



Alaska Wildland
Adventures

ALASKA HIKING ADVENTURE DAY-BY-DAY ITINERARY

Day 1: Meet your Trip Leaders and fellow travelers this morning in Anchorage. After introductions and a brief orientation, we'll drive alongside the Turnagain Arm to the trailhead of our first hike in the rugged Chugach Mountains. Here, we enjoy our initial encounter with the Alaskan wilderness, with naturalist guides sharing their knowledge on local flora and fauna. A picnic lunch is enjoyed al fresco with a splendid view. Late this afternoon, we arrive at our accommodation for the next two nights, our delightful Kenai Riverside Lodge, set on the banks of the turquoise Kenai River. We have our first dinner together tonight in the main lodge, followed by relaxing. Kenai Riverside Lodge features comfortable, private guest cabins, plus a large riverside deck with serene river views, a wood-fired sauna, self-guided nature trails and a lodge lounge with local wines and ales on tap. Overnight Kenai Riverside Lodge. **(L, D)** *(Included meals: B=breakfast; L=lunch; D=dinner. Complimentary snacks and non-alcoholic beverages included each day).*

Hiking Information (*Approximate*): 6 miles; Elevation gain/loss: + 2,100' / -2,100'

Day 2: After a hearty breakfast, gear up to explore an Alaskan high-country trail on the Kenai Peninsula. We take a short drive to the trailhead for today's invigorating hike, which follows a series of switchbacks through lush, vegetated forest and up into the alpine tundra of the high country. After a final climb, our trail rises above the tree line rewarding us with panoramic vistas. Keep an eye out for mountain goats and eagles, which can sometimes be spotted in this mountainous area. We enjoy a picnic lunch in our picturesque setting surrounded by millions of acres of wilderness. Afterward, we head back down the trail to return to our welcoming lodge. Overnight Kenai Riverside Lodge. **(B, L, D)**

Hiking Information (*Approximate*): 7 miles; Elevation gain/loss: +2,200' / -2,200'

Day 3: With miles of rugged coastline containing massive tidewater glaciers, snow-capped mountains and an abundance of marine wildlife, Kenai Fjords National Park is one of Alaska's crown jewels. We're lucky enough to explore it today by small touring vessel. After breakfast, we set course for the awe-inspiring coastlines of this protected wilderness, keeping on the lookout for breaching humpback whales, orcas, sea lions, sea otters and some of the 20 species of seabirds that summer in this area. Further into the park, we maneuver close to a beautiful tidewater glacier, marveling at its blue-tinged surfaces and listening to the cracking and groaning of the glacial ice. Weather permitting, we may enjoy a short wilderness beach hike before cruising back to Seward, our home for the next two nights. Overnight Seward Windsong Lodge. **(B, L, D)**

Small Boat Scenic Day Cruise (*Approximate*): 6-8 hours

Day 4: Spanning more than 700 square miles, the Harding Icefield and its outflowing glaciers comprise the largest icefield located entirely within the United States. Today, we set out on one of the Kenai Peninsula's most spectacular day hikes on a trail that climbs alongside Exit Glacier and ultimately leads to the icefield itself.

After winding through forests of cottonwood and alder, rise above tree line for views which just get better and better. As we skirt Exit Glacier, our guides help us understand the geological forces that shaped this remarkable landscape over the millennia. Conditions permitting, we continue our climb to a breathtaking viewpoint overlooking the impressive Harding Icefield. A delicious dinner in Seward is our reward after an active day in nature. Overnight Seward Windsong Lodge. **(B, L, D)**

Hiking Information (*Approximate*): up to 8 miles; Elevation gain/loss: +3,500' / -3,500

Day 5: Bidding farewell to the Kenai Peninsula, we set out from Seward and begin the drive north towards the Alaska Range and magnificent Denali National Park. We stop along the way to enjoy the changing landscape and stretch our legs during a short hike and outdoor lunch, before arriving in the small, historic town of Talkeetna this afternoon. Because of its proximity to Denali (formerly known as Mount McKinley), Talkeetna acts as a base for many climbers attempting to summit the enormous mountain, and it's an ideal place to arrange an optional flightseeing tour to get an aerial view of the Alaska Range. *(If you are interested in adding a flightsee tour, our team will point you in the right direction of trusted flight operators. As this is a weather dependent activity, you do not need to pre-arrange flights, and you will also have options to flightsee during your time in Denali, with Denali Air, or other local operators).*

This evening, we'll enjoy homey lodging in an authentically Alaskan inn, and on clear evenings, marvel at the spectacular sights of the Alaska Range from the inn's beautiful yard. Overnight Denali Overlook Inn. **(B, L, D)**

Hiking Information (*Approximate*): ~2-4 miles; Elevation gain/loss: less than 1,000'

Day 6: Today, we'll explore Denali State Park. Switchbacking up through forests of birch and spruce, past glacial lakes and wildflower meadows, we leave the forest behind and enter the tundra, stretching like a spongy carpet for miles in all directions. Although the ascent is steep at times, our payoff comes when we reach Kesugi Ridge where, on a clear day, we have unobstructed views of 20,320-foot-high Denali. After refueling with a "backcountry gourmet" lunch and returning to the trailhead, we make our way further north to Denali National Park. Our base for the next three nights is the charming McKinley Creekside Cabins, nestled alongside Carlo Creek and featuring a delightful on-site Café and Bakery. Overnight McKinley Creekside Cabins. **(B, L, D)**

Hiking Information (*Approximate*): 6 miles; Elevation gain/loss: +2,000' / -2,000'

Day 7: Today's journey deep into Denali National Park is accomplished aboard an interpretive bus tour into the park's backcountry. With an experienced driver with expert knowledge of the area, we relish the wilderness panoramas and keep our eyes peeled for some of Denali's iconic wildlife like moose, Dall sheep, caribou and, of course, grizzlies. This day also offers another opportunity to see Denali itself; if the weather is clear, the mountain will be visible from various points along the park road. Overnight McKinley Creekside Cabins. **(B, L, D)**

Narrated Denali National Park Bus Tour (*Approximate*): 5-6 hours

Day 8: Our final day in the magical Denali wilderness leads us up a trail that is a favorite among Alaska locals. As we hike along the ridge, our views may include the vast snow-capped Alaska Range—if the weather is clear. Even if the mountain is shy and shrouded with a bit of cloud coverage, in the open landscape, we may still spot wildlife from a safe distance. Although our time in this 4.7-million-acre park and preserve is drawing to an end, we'll spend time sharing top highlights at our farewell dinner this evening. Overnight McKinley Creekside Cabins. **(B, L, D)**

Hiking Information (*Approximate*): 7-9 miles; Elevation gain/loss: +1,000'-2,700' / -1,000'-2,700'

Day 9: On the last day of this active adventure, enjoy a more relaxed morning before boarding 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.*