



Alaska Wildland
Adventures

ALASKA 9-DAY GRAND ADVENTURE DAY-BY-DAY ITINERARY

Day 1: Meet your Trip Leader and fellow travelers this morning in Anchorage. Enjoy a scenic drive south along Turnagain Arm and through the Chugach National Forest to the quaint community of Cooper Landing. From our launch site on the Kenai River, gear up for a scenic raft trip into the heart of the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge. On this class II, casual stretch of river, we'll be able to access stunning backcountry sights and protected wilderness areas.

Along the river during our raft trip, scan for moose, bald eagles and other bird species, and salmon. The Kenai River is famous for its salmon and, depending on the time of your visit, you may witness their incredible spawning runs. A delicious picnic lunch will be served along the river or on the shore of Skilak Lake.

Late afternoon, arrive at our boat-in only Kenai Backcountry Lodge, a unique, historic inholding. The Lodge utilizes a simple but effective hydroelectric power system to provide water and electricity, reducing the need for fossil fueled power.

Appetizers and dinner welcome us in the main lodge, followed by evening activities. Relax in the outdoor gazebo or enjoy a casual stroll along an established nature path. Overnight at Kenai Backcountry Lodge. **(L, D)** *(Included meals will be noted: B=breakfast; L=lunch; D=dinner. Complimentary snacks and non-alcoholic beverages included each day).*

Day 2: Spend a full day exploring the remote wilderness of the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge. Hike a secluded trail and travel through several fascinating ecological communities, including riparian and hemlock forests.

Return to the lodge in the afternoon and simply relax at the lodge or take a hot sauna. For those brave souls, take a dip into the glacier-fed waters of Skilak Lake. Depending on the weather, options for the evening may include an exploration of the lake by sturdy touring kayak or fireside natural history presentation by one of the lodge's guides. Overnight Kenai Backcountry Lodge. **(B, L, D)**

Day 3: Cross the lake in the morning and say farewell to the Kenai Backcountry Lodge. Enjoy a scenic drive south through the Chugach National Forest to the stunning seacoast town of Seward where we'll board a small boat bound for Kenai Fjords National Park – home to an array of glaciers and marine wildlife including whales, Steller sea lions, sea otters, puffins and more! A half-day marine wildlife cruise will allow us to explore the rugged coastline. Enjoy lunch in front of a tidewater glacier before arriving at our exclusive lodge destination: Kenai Fjords Glacier Lodge.

Nestled in a protected tidal lagoon area, the Glacier Lodge offers stunning views of Pedersen Glacier and miles of pristine beachfront for exploring. This afternoon, meet your guides for a lodge orientation and settle into your private cabins. Enjoy dinner and evening presentations. Overnight Kenai Fjords Glacier Lodge. **(B, L, D)**

Day 4: Explore the wild delights of Kenai Fjords National Park for a full day. After breakfast in the main lodge, choose from a wide array of activities those that are best suited to your energy level and interest. Guided options include naturalist-led walks, sea kayaking, group canoe paddles and more.

In the spirit of adventure and to take advantage of tidal and weather patterns, guides will discuss specific nature outings and options with our group this morning. All activities are suitable for beginners and require no previous experience.

For those seeking a more relaxed approach, the main lodge offers ideal comfort within direct views of nature. Curious sea otters and seals frequent the lagoon, just steps from the main lodge deck. In a nearby meadow, we can sometimes glimpse bears and other wildlife from a safe distance. Our natural history library offers amazing resources and interesting reads – cozy up with a good book and let your worries drift out with the tide! Upon return to the main lodge in late afternoon, share stories from your day's adventure with other guests and join an evening natural history presentation, given by local expert guides or guest speakers. Overnight Kenai Fjords Glacier Lodge. **(B, L, D)**

Day 5: Savor another morning in the wilds of Kenai Fjords National Park. A morning outing allows for another opportunity to kayak, canoe, hike or beach comb for a half-day before boarding our boat for the return wildlife cruise to Seward.

Tonight's destination is the Seward Windsong Lodge, located in a spectacular glacier river valley. After dinner, enjoy an evening cordial at the Resurrection Roadhouse or stroll across the road to observe the braided river outwash or relax in our comfortable accommodations. Overnight Seward Windsong Lodge. **(B, L, D)**

Day 6: Begin the journey north through the scenic Chugach State Park to the mountain town of Talkeetna, the gateway to the Alaska Range. Talkeetna is rich in gold-mining history and, presently, is the starting point for many mountaineering expeditions for climbers on the Alaska Range and Denali (Mt. McKinley).

