

VOYAGE INFORMATION

Voyage Name	Alaska Adventure
Voyage Code	ALK005S
Dates	19–31 May, 2022
Duration	13 days / 12 nights
Start	Vancouver, Canada
Finish	Sitka, USA
Ship	<i>Sylvia Earle</i>
Optional Activities	Kayaking, Stand-up Paddleboarding, Snorkelling, Scuba Diving
Forms Due	19 February, 2022

VOYAGE SUMMARY

Enjoy small-ship exploration in Alaska, one of the world's largest terrestrial reserves. At Metlakatla, visit the only Indian Reserve in Alaska. In Misty Fjords National Monument, pull into quiet coves to view marine wildlife without the worry of crowds. Marvel at the towering trees of old-growth forests. Along the shoreline, keep watch for brown bears and their cubs while whales patrol the waters. Hike in the world's largest temperate rainforest listening for songbirds or take a small boat and sit under the imposing edifice of one of Alaska's many tidewater glaciers.

ITINERARY OVERVIEW

Day 1	Vancouver
Day 2	Embark in Vancouver
Days 3-4	British Columbia's Inside Passage
Day 5	Metlakatla, Misty Fjords National Monument
Day 6	Wrangell, Thomas Bay, Baird Glacier
Day 7	Frederick Sound, Endicott Arm-Ford's Terror
Day 8	Tracy Arm Fjord
Day 9	Haines
Days 10-11	Expedition days
Day 12	Sitka Sound, Saint Lazaria National Wildlife Refuge
Day 13	Sitka

VOYAGE HIGHLIGHTS

- Visit the Metlakatla Indian Community, Annette Island, where you can learn about their ancient culture and admire their unique, locally hand-carved standing totem poles
- Look for iconic Alaskan wildlife including, bears, eagles and salmon in Tongass National Forest – the largest in the US, covering most of south-east Alaska – and famous wilderness areas such as Misty Fjords National Monument and Tracy Arms-Ford Terror Wilderness
- Discover Haines' famous hiking trails
- Zodiac cruise, kayak or explore the shorelines of the islands around Icy Strait, which offer the possibility of superb wildlife viewing. Keep watch for wildlife all-stars such as orca, brown bears, Steller sea lions and many bird species

EXPEDITION INCLUSIONS

- Transfer from airport to hotel on day 1
- One night's hotel accommodation on day 1, breakfast included
- Sightseeing tour and transfer the vessel on day 2
- Group transfer from ship to airport on day 13
- On-board accommodation during voyage including daily cabin service
- All meals, snacks, tea and coffee during voyage
- Beer, house wine and soft drinks with dinner
- All shore excursions
- Educational lectures and guiding services from expedition team
- Complimentary access to onboard expedition doctor and medical clinic (initial consult)
- 3-in-1 waterproof polar expedition jacket
- Complimentary use of muck boots during the voyage
- Comprehensive pre-departure information
- Port surcharges, permits and landing fees
- Gratuities for ship crew

EXPEDITION EXCLUSIONS

- International or domestic flights, unless specified
- Transfers not mentioned in the itinerary
- Airport arrival or departure taxes
- Passport, visa, and vaccination charges
- Travel insurance or emergency evacuation charges
- Hotels and meals not included in itinerary
- Optional excursions not included in the itinerary
- Optional activity surcharges
- All items of a personal nature including but not limited to: alcoholic beverages and soft drinks (outside of dinner service), laundry services, personal clothing, medical expenses, Wi-Fi, email or phone charges

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1 Vancouver

Arrive in Vancouver and transfer to our group hotel. Upon check-in, reception staff will provide you with Aurora Expeditions cabin tags. Please fill out the luggage tags clearly, showing your name and cabin number to allow us to deliver your luggage to your cabin. Enjoy a welcome drink and meet fellow expeditioners at our voyage briefing this evening.

Accommodation: Sheraton Vancouver Wall Centre

Day 2 Vancouver

On a sightseeing tour, get a glimpse into Vancouver's main highlights, including Stanley Park, Granville Island, Prospect Point and Gastown, before transferring to the pier for embarkation. After boarding, there's time to settle into your cabin before learning important safety briefings. This evening, meet your expedition team and crew at the Captain's Welcome Dinner.

