

# Alaskan Adventures with Canadian Rockies and Cruise

24 Nights – 25 Days

Summer 2013



## Suggested Itinerary:

### Day 01 Calgary

Arrival in Calgary. Limousine transfer to your hotel. Rest of the day at leisure. Calgary is nestled beside the Rocky Mountain foothills and famous for the "Calgary Stampede" Rodeo & Show. Evening dinner at a famous Alberta Steakhouse. Overnight in Calgary. Note: some departures are including tickets for the Calgary Stampede. Please inquire.

### Day 02 Calgary – Banff

Morning Calgary Sightseeing Tour – included - You receive an introduction to some of the historic and modern highlights of this dynamic city – host of the 1988's Olympic Winter Games. We continue via Kananaskis and Canmore to Banff National Park. This park was established in 1885 and is now part of the UNESCO Rocky Mountain Heritage Site. Banff offers many attractions including Upper Hot Springs, the historical Whyte Museum, Bow Falls, Banff Springs Hotel and the Hoodoos. If you like take the Gondola to the Top of Sulphur Mountain and enjoy an amazing 360-degree view of unmatched beautiful mountain scenery. Banff Sightseeing Tour – Included -. Overnight in Banff.

### Day 03 Banff - Lake Louise - Jasper (Icefield Parkway)

Today we explore one of the world's most scenic mountain highways - the Icefield Parkway. The road winds up from the Bow Valley and offers outstanding viewpoints and excellent wildlife viewing for mountain goats, black bear and deer. Stopovers along the way include the town of Lake Louise with its famous Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise, nearby Maligne and Peyto Lakes. We continue our journey with several photo stops along towering mountains and pristine lakes to the mighty

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Columbia Glacier. It is here that you will have the opportunity to ride a unique Sno-Coach to the middle of Athabasca Glacier – included - to learn more about its geological features. Upon arrival in Jasper time at leisure. Overnight in Jasper.

### **Day 04 Jasper – Edmonton**

Morning sightseeing tour – included – within the Jasper area. Jasper is one of the Jewels of Canada's National Parks. Today's tour highlights include Maligne Canyon, a narrow gorge with Limestone walls and cascading waterfalls, Pyramid and Patricia Lakes as well as Maligne Lake with its enchanted Spirit Island - and one of the most photographed lakes in the world. We continue to Edmonton – home of the famous West Edmonton Shopping Mall. Evening at leisure at the mall. Overnight in Edmonton.

### **Day 05 Edmonton - Fort Nelson**

Morning city sightseeing tour – included - with Edmonton's cultural and heritage sites. Visit the prominent neighborhoods of Historic Glenora and Old Strathcona. Explore downtown Edmonton it's ethnic communities, the Alberta Legislative Building, the University of Alberta and the scenic North Saskatchewan River valley. We continue to Dawson Creek/BC and the beginning of the legendary Alaska Highway - Mile "0" The entire highway is 1422 miles (2275 km) long. Continue northwest on the Alaska Highway through a rolling landscape. Evening arriving in Fort Nelson. Overnight.

### **Day 06 Fort Nelson - Muncho Lake**

Today's journey traverses peaceful valleys and alpine meadows. We arrive at Muncho Lake – also known as the Northern Rocky Mountains - just in time for lunch. The afternoon at leisure to enjoy this beautiful lakeside resort in the wilderness. Our coach will do an afternoon run to the nearby Liard Hot Springs Pools for those guests wishing to enjoy a soothing dip in the thermal hot springs. Optional guided fishing and hiking trips, or even a flightseeing tour may be arranged independently directly at the resort. Overnight Muncho Lake.

