

PORTS

FAIRBANKS, AK



Nestled in the heart of Alaska, Fairbanks is a choice wildlife-watching locale. Outdoor enthusiasts are lured with frequent sightings of moose, caribou, bears, bald eagles, and other species, as well as with boating, fishing, and kayaking in the Chena and Tanana rivers. At the University of Alaska Museum of the North, guests can delve into the Last Frontier's natural and cultural history among the 2.2 million artifacts and specimens, including Blue Babe, a nearly 50,000-year-old mummified steppe bison. Those looking for gold rush insight can find it at local working mines, where you can try your hand at gold panning after stories of the profession's past. Log cabin facades host shops and eateries at the 44-acre Pioneer Park, which also touts rides on a historic sternwheeler boat and narrow-gauge train. Fairbanks is a prime jumping-off point for excursions to the Arctic Circle and Denali National Park & Preserve.

Language: English

Currency: U.S. Dollar (US\$)

DENALI NATIONAL PARK & PRESERVE, AK



One of Alaska's most popular destinations, Denali National Park & Preserve comprises 6 million acres of untamed wilderness and is capped by North America's highest peak: the 20,310-foot Denali (formerly Mount McKinley). Sharp-eyed visitors often spot some of the "big five" animal species (bears, moose, wolves, caribou, and curly-horned Dall sheep) roaming free amid the towering spruce trees that carpet the tundra. Shore excursions like flightseeing, dog-sledding, whitewater rafting, hiking, ATV riding and even ziplining call to adventure-seekers looking to take on The Last Frontier.

Language: English

Currency: U.S. Dollar (US\$)

ANCHORAGE, AK



Nestled between the Alaska Range and the Chugach Mountains, Anchorage offers multicultural experiences and adventure. The Last Frontier's largest city is on the Cook Inlet and near five national parks, including Denali National Park and Preserve, a popular pre- or post-cruise trip. Its namesake peak (formerly Mount McKinley) is the tallest in North America at 20,310 feet. Some explore its 6 million acres by snowshoe, dog sled or cross-country skis, and the variety of wildlife includes wolverines, caribou, and grizzly bears. Shore excursions like flightseeing, whale-watching, panning for gold and kayaking through glacial lakes are offered in the area, and, depending on the time of year, Anchorage visitors can witness the spectacle of the northern lights or cast out for king salmon in downtown's Ship Creek. The Alaska Native Heritage

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Center showcases the state's 11 major cultures through stories, dance and more.

SITKA, AK



Just across the water from snowcapped Mount Edgecumbe, Sitka displays its brilliant history. Tourists will find the onion-domed Russian Orthodox cathedral reminiscent of its czarist past. The charming town is known for its picturesque views and thriving fishing industry. Shore excursions are plentiful, including wildlife viewing, sea kayaking, sportfishing and cruising Silver Bay, but the city also lends itself to adventures by foot or bike.

Language: English
Currency: U.S. Dollar (US\$)

JUNEAU, AK



Accessible only by air or sea, Alaska's capital city entices travelers with its beauty, tranquility, and outdoor activities. The Mendenhall Glacier, the jewel of the Juneau Icefield, can be discovered on scenic drives, hikes, boat rides, rafting trips, kayaking excursions and helicopter tours. Thrill-seekers get their adrenaline fix while ziplining above alpine forests, and culture lovers learn about landmarks such as the governor's mansion and St. Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church during explorations of downtown. A prospector-led panning adventure to Last Chance Basin allows you to strike gold, just as folks did in the late 19th century. Juneau's waters are a hot spot for humpback whales, and daily cruises afford the opportunity to witness these majestic creatures—a truly unforgettable experience. Brush up on local history with a visit to the Alaska State Museum, and cap off the day's adventures with a sampling of freshly caught salmon and locally sourced beer.

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ENDICOTT ARM, AK



Like its neighbor Tracy Arm, Endicott Arm features excellent views of several different types of glaciers. As always, the thrilling spectacle of glacier calving could be on the menu. Also, Bald Eagles are known to nest in the area and may be seen along the coast.

ICY STRAIT POINT, AK



Housed in a refurbished salmon cannery, Icy Strait Point serves as headquarters for a variety of tours and activities. Perched on Chicagof Island, the cruise port is just outside Hoonah, home of Alaska's largest Tlingit community. Tours explore the fishing village's past through the likes of outings in traditional hand-carved dugout canoes, and Icy Strait Point has a zipline, adventure center, cannery museum and shops selling native merchandise. The ABC Islands, which include nearby Admiralty and Baranof islands plus Chicagof, boast a high density of brown bears with an estimated 4,200 grizzlies (about one per square mile), so wildlife watching excursions are popular. Lucky tour-goers might even catch a bear swimming the smaller channels between islands. Orcas and humpback whales also are often spotted, along with otters and porpoises.

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KETCHIKAN, AK



With its boat-filled harbor and colorful waterfront, Ketchikan welcomes visitors to southeastern Alaska's Inside Passage. Fishing opportunities abound in the self-proclaimed salmon capital of the world, and bear viewing spots often find the creatures munching on their catch of the day. The Totem Heritage Center displays 33 19th-century totem poles, making it the largest collection in the U.S. Expeditions to the country's largest national forest, Tongass, explore its 16.7 million acres by Jeep, canoe or on foot, while floatplane tours provide a bird's-eye view of Misty Fjords National Monument. Other outings explore the town's past as a Native American settlement and gold rush hub or take to the water with kayaks or paddleboards for encounters with harbor seals and the occasional humpback or killer whale.

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Currency: U.S. Dollar (US\$)

VICTORIA, BC, CANADA



Victoria revels in its English essence at the southernmost tip of Vancouver Island. Afternoon teas, double-decker buses and English inns, gardens and pubs are common in this capital city. The most popular attraction is the world-famous Butchart Gardens, flaunting 55 acres of floral magnificence. Other must-sees include the historic Fairmont Empress Hotel, overlooking the Inner Harbour, the Victorian-era Craigdarroch Castle and the Royal BC Museum, where tourists will find artifacts, documents and specimens that tell the tale of the province's natural and human history.

Language: English

Currency: Canadian Dollar (CAD)

SEATTLE, WA



Language: English

Currency: U.S. Dollar (US\$)

The bustling Washington port known as the "The Emerald City" is both a culturally rich metropolis and a gateway to beautiful natural attractions. In the shadows of the widely recognized Space Needle, the Seattle Center is home to the city's sports arena and many museums and theaters. The lively Pike Place Market and the mammoth "Hammering Man" sculpture are downtown must-sees. Visitors also flock to the waterfront for fresh seafood, the Harbor Steps park or to board a ferry bound for Puget Sound. Seattle is served by both the Bell Street Pier Cruise Terminal and Terminal 91.