

# ANCHORAGE Itinerary #helloworldRELAY

Anchorage is a fantastic destination in itself but is the perfect pre or post cruise destination when cruising the inside passage of Alaska where your cruise starts or finishes in Whittier.

### DAY 1:

Arrival day in Anchorage, check into the Hilton Anchorage for your stay. Why not head into town tonight to try the local cuisine at Orso a short 5 minute walk away - famous for their King Crab and Glacier brewhouse Ales

### DAY 2:

Today enjoy your Anchorage City tour & Native Heritage Centre tour, this narrated sightseeing tour brings you to Anchorage's historical points of interests, such as Earthquake Park and Lake Hood, the busiest private seaplane base in the world! Next visit the spectacular Alaska Native Heritage Centre.

Here you will learn about the rich heritage of Alaska's 11 major cultural groups while walking through native village settings representing the five regions of Alaska. You can also experience Alaska native culture firsthand through engaging storytelling, authentic native song and dance, and artist demonstrations. Your tour concludes with a return transfer to downtown Anchorage. Enjoy some free time wandering around town until early afternoon when you make your way to the meeting point in downtown Anchorage and meet your tour hoperator, who will give you an informative overview of Alaska's beer culture from a local's perspective before driving you to your first of three included tasting tours.

Get your taste buds ready for Alaska's best brews as you visit pioneering breweries and a trendy tap room. In all, you'll try beers from six breweries: two at the breweries themselves and then sample four more at a famous local bar. Listen as your guide tells you about the history of Alaskan beers, the founding brewery fathers, and what makes Alaska's beer culture stand out. Take in the awe-inspiring scenery of Anchorage's dramatic skyline, with soaring mountains as the natural backdrop.

Stop into Anchorage's oldest brewery and taste why it was medalled at the World Beer Cup. Enjoy the chef's selection of appetizers as you taste the beers. Sip on some hoppy goodness at a newcomer to Alaska's beer scene. Then get a little rowdy at a world-famous bar full of chatty locals. By the end of the tour, you'll have a good idea of what makes Alaskan beer

great, and what makes Anchorage such an appealing city. At the conclusion of the tour, your guide drops you off at the meeting point, leaving you free to continue to explore the city's beer scene on your own.

### DAY 3:

Today sit back, relax and get lost in the beauty of Alaska's epic glacial scenery on this helicopter tour.

After pickup from your Anchorage hotel in the morning or afternoon, your guide will drive you about an hour outside of the city to your helicopter departure location. Travel along the National Scenic Byway, stopping for photos and looking for wildlife, and enjoy water and snacks during your ride.

When you arrive, hop aboard a comfortable helicopter for a 30-minute helicopter tour over beautiful glacial valleys and magnificent fields filled with translucent blue glaciers created centuries ago. As you fly over the Chugach Mountains and the Chugach State Park backcountry, capture aerial views of Knik Glacier, Whiteout Glacier and Lake George. Become completely surrounded by the surreal, untouched landscape as you enjoy commentary from your expert pilot through your 2-way radio headset. The highlight of your trip is the glacier landing! Land on Colony Glacier and spend 15 to 20 minutes taking photos while standing amongst the awesome glacial surroundings. The 360-panorama of commanding mountains and blue ice is unlike anything you've ever seen. After filling your camera, hop aboard your helicopter for a 30-minute ride back to your

Tonight why not head out of town to view the Northern lights, <u>Eagle River Nature Centre</u> is located in the Eagle River Valley, about 22 miles (31 km) from downtown Anchorage. Named a favourite aurora viewing location by a member of International Dark-Sky Association. Being able to View the Northern lights like the weather can be variable, local aurora forecasts are available from the University of Alaska Fairbanks Geographical Institute or the weather section in the Alaska Dispatch News. Check the best days for sighting the Aurora early in your trip to avoid disappointment.

original take off location, followed by a drive back to Anchorage.

### DAY 4:

Start your day with pickup at your Anchorage hotel and head off to your zipline adventure in Talkeetna, a historic railroad town and popular gateway to the wilderness. Your guide will fill you in on Talkeetna's vibrant history of gold mining and mountaineers and other quirky characters over lunch in town. The region's tall, rugged mountains, gently flowing rivers and abundant wildlife make it a nature sightseeing haven. And one of the best ways to see an exciting overview of it is by soaring through the air on a zipline.

After a basic orientation, head to the scenic mountains above town and strap into your zipline gear. For the next 3 hours, you'll have a bird's-eye view as you fly from one platform to the next. Zip across nine lines, zooming through the canopy. Wiggle across three

suspension bridges and step down a spiral staircase for different perspectives on the nature surrounding you. Throughout the tour you'll be in awe of the boreal forest.

