



ADVENTUREWOMEN®, INC.

FIRST AND STILL THE BEST! SINCE 1982

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Alaska Bear Viewing & Wildlife Safari – 2016

Fly-In Bear Camp, Whitewater Raft/Float, Wildlife Cruise, Hike, and More in America's Last Frontier

Trip Summary

Dates

June 18 - 25, 2016

Cost

\$4,395* from Anchorage, Alaska (\$600 deposit)

*the included air price from Kenai to Anchorage is subject to change

Rating

Moderate

Activities

- Bear Viewing
- Hiking
- Flightseeing by Bush Plane
- Whitewater Raft/Float
- Wildlife Cruise
- Photography
- Sightseeing

AdventureWomen's Alaska Bear Viewing and Wildlife Safari on the Kenai Peninsula, south central Alaska, takes you on an Alaska adventure tour deep into grizzly bear territory where most don't have the opportunity to venture. An Alaska vacation to rival none, this bear watching, whale watching, glacier cruise and wilderness odyssey (with only 12 fellow travelers) gives you an insider's glimpse of Alaska, America's "last great place." This adventure is truly a nature aficionado's and a wildlife and landscape photographer's dream trip to Alaska. And it all and takes place in June, at the peak of Alaska's "midnight sun," in America's Last Frontier.

Our Alaska playground is the Kenai Peninsula, including Kenai Fjords National Park and Wildlife Refuge and Resurrection Bay, which encompass hundreds of square miles of Alaskan mountains, fjords, and forested valleys. We discover this unique state's scenic treasures - mountain meadows, hidden lakes, rolling forests, whispering streams, and sparkling blue glaciers - all of them teeming with rare species of Alaska wildlife.

During our action-packed eight days in Alaska we enjoy the company of expert Alaskan wildlife guides. We'll spend relaxing nights under Alaska's "midnight sun" in our Kenai Peninsula lodge and comfortable bear viewing camps, and gain a true appreciation and knowledge of Alaska's authenticity, prolific wildlife, and awesome scenic beauty.

A highlight of this Alaska adventure tour is our flightseeing tour by private bush plane over Kenai Fjords National Park, transporting us to a spectacular Alaska Bear Camp for prime viewing of grizzlies (Alaska brown bears), cavorting in their natural habitat. Our remote Alaska bear viewing camp is located on the shores of Lake Clark National Park in rugged Alaskan wilderness. Custom "weather ports" are our homes for two nights, and we have unlimited opportunities to view and photograph brown bears (also known as "grizzly bears") and their cubs, just emerging from their winter dens to feed on the succulent saltwater and sedge grasses found around our Bear Camp.

But bear viewing is just the beginning of our Alaska adventure! Later, we enjoy an easy rafting float trip down the turquoise clear waters of Alaska's Kenai River, then take a wildlife cruise into Resurrection Bay in the incomparable Kenai Fjords National Park for whale watching and views of seacoast birds and marine life. We hike up to a glacier and explore the Alaskan communities of Homer and Kachemak Bay. This Alaska adventure vacation is the perfect way to discover Alaska, "the greatland," our 49th and largest state.

Main Attractions

- A flightseeing tour by bush plane to an Alaska Bear Camp, named "Best Bush Camp" by *Outside Magazine*, to experience 2 nights and 2 spectacular days of Alaska bear viewing.
- Enjoy a rafting float trip on the Kenai River through Alaska's scenic Kenai National Wildlife Refuge.
- Take a wildlife cruise into Resurrection Bay from Seward, Alaska, in Kenai Fjords National Park for whale watching to view humpbacks and orcas, and see puffins, sea lions, otters, and sea birds.
- View stunning Alaskan glaciers and mountains.
- Explore the charming seaside town and artist community of Homer, AK and Kachemak Bay, "Where the Land Ends and the Sea Begins."
- Spend 4 nights at the beautifully located Alaska Adventure Lodge, at the confluence of the Moose and Kenai Rivers with vistas of the Kenai and Chugach Mountains and the Harding Icefield.

