

Ultimate Alaska Itinerary

2010



Day 1, Friday, May 28—Helena, MT

Arrive Helena, MT by midday, and transfer to the Great Northern Hotel. We will conduct a comprehensive Tour and Flight Briefing at the hotel at 3:00 pm. Welcome dinner at local restaurant with other pilots and guests.

Day 2, Saturday, May 29—Dawson Creek, BC

After breakfast, we will depart Helena for Dawson Creek, British Columbia, the start of the Alaska Highway. We will stop en route for Canadian Customs and fuel at Springbank, Alberta, near Calgary. After checking into the hotel, we'll visit the Alaska Highway House, the true "Mile 0" of the Alaska Highway, and the Dawson Creek Station Museum.

Day 3, Sunday, May 30—Whitehorse, YT

After breakfast and briefing, we will launch for the flight of a lifetime: northwest along the Alaska Highway to Whitehorse in the Yukon Territory. This highway route provides some dramatic scenery and remote wilderness, albeit with the safety of the Highway beneath you. We'll stop for fuel in Watson Lake, an original airport for the **Northwest Staging Route**, en route to Whitehorse. After checking in to the hotel, we'll use the ample daylight to enjoy downtown Whitehorse, and get a flavor for the river history of the Yukon by touring the SS Klondike with a Parks Canada interpretive ranger.

Day 4, Monday, May 31—Dawson City, YT

From Whitehorse, we'll fly north along the Yukon River to Dawson City, the heart of the Klondike Gold Rush. After checking in to the Downtown Hotel, we'll take a Walking History Tour, where our guide will lead us around town, bringing to life the colorful history and hearty characters that make up Dawson's past. In the evening we'll go out for a lively show at Diamond Tooth Ger-tie's, and perhaps induct a few of you into the Sour Toe Cocktail Club.

Day 5, Tuesday, June 1—Dawson City, YT

No fly day. Enjoy the Klondike! You can pan for gold, participate in a poetry reading at Robert Service's cabin, visit the mineral dredges, or stroll the cemeteries of this interesting town.

Day 6, Wednesday, June 2—Fairbanks, AK

Today, we'll finally touch down in Alaska, at Fairbanks International. After clearing Customs and Immigration, we will check into the hotel and grab a quick lunch. That afternoon it's *all aboard* the Riverboat Discovery for a cruise on the Chena and Tanana Rivers to catch a glimpse of Fairbanks life, historically and today.

Day 7, Thursday, June 3—Talkeetna, AK

It will be a quick morning flight south to this charming town, which claims to be a "quaint little drinking village with a climbing problem!" Talkeetna serves as base camp for all things adventuresome into Denali National Park. The afternoon is free to explore town, fly yourself around the Park, or let one of the local experts do it for you. There is nothing like a ski-plane landing on a Denali glacier to top off this once-in-a-lifetime tour.

Day 8, Friday, June 4—Anchorage, AK

We will leave the interior Mountains for the Chugach Range on the coast, just outside Anchorage—Alaska's largest city. After tying down our planes at busy Merrill Field, we will enjoy a city tour by bus, a visit to the Alaska Aviation Heritage Museum, then make our way to the hotel for check-in. We will spend three nights in the heart of downtown, allowing plenty of time for ground touring around the region.

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(see next page)

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Days 9 and 10, Saturday and Sunday, June 5 and 6—Anchorage, AK

Use your free days in Anchorage to explore beautiful south-central Alaska. There is a multitude of activities available, including day trips to Prince William Sound and Kenai Fjords National Park. Local activities in Anchorage might include cycling the Tony Knowles Trail or parting with a few dollars at the weekend Anchorage Market.

Day 11, Monday, June 7—McCarthy/Kennicott, AK

It will be a scenic flight from Anchorage's Merrill Field to McCarthy in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park, the nation's largest. After tying our planes down, we'll make the short drive to Alaska's largest ghost town: Kennicott. Home to our gorgeous Glacier Lodge, the town itself is a National Historic Landmark and historical site of one of the world's richest copper ore deposits. After lunch, we'll step back in time and take a tour of this old company town and the 17-story mill facility.

Day 12, Tuesday, June 8—Kennicott, AK

No fly day (unless, of course, you want to!). Take time to enjoy the alpine wilderness and scenic beauty as you soak in the wilderness of Wrangell-St. Elias which surrounds this town and lodge. Options include river rafting, glacier hiking, or simply relaxing on the front porch of our beautiful lodge.

Day 13, Wednesday, June 9—Juneau, AK

It will be a two-flight day en route to Juneau, Alaska's capital. We will enjoy a beautiful flight down the Copper River to the coast, then turn east for a fuel and lunch stop at Yakutat. From there, we'll enjoy the rugged coast inbound to southeast Alaska and the beautiful Inside Passage. After arrival and check-in, we will embark on the *Town-Tram-Trek* tour, which includes a historic bus tour through town, a ride up Mt. Roberts tramway, and a guided alpine hike at the top.

Day 14 and 15, Thursday and Friday, June 10 and 11—Juneau, AK

Use these two days to explore the Inside Passage as you wish. This could include day flights to other coastal destinations (like Skagway, Haines or Sitka), or cruises to see humpback whales, brown bears or calving glaciers. You will appreciate the extra time to enjoy the life in what the locals refer to as simply: *Southeast*.

Day 16, Saturday, June 12—Port Hardy, Vancouver Island, BC

We'll continue our journey south, stopping for customs and fuel at Prince Rupert, B.C., then fly on to Port Hardy on the northern tip of beautiful Vancouver Island.

Day 17, Sunday, June 13—Friday Harbor, WA

After yet one more beautiful day of coastal flying, we will alight upon charming Friday Harbor, WA, on San Juan Island. We will have the afternoon to explore this quaint village on foot, bicycle or moped. Tonight will be our Farewell Dinner and slide show, reliving all the memories of our incredible *ultimate* journey.

Day 18, Monday, June 14

We'll say good-bye in Friday Harbor and follow our respective routes home.

Approximate Distance: 3700 nm

Days: 18 **Nights:** 17

PLEASE NOTE: Due to the unpredictable and often unsettled weather patterns of northwestern Canada and Alaska, we will have to fly with ceilings and visibility lower than those encountered on the other Parkwest Tours. We will not compromise safety, but will be prepared to fly in low VFR conditions or even file IFR to fly in or above IMC. Because of this, **all pilots must be instrument rated, current, and proficient.** Additionally, all aircraft must be instrument-capable, have a cruise speed of at least 135 knots TAS, and be able to fly 3.5 hours with an hour reserve. Also, be aware that not all runways are hard-surfaced; however those that aren't have a good gravel surface.

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