Once in Talkeetna, you'll have the freedom to choose from several activities, including a guest favorite - flightseeing. Take to the skies on an optional flightseeing tour of Denali and its adjacent glacial canyons. Experienced pilots will share stories of how the last ice age has shaped the land. Moments later, enter a world of rugged high mountain peaks and wide glacier-filled valleys *(As this is a weather dependent activity, you will also have options to flightsee during your time in Denali, with Denali Air, or other local operators).*

Another casual activity to enjoy this afternoon is wandering through "downtown" Talkeetna. Tour the small-town museum, where artifacts and exhibits highlight native peoples, aviators, gold seekers and trappers from Talkeetna's past and present. Tonight, you have the flexibility to dine with the other members of your group or enjoy a great meal on your own. Overnight Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge. **(B, L, D)**

Special Note: *For the remainder of this crafted journey, the following day-by-day itinerary sequence may be adjusted slightly for your trip to take advantage of best-available hiking trails and Denali bus tour options. Our itinerary will allow for flexibility so that we may take advantage of unique opportunities...plus a few special surprises along the way!*

Though the activity sequencing may look slightly different than the below outline, your trip will include a day hike to explore the ecosystem of Denali, a sightseeing and wildlife viewing bus tour, time to enjoy the Park Visitor Center and exhibits, as well as optional activities at Tonglen Lake Lodge, such as art walks, evening bonfires and more.

Day 7: After a hearty breakfast, lace up your most comfortable trekking shoes to prepare for an immersive nature hike as we make our way further north, en route to our charming and small-scale Denali accommodations.

Aboard our custom mini coach, we'll travel in comfort from Talkeetna north to the eastern border of Denali National Park, where we'll soak up information about Denali's history, ecology and geology and then put our newfound knowledge to use during an interactive guided hike, as we explore Denali's beautiful front country sights and sounds.

After our day of exploring Denali by foot, we'll be welcomed to our northern home away from home at Tonglen Lake Lodge. This secluded 5-acre piece of paradise boasts incredible mountain views, lakeside solitude and authentically Alaskan crafted "hide-away" style guest cabins. In addition to rustically elegant and private guest accommodations, you'll have the opportunity to enjoy a rotation of optional activities, which may include local nature walks, yoga, evening art and music events, Native Alaskan cultural presentations and more. Appetizers followed by a savory dinner in the main lodge await us this evening.

Following dinner, we've carved out some free time to settle in and relax. Tonglen Lake Lodge routinely offers evening bonfires and yard games as a fun option for guests. Overnight Tonglen Lake Lodge. **(B, L, D)**

Day 8: Today, we'll enjoy a peaceful morning and breakfast at Tonglen Lake Lodge, followed by a new perspective of Denali – by bus.

One of our favorite ways to explore Denali National Park and increase the odds of seeing Alaska's charismatic wildlife is by way of an interpretative bus tour into the park. Our bus trip will start at the Denali Visitors Center and will include awe-inspiring sights along the one restricted-access Denali Park Road. Make sure to have your camera and binoculars at the ready; there's always the possibility to spot a majestic eagle overhead or a lumbering grizzly foraging along the road's edge.

After our drive tour adventure, we'll return to Tonglen Lake Lodge for dinner and unwinding. Overnight Tonglen Lake Lodge. **(B, L, D)**

Day 9: On the last day of this active adventure, we'll enjoy a more relaxed morning at Tonglen Lake before embarking on our voyage south to Anchorage.

After breakfast this morning, we'll make our way to visit Alaska's 4-legged "celebrities" – Alaskan sled dogs! You'll be able to learn more about how sled dogs serve an important role throughout rural and remote Alaskan communities.

Next, board the historic Alaska Railroad's first-class GoldStar cars for comfortable sightseeing en route back to Anchorage. This deluxe train trip features confirmed seating in the upper-level dome cars for enhanced wilderness and wildlife viewing as well as a private outdoor viewing deck; lunch and dinner are included with your GoldStar service, and the onboard service staff will assist you with your dining options.

You'll arrive at the Anchorage Rail Depot at approximately 8:30 p.m. Taxis are located directly outside the rail terminal and are easy to access. Although transfers to the airport or local hotels are not included, some hotels include courtesy shuttle service from the rail depot to their property. **(B, L, D)**

Departure: Plan to arrive at the Anchorage train station by approximately 8:30 p.m. on the last day of your journey. See the "Alaska Travel Information" section of your Trip Planning Booklet for recommended lodging. If you choose to fly home tonight, we suggest you book a flight that departs after 11:30 p.m. in case of transportation delays.

Note: *We do not expect any major changes to this schedule. However, in the spirit of adventure, we allow our itinerary to remain flexible so that we may take advantage of spontaneous events.*