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## ALASKA

# ULTIMATE ALASKA WILDLIFE SAFARI (TOUR CODE: 13104)

### STARTS AND ENDS

Fairbanks to  
Homer

### TRAVEL PERIODS

01 Jul 24 - 26 Aug 24

### EXPERIENCE

Escorted  
Walk & Hike  
Cultural  
Wildlife

### TRAVEL STYLE

Escorted Group Tour

Uncover the hidden treasures of the Last Frontier as you embark on a Small-Group Wildland Immersion Experience, taking you deeper into Alaska's unspoiled wilderness.

## Highlights

- Spend intimate, unhurried time with brown bears on one of the few comprehensive Alaska itineraries that includes a fly-in wilderness experience on Alaska's Bear Coast
- Fly over endless wilderness and past the icy slopes of Denali to access a remote backcountry lodge, and search for wildlife in Denali Park's farthest reaches in virtual solitude
- Cruise Kenai Fjords National Park aboard our chartered boat, surrounded by glaciers, seabirds and abundant marine mammals, and stay on an isolated beach on Fox Island
- A Small Group for a Richer Nature Experience with a maximum of only 14 travellers
- Visit Katmai National Park to view the legendary brown bears fishing at world-famous Brooks Falls

While attempts to convey Alaska's magnificence through superlatives often fall short, the true essence comes to life on this unparalleled wilderness adventure! Accompanied by expert naturalist guides, you'll venture into the remote backcountry of Denali National Park, where grizzlies, wolves, and caribou freely roam the tundra beneath the Alaska Range. Embark on a historic journey aboard the Alaska Railroad, traversing Moose Pass to Seward. Keep an eye out for whales, otters, and puffins in Kenai Fjords, sail to the face of a tidewater glacier, and spend a night on the secluded Fox Island. To complete your northern safari, immerse yourself in the world's finest bear viewing experience! Following the seasonal rhythms of the bears, our itinerary includes a stay at our private Bear Camp in Lake Clark National Park or a visit to

Katmai National Park during the salmon migration. Discover the genuine Alaska: a realm that is larger, wilder, and more captivating than you could ever have envisioned!

## INCLUSIONS

- 1 night in Fairbanks at Springhill Suites
- 2 nights in Denali at the Denali Backcountry Lodge
- 1 night in Anchorage at the Marriott Anchorage
- 3 nights in Homer
- 2 nights in Seward at the Kenai Fjords Wilderness Lodge
- 2 nights in King Salmon at the Gold Creek Lodge
- Airport Transfers
- Return helicopter transfers to Denali Backcountry Lodge
- Return flights from Homer to King Salmon
- Return floatplane transfers between King Salmon and Brooks
- Alaska Railroad (Coastal Classic) Anchorage to Seward GoldStar Service
- All meals included (except Dinner on Day 8)
- Services of a professional Expedition Leader
- Local Guides and Lodge Staff
- All activities and entrance fees

## ITINERARY

Day 1	<div><h3>Fairbanks</h3><p>This grand Alaska nature adventure commences in Fairbanks, known as the "Golden Heart City" of Alaska. As the capital of the expansive Interior region, Fairbanks preserves its frontier charm with pioneer saloons, paddlewheelers, and remote mining camps. Additionally, Fairbanks hosts the flagship campus of the University of Alaska system, housing the renowned Geophysical Institute, a hub for cutting-edge research on permafrost, earthquakes, sea ice, and the aurora borealis. Your Expedition Leader will be your host at this evening's welcome dinner, providing an orientation to all the upcoming adventures.</p><p>Overnight in Fairbanks at the <b>Springhill Suites</b></p><p>Dinner</p></div>
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FAIRBANKS | CREDIT: TRAVEL ALASKA

