

ALASKA: AMERICA'S GREATEST WILDERNESS

A LAND AND CRUISE WILDLIFE ADVENTURE!



DATE: JUNE 21 - JULY 1, 2005

Tuesday, June 21st

Depart Home / Arrive Anchorage

Welcome to Alaska for the experience of a lifetime! To discover the magic of this Last Frontier, we begin in Anchorage where you are surrounded by spectacular scenery – majestic mountains, glistening glaciers, crystal clear streams and lakes. Anchorage, Alaska's largest city, offers the biggest selection of things to see and do – in and around town. Anchorage sits at the base of the Chugach Mountains along the coast of Cook Inlet and is home to over forty percent of Alaska's population.

Upon arrival, we are met at the airport and transferred to our Anchorage hotel. This evening we meet our Zoo escort and fellow travelers for a **Welcome Dinner** and an orientation highlighting the adventures of the coming days. Overnight Westmark Anchorage (D)



Wednesday, June 22nd

Anchorage / Denali National Park

This morning we transfer to the train station. At 8:15 a.m. you will board the **McKinley Explorer**, the luxury dome train to travel to Denali National Park. Sit back and relax, breakfast will be served on board. You will have a splendid view of the forested mountains and vibrant meadows, via special glass-domed viewing cars. (Approx. 8 hour train; departs at 8:15 am and arrives at 4:00 pm).

Denali National Park & Preserve features North America's highest mountain, 20,320-foot tall Mount McKinley. The Alaska Range also includes countless other spectacular mountains and many large glaciers. Denali's more than 6 million acres also encompass a complete sub-arctic eco-system with large mammals.

This evening perhaps enjoy an *optional* "Alaska Cabin Nite Dinner Theater". The moment you step through the door be ready for good-time entertainment and a taste of old-time Alaska. Fannie Quigley and her group of unforgettable characters treat you to colorful stories of the Gold Rush along with foot-stompin', knee slappin' music. The hearty all-you-can-eat family style meal is sure to please!

Overnight at the McKinley Chalets
(B)

Thursday, June 23rd

Denali National Park

This morning, travel deep into Denali National Park. The **Tundra Wildlife Tour** is a fascinating and informative 6-8 hour adventure. Your interpretive guide/driver is an experienced naturalist who will share delightful insights about the land and its amazing wildlife, such as bears, moose, caribou, grizzlies, and Dall sheep. In addition, over 300 species of birds have been spotted at Denali. It is considered the most scenic place in North America to view wildlife in its natural habitat. You will be amazed at the natural beauty of the park! Weather permitting; you'll see **Mt. McKinley** in all of its towering glory as well as the beautiful rolling tundra and taiga forests. A "boxed lunch" will be served on tour. .

The remainder of the day is free to relax or participate in Denali activities as active or passive as you wish. Some exciting optional activities you may want to consider: a Wilderness Run white-river rafting or easy float trip down river, dog mushing demonstration, horseback riding, helicopter rides or a visit to the informative Visitor's Center.

Overnight at the McKinley Chalets
(B, L)

Friday, June 24th

Denali National Park / Sail from Seward

After breakfast and hotel check-out, we board our motor coach for our transfer to Seward and **Holland America's Statendam**. En route, we stop for lunch at Lake Lucille, arriving at the ship around 6:00 pm.

Located at the head of Resurrection Bay on the Kenai Peninsula is Seward, one of Alaska's oldest communities. Named for the man who bought Alaska from the Russians, this is one of the most beautiful cities in the Northwest. Saltwater bays, blue glaciers, majestic mountains and alpine valleys make this historical city one of the most memorable to visit.

Tonight before dinner we gather for a private **Welcome Cocktail Party** as we set sail to see the wonders of Alaska.
(B, L, D)

Saturday, June 25th

Scenic Cruising Hubbard Glacier

Stretching over 90 miles long and covering over 1,350 square miles in area, **Hubbard Glacier** is the largest tidewater glacier in North America. It is also one of the most impressive, a 300-foot wall of ice rising sheer and jagged from the ocean. You may hear the rumble and see the monumental splash as the glacier severs into great ice chunks, known as "calves." Among the islands of ice, you will find numerous sea mammals, birds and fish residing in the area. These nutrient rich waters are home to Pacific Halibut, which can grow up to nine feet long and can weigh over 500 pounds. Perched upon the floating islands in search of fish are bald eagles, cormorants and gulls. Two species of baleen whales, the minke and humpback, in addition to a toothed whale, the orca, all frolic in the nearby coves.