### **Day 07 Muncho Lake - Whitehorse**

An incredible landscape unfolds today as you travel through the southern Yukon Territory to its capital city, Whitehorse - a city with a unique combination of pioneer values and urban sophistication. On the way stopover at the famous "Sign Forest" at Watson Lake where you could view the more than 10,000 signs brought by visitors from around the globe. Add your sign to this collection if you like and if you have one with you. Late afternoon city tour in Whitehorse – included. The one hour cruise on the MV Schwatka on the Yukon River is optional. Overnight

### **Day 08 Whitehorse (Skagway, Alaska)**

Today's highlight is a tour with a narrow-gauge railroad - completed in only two years in 1900's – to the goldrush community of Skagway. – included -The excursion begins at a depot with the spine-tingling whistle of a working steam engine. The steamer pulls the train a couple of miles, then diesels take the cars - some of them originals more than 100 years old - up steep tracks that were chipped out of the side of the mountains. In the rush years of 1897 and 1898, Skagway and its ghost-town twin city of Dyea were the logical places to get off the boat to head off on the trek to the gold fields

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near the new city of Dawson City, Yukon Territories. Skagway instantly grew from a single homestead to a population of between 15,000 and 25,000. No one knows exactly how many, partly because the people were flowing through too quickly to count and partly because there was no civil authority to count them. This was a wide-open boomtown, a true Wild West outpost that in its biggest years was completely without law other than the survival of the meanest. Then, almost as quickly as it started, the rush ended and the town deflated. Return to Whitehorse. Historical - Frantic Follies Show evening entertainment – included - at the Westmark Hotel in Whitehorse. Overnight.

### **Day 09 Whitehorse – Dawson City**

We travel on the Klondike Highway along the scenic Yukon River and reach Dawson City approximately mid afternoon. Dawson City, the legendary capital of the 1898 Gold rush, is a living relic. After 100 years, miners are still digging for gold. From the panoramic Midnight Dome viewpoint we will have the opportunity for overwhelming views of the Klondike and Yukon River valleys. Here you will see the scars that one hundred years of searching for gold has left. Overnight: Dawson City

### **Day 10 Dawson City**

Sightseeing tour of Dawson City – included – You'll visit historical buildings, intriguing old cabins, Jack London and Robert Service cabins, abandoned commercial buildings and old stores that were the pulse of the gold rush capital in its hey-day. And as you drive through the heart of Dawson City, your imagination will run to the likes of Klondike Kate, Arizona Charlie Meadows and Diamond Tooth Gertie strolling down Dawson's boardwalks. Their spirit is as alive today as it was in 1898. From the one-time capital of the Yukon you'll follow history up Bonanza Creek (pan for gold) to Discovery Claim and Grand Forks once boasted a population of 10,000 where the Eldorado Creek and Upper Bonanza come together to form the "mighty" Bonanza Creek. View claim posts and vintage mining equipment. Your guide will give you a complete history of the gold rush and also tell some of the tales that made this region legendary. Overnight: Dawson City

### **Day 11 Dawson City - Fairbanks**

The Top of the World Highway is so named because much of its route meanders along the tops of mountains and ridges with endless views into spectacular alpine valleys. If you travel after the first hard frost – usually in mid August, the hills turn colors so brilliant that it seems almost unreal. Lunch stopover in Tok, Alaska. The community originated as an Alaska Road Commission camp for the construction of the Alaska - and Glenn Highways in the 1940s. The Tok Race of Champions Sled Dog Race is one of the oldest in the state and takes place in March. Tok is often referred to as the "Dog Mushing Capital of Alaska". We will attend a Sled dog demonstration. We continue to Fairbanks. Overnight in Fairbanks.