Days 3–4 British Columbia's Inside Passage

Sail the southern stretches of British Columbia's Inside Passage, navigating through narrow straits and channels that are inhabited by vast pods of orca, while admiring views of cascading waterfalls, snow-capped mountains, temperate forests and the abundant marine life.

Day 5 Metlakatla, Misty Fjords National Monument

On Annette Island, experience the extraordinary history, art, and cultural traditions of the Tsimshian tribe of Metlakatla Indian Community, the only Indian Reserve in Alaska.

Shore Excursions (choose one of the following)

Yellow Hill Hike (3.5 hours)

Enjoy a 5-mi / 8-km hike to Yellow Hill, a challenging walk with rewarding panoramic views of Metlakatla and Annette Bay. Walking mostly on timber board walk, stairs, and moderately steep terrain, the hike is suitable for individuals without mobility issues.

Visit the community Long House to learn about the building's history and traditions, and where you will enjoy a dance performance from a local Tsimshian dance group followed by a Q & A with the dancers. Afterwards, visit the Artist Village next door to see handicrafts made by local artists, and which are available for purchase.

Walking Town Tour & Totem Pole Journey (3.5 hours)

The Totem Exploration Journey is a path guides you to the Totems & points of interest of Metlakatla. On a guided walk, you get a close-up view of the fascinating, handcrafted cedar carvings scattered throughout Metlakatla. During the excursion, you'll discover the 14 totem poles standing in Metlakatla, all carved by local artists, you'll visit several historical and cultural points of interest, including the William Duncan Memorial Church, the Metlakatla Indian Community Longhouse, and the Artist Village. Visit the community Long House to learn about the building's history and traditions, and where you will enjoy a dance performance from a local Tsimshian dance group followed by a Q & A with the dancers. Afterwards, visit the Artist Village next door to see handicrafts made by local artists, and which are available for purchase.

Skater's Lake Trail Walk & Totem Journey (3.5 hours)

On this scenic timber boardwalk, you'll experience the lush scenery at Skater's Lake. Afterwards, visit the community Long House to learn about the building's history and traditions, and where you will enjoy a dance performance from a local Tsimshian dance group followed by a Q&A with the dancers. Afterwards, visit the Artist Village next door to see handicrafts made by local artists, and which are available for purchase.

Later, we sail in Misty Fjords National Monument, a wilderness area characterised by towering granite cliffs shrouded in mist, and glacial valleys. The area is a haven for wildlife, and by Zodiac or kayak, we explore the area searching for grizzly and black bears, whales, mountain goats and deer.

Day 6 Wrangell, Thomas Bay, Baird Glacier

Disembark in historic Wrangell, an important town that was founded by Russians in 1834, and which once thrived on fur and gold trading. Enjoy Wrangell's main highlights, including a visit to Petroglyph Beach to see ancient rock carvings, and a visit to the city museum to learn about Wrangell's colourful history. In the afternoon, anchor in Thomas Bay, a wilderness location shrouded in the mysterious local legends, for an exploration around Baird Glacier.

Shore Excursions (choose one of the following)

Highlights of Wrangell (2.5 hours)

Learn about Wrangell's most significant landmarks while driving through town. Hear the Tlingit tribe members interpret the meaning of their totem poles. See ancient rock carvings at Petroglyph Beach and delve deeply into the history of Wrangell at the city museum.

Tongass Botanical Forest Walk (2 hours)

Explore Tongass Rainforest on a guided walk through the coastal temperate rainforest on the Wrangell Nature Trail. Learn about the interconnectedness between tidal, muskeg, alpine, and deep forest ecosystems, and discover a variety of edible and medicinal uses of local flora. You'll walk through Wrangell's Historic Sites on the way to the Nature Trailhead.

