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Celebrity's Alaska

The Civilized Wilderness Experience

[The Last Frontier](#)[Atlas of Alaska](#)[Great Land Adventures](#)[Insights: The 49th State](#)[Frontier Destinations](#)[Lodging: Comforts in the Wild](#)[The Wilderness Express Train](#)[Our Fleet](#)[Itineraries](#)[Reservations](#)

Celebrity's Alaska

The Civilized Wilderness Experience

The Last Frontier

"Day after day, each succeeding view seeming more and more beautiful...never before this had I been embosomed in scenery so hopelessly beyond description."

--John Muir, 1879, Travels in Alaska

"Alaska-land of immensity. Both in its realities and its possibilities, Alaska can stir our hearts and minds like no other place on the planet. Where else can bears roam freely, and people roam freely, often on the very same terrain? Where else can we touch the depth and vastness of Creation-not just as observers, but as participants? Where else can the limitless landscape match the greatest reach of the human spirit?"

--T.A. Barron, author and nature writer

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Atlas of Alaska

Great Land Adventures

Alaska's waters and coast are among the most beautiful in the world. But there is so much more to Alaska than can be experienced solely from onboard Celebrity Mercury or Celebrity Infinity. Alaska is a wild, fascinating, exciting land. It is rich in culture and history. Nature reigns here. Alaska is alive. That is why you come to Alaska - to explore it firsthand. To help you experience Alaska to the fullest, Celebrity has designed an endless number of tour packages as both shore excursions from a Celebrity cruise and land excursions from the land-based portion of a Celebrity cruisetour. (Read more about cruises and cruisetours in Itineraries.)

The following are descriptions of all the exciting and enlightening things you can see and do on Celebrity's Alaskan excursions. They have been grouped into Ventures (activities you participate in), Nature Discovery (tours of natural wonders), and Culture (tours and exhibitions of life in Alaska.)

Ventures

Biking

What could be more pleasant than a summertime bike ride in the great Alaskan outdoors? Many of the shore and land-based excursions provide opportunities to go for a spin. Peddle along the shores of glacial lakes, ocean, inlets and estuaries, enjoying gorgeous views of glaciers, waterfalls and great mountain ranges. Cycle through colorful, historic towns like Haines, Ketchikan and Dyce. Coast gradually down to sea level from the Klondike summit at 3292 feet.

Canoe Adventure

Tongass National Forest is the largest forest in the United States. There, nestled in a lush rain forest is a secluded mountain lake that is ideal for a canoe adventure. You and twenty of your closest

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friends will get to paddle a 37 feet, Indian-style canoe out on the lake. These canoes are fast, stable and easy to maneuver. An experienced guide, who will pass along the natural and native history of the area, will accompany you.

Dog-Sled Exhibition & Ride

Dogsledding is Alaska's state sport. It was once a primary form of transportation in many areas. Dogsledding has its finest hour in March when the Iditarod, known as the "Last Great Race on Earth," takes place. It usually takes about two to three weeks for the teams of 12 to 18 dogs to complete the 1049-mile race from Anchorage to Nome, on the western Bering Sea coast. That averages out to be 50 - 75 miles a day, everyday! Someone who knows a lot about dogsledding is Susan Butcher. You'll have a chance to see her Iditarod champion dog sled team in action. At dog camps near the Denver and Norris glaciers, you get to meet professional handlers and their friendly dogs. You'll be introduced to the art of "mushing." The real thrill begins when you are given the opportunity to either stand on an authentic sled and mush or relax in the sled while one of the professional "mushers" zips the sled across the snow. Start practicing your shout of "Gee!" to make the dogs turn left and "Haw!" to go right.

Fishing

In 1999, Alaska fishers caught 17,777,400 salmon. Think you can land one? How about a trout or an 80-pound halibut? Celebrity has arranged several ways for you to go fishing in one of the world's truly great fishing states. There is boat fishing on a lake in the country's largest national forest. In the interior, fish for salmon and trout on a glacier-fed river. Experienced skippers can take you on private sport-fishing boats to favorite spots in the inside waterways for halibut or salmon fishing. Fly-fishing is all the rage these days and, whether you are an expert or novice, you will enjoy a tranquil afternoon casting on a guided, river trip. You will have everything you need provided on each guided fishing trip, except for a little good luck; you'll have to bring that. If you wish, your catch can be prepared locally (flash frozen, smoked, etc.) and shipped to your home. There is one other kind of fishing -- glacier fishing. Calving icebergs create waves that wash salmon up on the shore. They come to you. All you have to do is pick them up. The trick is you are competing with bears.

Golf

Shoot a round of 9 or 18 holes on fairways enveloped in spruce forests and greens amidst scenic greenery. Golfing is available at the Anchorage Golf Course, which is run by the Alyeska Resort. The golf course includes a restaurant/lounge, clubs, riding carts, pull carts, lockers, and driving range.

Helicopter Glacier Sightseeing

Go where few others have gone before --tramping on a glacier. And getting there is just about as thrilling, as you will be transported to the otherwise inaccessible Juneau Ice Field by helicopter. Explore these magnificent rivers of ice lead by experienced guides and outfitted with mountaineering equipment. While trekking across the glacier terrain, your guides will explain the significance of the area's geology, flora and fauna. They will point out the various glacier characteristics such as moraines, crevasses, moulins, ice tubes and seracs; many of which you will get to explore first hand.

Glacier Landing Explorer Tour

You'll see how frozen rivers of ice have shaped the land as you fly near the massive glaciers at the base of Mt. McKinley on your flightseeing adventure. Your plane will land on the snowy Ruth Glacier at the base of Mt. McKinley. Then you can actually step out and take a walk on the glacier and experience the profound stillness of the highest peak in North America. Returning to Talkeetna, you will follow the path of Ruth Glacier as it winds through the world's deepest gorge.

Hiking

The famed Chilkoot Trail is just one of the many glorious hikes that let you get out in the great Alaskan wilderness. This two-mile hike along the "Gateway to Gold" will give you an unforgettable taste of what more than 30,000 gold hungry stampeders experienced a hundred years ago. Hiking is

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offered at most destinations. Most are guided hikes that take you through the forests and untouched wilderness of Alaska and offer a great opportunity to view nature and wildlife.

Horse-back Riding

Experience Alaska as the original stampedeers did -- on horseback. Riders of all levels of experience are welcome, as the pace will be an easy walk to fully enjoy the tranquil scenery. Along the way, your guides will tell you tales of the "gold rush days."

Nature Walk (Guided)

Nature lovers will not want to miss a leisurely paced walk along wooden planked trails that wind through towering stands of spruce and hemlock or along protected beaches, rocky coastline, tide pools and quiet bays. Some walks lead you through beautiful alpine meadows, and rain forests carpeted with vivid green mosses and delicate wildflowers. Wander past lily-covered ponds, trickling brooks and patches of muskeg where ancient bonsai-like trees struggle to reach shoulder height. Squirrels, deer, woodpeckers and songbirds are frequent trail companions. Enjoy several interpretive stops at panoramic viewpoints, where a professional naturalist will enlighten you on the landscape and geological forces of the area.

River Rafting

One unique rafting experience is the trip through the eagle preserve in the Chilkat Valley, home to the world's largest concentration of bald eagles. The Lowe River through Keystone Canyon provides one of Alaska's most thrilling and spectacular river trips, offering scenery and white water excitement for all ages. The river flows through a deep canyon past breathtaking Bridal Veil Falls, which cascades nine hundred feet down from the canyon wall. Both beginners and experienced rafters will enjoy the rafting trip down Alaska's beautiful Eagle River. For the first eight miles you'll float along calm and scenic waters, keeping an eye out for nesting eagles, moose, and salmon that spawn from mid-June to mid-August. The last four miles offer an exhilarating ride on class II and III rapids. On the Nenana River, class II and III rapids provide an ideal introduction to rafting. For those ready to take on our white-water adventure, the Nenana River has a dozen major class III and IV rapids along with beautiful scenery and wildlife.

Sea Kayaking

Three coastal areas provide the scenic backdrop to a guided adventure that really takes you up close to nature. For your sea kayaking explorations, you will be taught how to pilot your stable yet nimble two person and triple person kayaks to get the most out of this wonderful excursion. Kayaks allow you to silently approach wildlife. You may just get eye to eye with eagles, whales, porpoise, seals, sea lions, otters, salmon, waterfowl and even whales, bears or moose. Apart from wildlife, the scenery is spectacular with breathtaking vistas and resplendent waterways. Your guide will explain the history of the surrounding area and help identify local flora and fauna. In the Ketchikan area, your small kayak group crosses the Tongass Narrows to the serenity of nearby Pennock Island. Returning you will tuck into Ketchikan's Thomas Basin Boat Harbor for a unique view of the former red-light district, Creek Street, while salmon spawn just beneath your boat. Another Ketchikan kayaking adventure explores the unique island environment of the Tatoosh Islands of the Tongass National Forest. In the Skagway/Dyea area, you will paddle through Lynn Canal to tour Nahku Bay and Taiya Bay. Off the coast of Valdez, your kayaking route will follow a chain of small islands recognized for their sun bathing seals and nesting birds, like bald eagles. Paddling past your Celebrity cruise ship gives a whole new perspective on how large the vessel is when you are sitting on the water.

Nature Discovery

Backcountry Jet boat Safari

Experience a trip into Alaska's backcountry and meet some of the people who live there. A covered and heated jetboat will transport you on a 25-mile round-trip river excursion to a wilderness trapper's camp, deep in the Alaska Range. You'll learn about the pleasures and

struggles of maintaining the prospecting lifestyle of mining and trapping within modern day Alaska, and you can venture at panning for gold.

Bear Watching Expedition

A jetboat will take you up the Talkeetna River to a prime salmon-spawning area. Salmon is the primary food for eagles and bears, so this area provides a great opportunity to see these amazing creatures in the wild. Your guide will share his knowledge of bears and salmon as well as give you an orientation to the beautiful Talkeetna River area.

Denali Natural History Tour

This three-hour tour will cover the region's wildlife, as well as its cultural and geological history. Features include an experienced driver guide, beautiful tundra scenery, great photo opportunities, and a light snack and beverage.

Eagle Preserve Tour

Just outside the picturesque town of Haines, the Chilkat Valley boasts the world's largest concentration of Bald Eagles. Three hundred pairs of bald eagles call the Chilkat Valley home year-round, but steadily through the summer this number increases until each fall the population can be as high as four thousand. This unique journey combines a round trip scenic cruise on the spectacular Lynn Fjord with a peaceful float through the world famous Chilkat Bald Eagle Preserve.

Board the fast, comfortable boat and enjoy the spectacular scenery of this daylight cruise through the Lynn Canal, North America's longest and deepest fjord. The adventure continues with a drive through historic Haines and the "Valley of the Eagles" to the heart of the preserve. On the riverbank an eighteen-foot raft awaits to take you on a voyage of discovery through the gently braided waters of the Chilkat River. As you float silently along, the guides will acquaint you with the unique human and natural history of this special place. They are experts in spotting the many animals that call the preserve home, including bear, wolves, moose and bald eagles. Also visible from this location is "Klukwan" the native "mother village" of the Tlingit people. Above all this loom the spectacular peaks of the Chilkat Mountains and icy blue glaciers tumble from the lofty heights.

Eagle Rehabilitation Tour

The majestic American bald eagle is the national symbol of the United States and for many years emblazoned the crest of Sitka's Russian-American flag. This excursion visits the Bald Eagle Raptor Center. At the eagle center you will learn how their volunteer program interacts from capture to rehabilitation care and hopeful release of the birds back to the wild. A brief time will be allowed to view and photograph the clinic, gallery and mews housing the eagles and other raptors in the center.

Float Trip

On the Nenana River, a scenic float trip traverses an 11-mile section of the river and offers the opportunity to learn about the geology of Denali National Park. Your guide will point out unique features of the river including evidence of Denali's volcanic past.

Garden, Butterfly Garden Tour

Victoria's Butchart Gardens are thirty-five acres of colorful flowers and plants. Wander at your leisure through the sunken Japanese, Italian, and English Rose gardens, all linked by spacious lawns, streams and lily ponds. Be sure to visit the magnificent Ross Fountain. The tour also takes in Butterfly Gardens, an indoor tropical garden, housing over thirty different species of free-flying butterflies from around the world.

Portage Glacier Cruise and Turnagain Arm Sightseeing

Traveling the scenic Seward Highway, a stop will be made to board the M/V Ptarmigan and cruise within three hundred yards of Portage Glacier. Choose a seat in the enclosed lounge or on the open deck. From either vantage point, you will enjoy fantastic views of the blue-white icebergs that decorate Portage Lake. Nature willing, you may even witness the "Calving" of an iceberg from the face of the glacier. After your cruise, you re-board the buses for the trip along Turnagain Arm of Cook Inlet into Anchorage. This glacier-carved fjord is seen between Anchorage and Girdwood.

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Mountains and river valleys surround the area, which has some of the largest tidal differentials in the world. Beluga whales, salmon, eagles, Trumpeter swans, wolves, bears, moose and Dall sheep are some of the animals present in the area.

Mt. McKinley Overlook

This popular tourist destination is a perfect place for sightseeing. It offers great views of the mountain and terrific photo opportunities.

Nature Safari

The nature adventure begins with a delightful scenic drive along a jade green fjord watching for waterfowl, seals and porpoise. See bald eagles soaring overhead or diving for salmon. Powerful spotting scopes provide wildlife viewing eye-to-eye, essential for observing the eagles or the agile mountain goat grazing in the alpine meadows. Enjoy an interpretive walk in the world's largest temperate rainforest on the shore of a picturesque mountain lake. Your guides will share intriguing stories of plant and animal relationships in this lush environment. This outstanding wilderness safari offers a unique opportunity for a close up look at the pristine beauty of Alaska. An excursion to the edge of the Alaskan wilderness, it combines a scenic flight to a remote beach landing strip with a guided safari adventure that takes you face to face with a sprawling glacier in the heart of southeast Alaska's lush forest. The adventure begins with a twenty-minute scenic flight over one of the area's deepest fjords to a remote airstrip on the tip of Glacier Point, twenty miles south of Skagway. Greeted by your experienced guides, they will share with you their extensive knowledge of the glacial, cultural and natural history of this area. From the airstrip board your four-wheeled safari vehicles for a short drive through the rain forest to the trailhead to the glacial lake. A fascinating quarter-mile nature walk across the glacier's terminal moraine brings you to the edge of the lake at the foot of the glacier. Here the glacier looms large in front of you. At the lakes edge the thirty-one foot Alaska-size canoe takes you on a voyage of discovery among icebergs to the face of this mighty glacier. It's a journey back in time, a first hand glimpse at the remnants of the last ice age.

