



ALASKA DISCOVERY

A Mountain Travel Sobek
Company

1266 66th Street, Suite 4
Emeryville, California
94608-1117

T: 1 800 586 1911

F: 1 800 956 7488

info@alaskadiscovery.com
www.alaskadiscovery.com



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TRIP DETAILS

9 days ~ Alaska

*Scenic rafting with some Class
II/III rapids (oar boats only),
moderate to challenging day bikes*

8 nights camping

2008 DATES

Jun 17–Jun 25

Jul 9–Jul 17

Aug 9–Aug 17

LAND COST

*\$3,050 per person + tax
(6-12 members)*

*\$3,350 per person + tax
(4-5 members)*

\$115 internal airfare

THE TATSHENSHINI RIVER

One of the Most Beautiful River Journeys in the World!

TRIP LEVEL
MODERATE

HIGHLIGHTS

- *Raft 132 miles through the largest contiguous wilderness area in the world*
- *More than a rafting trip—glaciers galore, icebergs, tons of wildlife, hiking opportunities!*
- *Travel with world-class river guides of international caliber*



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THE TATSHENSHINI RIVER

One of the Most Beautiful River Journeys in the World!

Ready for one of the greatest river journeys on earth? More than just a river trip, the Tatshenshini is a haunting, unadulterated introduction to the vastness and beauty of a pristine wilderness, a pilgrimage from the Yukon to the Pacific below the snowy peaks of the St. Elias Range. Slicing between towering peaks with casual grace, flowing past wildflowers and sweeping glaciers, the “Tat” cuts a path through the habitat of grizzly and black bear, mountain goat and moose, bald eagle and osprey. The awesome Ice Age scenery will take your breath away, but keep on breathing ‘cause it gets better every day.

As the river grows from a sparkling stream in a narrow canyon to a vast expanse of moving water after its confluence with the Alsek, the mountains rise ever higher and glaciers shoulder their way between the granite ranges, stretching long, icy arms into the river. Day hikes take us into the surrounding countryside, up side creeks and glacial valleys to spectacular views of an Alaska grander than any postcard. The last two days are unbelievable, as the river takes us through a flotilla of icebergs created by the calving glaciers spilling into Alsek Bay.

Outstanding river guides are the key to this trip. Not only are they extremely skilled in all the techniques for a safe river trip, they’re knowledgeable about the natural history and lore of the region, masterful and imaginative chefs (great salmon dinners and the heartiest breakfasts this side of Texas!), and some of the best companions ever. Without a doubt, they’re the best in the world!



Best Green Adventures: Eco-Success

National Geographic Adventure, April 2008

Canada: Mine Shafted

When the largest copper mine in history was given a green light to develop the Tatshenshini-Alsek River watershed back in 1987, rafters reached for their paddles and fought back. "Our goal was to bring people down the river to be touched by its magic," says adventurer Richard Bangs, who made the first rafting descent of the Tatshenshini and helped lead the campaign to protect it. The Canadian government rescinded the mine permit and created a 2.5-million-acre (1-million-hectare) protected area connected to Alaska's Glacier Bay. It now forms one of the largest transborder national parks in the world.



ITINERARY

☞ **Rendezvous**—The trip begins in Haines, Alaska, 40 minutes north of Juneau by air taxi. You will need to arrive in Haines no later than 5:00 p.m. the night prior to the trip in order to attend the mandatory **pre-trip meeting that begins at 6:30 p.m. at** the Halsingland Hotel (907-766-2000). Your trip leader will go over trip logistics, bear-country camping techniques, water safety instructions, and distribute personal camping equipment. The meeting will take about two hours; we recommend eating dinner before the meeting. Dinner and lodging is on your own this evening. The next morning we pick everyone up early, so you will want to get plenty of rest tonight.

We recommend you stay at the Halsingland Hotel, which has a complementary transfer from the ferry terminal. Most of the air taxis also offer complementary transfers from the Haines Airport. Please call ahead to verify. For transportation and lodging recommendations, consult the information in your trip packet.

The following itinerary may vary according to water levels and weather conditions.