### **Day 12 Fairbanks – Denali National Park**

Morning sightseeing tour in Fairbanks – included -. It sprawls, broad and flat, along big highways and the Chena. It's a friendly, easygoing town, but one where people still take gold and their independence seriously and they're still prospecting and mining around here. We visit the sights of Alaska's second largest city including the famous Fairbanks University Museum. This rich, interdisciplinary on-campus museum, long one of Alaska's best, will open a spectacular new

expansion in 2006 that promises to make a stir well beyond the state. First, the original part of the museum: Alaska's best natural history collection and its most scholarly, with information presented at advanced as well as elementary levels. Some of the objects have a real wow factor, such as Blue Babe, the mummified steppe bison; a 5,400-pound copper nugget; and the state's largest public display of gold. We continue for an exciting river boat cruise – included - The Discovery III belongs to the pioneering Binkley family, which has been in the riverboat business since the Klondike gold rush and have run this attraction since 1950. The Discovery is a real stern-wheeler, a 156-foot steel vessel carrying 700 passengers on as many as three trips a day. There's nothing intimate or spontaneous about the 3 1/2-hour ride, which mostly carries package-tour passengers off fleets of buses, but the Binkleys still provide a diverting outing that doesn't feel cheap or phony. After loading at a landing with shops off Dale Road, near the airport, the boat cruises down the Chena and up the Tanana past demonstrations on shore -- among others, a Bush plane taking off and landing, fish-cutting at a Native fish camp, and a musher's dog yard. Finally, the vessel pulls up at the bank for an hour-long tour of a mock Athabaskan village. Late afternoon departure from Fairbanks to Denali National Park. Evening at leisure. Overnight: Denali National Park.

### **Day 13 Denali National Park**

Denali's dynamic glaciated landscape supports a diversity of wildlife with grizzly bears, caribou, wolves, Dall sheep and moose. Summer slopes are graced with birds and wildflowers. You may enjoy sightseeing, backpacking, mountaineering, and natural research opportunities. Whether climbing or admiring, the crowning jewel of North America's highest peak is the awe inspiring 20,320 foot Mount McKinley. Your tour includes 2 full-day passes to explore the park with the shuttle busses at your own pace. Overnight Denali National Park

### **Day 14 Denali National Park**

A goal for many visitors to the park is to see the "big five." On a ride along the park road you can see a moose browsing in a stand of willow, caribou resting on a snow patch to avoid insects, Dall sheep high on the hillsides, a wolf trotting across the tundra, or a grizzly bear feeding on ripening blueberries. You may also decide to attend one of the ranger programs who emphasize on Alaskan Sled Dogs. The sled dogs of Denali have been important to the park for so long that they have become a part of the resource, and a cultural tradition worthy of protection. The dogs and the kennels where they live represent important pieces of American history: cultural and native significance, the pioneer experience in the far north and the history of Alaska's first national park. Overnight: Denali National Park.

### **Day 15 Denali National Park – Wrangell St. Elias National Park**

Drive on the scenic Denali Highway and along the mighty Alaska Mountain Range towards the magnificent Wrangell St Elias National Park. This section has the most extraordinary scenery - broad vistas, the Delta River, amazing alpine lakes including long Summit Lake, and many views of the trans-Alaska pipeline. Today you will stay at the Copper River Princess Wilderness Lodge featuring spectacular mountain views and breathtaking scenery of the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park. The Copper River Princess is situated on 200 acres at the junction of the Klutina and Copper Rivers. This premier Lodge features 85 rooms and suites with either mountain or forest views; a two-level dining area with excellent mountain and valley views; and the focal point of the Lodge- the Wrangell Room

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- with a staircase that takes you to the mezzanine level where you can relax and enjoy the majestic scenery provided by a two story wall of windows. Located just four miles from the Wrangell-St. Elias visitor's center, this true wilderness retreat offers a host of outdoor activities to explore the area with an array of excursions. Overnight: Wrangell St. Elias