Riverboat Discovery Cruise

On board the Riverboat Discovery, an authentic sternwheeler, you'll enjoy a narrated cruise to the heart of Alaska along the Chena and Tanana Rivers. Native Alaskan guides will show you a fish wheel catch migrating salmon and teach you about the Tanana, the world's greatest glacier river.

River Float Trip

An experienced river guide will greet you at the launch site for the next leg of your journey - a peaceful float trip down the gentle Taiya River. Relax and enjoy the serenity of this special valley as the guide tells you about the unique human and natural history of the area from the perspective of the river.

Salmon Hatchery Cruise

Scenic Train Ride

Described as one of the most scenic railways of the world, this spectacular narrow gauge railroad was born in the mad rush to the Klondike in 1898. Over a hundred years later it is still in operation exclusively for excursions through some of the north's most rugged and beautiful landscape. The train is made up of vintage "parlor cars" which you board right on the dockside. This combination tour includes a trip on the White Pass and Yukon Route railroad up the White Pass, following the original path of the Klondike stampedeers. The return will be on the Klondike Highway by deluxe motor coach and includes a visit to an authentic Gold Rush Trail Camp. From the train, be thrilled by beautiful Bridal Veil Falls, sheer drop-offs and the history brought to life by your guide. As you crest the summit of the White Pass, enter the eerie landscape of the Tormented Valley, a place which time seems to have forgotten. At Fraser, in the heart of the Tormented Valley, disembark the train and board your motor coach for the return trip along the Klondike Highway. From the vantage of the highway, look across Dead Horse Gulch to the railroad route etched in the mountain's face, where you traveled a short time before. The knowledgeable driver/guide will recount the history of life on the

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Klondike trail as you head for the Gold Rush Trail Camp at the foot of the original trail. Here, pan for gold, listen to tales of bygone days and explore this replica tent city. The finale of your adventure is a tour of Skagway's historic downtown en-route to the ship. Or, if you prefer, ask to be let off in town to explore on your own.

Sea Otter And Wildlife Quest

These special excursion boats are propelled by jet drives that make them among the fastest and quietest on the water. The vessel covers an extraordinary amount of territory in search of wildlife, of which you are guaranteed to see at least one species. You will explore the waters of Salisbury Sound, twenty five miles north of Sitka. A unique habitat rich in food, Salisbury Sound is a haven for humpback whales, sea otters, seals, porpoise, orcas, bears, deer, eagles, puffins, cormorants and more. Experienced naturalists will explain about the marine ecosystem and the various forms of wildlife you will see. Despite near extinction due to Russian fur hunters during the early 1800's, the sea otters now thrive around Sitka. The naturalist explains how the entire ecosystem is benefiting from the re-emergence of the curious and friendly sea otters. Enjoy the view from either the large windows in the cabin or from the special observation deck above.

Tramway Rides

Alyeska Tramway takes you 2300 feet above the valley in Girdwood for breathtaking views. The total of 3800 feet ride takes 7 minutes allowing ample time for photography and sightseeing.

Experience Juneau in an exciting and different way. From the ship enjoy a short walk to the Mount Roberts Tramway, which will take you to 1800 feet for a birds eye view above the city. At the top of the tram, begin a guided walk with a professional naturalist. Explore beautiful alpine meadows, forests and enjoy several interpretive stops at panoramic viewpoints. The guide will portray the nature of southeast Alaska and bring the landscape and geological forces to life. After the tour, at your leisure, enjoy the views and the free activities at the top of the tram, including the Mount Roberts Nature Center.

Twilight Wildlife Watch

Join enthusiastic naturalists who interpret the diversity of plants and wildlife on a bus ride in the Valley of the Eagles. Drive along the route of the returning salmon to the enchanting Chilkoot River, ancestral fishing grounds of the Tlingit people. At this time of year, depending on the run, pink salmon fill the river from shore to shore. Just before the sun sets, brown bear families leave the cover of the forest to forage along the grassy river banks. Marvel at close up views of the various wildlife through powerful spotting scopes.

Whale Watching

Don't miss the best opportunity in southeast Alaska to see humpback and orca whales, porpoise, sea lions, seals, eagles and more. Whales are spotted on the majority of the trips and the boats built with the comfort and safety of guests and wildlife in mind. Each boat is fully enclosed and has a heated cabin with big windows and plenty of deck space. The boats hold from six to twenty four guests, designed for close-up encounters with marine mammals and are equipped with water jet drives to ensure quiet underwater operation without dangerous propellers to frighten or harm animals.

The waters surrounding Victoria and southern Vancouver Island are naturally abundant with wildlife. This tour takes in the inner harbor and surrounding coastline. Watch out for a great variety of local wildlife that can, and almost always does, include orca whales. Also called Killer Whales, they make their home in these waters and pods are often seen. This unique habitat is also a haven for seals, porpoise and many varieties of bird. Although nature gives no guarantees, the network of local captains mean that the tours have a first rate chance of spotting whales.

Wildlife Cruises

Board one of Alaska's finest wildlife viewing vessels in Auke Bay, nine miles from downtown Juneau, for an adventurous cruise up the deep fjords of Stevens Passage and Lynn Canal. This area is rich with wildlife, maritime history and scenic beauty. Surrounded by the Chilkat Mountains, the Juneau Icefield teams with glaciers pushing towards the sea and Admiralty Island, home to the largest concentration of brown bears in the world. Here you make your way between the many islands in search of wildlife. Regularly viewed are humpback whales, orcas, sea lions, seals and bald eagles. The history of the ship wrecks, lighthouses and legends of the region will provide a fascinating backdrop as you cruise throughout this scenic archipelago. The high speed vessel provides extra viewing time in some of the best areas and the outside decks are ideal for unobstructed pictures as the crew concentrates on creating great photo opportunities.

Take an eighteen mile cruise to learn about Sitka's Tlingit and Russian heritage as you journey through Silver Bay. Relax and enjoy the scenery as your guide explains Sitka's role in the settlement and development of Alaska. You will cruise by the ruins of the historic Liberty Prospect Gold Mine, and the site of one of only two pulp mills in the Tongass, the country's largest national forest. Look out for wildlife as you cruise gently through Silver Bay. Step ashore at the remote Medvejie Salmon Hatchery in Bear Cove to learn how Alaskan fishermen are successfully working with marine biologists to raise various types of salmon to supplement the wild stock. See a fish ladder and also learn how eggs are collected, fertilized and incubated. See salmon fry being raised in sheltered raceways or being tagged to aid research.

Wildlife Search in Denali N.P.

The wildlife of Denali National Park and Preserve roam free and unfettered on more than six million acres of wild parkland. Vast numbers of them are often viewable on tours over the single 92-mile road that bisects a large portion of the park. Thirty-seven (count 'em, 37) species of mammals call the area home. They range in size from the massive bull moose (more than half a ton in weight, often seven feet tall at the shoulder) and the always formidable brown/grizzly bear to diminutive Arctic shrews. In between are magnificently horned caribou, dazzling white Dall sheep, fox, coyote, beaver, northern flying squirrel, porcupine, lynx, wolf, and wolverine. Chances of seeing the latter rather elusive three are probably slim, but few indeed are groups that return from tours of the park without viewing a good share of the others. The bear sightings often include roly-poly little cubs who roll, romp, wrestle, and race, sometimes to the considerable consternation of Momma Bear. --Writer Mike Miller lives in Juneau.

This wildlife exploration will take you to the tundra of one of the world's greatest wildlife sanctuaries, Denali National Park, where a large variety of animals make their homes. You may see bear, moose, wolves, Dall sheep, caribou and eagles. Your guide will explain the many habits and habitats of the wildlife you may encounter while enjoying the scenery.

Culture

Alaska Native Heritage Center

This is a gathering place for Alaska Natives and visitors alike. The center celebrates, perpetuates and shares the diverse cultures, languages and traditions of Alaska's first people. You'll learn about five different cultural groups as you wander around the various sites. Native Heritage Center in Anchorage The Alaska Native Heritage Center is a place to share and learn about Native Alaska cultures. Many different and distinct groups are represented by the center, including the Athabascan and Tlingit Indians. Educational programs are available for many different groups, from students to Alaska Natives

Anchorage Highlights Tour

This excursion features highlights of Anchorage, home to 250,000 residents, almost half the population of Alaska. You'll start with a visit to the Anchorage Museum of History and Art. Then travel across town to the Alaska Zoo where you'll see more than 50 species of Alaska wildlife, such as moose, Dall sheep, polar bears and bald eagles. You'll also visit the Anchorage Coastal

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Wildlife Refuge, a natural habitat for 130 species of birds and other wildlife. You'll then enjoy a drive through downtown Anchorage. Your guide will point out the city's historical features including Earthquake Park and Lake Hood, the world's busiest seaplane base.

Arctic Flight to Athabascan Indian Village

The Indian village of Fort Yukon is just 140 miles north of Fairbanks, but a world apart. Accessible only by air, you'll fly across the Arctic Circle and land on the banks of the Yukon River. Gwich'in Athabascan Indians will introduce you to their culture, history and way of life in this bush village. Fort Yukon was established in 1847 by the Hudson's Bay Company, yet the Athabascans have resided in the area for centuries.

Bush Pilot Demonstration

Classic Car Tour

Elegant curves of the fenders, polished chrome grilles, oversized steering wheels, roomy comfortable interiors and white wall tires, all evoke the nostalgia of a time when motor cars were made to last and designed to please the senses. Seated comfortably in a classic car, roam back in time as you tour historic Fort William H. Seward. The gleaming white buildings and broad parade ground stand as a monument to turn of the century architecture. A drive down the fjord past one of the most scenic old canneries in Alaska will give a glimpse back into the heyday of the fishing industry. See the boat harbors and the fishing fleets that have been the mainstay of the community for the past century. See the influence of the native Indians with clan houses and totem poles. The intimate setting of the classic car allows for flexibility to stop and take pictures at scenic points. Keep an eye out for the wildlife that may be spotted. Knowledgeable and entertaining guides will show you Haines and share with you its history, all in the comfort and fun ride of a classic automobile.

Denali Dinner Theatre

Located less than 2 miles from the Denali National Forest, this tourist attraction features costumed waiters who serve all-you-can-eat barbecue meals. Music and shows highlight the area's gold-mining history. It is located at the McKinley Chalet Resort.

Fairbanks City and Gold Tour

The early days of Fairbanks are brought to life as your guide explains the misadventures of Captain E.T. Barnette, and how a rumor of gold actually panned out. You'll stop at the Trans-Alaska Pipeline before continuing on for a visit to the El Dorado Gold Mine, where Alaska's gold-rush history comes alive. While touring the present-day working gold mine, you'll learn about modern mining methods from actual miners who work El Dorado's claim. You'll ride the narrow-gauge rails into the unique permafrost tunnel. Then you can grab a poke filled with "rich" El Dorado pay dirt and venture at panning for gold.

Gold Panning & Gold-Rush History Tour

The tour bus takes you from the town of Skagway and follows the Trail of '98, to the Summit of White Pass. From the dock you climb over 3,000 feet to White Pass Summit. As you travel through the breathtaking scenery your knowledgeable guide will recount some of the areas colorful history. Portions of the original trail are still visible today as is the narrow gauge railroad, which was the lifeline to the interior nearly 100 years ago. On the return journey a stop will be made at the foot of the historic White Pass Trail, where there is a restored gold rush camp. You will be able to see the artifacts, mementos and antique clothing left behind by miners, merchants and "ladies of the evening" who frequented the famous tent cities along the Klondike Trail. Try your hand at panning for gold, keeping what you find. The bus will return to Skagway and your guide will give you a brief historical tour, recounting tales of the many characters who inhabited the town in its gold rush days. As you watch, the chefs will prepare the food over campfires, using recipes handed down by the women who cooked in the camps and gold fields in 1898. Try the Alaskan salmon or beef bourguignonne a la goldrush, potatoes, vegetables, Indian summer salad, sourdough rolls with wild berry jam, coffee, tea, or hot apple cider. For desert, Ma Pullen's apple/cherry crisp.

High Tea and Victoria Tour

This tour takes in the finest of Victoria's rich heritage and traditions, including the best of the beautiful homes and gardens. Travel through the City Center, Chinatown and "Antique Row, as well as the exclusive Uplands and Oak Bay residential areas. Enjoy stunning views along Marine Drive with Mt. Baker and the "islands" as their backdrop. The knowledgeable driver/guide will provide commentary throughout, detailing Victoria's past, present and future. One of the highlights will be a visit to Craigdarroch Castle, built in the 1800's. The oak paneling and stained glass windows are stunning. Having visited the best of Victoria, the crowning glory and finishing touch to this wonderful tour is "high tea" at the famous Empress Hotel. A wonderful tradition and one that you won't soon forget.

Historical Cannery Tour

Nestled between sea and rain forest, Ketchikan is rich in turn-of-the-century history. The Historic Ketchikan tour will begin in the old, downtown district and take you through residential neighborhoods and along the shores of Tongass Narrows. As you travel to the remote George Inlet Cannery, your driver/guide will provide lively narration, sharing Ketchikan's rich seafaring past and how the town became known as the "Salmon Capitol of the World".

