



ALASKA DISCOVERY
A Mountain Travel Sobek
Company

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BEARS OF THE KATMAI COAST

**Bear Viewing & Cruising Along the Remote Coast of
Katmai National Park & Preserve**

TRIP DETAILS

7 days ~ Alaska

*Day hikes to view bears,
½ day easy sea kayaking
(optional)*

*3 nights hotels, 3 nights
expedition cruise ship*

2008 DATES

*Aug 2–Aug 8
Aug 10–Aug 16*

LAND COST

*\$5,995 per person + tax
(6-8 members)*

TRIP LEVEL
MODERATE



HIGHLIGHTS

- *Enjoy some of the best close-up (and safe) bear viewing in Alaska in Katmai National Park and Preserve*
- *Travel by float plane and expedition cruise ship—no camping!*
- *Kayak in Kachemak Bay, with its high diversity of marine life, including orca whales!*



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BEARS OF THE KATMAI COAST

Bear Viewing & Cruising Along the Remote Katmai Coast

Experience some of the best brown bear viewing in the world on this small boat cruise along the spectacular and remote coast of Alaska's Katmai National Park and Preserve. Though perhaps best known as the location of the "Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes," a result of the fiery explosion of Katmai Volcano in 1912, this is also one of the best (and safest) brown bear viewing areas in Alaska. Plentiful food sources that attract the bears make them more tolerant of one another (and us!). In this remote wilderness, it's possible to see up to 30 bears in just a few hours—almost like viewing lions on the Serengeti plains!

This is a part of Alaska most people never see, and our adventure here is an experience of true wilderness, but with all the comforts of home. By day you'll venture ashore along isolated beaches and into rugged inland meadow valleys in search of brown bears and other wildlife. Nights find you relaxing in the comfort of the cozy *M/V Kittiwake II*, originally built as a patrol boat for the Aleutian waters and nowadays an ideal home base for exploring the rugged Katmai coast. Before the cruise, you'll spend a day kayaking the tranquil waters of Kachemak Bay in search of even more wildlife!



ITINERARY

☞ This trip begins with a rendezvous at the airport in Homer, Alaska, on Day 1 (you may arrive at any time this afternoon or evening).

DAY 1 ~ Homer

Arrive in Homer, Alaska. (You can fly directly to Homer, or fly into Anchorage, rent a car, and drive to Homer.) Transfer on your own to Land's End Resort (4786 Homer Spit Rd., Homer, AK 99603; 1-907-235-2500), an oceanfront hotel at the tip of the Homer Spit. You will meet the group tomorrow morning over breakfast at 9:00 a.m. (your guide will leave a note for you at the front desk with additional information). The rest of the day is free to explore on your own, or you may want to relax at the hotel's health and fitness spa overlooking the shores of Kachemak Bay, where otters, seals, whales, and eagles abound and the Kenai Mountains make for a fabulous scenic backdrop. Dinner on your own.

Land's End Resort

FOR INFORMATION OR RESERVATIONS, CALL TOLL-FREE | 888 MTSOBK (687 6235)

DAY 2 ~ Sea Kayaking in Kachemak Bay – Yukon Island

This morning you will meet your guide and the rest of your group for a mandatory pre-trip meeting over a delicious breakfast at the Land's End Resort. After the meeting we'll head out on a water taxi across Kachemak Bay, one of the most biologically productive and diverse bodies of water in Alaska. We'll be dropped off at Yukon Island for a spectacular paddle by sea kayak, a great chance to see orcas, otters, giant starfish, salmon, and halibut. This is prime paddling coastline, and we may also explore isolated beaches and tiny coves. (Note—the kayaking is optional and if you don't wish to participate, you can enjoy the return boat trip by water taxi, then spend time in Homer, exploring the quaint artist community of shops, galleries, and museums.) In the evening we return to Homer for dinner at a restaurant along the Homer Spit featuring a spectacular view of Kachemak Bay.

B,L,D...Land's End Resort

DAY 3 ~ Float plane to the Katmai Coast – begin bear cruise

We're up early for a 1½-hour float plane trip over the coastal wilderness of Katmai National Park. Along the way we'll have scenic views of recent volcanoes, huge glaciers, and possibly pods of whales swimming below us. Once at the coast, we'll meet up with our boat, the *M/V Kittiwake II*, which is waiting for us in a protected bay. Typically the pilot will bring the float plane right up to the boat, and you can usually walk up the floats right on to the boat. Sometimes we bring a skiff out to the float plane and we transfer that way.

The *M/V Kittiwake II* was built for the U.S. Army in 1944 for patrol work in the Aleutian Islands. After the war it had a career maintaining the many radar stations along the Pacific coast for the Federal Aviation Administration, then was transferred to Alaska Department of Fish and Game and used for research and monitoring. Since 1986 the *M/V Kittiwake II* has been used for custom marine charters. The boat has been wonderfully maintained by all the owners since it was built and provides a great platform for plying the coast of Alaska.

After stowing your gear and taking some time to explore your new floating home, we'll have a safety meeting and a group orientation. Next, we'll enjoy a quick bite to eat, maybe some Alaskan salmon, fresh vegetables, and some fresh-baked pies. When everyone is ready we'll hit the beach for our first trip ashore and our first look at the Katmai brown bear.