DAY 1 ~ Travel to Dalton Post in Yukon Territory, Canada

After breakfast on your own, meet at the Halsingland Hotel lobby at 8:00 a.m. and board a van for a beautiful 3-hour drive (104 miles) up the Chilkat River Valley, across the border into British Columbia, and on to Dalton Post in Yukon Territory, Canada. After we rig our bags into the rafts, we'll push off on the Tatshenshini. Soon, we'll plunge into the exhilarating Class III rapids of the Tatshenshini Gorge. Upon emerging into calmer waters, we'll make camp along the river.

Note—Because we are making a border crossing into Canada, you will need a passport as proof of nationality. Please check visa requirements for entering Canada if you are not a U.S. or Canadian citizen. If you are traveling with children and both parents are not present, Canadian customs requires a notarized letter from the child's absent parent(s) saying that they are aware of their child's whereabouts. A photocopy of the absent parent's ID(s) and phone number are needed. Minimum age for child participation on this trip is 14.

L,D...Camp

DAYS 2-4 ~ Along the "Tat"

The river slowly builds momentum over the next three days as we wind our way toward the beautiful Alsek and Noisey Mountain Ranges. There are a few good short hikes to take in this area. This is prime country for moose, bear and wolf; the beaches are often marked with the tracks of all three, and occasionally we catch views of the animals themselves.

B,L,D each day...Camp

DAY 5 ~ The Confluence

The mountains, river and wildlife become more spectacular as the swift flowing river brings us ever closer to Alsek Bay. We come to the majestic confluence with the Alsek River, a place many call "the center of the universe." Our campsite vista will span the broad expanse of both river valleys, flanked by more than 20 different glaciers.

B,L,D...Camp

DAY 6 ~ The Walker Glacier

A short but dramatic day brings us to the Walker Glacier, so named by rafters because of the ease of walking onto this moraine-covered glacier right off the shore of the river. Here we'll spend some time hiking onto the glacier

terminus and exploring the base of the spectacular icefall from the upper glacier. We'll then reboard our rafts and float downstream to our campsite in a beautiful spot below one of the other glaciers.

B,L,D...Camp

DAYS 7-8 ~ Floating the Alsek

The river quickly carries us away from the Walker and the surrounding high peaks rise steeply from the banks to their thickly glaciated summits. This is ice age country, as literally dozens of large and small glaciers fill every vista around our tiny rafts. We leave the immense Noatak Glacier and float toward Alsek Bay (also known as Alsek Lake), dominated by looming 15,320-foot Mount Fairweather. We'll spot many species of birds, including bald eagles, semi-palmated plovers, spotted sandpipers, northern phalaropes, American pipits, and more.

The landscape continues to build as we pass through several different mountain ranges and finally enter Alsek Lake. The Alsek and Grand Plateau Glaciers flow into Alsek Bay, and we'll watch and listen as giant chunks of ice calve into the water from the seven-mile face of the Alsek glacier. The icebergs here are larger than those in Glacier Bay—some icebergs are 75 feet high, indicating a depth below the surface at least twice as great. The guides will row among ice floes sculpted into bizarre, fluted, ever-changing phantasmagoric shapes—a veritable “iceberg garden.” We hope to catch a glimpse of impressive Mount Fairweather, the tallest peak in Glacier Bay National Park, looming in front of our camp.

B,L,D each day...Camp

DAY 9 ~ Dry Bay – departure

After floating into the flat, forested plains beyond Alsek Bay, we arrive at the Dry Bay Fishing Company outpost along the estuary of the Alsek River. (Dry Bay is named for the mud flats in low tide, certainly not for the weather patterns here.) Small aircraft will meet us for our spectacular charter flight to Yakutat in time for the scheduled Alaskan Airlines service to Juneau (we have tailored this trip around this flight, and Juneau is your gateway city to other destinations). Most guests choose to return to Juneau this night and often get together for a no-host dinner at a local restaurant. We recommend you stay in Juneau this evening as some flights homeward necessitate a forced overnight in Seattle before connecting with onward-bound flights. We'll provide you with a list of hotels in the pre-departure information booklet.

