



WILD ALASKA: TALKEETNA & KENAI FJORDS

Itinerary



MEETING PLACE:	Anchorage, Alaska
MEETING TIME:	7:00 PM the evening before your trip departure date
RETURN TIME:	Approximately 11 AM on Day 9
RIVER RATING:	Class III-IV
RIVER MILES:	Talkeetna River, 75 miles
PUT-IN:	Yellowjacket Creek
TAKE-OUT:	Talkeetna
AGE LIMIT:	Minimum age is 12
TRIP LENGTH:	9 Days / 8 Nights
ACTIVITIES:	Hiking, rafting, sea kayaking

Alaska—perhaps nowhere in North America is the call of the wild as strong. Join O.A.R.S. on this all-encompassing exploration of wild Alaska which combines a three-day rafting trip on the Talkeetna River with a three-day sea kayaking adventure in Kenai Fjords National Park. Enjoy five nights of comfortable wilderness camping, gourmet meals and three nights of casual bed & breakfast and hotel accommodations. Experience the incredible terrain—mountains, rivers, glaciers, oceans and beaches—and catch a glimpse of the locals: eagles, moose, sea otters, seal, whales, sea birds and bears.

AWARD-WINNING NATURE-BASED ADVENTURES SINCE 1969

O.A.R.S. has been in business for over 40 years and that is no accident. Great trips on some of the world's best rivers and coastlines are the recipe for this success. Always focused on our clients and their vacations, it is our genuine belief that river trips and nature-based adventures are extremely valuable life experiences. With that as our foundation, we have committed ourselves over the years to providing the best trips available, always with an eye on improvement.

TALKEETNA RIVER

- This is the premier wilderness whitewater river trip in Alaska! Our three-day river trip begins with an exciting bush flight from Talkeetna to the put-in and gives you an excellent overview of this Alaskan wilderness area. One of the highlights of the upper Talkeetna River is the class III/IV whitewater through the heavily forested Talkeetna Canyon. Ten+ miles with almost continuous uninterrupted whitewater, (considered the longest rapid in North America at most water levels), is sure to please the first-timer and the experienced rafter. Strong salmon runs are found along the Talkeetna River—and so are the bears! Caribou frequently wander in from the nearby Nelchina herd, and we often see moose and eagles by the river as well. On our final day we float into the wide Susitna Valley, where we can catch a view of Mt. McKinley on a clear day and get some last-minute fishing in before reaching Talkeetna.

KENAI FJORDS NATIONAL PARK

- At the tip of the Kenai Peninsula lies a land where the ice age still lingers. In Kenai Fjords, glaciers, earthquakes, and ocean storms are the architects. Ice worms, bears and whales make their home in this land of constant change. Imagine kayaking in a place of turquoise blue waters, tidewater and hanging glaciers, islands of protected coves and rugged cliffs teeming with whales and puffins under glorious skies. The waters abound with marine life. Sea otters casually watch you as they feed on sea urchins and mollusks; adolescent seals follow you curiously as you kayak in silence; pods of orcas glide through the waters.

WILDLIFE

- Wildlife abounds in Alaska. The list is impressive and includes bears (brown or grizzly bears and black bears), caribou, moose, wolves and dall sheep to name a few. Alaska is home to more than 445 species of birds including bald and golden eagles, puffins and cormorants. Did you know that some 13,000 trumpeter swans nest in Alaska? As many as 140 million seabirds feed in Alaskan waters. There is plenty to see in the oceans as well—ocaras, beluga, gray and humpback whales, seals and sea otters.

MULTI-SPORT

- Something for everyone! Increasingly popular with our repeat travelers, our multi-sport adventures are an easygoing way to explore—combining rafting and sea kayaking with other fun-filled activities that take advantage of the best this region has to offer. Activities on the Wild Alaska itinerary include, rafting, hiking and sea kayaking.

Sample Itinerary

We pride ourselves in running a relaxed and always flexible schedule. Every trip is different depending upon the group, other trips in the area and sometimes the weather. The following is a sample of what your trip might be like. (The itinerary is subject to change as it is dependent upon weather, water levels and participants' abilities)

The Day before Your Trip

- Arrive in Anchorage, Alaska and take a shuttle or taxi to your overnight hotel. Meet with your O.A.R.S. trip leader at 7:00 PM at the Earth B&B (located downtown) for a pre-trip orientation. Accommodation on this night is not included in your trip cost.

