

ALASKA SMALL SHIP CRUISE & WILDERNESS ADVENTURE 14 day Sample Itinerary

Photo courtesy of
Alaska Private
Touring

- Includes a 7 night **GLACIER BAY ADVENTURE CRUISE** aboard **WILDERNESS ADVENTURER**
- Other vessels & cruise itineraries available on request
- Cruises in Alaska available from June – September only

Day 1: ARRIVE JUNEAU, ALASKA

Upon arrival at the Juneau airport, a private transfer will be provided to your overnight accommodations. The afternoon is at your leisure to enjoy Juneau and its spectacular sights.

Alaska's capital of Juneau is the third largest city in the state, a charming city in the heart of the rugged Tongass National Forest. Nestled at the base of towering mountains overlooking the Gastineau Channel, the community's rich culture and history are displayed throughout the town and in several local museums. Juneau is also home of the famous Mendenhall Glacier, a terminal lakeside glacier which receives an average of 500,000 visitors per year.

Day 2: JUNEAU – Embarkation

Breakfast, Dinner

Breakfast at the hotel followed by the morning at leisure to sightsee on your own.

In the afternoon you will walk to the Convention Center to meet your fellow cruisers and start on the next segment of your adventure: embarkation on **Wilderness Adventurer** where you will be welcomed by the crew, followed by a safety and information briefing. Dinner on board this evening.



Photo by Pannell's Tours

Day 3: ICY STRAIT – CROSS SOUND

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Before you do anything, look out of the window. From kelp-lined channels to hemlock and spruce forests, every inch of this far northwest corner is worth exploring. If the tides are right, head out in the skiff with one of the guides for a closer exploration of the rugged shore. Seals and sea lions haul out on rocky outcrops, resting before they disappear into the water to search for food. Whatever you do – wilderness trekking, skiffing or paddling – our expedition team guides the way.

Icy Strait is a body of water in South East Alaska, located between Chichagof Island and the mainland. Extending 64 km (40 miles) from Chatham Strait to Glacier Bay and Cross Sound, Icy Strait's nutrient-rich waters are abundant with marine mammals, sea birds and spectacular scenery.

Day 4: GLACIER BAY NATIONAL PARK

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

The crown jewel of America's national parks covers 3.3 million acres (13,335 sq. km or 5,156 sq. miles). Most visitors see just a small sliver of the park, but not on this cruise. You will be exploring parts that 99% of visitors never go to – and you have three days in which to do it.

Taylor Bay sea stacks and rocky shores make for good adventure. Or hike the outwash field of glaciers winding down the Fairweather Mountain Range. The cool breeze off the nearby snow and icefields is energizing. In Dundas Bay, keep an eye out for bears, humpbacks, and if you're lucky, a wolf sighting. Kayak the bay. Bushwack in the forest. Discover the outback of Glacier Bay.



Photo by Pannell's Tours

Day 5: GLACIER BAY NATIONAL PARK

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Your camera's memory card needs plenty of space. South Marble Island is abuzz with activity. Rare sea birds, black oystercatchers and orange-beaked tufted puffins can't be missed. A colony of raucous sea lions adds to the hubbub. Tucking into silent Tidal Inlet, the stomping grounds for bears, wolves, mountain goats and eagles – the backdrop is spectacular. At the end of the western-most arm of the bay sits Margerie and Grand Pacific Glaciers with possible views of glacial calving. Step on deck with the ranger to take it all in.

Glacier Bay Park and Preserve is the ultimate National Park in the United States. Where else will you find a 40 km long river of ice still carving the land just as it has for the past several thousand years? When Captain Cook sailed by in 1779, he saw this huge glacier where today the entrance of the park lies, as well as the park headquarters. Over the past 200 years, this wall of ice has retreated an astonishing 104 km north, splintering into a vast number of tributaries.

Visiting Glacier Bay Park is like visiting a wildlife park. Here bears, goats, moose, whales, sea otters and all the creatures of the water and forest flourish, completely protected from man.

Day 6: GLACIER BAY NATIONAL PARK

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

There's adventure afloat and ashore. Find a perch on the bridge with the captain, or with the guides on the bow. Follow the seal barks and chatter of birds by kayak and skiff. Pull on your rubber boots for a hike in mud across a glacial moraine. Then head up for spectacular views. Back on board, take advantage of the opportunity for a polar plunge, then make a beeline straight for the hot tub. Take a forest walk at Bartlett Cove, if there's still daylight left.



Photo by Pannell's Tours

Day 7: CAPTAIN'S CHOICE

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Stretches on deck with your guide to warm up those hard-at-play muscles. Conditions in the Southeast are constantly changing from one inlet to the next. The captain will pick just the right spot. Lynn Canal or Chatham Straight? Whichever, there will be plenty of opportunities for adventure.

There are so many hidden pockets in the Tongass National Forest. Practice your paddle board skills, watch for the big-eyed harbour seals from a kayak, or bushwack into the forest of giants. Your guides know the area and will keep you entertained.