What's Included:

- First night hotel accommodations in Anchorage, Alaska.
- One way flight from Kenai Alaska Municipal Airport to Anchorage, AK.
- 2 nights double occupancy in "weather-port" tent-cabins with propane heat and lamps at Bear Camp.
- 4 nights double occupancy accommodations at the main Adventure Lodge in Riverside Cabins.
- All meals from breakfast on day 2 through lunch on day 8.
- Alaska guides and one AdventureWomen Associate.
- Daily transportation and all bush flights listed in the itinerary.
- Happy Hour (includes complimentary wine and beer) and hors d'oeuvres each evening.
- Fully guided activities as listed in the itinerary.

What's Not Included:

- Round-trip airfare from your hometown to Anchorage, Alaska.
- Alcoholic beverages with meals not included in the itinerary.
- Suggested tipping, per person, for Alaska trip guides and staff:
 - \$80-100 for your main guide, cook, and other guides at Bear Camp;
 - \$70-80 for your Adventure Lodge guide (who meets you at the beginning of the trip and takes you on all the activities throughout the week, till you are dropped at the airport at trip's end);
 - \$15 for scenic raft/float guides;
 - \$30 for the Adventure Lodge Staff (cook, servers, housekeeping).Approximately \$220- 250 total for the week.

Health Requirements and Health Insurance

This trip is rated **Moderate**. You must be in very good physical condition, be able to hike at least 3 miles with ease. **You MUST have your own health insurance.**

How To Register

First, call (800-804-8686) or email (trips@adventurewomen.com) the AdventureWomen office to determine space availability. As a courtesy, we will hold your space for 5 days while you are completing the registration process, and making personal and travel arrangements.

Next, complete and sign the Trip Registration and Domestic Passenger Information forms on our Web site by clicking "Sign Up for this Trip" on the trip page. We can also fax or email them to you. Include, with your forms, the required deposit that can be made by credit card (Visa, MasterCard, or Discover), personal check, money order, or cashier's check. You can also give us your credit card number over the phone. Once we receive **your deposit and BOTH forms**, we will mail you a trip confirmation/information packet verifying your registration.

Traveling to Anchorage: Arrival and Departure

Your flight to Anchorage, Alaska needs to arrive in Anchorage by approximately **5:00 pm on June 18, 2016**. We are staying at the **Comfort Inn Ship Creek, Anchorage, 111 West Ship Creek Ave, Anchorage, AK 99501 (907-277-6887)**. This hotel has a free shuttle service from the airport. After retrieving your luggage, call the hotel for a pick up. A note will be waiting at the hotel desk informing you of the time your AdventureWomen Associate will meet you in the lobby to discuss details for dinner and orientation.

We return by plane to the Anchorage Airport from Kenai Alaska Municipal Airport on June 25 at approximately 4:45 pm. so you can schedule a departure flight from Anchorage, AK anytime after 6:00 pm. United, Northwest, and Alaska Air have "red eye" flights in the evening. OR you can choose to stay on your own for another night and fly out of Anchorage on June 26.

Making Travel Arrangements to Anchorage, Alaska

We suggest you book your air reservations with our travel consultant soon after registering for this trip!

In order to facilitate group arrivals and departures, we ask that you work directly with our travel consultants at **Travel Café** to make your travel arrangements. Either before or after booking your trip, please contact **Ciretta Green** at:

1-800-247-3538 OR FAX 1-406-586-1959
email: ciretta@travelcafeonline.com
CANADIAN RESIDENTS, please call 406-587-1188

When calling, please identify yourself as an AdventureWomen Traveler. If you leave a message on Ciretta's voice mail, she will return your call promptly. She will be happy to discuss your travel plans and help you decide when to purchase your ticket for the best rate. If you purchase your ticket through her, she can also help you with hotels and rental cars, should you want to come early, stay longer, or share a rental car or hotel room with another participant. If you do not purchase your air ticket through Travel Café, you are responsible for making your own arrangements for hotels, rental cars, trip extensions, transfers, etc.

NOTE: The recent trend in travel is for travelers to finalize their plans much closer to departure time than was customary in the past. While we try to be as flexible as possible booking last minute registrants, we must often relinquish hotel space and air reservations up to 6 – 12 weeks prior to departure!