The pace blends speed with time to absorb the scenery. After zooming across a zipline, take a few moments on the platform to enjoy the views of Mt McKinley and the expansive Alaska Range. Listen as your informative local guide reveals insights about the native flora and fauna below. Then continue on to the next portion of the adventure, and more views of ravines, ponds and the Chulitna and Susitna Valleys. Don't forget your camera, as there will be plenty of opportunity for postcard-worthy shots of this awe-inspiring region.

# DAY 5:

You'll be picked up from your downtown Anchorage hotel for a scenic drive to Turnagain Arm. This popular landmark is an extension of the Cook Inlet, which extends toward Anchorage and then branches into two arms that nearly surround Anchorage.

Travel along the beautiful Seward Highway, a National Scenic Byway and one of only 41 roads in the US designated as an All-American Road. You'll be astounded by the Alaskan scenery as you pass mountain slopes, marshes, rocky outcrops and dramatic coastlines on your way to Mt Alyeska. Take a 1-hour cruise to Portage Glacier, one of Alaska's most-visited attractions! Travel along Portage Lake and hear interesting facts and stories about the surrounding area and wildlife from your on-board guide. Your captain will take you close to the glacier face, giving you great photo opportunities.

Hop on an aerial tram for a ride up to the top of the mountain, where you'll enjoy views of alpine glaciers and learn about the surrounding area from your guide. You can also visit the Roundhouse Museum, Alaska's only mountaintop museum, featuring exhibits about pioneer skiers as well as awesome 360-degree views.

Afterward, head to The Bake Shop at the foot of the mountain to enjoy lunch including soup, sourdough bread and desserts. You'll then be taken to the Alaska Wildlife Conservation Centre for a guided tour. This privately owned non-profit organization rescues orphaned and injured animals. On your tour, get up-close views of bears, moose, elk, caribou and other Alaskan animals.

Continue your drive along the Cook Inlet and around famous Turnagain Arm, one of the most scenic spots in Alaska. Watch for the incoming tide - the second-largest tide in North America - and keep an eye out for the wildlife such as sheep, beluga whales and eagles. After some time here, relax on the journey along the Seward Highway back to Anchorage. Tonight why not visit the Hard Rock Café serving up fresh, made-from-scratch menu items from Legendary Burgers to in-house smoked barbeque and local Alaskan cuisine. Rock out with Anchorage at the lively Hard Rock Cafe in downtown Anchorage. Known for its support of live music and hip service, meals at Hard Rock Cafe Anchorage promise more than just tasty food

# DAY 6:

After pickup from your Anchorage hotel, you'll be taken on a scenic 2-hour drive to the quaint town of Talkeetna, where you'll board a plane for your 1-hour flightseeing tour of Mt McKinley.

Soar high above the granite peaks, cascading icefalls, canyons and glaciers of Denali National Park. You'll be awed by the Great Gorge of Ruth Glacier, filled with a 4,000-foot thick (1,220-meter) river of ice. The depth of this glacier combined with the height of the towering cliffs create an abyss that is deeper than the Grand Canyon! In fact, this is one of the deepest gorges in the world.

Throughout your flight, capture photos of the Don Sheldon amphitheatre, snow-capped peaks, intense blue melt-water pools and cascading icefalls, and enjoy informative commentary from your expert pilot about the surrounding wildlife and geological interests.

Then experience a glacier landing! Land on a river of ice for an unparalleled viewing of these majestic rock and ice formations.

After your flight, your guide will show around you the town of Talkeetna. You'll have time to stop for lunch (own expense) before heading back to Anchorage.

At the end of an adventure-filled day, relax on the drive back to Anchorage, complete with drop-off at your hotel.

Celebrate your last night in Anchorage dinner at the Flying Machine Restaurant, an Upscale Alaskan bistro with sweeping lake vistas. A fine dining experience charmed by Alaska's rich aviation history and breathtaking views, featuring flavorful breakfasts and extraordinary dinners. Few Alaskan restaurants can claim to offer a dining experience like the Flying Machine in Anchorage. The food, created by our innovative local chefs, draws on traditional American influences coupled with a distinctive Alaskan twist. Serving fresh Alaskan seafood, succulent steaks, and a variety of other options along with enticing cocktails and a charming ambience, the Flying Machine Restaurant captures the very essence of Alaska. Wash your meal down with our extensive featured wine list, and finish it off with one of our freshly prepared desserts. Restaurant hosts many exciting events, including wine pairings and whiskey tastings, and international pasta extravaganzas. Restaurant open from 6-11am and 5-10pm daily.

# DAY 7:

Check out of your hotel, your Anchorage adventure concludes today.