(B, L, D)

Sunday, June 26th

Sitka

Step back to the days of Russian Alaska as you watch lively performances of the New Archangel Dancers and view holy paintings of the Czarists' days. **Sitka** sits calmly at the Inside Passage's outer edge in the Tongass National Forest, world's largest temperate rainforest. Tlingit Indians were the sole inhabitants until Russians captured and subsequently sold the city (and the rest of Alaska) to the U.S. White-capped peaks dominate scenery characterized by motion, be it soaring raptors, paddling kayakers, or autumn's promenade of humpback whales. History remains static at the Tlingit Fort at the National Historic Park, the Russian canon at Totem Square, and the Isabel Miller Museum display of regional artifacts.

Included Shore Excursion: *Historic Russian America, Raptor Center & Russian Dancers*

Visit the historical highlights of this former "Russian Capital" city and tour through the **Alaska Raptor Center** which operates a program staffed mostly by volunteers who rescue the birds, provide rehabilitative care for them and hopefully release them back to the wild. After your introduction to the Center, view the clinic, outside deck habitat area, the new flight center and photograph the educational birds up close. Stop at **St Michael's Cathedral**, the first Russian Orthodox cathedral in America, to view priceless icons and religious artifacts. Visit the **Sitka National Historical Park** where the 1804 Battle of Alaska was fought, with a chance to photograph totems and exhibits. On a brief drive through the historic district, see the Russian Cemetery, the Blockhouse, and Castle Hill, site of the 1867 land transfer ceremony. Tour ends with an authentic Russian Folk Dance performance by the New Archangel Russian Dancers.

(B, L, D)



Monday, June 27th

Skagway

Nestled in a remote river valley in Southeast Alaska, **Skagway** became a boom town overnight with the discovery of gold around Dawson City in 1896. Floods of people seeking a better life swarmed Skagway on their trek to the gold fields. Amongst the rush, the White Pass and Yukon Route Railroad was constructed which ran prospectors over the White Pass on their way to the gold fields. When the greatest Gold Rush the world has ever seen finally subsided in the early 1900's, it is estimated that of the 100,000 people that rushed for the gold fields only 30,000 to 40,000 people arrived in Dawson. Of those, one in ten actually found gold and only a few hundred ever became rich. The community of Skagway has grown very little, thus helping to preserve the community's history and historical beauty. A walk down the wood boardwalk of Broadway Street amongst one hundred-year-old buildings will evoke awe. The community has preserved the original look and feel of Skagway's past.

(B, L, D)

Tuesday, June 28th

Juneau

Juneau, Alaska is considered by many to be the most beautiful capital city in the nation. Checking in at just a little over 3,100 square miles **Juneau** qualifies as the biggest American city - geographically, that is. The terrain is hilly and winding, and narrow streets present a small-town quaintness existing side-by-side with cosmopolitan sophistication.

You'll find great shopping, fine restaurants and superb Museums, taste salmon baked over an alderwood fire, pan for gold, flight-see the Juneau Ice Field, and walk right up to the Mendenhall Glacier.

(B, L, D)

Wednesday, June 29th

Ketchikan

A popular destination along Alaska's famed Inside Passage, **Ketchikan** is teeming with Native American culture. Home of the largest concentration of Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian people in the state this extraordinarily beautiful city on Revillagigedo Island boasts the world's largest collection of totem poles, and an equally impressive selection of museums and cultural centers featuring Native dance, carving and artifacts. Ketchikan's calm waters and surprisingly gentle climate make it a favorite of sports fishermen.

(B, L, D)

Thursday, June 30th

Cruise Inside Passage

All it takes to get the inside story of Alaska's beauty is a trip through the **Inside Passage**, Alaska's "water highway", where majestic fjords compete for your attention with mountain masterpieces carved by the glaciers and blanketed with majestic hemlock and spruce. Breathtaking panoramas are dotted by small fishing villages along the coast, and the protected waters are perfect for spotting wildlife. Alaska's Inside Passage is a region of pristine water; snow capped mountains, deep fjords and forested islands. With its mild, maritime climate, this area is prime habitat for bald eagles, sea lions, porpoise and whales.

