



## CHEESEMANS' ECOLOGY SAFARIS

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## Alaska

### ***Denali's Spring Wildlife and Wildflowers***

June 16 to 22, 2021



*Denali © Hugh Rose*

## **SAFARI OVERVIEW**

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Experience the Crown Jewel of the North, Denali National Park, from our private, custom-designed Sprinter van, avoiding the crowds on the public shuttle buses. Look for and photograph iconic wildlife as leisurely drive through the park. Stay in Kantishna at the end of the Denali Park Road in a small exclusive lodge run by the local air taxi operator. Enjoy the most spectacular flight on the continent as you fly around the highest mountain in North America, "Denali," in a bush plane. Enjoy the unique views of Denali and the Alaska Range from the ground, reflected in Wonder Lake. Explore Alaska's Golden Heart City, Fairbanks with its unique gold rush era history. Take home countless memories and photographs under the expert guidance of Alaska resident and naturalist, Bill Mohrwinkel.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Catch a glimpse of North America's tallest mountain peak, "Denali," while you drive through the park in our private, custom-designed Sprinter van.
- Get an up-close view of the continent's loftiest mountain on an exhilarating scenic flight around Denali.
- Look for and photograph the iconic wildlife species of Denali park, such as grizzly, moose, Dall sheep, and caribou as you leisurely drive through the spectacular mountain scenery.
- Walk to Wonder Lake to see the reflection of Denali and the Alaska Range on the calm lake surface.
- Spend a full day in Fairbanks to experience the warmth and friendliness of Alaska's Golden Heart City with its world class museums.
- Meet a dog team and learn about "mushing" in the Great land.

**LEADER:** Bill Mohrwinkel.

**DAYS:** 7, including estimated travel time.

**GROUP SIZE:** 7.

**COST:** \$3,475 per person, double occupancy, not including airfare (except the scenic flight in Denali National Park, weather permitting). See the *Costs* section on page 4.

**TRANSPORTATION:** Travel in our private, custom-designed 12-seater Mercedes Sprinter.

**CONDITIONS:** This is a **non-smoking tour** for people who are very interested in spending the maximum time in nature. See the *Conditions* section on page 7.

Date	Description	Accommodation	Meals
Jun 16	Travel to Fairbanks, Alaska from our Arctic in Spring tour or from home.	River's Edge Resort, Fairbanks	—
Jun 17	Free day in Fairbanks.	River's Edge Resort, Fairbanks	B
Jun 18	Drive to Denali National Park, explore the Denali Visitor Center, and meet local sled dogs that travel in the winter.	EarthSong Lodge, Healy	B, L, D
Jun 19–20	Explore Denali National Park, including scenic flight around Mount Denali (weather permitting).	Skyline Lodge, Kantishna	B, L, D
Jun 21	Return through Denali National Park and continue south to Anchorage.	Susitna Place B&B, Anchorage	B, L
Jun 22	Continue on our Cruise Prince William Sound tour or fly home.		B

## **OPTIONS**

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Mix and match any of our four Alaska tours as follows:

1. Begin your journey early on our Arctic in Spring tour from June 11 to 18, 2021 and **save \$400**. Experience the incredible spring blossom of life on the Arctic tundra, including the millions of migratory birds to the carpets of wildflowers while spending four nights north of the Arctic Circle. See full itinerary at [www.cheesemans.com/trips/alaska-arcticspring-jun2021](http://www.cheesemans.com/trips/alaska-arcticspring-jun2021).
2. Continue your journey on our Cruise Prince William Sound tour from June 21 to 27, 2021 and **save \$400**. From calving glaciers to breaching humpback whales, experience the northernmost coastal temperate rainforest from your boat, the *Discovery*. Whether you want to kayak amongst icebergs or watch playful sea otters from the deck, this is the best experience you can have on water in Alaska! See full itinerary at [www.cheesemans.com/trips/alaska-princewilliam-jun2021](http://www.cheesemans.com/trips/alaska-princewilliam-jun2021).
3. Combine three Alaska tours (Arctic in Spring, Denali's Spring Wildlife and Wildflowers, and Cruise Prince William Sound OR Denali's Spring Wildlife and Wildflowers, Cruise Prince William Sound, and Coastal Brown Bears of Silver Salmon Creek) and **save \$600**.
4. Combine all four Alaska tours (Arctic in Spring, Denali's Spring Wildlife and Wildflowers, Cruise Prince William Sound, Coastal Brown Bears of Silver Salmon Creek) and **save \$1,979**.

## **LEADERS**

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### **Bill Mohrwinkel**

Living and guiding in Alaska for 25 years, Bill has vast knowledge to share. He was part owner of an Arctic tour business for 10 years and has guided sea kayaking trips in Prince William Sound, polar and brown bear trips, and birding trips. His love of the polar regions has led Bill to also guide in Antarctica and South Georgia Island. Though he is not a photographer, he has extensive experience guiding photo trips and works hard to help clients accomplish their goals for the tour. His true passion is natural history and sharing that passion with participants, and he loves to have fun!