Day 8: HAINES

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Tucked beneath snowcapped peaks, Haines has it all – hiking, biking, rafting and history. The trails are irresistible. Take it slowly, or feel the burn. Whatever your speed, the views are rewarding. The expedition team will share the city's captivating history. Originally a trading outlet for the Chilkat Tlingit, the effect of European explorers, the Klondike gold rush, a U.S. Army outpost – these influences are still apparent today. There will be some free time to explore on your own.

This evening, we toast our voyage with a festive Farewell Dinner, after which your Expedition Leaders will share a "photo journal" of your trip.

Cruising itinerary and inclusions may vary to maximize passengers' experience.

Day 9: JUNEAU – Disembark – Flight to FAIRBANKS

Breakfast, Dinner

Enjoy breakfast before wishing the crew and new friends goodbye. After disembarkation, transfer to the airport for the start of the next sector of your exciting Alaskan adventure.

Take a midday flight to Fairbanks, a modern city with a quintessentially Alaskan frontier spirit. The city's colourful history dates back to the late 1800s and the discovery of gold in the area.

Located close to the centre of the state of Alaska, Fairbanks has the widest temperature range of any city on Earth, with temperatures dropping below -55°C in mid-winter, and rising over 38°C in mid-summer.

After your arrival and private hotel transfer, the afternoon is yours to relax or pursue any optional activities.

Tonight, after resting from your day of travels, you will journey to a remote yurt, perfectly placed for aurora viewing. Settle into the comfortable yurt as you wait for the northern lights to dance across the sky. You may stay inside to keep warm or wander outside to watch for the lights.

Transportation is part of the scheduled aurora viewing tour and therefore is not private. The capacity of the yurts is up to 35 guests. The tour begins at 22h00 and returns at 02h00.

While there is no guarantee that the northern lights show will happen on any particular night, you will be in the best place in a region known as the “aurora oval”, the area around the city (away from city lights), which usually has clear skies and has the most consistent sightings in Alaska.

Day 10: FAIRBANKS

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

After the previous night’s activities, there will be an opportunity for a rest with the morning at leisure.

In the early afternoon a private tour of Fairbanks has been arranged. Your city tour will take you to Golden Heart Park at the center of the city. The park is the site of the 18-foot bronze monument titled “Unknown First Family.” The park and the statue were dedicated in July 1986 as a tribute to the history and heritage of Fairbanks. Another point of interest along the way is Creamer’s Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge—a 2,000-acre habitat where visitors can view several species of birds as they make their biannual migrations. There will be a stop to view the Trans-Alaska Pipeline, a feat of civil engineering that still carries crude oil from Prudhoe Bay to Valdez. You will also visit the University of Alaska’s Museum of the North, located on the University of Alaska Fairbanks campus. The museum sports cultural and natural history exhibits from across the state: galleries showcase the state’s largest gold display, the history of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline, and the scientific phenomenon of the Aurora Borealis, or Northern Lights. There are no other activities planned for today; feel free to explore Fairbanks on your own.

Day 11: FAIRBANKS – ALASKA RAIL – DENALI NATIONAL PARK

Breakfast, Lunch

A private transfer will take you from your hotel to the Fairbanks rail depot where you will board the Alaska Railroad domed rail cars. It is all aboard for an unforgettable rail adventure on the Alaska Railroad! Breakfast will be onboard the rail this morning as you travel in style in the Gold Star luxury dome cars, complete with an open-air viewing deck and first-class dining services. After departing Fairbanks the train crosses the Tanana River on one of the world’s longest single-span bridges. It was here, at the west end of the 702-foot bridge, that President Harding drove the final spike completing the railroad in 1923.



Photo by Pannell's Tours

As you approach Denali National Park the train enters scenic Nenana River Canyon and continues to Nenana – an early trading center for Athabaskan Indians. Denali National Park lies in the heart of a curved mountain chain about 600 miles long, the Alaska Range. The centerpiece of these high mountains is Denali, the highest peak in North America, at 20,310 feet.

Upon arrival your hotel will provide a courtesy shuttle to your hotel.

This afternoon embark on a kennel tour of the home of Iditarod Champion Jeff King. The Husky Homestead tour is widely heralded as an authentic look into rural Alaskan lifestyle based on over 40 years of Alaskan adventures: from freight hauling on Denali to crossing the finish line in Nome with a champion Iditarod team. Cuddle a puppy upon arrival and share an intimate view of the Alaskan Husky. Watch as the dogs explode from the yard on a training run and witness their beauty in motion as they run on a 50' treadmill. Get a behind-the-scenes look at what goes into creating a championship team and carving a life in Alaska's Interior. Hear compelling stories from the trail and see actual racing sleds, arctic survival gear and equipment used to traverse 1100 miles of Alaska's most rugged terrain. Tour departs at 14h00 and returns at approximately 16h30 and includes courtesy transfers from hotel. The evening is at your leisure.

Day 12: DENALI NATIONAL PARK - KANTISHNA

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Breakfast is included at the hotel this morning. The start of your day is at your leisure to enjoy Denali.



