MT. FUJI CLIMBING

Many visitors to Japan dream of climbing Mt. Fuji, the 12,388 high symbol of Japan. Mt. Fuji, a dormant (?) volcano, is the tallest, and most celebrated mountain in Japan. People have been making pilgrimages to the top for at least 1,000 years. According to geologists, Mt. Fuji was formed about 600,000 years ago, and kept erupting for many years. The dirt now on the Kanto Plain is made up from the eruptions of Mt. Fuji and that of Mt. Asama, (located to the north of Mt. Fuji). Mt. Fuji has been inactive for over 200 years; one of the worst eruptions occurred in 1707 in the EDO period. Prior to the Meiji Restoration, (1858) women were not allowed to set foot on the slopes of Mt. Fuji. Today, women, children, and men of all ages ascend Mt. Fuji by the thousands during each climbing season.

The climbing season runs from July 1st through the end of August. During the two months about 400,000 people step on the summit of the mountain. There are 5 climbing trails: KAWAGUCHIKO, FUJI-YOSHIDA, GOTEMBA, SUBASHIRI and FUJINOMIYA. The closest trail from YOKOSUKA is the GOTEMBA TRAIL. The trail is divided from the starting point to the summit into 10 different stations. Buses are available up to the 5th station. Almost all stations on the way to the summit have stone huts, which dispense refreshments, allow you to rest, and provide overnight accommodations for overnight lodging. Sleeping accommodations include futon mats with a blanket in an open room. One night's lodging will cost around ¥4000 and up without reservations or meals, however, with reservations and 2 meals it will cost around ¥6500 and up. You can have a simple supper there at your own expense. All food available on the mountain is Japanese style.

It is important to stop early in the afternoon and pick a hut to stay in. No one is turned away on the mountain, so conditions can get crowded on the mountain throughout the climbing season and especially on weekends. Quarters will be cramped, everyone sleeps together, and you will be getting up very early in order to reach the peak in time to witness the glory of the sunrise from the peak of Mt. Fuji. Most climbers will start their ascent early in the afternoon, reaching the 7th or 8th station before dark, and stay at a hut for the night. This flier provides some hints that could help make your climb of Mt. Fuji a treasured memory.

It is the ambition of most Japanese people and foreign visitors to climb Mt. Fuji at least once in their lifetime, and to watch the sunrise on the world. It is a grand sight, and can also be a very satisfying experience. Climbers should realize that there are LIMITED comforts available on the mountain and precautions should be taken to protect themselves against adverse and sometimes hostile environmental conditions during the climb. It is a steep, rocky climb.

When climbing Mt. Fuji, you must be equipped properly with the most important items. Leather hiking boots are best, but whatever you wear on your feet should have high tops, otherwise you will be troubled by volcanic sand and gravel, especially when you descend the mountain. Dress lightly during the climb, but make sure that you have a warm sweater and a windbreaker or a warm jacket with you. Average temperatures at the summit are 40.8 degrees Fahrenheit in July and 43.6 Fahrenheit in August if the weather is fair. A canteen or other container filled with water is a must!!!!!!! There is NO water on the mountain other than that which is sold at the stations on your climb. Rain gear (an umbrella is not recommended), gloves and a flashlight are necessary. Do not forget to bring a hand towel and toilet paper as well. You should also carry enough food for one or two meals, as well as snacks. While food and drink are available on the mountain, they are very expensive. A backpack may prove useful. Remember PACK AS LIGHTLY AS POSSIBLE!!!

❀Japanese Proverb❀

"One who has never climbed Mt. Fuji is a fool!!! BUT, the person who climbs it more than once, is a BIGGER fool!!!"

*This flyer and many more can be found on the FFSC website: **www.cfay.navy.mil/fscyoko/index.htm**

CHECKLIST FOR WHAT TO BRING

_____ Dress lightly to avoid sweating too much. **Take a warm jacket**. Sweat will turn cold as you climb higher or when you stop to rest. Wool is recommended; it will keep you warm even if it gets wet.

_____ **Head covering (hood or cap), warm gloves and ear covering** are essential. It is easy to get sunburn up there. Wear your gloves while descending to protect your hands should you stumble and fall.

_____ **Light rain gear**, especially rain pants should be included. An umbrella and traditional raincoat may not be adequate.

_____ A **dry change of clothes** packed in plastic bags. Keep these items in your car, tour bus or a coin locker. If climbing in fair weather. Carry them with you if climbing in rain, so you can change at your rest hut in the evening.

_____ Select **comfortable shoes** that are water resistant with high tops to keep out the volcanic gravel. HIKING BOOTS ARE BEST. (Boots are available at the Outdoor Gear Issue for a small rental fee.) If you don't have any high top shoes or hiking boots, you may want to wrap electric tape around your ankles and the shoes to prevent little rocks and pebbles from getting in.

_____ Apply **suntan lotion** before you climb, ultraviolet rays are stronger at higher altitudes.

_____ Bring plenty of **water** at least 1-2 liters since the water on the mountain will cost you extra.

_____ Bring enough **food** for one or two meals: crackers, boiled eggs, candy, dried fruit, nuts, and etc. are recommended.