At the retired Libby, McNeill and Libby Cannery you will enjoy a quiet walk through the rain forest before viewing a short video. Your tour will take you back to the days when rugged men and women toiled day and night to harvest and process the abundant Alaskan salmon. Learn of the colorful world of fish pirates, fish traps and seine boats. As you return to town stories of southeast Alaska's native people will be shared. Much of the flavor of Ketchikan's colorful past is preserved along the quaint wooden walkways of Creek Street. Your tour concludes with a self-guided exploration of this historic site, prior to returning to the ship. This is a non-working cannery and some walking is involved.

Horse & Carriage City Tours

This unique tour of downtown Victoria offers a view into Victoria's past that cannot be captured any other way. Comfortable horse drawn trolleys wind their way through some of downtown Victoria's historic residential areas that are off limits to buses and too far off the beaten track for even the most adventurous walkers.

Tour Haines in unique style, aboard a horse drawn carriage. See stately Fort Seward, downtown Haines and the majestic snow capped Chilkoot and Chilkat mountains. Learn about the indigenous people and how this valley was the most fiercely protected territory of the Tlingit Nation. Visit the American Bald Eagle Foundation. Inside view over 160 species of wildlife and see why the Chilkat Valley is known as "The Valley of Eagles". Relax in the intimate carriage where your guide will be happy to answer any questions you may have about life in Alaska, as you tour this unique and historical town.

Indian Village Tour

A tour of the Saxman Village enables visitors to experience the living culture of modern day southeast Alaskan natives. The village is home to approximately five hundred Tlingit, Tsimshian and Haida Indians. The Saxman Totem Park boasts the world's largest collections of authentic totem poles. Your native guide will greet you upon arrival in the park, directing you to the theater. A host will share with you an Indian legend and you will view a short slide presentation that introduces the people of Saxman. The guide will lead you into the beautiful cedar Tribal House where a native dance group, adorned in regalia will perform authentic tribal dances. Next you move into the Totem Park, where your guide will tell you the fascinating history behind some of these famous totem poles. Finally a short walk to the carving sheds, brings you face to face with native artisans. See artisans that have become "living treasures" to their community practicing their native arts and crafts.

Lumberjack Show

Southeast Alaska is rich in logging history. Although the singing of cross cut saws and the pounding of hand held axes against virgin spruce are a thing of the past, they are still alive in downtown

Ketchikan. After a long winter of logging, just after the spring log drive, hundreds of lumberjacks gathered to determine who was the best “jack” in Alaska. This show relives those competitions. Cheer on as some of the finest lumberjacks compete in springboard chopping, bucksawing, log rolling, axe throwing and tree climbing that ends in a 50-foot free fall.

Salmon Bake

Salmon Bakes are an Alaskan tradition. A special bus will take you on a short, narrated ride through Juneau to experience Alaska's original outdoor salmon bake. The buffet is served family style on picnic tables. As you arrive, your fresh Alaskan caught salmon will be grilling over an open alder wood fire. The salad bar features fresh salads, vegetables, barbecue ribs, baked beans, sourdough bread and beverages, including lemonade, coffee or tea. It's all you can eat, in a festive setting on the banks of a babbling creek. Tables are placed under large canopies to protect you from the rain or sun. After dining, roast marshmallows over a crackling fire or take a short walk along the creek to spot spawning salmon (in season).

Totem Bight Park

Totem Bight State Historical Park, located ten miles outside of downtown Ketchikan, is the site of a former native summer fishing camp, set along the Tongass Narrows. The park offers a unique opportunity to learn about the history, lifestyle and lore of the northwest coast natives. On this site, replicas of original totem poles have been carved and painted reflecting the rich culture and traditions of the Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian Indians. Your driver/guide will interpret the significance of the myths and legends depicted on the many poles standing among the hemlock and cedar trees. Step into an authentic ceremonial clan house and learn about living in the early native villages. Through stories and narrative, you will learn about the lifestyle and rituals practiced by the native Indians.

Trans-Alaska Pipeline Tour

The town of Valdez is ringed by tall mountains and is also the northern most ice-free harbor in the United States. This made it the ideal location for the southern terminus of the Alyeska Pipeline. Situated on a picturesque eleven miles long fjord across from the town of Valdez, the Alyeska Marine Terminal offers the opportunity to see at close hand the final stage of the most ambitious and expensive construction project ever undertaken by private enterprise. Traversing 800 miles of Alaskan wilderness, the gleaming stainless steel pipeline concludes at the Valdez terminal where Alaska's crude oil is transferred to tankers for shipment. You will see the oil storage tank farm, tanker berths, ballast treatment facility, vapor recovery building and possibly a giant tanker taking on a cargo of crude oil. Your driver/guide will give you an informative, non-technical explanation of the entire pipeline operation.

Insights: The 49th State

We believe the more you know about the places you travel to, the more you will enjoy your time spent there. For that reason, we are passing along some of our knowledge of our Alaska and the most interesting aspects of life in this very alive corner of the world. Most of our Alaska guests inquire about the plants, animals, scenery, history and the native cultures in Alaska, so those subjects are examined in this primer for your expedition.

Nature

Undoubtedly, it is the work of Mother Nature on one of her greatest canvases that attracts travelers to the Great Land. Experienced Celebrity naturalists, in proud partnership with The Nature Conservancy, will guide you and point out the glorious plant life, wildlife and scenery encountered along the Inside Passage, the Gulf of Alaska and in the Alaskan interior.

The Nature Conservancy is a non-profit group dedicated to preserving the plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth.

Flora

Blueberry

Both the blueberry and huckleberry are of the same genus, and are among the most popular and widespread of the 50 berry species in Alaska. The blueberry may grow to five feet tall and form a continuous cover in open areas of the forest. Blueberries are used in jellies, jams, or eaten straight from the bush. A popular Eskimo dessert called akutuq is made of oil mixed with blueberries and sugar.

Fireweed

If you see a hillside covered in bright pink or purple, it's probably fireweed. This prolific plant can grow as tall as five feet, and its spire like clusters bloom from the bottom up. Alaskans say when the blooms reach the top, summer is on its way out, and when the downy seedpods open, it signals the first snows of the season.

Forget-me-not

With tiny yellow centers and blue petals, Alaska's state flower has long been a symbol of love and remembrance. Forget-me-nots can be seen along streams and in meadows throughout most of Alaska.

Lady's Slipper

The delicate lady's slipper is one of 14 or more species of orchids in Alaska, all requiring a complicated ecosystem to survive. Not only do they depend on fungi for water and nutrients, each species relies on a certain insect or insects for pollination. Other species include moccasin flower, rose-purple and Alaska rein.

Salmonberry

Salmonberry bushes grow up to seven feet tall and usually form a dense thicket, with juicy red to orange-gold berries ripening in August. The source of its name remains a mystery—some say the berries are the color of salmon flesh; others believe the berries look like tiny clusters of salmon eggs. The cup-shaped salmonberry is in the same genus as the raspberry, cloudberry and thimbleberry, all of which grow in Alaska.

Sitka Spruce

Growing only in Southeast and South central Alaska, these centuries-old trees can reach heights of up to 200 feet. Some Native Alaskan groups revere the spruce and believe it has a strong, benevolent spirit. The roots were made into baskets, its inner bark provided food, and its sap was used to heal. Today, the light wood of Alaska's official tree is used for pianos, guitars, boats and gliders.

Western Hemlock

Western and mountain hemlock trees make up some 70 percent of Southeast Alaska's dense coastal rain forests. The hemlock's inner bark is edible and the outer bark contains tannin used in tanning hides.

Western Red Cedar

The ideal building material for native canoes, totem poles, clan house poles and panels is the durable, giant western red cedar. This cedar thrives along the southern half of the Inside Passage. You will know this tree from its shiny needles, aromatic wood and massive trunk, which grows two to eight feet in diameter and 100 to 175 feet in height.

Fauna

Marine Mammals & Fish

Alaska's rugged shoreline offers sanctuary to more marine mammals than anywhere else.

Harbor Seal

Of the seven species of seals in Alaska, you're most likely to see the harbor seal. This torpedo-shaped seal can be gray, brown or black with spots and blotches. You may find it sunning on rocks, beaches or icebergs, or even following a kayak. The harbor seal has a highly evolved physiological response that allows it to stay underwater for 20 minutes. Named a species of special concern, the harbor seal population has declined 90 percent in the Kodiak Island area since the 1970s and by 60 percent in Prince William Sound since the 1980s.

Humpback Whale

More than 14 whale species have been observed in Alaskan waters, and of these, the humpback is one of the most likely to be seen. Humpbacks are vocal, but only the males sing. A bull can sing up to seven hours straight, stopping only to come up for air. To spot a whale, look for clouds of vapor forced from blowholes and listen for an explosive whooshing sound as the humpback surfaces and exhale. Also look for the flukes, or wing like tails. Humpbacks can hurl their 35-ton bodies out of the water in an acrobatic leaping display known as "breaching." There were an estimated 15,000 humpback whales in the North Pacific prior to mechanized commercial whaling, now there are 1,000 to 1,200. Even so, there are still more humpback whales in summer than rest of world's oceans combined.

Orca or Killer Whale

The orca, or killer whale, is commonly placed in the toothed whale category along with beluga and sperm whales, yet they're actually very large dolphins. The orca is distinguished by a tall dorsal fin and graphic black and white markings. Orca society is highly complex with resident pods using distinct dialects and vocalizations. Resident pods are matriarchal, with offspring staying with their mother for her 40 to 80 year life span. Resident pods eat mainly fish, but transient (wider-ranging) pods may eat sea lions, seals, porpoises and whales of other species.

Other Whales

Among the other species of whale you may be fortunate enough to come across on your voyage are the beluga, blue, gray and sperm whales. Don't be confused by Moby Dick; although he was white, he was a sperm whale, which in fact, are not white. Belugas are, though. This small toothed whale of about 19 feet can be heard making a variety of noises in its favorite waters in Turnagain Arm, south of Anchorage. Sperm whale sightings are rare, but you will know this 30-70 feet long, blunt snout, black whale should you see one. Gray whales are large, baleen (filter feeders with no teeth) whales that migrate slowly close to shore. A real treat would be a spotting of a blue whale in the College Fjord area. You would be among the privileged few who have seen the greatest creature that has ever lived.

Porpoise and Dolphin

This super-fast, seven-foot long black and white porpoise looks like a tiny Orca. Dalls always seem to be racing through the water, jetting behind boats, leaping and dashing. In contrast, the harbor porpoise is darkish gray-brown with a whitish underside and moves through the water in a shy, unhurried manner. Both porpoises swim in the protected waters of the Inside Passage. You may also see Pacific white-sided dolphins, with grayish-green backs, traveling in schools of 100 or more, "surfing" in the wakes of ships.

Sea Otter

If you see a cute, furry, inquisitive animal floating on its back, it's most likely "the old man of the sea." The sea otter will even eat while floating, using its chest as a tray, and breaking open clams with a rock or a shell. Very young pups ride on their mother's chest until they are able to dive. The sea otter's rich, luxuriant coat brought about a fur frenzy when the Russians came to Alaska in 1742. By 1911 the number of sea otters had crashed to an estimated 1,500. With planning and protection, Alaska has brought its sea otter population back up to nearly 150,000.

Steller Sea Lion

Nearly 70 percent of the world's Steller sea lion population resides in Alaska. These are the largest of the "eared" seals, with bulls weighing up to 1,800 pounds and reaching a length of 11 feet. From May to July, adults gather to breed in island rookeries and throughout the year they take rest and refuge on what are known as haul-outs. The sea lion was named for its "lion-like roar" and thick mane ruff. The Steller sea lion was listed under the Endangered Species Act in 1990 when their numbers declined by over 70 percent in Alaska in just two decades.

Chinook (King) Salmon

The Chinook is Alaska's state fish. Averaging 30 pounds, it is the largest of the five species of Pacific salmon. The record king was caught in 1949 and weighed 126 pounds. Like all salmon, the Chinook is anadromous—they live part of their lives in freshwater and part in saltwater. After living at sea, salmon return to the streams where they were born to spawn and die. Some travel as far as 2,000 miles in two months, never eating, to spawn high in the Yukon Territory. During summer migrations, you can see spawning salmon all day long.

Halibut

The halibut is born with one eye on each side of its head, but within a few months, the left eye migrates over the head next to the right eye. By then the halibut is swimming on its side and will continue to do so for life. The halibut's eyes are on the upper side which is mottled in camouflage colors, allowing the fish to bury itself in the ocean floor up to its eyeballs and wait for a meal to come by. The oldest known female halibut was 42 years old, and the largest caught in Alaska waters was estimated to weigh almost 900 pounds.

Land Mammals

Brown Bear or Grizzly Bear

Both bears are members of the same species, but brown bears reside near the coast usually in forested, mountainous areas. The grizzly resides inland, in open, treeless areas. Coastal brown bears are the largest omnivorous (eats plants and animals) land mammal in the world, weighing up to 1,500 pounds and standing nine feet tall. Yet cubs weigh less than a pound at birth, staying with their mother 1 1/2 years or longer. A brown bear is distinguished from a black bear by a characteristic hump over its shoulders. The beauty of all Alaskan bears is the wildness and mystery about them; they defy predictability.

Caribou

In Alaska, stately caribou easily outnumber humans, with nearly a million caribou in 32 herds. Their habitat is the alpine tundra near the timberline, including Denali National Park. These northern nomads can travel up to 3,000 miles in one year—further than any other land mammal. Large, two-toed hooves spread wide like snowshoes to support caribou in snow and soft tundra, and function as paddles for swimming. Caribou are the only members of the deer family in which both males and females have antlers. The antlers fall off and grow anew every year.

Dall Sheep

The sure-footed Dall, or white sheep, can usually be spotted in treeless mountain regions, on alpine ridges, in meadows or climbing steep slopes in central Alaska. This includes Denali National Park, Brooks Range, Chugach, Wrangells/St. Elias Mountains, and the Yukon Territory. Male Dall sheep have massive, curling horns used in ramming each other to establish individual rank. The female ewes have smaller horns and do not ram. Male and female sheep stay in separate groups except for a short mating period.

