



Are We There Yet?, LLC

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Alaska by Land

Explore Alaska, the Last Frontier, from Fairbanks & Denali National Park to Talkeetna and Anchorage! May 19-25, 2018

Specifically tailored for those who only wish to do the land portion of our tour, we have created this itinerary to allow you to see the highlights of the 49th state. We will explore the Iditarod racing team kennels, museums dedicated to ice carving, ride the rails to Denali National Park, shoot across the river on a jet boat, and visit a Musk Ox farm. Plus, enjoy free time to experience the majesty of Alaska's outdoors in Denali!

Saturday, May 19, 2018 – Head North to Alaska!

Meet your tour directors Dea and Declan at the Saint Louis Airport as we depart on Alaska Airlines to **Fairbanks**.

The largest city in the north of Alaska, Fairbanks experiences the largest temperature differentials of any city in the world, with summer temperatures reaching over 90 degrees and winter temperatures falling to -40 or more! Fortunately, May temperatures are wonderful, and we will arrive in the late afternoon and head to our hotel, Bear Lodge, our home for the next two nights. Upon arrival, enjoy dinner on your own at the wonderful restaurant in the hotel.

This evening is free to relax or visit the nearby **Auto Museum** opening especially for our group. A fascinating collection of historic automobiles, the museum tells the story of challenges that automobiles face in this extreme climate. Learn the fascinating history of the state's growth once an alternative to horses and dogsleds was made available. And most surprising is the display of the timeline of ladies fashions during the new era of travel by automobile.



Sunday, May 20, 2018 – Alaska's Hot Springs, Ice Museums, and Dinner and Dog Teams

After breakfast this morning, we depart for our **Fairbanks City Tour**. Learn how the city grew from a small trading post to the largest city in the interior of Alaska. We also stop to see the famous **Alaskan Pipeline**, which traverses the state. Upon arrival at **Chena Hot Springs** we enjoy a group lunch. Although there are year-round residents in the area, Chena Hot Springs is a privately owned, 440-acre, year-round resort. Gold miners discovered the springs in 1905 and by 1912 Chena Hot Springs was the premier place to soak for residents in the booming town of Fairbanks. The water comes out at 165 degrees, so it is cooled before you take a dip. Afterwards, explore the **Aurora Ice Museum**, with many handmade ice carvings on display. Bundle up before entering. You can even purchase their famous Appletini cocktail served in a glass made of carved ice!



We then return to Fairbanks and head to **Trailbreaker Kennels**, founded by four-time Iditarod Champion Susan Butcher and her husband, Yukon Quest champion David Monson. We will enjoy a tour of the kennels and an incredible dinner as we learn about the brave men and women who raise their dog sled teams and compete in these amazing races. Plus, we even get to **hold some of**

the new puppies! After a wonderful dinner at Trailbreaker, we return to Bear Lodge. **(B, L, D)**

Monday, May 21, 2018 – Ride the Rails to Denali National Park



This morning we depart Fairbanks and board the **Wilderness Train** as we head south to Denali National Park. The Wilderness Express operates on the Alaska Railroad's Denali Star route and runs all the way south to Anchorage, but our destination is the jewel of Alaskan National Park, Denali. Keep an eye out for all sorts of animals while we ride – we have seen caribou, moose and one year, Declan even saw a porcupine climbing a tree! Enjoy breakfast on board for a most scenic meal before we arrive in Denali, where you can wander through the exhibits at the Park Center. This evening we have a special treat – **dinner during our “Welcome to Subartic” lecture at the Denali Education Center!** We then head to the Riverview at Bluffs for our 2 night stay in Denali. **(B, D)**

Tuesday, May 22, 2018 – Denali National Park Tour

Enjoy breakfast in the hotel this morning before our early morning tour into **Denali National Park**. The animals are more active in the morning, so have your cameras ready! (This photo is one of Declan's from last time he went into the park.) We have chosen the longer tour (6-8 hours) to get you deeper into the park, for maximum opportunity for wildlife viewing. We will have a boxed lunch while traveling and carry everything out of the park we carried into the park. When we arrive back at the hotel this afternoon, the day is yours to explore. Remember, the sunset is after 9pm. There are numerous **optional excursions** to be had in the area, such as an ATV ride, Whitewater Rafting, a “Flightseeing” tour or even golfing. Or enjoy a restful afternoon looking at the spectacular scenery from the hotel. Dinner is on your own this evening. **(B, L)**



Wednesday, May 23, 2018 – The Quirky Town of Talkeetna, inspiration for the show *Northern Exposure*



After breakfast this morning, we head south to **Talkeetna**. The town featured in *Northern Exposure* is patterned off of Talkeetna, and while the show ended in the 1990s, the quirkiness of Talkeetna lives on today. The mayor of the town had been a cat named Stubbs from 1998 until his death in 2017 – it is widely rumored that one of his kittens, Denali, will follow in his father's paw-steps. Talkeetna is also home to the Talkeetna Bachelor Society, where men fill out a form on what they are looking for in a woman and women compete in various contests to prove their skills fitting an Alaskan bride. One gentleman's desire was a wife who owned a late model truck and a gas powered chain saw! It's why they say in Alaska if you're a woman looking for a man, “the odds are good, but the goods are odd!” Enjoy lunch on your own at one of the amazing restaurants before we board our Mahay family **Jet Boats** and explore the three rivers that come together outside of town. Dinner is on your own this evening. **(B)**

Thursday, May 24, 2018 – Anchorage

This morning we enjoy a **special breakfast at the Talkeetna Roadhouse**. Famous for serving meals to the climbers who seek to summit Mt. Denali, the pancakes are larger than the plates they serve them on! They also have incredible eggs, breakfast meats, and more. We then enjoy a **coach tour of the Matsu Valley**. Sheltered by the Alaskan Range and the Talkeetna Mountains, the valley is the fastest growing area of Alaska, both in population as well as with world record sized cabbages and assorted vegetables. On our way to Anchorage, we stop and **tour a Musk Ox farm**. These animals date back to the Ice Age, but were on the brink of extinction in the 1940s until John Teal created a non-profit in 1954 to domesticate the herd and save the species. The wool is incredibly warm and makes wonderful yarn. We arrive in Anchorage for lunch on own and free time to explore the largest city in Alaska. There are many wonderful shops, restaurants, and museums to visit. We then gather for **our final group dinner** at our hotel for the evening, Lakefront Anchorage, before our flight to Seattle tomorrow. **(B, D)**



Friday, May 25, 2018 – Depart for Seattle

We have an extremely early morning flight (6:25 am) to Seattle. Our land only travelers will then have a connecting flight back to Saint Louis, while those doing the cruise will head to the ship. We hope you have many fond memories of your adventures in the 49th State. Thank you for traveling with us!

Tour includes:

- Round trip transportation on Alaska Airlines
- Six nights in wonderful hotels, including 2 night stays in Fairbanks and in the Denali area!
- City tour of Fairbanks, visit Chena Hot Springs & Ice Museum, and Trailbreaker Kennels!
- Wilderness Train to Denali, dinner and lecture, and long excursion into the national park!
- Talkeetna visit, Roadhouse Breakfast and Jet Boat excursion
- Mat-Su Valley tour, including Musk Ox farm and Anchorage Free Time.
- 10 meals, including special dinners you can't do on your own like at Trailbreaker Kennels!
- All other Activities as indicated
- Baggage Handling
- Professional Tour Directors Dea Hoover and Declan Rutan
- All gratuities including step-on guides, included meals, driver and director

Please note: Any notice of fuel surcharges imposed by carriers and/or attractions will be disclosed at least 30 days prior to tour departure.

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Make your reservation with a \$1,500 non-refundable deposit per person due to the nature of purchasing airline tickets and holding hotels during peak travel season (*Note: if we have to cancel your deposit will be refunded*).

Once the space on this and the combo tour (land and sea) fills, a wait list will be formed. Please send a check or call with a credit card along with your legal name, address, phone number, and all roommates' names if you are sharing a room, and any dietary or walking restrictions.

We encourage all travelers to purchase travel protection with initial deposit, and include travel protection payment with deposit if purchasing. Please remember that certain benefits are time sensitive and coverage will begin upon purchase, including protecting your deposit. Plans also help provide coverage for unexpected circumstances prior to the tour, but most importantly DURING the tour and protect your trip and your investment.

Balance on base tour price is due Feb 10, 2018, and no refunds will be given after that time. If you purchase Travel Protection and need to cancel you must file a claim - the money is not reimbursed from our office.

Remind your friends and family we sell gift certificates for any denomination!