Day 1: Talkeetna

- We will depart Anchorage and drive to Talkeetna, the staging area for our river adventure. Talkeetna's colorful community has long been regarded as the classic model for the TV show "Northern Exposure". There will be time this afternoon to explore this quaint town and visit the various establishments where you might meet and talk to some of the famous (and not so famous) characters. *Camping* (L, D)

Day 2: Rafting the Talkeetna River

- After an early breakfast we will take a 30 minute scenic flight to the river. The morning views of the Alaska Range, dominated by Mt. McKinley, are impressive and commonly seen at this time of year. The early start helps us miss the mid-day cloud buildup in the Talkeetna Mountains and gives us a great view of the river's journey from above.
- We land on a gravel bar approximately 75 miles up river where the rafts are waiting to begin the next stage of our adventures. After lunch, we will watch for moose, bears, caribou and eagles as we float to Prairie Creek. Fishing here can be good, but an eye for bears must be kept open. Proper bear etiquette will be taught by your guides at your pre-raft meeting. This evening, we will camp just down river from Cache Creek. The guides will start dinner and a campfire while you setup your tents and then settle into the sights and sounds of the river and surrounding landscape. It's a perfect time to kick back by the fire with appetizers, refreshments and conversation. *Riverside Camping* (B, L, D)

Day 3: Rafting the Talkeetna River

- After breakfast, we'll get ready for today's whitewater by wearing drysuits and neoprene booties and float a few miles to the entrance of the Talkeetna Canyon. We'll land on shore and take a short hike to a scenic overlook to scout the first rapids, 'Entrance Exam' and the dog-leg of the 'Toilet Bowl.' This is an exciting start to our day of whitewater! Several miles downriver the pace picks up again as we enter the 'Sluice Box' and ride its 10 miles of uninterrupted Class IV (or class III, depending on water level) fun! The adrenaline brings on a healthy appetite, and a lunch stop is usually made in the canyon. The rapid and canyon end at a dramatic natural rock canyon gate that opens up to the huge expanse of the valley outside the mountains. We have several more miles of floating before we reach our camp near Disappointment Creek. Gold mining was popular on many of these creeks, and we suspect this one was aptly named for its poor yield. Hiking can be done here with a guide, fishing is also good, and yea, we do carry a goldpan... just in case you're feeling lucky. Enjoy a delicious dinner and comfortable camping in the Alaskan wilderness. *Riverside Camping* (B, L, D)

Day 4: Talkeetna

- Today we'll dress for comfort and put on rain pants, rubber boots and keep the rain jacket nearby in case of wet weather. The final segment of our trip is a mellow float with numerous river braids. There's good wildlife viewing in this area of numerous salmon spawning side streams. Our destination is Clear Creek. Although we are usually not alone at this popular fishing spot, the fishing is generally excellent. We'll depart after lunch, and hopefully enjoy views over Mt. McKinley as we reach our takeout in Talkeetna. From here we will be transferred back to Anchorage for an overnight at the Earth B&B. *Earth B&B* (B, L)

Day 5: Scenic train to Seward / Pre-kayak trip meeting

- After an early breakfast we'll transfer to the train station and take Alaska Railroad's Coastal Classic Train through a beautiful stretch of wilderness between Anchorage and Seward. We'll enjoy the view and comfort offered from the upper dome-level which also has access to a private outdoor viewing deck.
- On arrival in Seward we'll check in to our hotel accommodation and enjoy the afternoon in this quaint port town. There is plenty to see and do in Seward and your guide would be happy to offer suggestions for museums, shopping or grabbing a bite to eat. In the evening we'll have a kayak meeting to discuss the days ahead. *Breeze Inn, or similar* (B)

Day 6: Sea kayaking Kenai Fjords

- After a hearty breakfast, we take a charter boat through Resurrection Bay amid hanging glaciers, towering mountains and expansive vistas. Watch above for eagles, puffins, cormorants, oyster catchers

and marbled murrelets. Watch below for sea otters, sea lions, orcas, humpback whales, porpoise and more as we cruise to our destination of Aialik Bay in the Kenai Fjords National Park. Upon arrival we will set up our tents in a magnificent cove surrounded by waterfalls and with distant views of either Aialik or Holgate Glacier.

