

# ***Get Up and Go! Tours***

*'Active, Informative, Fun!'*

**ALASKA MULTI-SPORT, HIKING & FAMILY ADVENTURE TOURS**

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## ***Alaska Tour Pre-Departure Packet***

### **Part I: Introduction**

4 parts, 6 pages; please read entire document carefully

**GREETINGS *GET UP AND GO!* TRAVELERS.** Thank you for booking an Alaska Multi-Sport, Hiking, Family or Custom/Private adventure with us: We appreciate it! We are committed to doing our best to assure that your tour is the high quality, active, stimulating, enjoyable, and memorable experience you desire and expect.

Alaska is by any measure a special land, and we receive great satisfaction in helping others experience and appreciate it. Alaska's tremendous scale, wildness, and beauty, as well as the world-class recreational opportunities it presents, leaves most visitors awestruck. For many, even a short time spent in the "Great Land" can have a life-long impact, transforming the way they see and feel about the natural world in general, as well as their individual and collective place in it. And of course the hiking, sea kayaking, glacier trekking or ice climbing, whitewater rafting, canoeing, wildlife viewing, and other activities are themselves intensely stimulating and inspirational, as they allow entry into the otherwise inaccessible real Alaska that is bypassed by so many travelers.

Our ***Active, Informative, Fun!*** approach to Alaska travel is designed to enrich your experience, physically, intellectually, and personally, to get you out there, informed, up, and going in this amazing and beautiful land. So come on, get ready: It's almost time to ***Get Up and Go!*** to Alaska.

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**THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION** has been designed to help you prepare for your Alaskan adventure, and to help ease your arrival in Alaska. Please carefully read through all sections of this document now (and once again shortly before departing for Alaska), as it should answer most questions. If after reading through this document you still have questions, please feel free to contact us. Also, if you are coming on an ***Arctic Explorer*** tour with us, please contact us for more information about important travel logistics before booking your flights or confirming any other travel plans, as logistics are different for this particular tour.

**Part II. Anchorage Flights, Lodging Options, Arrival, and Joining the Group**

**Part III. Packing and General Alaska and Tour Information**

**Part IV. Alaska Packing List** (please follow this closely, and *resist the temptation to over-pack*)

**FINALIZING YOUR RESERVATION & PAYING FOR YOUR TOUR:** *In order for your tour reservation to be finalized, you should by now have done both of the following:* **1.** Returned your completed and signed ***Tour Reservation Form***. **2.** Paid your tour deposit. If you have not already done both of these, please do so immediately. Please also inform us as soon as possible if you would like help in booking pre- or post-tour lodging in Anchorage (lodging options can be found in Part II of this packet); and/or if you wish to rent a sleeping bag and/or sleeping pad from us. If you have not yet booked a flight, and thus don't yet know which nights you will need to reserve pre- and/or post-tour Anchorage lodging, don't worry about it. Simply leave these sections on your ***Tour Reservation Form*** blank for now, and contact us again as soon as you know which nights you will need to reserve.

Please note that your final payment is due no later than 60 days prior to your departure date (90 days for private, custom or charter tours). ***You will not be billed again, thank you for your prompt final payment.*** If you paid your tour deposit with a credit card, that same card will be charged again for the balance, on the due date (unless you instruct us otherwise). If you are paying by check, please be sure to pay the balance by the due date. We will send you a receipt once final payment has been received. Thank you.

### **A NOTE ABOUT PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE, PHYSICAL FITNESS AND CONDITIONING**

All ***Get Up & Go!*** tours are active and activity-oriented. ***No previous experience is necessary for any activity,*** and you don't need to be a well-conditioned athlete to enjoy yourself. Nevertheless, it goes without saying that **the healthier you are, the better prepared you are, and the better shape you are in, the more you are going to enjoy yourself and the various hikes and activities.** If you are not already doing so, starting a regular aerobic and strength exercise regimen **today** is a very sensible idea that will pay great dividends, both during your Alaska tour, and throughout your life! Alaska is a land of mountains, so any kind of hill or mountain trail hiking, stair climbing, or other aerobic activity you can do now will be especially beneficial. And make sure you wear any new hiking boots as you train to begin breaking them in!