Please keep this in mind when making your travel plans.

Liability Form and Final Payment

Part of what ADVENTUREWOMEN, INC. hopes to foster is the taking of more self-responsibility for our own lives, health, and safety. Please read the LIABILITY FORM carefully, return it with the remainder of your balance due by MARCH 20, 2016.

Cancellations and Refunds

Notification of cancellations must be received in writing. Full payment is due 90 days prior to departure date, and 50% of the registration deposit is non-refundable.

For cancellations received 60-89 days prior to the trip departure date: 50% of the total trip cost is non-refundable. For cancellations received 1-59 days prior to the trip departure date: 100% of the total trip cost is non-refundable.

You are highly encouraged to purchase trip cancellation insurance to cover emergency situations. A brochure will be sent to you in your registration packet.

Switching Trips

Before your final balance due date, you may change your deposit to another trip within the same calendar year by paying a \$75 fee to switch. You may not switch your deposit to a trip in another calendar year.

No Smoking Policy

Beginning in 1995, our trips became smoke free. Please note that there will be no smoking by any participants on AdventureWomen vacations.

Trip Itinerary

PLEASE NOTE: due to weather and any other unforeseen circumstances, the itinerary is subject to changed sequence and substitution of activities.

DAY 1

Saturday, June 18, 2016

Arrive in Anchorage

We arrive in Anchorage and transfer by free hotel shuttle to the Comfort Inn Ship Creek in downtown Anchorage, where our AdventureWomen Associate is waiting. Dinner is on your own tonight. Introductions and orientation follow dinner and then a good night's sleep is encouraged.

Overnight at **Comfort Inn, Ship Creek, Anchorage**

DAY 2

Sunday, June 19

Meet the Guides and Drive to the Lodge. Fly by Bush Plane to Bear Camp

After an early breakfast this morning at the hotel, we are picked up by vehicle and transferred to the Great Alaska Adventure Lodge, where we make a brief stop for gear organizing, trip orientation, and a delicious lunch.

Leaving most of our luggage at the Adventure Lodge, we take (only) a small duffel, cameras, and binoculars to travel to the airstrip where we board bush planes for a spectacular flightseeing trip to Bear Camp, a truly remote experience in every sense of the word. Perched on the edge of Lake Clark National Park and on the shores of Cook Inlet, with towering mountains behind and rugged coastline ahead, you know as soon as you land on the beach that this is a very special place. Bear Camp is accessible only by bush plane—a quintessential Alaskan adventure in itself. We fly with experienced Alaskan bush pilots, a group renowned for their skills of touching down on anything from ice floes to mountain stubble. We land on a beach surrounded by endless vistas of snowy peaks with not even a cabin or highway in sight. The flight confirms why Alaska is called "The Last Frontier."

We climb out of the bush planes to greet our guides. With rifles slung over their shoulders, our guides' immediate orientation is about bear country safety. We can walk unattended around Bear Camp itself, but only in the daytime. Forays beyond camp perimeter only take place as a group, and only when accompanied by a guide carrying a shotgun, loaded with buckshot.

***Note:** About the shotguns—they are for our safety. The bears are so focused on foraging for food that the guns, in our experience, have not been de-slung from the guides' shoulders.*

The camp is, well, "cushy." Accommodations are in what the Alaskans call Weather Ports, which are Quonset-hut-like structures made of high-tech fabric stretched over ribs. Our comfortable Weather-Port cabin/tents are on raised platforms with small decks out front and twin beds in each cabin. They feature wooden floors, solid doors, propane heat, and light. Meals are brought in daily by plane and prepared by the staff at camp. All meals are family-style, and feature fresh seafood/chicken/meats/pasta, and even a glass of wine.

The balance of today is spent viewing bears. Unlimited time on the platform and ground level viewing stations, and no more than 12 guests at any time, ensure a remarkable bear viewing experience at the "picnic benches," a viewing blind set across a small stream from a lush green meadow. In early summer, this coastal plain becomes a prime breeding ground and nursery due to its delectable grasses and sedges. Bears can consume 90 pounds of vegetation in a single day!