## **DETAILED ITINERARY**

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### **Jun 16 ~ Travel to Fairbanks, Alaska**

Travel to Fairbanks, Alaska from our Arctic in Spring tour ([www.cheesemans.com/trips/alaska-arcticspring-jun2021](http://www.cheesemans.com/trips/alaska-arcticspring-jun2021)) or from home.

### **Jun 17 ~ Free day in Fairbanks**

Spend your free day in Fairbanks experiencing world-class museums (UAF Museum of the North, Fountainhead Antique Auto Museum, and Pioneer Park), the Morris Thompson Cultural and Visitors Center to learn about the cultural and natural history of Interior Alaska, the UAF Large Animal Research Station for close-up views of muskoxen, caribou and reindeer, the Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge to photograph sandhill cranes, waterfowl, and songbirds, walk aboard a vintage stern-wheeler at Pioneer Park, or shop for native art work housed in a 1939 hand-built log cabin at The Alaska House! We will help you plan and facilitate your day in Fairbanks!

### **Jun 18 ~ Travel to Denali National Park**

Drive to Denali National Park and enjoy the Denali Visitor Center located at the east end of the park before heading to EarthSong Lodge. If timing and availability allow, get a tour of the working dog kennels and a wonderful slide show presentation from the lodge owner, Jon Nierenburg, an excellent photographer and dogmusher.

### **Jun 19–20 ~ Denali National Park, including scenic flight**

Denali National Park exemplifies Interior Alaska's character as one of the world's last great frontiers. Most of the park remains largely wild and unspoiled. It's an excellent place for viewing wildlife and wildflowers, mammals, and birds. Stony Creek is one of the special areas to explore with 132 species of wildflowers, as well as wheatears, nesting shorebirds, long-tailed jaeger, and other birds.

Depending on the weather, you'll have the opportunity for a scenic flight around Denali's impressive peak (cost included). The mountain makes its own weather and is often hidden in clouds, especially in the afternoon. Staying two nights in Kantishna provides excellent opportunities to photograph this majestic mountain and explore the Kantishna side of the park, including Wonder Lake for iconic photos of Denali's reflection.

### **Jun 21 ~ Denali National Park south to Anchorage**

You'll depart early for what will hopefully be more stunning views of Denali and great wildlife experiences traversing back through the park. Travel south to Anchorage through fertile Matanuska Valley farmlands and make a stop at Denali State Park for a chance to photograph the south side of the Alaska Range and Denali from a distance. After checking into the hotel, you'll have a bit of time to explore downtown Anchorage and enjoy dinner on your own this evening.

### **Jun 22 ~ Continue your journey in Alaska with us or fly home**

Continue on our Cruise Prince William Sound tour ([www.cheesemans.com/trips/alaska-princewilliam-jun2021](http://www.cheesemans.com/trips/alaska-princewilliam-jun2021)) or fly home.

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## **COSTS (ALL COSTS ARE IN US DOLLARS)**

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### **Cost**

Type	Cost per Person
Trip Cost, double occupancy	\$3,475
Single Supplement	\$400

Costs are per person, double occupancy, not including airfare (except the scenic flight in Denali National Park, weather permitting), singles extra. See *Included* and *Not Included* sections for more details.

We reserve the right to charge for cost increases that occur between when we set tour prices and the date of travel, for example, changes due to the cost of lodging and transportation. If you are a single traveler and you desire, we will find a roommate for you. If we cannot find you a roommate, we will not charge you a single supplement. Single rooms are subject to availability and cannot be guaranteed throughout the tour.

## **Payment Schedule**

<b>Payment</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Amount per Person</b>
Deposit	Due now to reserve your space	\$500
Final	January 15, 2021	Remaining Balance

Payments are due based on the schedule above. All reservations require a deposit to confirm reservation of your space. For reservations made after a due date, all past payments will be due with registration. By sending your initial deposit, you agree to accept our payment schedule and cancellation policy as a contract. If payments are still outstanding two weeks after the due date, your space may be forfeited.

## **Cancellations**

Until the Final Payment due date, deposits are refundable except for a cancellation fee of \$150 per person, which can be applied toward another tour if reserved within six months of the cancelled trip's departure date. Cancellations are non-transferrable. No refunds are given after the Final Payment due date.

## **Included**

- All activities, leaders, transport, park entry and user fees, landing fees and permits unless described as optional.
- Accommodations for the nights of June 16 through June 21.
- Meals from breakfast on June 17 through breakfast on June 22 except meals listed in the *Not Included* section.
- Scenic flight in Denali National Park (weather permitting; no refunds are given if the flight must be cancelled).
- Airport transfer on June 16 in Fairbanks.
- Gratuities to lodge and hotel staff throughout the trip.
- Trip Materials – information about flights, packing, entry and departure requirements, airport transfers, gratuities, etc.

## **Not included**

- All Airfare (except flights listed as included), airport and departure taxes, and excess baggage fees.
- Lunch and dinner on June 17 and dinner on June 21.
- Airport transfers in Anchorage.
- Gratuities for the scenic flight pilots. We recommend \$10–\$15 *per participant* per flight.
- Emergency medical and evacuation insurance and trip cancellation insurance. Refer to our website for more information: [www.cheesemans.com/travel-insurance](http://www.cheesemans.com/travel-insurance).
- Items of a personal nature such as laundry, telephone calls, medical costs or hospitalization, room service, alcoholic and other beverages, items not on the regular menu, etc. If you have special dietary needs, please indicate them on your Reservation Form.

