

ALASKA'S UNTAMED DENALI & BEYOND



WALKING & HIKING | Casual Hotels

Alaska's wild and untamed corners entice and enchant. Walk where adventuring mountaineers and gold-miners once explored. Hike where tundra-dwelling caribou and grizzlies have ambled and wolves have loped. From Denali National Park and its magnificent namesake peak to old-timey Talkeetna and finally to the verdant temperate forest of the coastal Chugach Mountains, a true Alaskan experience awaits.

18WADQR1a 2/13/2018



Backroads has the perfect formula for active vacations that include local history and culture, as well. Altogether, it makes each trip a learning experience as well as a vacation that keeps you moving and feeling good!

-Lindsay Duggan - Weston CT

Click [HERE](#) to read more reviews

6 DAYS, 5 NIGHTS

Click [HERE](#) for departure dates and pricing details

ROUTE RATING LEVELS 1-2

[See below for details](#)

TO RESERVE YOUR TRIP

Sign up online [HERE](#) or call 800-GO-ACTIVE (462-2848) or 510-527-1555

Open daily 6 a.m.-6 p.m. Pacific time

BACKROADS
THE WORLD'S #1 ACTIVE TRAVEL COMPANY.

WHY BACKROADS?

*"Backroads is the best of the best."
Sheryl Simons | SK, Canada*

Never Subcontracted

We operate our own trips around the globe. That way we control the quality—and we're fully responsible for your great experience.

Two Support Vans

We provide two support vans on all of our trips* so you can count on us to be there when you need us, regardless of the route you take.

Three Leaders

Our trips have three leaders*, for an average 6:1 guest-to-leader ratio. Guests consistently score our leaders 9.7 out of 10, telling us they make all the difference.

Thoughtful Trip Design

We know how to create exceptional travel experiences, ensuring that you get the most from your trip as it unfolds.

Multiple Daily Routes

Being able to choose among several expertly designed routes each day gives you the freedom to enjoy the best of a region at your own pace.

We Celebrate Mixed Abilities

To accommodate varied activity levels, you need three leaders, two vans, multiple route options, detailed directions, a rating system showing if shuttles are required, and plenty of well-matched riding/hiking companions.

**See web for more information on leaders and van support*

Click [HERE](#) to learn more about the Backroads Quality Guide

STRAIGHT *talk*

We want to make sure you're on the right trip and that you have the best experience possible. Every Backroads trip is unique and this one is no exception.

ACCOMMODATIONS & SERVICE STANDARDS

Alaska is a land of rustic and rugged beauty. While Backroads has selected the best possible lodging available in the places we visit, simplicity and comfort often outweigh elegance and luxury in this great state. Generally speaking, customer service in Alaska can seem slow and casual when compared with the high standards of hospitality found on other Backroads trips. Patience, a sense of humor and an appreciation for the cultural differences that abound in this population-sparse setting will help to make the most of your experience.

ALASKA: GREAT LAND, GREAT DISTANCES

Did you know that Alaska is more than twice the size of Texas and four times the size of California? To experience the full grandeur of Alaska, we must cover great distances and unfortunately we can't do it all on foot. We spend more time in the van on this trip than on the typical Backroads trip (2–6 hours on several days). Rest assured, the views from these shuttles are spectacular.

DAY 1

On the first day of the trip, meet your Backroads Trip Leaders (the folks in Backroads T-shirts) at 8 a.m. in the lobby of Pike's Waterfront Lodge (907-456-4500), located at 1850 Hoselton Road in Fairbanks, Alaska. Please arrive dressed in comfortable clothing, including shoes appropriate for short walks and a warm layer and bring your luggage and a daypack with your rain gear, and anything else you may want for today's activities (your luggage will be transported to our first night's accommodations).

SHUTTLE TO DENALI NATIONAL PARK 2½ Hours

DENALI NATIONAL PARK SCENIC BUS RIDE 6 Hours

Welcome to Alaska! After meeting in Fairbanks we shuttle south through expansive taiga forests to Denali National Park.