Day **2**

## Fairbanks Denali Denali Backcountry Lodge

This morning, drive south through boreal forest along the Nenana River to Denali National Park. At 6 million acres—larger than the state of Massachusetts—Denali is one of the world's great wilderness preserves. The park's namesake is the highest peak in North America, towering 20,310 feet over alpine tundra and taiga that provide habitat for abundant wildlife. The mountain's name—Denali—means "The High One" in the Athabascan language. Due to an extended road closure in the interior of Denali National Park as a result of a major landslide in 2021, access to the remote backcountry at the end of the 92-mile-long park road is now possible only by air. At the park entrance, you will board a chartered helicopter for a spectacular aerial journey to Denali Backcountry Lodge, isolated in a vast expanse of wilderness. Spending two nights here is an exclusive experience very few visitors to Alaska get, even before the road was closed – and it's an even rarer opportunity now. As we fly over the tangled veins of glacier-fed rivers, broad valleys and steep mountainsides, look for wildlife along the edge of the spruce forest and on the braided gravel river bars—you can often see moose, caribou, Dall sheep, grizzlies and occasionally wolves, "Alaska's Big Five."

Overnight in Denali at **Denali Backcountry Lodge**

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



DENALI BACKCOUNTRY LODGE | CREDIT: PURSUIT



## Denali Backcountry Lodge

From our base at Denali Backcountry Lodge, a host of activities offers a chance to learn about the natural and cultural history of our environs, including the wildlife that thrives here, the Athabascan people who lived off this land for 10,000 years, and the pioneers who mined for gold in nearby Kantishna at the turn of the 20th century. Take a hike in search of wildlife with the Expedition Leader and lodge naturalist guides. Paddle a kayak on Wonder Lake, offering the ironic postcard shot of Denali's massive white hulk rising behind. Try your hand at fishing in Moose Creek. Ride a mountain bike. And just drink up the profound beauty and silence of wild country on a scale few people will experience in their lifetimes. At the end of our day of adventure, return to the lodge for a hearty dinner featuring fresh seasonal, regional fare spotlighted in every dish. Afterward, head to the campfire to roast marshmallows for s'mores.

Overnight in Denali at **Denali Backcountry Lodge**

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



DENALI NATIONAL PARK | CREDIT: NATURAL HABITAT / PURSUIT

## Denali Backcountry Lodge Talkeetna Anchorage

After lunch, depart our wilderness lodge and fly back to the park entrance via chartered helicopter. Weather permitting, we'll have stunning eye-level views of the icy flanks of Denali en route. We disembark and board a spacious mini-bus for our journey south to Anchorage. Our route climbs above tree line over Broad Pass, then descends through taiga forest to reach the historic village of Talkeetna. This rustic town, founded a century ago as the district headquarters for the new Alaska Railroad, sits at the confluence of three rivers in view of Denali and adjacent Alaska Range peaks. An outdoor recreation mecca, Talkeetna's economy today thrives on rafting, flightseeing, mountain biking, hiking, camping, fishing, hunting, and not least mountaineering, as it is the jumping-off point for climbing expeditions to Denali. We stop to discover the quaint and quirky hamlet, whose "downtown" dating to the early 1900s has been designated a National Historic Site. Then, continuing south, follow the Susitna River through thick stands of birch, balsam poplar, willow and spruce to reach Anchorage, where we spend the night at the venerable Captain Cook Hotel overlooking Cook Inlet and the Chugach Range.