_____ **Headache medicine**, as headaches may result from the thin air.

_____ **Hand towel**, **soap** and **tissue** or **toilet paper** (in place of Kleenex, which does not dissolve in water, exacerbating the garbage problem on the mountain).

_____ **Flashlight**: The climb from the 8th station to the top is made in the dark (if you're doing an overnight climb).

_____ Bring plenty of **YEN**!!! You don't know what could happen. To stamp your climbing stick at each hut will cost you over ¥4000. (You can purchase the climbing stick at the Fifth Station). The stick itself costs about 1,200 yen.

_____ A **bandana** or large **handkerchief** to protect your mouth from the volcanic dust while descending the mountain.

☞HOW TO GET TO MT. FUJI BY CAR

From YOKOSUKA

Driving to the Fifth Station from Yokosuka Naval Base will take from 2 1/2 to 3 hours and will cost approximately ¥6000 in tolls one way. The drive is scenic, especially in the Fuji area. A shuttle bus is provided from the temporary parking lots to the Fifth Station.

NOTE: During Peak Climbing times, the SUBARU Toll way from the bottom of Fujisan to the Fifth Station will be closed to cars.

Exit the main gate and turn right onto RT. 16 and get on the HONCHO-YAMANAKA Toll Road just beyond Daiei. The right lane becomes the on-ramp. Pay toll, head toward the tollbooth for the YOKOHAMA - YOKOSUKA (Yoko-Yoko) Toll Road and pick up toll ticket. ➽Exit at Kariba (end of Yoko-Yoko Road), pay, head straight down HODOGAYA BY-PASS (RT.16) for 13 km toward TOMEI EXPWY, getting in left lane well before the on-ramp for the TOMEI EXPWY. Pick up toll ticket at YOKOHAMA Interchange, enter TOMEI EXPWY and head toward NAGOYA. This will be the longest and easiest stretch of driving, about 57 km to GOTEMBA Interchange (No. 7). Take the left interchange at GOTEMBA (two interchanges are there). Pay toll. Turn left at traffic light, getting onto RT. 138 toward FUJISAN (6.5 km). This becomes a toll road and is clearly marked. Get onto the HIGASHI FUJI GOKO Toll Road and pay toll. Travel about 8 km, exit at FUJI-YOSHIDA Interchange and head toward the SUBARU Toll way (left and uphill). Upon entering the SUBARU Toll way, you will have to pay the round-trip toll at the beginning, since the toll way dead ends at the Fifth Station.

From IKEGO

Go straight at IKEGO main gate and turn left at 7-11 store onto RT. 27. Follow the sign for YOKOHAMA-YOKOSUKA Toll Road. **Continue with ➽ above.**

☛HOW TO GET THERE BY TRAIN

From YOKOSUKA

ROUTE 1: *From JR YOKOSUKA to GOTEMBA*

Take the JR Line from YOKOSUKA 横須賀 to OFUNA 大船. At OFUNA 大船, switch the track to #3 or #4. Take JR TOKAIDO 東海道 Line to KOZU 国府津. At KOZU 国府津, from track #3, take GOTEMBA LINE 御殿場線 to GOTEMBA 御殿場. At Gotemba, go out the front exit of the station, and go to bus pole #1. You will take the FUJIKYU BUS (called the FUJI-TOZAN BUS 富士登山 バス) to SHIN-GOGOME (the new 5th Station). The bus ride to SHIN-GOGOME will take you about 40 minutes and will cost you about ¥1080 (¥540 6-12 yrs) for adults.

ROUTE 2: *From YOKOSUKACHUO to KAWAGUCHIKO*

Take KEIKYU 京急線 Line from YOKOSUKA CHUO 横須賀中央 to YOKOHAMA 横浜. At YOKOHAMA 横浜, transfer to JR YOKOHAMA ＪＲ横浜線 Line to go to HACHIOJI 八王子. At HACHIOJI 八王子, switch the line to JR CHUO 中央線 Line. Transfer at OTSUKI 大月 to FUJIKYU 富士急線 Line to KAWAGUCHIKO 河口湖.

From IKEGO

ROUTE 1: Go to JR ZUSHI Station and continue with ***ROUTE 1 above.***

ROUTE 2: Go to KEIKYU JIMMUJI Station and take a train to KANAZAWA BUNKO. At KANAZAWA BUNKO, change to a GREEN or RED KANJI Train to YOKOHAMA. Continue with ***ROUTE 2 above*** from YOKOHAMA.

CLIMBING DO'S

1. Set a slow steady pace from the beginning.

2. Make several short stops along the way; they are more effective than long ones.

3. Eat a little bit at each rest stop to keep up your vitality.

4. Use your climbing stick to push and pull yourself up the steep parts.

5. Climb with a friend in case you develop any trouble.

6. Should you develop altitude sickness, inform your friends and head back down. Symptoms are: nausea, severe headache, and field of vision turning yellow or spotted.

