

# Best of Denali National Park

## SAMPLE ITINERARY — 7 DAYS / 6 NIGHTS

### Day 1: Welcome to Anchorage

The city of Anchorage is a perfect place to start your Alaska vacation. Enjoy the best of Alaska with all the modern conveniences. Walk along the Tony Knowles coastal trail, look out over Cook Inlet, or watch the salmon run at ship creek without ever leaving the city limits. Your Best of Denali National Park vacation package includes an insightful visit to the Alaska Native Heritage Center. Learn about the fascinating way of life of Alaska's earliest inhabitants and see how their rich culture still thrives today. Enjoy cultural dance demonstrations, Native crafts, and a tour through authentic village replicas. Your knowledge of Alaska's Native culture and history will enrich your journey through the Last Frontier.

### Day 2: Denali

Your accommodations in Anchorage provide comfortable shuttle service to the bustling downtown area where you will board a deluxe motorcoach bound for Denali National Park. This narrated tour travels north along one of Alaska's most scenic highways. Journey through grassy wetlands, colorful mountain meadows, and lush tundra wilderness as you take in the endless landscape from the comfort of this roomy motorcoach. Your drive concludes at the entrance to Denali National Park where you will find an exciting array of attractions and activities. From great entertainment to thrilling adventure tours, your stay at the park entrance offers the Alaska experience you've been looking for. Enjoy breathtaking views of Mt. McKinley, North America's tallest summit. Visit local shops for gifts handcrafted by real Alaskan artists. Quality lodgings have been reserved for you during your visit to Denali National Park.

### Day 3: Into the Park

Catch the morning shuttle over to the Husky Homestead and learn about the athletic sled dogs of Iditarod champion Jeff King. Sled dogs have played an integral part in Alaska's history. Today mushers and their dogs still share a feverish passion for Alaska's open trails. After an exciting sled dog demonstration and some quality time with the kennels newest huskies, join a magnificent bus tour into Denali National Park. This narrated tour travels through miles of untouched wilderness affording you stunning views at every turn and a chance to view a variety of wildlife in their natural habitat. Dall sheep feel right at home on the rocky terrain of Polychrome Pass. Caribou enjoy a cool afternoon as they cross the elegant snowfields in the park. Bears roam the tundra, eating the fresh mountain blueberries along the way. These and many other species make a journey into Denali National Park a genuine wildlife experience. Your destination today is Kantishna where you will stay at the remote Denali Backcountry Lodge for two nights.

Enjoy good food and a secluded wilderness atmosphere at this comfortable cabin style lodge.

#### **Day 4: Explore Denali National Park**

With a whole day to explore the splendor of Denali at your leisure, you couldn't find yourself in a more superb location. Located in the heart of Denali National Park, Denali Backcountry Lodge offers a wealth of activities. Knowledgeable naturalist guides at the lodge are eager to share their love of the park with you. Explore the wilderness trails in search of wildlife and exceptional views of Denali. Visit the original cabins of Kantishna's early settlers and try your hand at gold panning in the crystal waters of the creek at the lodge. Take a shuttle tour to Wonder Lake or explore the countryside by bicycle. Enjoy a day of adventure and relaxation at your own pace and share your experiences over a delicious dinner back at the lodge. During your second night at the lodge, take a few moments to soak in the golden Alaska sunset as it blankets the land in brilliant evening colors.

#### **Day 5: Talkeetna**

Get another look at Denali's abundant wildlife on your scenic tour back to the park entrance. Board the train and enjoy a pleasant rail tour south to Talkeetna. Your narrated rail tour offers sweeping views of Alaska's unspoiled landscape and an impressive look into the history of the Alaska Railroad. Traverse one of the railroad's greatest engineering feats, the bridge over Hurricane Gulch. After your arrival in Talkeetna, you'll quickly become acquainted with the small town feel of this fascinating community. Located near the southern border of Denali National Park, Talkeetna is the perfect place from which to discover the vast expanse the park. Take a courtesy shuttle from the train station to the Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge and put the enormity of Denali into perspective from the spacious viewing deck. The lodge overlooks South Denali with Mt. McKinley and the Alaska Range towering in the background. Enjoy fine dining and great atmosphere during your stay in Talkeetna.

#### **Day 6: On the River**

Talkeetna is situated near pristine rivers fed by Alaska's massive glaciers. Visitors to Talkeetna get a closer look at the lush forests of the region on exciting river tours. Catch a shuttle and embark on a guided rafting tour down the glacial fed rivers that wind their way through Alaska's backcountry. Keep an eye open for the wildlife that frequent the banks of these beautiful waterways. Watch for eagles looking for salmon or trout. Signs of other "homesteaders" can be seen along the river bank where trees have fallen victim to the mighty teeth of the beaver. An abundance of fish can also lure bears from the trees and onto the gravel bars along the river. Upon your return to Talkeetna, take a stroll through town and visit the historic sites, museums and shops along the way. The rest of

the day is yours to enjoy the many activities and attractions that are unique to Talkeetna. At the close of the day, return to the Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge for a relaxing evening by the 46-foot river rock fireplace in the Great Room. Stop in to one of the restaurants at the lodge and try some of Chef's specialties as you take in the panoramic view.

## Day 7: Soaring over Denali

Join an experienced pilot and superb guide on an unforgettable flight tour over Denali National Park. The extraordinary views of endless tundra and majestic peaks will take your breath away as you soar amongst the regal mountain peaks of the Alaska Range and over the towering slopes of Mt. McKinley. See the Ruth Glacier and peer down upon the deepest gorge in the world. Fly over snow fluted cliffs and numerous glaciers rippled with deep crevasses as you spot some of the bold mountain climbers who brave these icy heights on foot claim coveted glory of reaching the summit. After you return to Talkeetna, continue your journey on a narrated rail tour back to Anchorage where your vacation package concludes upon arrival. The rest of the time is yours to enjoy the popular events and attractions that this northern metropolis has to offer. We thank you for visiting Alaska and hope you will come back soon.

*Any **Alaska Heritage Tours** vacation package can be customized to suit your travel specifications. Ask our experienced reservations team for assistance with activities or changes to this itinerary to make your vacation the Alaska Adventure that you've been looking for.*

*Please note that dining options mentioned above may not be included in your package. As a general guideline, day trips that exceed five hours typically provide a meal or snack as part of the excursion. Meals at hotels and lodges are usually not included in the vacation package price. For specific details, ask a reservation specialist about meals as you finalize your itinerary.*