Overnight in Anchorage at the **Marriott Anchorage**

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



DENALI NATIONAL PARK | CREDIT: TRAVEL ALASKA/ MICHAEL DE YOUNG

Day 5

## Anchorage Seward Fox Island

Today, travel the most scenic section of the historic Alaska Railroad, built in the early 20th century. The state-owned railroad's mainline is 470 miles long, connecting Seward in the south with Fairbanks up north. From a private dome car, enjoy a classic train journey along Turnagain Arm as you look for beluga whales and keep an eye out for tidal bores that create waves big enough for local surfers to ride! To the north lie the ice-clad peaks and lush glacial valleys of the Chugach Range, harboring the northernmost temperate rain forest in North America. The corridor you will follow winds through the Kenai Mountains–Turnagain Arm National Heritage Area, a designation that recognizes the area's unique cultural, geographic and historical features. Once you cross Moose Pass, the rail line drops back to the coast, ending at the fishing town, port and southern terminus of Seward on Resurrection Bay. In Seward's small boat harbor, look for sea otters frequently seen bobbing among the yachts and docks. Here, board a boat for the voyage to private Fox Island on the edge of Kenai Fjords National Park. The isolated location, fronting a wild pebble beach backdropped by steep forested mountains, reveals the pristine side of Alaska most visitors miss. The Kenai Fjords region is famed for its sea kayaking, and an optional paddling excursion late this afternoon is likely to reveal some of the area's prolific marine life.

Overnight in Seward at the **Kenai Fjords Wilderness Lodge**

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



KENAI FJORDS CRUISE | CREDIT: PURSUIT



## Fox Island / Kenai Fjords National Park

Iconic images of Alaska are on display today from a private chartered boat as you explore a marine realm where vestiges of the Ice Age linger. The small vessel allows the approach to wildlife at close range, and Kenai Fjords National Park provides excellent opportunities for viewing humpback whales, orcas, Dall's porpoise, sea lions, sea otters and bobbing puffins. Weave among islands and rocky cliffs where seabirds nest, and look for bald eagles in the treetops above. Jagged glaciers wind from the mountain heights to the sea, and we may observe icebergs calving with a thunderous crash from a glacier's towering blue face. Following an all-day outing, the boat returns to the secluded lodge on Fox Island for another night of peace and solitude in the coastal wilderness.

Overnight in Seward at the **Kenai Fjords Wilderness Lodge**

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



## Fox Island Homer

After a last morning on serene Fox Island, board a private boat for the return journey up Resurrection Bay to Seward, where you'll have lunch and visit the Alaska SeaLife Center. Primarily dedicated to marine research and education, the renowned center also features a public aquarium and is the only permanent marine mammal rescue and rehabilitation facility in the state. From Seward, we head south on the spectacular drive to Homer, following the route along turquoise Skilak Lake. The mountain ranges of the Kenai Peninsula rise one after another, sourcing some of Alaska's richest salmon rivers. Homer is called "the End of the Road" in Alaska, and you will spend the next two nights at its very end, on the tip of Homer Spit. This spot is also known as the "Halibut Fishing Capital of the World," and we may see fishermen unloading their catch—the biggest halibut can be eight feet long and up to 500 pounds! While halibut are one of Alaska's most valuable fisheries, Homer also offers excellent fishing for several salmon species, lingcod and rockfish.

Overnight in Homer

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



HOMER | CREDIT: TRAVEL ALASKA / BRIAN ADAMS

## Day 8 Homer Seldovia Homer

Explore the abundant waters and striking scenery of Kachemak Bay on a private boat cruise today. The bay is transformed daily by some of the largest tidal fluctuations in the world, and it's home not only to coveted sport fish but other plentiful marine life. Sea otters, seals, porpoises, sea lions, orcas, whales, bald eagles and puffins are common sightings. We cross the bay to Seldovia, south of Homer, and go ashore for lunch and a walk around this tiny town that can only be reached by boat or air, since it is not connected to a wider road system. Alaska Natives have a long history in the region, and we'll hope to meet with a member of the Seldovia Tribe to learn about its unique culture, which brings together Aleut, Yupik, Alutiiq and Athabascan peoples. One of the oldest settlements in the Cook Inlet region, Seldovia also reflects its early Russian colonial heritage, shaped by fur traders and Russian Orthodox missionaries who had an influential presence here in the 19th century. In the early 20th century, Scandinavian immigrants developed a booming herring fishery, and salmon canneries dominated the town's economy until they were destroyed in the 1964 earthquake. Late this afternoon, return by boat to Homer to enjoy some free time for browsing on the spit.