7. Keep an eye out for falling rocks, especially when descending. Should you see any falling rocks, shout "ABUNAI" ("DANGER"), to warn others below.

8. In case of a lightning storm, go to the nearest hut. Stay as low as possible enroute and DO NOT grab the chain along the trail.

9. Be courteous to the other climbers.

10. Do enjoy your climb and the scenery around and below you.

CLIMBING DONT'S

1. Don't drink too much water and don't drink any alcohol before or during the climb.

2. Don't keep staring at your destination. It will make you feel as if you are not making any progress.

3. DO NOT stray from the climbing path.

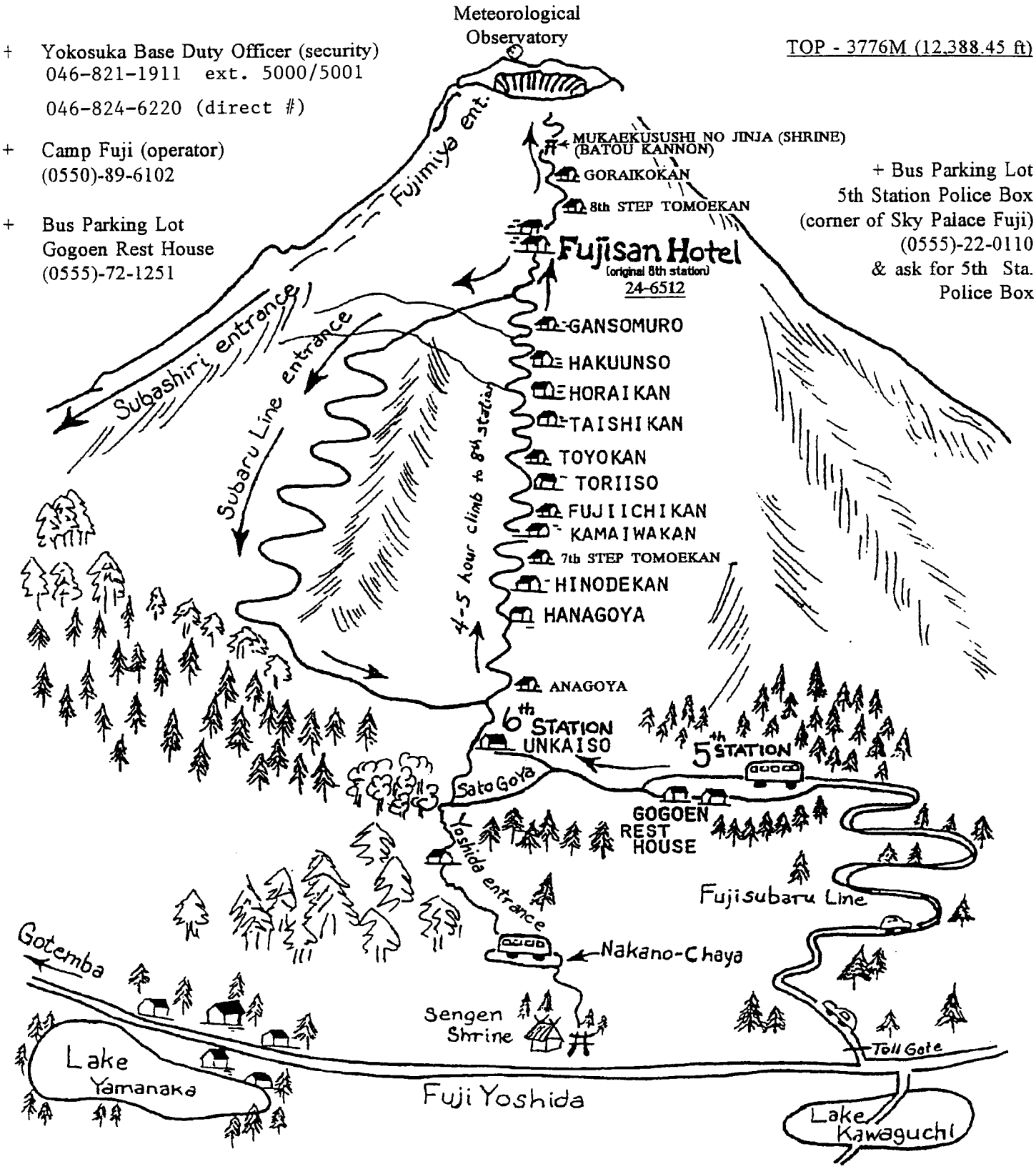
4. Never throw rocks or cut switchback, as you may start a rockslide. Many people have been injured by falling rocks.

5. Never run down the mountain, you may cause serious injury to yourself.

6. Never litter on the mountain. What you carry up, you must carry back down.

7. Don't feel bad if you have to call it quits before you reach the 8th station.

Tip for Descending Mt. Fuji

- Make sure you take the correct trail down the mountain!!!!!!!!

GUIDE MAP OF MT. FUJI