After lunch at the park's main entrance, board Denali Backcountry Lodge's bus and set off on our first excursion into the wilderness. The 6 million acres that make up Denali National Park are bisected by a single ribbon of dirt road—our route to the former mining settlement of Kantishna. Be on the lookout for moose, caribou, grizzly bears, Dall sheep and even gray wolves as we venture deep into the park. If Mother Nature cooperates, North America's tallest peak, 20,320-foot Denali (which means "the high one" in the indigenous Athabascan language), may be visible. The road crosses mountain passes and wetland tundra before reaching Wonder Lake. Beyond the lake we travel to the literal end of the road: the town of Kantishna and Denali Backcountry Lodge, our home for the next three nights.

After settling into the lodge, get acquainted with your fellow travelers during a welcome reception and a family-style dinner in the dining room. *Lodging: Denali Backcountry Lodge*



DAY 2

HIKING IN DENALI NATIONAL PARK 1–8 Miles
(minimal elevation gain)

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES IN DENALI NATIONAL PARK

Spend the day exploring Denali's wide-open spaces with a variety of activities. See for yourself how vast this park is as you walk through alpine meadows and dense pine forests.

Join Denali Backcountry Lodge guides on hikes and walks of varying lengths and learn about the behavior and habitat of Denali's wild residents. Keep your binoculars handy to spot migrating birds, including golden plovers, arctic loons, jaegers and eagles. (Note: Due to national park regulations, your Backroads leaders are not allowed to guide in the park; they will join activities led by Denali Backcountry Lodge guides, sharing their knowledge along the way. Other lodge guests may be a part of your small hiking group.)

If you'd prefer a different mode of exploration, the lodge provides mountain bikes and fishing gear. (Note that fishing and biking are unguided due to park regulations. Also note the quality of equipment may not be up to Backroads standards.) For something less active, head to the lodge's natural history library to learn more about the park by perusing the collection of books and videos. Or enjoy a treatment at the on-site spa and wellness center. (Spa treatments are not included in the price of the trip. Advance reservations are recommended.)

Or if you'd rather see the park from above, choose to embark on a completely different kind of adventure. Kantishna Air offers 60-minute scenic flights for a dramatic bird's-eye view of Denali (not included in the trip price).

Back at the lodge this evening, enjoy a family-style dinner in the dining room and an evening fire in one of the screened gazebos. *Lodging: Denali Backcountry Lodge*

DAY 3

HIKING IN DENALI NATIONAL PARK 1–8 Miles
(minimal elevation gain)

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES IN DENALI NATIONAL PARK

Today, continue your exploration of Denali's magnificent interior. Different hiking options are offered each morning and afternoon, so there's bound to be a new enticing trail that you didn't explore yesterday! Experience the vastness of the park as you hike through boggy tundra, alpine meadows and dense pine forests.

In the afternoon, consider panning for gold or visiting Fannie Quigley's historic cabin and learn about one of the area's most colorful homesteaders.

After a hearty dinner in the lodge's dining room, head out for a relaxing evening stroll—you won't need a flashlight to find your way around in the Land of the Midnight Sun!

Lodging: Denali Backcountry Lodge



KEEPING YOU UP TO DATE

We are always seeking opportunities to enhance this itinerary. We'll be certain to notify you of any important changes prior to departure; other changes may be communicated on trip by your leaders.

DAY 4

DENALI NATIONAL PARK SCENIC BUS RIDE 6 Hours

DENALI STAR TRAIN DENALI TO TALKEETNA 4 Hours

Rise early this morning and board Denali Backcountry Lodge's bus for a scenic drive through the park to the eastern entrance. Though it is difficult to leave such pristine parkland, our early morning departure offers the opportunity to spot wildlife during a more active period of the day.

Once at the edge of Denali National Park, we continue our journey, now in a southerly direction, aboard the Denali Star Train. The scenery is truly inspiring as we crest Broad Pass, the highest point on the railroad line at 2,363 feet. Further along we cross Hurricane Gulch Trestle, a wooden bridge that towers over the creek below, en route to our destination, the historic town of Talkeetna. Officially established in 1919, the main street of town is lined with authentic buildings that harken back to the days of the Wild West and Alaska's gold rush in the early 1900s.