Powerful viewing scopes and binoculars allow us to observe bears in the wild from about 150 yards away. Here we spend the afternoon with our guides watching a wonderland of sows and cubs in their native habitat. This is an afternoon and night to remember!

"Focusing my binoculars as we settled into the blind, I saw over 20 bears in the meadow—mothers and cubs, one or two lone females, and small gangs of rowdy adolescents. Through powerful viewing scopes, we observed the bears' muscular shoulder humps and concave profiles. ... and watched the triplets, two and a half year-old siblings, who had just been weaned. Overheated by the warm afternoon, they jumped and splashed in the river, then sat up on their hindquarters and sparred with their forepaws, before piling together on the grass for a nap."

—from a bear viewing account at "Bear Camp," named "Best Bush Camp in North America" by *Outside Magazine* and "One of America's Best Adventures" by *National Geographic Traveler*.

After more bear viewing, you retire to your Weather Port accompanied by the sounds of jeering gulls circling the bay. And don't forget that you are in the land of the midnight sun where daylight lasts into the night hours.

Bring LOTS of memory cards, binoculars, and a long lens if you have one. Battery charging for cameras is available via solar panels and some limited generator time, but we highly recommend bringing many spare batteries for digital cameras.

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Overnight at **Bear Camp**

DAY 3

Monday, June 20

More Bears

Wake up at your own schedule to the smell of hot coffee and then spend the morning with the royalty of Alaska Wildlife—the incredible brown bear. If the weather is nice, we may also have yoga on the beach. No roads or trails access this area, so you get a glimpse of the "homesteader experience" and a true Alaskan wilderness as you feel your internal clock reset to a different pace. This evening may include a fire on the beach as the sun "almost" sets.

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Overnight at **Bear Camp**

DAY 4

Tuesday, June 21

From Bear Camp to the Adventure Lodge

Through the morning and until lunch, we indulge in still more photographing and viewing bears from the many viewing stations situated throughout the area. We stand witness as bald eagles circle the heavens and bears lumber through the channels, splashing in the rivulets, and devouring the delectable grass.

After lunch our bush planes arrive and we fly back to "civilization" and the Adventure Lodge, with all its creature comforts. The Lodge sits on 25 acres at the confluence of the Kenai and Moose Rivers. Its huge deck overlooks the Kenai and Chugach Mountains as they bisect the massive Harding Icefield. The Lodge is the terminus for the Swan Lake Wilderness Canoe Trail, and its back door swings open to the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge. The unique and special location of the Adventure Lodge allows unlimited access for wilderness recreation.

Happy Hour and dinner end another exciting day. Our accommodations for the next 3 nights are in cabins with river views below, fireplaces, and private baths.

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Overnight at **Adventure Lodge**

DAY 5

Wednesday, June 22

Cruise Kenai Fjords National Park

This morning we depart the Adventure Lodge for a beautiful drive to Seward, called the "gateway to Alaska." On the way we stop to stretch our legs and take a hike to the face of Exit Glacier, a retreating glacier, almost close enough to touch. Once in Seward, we board a large cruise boat for an extensive wildlife cruise through Resurrection Bay and Kenai Fjords National Park on the Kenai Peninsula's western shore. This is the beginning of Prince William Sound, made famous by the tanker "Exxon Valdez." Whales, dolphins, mountain goats, puffins, sea lions, seals, otters, and sea birds join the glaciers, mountains, and fjords on this beautiful adventure near the Harding Icefield.

While cruising, the captain offers a thorough narration of our surroundings. The boat is designed so that we can experience and photograph the sights comfortably from inside the cabin, or outside on the observation deck. We visit a glacier, one of the many tidewater glaciers that are fed by the massive Harding Icefield. Here we spend time listening and watching for icebergs to "calve" into the sea, while eating a delicious hot lunch. As we continue to cruise, our Captain shares facts about local geology as we photograph bald eagles, harbor seals, cormorants, sea otters, and maybe humpbacks and orcas as they play and feed.

