

Rev 7/14/2023

## Lincoln Hills Sports Car Club Tour Planning Guide

Questions? Need Help?  
Contact our [Tour Officer](#)  
(Email Address and Phone are In the Roster)

### Our Club Does 4 Types of Tours/Rides:

- **Day Tours** – A ride along winding roads, fabulous scenery, maybe a visit to some point of interest, maybe lunch or dinner along the way. These require planning, some documentation including a flyer to be sent to the members, signups by members in advance of the tour, and pictures for our website.
- **Overnight Tours** – Just like day tours but potentially longer distances and the need for hotels and additional meals and stops along the way.
- **Impromptu Rides** – Any member can ask the Tour Officer to send out an email inviting club members to join them on a ride. Requires little advance notice, often just a few days. Whether or not advanced signups are necessary is up to the Tour Leader. You can just meet and go. A simple description of the tour (preferably with a simple flyer) should be sent to the Tour Officer so we can document the tour on our website, even if after-the-fact, and pictures of the ride for the website are appreciated.
- **Third Thursday Rides** – Similar to Impromptu Rides, but intended to offer a slightly more aggressive driving experience. More aggressive does not mean outside the traffic laws. It means the leaders may not slow down for followers to catch up. Instead, they will meet at the next planned stop. Often these are held on the third Thursday of a month. Again, pictures for the website are appreciated.

**This Document will focus on Day and Overnight Tours. These involve Documentation and Advance Member Signups.**

If you are leading a tour that the club has done before, a good source of information are the flyers and maps on the website. These can make planning a tour much easier.

Members participate using their approved sports cars unless their approved car has become inoperable for the Event they are scheduled to attend.

# Day and Overnight Tours

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## 1. Preliminary Steps

Start by developing a general description of a tour giving the likely date(s), destination(s), and the site(s) to be visited. Create an estimate of the tour length, time and mileage by completing a very preliminary map route using your favorite computer map program (like Google Maps). Help from the Tour Officer is **always** available with flyers, mapping/directions, contacts with facilities, etc.

Discuss possible tour dates with the Tour Officer to avoid conflicting events.

Present your preliminary tour ideas at a club meeting, or ask the Tour Officer to do it for you. Ask for a show of hands to gauge the level of interest in your tour. Although only a portion of the club comes to any particular meeting, you can often tell from the response if you might have a small number of cars participating, on the order of 8 or 10 cars, or if you could have a larger number, 20 or 30 cars. Provide a date you plan to take sign-ups.

If this is an overnight tour, see [Section 15](#), below, for information about dealing with hotels.

## 2. Preliminary on Restaurants

A restaurant might be part of the tour, but this is not required. A ride through the country on winding roads and beautiful scenery is more than enough.

Even long rides can be arranged without visiting a restaurant as a group. As an example, going to Truckee on back roads is a wonderful tour, but Truckee is a town full of small restaurants that cannot handle some large groups. In this case simply let the participants choose their own places to eat when you get there.

See [Section 13](#), below, for more information about restaurants.

## 3. Pre-Trip

The Tour Leader/Co-Leader(s) should preview the tour by actually driving the route:

- Record important notes for inclusion in the map and directions.
- Make note of scenic areas of interest on route.
- Plan for a rest stop (with bathrooms) break every 60-90 minutes.
- If needed, plan for a lunch break at a restaurant.
- Check for any fees and operating hours that might apply.
- Check out all parking areas that will be used.
- Meet and greet the facilities' reservation person or management rep.
- Check online road condition sources (e.g., Caltrans at [roads.dot.ca.gov](http://roads.dot.ca.gov))
- Decide if you will guide participants back or let them return on their own.

## 4. Prepare a Flyer (The Tour Officer or his/her designee can help with this.)

When the Tour Leader is ready to sign members up, the flyer will be used to announce the tour to the members. The flyer can be a simple email or made interesting with pictures or art. The flyer doesn't have to be too detailed. It is an advertisement. Send your flyer to the Tour Officer for review and distribution to the club. (See [Section 6](#))

Determine the time of departure allowing for driving times and times for stops along the way. It is important to include the time of departure on the flyer because some members have time constraints.