Please note—There is only one Yakutat/Juneau Alaska Airlines flight a day, and **you must arrange for this flight on your own as it is not provided by Alaska Discovery**. Alaska Discovery will meet you at the airport in Juneau and take you to your preferred lodging. We will also bring any excess luggage you may have had shipped from Haines. If you are planning to fly to Anchorage, you will need to stay overnight in Yakutat and catch a flight to Anchorage the next morning.

B,L...

Please Note—*The weather at Dry Bay occasionally prevents landing or take-off of small planes, in which case the end of the trip will be delayed until the weather clears. All extra costs caused directly or indirectly by this delay will be solely at the expense of the participant.*

LAND COST

\$3,050 per person + tax (6-12 members)

\$3,350 per person + tax (4-5 members)

\$115 internal airfare

Rates quoted are per person, based on sharing double accommodations in tents.

Tier Pricing

Adventure travel works best with a small group of people. In order to operate these small groups, our trips are priced according to the number of full-price passengers on the trip. (Alaska Discovery staff, trip doctors, and other discounted travelers are excluded from the count for this purpose.) We initially invoice you at the highest tier level price (the smallest group size we can operate). If the price drops due to an increase in group size, you will be refunded the difference.

What's Included

- ◆ expert leadership
- ◆ all arrangements in the field, including camp meals, guides, group gear and equipment (2-person tents, raingear, rubber boots)
- ◆ meals as noted (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- ◆ bush plane charter (see separate cost above)
- ◆ rafting gear
- ◆ permits
- ◆ ground transportation
- ◆ basic medical and evacuation insurance

What's Not

Airfare to Haines, Alaska, and return from Yakutat; meals not noted in itinerary; daypack for yourself to carry daily items; sleeping bag and pad (available for rent from Alaska Discovery for \$40); insurance other than basic medical and evacuation insurance as noted above (we strongly recommend you purchase the supplementary trip insurance offered by Alaska Discovery, which includes trip cancellation insurance); optional tipping to leader, guides and local staff; airport transfer to Haines the day before the trip begins; excess baggage charges; airport taxes; and items of a personal nature (sodas, alcoholic beverages, laundry, etc.).

Air Travel

Airfare is not included in the land cost of our trips. For air reservations, we recommend you contact the airlines directly. Please refer to the link or document called "Planning Your Trip to Alaska," included in your Trip Packet.

But please check with our staff before purchasing or obtaining your tickets. We need to verify your arrival and departure schedule and ensure we have enough participants to operate the trip.

How We're Giving Back

Dollar-a-Day: We encourage our guests to participate in our "Dollar-a-Day" program. Most of our guests donate two dollars for each day of our trips into the Alaskan wilderness. Alaska Discovery distributes those funds along with our own donations among Alaskan organizations that work for conservation of the areas of Alaska in which we operate.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT

Expert Leadership

Expert leadership is the key to an exciting, unforgettable experience. Our trips feature gifted leaders for whom leading trips is a true vocation. Besides showing you wonders you'd never find on your own, they make sure everything runs smoothly and safely without a hitch. They are knowledgeable about all aspects of your trip, and take great pleasure in sharing their insights with you. More than just guides, they positively elevate your experience by being teachers, companions, and the best of friends. You'll be in good hands with them every step of the way.

We are fortunate to have the best whitewater rafting guides in the world working for us. Each has a minimum of five years professional guiding experience; most have been boating with us over 10 years, on rivers from the Alsek to the Zambezi. All possess certifications in wilderness first responder and swiftwater rescue. Many of them teach guiding and rescue skills at local guide schools in the off-season. They are mature, well educated and personable (not to mention incredible cooks!). They are the first to rise and the last to sleep, and in between will make you gourmet meals, guide you safely down the river, tell stories around the campfire, and ensure you come away from the journey with a true appreciation of the culture, natural history, and other important aspects of the trip. You won't find a more competent crew anywhere!

Leader assignments will be confirmed in the Final Bulletin sent to you three weeks prior to departure.