(B, L, D)

Friday, July 1st

Vancouver / Arrive Home

Vancouver is a dream-like mountain ringed city blessed with a huge natural harbor that remains ice-free year round. Wide open spaces, beautiful beaches, tall skyscrapers and an enchanting rainforest all mingle together to create a most relaxed and stress-free setting. From Vancouver's cosmopolitan downtown to the historically renovated Gastown district and exotic Chinatown, Vancouver displays varied urban scenes. Nestled near the city center is Stanley Park, resplendent with its deep forest, totem poles, and scenic promenades.

After disembarkation, transfer to the airport for your flight home. Or, continue your journey with a post-cruise option in Vancouver. **Optional 3 day extension in Vancouver** includes Butchart Gardens, Victoria and city sightseeing.

(B)

Optional Vancouver Extension Itinerary

Friday, July 1st

Vancouver

After disembarkation, you are met by coach and guide for a city tour that encompassed the sights of Vancouver. The tour ends at your downtown Vancouver hotel where you are free to explore the city on your own!

(B)

Saturday, July 2nd

Victoria Excursion

This morning ferry through the Gulf Islands to the famed **Butchart Gardens**. Fifty-five acres of wonderful floral display are open to the public, offering spectacular views from the many paths that meander through the four main gardens. The family's commitment to horticulture and hospitality spans 100 years, and continues to delight visitors from all over the world. From the exquisite Sunken Garden to the charming Rose Garden, the gracious traditions of the past are still maintained in one of the loveliest corners in the world.

Time for lunch on your own before travelling on to **Victoria** for a bit of Olde England. Victoria, an intimate, sophisticated seaside vacation capital of Canada, is situated on the southern tip of Vancouver Island and sparkles in one of Canada's mildest climates. This area is the sunniest spot in the province and the gentlest in the country in terms of climate, environment, and lifestyle. Victoria's unique character is deeply rooted in its 150-year history -- a history full of colourful people and fascinating tales. Late in the day you ferry back to Vancouver for a night at leisure.

Sunday, July 3rd

Vancouver / Depart

Enjoy the morning at leisure. Transfer to airport for homeward bound flight.

SHIP DESCRIPTION

Holland America's *Statendam* was designed for Alaska cruising, with airy viewing lounges, wraparound teak decks and private, roomy verandah suites that offer guests the chance to experience – in intimate elegance – Alaska's glaciers, wildlife and scenery. Designed to carry fewer guests than other ships in their class, these magnificent five-star vessels are among the most spacious at sea and offer a host of signature amenities.



ms Statendam
Named for the "states" or provinces
of Holland.

All staterooms are equipped with sofas, hairdryers, individually controlled air conditioning, telephone and computerized wake-up service, multi-channel music system and closed circuit television. In each room the beds are convertible from one queen size to two singles.

A triple-deck, fountain-filled atrium greets passengers as they move between the public rooms on the ship's Lower Promenade Deck and Upper Promenade. The two-level, 700-seat formal dining room serves elegant five-course evening menus in fine style with an ocean view. Cruisers may feast on casual breakfast and lunch buffets in the Lido restaurant, right next to one of the two onboard swimming pools.

The 600-seat Van Gogh Theater features Broadway-style entertainment in a setting evoking the Dutch artist's beloved *Starry Night* and *Irises* paintings. Additional lounges include the Ocean Bar, Piano Bar, Explorers Lounge, and the Crow's Nest, a cross between an observation deck and a nightclub. Meetings, lectures, religious services, and movie screenings all take place in the 249-seat Wajang Theater.

After a run on *Statendam's* jogging track or a workout in the fitness center, passengers can pamper themselves with a visit to the Ocean Spa and its massage tables, sauna, steam room, juice bar, beauty salon, and barber shop. Lady Luck has been known to spread some of her magic around in the casino. The Erasmus Library, the card room, and puzzle room offer respite for those seeking quieter pursuits. In keeping with Holland America's tradition of artistic display, the ship showcases a \$2 million art and artifact collection built around the apropos theme of Dutch exploration.

Alaska at its best, you'll see more, learn more, and experience a more memorable side of Alaska!