area can take anywhere from 2 to 4 hours on-way and we want you to be comfortable during the journey. Food and non-alcoholic drinks are always welcome on the bus! Appropriate rest stops are scheduled on all trips for customer comfort. Because of limited storage space, coolers are limited to personal-sized 6 to 12-pack style lunchboxes and must be stored at your feet or under your seat.
- 8. CUSTOM TRIP SPECIFIC ISSUES.** Your custom trip was coordinated through a person designated by your organization. The outdoor recreation center works directly with this individual, who in turn accepts enrollments, handles payments, submits rosters etc. Please direct all questions concerning enrollment and payments to your trip representative, not the outdoor recreation center. If you have questions concerning equipment, resorts, transportation etc, please feel free to call the outdoor recreation center at 226-9378 or 226-3480.
- 9. CASH or CARD?** Some Japanese resorts accept American credit and debit cards, most do not. Food and drink concessions at virtually ALL resorts are cash-only (Yen). Please bring enough Yen to cover your expected needs for the day.

10. WHAT SHOULD YOU BRING? Here are some great recommendations to make the day safe and enjoyable!

- a. Ski or Snowboarding Equipment
- b. Winter Jacket & Pants (should be made for winter sports)
- c. Ski Goggles and a Facemask or Scarf
- d. Winter Sports Gloves
- e. Ski or Snowboarding Socks (cotton should be avoided)
- f. Helmet (designed for winter sports) or a Warm Hat (helmets are best!)
- g. Lift Ticket Holder (can be purchased at the resort)
- h. Extra Clothing (for changing into afterwards if you get soaked)
- i. Small Towel (most resorts have hot springs nearby, or to dry you equipment)
- j. YEN (credit card acceptance in Japan is sporadic/food vendors do not take cards)
- k. Child Safety Seat (if you need it in your car you'll need it on the bus)