**Thank you for your reservation,** and for reading through this ***Alaska Tour Pre-Departure Packet,*** we look forward to your visit!

## Part II. Alaska Flights, Lodging Options, Arrival, and Joining the Group

**A. ALASKA FLIGHTS:** Airfare to and from **Anchorage, Alaska** (where all but our *Arctic Explorer* tours start and end) is not included in the tour price, and you are responsible for making your own travel arrangements. We recommend you contact your favorite airline directly, or shop on the internet (on the airlines' sites, or on the site of a wholesaler such as Expedia, Travelocity, Orbitz, etc), for fares and tickets. **Alaska Airlines** has by far the most Alaska-bound flights (and the easiest-to-use website), but American, United, Jet Blue, Frontier, Northwest, Delta, America West, Air Canada, British Airways and several others all fly to Anchorage. As all tours begin on the morning of the first listed day, you must arrive at least one day prior to the tour departure date (i.e. the night before). If you are taking an *Arctic Explorer* tour, please contact us before making any travel arrangements.

**RETURN FLIGHTS:** Most of our tours end in Anchorage at 5:00 pm on the last day of the tour (barring some unexpected delay), although our *Kenai Explorer* and *Alaska Ranger* tours can end as late as 8:30 pm. Our *Arctic Explorer* tour ends in either Fairbanks, or Prudhoe Bay (aka Deadhorse), also generally by 5 pm (you can fly to Anchorage from either of those cities to connect to your homeward flight later that evening, or the next day). Indeed, it is quite possible on all tours to fly home the same evening your tour ends, as long as the scheduled departure time of your flight is after 6:30 pm (or after ~9:30 pm for *Kenai Explorer* and *Alaska Ranger* tours). Due to the time zone differential with the rest of the country, late and overnight flights from Anchorage are very common. If you are taking the optional Alaska Railroad train trip on the last day of our *Alaska Family Explorer* tour, you will arrive back in Anchorage at ~8 pm, so be sure to book a flight departing after ~10 pm.

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**B. ANCHORAGE LODGING OPTIONS:** Anchorage (or other) lodging before or after the tour is not included in the tour price. Accommodations in Alaska during the short and busy summer tourist season are relatively expensive and often difficult to obtain. **As a courtesy to our clients, we're happy to help you arrange accommodations at discounted rates at the properties listed below.** Please note that in order to take advantage of these discounted rates (and avoid confusion!), ***you must contact us directly for reservations: we'll take care of it for you.*** Please note that all nights may not be available at all hotels.

**These two hotels are our only Anchorage pick-up points.** You are welcome to stay elsewhere if you wish, but you must meet your group at one of these two hotels the first morning of the tour at the designated tour start time (see section D below for details).

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**1. INLET TOWER HOTEL & SUITES**, 1200 L Street, Anchorage (downtown). \$196/night (**inc. tax**). \* 3-star downtown hotel  
**2. QUPQUGIAQ INN**, (coop-coog-ee-ack), 640 W. 36<sup>th</sup> Ave. Anchorage (Midtown). \$25-140/night (**inc. tax**). Call it "The Q"

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**1. INLET TOWER HOTEL (IT)** is a nice, quiet, comfortable, newly remodeled and very well situated 3-star, **downtown** hotel with great views, a good on-site restaurant, a fitness center, **complimentary breakfast buffet, airport shuttle service, and in-room internet.** The shopping district, museums, Coastal Trail, and many great restaurants and bars are all within easy walking distance. Coin-operated laundry and excess luggage storage are available. All rooms have two queen-size or one king-size bed. All rooms are non-smoking. Check-in: 3 pm. Check-out: 12 noon.