## SIGN UP

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Please contact us first to check availability, reserve your space, and obtain a Reservation Form. To confirm your reservation, we require a deposit and signed form from each participant.

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## OTHER DETAILS

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### Climate

Weather in Denali and Fairbanks at this time of year tends to be stable and warm. Expect daytime highs in the 70s°F and nighttime lows in the 40s–50s°F. Although this interior part of Alaska is semi-arid, rain can occur at any time, so a rain jacket is a must.

### Fitness Level

We strive for frequent stops for wildlife viewing, but participants should be comfortable sitting for several hours at a time due to the distances you cover. Please contact us if you have any health concerns that may make this trip challenging.

### Transportation

Travel in our private, custom-designed 12-seater Mercedes Sprinter, specifically adapted for photography, including windows that open on both sides. With a maximum of seven participants throughout the journey, you'll have plenty of room for photography.

Take a scenic flight in small aircraft around Mount Denali (depending on weather).

### Accommodations

Lodging throughout the tour is very comfortable albeit basic at times. Since you travel to remote locations, we do not have many options, but we have found excellent choices in all locations and hope you will enjoy the rustic Alaskan feel and remoteness of our lodges. Your accommodations in Fairbanks and Anchorage have private baths, however, Skyline Lodge in Kantishna has shared bathrooms in a separate building a short walk from your rooms (staying here is well worth it since you can travel in our private van through Denali Park, avoiding the 50-passenger shuttle buses that all other visitors must take to reach Kantishna).

### Flights

Airfare (except flights listed as included) is not included in trip costs. Detailed logistical information and the contact information for our recommended flight-ticketing agent are included in the Trip Materials we will send you. Please let us know if you are arriving earlier or staying later as we are happy to assist you with any extra overnights that you might want to arrange.

Flights you (or a travel agent) book: Arrive in Fairbanks, Alaska (FAI) by June 16. **If you are arriving from our Arctic in Spring tour, see Flights section in its itinerary for arrival information**

([www.cheesemans.com/trips/alaska-arcticspring-jun2021](http://www.cheesemans.com/trips/alaska-arcticspring-jun2021)). Depart from Anchorage (ANC) anytime on June 22. If you are continuing on our Cruise Prince William Sound tour, see Flights section in its itinerary for departure information ([www.cheesemans.com/trips/alaska-princewilliam-jun2021](http://www.cheesemans.com/trips/alaska-princewilliam-jun2021)).

## Conditions

- **Non-smoking policy:** We have a strict non-smoking policy. Smoking is not permitted at any time or any place during our tours.
- **Maximum time in nature:** We try to spend as much time in nature as possible, sometimes resulting in long days but giving you a more in-depth experience.
- **Itinerary route:** The itinerary route, stops, and plans are subject to change by unforeseen circumstances beyond our control, such as weather or road conditions.
- **Additional forms:** For some of our tours, you may be asked to fill out additional forms (e.g., medical questionnaire).
- **Medical conditions and travel risks:** Travel to remote places is exciting, but it is important to understand and accept the risks, both medical and logistical. Minor medical problems can usually be treated, but because we are often far from medical facilities, there can be no expectation for immediate medical treatment or evacuation, even in cases of trauma. Anyone with health problems needing close medical supervision should not consider going on this tour. Bring enough medication for the duration of the trip for any chronic medical needs since pharmacies are usually not available. When you send your deposit and signed Reservation Form, you certify to us that you do not knowingly have any physical or other conditions that would create a risk for yourself or for other trip participants.
- **Use of drones/UAVs on tours:** Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), AKA drones, are not suitable for use on most Cheesemans' Ecology expeditions due to logistical constraints and in many cases, local and national laws or regulations. In some cases, such as on our polar voyages, we operate under environmental regulations that ban the use of recreational drones. Do not bring a drone on safari without contacting us first.

## Conservation

Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris is passionate about conserving the precious regions that we travel to and supports many conservation efforts. By visiting these areas, we contribute to sustainable conservation of these valuable wildlife habitats. The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is a national treasure in danger of being opened for oil extraction. Please help stop this wasteful disregard of our natural heritage by taking action through the Arctic Refuge Action Coalition ([www.ArcticRefugeAction.org](http://www.ArcticRefugeAction.org)). We also urge you to join a conservation organization to help protect Alaskan wildlife, such as Defenders of Wildlife, the Wilderness Society, Alaska Wilderness League, and the Audubon Society.

We aim to make all our trips carbon neutral by splitting the cost of carbon offsetting with our participants. For your convenience, the optional donation amount for your half of the carbon offset will be indicated on your invoice. We source high quality offsets through CarbonTree Conservation Fund, a non-profit we helped found, supporting pioneering forest conservation in the Valdivian Coastal Reserve, a Nature Conservancy project (<https://tinyurl.com/ybgkwton>).