Later this afternoon, settle into the comfortable Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge, where you can relax in one of the cozy lounges or enjoy the lodge's 46-foot river rock fireplace. When you're hungry, enjoy the fine dining options available at the lodge, or venture into town to explore Talkeetna's restaurant scene on your own. The chance to meet some local Alaskan characters will surely make your adventure memorable. *Lodging: Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge*

DAY 5

SHUTTLE TO ANCHORAGE 2.5 Hours

WALKING & HIKING OPTIONS:

Albert Loop Route: 3 Miles (100' elevation gain)

Dew Mound Route: 6 Miles (300')

SHUTTLE TO GIRDWOOD 1½ Hours

Today we shuttle south and explore the area north of the Turnagain Arm as you walk through a glacially carved valley along boardwalks and dirt trails at the Eagle River Nature

Center. Alaskan explorer, Walter Mendenhall, called the Eagle River Valley "a miniature Yosemite." Incredible vistas and opportunities for bird sightings abound. Enjoy peaceful Dew Lake – the perfect setting for a photographic session.

After leaving the Eagle River Nature Center our drive follows Turnagain Arm to Girdwood. Views along our drive include the sprawling mudflats of the Turnagain Arm and Cook Inlet and the snowcapped mountains of the Kenai Peninsula. Extreme high and low tides make Turnagain Arm the site of one of the world's few bore tides—when conditions are right, water rushes in with such force that it forms a tidal wave powerful enough for the truly daring to surf.

Our final destination is the grand Alyeska Resort in the charming mountain town of Girdwood, our home for the night. The afternoon is yours to enjoy the hotel's amenities, including a pool, spa, fitness room and more. Or ride the aerial tram to the top of 2,300-foot-tall Mount Alyeska for dramatic views of hanging glaciers and the Chugach Mountain Range. (Spa treatments and aerial tram are not included in the trip price. Advance reservations are recommended for spa treatments.)

This evening we raise a glass to celebrate our Alaskan adventure over culinary delights at one of our favorite local restaurants. *Lodging: Alyeska Resort*



DAY 6

WALKING & HIKING OPTIONS:

Winner Creek Route: 2.5 Miles (300' elevation gain)

Winner Creek Gorge Route: 5 Miles (500')

SHUTTLE TO ANCHORAGE 1 HOUR

We begin the day with breakfast at the Alyeska's Pond Café, then follow Winner Creek through the temperate coastal forest of the Cook Inlet. Meander through a lush wooded area filled with Sitka spruce, mountain hemlock, devil's club, wildflowers, ferns and wild blueberries. Keep your eye out for bear and moose! The sound of rushing water accompanies us as we follow the trail to Winner Creek Gorge. Here the creek is forced to run through a narrow granite gorge that turns it into a plunging deluge of water. It's a dramatic turnaround point!

If you'd rather relax in the comfortable setting of the Alyeska, skip the hike and take advantage of all the resort has to offer, including a spa, fitness room and more. We reconvene at the hotel later for a picnic before shuttling to Anchorage, where our trip ends. Please see "Arriving & Departing" for end-of-trip logistics.

SHIFT GEARS

Our trips are designed to be flexible, giving you the freedom to experience the best of the region the way YOU want. Feel like you're ready to go, go, go? We can show you the way! Want some downtime or prefer to head out on your own? No problem!

Your Trip Leaders will make sure to tell you the best days to take time for yourself (if you want it) without feeling like you're missing out.

So feel free to shift gears and make it your day!