**Discounted rates for Get Up & Go! Tours' clients at the Inlet Tower are \$196/night\* (includes 12% tax, 1 or 2 people. Regularly \$265 plus 12% tax = ~\$297).** Add \$24 for each additional person (max 4 per room); if a rollaway is needed, please let us know asap. **Breakfast, and shuttle service to and from the Anchorage airport are included** (see below for details). **Hotel policy states that cancellations made less than 7 days in advance receive no refund.** Please note that **not all nights are available at this price.**

**2. QUPQUGIAQ INN** (coop-coog-ee-ack, or simply "The Q") is a friendly Midtown, budget, non-smoking boutique motel and hostel that features comfortable private rooms with private baths; or cheaper rooms with clean, shared baths. There are plenty of shared bathrooms throughout the inn (waiting is very rare), they are cleaned regularly, and they are right next door to most rooms. They also have even cheaper hostel-style bunks in same-sex and co-ed dorms available.

The inn was completely remodeled inside and out in 2006, and features a guest-accessible kitchen; **free continental breakfast**; free internet access; in-room satellite television, phones with voice mail, and hand-crafted furniture imported from India, a café; free luggage storage; and very reasonable prices. Profits from the inn are used to fund the on-site Humanity Center, a community-oriented, adult liberal arts education center. Fifty percent of all profits are donated to schools in poor countries. Restaurants, a laundry-mat, the main branch of the Anchorage library, a 16-screen movie theater, and REI (sporting goods), and other shops are all nearby. Please note that alcohol is not allowed on the premises. Cab fare from the airport generally runs ~\$11-15. The Q is on the downtown bus line (#36), and is about 3 or 4 miles from downtown. **Room rates at the Q, including tax, are as follows:**

- ❑ **Private Rooms, w/ shared bath:** One bed, for one person: \$91; one full-sized bed for two persons: \$103. Two beds: \$106.
- ❑ **Private Rooms with private bath:** One bed, for one person: \$110; one full-sized bed for two persons: \$121. Two beds: \$129.
- ❑ **Hostel Bunks** are also available for \$25/pp/night. Mixed gender hostel rooms, with 4 to 8 people per room.

**Note: All rooms at the Qupqugiaq Inn (except hostel beds) are \$11 more on Friday and Saturday nights.**

No alcohol or smoking indoors. All room reservations and room types are subject to availability. **Please contact us rather than the Q for reservations**; we have blocked several rooms each night, and if you contact them directly it will just lead to confusion.

**Note: Cancellations less than 7 days in advance will be charged a \$25/night cancellation fee. Rates are subject to change.**

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## C. ARRIVING IN ANCHORAGE / GETTING TO YOUR HOTEL

**INLET TOWER HOTEL** (276-0110) offers guests **complimentary shuttle transport to and from the airport, train station, and Egan Center, and front desk check-in services, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week**. Courtesy phones are located in the airport baggage claim area. Please don't call until you have retrieved your luggage. To meet their airport shuttle vans, walk outside from the baggage claim area, **cross the access street to the median, and wait at the BUS/LIMO pick up point**. It is customary and expected that you tip shuttle drivers at least \$2 pp each way, and porters ~\$5/bag each way (or carry your own bags).

If you are staying at the **QUPQUGIAQ INN** you must take a taxi from the airport (easily available 24/7). The fare to the "Q" (640 W. 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue) should be about ~\$11-15. **The front desk at the Q is open 10 am till 3 am, so late arrivals are no problem.**

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## D. JOINING THE GROUP ON THE FIRST MORNING OF THE TOUR

**ALL TOURS BEGIN AT THE TIMES LISTED BELOW, ON THE FIRST MORNING OF THE TOUR:** *It is your responsibility to be at our pick-up points at the appointed times. If you miss the start of the tour, you must pay for any transport required to enable you to catch up with the group, which may or may not be possible; we'll try to help, but can make no promises.*

- ❑ **INLET TOWER HOTEL: 8:00 a.m.** Please be checked out and ready to go! Store any excess luggage with the front desk.
- ❑ **QUPQUGIAQ INN: 8:15 a.m.** Please be checked out and ready to go! Your guide can help you store luggage if necessary.