Moose

The largest member of the deer family, the moose can be seen throughout Alaska, often near spruce forests and freshwater marshes. Moose will wade into ponds or lakes up to their backs to munch on aquatic plants. Alaska's moose are the largest in North America, with bulls reaching a

height of 7 1/2 feet at the shoulder, weighing up to 1,800 pounds, with antlers spanning over six feet. During the breeding season, bulls joust by bringing their antlers together and pushing.

Mountain Goat

It is easy to sight a mountain goat with its double coat of long white hair, but impossible to follow one. The mountain goat's protection from predators is its ability to go where no other animal can go – the very steep terrain of fjords and mainland mountainsides. You will get dizzy watching them climb along the sheer cliffs and narrow ledges. Everything about this agile creature is designed for living on the edge; they have short legs, heavy shoulders and spreadable hooves cushioned with skid-proof pads.

River Otter

Also known as the land otter, this carefree creature can be found in coastal and inland Alaska. Both young and old enjoy playing games such as hide-and-seek, dunking and wrestling. They also enjoy sliding on ice and snow. With webbed back feet, otters are excellent swimmers and can dive to 60 feet.

Sitka Blacktail Deer

The smallest of the blacktail deer can be found along the Inside Passage and now in Yakutat Bay and Prince William Sound. In the summer months, they can be identified by a reddish-brown coat, white tail with a black tip and velvety antlers on the bucks. They make the alpine areas their home during this time of the year to eat the new growth.

Wolf

The elusive wolf requires large natural areas, such as the foothills of the Alaska Range in Denali and the Chugach and Talkeetna Mountains. They are occasionally seen on open riverbeds and tundra. Wolves are great travelers, sometimes covering more than 40 miles in one day. Highly social animals, wolves live in well-organized packs led by an alpha, or dominant, breeding pair. Every wolf in the pack helps to rear the alpha pair's litter. Today the wolf survives in only a few states as an endangered species; however, an estimated 7,500 wolves are alive and wild in Alaska.

Birds

In summertime, 10 million geese, like the loud Canadian goose, and ducks, like colorful, sea ducks and the maternal Merganser, nest in Alaska.

American Peregrine Falcon

These amazing travelers have been known to winter as far south as Argentina, returning to nest throughout Alaska on cliffs along rivers and lakes. Adults have blue-gray backs and white chests with dark barring and a distinctive cheek mark. Feeding primarily on other birds, the peregrine falcon knocks its prey from the air in spectacular midair dives of up to 200 mph.

Arctic Tern

Built for speed and endurance, the arctic tern flies about 25,000 miles a year to breed in the Alaskan wetlands and winter in the Antarctic. To spot the arctic tern just look for a small, streamlined seabird with a bright red bill and feet, black cap, white cheeks and soft gray back. The tern is an expert fisher, hovering above a fish, plunging in and retaking the air quickly. During courtship, the male tern flies low over the female with a fish in his bill, and if she's receptive, he begins to feed her.

Bald Eagle

Midday is the best time to observe eagles as they gracefully soar on warm air currents, with a wingspan of up to eight feet. They can spot a single fish from a mile away. Numbering about 30,000, more bald eagles make Alaska their home than anywhere else in America. They are plentiful along the Southeast and South central coasts. Young bald eagles have mottled brown

plumage and don't molt into the white heads and tails until four or five years old. They can live at least 20 years, mate for life, and may return to the same nest year after year.

Raven

Often symbolized on totem poles, the raven plays a mystical role in Native Alaskan storytelling, performing such wonders as creating the earth and hanging the moon. Indeed, the raven is said to be among the smartest of birds, with studies showing they can learn and solve problems. The glistening-black, two foot raven is the largest perching songbird on earth, with more than 30 distinct vocalizations.

Trumpeter Swan

Once thought to be nearly extinct with only 69 left in the lower 48 states, trumpeter swans now number over 16,000, with 80 percent in Alaska. The trumpeter swan is the largest waterfowl in the world, weighing up to 40 pounds, with an eight-foot wingspan. These beautiful birds give a loud, clear, musical call and create a magical presence as they migrate south to the Pacific Northwest.

Tufted Puffin

In the spring, some 5.5 million puffins come to Alaska to nest. Nicknamed "sea parrots" by early sailors, the puffin's bright yellow and red bill is a temporary summertime breeding display. The outer shell peels off by late summer to reveal a smaller, plain beak. Look for the puffin on steep, grassy slopes and cliffs near seabird colonies in areas such as Glacier Bay. About a foot tall and stocky, propelling into flight takes a lot of work. Water takeoffs require a long, running start sometimes crashing into waves. On land, puffins launch themselves off cliffs.

Willow Ptarmigan

Chosen as the state bird by Alaskan schoolchildren, the willow ptarmigan lives here year round. Molting from brown to white feathers in the winter, the ptarmigan is camouflaged from predators. It keeps warm in the severe cold by burrowing into snowdrifts.

Environment

A land as big as Alaska provides a palate for nature to create endless awe and marvel, a visual magnificence that can only be appreciated by being there. The highest mountain peak on the continent, crystal streams glittering red from salmon, alpine meadows glorified by blooming wildflowers and towers of ice collapsing into the sea then reborn as icebergs, are just a few of the wonders waiting for the Alaskan traveler.

Mt. McKinley

Alaska has 39 mountain ranges. The state boasts 17 of North America's 20 tallest mountains, but one mountain reigns supreme – Mt. McKinley. The snow crowned north peak rises to 20,320 feet above sea level, easily making it the highest mountain in all of North America. Called Denali, "the Great One," by the Athabascan Indians, this mountain is part of the Alaska Range, which stretches for 600 miles across Alaska. Mt. McKinley is set in Denali National Park, which is itself larger than Massachusetts. The lower south peak was originally climbed in 1910 by the "Sourdough Expedition", a group of gold miners who had never climbed before. Native climber Walter Harper first reached the north peak summit in 1913.

Volcanoes

Volcanoes, both active and dormant, rise above the landmasses that crashed together to form Alaska. Dramatic, barren fields of ash and pumice and steaming mineral hot springs are both results of the volcanic activities. Alaska's fantastic granite mountains were created when ancient molten lava, cooled deep below the Earth was forced up through the surface. In gray granite cliffs, columns of black reveal the lava that flowed into cracks from ancient earthquakes.

Fjords

Glaciers on their way to the sea carved deep V-shaped valleys, with steep rock and forest-covered walls. Now they are nature's Venetian canals, more grand and beautiful than anything man or chance could create. A ship cruising through the fjords is surrounded by the work of ages, with some of the fjords almost 1000 feet deep. Waterfalls spill off the sides of the fjord with water pure enough to drink. The mountains above are often shrouded in mist, their crests disappearing in the white, giving the fjords a mystical feel.

Glaciers

Rivers of ice slowly flow down a valley, carving the earth in it's own image. These are the mighty, ancient glaciers, some the size of states, that advance and recede with the years, creating valleys, damming inlets and engulfing whole bays. Glaciers are "God's Great Plough" wrote Louis Agassiz, the 19th century French naturalist. 150-foot high towering walls of ice break off, or "calve," sending their "white thunder" crashing into the sea and giving birth to icebergs. Boats sail up to the sheer face of the glacier, airplanes look down upon the shimmering icy surface and helicopters land on the broad ice fields of the glacier to let visitors walk the frozen giant. Alaska has an estimated 100,000 glaciers and more active glaciers and ice fields than anywhere in the rest of the inhabited world.

Forest

The panhandle of Alaska is lush rainforest, filled with massive trees that have been growing for centuries. And the vast forests throughout the state have provided a habitat for wildlife to thrive in and sanctuary and livelihoods for the people who have lived there. Raven, bear, owl and wolf - all of the animals of the totem pole - can be found here.

Lakes

Scattered about Alaska's frontier are three million lakes. Here you will find lakes teeming with fish including trout, pike and burbot, lakes carved out by glaciers, even lakes that rival the Great Lakes in size. You are likely to have company in your exploration of Alaskan lakes – the moose wading in the misty shallows foraging for breakfast, for instance, or the bald eagle scanning the waters for the flash of a fish.

Rivers

3000 rivers crisscross the Alaskan landscape. From river estuaries to tumbling waterfalls, babbling mountain brooks to the mighty Yukon, placid, lazy rivers to whitewater rapids, the rivers of Alaska are truly a force of nature. Riverboats, canoes, jet boats, rubber rafts, kayaks and floatplanes all navigate the flowing waters here. Since the first peoples crossed the land bridge into Alaska, the rivers have provided primary transportation routes. Filled with salmon, trout, grayling and char, the rivers have also provided a banquet for both man and beast.

Tundra

The northern tundra lands are vast, treeless plains that spend the long winter frozen. But in the spring, the tundra bursts to life with blooms, a carpet of color that stretches to the horizon. The tundra is a dazzling landscape, where the earth truly meets the sky. Lichen moss, blueberries, arctic poppy and other grasses and shrubs grow above a layer of permafrost. It's a short growing season but one that provides a bounty of food for the animals like the ground squirrel, bear and caribou that pass the season in the tundra.

Alpine

There are parts of Alaska where the climate is reminiscent of the European Alps, creating enough alpine meadows to cover all of Switzerland. Graced in the summer months with delicate flora and hardy fauna, the alpine areas of Alaska are widespread and always beautiful. Alpine zones of meadows and mountains are spread throughout the state depending as much on altitude as latitude.

Inside Passage

Deep blue water, lush green forests, snow capped mountain peaks and pale azure sky fill the view when cruising through the Inside Passage. This 1000-mile long coastal waterway winds through countless islands, a protected wilderness seaway passing along the coast of Canada and the Alaskan panhandle. Its waters are home to whales, porpoises, sea lions, and its shores are habitat for deer, bear and eagles. Every mile is picture perfect. The Inside Passage stretches from Vancouver, past Juneau and on to Skagway, each port separated by ever-changing views of Alaskan paradise.

Tides

In certain areas of Alaska, the tides run more than thirty feet. Some bays and inlets flow so fast that the towns have no fishing fleets. And at the Turnagain Arm, part of Cook's Inlet between Seward and Anchorage, a tidal bore can often be seen. This is a standing wave caused by the forces of two bodies of water rushing headlong into each other. Sometimes up to 10 feet in height, the bores can be followed from lookout point to lookout point along the Seward Highway.

Aurora Borealis

The Aurora Borealis, or Northern Lights, occurs in the northern latitudes when charged solar electrons borne on the solar wind collide with gas molecules in the Earth's upper atmosphere. But even the most elegant scientific description cannot convey the beauty of a night sky filled with waves of shimmering color. The Northern Lights are best viewed on a dark night, away from towns, especially from late summer until spring.

Summer

60 to 80 degree weather and around the clock daylight are the treats of an Alaskan summer. In the Southern portions of the state, warm summer days last into the nights and the locals know they better enjoy it while they can. That much daylight produces giant vegetables, which show up in August in the local fairs. The summer might not be endless in Alaska, but the summer days can be.

History

In the beginning, there was only the wilderness, vast beyond belief. Imagine a mountain towering the height of a jet in flight, or the Mississippi River...frozen. Imagine a great land populated solely by bears, moose, caribou, eagles, salmon and whales. Snow-capped mountains and volcanoes, sharp-edged fjords and massive glaciers, ancient rain forests and frozen tundra together formed the magnificence that is Alaska. And it's all still there.

More than 10,000 years ago, the first people arrived in Alaska. Crossing a land bridge over the Bering Strait from Siberia, which was exposed due to a lowered sea level during the ice age, they followed the hunt to a new continent. They did not have luxury accommodations or gourmet cuisine. What they did have was the astounding adventure that is Alaska.

These first immigrants, including the Eskimos, Thule and Aleut, thrived and created a culture that grew from the wonders of their new home. They developed complex social structures and skills like canoe building and totem pole carving that were as artistic as they were useful. They were skilled hunters of land and sea animals, traveling by kayak, skin hulled boat and sled. Their umiaqs, or skin boats, sewn by the women, were large enough for whale hunting. They built energy efficient houses that were part subterranean and had front doors that trapped the precious heat inside. Their descendents would carry out one of the most dramatic migrations in human history, populating the entire Western Hemisphere.

The first European explorer to sail to Alaska was the Danish Captain Vitus Bering under the flag of Peter the Great of Russia in the early 1700's. This voyage is credited as the "official" discovery by Russia and the first reliable information on the land. The next explorer was England's Captain Cook, so far from his famed exploits of discovery in the South Pacific. Spanish and French ships also visited. By the late 1700's, the Russians had established the first permanent European

settlements in the territory to exploit the fur trade. They interjected their own culture into the region, most notably in their North American capital of Sitka. First the traders came, then the missionaries. By the early 1800's, interaction was an ongoing concern for the Europeans and the native population.

In 1867, the Russians, their pocketbooks still smarting from the Napoleonic wars and their settlements in Alaska in the red, lost interest in the Great Land. On October 18, they sold Alaska to the U.S. government for two cents an acre, or a cool \$7.2 million. Believe it or not, the American public ridiculed the purchase. Nicknamed "Seward's Ice Box" after Secretary of State William H. Seward, who masterminded the purchase, the new lands went almost twenty years without even having a civilian government. When it wasn't being joked about as "Seward's Folly", Alaska was being ignored.

That is, until gold was discovered. One of the first strikes was in Sitka in 1872, followed by Juneau in 1880 and then came the mother lode, the Klondike strike in 1898. Headlines such as "SHIP'S IN WITH A TON OF SOLID GOLD ON BOARD" flashed across continents bringing a flood of treasure seekers to Skagway, the starting point for the trip across the Chilkoot Pass into the Yukon gold fields. Unfortunately, most of the miners struck out before they struck pay dirt. The life of most of the gold diggers was one of harsh weather, high prices and hard times, but lucky were the ones who struck it rich.