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Overnight at **Adventure Lodge**

DAY 6

Thursday, June 23

Raft/Float the Upper Kenai River through Kenai Canyon and the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge

After breakfast, we leave the Adventure Lodge and travel to the Upper Kenai River for a scenic float trip through the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge and Kenai Canyon.

Our rafts take us through spectacular Kenai Canyon, a remarkable area teeming with moose, black bear, and salmon. At times we actually float over spawning beds of salmon, watching them jostle for position! In turn, we can view bald eagles and bears as they maneuver for the best fishing spots. The prodigious spawning salmon feed native trout populations, bald eagles, and grizzlies. This important ecosystem is generally considered the "cradle" of the area's animal life.

Lunch is served shoreside by our guides.

Happy Hour and hors d'oeuvres await us back at the Adventure Lodge before dinner.

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Overnight at **Adventure Lodge**

DAY 7

Friday, June 24

Discover Homer and Kachemak Bay

No trip to Alaska is complete without a visit to the charming, historic, and scenic "End of the Road" town of Homer and Kachemak Bay. On our way we pass early Russian churches, active volcanoes,

and most likely view baby moose with their mothers. It is a truly unforgettable and fun-filled day of exploring the art and uniqueness of the famous boardwalk at "Land's End."

Homer could easily double as the fictional town of Cicely from the old TV show Northern Exposure. The Kenai Mountains loom behind every building, and the whole town stops by the farmer's market on summer weekends and Wednesdays to pick up berry jam and organic greens. The town is a nature lover's nirvana where common sights can include moose grazing, a black bear crossing the road, or porpoises playing in the surf.

In downtown Homer you can sample delicious seafood and visit art galleries, museums, and shops that sell locally made crafts. Nearby is Halibut Cove, a unique fishing and artists' enclave where the roads are made of water.

This afternoon we return to the Adventure Lodge on the banks of the Kenai River, surrounded by Alaska's stunning wilderness. After nightly Happy Hour, we enjoy our last dinner and evening together, reminiscing about bears, whales, and all the amazing activities we've shared throughout the week.

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Overnight at **Adventure Lodge**

DAY 8

Saturday, June 25

Explore the Splendor Around the Adventure Lodge

On our last day together, you can choose from a paddle in sea kayaks on the Swan Lakes Wilderness Trail, to watch for moose, swans, eagles, and countless ducks, or a morning of guided sport fishing with one of the lodge's expert guides (additional fee for this).

After lunch, and back at the lodge we gather on the expansive main deck overlooking the Kenai River and the Chugach Mountains for a group photo. We then depart for the Kenai Airport, stopping to view wildlife along the way. We arrive at the Kenai Airport for our 4:00 pm flight, with arrival into Anchorage at approximately 4:45 pm. You may choose to take a plane out this evening, or stay another night in Anchorage on your own.

Breakfast, Lunch

What to Bring

Since weather in Alaska is always unpredictable, it is imperative that you come prepared on your Alaska adventure vacation with the proper clothing and outdoor gear to be safe and comfortable. When we say to bring warm (wool or polar fleece) sweaters, hat, socks, gloves— we mean it! You can always peel clothes off and put them in your day pack if you are too warm. On the other hand, if you are without the right clothes in a sudden storm, you will be miserable.

Clothing

- Medium-weight hiking boots: It is best not to wear shoes, even if they are walking shoes, because ANKLE support is absolutely essential in mountain terrain. Please do not buy heavy leather boots as there are numerous medium-weight quality hiking boots on the market that will better serve your purpose. Asolo, Garmont, Merrell, Vasque - to name a few - are widely available and designed especially for women. Since they are waterproof, Gore-tex boots, although a bit more expensive, are our first choice. Other boots should be

waterproofed with one of the excellent waterproofing products available such as Nikwax. MAKE SURE your boots fit properly and are well broken-in. Wear them around town to thoroughly break them in. Please do not come on this trip with a pair of boots you have never worn before!