**Please have already eaten your breakfast, checked out, and be ready to go on time.** If your guide is not there exactly on time, please be patient, he or she may have been delayed at one of the other pick-up points, or otherwise. **Sorry, no other pick-up points are possible.** If you are staying elsewhere than at our departure hotels you will need to walk or take a taxi to one of these by the scheduled pick-up times. We'll all get acquainted and your guide/s will introduce the tour and talk briefly about the day's activities, after which we'll be on our way. Make sure you are dressed appropriately for the day's activities (see Section E below).

**BREAKFAST** on the first morning is not included on any tour, but both of our departure hotels now include free breakfasts. The **Inlet Tower Hotel** offers complimentary breakfast in the restaurant just off the lobby ("Mixx," **pick up your breakfast vouchers during check-in**), and there is a good deli /coffee shop /bakery /grocery store at the New Sagaya Market, just behind the hotel. The **Qupqugiaq Inn** offers free, continental breakfast, in the lobby. There is also a self-service kitchen, and Café Europa, a bakery/coffee shop, is directly across the street. No matter where you are staying, **please have eaten your breakfast, checked out, and be ready to go at the designated starting times.** We generally take a brief coffee/bathroom break mid-morning on all tours.

**EXCESS LUGGAGE STORAGE:** Space is limited in and on our vehicles, so please don't bring anything more than you really need during the tour (see our packing list in Part IV). If you are traveling independently before or after the tour and have excess luggage, gear, or gifts, etc, please store these at your Anchorage hotel prior to joining the tour. The **Inlet Tower Hotel** (make arrangements at the front desk, before your guide arrives to pick you up), as well as the **Qupqugiaq Inn** (ask your guide in the morning, s/he has the key to the storage closet), offer free excess luggage storage to guests. Be sure to put your name on all bags.

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## E. WHAT TO WEAR AND HAVE WITH YOU ON THE FIRST MORNING

**On most tours we will be hiking before we arrive at our first campsite or lodge; please dress accordingly.** Wear your hiking boots, and layered, non-cotton clothing, and carry a fleece or other warm layer and rain gear with you, just in case. Your small daypack should contain your full water bottle, camera, binoculars, sunscreen, sunglasses, valuables, and anything else you want to have handy in the vehicle. All other items should be packed in your primary luggage, which will be inaccessible during travel. See the **Packing List** and **Packing and Miscellaneous Tips** sections below for details. **Please do not over-pack, as space is limited.**

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## F. RETURNING TO ANCHORAGE ON THE LAST DAY OF THE TOUR

**MOST TOURS END IN ANCHORAGE ON THE LAST DAY OF THE TOUR, BY 5 PM** (barring some unexpected delay), **except Arctic Explorer**, which ends in Fairbanks or Prudhoe Bay (aka Deadhorse) at ~5 pm. **Alaska Ranger** and **Kenai Explorer** tours may end as late as **8:30 pm**. **Alaska Family Explorer** group members who choose to take the optional **Alaska Railroad** trip back to Anchorage from Denali on the last day will arrive in Anchorage at ~8 pm, please plan accordingly. Your guide will drop you at your hotel, or s/he can take you to the airport if you are ready to go directly. **Inlet Tower Hotel** guests can also take the hotel's complimentary shuttles to the airport from their hotel; inquire at the front desk about scheduling a shuttle departure time.

If you have left luggage at the **Qupqugiaq Inn** **make sure to ask your guide to help you retrieve it before he or she leaves**, as the hotel staff does **not** have a key to the storage closet.

**Get Up & Go! Tours Alaska Tour Pre-Departure Packet**

## Part III. Packing & General Alaska and Tour Information

**CLIMATE AND WEATHER:** Summers are the nicest time of the year in Alaska, with mild temperatures and long days. Daytime temperatures typically range from mild to warm (50-80° F / 10-27 C), and nights from cool to mild (40-55° F / 6-12 C). A lot depends on where you are: the coast is very mild, the interior valleys are warmer and drier, the mountains cooler. (In early June and late August, nighttime temperatures in the mountains occasionally drop below freezing). While there are generally lots of long, sunny days, Alaskan weather can change quickly and rain and cool temperatures are possible at any time. You'll thus want to be prepared for warm, sunny days, as well as for cooler, rainy ones. Versatile, layered clothing is the answer; see below for details.