B,L,D...Aboard the M/V Kittiwake II

DAYS 4-5 ~ Bear tour of Katmai Coast

The next two days are spent cruising the coast in the *M/V Kittiwake II*. Each morning on the boat the aroma of fresh-baked muffins and whole grain breads from the galley will be a hint of the delicious breakfast our cook is preparing. Take your mug of fresh-brewed morning coffee on deck as you look out to sea for a pod of humpbacks or orcas, then enjoy a hearty breakfast sitting around the galley table as the captain fills you in on the day ahead. An easy hike to a puffin rookery or a pristine glacier-fed waterfall could be on tap. Harbor seals, sea lions, and otters could also steal our attention for a while but we never forget that we are in bear country.

Accompanied by an experienced naturalist guide, we'll take our skiff into isolated bays along the Katmai coast, where we'll put ashore to hike and view magnificent brown bears. Perhaps we'll head inland to a sedge meadow, climbing to the top of a grassy knoll where we can spot the bears grazing in the near distance. Mid-summer we'll find them congregating at the salmon-rich streams and rivers of the Alaska Range or perhaps at a nearby pristine waterfall. It's not uncommon to see up to a few dozen bears at a time, and because there are ample food sources, the bears are tolerant of one another (and us) and grow accustomed to seeing humans watching them. Be prepared, too, for glimpses of eagles, red fox, and a myriad of other birds and wildlife. At the end of our long exhilarating day ("long" being an understatement as this is the land of the midnight sun) of bear viewing, bird watching, fishing, and

sightseeing, it's back to the *Kittiwake II*, our floating lodge, for a nice hot shower and a gourmet meal. Fresh produce is flown in every week and tasty Alaskan seafood is a highlight of our dinners. The rest of the evening gives us time to relax and enjoy discussing the events of the day while the boat takes us to our next day's destination.

B,L,D...Aboard the M/V Kittiwake II

DAY 6 ~ Bear viewing and fly back to Homer

After a morning of bear viewing, we'll fly back to Homer by float plane in the mid-afternoon. Farewell dinner at the Land's End Resort.

B,L,D...Land's End Resort

DAY 7 ~ Depart

Transfer on your own to the airport for departure on homeward-bound flight (the routing is generally through Anchorage).

B...

Stay a Little Longer!

If you like to explore on your own, plan to arrive a day or two early or extend your trip after the tour. We offer 4- to 8-day extensions to Camp Denali in Denali National Park, and other short trips to Southeast Alaska, including *Whales of Point Adolphus*, *Bears of Pack Creek*, and *Glacier Bay Escape*. Please call us for all the details.

LAND COST

\$5,995 per person + tax (6-8 members)

Rates quoted are per person, based on sharing double accommodations. No requested single supplements are available because of accommodation restrictions while aboard the boat. The "forced" single supplement is \$310.

What's Included

- ◆ expert leadership
- ◆ accommodations at Land's End Resort in Homer and aboard the *M/V Kittiwake II*
- ◆ meals as noted (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- ◆ roundtrip floatplane flight from Homer to Katmai Coast and return
- ◆ sightseeing and activities as noted in the itinerary
- ◆ ground/water transportation
- ◆ basic medical and evacuation insurance

What's Not

Airfare to Homer and return; meals not noted in itinerary; insurance other than basic medical and evacuation insurance as noted above (we strongly recommend you purchase the supplementary trip insurance offered by Mountain Travel Sobek, which includes trip cancellation insurance); optional tipping to leader, guides, and boat crew; airport transfers; 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, either by phone or the Internet. In addition, many travelers elect to use their “frequent flyer” miles when traveling with us. **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.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT

About the Boat

The *M/V Kittiwake II* was originally designed for heavy work hauling men, barges, and materials around Alaskan waters. She is 73 feet long with a deep displacement hull and is considered a very seaworthy design with a high bow and a fine horseshoe stern. The wheelhouse is equipped with all the modern electronic navigation aids and radio equipment. Two radars, two sounders, two VHF radios, two GPS's, computerized charts, and an autopilot assure safe navigation and communications.

The living quarters on the boat are roomy by small boat cruising standards. Bunks are large and comfortable, each is at least 27' by 78" with a reading light and storage. The galley and eating areas are clean, bright, and well maintained. There are two heads and a shower with plenty of hot water. A washer and dryer is available for your use. A reverse-osmosis water maker provides excellent quality water. We have two skiffs for transportation to and from the shore and handheld VHF radios for communication. Skiffs carry emergency gear and safety equipment. The *Kittiwake II* is Coast Guard approved for commercial use and carries all required safety equipment including three life rings, a 15-man life raft, a rapidfix GPS interfaced EBIRB, ample fire extinguishers, first aid kits, and flares. A small library, computer, VCR, cassette, and CD player are also on board.

We are in protected waters and it is extremely rare that you will experience any discomfort as we cruise the coastline. Life on the boat is really great: it is stable, roomy, warm, and cozy. There are places to congregate and places to be alone. A camaraderie develops as we share experiences and knowledge. Our crew is well experienced and will provide you and your family with a high quality and safe wildlife viewing experience.

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. 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 and have a spirit of adventure and a positive attitude. You should be in good physical condition and enjoy hiking. This trip will be at a relaxing pace, but you will be outdoors in possibly very wet conditions and hiking in rugged terrain for 6-8 hours per day. Hikes are relatively short (2-3 miles) and there is plenty opportunity to rest while watching/photographing the bears. The sea kayaking day is easy to moderate (6-8 miles) and no experience is necessary.

Minimum age for participation is 12.

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, up-to-date health advice prepared by our consulting physician (an expert in wilderness medicine), 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 over 30 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. Our permits in Alaska's finest wilderness areas give you greater access than any other company. We hold the only permit to guide overnight sea kayaking expeditions in Glacier Bay National Park, and are one of the few companies with permits in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Gates of the Arctic 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. 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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