

ALASKA & YUKON EXPLORER

Whitehorse, Dawson City, Denali & Prince William Sound,

12 days

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Day 1 Arrive in Whitehorse, YT

Today we arrive into Whitehorse, the capital city of the Yukon. Hugged by the banks of the Yukon River and surrounded by the peaks of Grey Mountain, Haeckel Hill, and Golden Horn Mountain, Whitehorse is the Yukon's most cosmopolitan community. Few cities in the world offer such rich access to pristine wilderness, yet still provide all the amenities of a modern metropolis.

Overnight in Whitehorse.

Included Meal(s): Dinner, if required.

Day 2 Whitehorse - Dawson City, YT

This morning we visit some of the local highlights, including Miles Canyon. Miles Canyon, perhaps the most dramatic natural feature near Whitehorse, is where the Yukon River has cut its way down through a flow of basaltic lava. The Whitehorse Fish Ladder and Dam is the world's longest wooden fish ladder - which helps migrating Chinook (aka king) salmon on the final leg of their epic journey. For the first half of the twentieth century, the sternwheelers of the British Yukon Navigation Company plied the upper Yukon River between Whitehorse and Dawson City. The S.S. Klondike was the largest of the fleet. Sitting proudly on the banks of the Yukon River in Whitehorse, she has been meticulously restored and refurnished, paying tribute to an era before roads, when riverboats and rail linked the Yukon to the outside world.

We then head north on the peaceful Klondike Highway! This picturesque highway offers us plenty of wildlife viewing opportunities along the way, and our route takes us past the stunning Lake Laberge. At the Carmacks Interpretive Riverfront Boardwalk we will take in the scenery, stretch our legs and enjoy the views of the beautiful Five Finger Rapids. We later arrive in Dawson City - once the capital city of Yukon. Today Dawson City is an eclectic and vibrant northern community on the banks of the Yukon River.

This afternoon we will enjoy the sights of this enticing town steeped with Klondike Gold Rush history, featuring streets lined with vibrantly coloured store fronts. A base during the 19th-century Klondike Gold Rush, the town has several preserved frontier-style buildings. Many of these are found in the Dawson Historical Complex. Tonight, we will visit Diamond Tooth Gertie's Gambling Hall, Canada's oldest casino featuring Dawson City's famous can-can girls.

Overnight in Dawson City.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Day 3 Dawson City, YT

Dawson City boasts a mixture of First Nations Heritage and Gold Rush History blended with an active Gold Mining and Tourism Industry as well as a thriving Arts scene

Today we will visit the enormous Gold Mining Dredge, one of the largest wood hulled dredges in North America. At the peak of corporate mining, a dozen dredges, churned through the creeks. Dredging continued in the Klondike until 1966, when the last of the Yukon Consolidated Gold Company's dredges shut down. Dredge No. 4 represents the many decades of corporate mining in the Canadian mid-north through the 20th century. Dredge No. 4 is commemorated because it represents the importance of dredging operations in the Yukon between 1899 and 1966.

This afternoon you will have some free time to explore Dawson City on your own.

Overnight in Dawson City.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast

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Day 4 Dawson City, Yukon - Tok, Alaska

Today we travel over the 'Top of the World Highway', an unforgettably breathtaking highway winding along the tops of mountains with panoramic views of Alaska and the Yukon. While most roads traveling through mountains wander through lower elevations highway winds along the top of the mountain range for a truly breathtaking drive, connecting Dawson City, Yukon to Tok, Alaska. It only takes a few miles climbing out of Dawson City to realize where the name of this road comes from.

After our scenic route we will arrive in Tok, the trade center for several Athabascan Native villages. In the region around Tok one will see both wild and domestic flower gardens, log homes with sod and wild flower roofs, old fish wheels, historic mining equipment and log caches. This will be our home for the evening.

Overnight in Tok.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 5 Tok - Fairbanks, AK

Our destination today is Fairbanks. En-route we will make a short visit to the small Alaskan city of North Pole – an iconic and charming location. We then continue on to Fairbanks. Here there are serious mountain ranges, pristine rivers and lakes, abundant wildlife and a certain poignant solitude that is found in few places on earth. Locals embrace the natural world and have created a vibrant river city in the far north.

Fairbanks is known for its captivating sunrises and rich Alaskan Native culture. This afternoon we will board the Sternwheeler Discovery for an unforgettable cruise of the Chena and Tanana Rivers. During our river journey we will learn about the ancient Athabascan Indian culture as we tour the Chena Native Village.

Tonight we will enjoy a delicious baked salmon dinner, followed by an entertaining musical show at the Palace Theatre and Saloon.