Include the following:

- The major destinations of the tour, the general route and points of interest.
- The date of the tour, time of departure, and the departure location (Orchard Creek, Kilaga, or somewhere else).

- Say if the participants will be returning home as a group or on their own. And state approximately when you expect members to be back home. Again, some members have time constraints.
- Include costs, and if a check is due to the Tour Leader when signing up.
- Include how to contact you. Email is recommended so you will have a time-stamped record of when each member requested to go on the tour in case there is a waiting list. But do not include third party links or your personal information in the flyer. Just say "Email Address is in the Roster".
- Include any other special instructions that participants should know before they sign up for the tour.

## 5. Prepare a Map or Detailed Driving Directions (The Tour Officer can help.)

Use a mapping application (like Google Maps) or prepare detailed directions yourself. Routes should be detailed enough so participants could catch up to their group if they fall behind or get delayed. Several shorter maps for each leg of the tour can be created if there are stops along the way.

For detailed directions not developed with a mapping application, realize that it is critical that someone following those directions knows when the next turn is coming up. Is it 2 miles from here, or 20 miles? Include the distance from each turn to the next.

Maps are sent to the Tour Officer. The Tour Officer will review the maps but not submit them for the website until they are final. Submitting a map to the website prematurely can cause a lot of confusion on the day of the tour, if a member downloaded it early from the website and doesn't realize that version was changed later.

## 6. Announce the Tour and Take Signups

If there is time, we prefer that Tour Leaders announce their tours first at a monthly meeting. This is a reward for members who attend meetings. The flyer can be shown at the meeting, and those at the meeting are invited to sign up, based on the date you plan to take names for your tour.

If there is not enough time to wait until the next monthly meeting, or if there is no particular concern about this tour filling up quickly, you can request the Tour Officer to send your flyer out any time.

The Tour Officer will send the flyer by email to the whole club and submit it for posting on the website. If a tour was first announced at a monthly meeting, this will normally happen about a week after the meeting.

When a member contacts the Tour Leader to sign up, do the following:

- Keep a record of who signs up, including their email address.
- If there is a guest, send a copy of the club's [Guest Release Form](#) to the member, ask the member to get it filled out and signed and send it back to you. The Guest Release Form is available on the club website (<https://www.lhsportscars.com>) under Membership.
- If a check is required to be sent to the Tour Leader when a member signs up, it is best for the Tour Leader to cash the checks as they come in.
- Create a wait list if the tour fills up. Fill any vacancies that come up in the order members ended up on the wait list.

## 7. Create Your Tour Roster (The Tour Officer can help.)

This is just a list of the members and their guests, their cell phones and their car model and color that will go on the tour. All this information is contained in our club Roster except the guest names.

When the Tour Roster is complete, you can send it to the participants just before the tour. Participants on a tour like to know who is going, and associate people with their cars. It is a good way to get to know fellow car club members. The cell phone numbers can be useful if a participant drops out for any reason, or if a member or leader needs to contact each other.

## 8. Identify your Group Leaders and Sweeps

Keep in mind that you may need additional Group Leaders (i.e., Co-Leaders). The Tour Leader can determine how many groups to have. Groups with 7 or 8 cars work well for longer tours with lots of turns. If possible, the Group Leaders should participate in the pre-trip to learn the route.

Sweeps are also needed. We strongly urge that Group Leaders and Sweeps be identified in advance of the tour.

The Tour Leader should put the other Group Leaders to work. The Tour Leader does not have to personally do everything. Spread the workload.

Ask the Group Leaders to do the following:

- Recruit their own Sweeps in advance.
- Do the following on the day of the tour:
  - Help direct the lining up of their group. Have the sweep car positioned so it can conveniently pull into the last car in that group.
  - Visit each of the cars in their group and collect any remaining Guest Release Forms.

- Do a radio check with their Sweep before heading out.
- Check that every walkie-talkie in their group is set to channel 6.1.
- Discuss with their Sweep to let their Group Leader know:
  - When the whole group is through a turn.
  - If the group is getting excessively spread out and the leader needs to slow down to allow catch up. It is often hard for the leader to know this without information from the sweep car.
  - If anyone in the group is having trouble. The Sweep is in the best position to pause and provide assistance where and when they can.

## 9. Approximately Two Weeks before the Tour

- Check road conditions again (e.g., Caltrans at [roads.dot.ca.gov](http://roads.dot.ca.gov))
- Confirm any reservations at the destination facilities updating the number of participants.
- Make any last-minute updates to the Tour Maps and Tour Roster and send to the Tour Officer.
- Follow up with any member who is bringing a guest who has not provided you a Guest Release Form. You can ask them to bring that with them on the day of the tour.
- Obtain the club walkie-talkies from Tour Officer at least 2 days prior to the tour and ensure a full charge before tour (sometimes it takes 24 hours to fully charge).
- Make sure the club walkie-talkies all have the same channel and privacy code. Currently, we are using **channel 6 with privacy code 1**.

## 10. Two Days Prior to the Tour – Email Final Instructions

(The Tour Officer can help creating an email address list.)

Send a "Final Instructions" email to the tour participants. Identify the Tour Leaders and attach the Tour Maps and Tour Roster, pointing out if either has changed, and ask the participants to print them out and bring them on the tour.

Other things you might say to the participants in the Final Instructions:

- Remind them where to meet and what time you will be departing.
- Tell them how many cars are going.
- Identify the Group Leaders and their cars.
- Reminder to set their walkie-talkie channel and privacy code in advance.
- Say where to find a club radio if they need one on the day of the trip. (The participants shouldn't have to bother the busy leaders to get them a radio.)
- Include addresses of all the stops so participants can input them into their cell phones or car navigation systems.

- Last minute road or weather changes, if any.
- Any other last-minute arrangements or special instructions.
- Any other last-minute arrangements or special instructions.
- Assign someone to take pictures for your tour.

## 11. Actions on the Day of the Tour

- Divide cars into equal groups.
- Have a few extra copies of maps/directions and the Tour Roster for those participants who don't have them.
- Gather any last-minute Guest Release Forms. (Bring two blank copies.) Give these to the Club's Vice President at your earliest convenience.
- Issue last-minute instructions to the participants just before leaving the staging area for the tour:
  - Remind participants to follow at a reasonable distance to keep their groups together. Remember, stop lights/signs can disrupt a group, but participants will almost always catch-up before long. Having the leader pull over for catch-up is **rarely very safe**, particularly in heavy traffic or inadequately paved turnouts
  - Also, once a participant is placed in a group, **do not change position** within that group, or join another group.
  - And, **no passing** within a group unless **safety** requires such a pass.

## 12. After the Tour

- Return club walkie-talkies to Tour Leader, who returns them to Tour Officer.
- Make arrangements to forward all pictures to the club Historian.
- Plan on informally sharing some fun highlights of the Tour at the next club meeting

## 13. More on Restaurants

### a) Separate Checks

Even if a restaurant is the main event of a tour, and particularly if this is just a meal stop when some participants will not want a large meal, ordering off the regular menu and separate checks is the easiest thing to do. Some restaurants will do this, even for large groups. Remind the restaurant that we mostly travel in pairs, and they sit together. So separate checks would be per pair of people.

If the restaurant will not do separate checks, the restaurant may do one check per table. As long as the tables are small, 4 or at most 6 people per table, this works ok. The Tour Leader just needs to tell the members in the Final Instructions what the arrangement is, and to bring some cash to divvy up the bill at the table.

A Tour Leader should never agree to a single bill for the entire group unless the event is a fixed price meal and members pay in advance. A Tour Leader should never agree to a guaranteed minimum payment.

### **b) Fixed Price Meal**

A fixed price meal is where the members choose from a few menu choices and pay the Tour Leader in advance. This is a deterrent to a member cancelling at the last minute. They don't get their money back unless there is no cost to the Tour Leader or the Club.

Arrange for the restaurant to offer a few choices. Ask for a fixed price that includes entree, non-alcoholic drinks, salad or dessert (if desired), tax and tip. Alcohol is always separately ordered and paid for at the restaurant by the individual members on our tours.

Ask the tour participants to send you their menu choices and a check well in advance of the tour. The Tour Leader will usually pay the restaurant using a credit card.