If you are taking an *Arctic Explorer* tour, be advised that this region has both the hottest, coolest, and most variable temperatures in Alaska. Although it can often be in the 80's, a storm front could bring much colder temperatures. Please plan accordingly.

**PACKING AND WHAT TO BRING:** When packing for your Alaska adventure, keep in mind that Alaskans are extremely casual. "Nice clothing" of any kind is completely unnecessary (although lodge-based tour clients may want to bring one additional set of comfortable clothes to wear to restaurants). Your best bet is to wear **comfortable, versatile, non-cotton clothing that can be layered**. On sunny days, shorts and t-shirts are often sufficient. Many people enjoy the convenience and comfort of convertible, zip-off pants (zip off the pants legs to convert them to shorts without having to remove your boots). On cooler or wet days and evenings (especially of course on camping trips), you may want to layer long underwear (they double as pajamas), pants and shirt, a warm fleece or wool sweater, and your waterproof outerwear. If you become too warm, simply peel off a layer. Wool or fleece gloves, scarf and hat will be appreciated on cool nights around the campfire on camping and 'Camp & Cabin'-based tours.

**Having a good rain jacket is very important** (goretex or another breathable material recommended). A sun/rain hat is also essential. It's also nice to have rain pants handy to pull over your regular trousers if it rains (or if the trailside bushes are wet, etc). These allow you to continue hiking or doing whatever else you were doing dry, and in comfort. A bulky ski parka is not advised (although a compact down vest or an extra fleece jacket is a possible additional layer, especially on Arctic trips, or if you tend to get cold, or if you're coming in late May, early June or late August). Umbrellas and ponchos are discouraged.

**Cotton and denim clothing is not recommended**, although jeans and a t-shirt around camp or the lodges are fine. "Cotton Kills!" is a melodramatic, but nonetheless accurate Alaskan buzz phrase, as cotton absorbs water and cold (rather than evaporating it), and doesn't keep you warm when wet, potentially leading to hypothermia. By wicking away perspiration and water, lightweight silk or synthetic first layers (e.g. polypropylene, capilene, nylon, polyester and nylon, etc.), medium weight fleece or wool tops, and breathable (e.g. goretex or similar) outerwear will keep you warmer, drier, and much more comfortable than damp or soggy cotton.

**Your light or medium-weight hiking boots should be well broken-in** (if they're new, start wearing them now), and it would be a good idea to waterproof them (as well as your other outerwear: try Nikwax) before the trip. Thick wool or synthetic hiking socks with or without thin, synthetic sock liners are much, much better than cotton socks, and your feet will thank you. **A daypack, metal or nalgene water bottle, sunglasses, sunscreen, and your camera are all essential**, and a pair of **binoculars** will be much appreciated for viewing wildlife and scanning the big Alaskan landscapes. You may also want to bring something to read (check out the "Alaska Library" link on our website for suggestions), and a notebook or journal is often appreciated. If you already have, and are accustomed to using them, bring along your collapsible hiking pole/s, and/or gaiters. Running or other lightweight shoes or sandals are nice to change into at the end of the day. See our *Alaska Packing List* (below) for a complete listing of what to bring.

**As space on and in the vehicle is limited, please do not over-pack.** You won't need as many clothes as you might think, and most tours offer opportunities to do laundry mid-trip (see below). **You do not need any gear not on the packing list.** If you will be traveling independently before or after our tour and have additional clothing, gear, gifts, or other items, we strongly suggest packing these extra things in a separate bag, suitcase or cardboard box and checking it at your Anchorage hotel (if you're staying at the **Qupquliaq Inn**, your guide can store this for you on the first morning; if you're staying at the **Inlet Tower**, check extra baggage with the desk clerk before meeting your guide). There is almost always someone with an unnecessarily large bag filled with extra clothes, gear, and other things that they don't need and never even use. Please don't let that person be you! Thank you.

