

The Great Escape ...

AFRCs PROVIDE THE PERFECT GETAWAY

Photos courtesy of Army Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation.

For service members and their families in need of a vacation, Armed Forces Recreation Centers (AFRCs) provide the perfect getaway. The four self-supporting AFRCs are the Hale Koa Hotel on Waikiki Beach, Hawaii; Shades of Green at Walt Disney World Resort in Lake Buena Vista, Fla.; Dragon Hill Lodge in Seoul, South Korea; and Edelweiss Lodge and Resort in Garmisch, Germany.

The Army serves as the Department of Defense (DoD) executive agent for these joint-service Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) facilities, which provide quality, wholesome, affordable, family-oriented vacation and recreation opportunities to service members, their family members and other authorized patrons (including official travelers) of the total defense force.

The resorts not only provide world-class service to ensure guests experience the vacation of a lifetime, but also continue to serve as force multipliers by supporting military readiness, retention and well-being objectives.

“The AFRCs support resiliency by providing opportunities for soldiers and their families to reconnect, relax, refresh and renew,” said Debbie Martin, director of Hospitality Programs & AFRCs, Installation Management Command (IMCOM). “Our recreation centers provide safe and fun environments that support the social, emotional and family dimensions of the Army’s Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness Program.”

From strolling barefoot on the sandy shores of Waikiki, to exploring medieval European castles or the exotic city of Seoul, AFRC resorts provide an array of affordable, world-class vacation opportunities for eligible guests, which include active-duty and reserve-component service members, retirees, current and retired DoD civilians, delayed-entry recruits and family members.

Guests can attend a luau on Waikiki Beach; golf in the shadows of the Magic Kingdom; sightsee in a seventh-century city in “The Land of the Morning Calm;” or ski or hike in the Bavarian Alps.

By providing high-quality and affordable vacation opportunities for those who serve, the resorts uphold the Army’s philosophy that service members are entitled to the same quality of life they are pledged to defend.

Perhaps the most important benefit to staying at any Armed Forces Recreation Center is the fact that all guests are members of the military family.

Because the resorts are owned and operated by the U.S. Military, merchandise and hotel taxes are exempt, an added value to the budget-conscious vacation traveler. All four resorts are family-oriented and offer beautiful interior-designed guest rooms, and a multitude of entertainment and activities for adults and children. The resorts also frequently offer discounts and specials.

Room rates are based on a sliding scale according to pay grade so junior service members and their families can afford the same accommodations general officers might enjoy. In addition, the resorts have the same force protection measures found on Army garrisons, ensuring safety and security.



DRAGON HILL LODGE

Yongsan Garrison, Korea
 General Manager: Edward Fagan
 011-82-2-790-0016
edward.fagan@dhl.korea.army.mil

Number of Employees: 410
 Number of Rooms: 394
 Room Nights Available: 144,204
 Room Nights Occupied: 131,055
 Occupancy Rate: 90.9
 Room Revenue: \$20,613,593
 Average Room Rate: \$157
 Total Revenue: \$38,917,763
 NIBD: \$14,659,096

Nestled in the heart of Seoul, Korea, Dragon Hill Lodge is the gateway to Asia’s mystical culture. Guests can relax in a number of restaurants and lounges, or unwind in a state-of-the-art health club and pool. Additional amenities include a number of services such as a gift store, flower shop, tourism desk and beauty salon. Premier conference rooms and gardens offer elegance and variety for business meetings or special events.

The lodge, on Yongsan Garrison, is minutes from downtown Seoul’s historic landmarks, shopping districts and the beautiful Namsan National Park. Despite its towering buildings and neon-lighted streets, Seoul preserves its historic spirit, traditions and culture. Modern coffee shops share sidewalk space with street vendors and traditional teahouses. Visitors to the city also have access to a wide range of cultural events, parades and festivals.