TRIP ACCOMMODATIONS

Casual Hotels*



3 Nights (above)

Denali Backcountry Lodge

Nestled deep within Denali National Park, this remote lodge allows for a true Alaskan experience with opportunities to see remarkable wildlife, including grizzly bears, Dall sheep and caribou. (spa) | Kantishna
www.alaskacollection.com/lodging/denali-backcountry-lodge/ | 855-973-8759

1 Night

Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge

Set high on a ridge above the small community of Talkeetna, this quintessentially Alaskan lodge offers breathtaking views of Denali and the Alaska Range. | Talkeetna |

www.alaskacollection.com/lodging/talkeetna-alaskan-lodge/ | 866-602-3323

1 Night

Alyeska Resort

This stylish hotel with an aerial tram to the top of Mount Alyeska has earned accolades from *Travel + Leisure*. (pool, spa) | Girdwood | www.alyeskaresort.com | 907-754-2111

**With 1 Premiere Hotel night at Alyeska Resort*

ARRIVING & DEPARTING

After reviewing the following information, please inform us of your arrival and departure plans on your *Personal Information Form*.

Meeting Time & Location

On the first day of the trip, meet your Backroads Trip Leaders (the folks in Backroads T-shirts) at 8 a.m. in the lobby of Pike's Waterfront Lodge (907-456-4500), located at 1850 Hoselton Road in Fairbanks, Alaska. Please arrive dressed in comfortable clothing, including shoes appropriate for short walks and a warm layer and bring your luggage and a daypack with your rain gear, and anything else you may want for today's activities (your luggage will be transported to our first night's accommodations).

Conclusion of the Trip

On the last day of the trip, Backroads provides a complimentary shuttle from Girdwood to Anchorage, arriving the Anchorage Airport at approximately 2:15 p.m. and at Hotel Captain Cook around 2:30 p.m. If you're flying out of Anchorage on the day our trip ends, please schedule your flight for after 4 p.m.

Flight Arrangements

This trip starts in Fairbanks and ends in Anchorage, Alaska. We recommend flying into Fairbanks International Airport (airport code: FAI; www.dot.state.ak.us/faiiap) and out of Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport (ANC; www.anchorageairport.com) To make the morning meeting time, you will likely need to fly into Fairbanks the day before the trip starts.

For help arranging air transport to and from your Backroads trip, please work with your own travel advisor or you may choose to work with the Backroads Travel Desk at Dimensions in Travel. Their professional expert travel advisors are ready to share their insiders' knowledge of Backroads and our worldwide destinations and are available to assist you with any of your travel needs. Call 800-GO-ACTIVE (462-2848) to be connected with an advisor. Please note that consulting or ticketing

fees may apply, depending on the services requested. The Backroads Travel Desk at Dimensions in Travel is open Monday–Friday, 9 a.m.–5 p.m. Pacific time.

Transportation from the Airport to downtown Fairbanks

Pike's Waterfront Lodge is located in downtown Fairbanks, just 2 miles from Fairbanks International Airport. If you are staying at Pike's Waterfront Lodge, the hotel provides a complimentary shuttle from the airport. After arriving at the Fairbanks International Airport and collecting your baggage, contact the hotel from a free phone available at the bottom of the escalator when exiting to the baggage claim area; Pike's Waterfront Lodge is #3 on the phone.

If you are staying in downtown Fairbanks, There are several taxi companies; a ride with **Call Roy** (314-556-0596) or **Arctic Taxi** (907-455-0000) from the airport to downtown Fairbanks takes about 15 minutes and costs around \$20.

PRICES & SCHEDULES

All prices and schedules were current at the time of printing, but are subject to change at any time.

WORLD BICYCLE RELIEF

MAKING A POSITIVE IMPACT



Backroads is pleased to support World Bicycle Relief's mission of providing bicycles to women, students, rural workers, healthcare providers and others in disadvantaged communities worldwide.



VISIT WORLDBIKICLERELIEF.ORG

DESTINATION DETAILS

Climate

Weather conditions in Alaska are unpredictable and can change significantly throughout the day or week. **Because rain is possible year-round, you'll very likely experience wet, cool and even cold weather during your trip. It is essential that you bring appropriate clothing.** High-quality rain gear and plenty of warm layers will help ensure that you're prepared for all weather conditions.