Overnight in Fairbanks.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 6 Fairbanks - Denali, AK

Today we will explore the rugged wilderness of Denali National Park & Reserve. Here we will marvel at the panoramic views of the famed Alaska Mountain Range including famous Mount Denali – North America's highest peak.

Denali is six million acres of wild land, bisected by one ribbon of road. Travellers along it see the relatively low-elevation taiga forest give way to high alpine tundra and snowy mountains, culminating in North America's tallest peak at 20,310'. Wild animals large and small roam unfenced lands, living as they have for ages. Solitude, tranquility and wilderness await.

This afternoon we embark on a wildlife tour through the heart of Denali National Park. Be sure to keep an eye out for wildlife as this tour offers a great opportunity to see grizzly bears, moose, and wolves.

Overnight at Denali.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Lunch

Day 7 Denali - Anchorage, AK

Our destination today is Alaska's largest city, Anchorage. Set amid the coastal Chugach Mountains and located on the beautiful Cook Inlet, Anchorage is a stunning urban enclave surrounded by wilderness.

Anchorage might appear at first glance to be a typical city, but upon closer exploration one discovers that the city's 300,000 human residents

share their space with an estimated 1,500 moose, not to mention bald eagles, bears, and beavers. King and silver salmon fill Ship Creek all summer long, drawing anglers to one of the world's only urban salmon fisheries. The Alaska Railroad's largest passenger depot is at the center of train travel, as it has been for more than a century. For access to spots beyond the reach of road or rail, a bustling seaplane base at Lake Hood has planes casting off from docks near hotels and homes.

We will discover the enticing history of Alaska at Anchorage's famed cultural attraction, the Alaska Native Heritage Centre.

Overnight in Anchorage.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 8 Prince William Sound Cruise

Today embark on a Kenai Fjords Cruise and explore the protected waters Resurrection Bay. We experience up-close encounters with wildlife our ship is guided along massive bird rookeries and sea lion colonies, stopping along the route to view passing whales and otters. Keep watch for eagles, puffins, sea lions, whales and other wildlife that call the area home. We will enjoy a delicious lunch on board the ship.

Overnight in Anchorage.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Lunch

Day 9 Anchorage - Tok

This morning we will witness more stunning landscapes as we travel the Richardson Highway. The Richardson Highway (Alaska's oldest!) connects Valdez (mile 0) and Fairbanks (mile 364), and the drive will take us through the spectacular and narrow Keystone Canyon and across the Thompson Pass.

We pass by lakes, canyons and glaciers as we wind along the highway to Gakona Junction. The highway will take us to Mentasta Summit before descending into Tok, the trading hub for nearby villages. Here we rejoin the Alaska Highway.

Overnight in Tok.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 10 Tok, AK - Whitehorse, YT

Today depart Tok and travel back into the Yukon. The scenic highway travels alongside the dramatically beautiful Kluane National Park & Reserve, home of Canada's highest mountain, Mount Logan (5,959 m). Kluane National Park and Reserve covers 21,980 square kilometres. It's a land of mountains, icefields and valleys with a diverse plant and wildlife species. Established in 1976, Kluane abuts three other protected areas: Wrangell-St. Elias and Glacier Bay national parks in Alaska, and British Columbia's Tatshenshini-Alsek Park. Together these parks form the largest UNESCO World Heritage Site.

We will stop at Kluane Park Visitor Centre with its award-winning digital exhibits, engaging exhibit panels, and cultural artefacts that will introduce us to the fascinating world of Kluane National Park and Reserve. We will also make a visit to the Kluane Museum of Natural History and the Sheep Mountain Visitor Centre where we can catch a glimpse of the Dall sheep before arriving in Whitehorse.

Overnight in Whitehorse.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 11 Day Trip to Skagway, AK

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Today we travel southwest to Skagway along the same route that, long ago, thousands of people journeyed in search of their own gold fortune.

We will ride on Yukon's iconic railways, on a train journey to Skagway on the White Pass & Yukon Railway. The railroad winds around mountains and follows the historic Chilkoot Trail, the original Klondike trail. Built in 1898 during the Klondike Gold Rush, the White Pass & Yukon Route is a marvel of engineering despite the harsh weather and challenging geography faced by thousands of railroad construction workers. Sit back, relax and enjoy the views and historic commentary from the comfort of our vintage passenger coaches on "The Scenic Railway of the World".

You will likely fall in love with the quaint port village of Skagway, nestled into the harbour and full of gold rush history. After some time here to explore we will then travel back to Whitehorse.

Overnight: Best Western Gold Rush Inn

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 12 Depart Whitehorse, YT

Today after breakfast, say goodbye to the Yukon and your new friends before you return home.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast