

Below is the proposed itinerary for the trip. As is true on any adventure travel trip, plans for any specific day may be modified due to weather considerations, unforeseen circumstances, new opportunities, and group interests.

DAY 1

Arrive Fairbanks, Transfer to Chena Hot Springs

Our trip begins when we meet in the Golden Heart of Alaska, Fairbanks. Plan to arrive at the Fairbanks airport in time to meet the group at 3:00PM. We'll drive together to Chena Hot Springs in plenty of time to enjoy a rejuvenating soak before our trip orientation and dinner. Although the sun technically sets for about three hours on this day, it never really gets dark. You may find yourself soaking and exploring long past your bedtime! (D)

DAY 2

Hike Angel Rocks Trail, Soak in Hotsprings

We'll spend the day in the vicinity of Chena Hot Springs, so there will be ample opportunity to enjoy the heat before breakfast and after we hike. We'll earn our picnic lunch by hiking up to explore the rugged beauty of the granite tors on Angel Rocks Trail. If you still have energy at the end of the day, there may be time to go for a horse or ATV ride at the hot springs. Hiking distance: 4 miles. (B, L, D)

DAY 3

Drive to Denali, Hike Triple Lakes Loop

After a final soak in the hot springs and a hearty breakfast, we'll continue our adventure by driving to Denali National Park. Along the way we'll travel through a variety of Alaska's ecological biomes, and cross the mighty Nenana and Tanana Rivers. Keep your eyes open: moose, bears, beavers and more are residents of this area, so hopefully we'll get lucky and see them all. We'll picnic along the way, and arrive at our Denali home in time to hike the Triple Lakes Loop, explore the local flora and fauna, and capture some amazing views. Hiking distance: approximately 5 miles. Driving time total: approximately 4 hours. (B, L, D)

DAY 4

Visit Visitor's Center and Murie Science Center, Hike Mt Healy

Today we'll have more time to explore the wonders of Denali National Park. The park Visitor Center and Murie Science Center can teach us a great deal about the area's history, geology, plants, and animals. Once we've educated ourselves, we'll continue our explorations by hiking up Mount Healy for lunch and, hopefully, views of Denali, The Great One. Hiking distance: 5.5 miles, 1,700 ft. elevation gain. (B, L, D)

DAY 5

Free Morning, Rafting on the Nenana River

We'll have this morning free to pursue our own explorations of Denali. Options include flight seeing, ATV adventures, visiting with sled dogs, local hikes, and much more! After lunch (on your own), we'll meet back at our cabins to go rafting on the Nenana River. On this splash tour, everyone paddles the boat down a scenic 11 mile stretch. Rafting here is loads of fun with class II and III rapids. There's always a chance of seeing bears, moose, sheep, and caribou. Over dinner we can share tales of our chosen adventures of the day. (B, D)

DAY 6

Full Day Narrated Bus Tour of Denali National Park

For our final day in Denali, we'll venture fully into the park. There's only one road into this 6-million-acre park, and we'll traverse it with a certified naturalist driver who will tell us all about what we're seeing as we drive to the Eielson Visitors Center. In an effort to preserve the fragile ecosystem of Denali National Park and Preserve, the National Park Service has limited access on the Park Road for private vehicles so a bus tour is the best way to see it all! There will be many opportunities to take photos, and short stops along the way will allow us to stretch our legs. Driving time: 7 - 8 hours. (B, L, D)

DAY 7

Drive to Talkeetna, Hike Little Coal Creek Trail

After breakfast, we'll bid farewell to Denali and head to the charming town of Talkeetna. This unique (even by Alaskan standards) community is home to festivities such as the annual Moose Dropping Festival (no moose are harmed) and the Bachelor Auction and Ball (presumably no bachelors are harmed). We'll settle for exploring town after a hike through the alpine tundra on Little Coal Creek Trail, and maybe another opportunity to glimpse Denali. Hiking time: approximately 3 hours. Driving time: approximately 3 hours. Dinner is on your own tonight, a great chance to check out the local cuisine. (B, L)

DAY 8

Hike Hatcher Pass, Drive to Anchorage

For the final full day of our trip, we'll drive to Anchorage. Before we get there, however, we'll have the opportunity to visit one of the Alaska's hidden jewels: Hatcher Pass. Home to a historic gold mine, Independence Mine, Hatcher Pass offers splendid opportunities for hiking in alpine tundra while gawking at rugged mountains and glacial erratics, lichen-covered boulders left behind when glaciers receded. We'll enjoy a picnic during our hike, and then continue our drive into Anchorage. We'll arrive in plenty of time for a shower before our farewell dinner. For those CHAMPS hikers who would like to check out The Far North Barn Quilt Trail, there will be time after dinner to swing by and ooh and aah at the visual art projects! (B, L, D)

DAY 9

Farewell Alaska! Depart for Home.

Sadly, today is the day we have to say goodbye to Alaska. Our hotel has an airport shuttle so you can leave whenever you choose. Or stay a little longer on your own to soak up more of the midnight sun! (B)