### **Day 16 Valdez – Prince William Sound Cruise – Kenai Fjords National Park**

Big events have shaped Valdez. The deep-water port, at the head of a long, dramatic fjord, first developed with the 1898 Klondike gold rush and an ill-fated attempt to establish an alternative route to the gold fields from here. Later, the port and the Richardson Highway, which connected Valdez to the rest of the state, served a key role in supplying materials during World War II. On Good Friday, March 27, 1964, all of that was erased when North America's greatest recorded earthquake occurred under Miners Lake, west of town off a northern fjord of Prince William Sound. It set off an underwater landslide that caused a huge wave to sweep over the waterfront and kill 32 people. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers moved the town, rebuilding a drab replacement in a safer location that slowly filled with nondescript modern buildings. The construction of the trans-Alaska pipeline, completed in 1977, brought a new economic boom to Valdez and enduring economic prosperity as tankers came to fill with the oil. Then, on March 24, 1989, on Good Friday 25 years after the earthquake, the tanker Exxon Valdez, on its way south, hit the clearly marked Bligh Reef, causing the largest and most environmentally costly oil spill ever in North America. The spill cleanup added another economic boom. More than 15 years later, some wildlife populations have recovered and some have not, although visible signs of the spill are difficult to find. Overnight: Seward

### **Day 17 Seward – Anchorage**

Morning: attend one of Alaska's most popular and spectacular wildlife and glacier cruise! Kenai Fjords National Park boasts abundant wildlife, alpine and tidewater glaciers. Departure: 08:00 – 14:00 Tours are fully narrated by an accredited wildlife interpreter and include a visit to the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge – home to a large variety of whales, sea lions, sea otters and more. After returning your trip continues along Turnagain Arm, a body of water featuring the world's second highest tides at over 30 feet. Beluga whales can often be seen following salmon on the incoming tide, and Dall Sheep frequent the rocky mountainsides. Rest of the day at leisure. Overnight: Anchorage

### **Day 18 Anchorage – Cruise to Vancouver**

Morning: Let our tour escort show you some of Anchorage's historical points of interest within a 2-hour tour through this sprawling city of over 250,000 full-time residents – included -. Watch for attractions like the Log Cabin Visitor Center and its Crossroads of the World Signpost, Ship Creek Viewpoint overlooking Cook Inlet and the Alaska Railroad Depot, Resolution Park with its Captain Cook Monument, and the Museum of History & Art. The highlight of the tour will be a visit to the world renowned 25-acre Alaska Native Heritage Center displaying several interactive exhibits developed in recognition and tribute to the distinct culture of the Alaskan people. This unique opportunity allows you to see traditional customs displayed in basketry, dance, boat making, and beadwork. Step outside and learn about five distinct lifestyles by exploring model village homes set around a lake. Your Alaska Highway journey ends with a transfer to Cruise. At the base of the Chugach Mountains in the shadow of a towering glacier and surrounded by snowcapped peaks, the



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tiny town of Whittier is the gateway to the spectacular Prince William Sound and the city of Anchorage. Whittier exists on thriving fishing and tourism industries. Its 290 residents enjoy a near wilderness state, as it was not accessible by road until 2000. Note: we offer a variety of Alaska Land Tour Packages from 03-21 Days – including Denali National Park, Katmai Bear Viewing, Alaska's Arctic and to Kodiak Island. Please inquire. Departure Whittier 21:30.

### **Day 19 College Fjord Cruising:**

Some of the best glacier viewing in the state can be seen tucked into the northwest corner of Prince William Sound at College Fjord. Winding down from mountains and through valleys and fjords, these massive rivers of ice are often on the move, periodically dropping their bounty into the sea. This fjord boasts the largest collection of tidewater glaciers in the world. There are 16 glaciers named after Ivy League colleges by the Harriman Expedition that discovered them in 1899. There's nothing like the sight of a 40-ton humpback whale breach. During the summer, more than 2,000 of these magnificent giants of the sea are known to feed in the waters off Alaska. Cruising Time 06:00 / 09:00

