



Arctic Quest

Now *THIS* is something entirely different: a winter adventure to the lesser-known Last Frontier, to the Alaska with neither cruise ships nor mosquitos, no endless daylight, no smoky forest fires. This is a “culture trip” to see the 49th State at its finest—the tranquility of winter, the blinding white snow on the Alaska Range, the dog mushing heritage, the spectacular aurora borealis, and much more. (And, new for Parkwest Air Tours, this tour does not involve you flying your own airplane – yet another departure for us!)

Forget the unreal-ity shows. Come experience real Alaskans living the real Alaska.

JAN 28 – FEB 7, 2016

Trip Highlights:

Tour Length: 10 nights
Starts: 1/28/16 in Anchorage, AK
Ends: 2/7/16 in Fairbanks, AK

Highlights include:

- Train trip aboard the Alaska Railroad from Anchorage to Fairbanks though the majestic Alaska Range
- Charter flight to the Arctic Circle
- Two-night stay at Chena Hot Springs Resort with great aurora watching, dog sledding, snow coach tour, world-class ice museum and hot springs soaking
- Yukon Quest International Sled Dog Race events, including Musher’s Start & Draw Banquet and Race Start
- Local traditions like curling, snow shoeing, and photos in traditional Athabascan clothing
- Regional museums, meet a reindeer and more!

Itinerary

Thursday, 1/28

Arrive Anchorage, anytime, day or night, and transfer by taxi to the Historic Anchorage Hotel.

Friday, 1/29

Breakfast at the hotel. Visit Anchorage Museum, considered the best place to start or end an Alaska visit because it provides a context for all you will see in the state. It’s Alaska’s largest museum, displaying 10,000 years of Alaska history, and one of the best places to buy authentic Alaska Native Art. In the evening, we will have a group Welcome Dinner and briefing. B/D

Saturday, 1/30

Transfer to train station for a gorgeous, 12-hour ride aboard the Alaska Railroad through pristine wilderness to Fairbanks. In clear weather, the Denali views go on for hours! Transfer to Springhill Suites in downtown Fairbanks. Breakfast is included at the hotel; lunch and dinner can be purchased aboard the train.

Sunday, 1/31

After breakfast, visit local museum to get acquainted with Fairbanks and Interior Alaska. Travel by road to Chena Hot Springs Resort—voted one of the World’s Most Beautiful Places to Soak—for a two-night stay. See amazing ice sculptures in the Ice Museum and enjoy an appetini from the ice bar. After dinner we’ll depart on a snow coach tour, riding 30 minutes up the hillside. At the top we will keep warm inside a yurt, enjoy hot beverages, and head outside to see the Aurora Borealis dance across the night sky! B

FEATURED

HOTELS :

Historic Anchorage Hotel * Anchorage, AK * www.historicanchoragehotel.com

Springhill Suites * Fairbanks, AK www.marriott.com

Chena Hot Springs Resort * Chena Hot Springs, AK * www.chenahotsprings.com

Arctic Quest Itinerary – cont.

Monday, 2/1

Today is a bonus day to enjoy all of what Chena Hot Springs has to offer: soaking in the 106-degree hot springs pool, dog sled rides, and hopefully another good evening show by Lady Aurora. There will also be free time to partake in additional activities, such as the geothermal renewable energy tour, snowmobiling, skiing, etc. If the dog sled ride wasn't enough, you can even sign up for Mushing School, a 2-hour activity where you learn the basics of mushing and have the opportunity to drive your own team along the groomed course.

Tuesday, 2/2

After check-out, we will return to Fairbanks with stops to see a display of the Alaska Pipeline and lunch at Silver Gulch Brewery. Back in town, we will visit the Fairbanks Community Museum, then check back in to the SpringHill Suites for the duration of the tour. We'll have pizza night in the hotel, with brief, informative "lectures by locals." D

Wednesday, 2/3

Today we claim the *Arctic* part of our tour with a charter flight up to the Arctic Circle. This half-day adventure will transport us to either Coldfoot or Beaver, each with time for a brief tour on the ground. Back in Fairbanks, we'll re-live the adventure over dinner and beer at HooDoo Brewery & Taproom, home to the freshest and yummiest craft beer in Alaska. B/D

Thursday, 2/4

Get ready for some wintertime exercise! On show shoes, we will leisurely explore the frozen Tanana River, the superhighway of Fairbanks' winter. There could be snow machines, dog sleds, skiers, bicyclists, ice fisherman, or even cars and motorcycles out there with us. For dinner, we will join other Yukon Quest fans for a delicious meal at the Start and Draw Banquet. Here, mushers will draw bib numbers to determine their start order. This is your chance to meet the mushers before race day! B/D

Friday, 2/5

We'll have a fun time today, at the Morris Thompson Cultural Center, where we will have the chance to dress in traditional Athabaskan clothing featuring stunning beadwork, moosehide, and wolf, muskrat, wolverine and beaver fur. Keepsake photos included! Later, we'll try our hand at curling, the classic winter sport of the northlands. We've rented the Fairbanks Curling Club for a couple of hours of hands-on instruction given by professional curlers. B/L

Saturday, 2/6

Fairbanks will be abuzz with the start of the Yukon Quest, the only 1000-mile international sled dog race, which begins in Fairbanks and ends in Whitehorse, Canada. The race start is conveniently located across the street from your downtown hotel, so we'll simply walk across the street to witness the launch of up to 50 teams, 16 dogs each. You'll get to see the mushers, their sleds, and these amazing canine athletes up close and personal! After an afternoon break, we'll have a Farewell Dinner at the Fays' cabin. Special guest will be Dave, the Reindeer, who makes appearances at private events and parties! B/D

Friday, 2/7

Breakfast at hotel, and departures as required. B

NOTES ON TRANSPORTATION

This tour officially starts in Anchorage (ANC) and ends in Fairbanks (FAI). Therefore, your options for commercial travel will be as follows:

- 1) open-jaw ticket, flying in to Anchorage 1/28, flying home from Fairbanks 2/7
- 2) round-trip tickets in/out of Anchorage, then purchase a one-way, interior flight from Fairbanks to Anchorage separately. Tickets are available on Alaska Airlines or Ravn Alaska, cost approx. \$130 pp, duration approx. 1:15. There are numerous daily departures, so it's easy to connect up with your flight home.
- 3) round-trip tickets in/out of Anchorage, and train back to Anchorage from Fairbanks on 2/7. This time of year the train only makes the southbound run on Sundays, so 2/7 is the day you need to book (unless you'd like another week in Fairbanks!) The train departs Fairbanks at 8:00 am and arrives ANC about 8:00 pm, so it works well if you're on a red-eye flight home (which many of them are). Alternatively, you can plan to stay an additional night in Anchorage, and fly home on the 8th.