



Hilton Lakes Mini Tour

While we really love the long distance tours we know that not everyone can get a week off work. So we offer this as a short weekend tour to get you a taste of what it is all about and hope that this will whet your appetite for longer trips. The skiing is straightforward and really has one short uphill, some flat and a long steady downhill. Overall you climb about 1000 feet and then get a 3000 foot downhill. How many times can you do that?

Itinerary: We start from the snowpark area at the road closure in Rock Creek Canyon and head up the two mile groomed road to Rock Creek Lodge. Here we leave the road and make a short steep climb up onto the top of the huge moraine ridge that runs along the west side of Rock Creek Canyon. Once atop tis the terrain eases off and flattens out as we start our descent down towards Hilton and Davis Lakes. This is home for the night and it is a truly spectacular camp with the peaks of Stanford, Crocker and Huntingdon rising above us.

Sun arrives slowly here so after breakfast we can tour up canyon a little ways and enjoy the scenery and hopefully get in a few turns without packs.

In early afternoon we pack up camp and follow down the drainage following the course of an old mining road until we reach the edge of the huge alluvial fan that drops to Crowley Lake. Here the real fun begins and the next four miles go by in a few minutes as we carve big wide turns across the snow covered sage and low angle slopes. Too soon it is all over and we are at our vehicles and shuttle back up to Rock Creek

Meeting place and time: We will meet the first day at 7.00 am at the Toms Place restaurant. Toms Place is at the top of Sherwin Grade, the big hill ten miles north of Bishop. There is a road turning west from Highway 395 that is signed "Rock Creek Lake" After fifty feet you turn back north, paralleling the Highway and go 100 yards to the restaurant. We will meet for breakfast and will have a thorough pack check so don't plan on finalizing your packing until then. We will need to shuttle a vehicle or two back down the road to our exit point and this will add about a half hour to our departure, but we would like to be out skiing by 10.00 a.m..

Dates and Prices: Check the latest brochure, call us or go to our web site for dates and rates. Should minimum participant numbers not be reached you will be given the option of paying our private rate, rescheduling, or cancelling. Price includes guiding, permits, all necessary group gear, avalanche beacons, tents, kitchen gear and dinners, lunches and breakfasts (you bring snack items).

Length: 8 miles **Duration** 2 days **Difficulty:** SMC Tour Rating 1

Other information: Of course this falls on the boundary of four maps; The Mt. Morgan, Mt. Abbott, Mt. Morrison, and the Casa Diablo 7.5 minute maps. The SMC web site has photos, our own topo map, trip profile and more information. Proper acclimatization to the elevation with greatly increase your pleasure and enjoyment of the trip. We highly recommend getting at least one day and night at altitude immediately prior to the trip, for instance, by staying in Mammoth for the night before the trip.

Prerequisites: You need beginning ski skills for this tour and no prior winter camping experience. You should be able to ski intermediate ski area runs confidently and be proficient at kick turns, snowplow turns all while carrying a pack of about 25 pounds.