

Russia's Far East Region Launches Ski Tours in North Korea

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Masikryong Pass Ski Resort in Wonsan, North Korea. **AP Photo / Wong Maye-E**

Authorities in Far East Russia's Primorye region [said](#) Wednesday they have launched the country's first ski tours to neighboring North Korea as Moscow seeks to cultivate deeper ties with Pyongyang.

"Would you like to visit one of the most interesting and mysterious countries in the world, North Korea?" the Primorye region's government wrote in a post on social media.

"Then hurry up and pack your bags to go on a five-day tour," the post continued, adding that the first group of Russian tourists is expected to take up the "unique offer" on Feb. 9.

The Primorye region's international cooperation agency [said](#) the \$750 tour package to North Korea's Masikryong ski resort includes return flights between Vladivostok, the North Korean capital of Pyongyang and the port city of Wonsan, with stays in four and five-star hotels, according to the state-run news agency TASS.

Masikryong is described as North Korea's first public ski resort built on leader Kim Jong Un's orders to generate foreign tourism.

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Historic allies Russia and North Korea are both heavily sanctioned by the West — the former for its invasion of Ukraine and the latter for its nuclear weapons and missile programs.

Last week, the United States accused Pyongyang of providing Moscow with ballistic missiles and missile launchers that were used in recent attacks on Ukraine.

The Primorye region government said Governor Oleg Kozhemyako had arranged for the new Masikryong ski tours during North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's visit to Russia in September.

Kozhemyako at the time urged Russian parents to send their children to so-called pioneer camps in North Korea, an offer that some parents [opposed](#).

So, too, has Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov [recommended](#) that Russian tourists vacation in North Korea.

Russian tour agencies have [said](#) they do not expect more than a few thousand Russians to travel to North Korea per year.

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