- Before we head out on our first paddle, we'll review paddle techniques and safety considerations while still at our wilderness camp. Our guides will offer kayak instruction for first time kayakers or anyone who'd like to refresh their skills. Following lunch, we'll explore the coastline of the bay. Upon our return to shore a dinner of hearty fare will be served while we enjoy solitude, scenery and good company. The evening is a good time to absorb the serenity of nature, stroll along the beach, and enjoy quiet conversation or to just plain relax. *Wilderness camping* (B, L, D)

Day 7: Sea kayaking Kenai Fjords

- This will be an active day of sea kayaking full of breath-taking paddling opportunities. Options are plentiful and your experienced guides will facilitate your Alaskan adventure based on wind, weather, tides and dynamics of the group. *Wilderness camping* (B, L, D)

Options may include:

- A day of paddling among 'bergy bits' with the feeling of being in a prehistoric slush cup. Our trance will only be broken by the thunder of glacial calving as rumbling ice crashes into the sea. We'll enjoy lunch beach-side overlooking Aialik Glacier.
- A paddle to a glacial lagoon where we float among large bergs and may encounter harbor seals in one of their favorite pupping and molting areas. Nearby we'll enjoy a beach-side lunch.
- A visit to Abra Cove and Coleman Bay. We'll paddle beside magnificent waterfalls dropping hundreds of feet into the cove. A shore-side lunch will be served in view of this unique landscape.
- Aialik Bay waters provide prime opportunities to view seals, whales and many pelagic birds. Keep an eye on the shoreline for bears and goats which frequent the fjord in abundant numbers. *Wilderness camping* (B, L, D)

Day 8: Sea kayaking and a return cruise to Seward

- An early breakfast and camp break-down will start our day. A morning of sea kayaking may be available before our charter boat returns to whisk us away for lunch while viewing the glacier. Our wildlife cruise home will take us to a sea lion haul-out, sea bird rookeries and with luck will give us an opportunity to view more whales and orcas. Return to Seward is typically between 5:00-7:00 PM depending on weather and whale conditions.
- We'll check into our hotel and enjoy a farewell dinner at a local restaurant, toasting to an incredible adventure. *Breeze Inn or similar* (B, L, D)

Day 9: Return to Anchorage

- Return to Anchorage by charter bus and transfer to the airport for afternoon or evening departing flights (approximately two and one half hour drive). Bid farewell to our fellow adventurers and beautiful Alaska. (B)

What's Included?

- Skilled professional guide service
- 3 nights hotel/B&B accommodation (based on double occupancy)

For more information, call 1-800-346-6277 in the USA and Canada or 1-209-736-4677 outside the USA and Canada, or e-mail info@oars.com

- 5 nights catered camping
- All meals as outlined in the itinerary
- All activities as outlined in the itinerary, including rafting, sea kayaking, hiking
- All camping equipment including sleeping bag, sleeping pad, two-person shared tent
- All transportation from day 1 through the return to Anchorage on day 9
- High quality inflatable rafting and sea kayaking equipment including paddle, helmet and personal flotation device (PFD), waterproof bags
- Dry suits, neoprene mittens and river shoes on the Class III-IV whitewater segment of the Talkeetna River
- Rubber boots on the kayaking trip

What's Not Included?

- Flights to and from Anchorage, Alaska
- Pre- and post-trip accommodations and meals
- Single hotel room supplement \$400 (due to the camp sites available in the Kenai Fjords, single occupancy tent use will depend on the size of the group)
- Insurance of any kind, including travel or mandatory medical evacuation insurance
- Alcohol and personal items (an equipment list will be provided)
- Guide gratuities

SOMETHING VOLUNTARY

- In reviewing your statement, you'll note a \$1/person/day donation to Waterkeeper Alliance, a non-profit conservation organization dedicated to fishable, swimmable and drinkable waterways worldwide. One-hundred percent of these funds go directly to worldwide watershed protection and your contribution is tax-deductible. This donation is voluntary and may be removed from your invoice if you choose not to participate. Please notify our office if you would prefer to delete the donation from your balance.
- The O.A.R.S. Foundation is a not-for-profit 501 (c) 3 organization with the express goal of providing opportunities for young people to experience the magic of a river trip. Visit www.oarsfoundation.org to learn more about how your tax deductible donation can change young lives for the better.