- Rain gear: Weather in Alaska can be extremely variable, and you should be well prepared for whatever conditions occur. Therefore, it is very important to bring a good waterPROOF (not just waterREPELLENT) rain suit (jacket and pants). A rain parka or poncho will not keep your legs and feet dry, and it is important that your entire body is covered in a downpour. Many outdoor stores carry inexpensive rain suits, but beware of cheap VINYL gear that may tear easily at the seams. Your rain parka can also act as a lightweight wind jacket.
- One wool or fleece sweater, wool cap, and gloves. The wool sweater or fleece jacket can be layered under your rain parka to act as a warmer jacket.
- Extra comfortable shoes that you don't mind getting wet, tennis shoes or Tevas are a good option.
- Several pairs of long pants and hiking shorts.
- Long-sleeved shirts and T-shirts, underwear, sleepwear, lightweight robe.
- Bathing suit, needed in the event of an invigorating dip.
- Socks – it is best to wear 2 pair of socks inside your hiking boots, such as a pair of wool socks, and a thin pair of liner socks underneath the wool socks. We like Thorlo hiking socks and polypropylene liner socks which wick moisture and reduce blistering. Bring plenty of socks!
- Sun hat and sunglasses.
- 2 or 3 (100% cotton) bandannas for instant sweat bands and other uses too numerous to mention, some of which you have never even dreamed! Besides, it's a tradition at AdventureWomen!

Camera Equipment

- Camera, long lens, plenty of extra memory cards and batteries, plus battery charger. Again, we would like to stress: bring more memory cards and batteries than you think you need. Also bring plenty of Ziploc bags to protect your camera(s). You will have time to recharge your batteries at camp and at the Adventure Lodge. This is an experience you definitely want to record on film!
- Small, lightweight binoculars (a MUST) for game viewing and birds. You will be very disappointed if you do not have a good pair of binoculars. Nikon or Minolta make fine, lightweight viewing binoculars. Try a general game viewing 7 X 28, or 8 X 20 binocular.

Miscellaneous

- Small duffel bag to take for your 2 nights at our Alaska Bear Camp. Your large suitcase will stay at the Alaska Adventure Lodge.
- A day pack that is comfortable and large enough to carry your lunch, cameras, binoculars, rain gear, drink, and a water bottle on all hikes. Please note that fanny packs are not suitable. You can also take your day pack to Bear Camp.
- A one-quart water bottle. We recommend the 24 oz. Nalgene Everyday OTG Tritan Bottle. Made of Eastman Tritan™ copolyester, the bottle is completely BPA-free. Tritan™ copolyester provides excellent impact resistance and is suitable for both warm and cold beverages.
- Sunscreen, lip balm with SPF, insect repellent, lotion (fragrance-free).
- Toiletries, including soap, shampoo, and toothpaste. And to cover all your bases, you can also include an Ace bandage, Pepto Bismol, Immodium, Correctol, and Dramamine or Bonine for motion sickness (if you get motion sickness on boats. This is for the wildlife cruise).

- 10 or more quart size Ziploc bags for waste paper and left-over picnic lunches.
- Lightweight flashlight/headlight.
- Earplugs. We recommend Mack's Pillow Soft White Moldable Silicone Snore Proof Earplugs, which you can buy at most drug stores, or at www.earplugstore.com. Good to 22 decibels!
- Small travel alarm clock.
- Optional: journal, a relaxing book, and field guides.

About Adventure Travel Today - Please Read Carefully!

At AdventureWomen, we would like to ensure that all participants understand that our excursions are *adventure travel vacations*, and not "tours." We define "adventure travel" as travel in which one *actively participates*, as opposed to a "tour," in which one is more or less a passive observer. AdventureWomen designs and organizes vacations all over the world for women who want to experience an *active, out of the ordinary vacation, and meet new friends*. Most of all, we want our trips to be fun!

In this spirit, the successful adventure traveler should be a *good-natured realist* and have a *sense of humor!* *Adventure vacations, by nature, require that participants be self-sufficient, flexible, and able to accept situations as they exist*, and not just as they would have preferred or expected them to exist. The constraints of scheduled group traveling also necessitate that each of us be understanding of and sensitive to others. *Being on time is important*, and contributes to the congeniality, success and well being of both individuals and the group!

Thank you for choosing to travel with AdventureWomen! If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call, write or email us.

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