Anchorage

| | | | | | | |
|----------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Average: | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun |
| High °F | 22 | 25 | 33 | 43 | 55 | 62 |
| Low °F | 8 | 11 | 17 | 28 | 39 | 47 |
| Precip. inches | 0.8 | 0.8 | 0.7 | 0.6 | 0.7 | 1.0 |
| Average: | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| High °F | 65 | 63 | 55 | 41 | 28 | 22 |
| Low °F | 51 | 49 | 41 | 28 | 15 | 10 |
| Precip. inches | 1.9 | 2.4 | 2.7 | 1.9 | 1.1 | 1.1 |

Fairbanks

| | | | | | | |
|----------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Average: | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun |
| High °F | 1 | 12 | 26 | 47 | 62 | 73 |
| Low °F | -18 | -13 | -4 | 21 | 37 | 49 |
| Precip. inches | 0.7 | 0.5 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.6 | 1.3 |
| Average: | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| High °F | 74 | 68 | 56 | 34 | 13 | 6 |
| Low °F | 52 | 46 | 35 | 16 | -6 | -14 |
| Precip. inches | 2.4 | 1.8 | 1.3 | 0.7 | 0.5 | 0.6 |

GETTING ACTIVE FOR YOUR TRIP

Activity Level

The routes on this trip are rated Levels 1–2.

| ACTIVITY LEVEL | Avg. Time in hours | BIKING | | WALKING | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------|---------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------------|
| | | Avg. Miles | Max Elev. Gain in feet | Avg. Miles | Max Elev. Gain in feet |
| 1 | 2–3 hrs | 8–22 | 1000′ | 2–5 | 800′ |
| 2 | 2–4 hrs | 18–32 | 2200′ | 4–7 | 1300′ |
| 3 | 3–5 hrs | 26–42 | 3400′ | 5–9 | 2000′ |
| 4 | 4–6 hrs | 36–54 | 4400′ | 6–11 | 3000′ |
| 5 | 5–7+ hrs | 48–70+ | 4400′+ | 7–13+ | 4000′+ |

Review the "Activity Level" section on the web for more details on daily route options.

Conditioning Tips

Every Backroads trip is designed to appeal to a wide variety of interests and fitness levels. We know your pace may vary from one day to the next—and your traveling companions' may differ somewhat from yours. So we present a range of mileage options, and each day you decide exactly what and how much you want to do.

Before your trip, we suggest walking and hiking regularly and hitting a few hills whenever you can. Review the route options in the daily itinerary for the range of mileages offered on this trip. But mostly, just show up and have fun!

WHERE TO STAY BEFORE & AFTER YOUR TRIP

For help making hotel reservations for before and after your Backroads trip:

- Work with your own professional travel advisor.
- Contact the Backroads Travel Desk at Dimensions in Travel by calling 800-GO-ACTIVE (462-2848), Monday–Friday, 9 a.m.–5 p.m. Pacific time. Please note that consulting or ticketing fees may apply, depending on the services requested.
- Book directly with the hotel or through a discount website.

HOTEL ROOM RATES

IN US DOLLARS PER NIGHT

| | |
|---------------------|-------|
| \$501 and up..... | ◆◆◆◆◆ |
| \$300 to \$500..... | ◆◆◆◆◆ |
| \$201 to \$300..... | ◆◆◆◆◆ |
| Up to \$200..... | ◆◆◆◆◆ |

Please note that Backroads does not block rooms and does not offer special rates for pre- and post-trip stays. If you plan on extending your stay at our first night's hotel before the trip starts or our last night's hotel when the trip ends, let the hotel reservations agent know that you're traveling with Backroads—you may be able to avoid changing rooms. **We recommend booking your rooms as early as possible, especially during peak travel season!**

The following is a selection of recommended properties that span a range of prices, amenities and locations. Refer to the Hotel Room Rate Guide for the starting double-occupancy rates, which were accurate at time of printing. Note that rates are subject to change and some hotels may require a minimum stay.

Pike's Waterfront Lodge in Fairbanks is our meeting location on Day 1 and **Hotel Captain Cook** in Anchorage is a drop-off location on Day 6. See the following for more information on these hotels.

