



Alaska

Spring in America's finest wilderness

Saturday 2 – Wednesday 13 June 2012
Nome extension to Monday 18 June

(12 days)
(5 days)

In a world where the treasures of wildlife and wild places are dwindling Alaska remains a wilderness jewel. More than any place in North America, it retains its wild character and ecological integrity, making a visit here simply a 'must do' experience.

We visit in June when we have endless hours of daylight to explore. It is an active time for birds and wildlife feeding young in the short summer season. Our journey is designed to visit signature landscapes from seacoast to tundra, including thick spruce forests, seabird islands, and Denali National Park.

A sampler of Alaska's magnificent scenery would not be complete without a boat trip into the Gulf of Alaska and Kenai Fjords National Park from Seward. From our comfortable boat, we look for close encounters with Humpback Whales, large groups of Orca, and the increasingly rare Steller's Sea Lion. Our route takes us past several large glaciers, and then travels through rich waters where seabirds such as Tufted and Horned Puffins nest in the long days of summer.

We feature three nights at renowned Camp Denali, a naturalist's paradise with views of Mt. McKinley possible on clear days from the porch.

In Fairbanks we visit the Alaska Bird Observatory. Sandhill Cranes nest here and their calls are a delight over fields and rivers. Our main journey ends in Anchorage, and we add a night here with our extension as there is much to see and experience in this beautiful city, rimmed by water and mountains.

On our extension to Nome, we explore a wild and beautiful landscape close to the Arctic Circle. Nome's unique community is locked in by ice for much of the year. Our visit is timed for the ice 'break-up', an exciting time for birds. After exploring many areas, we think Nome provides Alaska's premier birding experience – 'there's no place like Nome', as they say!

Outline Itinerary

Day 1 : We fly from London to Anchorage, Alaska, arriving later the same day.
Overnight Anchorage

Please note: Anchorage is a delightful small city with easy access to some great museums, shops and restaurants. You may want to consider arriving early to spend time here at your leisure. We can certainly help with your arrangements.

Day 2 : We drive south to Seward, a spectacularly situated fishing town on Resurrection Bay, at the edge of the Gulf of Alaska. This is a stunning route, and we stop for photography, birding and sightseeing.
Overnight Seward (B,L,D)



Breaching Humpback Whale (Photo: Peg Abbott)

Day 3 : Today we embark on an all-day boat trip into Kenai Fjords National Park. This is a marvelous day spent cruising among glaciers and seabird nesting islands of the Gulf of Alaska.
Overnight Seward (B,L)

Day 4 : We drive north to beautiful Alyeska Resort, in winter a ski resort and in summer, a lovely mountain lodge.
Overnight Alyeska Resort (B, L,D)

Day 5 : This morning we enjoy the scenic drive back to Anchorage. Mid-morning, we take a flight bound north to Fairbanks. On arrival we settle in at accommodations on the Chena River.
Overnight Fairbanks (D)

Day 6 : Today we explore Fairbanks and its surroundings in more detail, with a local birder from the Arctic Audubon Society. Tonight we share a special evening with Mary Shields, the first woman to complete the Iditarod; now an author, educator and enthusiastic dog-musher.
Overnight Fairbanks (B,L,D)

Day 7 : We get an early start for Denali National Park. Our Alaska Railroad train passes through boreal forest, where we see abundant Black Spruce interspersed with ponds and wetlands.

Guides from Camp Denali await us at the station. We then head to the wilds, driving 90 miles through Denali National Park to our intimate, peaceful lodge with front porch views of Mt. McKinley (Denali).
Overnight Camp Denali (D)

Days 8 - 9 : Camp Denali sits right at the 2,400 foot tree line, providing access to native tundra and taiga habitats right from your door. During the day, we join other talented guides of Camp Denali, mingling with lodge guests as we wander across tundra and forest.
Two nights Camp Denali (B,L,D)

Day 10 : Our return trip through the park has the feel of an African safari, as we never know what animals we will see.
By noon, we are at Denali Station, where we board the train to Anchorage. Our final dinner is on the train.
Overnight Anchorage (B,D)

Day 11 : We will be sad to leave the great far North, but will do so with treasured memories, flying from Anchorage and then onward to London, arriving on **Day 12**.

Nome extension

Day 11 : Those staying on for the extension can enjoy time to explore Anchorage.

After lunch, we drive north of the city for a walk at beautiful Eagle Creek, an impressive valley with an easy trail that affords views of the mountains and wildlife.

Overnight Anchorage (B)



TRIP DETAILS

ACCOMMODATION : Hotels and lodges with all rooms en suite. Most meals are included, as specified in the itinerary (B=breakfast, L=lunch, D=dinner).

PRINCIPAL LEADER : Greg Smith

NUMBERS : Max. 14 clients

PRICE :

	Main tour: £ 5,595
	Extension: £ 1,495
Single supps* :	Main tour: £ 545
	Extension: £ 445
Deposit :	£ 600 per person

The price is per person, and is fully inclusive of return flights London – Anchorage, accommodation, most meals as specified in the itinerary (B=breakfast, L=lunch, D=dinner), park entrance and other activity fees for activities described in the itinerary, the flight from Anchorage to Fairbanks mid-way through your journey, train travel from Fairbanks to Denali and from Denali to Anchorage, the all day boat tour in Kenai Fjords National Park, and the services of the leader(s).

The price excludes meals as described, airport taxis in Anchorage on arrival and departure days (allow \$25 each way), travel insurance, tips to the leader(s), drinks and other personal expenses.

**Please note that single rooms may not be available throughout, and are especially hard to book at Camp Denali, so are not included there. If we can get any single rooms here we will increase the single supp.*

This trip will be operated in conjunction with Naturalist Journeys of the USA.

Please note that we require full payment 18 weeks before departure on all USA tours.

Day 12 : After breakfast, we catch a morning flight from Anchorage to Nome; typically a jet-carrier flight where we share space with cargo.
Overnight Nome (B, L, D)

Days 13 - 15 : Three main roads lead out into the wilds of the Seward Peninsula, and we travel a combination of routes. En route, we could sight Grizzly Bears digging up arctic Ground Squirrels or we may encounter a roadblock of Reindeer, which are herded here instead of cattle. Gyrfalcons, Long-tailed Jaegers and Snowy Owls nest in the region and can be found hunting the open tundra.

There is abundant daylight, and we vary the times we go afield so those who wish can experience midnight sun! Dinners are at your leisure and not included in the cost, so you can pace yourself.

Three nights Nome (B, L daily; dinners at your leisure)

Day 16 : We plan on morning flights from Nome to Anchorage to connect with the return flight to London, arriving **Day 17**.