Day 7 Frederick Sound, Endicott Arm, Tracy Arm-Fords Terror Wilderness Area

As we glide through Endicott Arm, enjoy views of snow-covered mountains and spot seals resting on 'bergy bits' that have calved from Dawes Glacier. Tides permitting, explore the narrow passage of Ford's Terror. Later, as we enter into Frederick Sound keep your eyes peeled and your cameras ready for orca, feeding Steller's sea lions and humpback whales, famous for their acrobatic behaviour such as tail lobbing, pectoral slapping, breaching, and picturesque dives that showcase their massive flukes.

Day 8 Tracy Arm-Fords Terror Wilderness Area

In Tracy Arm glide along the steep walled fjords of a watery Wilderness area that has been likened to Yosemite and enjoy views of snow-covered mountains. Zodiac-cruise or kayak in search of wildlife at the back of the Tracy Arm, home to the twin Sawyer Glaciers. Spot for harbour seals resting on 'bergy bits' which calve regularly from the active tidewater glaciers.

Day 9 Haines

Nestled between two river valleys and beneath the craggy mountain peaks of the Chilkat Range lies Haines, the adventure capital of Southeast Alaska, and one of the best places in Alaska to hike, view wildlife and investigate the gold rush era history at Fort William H. Seward.

Shore Excursions (choose one of the following)

Haines Highlights (3.5 hours)

Learn about Haine's local culture, history while enjoying the stunning natural beauty of the surrounding areas. Along the way stop for a delicious beachside snack of locally caught and smoked salmon. Visit historic Fort William H. Seward, a National Historic Landmark and one of the first military outposts in Alaska. At the American Bald Eagle Foundation's Raptor Center, meet naturalists and expert bird handlers who have trained with these impressive birds for many years, and who are eager to share their knowledge and experience with you. Afterwards, as we drive along the Chilkat Peninsula, enjoy views of surrounding mountains, glaciers, and rivers. At the Haines Packing Company, the oldest working cannery in Alaska, learn how salmon, crab, shrimp and halibut are processed. Visit the smokehouse, explore the nets and the traps on the loading dock and perhaps view the day's catch. Returning to town, we make a stop at a private beachside location to enjoy a snack of local smoked salmon, cream cheese, cookies, and hot beverages.

Chilkat Rainforest Nature Walk (3.5 hours)

Walk through forest filled with towering spruce and hemlock trees, moss, ferns, wildflowers, moose, bear and bald eagles. Enjoy panoramic views of Tayia and Chilkoot Fjords framed by the glacially carved coastal mountains.

Valley of the Eagles Nature Tour (3.5 hours)

The fertile Chilkoot Valley provides an abundance of potential wildlife sightings including brown bears, bald eagles, mountain goats, salmon, harbor seals, and migratory birdlife. At a picturesque lake, join the guides for a refreshing forest walk beneath old-growth trees and into a muskeg (bog or swampland).

Days 10–11 Expedition days

Enjoy the next two days exploring the narrow straits and small islands around Chichagof Island, searching for wildlife and admiring the superb scenery from hiking trails. The islands along Icy Strait, such as Inian Island, Point Adolphus, Elfin Cove and George Island, offer some of the best opportunities for Zodiac-cruising and kayaking experiences. Home to an abundance of all-star Alaska wildlife, keep a look out for whales, Steller sea lions, sea otters, harbour seals, bald eagles and brown bears. We attempt to navigate Peril Strait, which leads us from Chatham Strait to Sitka on the North Pacific coast, a navigation that if successful, rewards us with stunning scenery, genuine adventure and ultimately, bragging rights.

Day 12 Sitka Sound, Saint Lazaria National Wildlife Refuge

Along the Gulf of Alaska, explore around Kruzof Island where brown bears are abundant and Mount Edgecumbe volcano looms in the horizon. Saint Lazaria National Wildlife Refuge is home to 500,000 nesting seabirds and is excellent for Zodiac-cruising and kayaking when the weather is favourable. Alternatively, protected Sitka Sound offers abundant marine wildlife viewing opportunities.

Day 13 Sitka

Disembark in Sitka and transfer to the airport to continue your journey.

TRIP NOTES



Note: The itinerary outlined is intended to be used as a guide. Although we plan to visit as many of the places mentioned in the itinerary as possible, tides, timing, local regulations and weather conditions may determine where we land and the precise order in which we operate the itinerary.