The 20th century brought to Alaska ships, trains and air travel to join the packhorses and dogsleds. Private railway companies had failed to bring the steel rails to Alaska, so in 1916 the U.S. government stepped in. Using equipment left over from the Panama Canal project, eight years of construction began through the most impenetrable mountains and raging rivers. On July 15, 1923 in the tiny town of Nenana, President Harding drove in the golden spike signifying completion of the Alaska Railroad. (Weak from an illness, it took the president three swings to finally hit the spike. It might have all been too much for him, for he died shortly afterward.) The 470-mile trip from Seward, through Anchorage and up to Fairbanks, is one of the most incredible rail journeys in the world. It travels into the Denali National Park within 50 miles of Mt. McKinley and crosses 700 and 900-foot long bridges for views unmatched anywhere.

During World War II, the army built the 1500-mile Alaskan Highway in just 8 months to provide a land route for supplies. Prior to this, the Alaska Territory was connected to the world by sea, but with the threat of enemy submarines prowling offshore and two Alaskan islands already occupied, an alternative had to be found. The military continued to maintain a crucial presence in Alaska throughout the Cold War. Since the gold rush days, there had been movement to make Alaska a state, but it wasn't until this wartime recognition of Alaska's strategic importance, and more importantly the discovery of oil in 1957, that the territory made the final leap toward statehood. On January 3, 1959 President Eisenhower signed Alaska in as the 49th state of the union.

In the 60's and 70's, the "gold rush" was for "black gold." Soon everyone knew Prudhoe Bay as the largest oil field in North America, representing 25 percent of known oil deposits in the United States. To get that oil to the rest of the country, the Alaskan Pipeline was built, above and below ground, the breadth of Alaska from Prudhoe Bay in the north to the southern terminus in Valdez. The pipeline took 70,000 people and 8 years to build. It has produced 11 billion barrels of oil. In the 80's, the king of the economy was the king crab; now it is Alaska itself, the lure of beauty and adventure and the promise of an experience that can only be found in the Last Frontier. With less than one million citizens living in a land 1/5 the size of the continental U.S. (that's bigger than Portugal, Spain, France and Italy combined), Alaska is still a pristine wilderness with a sprinkling of colorful and welcoming outposts of civilization.

Native Culture

At first, the naming and description of Alaska's native peoples may seem a bit puzzling. For one thing, the naming of people, places and things was always passed down orally through the

centuries; therefore, there may be many different spellings of a name. For instance, you might see the Athabascan Indians' name spelled Athapascan or Athabaskan. Also depending on the reason for classification, the number of cultural groups that inhabit the region may vary. The Alaska Native Heritage Center recognizes five groupings of eleven distinct cultures: Aleuts and Alutiiq of the Aleutian Islands and the central Gulf islands, Athabascans of the central interior, Inupiaqs (Northern Eskimo/Inuit), Yupiks (Western Eskimo/Inuit) and the Northwest Coast Indians of Alaska's Inside Passage (Eyak, Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian.) To this list, one could also add the coastal Indians that live along the Canadian Inside Passage (Coast Salish, Nootka, Kwagiutl and Haida.) Special Celebrity trips of in depth discovery are taken to villages of the Tlingit and the Athabascan peoples. However, visitors to the region could very well meet someone from any of these cultures as today's native peoples live all over Alaska and the lower 48. Today, many Alaska natives still follow the ancient ways of hunting and fishing and making crafts, while others choose to live a modern, western life.

Athabascans

These are the "Dena" or "the people." Traditionally, they lived in Alaska's interior from Anchorage to Fairbanks, primarily along the river ways. They believed in the respect of all living things and in the importance of sharing. Principally, Athabascans were nomadic hunters and fishermen and later trappers for the fur trade. They would travel in small groups of 20 – 40. As with all Alaska native peoples, the Athabascans follow a matrilineal descent in which children belong to the mother's clan, rather than to the father's clan. The center of the traditional group was a woman and her brother and their two families. In this structure, the brother and his sister's husband became hunting partners for life. Clan elders made decisions concerning marriage, leadership, and trading customs. It was the place of the Shamans to contact the spirit world in order to cure illnesses and foretell the future. They got around by means of canoes (which were crafted from birch bark, moose hide and cottonwood,) sleds (with and without dogs,) and snowshoes. Their homes were semi-subterranean log homes or dome-shaped animal skin tents. Athabascan clothing was produced from moose and caribou hides. Moccasins and snowshoes were important pieces of the wardrobe. When the occasion called for regalia, men and women donned beaded tunics, while the chief wore dentalium shell necklaces. Tools were fashioned from stone, antlers, wood, and bone. Dogs were used as pack animals.

Tlingits

Description of Tlingit life mirrors that of the other cultures of the Alaska panhandle and Canadian coast, with the exception of differences in language and clan structure. Although they were neighbors, the languages of the Tlingit of the mainland coast of Alaska's Inside Passage, the Eyak of the south central gulf coast, the Haida of Queen Charlotte Island, the Nootka of Vancouver Island, the Tsimshian and Kwagiutl of British Columbia's coast and the Coast Salish of Vancouver and Seattle were not mutually intelligible. It is interesting to note that today there is only one living speaker of Eyak.

Abundant salmon and shellfish and a mild climate gave the Tlingits the time to develop sophisticated art forms (they are very artistically skilled weavers and woodworkers) and complex social systems. Villages typically had 300 – 500 people in them. Tlingits divided themselves into clans signified by special totems and clan crests such as the killer whale or thunderbird and into households. There was no central government, nor were there tribal meetings. Decisions and policies were carried out at the clan and household level. This was a very stratified society. Each clan "owned" the area where they lived, fished and hunted. Vital to subsistence in this region were salmon and cedar. To catch the salmon, the Tlingit employed fish fences and traps in the streams, holding ponds in tidal areas, dip nets, hooks, harpoons and spears. Cedar was the chief building and art material, along with spruce and hemlock. They lived in large cedar-planked houses supported by great posts and beams, which could take as many as 300 men to raise. The Beaver Clan house at Saxman Village near Ketchikan is a fine example. These houses could be 50' x 100' and hold 20 – 30 people. All houses had a central fire pit and smoke hole. Cedar was used to build canoes, the major form of transportation. Some highly prized canoes were as long

as 60 feet. In these canoes, the Tlingit could travel hundreds of miles – as far as San Francisco! Besides animal skins and furs, cedar bark was even used for clothing and cedar roots for hats.

Potlatch

Etiquette and ceremony were very important ingredients in Tlingit society. These were best characterized in a uniquely native celebration called a potlatch. Ostensibly, potlatches were held as a display of power and wealth. This was a reason to pull out your finest, woven Chilkat robe. High-ranking clans and/or individuals were expected to give potlatches. However, a potlatch could be given by a commoner, who could raise his position by hosting a potlatch. A potlatch could last days and was marked by feasting, speeches, singing, dancing, totem raising, theatrical dances with masks, props and costumes, and gift giving. It was the host, however, who did the giving - the bigger the gifts given, the more power displayed. In return for the hospitality, guests displayed their power by giving the host a potlatch. Other occasions that called for a potlatch were funerals to honor the dead, weddings, naming of a child, completion of a new house, validation of debt payment, or to rid the host of shame.

Totem Poles

The totem is a great, carved cedar pole and an intricate, meaningful native art form. Totems served many purposes for the native peoples. "Heraldic" poles frequently displayed the "crests" or genealogical lineage of clans, families and individuals. Some totems honored chiefs. Some honored relatives who died and may even have contained the ashes of the deceased. Some totem poles told ancient legends. Due to the important function of the totem, great pains were taken in selecting the cedar for its spiritual purity. After the right cedar was chosen, it was left to master craftsman to carve. Figures from tribal history, legend, and mythology were the subjects for highly stylized carvings traditionally painted in black and red. Common figures to look for are: the Raven or Trickster (long, straight beak), the Eagle (shorter, hooked beak), the Thunderbird (outstretched wings), the Bear (clawed paws, sharp teeth, flared nostrils), the Beaver (two large teeth and crosshatched tail), the Wolf (standing on four legs), the Killer Whale (tall dorsal fin and rows of saw-like teeth.) There are also human figures and those with high-crowned hats on the top of a totem are watchmen on the lookout. Contrary to popular belief to be the "low man on the totem pole" is actually a good thing. The most intricate and best-carved figures are usually placed on the bottom end with the story thinning out towards the top.

World Eskimo-Indian Olympics

Typically, when you think of the Olympics, you think of events like track & field, swimming and basketball. Well this is a very different kind of Olympics. Each July in Fairbanks, the native peoples of Alaska hold a unique sporting competition of their own. The World Eskimo-Indian Olympics is comprised of 25 events of strength, endurance and speed. While events such as the Grease Pole Balance may at first seem odd, these events are based on either traditional pastimes or the mental and physical skills and movements needed for survival in this sometimes testing environment. These games have been practiced for generations. Contestants are honored for their coordination, discipline and quickness. Some of the Olympic events include: the One-Foot High-Kick, where the contestant must hop on one foot, hit a target with that foot and land on the same foot; Fish Cutting and Seal Skinning contests; the Arm Pull, which mimics the muscle movement used in hauling in whales by locking arms and trying to straighten the opponents arms; and the Blanket Toss, developed when Inuit hunters were tossed in the air on a large animal skin to look for whales offshore. To round out the competition, there are also some events that sound rather painful and nauseating like the Knuckle Hop, Ear Pulling, Whale Blubber Eating, and the Four Man Carry in which one man must carry four men on his back until he collapses. This last event was based on the survival need to carrying wood or caribou long distances back to camp.

Frontier Destinations

We cannot wait to show you all the wondrous places in our Alaska, so make yourself comfortable and let Celebrity escort you to:

Alyeska (Girdwood), Alaska

Girdwood is located at the foot of Mt. Alyeska not far from Anchorage. Founded as a mining town, Girdwood has evolved into a seasonal resort community. Yet, this quaint town has managed to retain its quirky charm and is said to have been one of the models for the Northern Exposure television series. Hiking trails offer wondrous sights through forests and wildflower meadows, leading to a roaring gorge.

Anchorage, Alaska

Nearly a quarter of a million people-half the population of Alaska-live in the city of Anchorage. Gleaming high-rises stand in dramatic contrast to surrounding mountains and the wilderness. City highlights include a wildlife refuge, zoo, performing arts center, museums and shopping. The Alaska Native Heritage Center offers insight into the first people of Alaska, including the Athabascan, Tlingit, Haida, Tsimshian and Eskimo Native groups.

Denali National Park, Denali, Alaska

One of the greatest wildlife sanctuaries in the world, the six-million acre Denali National Park is home to grizzly bears, caribou, Dall sheep, moose, wolves, Trumpeter swans, Golden eagles and countless other living creatures. The park is dominated by Mt. McKinley, the tallest mountain in North America, and part of the 600-mile long Alaska Range. The mountain's great beauty is reflected in Wonder Lake.

Talkeetna, Alaska

Situated just outside Denali National Park, the town of Talkeetna is the staging center for Mt. McKinley climbers. Once a gold mining town, this picturesque community features the historic Talkeetna Roadhouse, log cabins and clapboard houses. Three glacier-fed rivers, the Susitna, Chulitna and Talkeetna converge here and offer superb opportunities for salmon and trout fishing, as well as bear-watching expeditions.

Fairbanks

Just 90 miles south of the Arctic Circle, Fairbanks is known as the "golden heart" of Alaska. Founded on the banks of the Chena River in 1901, the town's colorful gold-rush history comes to life in working gold mines, at the Palace Theater & Saloon and on the Riverboat Discovery -an authentic sternwheeler. Shopping includes gold nugget jewelry, and Native handicrafts from the Interior, such as beaded slippers and gloves, birch-bark baskets and porcupine quill jewelry.

Nenana, Alaska

Nenana is evidence of just how unspoiled the Great Land is between Denali and Fairbanks, as this town of 540 people on the Tanana River is the only major population center in the area. Be sure to enter your \$2 in the Nenana Ice Classic on your brief layover here. Each spring, Alaskans from all over wager a guess on the day, hour and minute when the ice will begin to break in the Tanana River. This cabin fever-inspired lottery has been going on since 1917. Because Nenana was the northern base for building the Alaska railroad, this is where you'll find the Alaska State Railroad Museum and the golden spike driven in by President Harding on July 5, 1923.

Catalina Island, California

26 miles across the sea from Los Angeles, Catalina has been an island retreat for Hollywood's glamorous set for many years. Catalina Island offers magnificent coastline, broad valleys and 2,000-foot peaks. The Gabrielino Native Americans once called it the "mountain ranges that are in the sea." A conservancy dedicated to preserving the island's natural beauty and diversity,

including plant and animal species found nowhere else in the world, manages some 42,000 acres. There are some wonderful hikes here. On Catalina, you can also browse through the boutiques in charming Avalon and visit the village of Two Harbors. Shore diving the waters around Catalina makes for a unique scuba experience.

College Fjord, Alaska

Located within the breathtaking beauty of Prince William Sound, College Fjord is home to six calving glaciers named for the East Coast universities that supported the Harriman expedition that explored the fjord a century ago. The fjord's steep sea cliffs rise high above the water and are covered with stands of giant trees. The area is a haven for wildlife, including the largest animal on the planet, the blue whale, weighing in at 150 tons.

Haines, Alaska

This is Bald eagle country. Drawn to the area's salmon-rich waters, the world's largest concentration of bald eagles can be seen flying majestically overhead. Haines is a great place to see Alaska's heritage come alive in the handcrafted artistry of the Tlingit Indians and in the lively performances of the Chilkat Dancers, with their brightly painted tribal masks. Take a walking tour of Haines or visit the Chilkat Bald Eagle Preserve. Haines is the launch point for a most memorable flight seeing trip over Glacier Bay. The bay in this three million acre national park is chock full of icebergs of every shape and size. It is also filled with whales. This is a prime destination for observing humpback whales.