Anchorage

Hotel map: bit.ly/AnchorageHotels

Copper Whale Inn

This homey inn is located in the heart of downtown Anchorage near shops, restaurants and museums, and still just 15 minutes from the airport. | 440 L Street | www.copperwhale.com | 866-258-7999 or 907-258-7999 | 14 rooms & suites | Rates: ♦ ♦ ♦

Historic Anchorage Hotel

This 1916 Anchorage landmark, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is located 6 miles from the airport and within proximity of some of the best retail and dining establishments in downtown Anchorage. Light sleepers should request a room facing away from the street. | 330 E Street | www.historicanchoragehotel.com | 800-544-0988 or 907-272-4553 | 26 rooms & suites | Rates: ♦ ♦ ♦

Hotel Captain Cook

A member of Preferred Hotels and Resorts Worldwide, this grand hotel fills an entire city block in the heart of Anchorage. Guest rooms offer panoramic views of the Cook Inlet or Chugach Mountains. (pool) | 939 West 5th Avenue | www.captaincook.com | 800-843-1950 or 907-276-6000 | 547 rooms & suites | Rates: ♦ ♦ ♦

SpringHill Suites Anchorage University Lake

This spacious hotel makes for a great home base while exploring downtown Anchorage and the surrounding area. Ask for a room overlooking University Lake. (pool) | 4050 University Lake Drive | www.marriott.com | 877-729-0917 or 907-751-6300 | 159 rooms & suites | Rates: ♦ ♦ ♦

Alaska Sundance Retreat Bed & Breakfast

This small but stunning bed-and-breakfast sets itself apart with beautiful views and impeccable service. | 12351 Audubon Drive | www.aksundanceretreat.com | 907-242-2980 | 3 rooms | Rates: ♦ ♦

Alaskan Frontier Gardens Bed & Breakfast

Set on 3 wooded acres 20 minutes from downtown, this cedar lodge offers a wonderful blend of rustic elegance and homey comfort. (spa) | 7440 Alutna Drive | www.alaskafrontiergardens.com | 907-345-6556 | 4 rooms & suites | Rates: ♦ ♦

Fairbanks

Hotel map: bit.ly/FairbanksHotels

Best Western Plus Chena River Lodge

If you're looking for good-value accommodations within easy reach of the airport, shopping and restaurants, this Best Western lodge fits the bill. | 1255 TVSA Way | book.bestwestern.com | 800-780-7234 or 907-328-3500 | 67 rooms | Rates: ♦ ♦

Hampton Inn & Suites Fairbanks

With a reputation for being consistently clean and comfortable, this Hampton Inn & Suites property is a pleasant place to hang your hat while in Fairbanks. (pool) | 433 Harold Bentley Avenue | hamptoninn3.hilton.com | 855-271-3622 or 907-451-1502 | 101 rooms & suites | Rates: ♦ ♦

Pike's Waterfront Lodge

Overlooking the Chena River, this historic family-run lodge enjoys a gorgeous setting just minutes from the airport. | 1850 Hoselton Road | www.pikeslodge.com | 877-774-2400 or 907-456-4500 | 208 rooms | Rates: ♦ ♦

River's Edge Resort

Offering a choice between quaint riverside or garden cottages and lodge rooms, the River's Edge enjoys a scenic spot along the Chena River. | 4200 Boat Street | www.riversedge.net | 888-966-8103 or 907-474-0286 | 94 cottages, rooms & suites | Rates: ♦ ♦

Sophie Station Suites

A stay in one of Sophie Station's spacious, well-appointed suites includes complimentary van service to the airport and rail station. | 1717 University Avenue South | www.fountainheadhotels.com/sophie-station | 907-479-3650 | 148 suites | Rates: ♦ ♦

SpringHill Suites Fairbanks

This all-suite Marriott property in downtown Fairbanks provides a riverfront location and all the amenities that make for a comfortable stay. (pool) | 575 1st Avenue | www.marriott.com | 907-451-6552 | 140 suites | Rates: ♦ ♦