The Dragon Hill Lodge can also help guests arrange vacation activities ranging from unique shopping trips in the heart of Seoul to tours of ancient temples, with stops at traditional entertainment venues, ski slopes and amusement parks.

RECREATION CENTERS

Edelweiss



EDELWEISS LODGE AND RESORT

Garmisch, Germany

Acting General Manager: Steven Sifers

011-49-8821-9440

steven.sifers@us.army.mil

Number of Employees: 373

Number of Rooms: 347

Room Nights Available: 127,000

Room Nights Occupied: 114,597

Occupancy Rate: 90.2

Room Revenue: \$13,913,824

Average Room Rate: \$121

Total Revenue: \$28,899,636

NIBD: \$3,054,858

Edelweiss Lodge and Resort sits at the foot of the Bavarian Alps and offers guests views of alpine vistas, Olympic-quality skiing, mountain biking, rock climbing and hiking. Located 56 miles from Munich, the resort features intimate rooms with spectacular views from private balconies, cozy cabins and camping facilities.

The staff coordinates daily activities, ranging from guided tours of historic European castles to tandem paragliding from nearby mountaintops. The resort has an indoor pool, hot tub, spa, Wellness club, massage services, casual and fine dining and a comfortable lobby with a fireplace.

John Kelmelis, a guest, summed up his stay: "Our military deserves the best vacation experience and you provide it!"



Hale Koa

RECREATION CENTERS

HALE KOA HOTEL

Honolulu, Hawaii
General Manager: Richard LeBrun
(808) 955-9461
lebrunr@halekoa.com

Number of Employees: 758
Number of Rooms: 817
Room Nights Available: 299,022
Room Nights Occupied: 290,815
Occupancy Rate: 97.3
Room Revenue: \$40,771,606
Average Room Rate: \$140
Total Revenue \$73,623,282
NIBD: \$14,420,138

The Hale Koa Hotel is located on beautiful Waikiki Beach on the sparkling blue Pacific, and features lush and colorful tropical gardens, Polynesian entertainment, hospitality and more. Whether strolling barefoot on the sand, sunbathing lazily on Waikiki Beach, or simply relaxing comfortably, guests are dazzled by this Polynesian paradise.

The 72-acre recreational oasis offers surfing, snorkeling, SCUBA diving, hiking and golf outings, which can be arranged through guest services, and guests will also find easy access to tennis and racquetball courts, sand volleyball, swimming pools and spa services.

In the evenings the resort offers magic shows, local music and traditional dance exhibitions, and what some describe as the best luau on Waikiki Beach.

"I just returned from 15 months in Iraq, and this was my dream vacation" wrote Shannon Holdscaw, a Fort Huachuca, Ariz., soldier, in a letter to the hotel. "The Hale Koa exceeded all of the rave reviews I had heard about it. Thank you for providing such an outstanding facility for military personnel and their families."

SHADES OF GREEN

Walt Disney World Resort
Lake Buena Vista, Fla.
General Manager: Arnie A. Cole
(407) 824-1420
albert.a.cole@shadesofgreen.org

Number of Employees: 304
Number of Rooms: 585
Room Nights Available: 214,110
Room Nights Occupied: 191,988
Occupancy Rate: 89.7
Room Revenue: \$22,323,148
Average Room Rate: \$116
Total Revenue: \$33,812,905
NIBD: \$9,081,637

The Shades of Green resort, located in the heart of the Walt Disney World Resort in Florida, offers friendly hospitality and choice accommodations, and is a premier vacation destination for families.

Surrounded by cascading waterfalls, tropical gardens, Koi ponds, several swimming pools and two world-class golf courses, the resort also offers guests free transportation to the Disney theme parks and early admission to select resort attractions.

The resort is within minutes of the Magic Kingdom and other Disney attractions.

Perhaps the most important benefit to staying at any Armed Forces Recreation Center is the fact that all guests are members of the military family, and are "people who serve together and share life experiences," as one guest at the Shades of Green explained.

—MCH