Photo by Pannell's Tours

Choice of Morning Hike (3.5 Hour Hikes):

Triple Lakes Hike: The Triple Lakes Trail inside Denali National Park provides visitors with one of the best opportunities for a serene immersion into the boreal forest of Interior Alaska. This adventure on an improved trail inside Denali National Park begins with a gradual and consistent hill climb providing spectacular views of the Nenana River and the expansive glacially carved Yanert Valley. This Alaska trail then descends and levels off to provide access to the three alpine lakes that give this Alaska trail its name. Beautiful views of the lakes, bounded by the elevated ridges, make for some outstanding photo opportunities. The lakes are abundant with arctic grayling and also home to resident beavers. Moose enjoy the sheltered valley and other small mammals are abundant, increasing the opportunity for wildlife viewing. Countless wildflowers dot the hillsides adjacent to the trails and wild blueberries are abundant in August. This is a "must do" Alaska hike for any Denali visitor desiring to experience some solitude. This Alaska hike is rated moderately strenuous due to the reasonably steep ascent at the onset of this hike. Only avid hikers with appropriate conditioning and footwear should consider this option.

Steps Through Time: Experience the concept of true wilderness by stepping away from the developed areas and immersing yourself in the tranquility of a hike through the mixed spruce, birch and alder forest that encompass the Denali area and Interior Alaska. This guided hike will set you on the trail of discovery and adventure as your certified guide interprets many of the unique natural attributes of the area. Follow the trail of frontier hunters on the way to an old hunting cabin and take in some of the spectacular scenery on this invigorating hike. The trail is rustic and leads away from the lodge, gradually enveloping the hiker into a quiet and refreshing environment. You'll get a bird's eye view of the glacially-carved Nenana River Valley. The guide will help in your understanding of the immense power and magnitude of the forces that shaped the land.

This is a moderately strenuous to difficult hike and proper footwear is essential in order to provide for good, secure footing along the trail. You'll need to step over exposed roots and around wet areas and boulder hop over Lynx Creek. The trail rises in elevation at various spots and can provide a moderately strenuous workout for most participants.

Sightings of fox, moose, Dall sheep, and numerous birds are always possible, but the scenery is what this trail is mostly about. This is a well-marked but unimproved trail still used by hikers, backpackers, and hunters to easily access some of the most beautiful wilderness areas of Denali.

In the early afternoon transfer by hotel courtesy shuttle to the Denali Rail Depot where you will meet your shuttle to Kantishna.

This 6-hour journey into the heart of the national park will provide you with spectacular scenery and opportunities to view Alaska's wildlife. Moose, caribou, Dall sheep, grizzly bears, and even wolves call this area home. Upon arrival at the lodge, about 20h00, dinner will be prepared and you will receive an orientation of your stay.

Day 13: KANTISHNA

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today you will have additional opportunities to participate in the lodge activities – walks, hikes, gold panning, biking, fishing, yoga class, evening presentation, a natural history library and video collection.

Day 14: KANTISHNA - DENALI NATIONAL PARK – ALASKA RAIL - ANCHORAGE

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

After an early breakfast you will return to the Denali Park entrance by lodge shuttle (departs at 06h00). At the rail depot board the Alaska Railroad train for a scenic journey to Anchorage (12h00-20h00). Sit back and take in the scenery as you depart Denali National Park. You will travel south, over the breathtaking Hurricane Gulch bridge—an astounding 296 feet from the floor of the gulch—then coast by the former town site of Curry and the Curry Hotel, all the while amidst the most picturesque vistas along the entire Fairbanks to Anchorage rail line. About halfway through your journey, the train will stop in the small town of Talkeetna, best known as the staging area for climbers attempting to summit Denali. Lunch and dinner are served onboard. Upon arrival in Anchorage a private transfer will bring you to your hotel.

Day 15: ANCHORAGE

Breakfast

Today is at leisure to explore the beautiful city of Anchorage until it is time to take the hotel courtesy shuttle to the airport to meet your departing flight.

INCLUDED

- 7 nights' accommodation aboard Wilderness Adventurer in a Navigator cabin
- All onboard meals; all alcoholic & non alcoholic beverages onboard (excluding premium spirits)
- All shore excursions
- Hotel accommodation including daily breakfast and roundtrip baggage handling
- Denali Park accommodation including roundtrip bus transportation (not private) from the park entrance, all meals, activities, and naturalist programs
- Private transfers in Juneau, Fairbanks and Anchorage
- Scheduled Air Flight - Juneau to Fairbanks
- Aurora Viewing Lodge Tour (not private) from Fairbanks
- Private Fairbanks City Tour
- General Admission to the Museum of the North in Fairbanks
- Alaska Railroad Gold Star deluxe rail service from Fairbanks to Denali National Park entrance, breakfast included
- Husky Homestead Tour (not private) from the Denali Park Entrance
- Alaska Railroad Gold Star deluxe rail service from Denali to Anchorage, lunch and dinner included

NOT INCLUDED

- International flights; visas; travel insurance
- Gratuities for drivers, lodge staff, ship's crew
- Alcoholic beverages (except onboard the train)
- Laundry and personal expenses

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