**SLEEPING BAG & INSULATED PAD: If you're on a 'Camp & Cabin' or camping-based tour, don't forget your sleeping bag and sleeping pad!** While it's unlikely to ever be this cold in the summer, your compact "three season" bag should be rated to at least 20° F / -5° C (they are often over-rated), and should be **carried in a nylon stuff sack** (just stuff it in there, don't try to roll it and then put it in). Self-inflating Thermarest-brand sleeping mattresses are luxurious and of high quality, but any insulated, closed cell/rigid foam, sleeping pad will do. Sleeping bags (\$25) and sleeping pads (\$10; non-inflating, rigid foam/closed cell Ridgerests) are available for rent from us with advance notification only. Please let us know ASAP if you want to reserve these. **The first morning of the tour is too late!** We provide roomy, twin-share tents, as well as all other necessary camping gear.

**LAUNDRY FACILITIES:** Coin-operated, self-service laundry facilities are available in Anchorage (in the Inlet Tower Hotel, and at a Laundromat across the street from the Qupquliaq Inn), Denali, Valdez, Seward, Manley Hot Springs and Fairbanks. You can also wash your socks, skivvies, quick-drying synthetic t-shirts, etc, in a washbasin or sink and line dry them at some campgrounds (or in your room on lodge tours). And as mentioned, we Alaskans are very, very casual and practical in our dress, so having spotlessly clean clothes all the time is not at all important: you can wear things more than once!

**LUGGAGE:** A single, medium-sized, zippered, top-opening duffel-style bag with a shoulder strap is your best choice. If you already have one, an **internal** frame backpack is also ok (but not necessary). **Please do not bring a hard suitcase or an oversized bag.** A small **daypack** for walks and for carrying necessities with you inside the van is the only other luggage you'll need (plus your sleeping bag and pad, which can be packed loose/separately, rather than in or attached to your main luggage).

**CARRY ON BAGGAGE—YOUR HANDY DAY PACK:** When traveling to Alaska, you should carry anything that you absolutely cannot afford to do without (or have the airlines lose) in your carry-on daypack with you on the plane. Having your rain gear, hiking boots, hiking clothes, camera, binoculars, eyeglasses, important papers (make copies), medications, and other vitals with you will minimize inconvenience if your baggage is lost or delayed by the airline. If your luggage doesn't arrive with you, it is the airline's responsibility to transport it to you, but this sometimes takes longer than seems fathomable. Be prepared!

**MOSQUITOES AND INSECTS:** Tales of voracious, bird-sized, sub-arctic mosquitoes are generally greatly overblown. There are of course mosquitoes and other bugs in Alaska, but they generally aren't so bad, and they certainly aren't the assault missile variety that one finds in the tropics. Nonetheless, it can't hurt to be prepared. Long-sleeved shirts and pants and a hat generally do the trick, although if you are especially sensitive or otherwise worried (or dislike repellants), bring a cheap mosquito head net. Bugs are mostly gone by August. Don't let an exaggerated fear of mosquitoes keep you from experiencing the beauty of Alaska!

**PHOTOGRAPHY:** Digital cameras are convenient and make it especially easy to share e-photos with friends, family, and fellow travelers. Please email us your best shots or send us a cd after you get home! If you want to re-charge your camera batteries during the trip it is a good idea to **bring a special dc car adapter plug that plugs into our vans' cigarette lighter** and charges as we drive. On some tours you can also charge them with standard ac chargers at campgrounds or lodges, but we can't guarantee this will always be available; bringing extra batteries or a dc charger to use in the vehicle is thus a better bet.

If you are shooting film, bring more than you think you'll need, especially if you shoot slides. Film is expensive in Alaska, and hard to find outside of Anchorage: you'll take more photos than you think!

**Note:** By participating in any of our tours you are agreeing to permit us to use your photographed or videotaped, etc. image in our advertising (e.g. print, web, brochure, cd-rom/dvd, or other), without notice or compensation. Thank you!