Terms & Conditions

Reservations & Deposit

- An \$800/person deposit is required at the time of reservation. The balance is due 90 days prior to departure.

Cancellations & Refunds

- If you find it necessary to cancel your trip, notify us as soon as possible. Cancellations are subject to cancellation penalties. We regret that we cannot make exceptions for personal emergencies. For this reason, we strongly urge our participants to investigate trip cancellation insurance (see Insurance).

Date of cancellation	Cancellation Fee
360 days or more prior to your trip	\$100/person
359 - 180 days prior to your trip	\$250/person
179 - 120 days prior to your trip	\$500/person
119 - 90 days prior to your trip	\$800/person
89 days or less	Full Fare

Medical

- Under most circumstances, if you are of an adventurous spirit and in reasonably good health, you should have no problem enjoying this trip. People with medical conditions, including pregnancy, should have a physician's approval before taking an adventure travel trip.

For more information, call 1-800-346-6277 in the USA and Canada or 1-209-736-4677 outside the USA and Canada, or e-mail info@oars.com

Insurance

- Although every effort is made to insure a safe trip for all, we require that you purchase medical evacuation insurance to participate in this expedition. Call Travel Insurance Services at 800-937-1387 or visit their website at www.travelinsure.com/what/imedhigh.htm?32635 for inexpensive options that cover this requirement. We also strongly recommend that you protect yourself, your belongings, and your vacation through the purchase of a short-term traveler's policy. A trip cancellation policy covers your non-refundable payments in most cases, should you have to cancel your trip at the last minute due to illness or injury, as well as including the coverage required above. Trip participants should realize that in the event of illness or injury on a river trip, evacuation could be prolonged, difficult, and expensive. Personal belongings and cameras are carried entirely at the owner's risk, and we accept no responsibility for lost, damaged, delayed, or stolen property.

Liability Waiver

- Everyone is required to sign a standard liability release before the trip, acknowledging awareness that some risks are associated with the trip. Safety is of the utmost concern on our trips. However, due to the nature of the activities, a condition of your participation is that you will sign this form before the trip begins. Anyone who refuses to sign the form will not be allowed to participate, and consistent with Travel Outdoors, Inc. cancellation policy, there will be no refund of the trip fees at that time.

Responsibility – An Important Notice

- Travel Outdoors, Inc., Nova, Sunny Cove Sea Kayaking and cooperating agencies act only in the capacity of agent for the participants in all matters relating to transportation and/or all other related travel services, and assume no responsibility however caused for injury, loss or damage to person or property in connection with any service, including but not limited to that resulting directly or indirectly from acts of God, detention, annoyance, delays, and expenses arising from quarantine, strikes, theft, pilferage, force majeure, failure of any means of conveyance to arrive or depart as scheduled, civil disturbances, government restrictions or regulations, and discrepancies or change in transit over which they have no control. Reasonable changes in itinerary may be made where deemed advisable for the comfort and well-being of the participants, including cancellation due to water fluctuation, insufficient bookings (this trip requires a minimum of 6 guests), and other factors. There is risk in whitewater rafting, particularly during high-water conditions. Rafts, dories and kayaks do capsize. You could be swept overboard. Your guide will make every attempt to assist, but you must be strong and agile enough to "self-help" and "float-it-out" without further endangering yourself or others. We reserve the right not to accept passengers weighing more than 260 pounds or with a waist/chest size exceeding 56 inches.
- We are experienced at accommodating people with various disabilities. Please give us an opportunity to make you feel welcome. However, we need to discuss any special requirements ahead of time. We may decide, at any time, to exclude any person or group for any reason we feel is related to the safety of our trips. On advancement of deposit the depositor agrees to be bound by the above recited terms and conditions. Prices and itinerary are subject to change without notice.

Nova and Sunny Cove Sea Kayaking:

- Nova and Sunny Cove Sea Kayaking, travel partners of Travel Outdoors, Inc., are the operators of the rafting and sea kayaking portion of this trip. Their staff members are the very best and will strive to ensure your complete satisfaction.

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