### **c) Introduce Yourself**

As a Tour Leader, call a restaurant and communicate with the appropriate person about large groups. You can do this on the phone or in an email. Restaurant management first and foremost wants to know that you are reliable and can be depended on to work with them to have a successful visit. Explain that we are the Lincoln Hills Sports Car Club, mention our website address (<https://www.lhsportscars.com>) so they can check us out, mention if the club has used their restaurant before, and tell them we frequently stop at restaurants on our tours.

### **d) Tell the Restaurant the Following:**

- Approximate date and time you would like.
- Preliminary estimate of how many will attend. If you don't have a clue, you can say 20 to 30 people. But say that we will have signups and you won't know for sure until later.
- Say we will be driving, and you will call the restaurant from the road to keep them advised about your arrival time. They will appreciate this since you might run into traffic and be delayed. (When going to the Point Restaurant in Rio Vista, a favorite destination, it has happened that we are delayed for a half hour when the bridge is up for a passing boat.)

### **e) Ask the Restaurant these Questions:**

- Are they interested in hosting us?
- What is the largest group they can handle?



- Are some days and times better for them?
- Where will your group be seated?
- Ask what size tables they can set up. One or two large tables will not work if the payment option is to have one check per table.
- Is there outdoor seating?
- What is the parking situation for the number of cars you might have?
- When will they need a final participation count?
- If the restaurant wants a credit card number to hold the reservation, clarify that it will not be charged until you are at the restaurant.

## 14. Contracts

Occasionally a contract is required for a venue. Tour Leaders may not sign contracts on their own. Instead, consult the Tour Officer for advice, and when ready, forward a proposed contract to the President for approval.

Contracts are routinely possible when a venue is simply seeking to protect itself from last minute no-shows. These contracts will have costs that are by participant, and a date to provide a final participation count, usually a week or two before the event. The Tour Leader will then have enough time to collect money from the participants to cover the costs and inform the venue.

The only risk, then, is if something really rare happens just prior to a trip, like fire, flood or car accident, that prevents the Club from showing up at the last minute. If the venue has not already been paid, the Event Leader should retain participant's pre-payments until it is known if those funds are needed to settle with the venue.

## 15. Overnight Tours (Meals and Hotels)

Overnight tours require additional meals and a stay in a hotel.

With regard to meals, it is not necessary for the Tour Leader to arrange a group event at a specific restaurant for every meal. It is only necessary to identify where the participants can go for meals, allow time in the schedule, and let everyone know what the options are.

With regard to hotels, there are a few considerations.

- Contact the hotel(s) to insure availability on the tentative tour dates. If the number of rooms is limited, set a limit of on the number of participants.
- Ask if the hotel(s) can set aside an appropriate block of rooms for enough time to advertise the tour and get signups. If blocking rooms is possible, ask if that will change the price of the rooms, if there will be deposits required, or changes to the cancellation policy, and decide if those changes, if any, are reasonable.

- If the hotel is not setting aside a block of rooms, it may still be possible to stay there if you can advertise the tour a month or two early. Ask the hotel what days of the week they tend to fill up first and avoid those days. Ask the hotel what a reasonable timeframe would be to still have rooms available for your tour.
- The Tour Leader should not sign a contract with a hotel for rooms or collect money from members for hotels. The members must make their own reservations and be individually subject to the hotel's cancellation policy.

Sign-ups for a tour with a hotel stay may need to be handled differently, particularly if the tour has other attendance limits than just getting a hotel reservation. In your flyer, tell the members to contact you first to find out if there is room on the tour. If there is, tell the member to make their room reservation right away, and contact you back as soon as that is done. If there is a block of rooms set aside, tell the member to identify themselves as part of the Lincoln Hills Sports Car Group. If you do not hear back from the member in one or two days, contact them again and find out if they made their room reservation.

Also, the Tour Leader should tell the members when they sign up that if they must cancel from the tour at any time, let the Tour Leader know first before contacting the hotel. The Tour Leader will want the opportunity to shift the hotel reservation to a member on the waiting list.

When there is a block of rooms set aside, the Tour Leader can contact the hotel from time to time and cross check the hotel's list of attendees against that of the Tour Leader.