**CELL PHONES:** While we strongly discourage you from talking on cell phones in front of the group, or even leaving your phone on, there is cell coverage in most of the communities we visit, so if you want to bring your phone for emergencies or discrete private conversations, that's fine. Thank you for respecting your fellow travelers' desires to escape the world of cell phones!

**CREDIT CARDS, CASH & ATM'S:** Credit cards are widely accepted in Alaska. Virtually all optional activities and non-included restaurant meals, as well as most other miscellaneous expenses, can be paid for in this way. Additionally, ATM's (aka cash point machines) are available in many towns, including Valdez, McCarthy, Seward, Homer, Fairbanks and Anchorage. Having some cash on hand at all times is a good idea.

**GUIDE GRATUITIES:** Your hard-working and conscientious guide/s are the single biggest factor in determining the success or failure of your tour, and the quality of your Alaska experience. Our top-notch guides make it happen, working long hours to assure that your tour is fun, interesting and memorable, and providing you with numerous personal services (including feeding you and looking after your personal safety) all with good cheer and genuine friendliness! As in other service industries, it is customary to show your appreciation at the end of the tour with a gratuity. While the amount is of course up to you and should be based on the quality of your overall experience, the industry standard is generally ~10% of the tour price. Guides prefer to receive cash, but are happy to accept personal or traveler's checks as well; whatever is easiest for you. Cash tips for local activity guides (while rafting, ice climbing, glacier trekking, and sea kayaking, we sometimes contract local guides) are also appropriate and much appreciated.

**FLEXIBILITY, PATIENCE, AND A SENSE OF HUMOR:** As you're undoubtedly aware, regardless of the precision of one's preparations and fervency of one's desires, things don't always go exactly as planned! We always make reasonable efforts to adhere to the itinerary as outlined, but if something unforeseen or otherwise out of our control does come up or limit us in any way, we ask for your patience and understanding as we do our best to improvise. Flexibility, patience, a positive attitude, and senses of humor and adventure are as important to bring along with you as your hiking boots and raincoat. Thank you!

**WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU:** We do not distribute any kind of post-tour evaluation form to ask you about your experience in Alaska with us, but that doesn't mean that we don't want to hear from you. We are always very happy to receive feedback from you, our valued clients, positive or otherwise. It is only through such feedback that we know what our guests especially enjoy, and what can perhaps be improved. If it's not too much trouble, please take a few moments after your tour to email us with your thoughts and feelings about your experience with us: [alaska@getupandgotours.com](mailto:alaska@getupandgotours.com).

We are also happy to see your photos, blogs, videos or other documents of your experience with us. We love receiving photo cds. We may even publish some of your best photos on our website or in our brochure. We will always give you a photo credit for any images used. If we publish one or more photographs taken by you, we will give you a photographic credit and a \$50 credit toward your next tour with us.

**THANK YOU: WE LOOK FORWARD TO YOUR VISIT!**

## **Part IV. Alaska Packing List**

See also the *Packing & Miscellaneous Tips* section, above, for more info

### **CLOTHING, RAINGEAR, AND FOOTWEAR**

- **Hiking Boots:** Light- or medium-weight, already broken-in and waterproofed; start wearing new ones now.
- **Sport or Running Shoes, Sandals or Flip Flops:** To change into after you take your boots off; 1 pair only.
- **Raincoat:** Bring a good one w/ a hood (not rubber); goretex or other breathable material recommended; no ponchos!
- **Rain Pants:** Pulling these over your regular pants or shorts will help keep you warm and dry in inclement weather.
- **Fleece (pile) and/or non-cotton “hoodie” jackets,** or warm wool sweater/s (no cotton sweatshirts!): 1 or 2 of these.
- **Pants:** 2 pairs. At least one should be quick drying, lightweight nylon or polyester, for hiking and other activities.
- **Short Pants:** 1 pair. Convertible, zip-off hiking pants are practical, lightweight, fast drying and easy to clean.
- **T-Shirts:** 3 or 4. At least a few of these should be of a synthetic material such as polypropylene, capilene or silk, as these wick away, rather than absorbing water and sweat, are easy to clean, and dry quickly.
- **Long-Sleeved Shirts:** 2. Again, synthetic fabric is recommended.
- **Thermal Long Underwear:** 1 set, tops and bottoms; these can double as pajamas.
- **Warm Hat and Gloves:** Wool or polyester/fleece recommended; a bandana is also nice
- **Sun/Rain Hat:** The sun can be intense, especially on the water. Your rain jacket should have a hood.
- **Socks:** 5-8 pairs; thick wool or polyester/nylon “smart” hiking socks are much better than cotton.
- **Underwear:** If one or more pairs are synthetic you can easily hand wash these in a basin or sink at your CG or lodge.