Hubbard Glacier, Alaska

At 500 feet in height and six miles in width, the spectacular Hubbard Glacier is Alaska's largest valley glacier and one of the world's most active iceberg calving glaciers. Hubbard Glacier once extended into the Pacific Ocean, but over a 400-year period it has retreated 35 miles back to some of the world's tallest coastal mountains. In 1986, Hubbard Glacier earned the name "Galloping Glacier" when it began a dramatic and sudden advance, surging forward at a rate of up to 130 feet a day. The moving wall of ice eventually stretched all the way across the water to Gilbert's point, blocking off Russell Fjord to create a temporary freshwater lake. Inevitably, water pressure broke through the ice dam, but today Hubbard Glacier continues to advance, "calving" icebergs into the water. Keep your binoculars handy as you cruise through the glacier's home waters, the wildlife-rich Yakutat Bay.

Inside Passage, Alaska

Threading one thousand miles along the scenic coast of Canada and Alaska, the Inside Passage offers spectacular close-up views of rain forests, sparkling glaciers, emerald islets, rocky headlands, steep-walled fjords and snow-capped mountains. Watch closely for whales, sea lions, bears and other wildlife; the Inside Passage is home to more than one hundred species of mammals.

Juneau, Alaska

Nestled between mountains and sea, Alaska's capital city has a rustic charm that blends cosmopolitan and frontier lifestyles. If you've come north for the great sport fishing, the waters off Juneau are an ideal place to cast a line. You can see nature up close on the Mt. Roberts alpine walk or on a whale-watching cruise. The Alaska State Museum includes a Native clan house and birch-bark canoe, gold rush memorabilia, and Russian Orthodox relics. A short drive out of Juneau takes you to the impressive, one and a half mile wide, "drive-in" Mendenhall Glacier, one of 38 glaciers in the Juneau Ice field.

Ketchikan, Alaska

Welcome to the Salmon capital of the world. Southeast Alaska's "First City" is as picturesque as it is unique. Set in coastal rain forests, this rustic waterfront village was built on the slopes of Deer Mountain and out into the harbor on stilts. Ketchikan is the ancestral home of Alaska's Tlingit Indians and the area boasts the world's largest collection of totem poles. You can see this ancient art form and learn the meaning behind totem pole imagery at the Saxman Native Village and Totem Bight State Park and the Totem Heritage Cultural Center. Ketchikan is also the jumping-off point for seaplane (there is no land access) excursions to the 2.2 million pristine acres of Misty Fjords National Monument, where you'll marvel at the abundant wildlife, waterfalls, crystal-clear alpine lakes and towering mountains.

San Diego, California

Called the "pearl" of Southern California's coastline, San Diego's gleaming skyline, beautiful beaches, shopping plazas and restaurants make it a popular destination. San Diego's acclaimed animal attractions are models for how rare and exotic creatures should be showcased. The world famous San Diego Zoo is one of the biggest and best. Giant Pandas and Koalas are the headliners here. Many endangered species roam free in the 1800-acre Wild Animal Park. Shamu, the acrobatic killer whale, is the star at Sea World. The Hotel Del Coronado is a grand, Victorian, seaside hotel, built in 1888, and is now a national historical landmark. Kings and seventeen presidents have stayed here. Some Like It Hot was filmed here, and it was the inspiration for the Emerald City in the Wizard of Oz. Oh, the "Del's" beach is great, too.

San Francisco, California

The culturally and architecturally rich "city by the bay" is filled with historic landmarks, wonderful restaurants and shops. You can take a cable car to Fisherman's Wharf for delicious seafood or dine in Chinatown. Don't miss the Golden Gate Bridge, fashionable Nob Hill, winding Lombard Street or the melt-in-your-mouth chocolate made at Ghiradelli Square

Seattle, Washington

Situated on Puget Sound, Seattle's lush rain forest surroundings have earned it the nickname the "Emerald City." Seattle's most distinct landmark is the six hundred feet tall Space Needle, originally built for the 1962 World's Fair. It offers a 360-degree view of the city's beautiful skyline, Puget Sound and the Cascade Mountains. And speaking of the nearby Cascade Mountains, there are numerous mountain getaways just outside of the city. Snoqualmie Falls is singular and sacred. Mount Rainier reigns supreme at 14,410 snow-covered feet. Leavenworth is a quaint Bavarian village. Roslyn is the fictional Cicely, Alaska from TV's Northern Exposure. And a helicopter flight over Mount St. Helens can be a blast. The in-town shopping mecca is the Pike's Place Market, where you can shop for handcrafted clothes and jewelry, and enjoy the amazing variety of flowers, famous fish markets and more.

Seward, Alaska

Named for William Seward, who negotiated the purchase of Alaska from Russia in 1867, this tiny fishing village is encircled by the Alaska Maritime National Refuge, the Kenai Wildlife Refuge, the Chugach National Forest and Kenai Fjords National Park. Kenai Fjords National Park is brand new, relatively speaking. New islands, cliffs and dramatic landmarks like Three Hole Point and Aialak Cape have been carved from retreating glaciers in just the last 50 years. Existing on the edge of a tectonic plate helps, too. Otters, seabirds, whales, black bears, moose and the silly-looking puffin are just a few of the Seward area's inhabitants. Seward is where our northernmost cruise port meets the southern terminus of the scenic Alaskan railroad.

Sitka, Alaska

Sitka is the best place in America to tour Czarist Russian history. That's because Sitka used to be the capital of Russian America until the Russians exhausted their fur-trading empire and sold Alaska in 1867 for two cents per acre. Watch an authentic Russian folk dance and peek at the

priceless icons and religious artifacts in the first Russian Orthodox Cathedral in America. For centuries, before the Russians settled in Sitka, the area was home to the Tlingit Indians. The Sitka National Historical Park marks the site of a battle between the two groups. Today, Sitka is a peaceful blend of Russian, Tlingit and American cultures. Get a bird's eye view of this enchanting area in a seaplane excursion. Seaplane tours take you over Sitka Sound to the lofty peaks and crystal clear lakes of Baranof Island. Once there, your plane touches down on a remote fjord so that you can step out onto the floats to enjoy the moment. Another way to see the island is with knowledgeable instructor/guides in an ocean-going two-person kayak.

Skagway, Alaska

Gold fever is still contagious in Skagway. Skagway was the gold rush gateway for prospectors during the great Klondike gold rush of the 1890s. The frontier spirit is alive and well in Skagway, the northernmost point of Alaska's Inside Passage. Relive the city's boomtown past in lively saloons, rousing dance hall revues, the Trail of '98 museum and on vintage streetcar tours. Get a taste for the prospector's life by feasting on Yukon stew and sourdough rolls in a local eatery. Board the historic White Pass & Yukon Railway, hike or take the Klondike summit coach tour along the "trail of '98" to pan for gold yourself. Should glaciers capture your fancy more than gold, you are invited to soar over majestic glaciers on a flight-seeing tour.

Valdez, Alaska

Hugging the shore of beautiful Prince William Sound, Valdez is known as the "Switzerland of Alaska" for its alpine meadows, fresh mountain air and lofty, snow-capped peaks. This bustling town is situated between the wildlife-rich waters of the Sound and the Chugach Mountains. Because Valdez is America's northernmost ice-free harbor, it was made the terminus of the 800-mile long Alaskan pipeline. Get a tour of the port facilities where giant tankers that are more than three football fields long load up with their cargo of black gold. Not far from here is the spectacular Keystone Canyon where Bridal Veil Falls tumbles 900 feet. Looking down from a helicopter is a great way to gaze at a glacier. For a bird's eye view of the magnificent scenery around Valdez, take a helicopter tour over the enormous Columbia glacier-40 miles long and 3000 feet thick.

Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

From its sparkling skyline to beautiful vistas of the archipelago of offshore islands in Puget Sound and the snow-capped Cascade Mountains, the city of Vancouver mixes cosmopolitan charm with natural beauty. Vancouver is known for its thriving downtown shopping districts like Robson Street and Gastown, where you can explore cobblestone alleys filled with galleries and boutiques. Visit Chinatown or Little Italy. Watch ships sail under Lion's Gate Bridge, which many consider more inspiring than San Francisco's Golden Gate. A Vancouver must-see is Stanley Park. You may explore this gorgeous, thousand acre, urban park by horse drawn carriage or stroll along the five and a half miles of pedestrian seawall, admiring the harbor view. This park on a peninsula has everything from a Cricket pitch surrounded by totem poles to an aquarium with killer whales and sea otters. In North Vancouver, the Capilano Suspension Footbridge, the world's longest and highest, hangs 230 feet above the Capilano River. Both the young and old enjoy swaying back and forth as they cross to a very pleasant forest trail hike and a dramatic waterfall.

Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

The "City of Gardens" is very English in style, with double-decker buses, cricket fields and afternoon high tea at the Empress Hotel. It feels like a little slice of Britain on Vancouver Island. You can shop for rare collectibles along Antique Row or fine imported British goods in the boutiques on Government Street. Be sure to wander through the world-renowned Butchart Gardens, a 35-acre park of floral splendor. Butchart Gardens is sectioned into various theme gardens – Japanese, Italian, English Rose and Butterfly gardens. They are all delightful. For a spectacular view of Victoria, look out the fifth floor tower of Craigdarroch Castle. Built in 1887-90, this lavish mansion features the best collection of residential stained and leaded glass on the west coast, magnificent woodwork, and period furnishings. It also features the storied family soap

opera of its coal baron owner, Robert Dunsmuir -- by far the wealthiest and most powerful man in British Columbia.

Lodging: Comforts in the Wild

Celebrity presents premier land-based lodgings from Fairbanks to Prince William Sound to complement the impeccable comforts aboard Celebrity Infinity and Celebrity Mercury. Whether you are overnighiting onboard or on shore, your stay will always be a stay in Celebrity style. Alaska's vast wilderness provides the spectacular setting for the finest of land-based accommodations. All along your wilderness journey, special rooms have been reserved for you at resort lodges, grand hotels and charming, rustic cottages. After each memorable day of exploration, you will have a warm, comfortable home base, with all the amenities you could wish for, in which to return. Rest assured that the accommodations on the mainland portion of your cruisetour are held to the highest Celebrity standards. As with life on Celebrity Infinity and Celebrity Mercury, every detail is taken care of and every expectation is exceeded.

Anchorage Marriott Downtown

The Marriott provides a central location near shops, museums and historic buildings for exploring Alaska's largest city-yet it's just minutes from the wilderness. As a guest at the Marriott, you'll enjoy a number of amenities such as a fitness center and an indoor swimming pool. You will have access to a nearby golf course. There is white-water rafting, as well. An optional excursion goes to the Anchorage Museum of History and Art, the Alaska Zoo and the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge, a natural habitat to 130 species of birds and other wildlife.

Denali Bluffs Hotel

The hotel sits high on a bluff just a short distance from the entrance to Denali National Park. An outdoor deck offers amazing views of Nenana Canyon that are sure to leave lasting memories of this incredible land. The hotel features relaxing sitting areas and a large stone fireplace. Each room is decorated in an Alaska theme, many with private balconies and mountain views. Optional excursions include a jetboat safari through the Alaska backcountry and a wildlife search of the Denali tundra, home to bears, caribou, moose and countless other animals.

Pike's Waterfront Lodge

On the beautiful Chena River in Fairbanks, Pike's offers a comfortable lodge setting in the "golden heart" of the Alaska interior. A lobby with a fireplace welcomes you, and a collection of photos and mementos offer a glimpse into the area's gold rush and riverboat past. Amenities include rooms with balconies and a spa with hot tub and sauna. Optional excursions include Arctic Circle flight seeing, the Palace Theater and Saloon.

River's Edge Resort Cottages

These secluded cottages are nestled along the banks of the Chena River in Fairbanks. Each charming cottage features a private patio opening onto a garden courtyard or landscaped riverbank. Just step outside for a relaxing stroll along the Chena River Walk. An optional excursion includes a tour by air over the Arctic Circle to the banks of the Yukon River to learn about life in an Athabascan Indian village.

Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge

Overlooking the Talkeetna River Valley, the lodge is in full view of magnificent Mt. McKinley, the single largest mountain in North America. The lodge offers all the amenities of a great hotel in a mountain lodge setting complete with a 45-foot stone fireplace and nature trails. It's located near the quaint town of Talkeetna, filled with Alaska history and local charm. The town is the staging area for Mt. McKinley climbers. Optional excursions include a bear watching expedition, a glacier flight seeing exploration and a river float trip.

Westin Alyeska Prince Hotel

Situated in Girdwood at the very foot of majestic Mt. Alyeska and nestled amongst mountains and glaciers, the chateau-style Alyeska Prince Hotel offers a four-diamond experience and first-class amenities in a rugged environment. The indoor pool has a cathedral ceiling and large windows with mountain views. You can enjoy a number of activities such as hiking, golfing and fishing. The adjacent Alyeska Tramway will carry you 2,300 feet above the valley for extraordinary views and a mountaintop restaurant.

The Wilderness Express Train**Cutaway****Railroad Map**

The romance of the rails lives again in Alaska as Celebrity has arranged an elegant way for you to continue to cruise on land aboard our exclusive, scenic passenger train, the Wilderness Express. Great detail has gone into every aspect of customizing the state-of-the-art double dome rail cars to ensure your complete comfort and enjoyment of the marvelous scenery around you.

From the moment you debarked from Celebrity Mercury, a knowledgeable Celebrity host escorts you on seamless transfers from deluxe motor coach to grand hotel to the Wilderness Express. Before boarding, the Celebrity concierge service informs you that a personal request you made has been handled. An attentive butler then helps you aboard the world's most advance dome rail car and hands you your amenities package, which includes binoculars, a map, and Celebrity's Alaska Nature Card guide to flora and fauna created in partnership with The Nature Conservancy. He then shows you to your seat - one with the greatest headroom of any train car in Alaska - on the dome level. All seats on the Wilderness Express are plush, roomy, wide seats that rotate 180 degrees in pairs, allowing you to face forward or form seating groups with family and friends, and capture the best views in all directions. For your complete comfort and relaxation, our seats recline and feature digital music selections through headphones, as well as individual flat screen TVs with Celebrity programming (CNN, movies, games, etc.) In addition, our rail cars are smoke-free and offer dome-level seating for the physically challenged.