### **Day 20 Glacier Bay National Park:**

This spectacular national park and preserve displays massive glaciers that stretch 3.3 million acres from the St. Elias and Fairweather mountain ranges to the ends of the fjords. It is home to an amazing world of marine life, including humpback whales, sea otters, porpoises and harbor seals. It also possesses the highest concentration of tidewater glaciers on the planet and access is extremely limited. At the head of Glacier Bay is the Tarr Inlet, where scientists have found exposed rock that is believed to be more than 200 million years old. The Tarr Inlet is also home to the active Grand Pacific Glacier. The northeastern edge of the Fairweather Range is home to nine glaciers. Framed by rocky slopes that stretch for more than 6,000 feet, these wondrous bodies are eclipsed only by Mt. Fairweather itself, which, at more than 15,300 feet, is the highest point in southeast Alaska. In the northeastern corner of Glacier Bay, the snow-covered Takhinsha Mountains feed the active Muir Glacier, which regularly sheds walls of ice into the bay. The brilliant blue glow of a calving glacier and the thunderous roar of ice crashing into the water are unforgettable. Arrival 10:30 / Departure 20:30

### **Day 21 Skagway:**

As you approach Skagway, you'll see the town resting peacefully at the base of a river valley bordered by the Coast Mountain Range. The mountains, ranging from 5,000 to 7,000 feet in height, seem to rise straight up from the saltwater fjord. Once on land, the streets of Skagway draw you back to 1898 when this idyllic native fishing village and nearby Denaikine had a population of about 20,000 during the most fanatic Gold Rush in history. Today, wooden sidewalks, old-fashioned saloons, quaint gift shops and horse-drawn carriages serve as reminders of the famous Alaskan Gold Rush days. Don't miss an adventurous trip with the historic White Pass Yukon Railroad – completed in 1890 with the driving of a golden spike in Carcross/Yukon. The narrow gauge railroad climbs about 3000 ft within just 20 Miles. Arrival 07:00 / Departure 20:30

### **Day 22 Juneau:**

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Established as a gold camp and now Alaska's capital city is the third largest city within the state. Juneau is full of contrasts, a sophisticated cosmopolitan city in the heart of the lush green Tongass National Forest. Nestled at the base of towering mountains dominated by the 1500 square mile Juneau Icefield and overlooking the Gastineau Channel, the community's rich culture and history is displayed throughout the town. Arrival 06:30 / Departure 16:00

### **Day 23 Ketchikan:**

Ketchikan was built along a steep hillside, with sections of the town built right over the water on pilings. The scenic rustic boardwalks on Creek Street preserves a distinct historic feel. Look along the water line and you're likely to see many bald eagles on waterside perches. An outstanding collection of majestic totem poles within the Saxman Village make a visit to Ketchikan essential for anyone interested in Native art. The town's nickname - Salmon Capital of the World – was already established in 1936 when seven canneries produced 1.5 Mio cases of salmon. The abundance of salmon continues to provide outstanding sportfishing opportunities for visitors in Southeast Alaska. Arrival 10:00 / Departure 18:00

### **Day 24 At Sea:**

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. Small fishing villages along the coast dot breathtaking panoramas and the protected waters are perfect for spotting marine mammals and other wildlife.

### **Day 25 Vancouver:**

Often thought of as Canada's most beautiful city, Vancouver is a gorgeous thriving metropolis that's fortunate enough to be flanked by the ocean and mountains. With its numerous parks, beaches, gardens, museums, art galleries and ethnic diversity, Vancouver is one of those rare places that actually lives up to its promise of offering something for everyone. Tips to visit Vancouver: Few locations offer a more spectacular view of this dynamic city than Stanley Park. The park offers miles of walking trails and bike paths, including an aquarium, outdoor pool, tennis courts and more. Granville Island's Public Market on Vancouver's west side is a wonderful place to grab a quick bite, shop for a gourmet meal and find unique souvenirs with its variety of shops, stalls and galleries. Robson Street and the surrounding downtown offer the best shopping and people-watching in town. Stores with European flair share the avenue with delicatessens, modern boutiques, coffee houses, and a myriad of ethnic eateries. Arrival 07:30, Transfer to Airport for your Flight to India.