### **PERSONAL ITEMS** (The first two items obviously do not apply to **Lodge-based** tours)

- **Sleeping Bag:** A warm one, rated at least 20 degrees F/ -5 C (stuff—don’t roll—it in a nylon stuff sack); rentals \$25/tour.
- **Insulated Sleeping Pad:** Or you can rent from us if you wish for \$10/tour (Ridgerest “closed cell” pad, non-inflating).
- **Day Pack/Rucksack:** Small, student book-bag-sized, for hikes, and to keep essentials handy while traveling.
- **Water Bottles:** 1-2 sturdy, refillable ones; at least one liter/quart capacity each; nalgene or “camel back” recommended.
- **Headlamp or Flashlight:** Late July, August, and September trips only; you won’t need one in May, June or early July.
- **Toiletries; Towel; Washcloth:** Small & quick drying. Towels and washcloths are unnecessary on lodge-based tours.
- **Sunglasses / Spare Eyeglasses:** Even if you don’t wear sunglasses at home, you will need them here. A leash is nice, also.
- **Sunscreen and Lip Protection:** The Alaskan sun and glare off the water and glaciers can be a lot stronger than you think.
- **Insect Repellent** that contains “deet” (**OFF!** is a common brand).
- **Personal First Aid Kit:** A small one, containing bandages, aspirin, personal prescription medications, etc.
- **Plastic Bags:** Bring a few strong, re-usable plastic bags to pack muddy boots, dirty clothes, damp towel, etc. in luggage.
- **Cash / Credit Card / ATM (cash) Card:** ATM’s are available locally but you should always carry at least a little cash.
- **Photo Identification:** Driver’s license or passport; **required to board the state ferry or train** for everyone aged 18 and over

### **OPTIONAL ITEMS**

- **Down Vest or a second Fleece Jacket:** For early and late season, and Arctic trips, especially if you tend to get cold.
- **Camera / filters / extra film or memory chips!** Spare batteries and/or dc battery charger (to use in our vehicle en route).
- **Binoculars:** For wildlife and landscape viewing; if you are buying new ones, the small, cheap models are adequate.
- **Collapsible Hiking Pole/s and/or Gaiters:** If you already have, and are accustomed to using these, bring them.
- **Fishing Gear:** Rods should be protected in a sturdy case; you will have to buy a fishing license to fish.
- **Swim Suit:** For lakes or saunas; the Valdez hotel we use on our *Alaska Explorer* lodge tours also has an indoor pool .
- **Earplugs,** and/or **Eye Shields,** against the midnight sun; a bandana or stocking cap work well; recommended.
- **Mosquito Head Net:** Almost certainly unnecessary, but if having one available will help you to relax...
- **Insulated Cup or Mug** with tight-fitting and closeable lid, for hot drinks to go.
- **Reading Material / journal / pen / list of friends’ and family’s addresses / postcard stamps.**
- **Cell phone:** **Please leave these off, and use them in private only,** to avoid disturbing your fellow travelers. See note p. 5
- **iPod** and headphones
- **Laundry Soap:** Bring a small amount if you wish to use the coin-operated machines available at some lodges & CG’s.
- **Pillow Case:** Make your own to-go pillow! Simply stuff your fleece jacket or another article of clothing into your sleeping bag’s stuff sack (or bring a pillow case for this purpose). Actual pillows are not advised.

**SPACE IS LIMITED, PLEASE DO NOT OVER PACK!**

If you have any questions please don’t hesitate to call.