The guaranteed departure time has arrived so it is time to pull out of the station. The Wilderness Express rolls past spruce forests, around a pristine inlet, over a 265-foot high gulch and through a gap in an enormous, snow-capped mountain range. The scenery seems so close you could touch it. That is because you are seeing it from the tallest double dome car, through the largest windows of any train in Alaska, for an unmatched 360-degree panoramic view. You call one of Celebrity's Alaska experts over to confirm that those are indeed grizzly bears on the left. Anxious to get a close up photo of them, you move to the deluxe open-air observation platform. Back inside the car, you are escorted to the bistro-style dining salon and seated at a well-appointed, window-view table. You will never miss a magical view, even while you are dining on gourmet entrees, such as freshly prepared, cooked-to-order Alaskan and Pacific Northwest specialties. Feeling quite satisfied, you return to your dome-level seat. Later, your butler pours afternoon tea, while a herd of caribou grazes in the shadow of Mt. McKinley. You wish the trip would never end.

Our Fleet

Native to the waters of the Inside Passage and the Gulf of Alaska are the rare and beautiful Celebrity Mercury and Celebrity Infinity. These magnificent ships are frequently seen cruising in the midst of awe-inspiring scenery or gracing the many fascinating ports of call along the region's coast. Look closely and you will see two ships that are so perfectly designed for sailing the last frontier that one would think they had been calved from the glaciers themselves. No expense was

spared nor any detail overlooked in creating two ships that would ensure that guests of Alaska would be indulged every minute of every lavish voyage.

The majestic beauty of Alaska's wilderness is enhanced by the well-appointed splendor within Celebrity Mercury and the new Celebrity Infinity. Inside, you'll discover finishes of rich wood, etched glass, stone and marble, with alluring museum-worthy artwork at every turn. Every voyage includes enriching lectures and insights into the real Alaska by Celebrity's native Alaskan guides and other experts and naturalists. Both ships pride themselves on their impeccable service by warm, attentive staff. Further exploration of Celebrity Mercury and Celebrity Infinity reveals the exclusive AquaSpa; the exquisite five-star gourmet cuisine of Master Chef Michel Roux - including specialties of the Pacific Northwest; two-story grand dining rooms; specialty restaurants; the most complete beauty, health and fitness amenities on the sea; splendid views from the glass dome of the Conservatory and 15-foot-high observation lounges; luxurious, spacious staterooms and suites; an intimate cigar bar; a martini bar; a champagne bar; the Celebrity Theatre and so much more.

To learn more details about Celebrity Infinity and Celebrity Mercury, [click here](#) and then on either Infinity or Mercury.

Itineraries

Because Alaska is so vast and there are so many memorable things to see and do while traveling the "last frontier," we present, not one, but two ways to explore our Alaska in Celebrity style.

Celebrity Cruises

Choose an unforgettable cruise aboard Celebrity Mercury or the new Celebrity Infinity through the Inside Passage and along the Gulf of Alaska.

Magnificent glaciers and mountain vistas, whales and moose, native villages and gold rush towns are all part of the distinctive charm of a Celebrity Alaskan cruise. Your experience of the breathtaking beauty of Alaska - its unique scenery, cultures and wildlife - will be enhanced by the insights of Celebrity's onboard Alaskan experts and naturalists. You are surrounded by great beauty inside our ships as well. Celebrity Mercury and Celebrity Infinity are revered throughout Alaskan waters for their unrivaled comfort and elegance, famed gourmet cuisine, stylish staterooms and suites and the largest spa afloat.

Celebrity offers 7 Alaskan cruises that range from 7 to 11 nights and travel to various combinations of glaciers and ports of call.

Celebrity Cruisetours

To discover the true heart and soul of Alaska, you may choose to combine a fabulous Celebrity Mercury cruise with an additional 3 to 7 days exploring the diverse natural wonders and intriguing cultures of south central Alaska and the interior lands.

On our hosted cruisetours, you will travel by the custom-dome Wilderness Express traincar, deluxe motor coach or plane through the amazing Alaska landscape to premier wilderness lodges, hotels and cottages. Destinations on the land portion of these Cruisetours range from Anchorage and Fairbanks to native villages and Mt. McKinley. Adventures range from river rafting and Arctic circle flight seeing to experiencing a lumberjack show and a championship dog sled exhibition. All cruisetours ensure the comfort and ease of seamless, all-inclusive travel escorted by knowledgeable Celebrity hosts and Alaska experts, naturalists and native guides.

For your complete Alaska experience, Celebrity has designed 13 cruisetour itineraries, from 9 to 13 nights total. *There are no land-only itineraries.*

To help you make decisions about which itinerary is just right for you, grids have been provided to cross-reference the Alaskan destinations and adventures that most interest you with the cruise or cruisetour that offers them. Click the cruise or cruisetour of your choice on the grid and you will be sent to an individual, printable itinerary page complete with sail dates, durations, descriptions and map.

Itineraries

Cruisetours

(1) Mt. Alyeska & Anchorage 9-Nights

5/11, 5/25, 6/8, 6/22, 7/6, 7/20, 8/3, 8/17, 8/31

Days 1-7:

Northbound Glacier Cruise

Day 8: Seward/Alyeska (Girdwood)

Mercury arrives in Seward, where your Cruisetour host is waiting. Travel by deluxe motor coach on a scenic trip to Alyeska (Girdwood) and the Westin Alyeska Prince Hotel. Enjoy a day of hiking, golfing and fishing and take the Alyeska Tramway 2,300 feet above the valley for extraordinary views.

Day 9: Alyeska (Girdwood)/ Anchorage

Travel by deluxe motor coach to Anchorage and visit the Alaska Native Heritage Center. Or you can choose an optional land excursion*, such as the Eagle River rafting adventure or brown bear flightseeing expedition. You'll stay overnight at the Anchorage Marriott Downtown.

Day 10: Anchorage/Home

Your host will transfer you by deluxe motor coach to the Anchorage Airport.

(2) Anchorage Highlights 9-Nights

5/16, 5/30, 6/13, 6/27, 7/11, 7/25, 8/8, 8/22, 9/5

Day 1: Anchorage

Upon arrival in Anchorage you'll be greeted by your Cruisetour host and transferred by deluxe motor coach to your hotel, the Anchorage Marriott Downtown.

Day 2: Anchorage/Alyeska (Girdwood)

Enjoy a visit to the Alaska Native Heritage Center before departing from Anchorage. Experience the natural wonders of Alaska as you travel by deluxe motor coach to Alyeska (Girdwood). You'll stay overnight at the four-diamond Westin Alyeska Prince Hotel.

Day 3: Alyeska (Girwood)/ Anchorage

Experience breathtaking views as you ride 2,300 feet above the valley on the Alyeska Tramway. In the afternoon, you'll travel by deluxe motor coach to Seward where Mercury awaits.

Day 4-10:

Southbound Glacier Cruise

(3) Denali Wilderness Journey 10-Nights

5/11, 5/25, 6/8, 6/22, 7/6, 7/20, 8/3, 8/17, 8/31

Days 1-7:

Northbound Glacier Cruise

Day 8: Seward/Alyeska (Girdwood)

Mercury arrives in Seward, where your Cruisetour host is waiting. You'll be taken by deluxe motor coach to Alyeska (Girdwood) and the Westin Alyeska Prince Hotel. The afternoon and evening are yours to hike, golf, fish or simply enjoy the extraordinary views 2,300 feet above the valley on the Alyeska Tramway. You'll stay overnight in this four-diamond resort hotel at the very foot of majestic Mt. Alyeska.

Day 9: Denali/Alyeska (Girdwood)

Enjoy a scenic drive as you travel by deluxe motor coach to Denali, where the mountains rise from the sea. At the McKinley overlook you may catch sight of the largest mountain in North America. Upon arrival in Denali, you can embark on an optional land excursion* such as white-water rafting or a backcountry jetboat safari. Overnight at the Denali Bluffs Hotel overlooking the valley and surrounded by the Alaska Range.

Day 10: Denali/Anchorage

In the morning, you'll experience a Natural History Tour of the six-million acre Denali National Park, one of the world's greatest wildlife sanctuaries. Stay on the lookout for moose, caribou, Dall sheep and more. In the afternoon, travel by deluxe motor coach through the Alaska wilderness to Anchorage and stay overnight at the Anchorage Marriott Downtown.

Day 11: Anchorage/Home

Your host will transfer you by deluxe motor coach to the Anchorage Airport.

(4) Denali's Natural Wonders 10-Nights

5/15, 5/29, 6/12, 6/26, 7/10, 7/24, 8/7, 8/21, 9/4

Day 1: Anchorage

Arrive in Anchorage, greeted by your Cruisetour host who will transfer you by deluxe motor coach to the Anchorage Marriott Downtown.

Day 2: Anchorage/Denali

Travel by deluxe motor coach with scenic wilderness and mountain views to Denali, stopping enroute at the McKinley overlook. In Denali you'll have time for optional land excursions* such as white-water rafting, a backcountry jetboat safari or Denali Dinner Theatre. Stay overnight at the Denali Bluffs Hotel, overlooking the Nenana Canyon.

Day 3: Denali/Alyeska (Girdwood)

In the morning you'll have the chance to see wildlife such as bears, moose and caribou on the Natural History Tour in Denali National Park. Then experience even more of the natural wonders of Alaska as you motor coach to Alyeska (Girdwood). En route you'll stop for lunch in Anchorage. You'll stay overnight at the four-diamond Westin Alyeska Prince Hotel, at the foot of Mt. Alyeska.

Day 4: Alyeska (Girdwood)/ Seward

Experience breathtaking views as you ride 2,300 feet above the valley on the Alyeska Tramway. Go fishing, or hike on trails through forests and wildflower meadows. In the afternoon you'll travel by deluxe motor coach on a scenic ride to the fishing village of Seward, where Mercury awaits.

Days 5-11:

Southbound Glacier Cruise

(5) Majestic Mt. McKinley Northbound 11-Nights***5/11, 5/25, 6/8, 6/22, 7/6, 7/20, 8/3, 8/17, 8/31***

Days 1-7:

Northbound Glacier Cruise

Day 8: Seward/Anchorage/ Talkeetna

Mercury arrives in Seward, where your Cruisetour host is waiting. Our deluxe motor coach will take you to Anchorage for lunch and on to the charming town of Talkeetna, the staging center for Mt. McKinley climbers. Stay overnight at the Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge overlooking a river valley in full view of Mt. McKinley. You'll have time to explore or opt for a land excursion* such as a bear-watching expedition, river-float trip or glacier flightseeing tour.

Day 9: Talkeetna/Denali

Your morning is open to explore Talkeetna or choose an optional land excursion*. Midday, enjoy lunch onboard as you take in the amazing scenery in the plush comfort of our custom dome traincars to Denali. You will stay overnight at the Denali Bluffs Hotel, with spectacular canyon views.

Day 10: Denali/Fairbanks

An early morning Tundra Wildlife Search in Denali National Park will take you deep into the habitat of wildlife such as bears, moose, caribou and wolves. Then travel by custom dome traincar to Fairbanks, Alaska's second largest city. You'll stay overnight at Pike's Waterfront Lodge or quaint River's Edge Resort Cottages, both on the banks of the Chena River.

Day 11: Fairbanks

Enjoy a city tour of Fairbanks, filled with gold-rush history and the spirit of the frontier. You'll also cruise on a scenic glacier river on the Riverboat Discovery, an authentic sternwheeler. Native guides will take you ashore to an Athabascan Indian village and you'll see Susan Butcher's championship sled dog team in action. You'll stay a second night in Fairbanks.

Day 12: Fairbanks/Home

Your host will transfer you by deluxe motor coach to the Fairbanks Airport.

(6) Majestic Mt. McKinley Southbound 11-Nights***5/14, 5/28, 6/11, 6/25, 7/9, 7/23, 8/6, 8/20, 9/3***

Day 1-2: Fairbanks

Upon your arrival in Fairbanks, you'll be greeted by your Cruisetour host and transferred to Pike's Waterfront Lodge or the quaint River's Edge Resort Cottages, both on the banks of the Chena River.

Enjoy a tour of Alaska's second largest city, and recapture the frontier spirit as you enjoy a tour to the El Dorado Gold Mine. Board the Riverboat Discovery, an authentic sternwheeler, for a cruise along a scenic glacier river. You'll stop at an Athabascan Indian Village, see a bush pilot demonstration and watch a championship sled dog team in action. Your evening is free to explore Alaskaland and to shop for native handicrafts in Fairbanks, or take off on an optional Arctic Circle flightseeing land excursion*. You'll stay a second night in Fairbanks.

Day 3: Fairbanks/Denali

Enjoy dramatic views on your motor coach ride to Denali, stopping en route at the rural community of Nenana. In the afternoon, you'll take the Tundra Wildlife Search in the six million acre Denali National Park. Stay overnight at the Denali Bluffs Hotel, overlooking Nenana Canyon.

Day 4: Denali/Talkeetna

Your morning is open for an optional land excursion* such as river rafting on the Nenana River in Denali National Park or a backcountry jetboat safari deep in the Alaska Range. In the afternoon, our deluxe motor coach will take you on a scenic ride to Talkeetna, where you'll stay at the Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge in full view of magnificent Mr. McKinley.

Day 5: Talkeetna/Anchorage/ Seward

Your morning is open for an optional land excursion* such as a bear-watching expedition or a float trip on the Talkeetna River through prime wildlife habitat. Your deluxe motor coach tour will stop in Anchorage before continuing on through dramatic landscapes to Seward and setting sail on Mercury.