Breakfast, Lunch

## Day 9-10 Homer King Salmon / Katmai National Park

From Homer, fly across Cook Inlet to King Salmon, then continue to a classic Alaskan lodge on the Naknek River. Deluxe log cabins offer a comfortable base for wilderness bear-viewing in nearby Katmai National Park. After we drop our bags off, we reach the park by floatplane, offering access to world-renowned Brooks Falls, one of the best places to view brown bears in their natural habitat. Katmai is home to the world's largest population of these enormous omnivores, with some 2,200 individuals inside the park. As many bear populations around the world decline, Katmai's 4 million acres of wilderness provides some of the last pristine habitat to sustain them. Within Katmai's protected bounds, bears live largely undisturbed, and visitors have unparalleled viewing opportunities. From the safety of platforms built over world-famous Brooks Falls, we get a close look at one of the world's most iconic wildlife spectacles: bears standing in the rushing whitewater, jaws gaping, trying to catch the salmon that leap up the falls once spawning season starts. July departures offer a good chance to see fishing bears, since this is when the salmon are running, but viewing is excellent in August and September, too, with even more (and fatter!) bears in the vicinity, wandering up and down the Brooks River. Each day, we break for lunch at Brooks Lodge, an easy walk from the falls. In the evenings, shuttle back to King Salmon by floatplane or water taxi to spend the night enjoying "rustic luxury" at Gold Creek Lodge.

Overnight in Kodiak at **Gold Creek Lodge**

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day **11** Katmai/King Salmon Homer

After a last round of bear viewing in the Brooks Falls region, fly once more to King Salmon, then back to Homer this afternoon. This evening, we celebrate our adventures at a festive farewell dinner.

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day **12** Homer

The grand Alaska wildlife safari comes to a close today as you transfer to the Homer airport for homeward flights.

Breakfast

## ACCOMMODATION

### SpringHill Suites by Marriott

#### Fairbanks

Discover an incomparable stay at Springhill Suites Fairbanks. Located in the heart of historic downtown Fairbanks and just across from the Chena River, the hotel offers charming guest rooms, meeting rooms, a business centre, laundry facilities and exercise room, an indoor pool and a whirlpool. The hotel is home to one of the best restaurants in town, Lavelle's Bistro. Shops, cafes and other restaurants are nearby and within walking distance. Rooms have 140 spacious suites, all with private bathrooms, air conditioning, phone, free wireless internet, mini-refrigerator, microwave, coffee maker, hairdryer, iron/ironing board and alarm clock.





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## Denali Backcountry Lodge

### Denali National Park

The Denali Backcountry Lodge is situated in a quiet and remote river valley. Explore the area, it's forests, hills and creeks, as you make yourself at home. The lodge is made up of a spacious two-story Main Lodge, where meals are served, and comfortable and cozy sofas and chairs await upstairs in the vaulted ceiling lounge accompanied by a full service bar. Your home for your stay will be one of 42 individual cabins, which are comfortably heated and appointed with individual private baths and blackout curtains for a peaceful night's sleep. To enhance your stay, indulge at The Nest Spa & Wellness Center or join the Naturalist Guides for a guided hike, botanical walk or exploration of a nearby historic site.



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## Marriott Anchorage Downtown Hotel

### Anchorage

Located just five miles from Anchorage Airport in Alaska, this 20-story hotel, situated between H and I Streets, offers first-class accommodation and panoramic views of Cook Inlet and the Chugach Mountains. The hotel features a restaurant, a bar and lounge, meeting facilities, as well as an indoor swimming pool and fitness center. Free wireless internet is available in the hotel lobby.



## Kenai Fjords Wilderness Lodge

### Fox Island

Kenai Fjords Wilderness Lodge is the only accommodation on remote Fox Island. The lodge consists of eight guest cabins situated on a narrow peninsula of land just south of Kenai Day Lodge. Four cabins are connected in one building, two facing the fresh-water lagoon and two facing Resurrection Bay with ocean views. The other four cabins are duplexes, with water views. The main lodge's cozy guest lounge and dining room, featuring expansive views of the spanning island and the ocean bay, is the perfect spot for socializing with the other guests or curling up with a book.



## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE  
English

LOCAL CURRENCY  
USD

### 2024 Departures

June - 19\*, 21\*, 23\* & 25\*  
July - 1, 5, 7, 11, 15



August - 24, 26

**\*Please Note:**

June departure dates do not follow the same itinerary as the July & August departures. The itinerary reflected is based on the July & August departure dates only. Please contact reservations for further details in regards to the June itinerary.

**Ultimate Alaska June Itinerary**

A wide-ranging survey of Alaska's best wildlife realms, including the Denali backcountry, Kenai Fjords, and two different brown bear viewing settings: Alaska Bear Camp in Lake Clark National Park, plus an all-day fly-in adventure on the wild Katmai coast.

**Ultimate Alaska July & August Itinerary**

Alaska's premier wildlife experiences await in the remote backcountry of Denali, Kenai Fjords National Park, and Katmai National Park, where we fly by floatplane to watch brown bears fishing in the Brooks River and, in season, catching salmon in Brooks Falls.

**Group Size:**

***Limited to 14 Travelers***

A very important feature of this Alaska adventure is the limited group size, as nature expeditions and wildlife encounters are best experienced in a quiet, intimate context.

**Physical Requirements**

***Moderate to Difficult***

The activities on our Alaska wildlife adventure are diverse, requiring general mobility and fitness. The longest required walk is 2 miles one-way over gravelly terrain. For guests on June departures, exploring the Katmai coast will require the ability to navigate beach terrain, small sand dunes and fallen trees, and walk through high, uneven grasses. While all travelers must be able to walk at least two miles without assistance, some longer hikes are available for those who desire. Travelers may have the opportunity to participate in optional kayaking, on Fox Island, weather permitting. Though no prior kayaking experience is required, general fitness and mobility, including the ability to get into and out of a kayak, are essential. We stress that travelers are not required to participate in every activity, but all participants must be generally physically fit and have the ability to walk two miles unassisted.

**Important Information About This Trip**

This trip ventures far afield from the typical Alaska tour circuit where large motorcoaches move long lines of cruise clients to crowded destinations. A couple of details you should be aware of: Power is available at Denali Backcountry Lodge, Kenai Fjords Wilderness Lodge on Fox Island, and at Bear Camp or Gold Creek Lodge.

**Mandatory Insurance**

Since the areas we travel to are remote and wild (that's why we go there!), we require that all guests have, at minimum, medical evacuation insurance for this program. This is for the safety of all guests. We recommend that your chosen independent insurance plan includes at least \$250,000 in medical evacuation coverage.

To protect your investment and to provide peace of mind while you travel, we also strongly recommend purchasing comprehensive travel insurance. Plans may cover everything from medical treatment to trip cancellations and delays and lost luggage.

**Getting There & Getting Home**

This adventure begins in Fairbanks and ends in Homer. Please book your flights so that you can arrive in Fairbanks by 4:00pm on Day 1 of the program in order to attend an orientation and welcome dinner at 6:30pm. You are free to depart Homer any time on the final day.

**Excluded**

- International airfares and taxes
- Domestic airfares and taxes, unless otherwise specified in our holiday package
- Visa expenses, processing and issuance fees
- Meals other than as specified in our holiday package
- Travel Insurance or expenses of a personal nature (mini-bar, phone call, laundry, etc.)
- Tips or gratuities to guides, drivers, porters, hotel, restaurant or boat staff, etc.
- Or any other travel expense that has not been included in our holiday package
- Travel to and from the start and end point of your trip
- Dinner on Day 8
- Alcoholic beverages
- Optional activities
- Airline baggage fees, airport and departure taxes (if any)

- Required medical evacuation insurance, optional travel protection insurance