Activity Level

Alaska Discovery trips are designed for flexible, energetic people who like to be active. This is a long and active trip into a remote wilderness with no facilities of any kind. Good physical condition, an adventurous spirit, a positive attitude, and a willingness to deal with possible wet, cold, and windy conditions are a must! Proper gear and robust health are necessary to withstand potentially extended periods of cool, rainy weather. The hiking can be moderate to strenuous as there are few trails and the terrain can be uneven and steep. Hikes are tailored to the strength of the group.

Physical conditioning before your trip will increase your enjoyment. Depending upon water levels, it may be necessary to help pull rafts over gravel bars. Guests should be prepared to help carry personal and group gear to and from camp. The terrain can be uneven and may be slippery. No special conditioning is necessary, but if you don't normally follow a fitness or exercise regime, we strongly recommend beginning one. Be sure to hike in the boots you plan to bring with you.

We row 18-foot oar rafts with one guide and four guests per raft. Although we do not offer paddle rafts, we do encourage guests to paddle in the oar boats whenever they feel so inclined.

Minimum age for participation is 14.

THE NEXT STEP

Ready to go? Signing up is easy!

Just call us at 1-800-586-1911 and reserve your spot! You can also reserve a trip online at our website (www.alaskadiscovery.com). If you prefer to use a travel agent, he or she can book your trip at no extra cost and provide other helpful assistance.

Then Leave the Rest to Us

Before you go, we provide you with extensive pre-departure information, including clothing recommendations, suggested reading lists, and other details.

Why Alaska Discovery is Your First Choice for Adventure

We are Alaska's oldest wilderness guiding company! Alaska Discovery has pioneered trips in Alaska by kayak, raft, and canoe for more than 35 years. We led the first tours to sea kayak Glacier Bay, Icy Bay, Russell Fjord, Tracy Arm, Endicott Arm, and to reopen the cross-Admiralty canoe route. We also ran the first commercial descents of the Tatshenshini, Alsek, and Kongakut Rivers. Our permits in Alaska's finest wilderness areas give you greater access than any other company. We are one of the few companies with permits in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Glacier Bay National Park, Wrangell-St. Elias/Tatshenshini-Alsek World Heritage Site, and the Tongass National Forest. We are also a founding member of the Alaska Conservation Foundation and contribute to numerous Alaskan conservation organizations through our "Dollar-a-Day" program (see "How We're Giving Back" above). Among our many awards, we have received the prestigious Outstanding Long-Term Program Award of the Alaska Land Manager's Forum for excellence in dedication and commitment to ethically and socially aware use of the land.

References

Don't take our word for how great our trips are. We'll be happy to provide you with references of satisfied past travelers.

Questions?

Feel free to call us at 1-800-586-1911 if you still have any questions or concerns. We're here to help you. You can also check out our website at www.alaskadiscovery.com.

Note on Itinerary

Although we will do our best to adhere to the itinerary schedule as listed, it is subject to change. Please read the Limitation of Liability and Booking Conditions in the four-page Participant Information Form. You can find all this information on our website at www.mtsobek.com/faq and the form itself at www.mtsobek.com/pdf/participant_info.pdf.

Terms & Conditions

Once you have made a deposit for a trip, you agree to be bound by all our terms and conditions including the Limitation of Liability Clause. The full Terms and Conditions can be found at www.mtsobek.com/faq/#liability or call 1-888-MTSOBEK (687-6235) for a copy. These are partial conditions. Your participation is contingent on your signature on the full list of terms specified in the four-page Participant Information Form (www.mtsobek.com/pdf/participant_info.pdf). Any dispute concerning, relating or referring to the Terms and Conditions, to any literature concerning this trip, or the trip itself, shall be resolved exclusively by

binding arbitration in San Francisco, California, according to the then existing commercial rules of the American Arbitration Association. Such proceedings will be governed by substantive California law (but not procedural law) without regard to the California Arbitration Act.

Note on Services

At Alaska Discovery, we have assembled an outstanding team of guides by taking the greatest care in both recruiting and retaining the fine guides we have. Along with our high standards of qualifications and experience, we conduct our own training. Each spring we hold refresher courses in rescue, gun handling, trip area knowledge, communication, teamwork, and special lectures on the unique natural and social history of Alaska. We also sponsor Wilderness First Responder classes regularly for our guides.

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