Days 6-12:

Southbound Glacier Cruise

(7) Frontier Spirit Tour 11-Nights

5/11, 5/25, 6/8, 6/22, 7/6, 7/20, 8/3, 8/17, 8/31

Days 1-7:

Northbound Glacier Cruise

Day 8: Seward/Anchorage/ Fairbanks

Arrive in the quaint fishing village of Seward, greeted by your Cruisetour host. Enjoy the scenic drive by deluxe motor-coach to Anchorage and fly to Fairbanks, the golden heart of Alaska. Upon arrival, you'll recapture the frontier spirit on a tour of this gold-rush town. Stay overnight at Pike's Waterfront Lodge or River's Edge Resort Cottages, both on the banks of the Chena River.

Day 9: Fairbanks/Denali

Enjoy dramatic views on your motor coach ride to Denali, stopping en route at the rural community of Nenana. In the afternoon, you'll take the Tundra Wildlife Search in the six million acre Denali National Park. Stay overnight at the Denali Bluffs Hotel, overlooking Nenana Canyon.

Day 10: Denali/Talkeetna

Your morning is open for optional excursions* such as river rafting or a backcountry jetboat safari. Then you'll travel by custom dome traincar to the charming town of Talkeetna, and stay at the Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge in full view of Mt. McKinley. In the evening you can opt for a bear-watching expedition* or glacier exploration land excursion*.

Day 11: Talkeetna/Anchorage

The day is yours for exploration and optional land excursions*, such as a float trip on the Talkeetna River through prime wildlife habitat. Enjoy spectacular scenery from your traincar on your way to Anchorage, Alaska's largest city. You'll stay overnight at the Anchorage Marriott Downtown.

Day 12: Anchorage/Home

Your host will transfer you by deluxe motor coach to the Anchorage Airport.

(8) Golden Heart of Alaska 12-Nights

5/11, 5/25, 6/8, 6/22, 7/6, 7/20, 8/3, 8/17, 8/31

Days 1-7:

Northbound Glacier Cruise

Day 8: Seward/Anchorage

Arrive in Seward and meet your Cruisetour host at the pier. Travel by deluxe motor coach to Anchorage for an afternoon tour of Alaska's largest city. You'll visit the Alaska Native Heritage Center and learn about the first people of Alaska. Stay overnight at the Anchorage Marriott Downtown, near museums and shops.

Day 9: Anchorage/Talkeetna

Enjoy the Alaska scenery as you travel by custom dome traincar to the charming town of Talkeetna, the staging area for Mt. McKinley climbers. Stay overnight at the Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge, in full view of Mt. McKinley.

Day 10: Talkeetna/Denali

Spend the morning hiking nature trails or choose an optional land excursion* such as a bear-watching expedition or glacier flightseeing exploration tour. Enjoy lunch as you travel by custom dome traincar to Denali, with the evening open for optional activities such as the Denali Dinner Theatre*. Stay overnight at the Denali Bluffs Hotel.

Day 11: Denali/Fairbanks

Early morning is one of the best times to spot wildlife, and that's when you'll begin a Tundra Wildlife Search in Denali National Park. Then travel by custom dome traincar to Fairbanks, the "golden heart" of Alaska. Stay overnight at Pike's Waterfront Lodge or River's Edge Resort Cottages, both overlooking the beautiful Chena River.

Day 12: Fairbanks

Capture the gold-rush spirit on a Fairbanks city tour and a visit to the El Dorado Gold Mine. Then cruise on the Riverboat Discovery, an authentic sternwheeler. Stay a second night in Fairbanks, and shop for Indian arts and crafts such as birch-bark baskets and porcupine quill jewelry.

Day 13: Fairbanks/Home

Your host will transfer you by deluxe motor coach to the Fairbanks Airport.

(9) Wild Alaska's Interior 12-Nights

5/13, 5/27, 6/10, 6/24, 7/8, 7/22, 8/5, 8/19, 9/2

Days 1-2: Fairbanks

Upon arrival in Fairbanks, meet your Cruisetour host and transfer to Pike's Waterfront Lodge or River's Edge Resort Cottages, both on the Chena River.

Enjoy a city tour of Fairbanks and recapture the area's frontier spirit with a tour of the El Dorado Gold Mine. Then board the Riverboat Discovery, an authentic sternwheeler, for a tour that includes an Athabascan Indian village and bush pilot demonstration. Your evening is open for an optional land excursion* such as an Arctic Circle flightseeing tour. Or you can shop for Native handicrafts. You'll stay a second night in Fairbanks.

Day 3: Fairbanks/Denali

Travel by custom dome traincar through spectacular wilderness areas to Denali, where you'll stay at the Denali Bluffs Hotel overlooking a canyon. In the afternoon you will enjoy a Tundra Wildlife Search in Denali National Park, home to bears, moose, wolves and caribou.

Day 4: Denali/Talkeetna

Your morning is open for optional land excursions* such as Nenana river rafting in Denali National Park or a backcountry jetboat safari deep in the Alaska Range. Then travel by custom dome traincar to the charming town of Talkeetna, the staging center for Mt. McKinley climbers. Overnight at the Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge in full view of Mt. McKinley.

Day 5: Talkeetna/Anchorage

Optional land excursions* include a Talkeetna River float trip through prime wildlife habitat, a bear-watching excursion or a glacier flightseeing exploration tour. Later, experience even more of the wilder-ness on a deluxe motor coach tour to Anchorage, where you'll stay at the Anchorage Marriott Downtown.

Day 6: Anchorage/Seward

Take a tour of Alaska's largest city including the fascinating Native Heritage Center. Travel by deluxe motor coach to Seward and set sail on Mercury.

Days 7-13:

Southbound Glacier Cruise

(10) Denali Explorer 12-Nights

5/11, 5/25, 6/8, 6/22, 7/6, 7/20, 8/3, 8/17, 8/31

Days 1-7:

Northbound Glacier Cruise

Day 8: Seward/Alyeska (Girdwood)

Mercury arrives in Seward. Travel by deluxe motor coach to Alyeska (Girdwood). The rest of the day is yours for exploring, hiking, golfing or fishing. You'll stay overnight at the four-diamond Westin Alyeska Prince Hotel, at the foot of Mt. Alyeska. The adjacent tramway will carry you 2,300 feet above the valley for extraordinary views.

Day 9: Alyeska (Girdwood)/ Anchorage/Fairbanks

Board our deluxe motor coach to Anchorage then fly to Fairbanks, the "golden heart" of Alaska. Enjoy an afternoon cruise on the Riverboat Discovery to an Athabascan Indian village. You'll stay overnight at Pike's Waterfront Lodge or River's Edge Resort Cottages, both on the banks of the Chena River in Fairbanks.

Day 10: Fairbanks/Denali

Travel by custom dome traincar to Denali, where you will embark on a Tundra Wildlife Search in Denali National Park, one of the world's great wildlife sanctuaries. Overnight at the Denali Bluffs Hotel, overlooking a canyon and surrounded by mountains.

Day 11: Denali/Talkeetna

In the morning, you can embark on an optional land excursion* such as river rafting or a backcountry jetboat safari through Denali National Park. Then enjoy the scenic wilderness as you travel by custom dome traincar to the charming town of Talkeetna, the staging center for Mt. McKinley climbers. Stay overnight at the Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge in full view of magnificent Mt. McKinley.

Day 12: Talkeetna/Anchorage

Your morning is open for optional land excursions* such as a bear-watching expedition or a glacier flightseeing exploration tour. Then board our custom dome traincar to Anchorage, where you'll stay at the Anchorage Marriott Downtown, near museums, shops and restaurants.

Day 13: Anchorage/Home

Your host will transfer you by deluxe motor coach to the Anchorage Airport.

(11) Denali Discovery 12-Nights

5/13, 5/27, 6/10, 6/24, 7/8, 7/22, 8/5, 8/19, 9/2

Day 1: Anchorage

Your Cruisetour host will greet you at the airport for transfer to the Anchorage Marriott Downtown.

Day 2: Anchorage/Talkeetna

Enjoy the amazing Alaska landscape as you travel by custom dome traincar to the picturesque town of Talkeetna. Your after-noon and evening are open for optional land excursions* such as a glacier flight-seeing exploration tour, a bear-watching expedition, or a river-float trip. You'll stay overnight at the Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge in full view of Mt. McKinley.

Day 3: Talkeetna/Denali

Spend the morning in Talkeetna, the staging center for Mt. McKinley climbers. Three glacier-fed rivers converge here, offering superb fishing for salmon and trout. Travel by custom dome traincar to Denali, where you'll stay at the Denali Bluffs Hotel, overlooking a canyon and surrounded by mountains.

Day 4: Denali

Your morning is open for optional land excursions* such as Nenana River rafting through Denali National Park or a back-country jetboat safari deep in the Alaska Range. Then take a Tundra Wildlife Search through the Park, where you might see grizzlies, moose and caribou. Stay a second night in Denali.

Day 5: Denali/Fairbanks

Travel by deluxe motor coach to Fairbanks, stopping en route at Nenana. In the afternoon you can board the Riverboat Discovery for a cruise down a scenic glacier river to an Indian village. You'll also see a championship sled dog team in action. Stay overnight at Pike's Waterfront Lodge or River's Edge Resort Cottages, both on the Chena River.

Day 6: Fairbanks/Anchorage/ Seward

Capture the frontier spirit of Fairbanks on a city tour, then fly to Anchorage. Enjoy a deluxe motor coach tour with spectacular views of wild Alaska as you travel to Seward and set sail on Mercury.

Days 7-13:

Southbound Glacier Cruise

(12) Scenic Explorer 13-Nights

5/11, 5/25, 6/8, 6/22, 7/6, 7/20, 8/3, 8/17, 8/31

Days 1-7:

Northbound Glacier Cruise

Day 8: Seward/Alyeska (Girdwood)

Mercury arrives in historic Seward. Travel by deluxe motor coach to the town of Alyeska (Girdwood), where you'll stay at the four-diamond Westin Alyeska Prince Hotel, at the foot of Mt. Alyeska. Take the tramway 2,300 feet above the valley for breathtaking views.

Day 9: Alyeska (Girdwood)/ Anchorage/Talkeetna

Embark on a scenic journey by deluxe motor coach past the beautiful Turnagain Arm with mountains rising from the sea, to Anchorage, and on to Talkeetna. Here you'll stay two nights at the Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge in full view of magnificent Mt. McKinley.

Day 10: Talkeetna

This picturesque community is now the staging center for Mt. McKinley climbers. Three glacier-fed rivers converge here and offer superb fishing. Optional land excursions* include a bear-

watching expedition or a glacier flightseeing exploration tour. Stay a second night and relax by the lodge's 45-foot stone fireplace.

Day 11: Talkeetna/Denali

Travel by custom dome traincar to Denali, where you'll stay at the Denali Bluffs Hotel near the entrance to Denali National Park. Optional evening activities* include the Denali Dinner Theatre.

Day 12: Denali/Fairbanks

A Tundra Wildlife Search of Denali National Park will take you deep into the habitat of moose, bears, caribou and wolves. Then you'll travel by custom dome traincar to Fairbanks, where you'll stay two nights at Pike's Waterfront Lodge or River's Edge Resort Cottages.

Day 13: Fairbanks

Enjoy a fascinating city tour of Fairbanks and the El Dorado Gold Mine, where Alaska's gold-rush history comes alive. You'll also ride on the Riverboat Discovery to an Indian village.

Day 14: Fairbanks/Home

Your host will transfer you by deluxe motor coach to the Fairbanks Airport.

(13) The Great Land Expedition 13-Nights

5/12, 5/26, 6/9, 6/23, 7/7, 7/21, 8/4, 8/18, 9/1

Day 1-2: Fairbanks

Transfer from the airport to Pike's Waterfront Lodge or River's Edge Resort Cottages.

Capture the frontier spirit on a tour of Fairbanks and the El Dorado Gold Mine. Then board the Riverboat Discovery for a cruise down the world's greatest glacier-fed river and a tour of an Indian village. Your evening is open for an optional land excursion* such as the Arctic Circle flightseeing tour. Stay a second night in Fairbanks.

Day 3: Fairbanks/Denali

Enjoy the scenery as you travel by custom dome traincar to Denali, where you'll stay at the Denali Bluffs Hotel. Look for bears, moose and caribou on the Tundra Wildlife Search in Denali National Park.

Day 4: Denali/Talkeetna

This morning, opt for a backcountry jetboat safari* or river rafting land excursion* in Denali National Park. Then travel by custom dome traincar to the picturesque community of Talkeetna. Stay overnight at the Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge in full view of Mt. McKinley.

Day 5: Talkeetna

You'll have the day at your leisure to choose an optional land excursion* such as fishing for salmon or trout in a glacier-fed river, a glacier flightseeing exploration tour or a bear-watching expedition. Stay a second night in Talkeetna.

Day 6: Talkeetna/Anchorage/ Alyeska (Girdwood)

Take a scenic deluxe motor coach drive to Anchorage with time to explore Alaska's largest city. Then continue on past the dramatic views of Turnagain Arm to Alyeska (Girdwood). Stay overnight at the four-diamond Westin Alyeska Prince Hotel.

Day 7: Alyeska (Girdwood)/ Seward

Enjoy hiking, golfing and fishing at this chateau-style resort, nestled amongst mountains and glaciers. The Mt. Alyeska Tramway will carry you 2,300 feet above the valley for extraordinary views. Travel by motor coach to historic Seward and set sail on Mercury.

Days 8-14:
Southbound Glacier Cruise

Cruises

Infinity

Inside Passage 7-Nights

5/11, 5/18, 5/25, 6/1, 6/8, 6/15, 6/22, 6/29, 7/6, 7/13, 7/20, 7/27, 8/3, 8/10, 8/17, 8/24, 9/7, 9/14

Southbound Pacific Coast 9-Nights

9/21.

Northbound Pacific Coast 10-Nights

5/1.

Mercury

Northbound Glacier 7-Nights

5/11, 5/25, 6/8, 6/22, 7/6, 7/20, 8/3, 8/17, 8/31

Southbound Glacier 7-Nights

5/18, 6/1, 6/15, 6/29, 7/13, 7/27, 8/10, 8/24, 9/7

Inside Passage 7-Nights

9/14, 9/21

Northbound Pacific Coast 11-Nights

4/30.

Reservations

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