

THE ABUNDANCE OF ALASKA!  
YOUR PERSONAL GUIDEBOOK  
ON PREPARING FOR  
YOUR SAFARI



PREPARED FOR  
THE COLUMBUS ZOO TRAVELERS



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## Preface

This Safari Guide contains all of the information you will need before going on your safari. It is divided into two sections:

**Section One: Before Departure** contains important information that you will need before you leave. **Please read it now** for this reason.

**Section Two: On Safari** contains details and reference materials that will help you during your safari. Please make sure you review it before your safari departs.

Please contact us if you have any questions.

## **Section One: Before Departure**

### **Checklist: Before Departure**

- Please read this entire guide before your departure.** It contains important information to help you prepare for your safari. We recommend you bring this safari guide with you on safari.
- Please talk with your medical professional and/or a professional at a travel health clinic about recommended health precautions.** This safari guidebook provides you with important information on the various precautions you may choose to take, but it is ultimately up to you to consult with your own medical professionals to determine your personal precautionary health measures.
- Arrange for transportation to and from your hometown.** Safari Professionals does not make flight arrangements to and from your destination.
- Please be sure to send us a copy of your air confirmations as soon as you received them.** We need to provide your flights details to our team in Alaska in order to coordinate all your arrangements

## **What to Take**

### **Documents**

Before your departure, we will provide you with additional information that will help you on safari. Take this safari guide and other information with you. **DO NOT put any important documents in the luggage that you check through.** Keep these items with you at all times in your carry-on luggage.

### **Packing**

This packing list will help to ensure you will have everything you need for your trip with us. Plan your travel wardrobe around informal and comfortable clothing; even at mealtimes, dress is casual. The weather in Alaska is quite variable so clothing which can be layered is ideal. Of special note is to make sure you bring a high-quality rain suit so that even if it rains, you can stay comfortable outdoors and have an enjoyable experience. Items made of wool or synthetic fabric remain comfortable and warm even when wet. Cotton is not recommended for Alaska outdoor activities as the fabric does not easily dry and won't help keep you warm once wet.

**Please Note:** This packing list is designed for a trip eight to nine days in length. You will need most items on this list, and we've provided an "Optional Items" section below for additional items that we find useful in Alaska's backcountry. Also note that there are no laundry facilities available at our wilderness lodges.

### **Luggage**

Due to the small-scale, remote nature of our lodges we ask that you bring duffel bags as luggage. However, if your trusty roller bag is best for you, bring that along. Please note that your luggage will not always be accessible during travel so bring a day pack for any items that you will want to have at hand. Also keep in mind that our vehicles and boats have limited luggage compartments and, for your convenience, our staff hand carry luggage to your accommodations. Therefore, we truly appreciate bags that are of a manageable size.

### **Hiking Boots or Shoes**

Comfortable, lightweight and water repellent. Make sure these are well broken in, especially if all leather, before your trip. If you prefer strenuous hiking, you may want to invest in rugged hiking boots. You should put a coat of waterproofing compound on your boots before arriving in Alaska.

### **Day Pack**

This will come in handy for day hiking and van travel. A smaller daypack with two shoulder straps that you carry on your back is perfect, and should be large enough to hold rain gear, an extra sweater, water bottle, lunch, binoculars, and anything else you would take on a day hike.

### **Rain gear**

During kayak excursions, group canoe paddles and explorations on foot, a good quality rain suit (both top and bottom) is a must to keep you warm and dry. We do have some rain suits available at the lodges, but most guests prefer to bring their own gear. Rain suits should be made of coated nylon with factory-sealed seams. The expensive Gore-tex variety is not necessary; however, you may opt for this if you think you may have use for it again. Heavy rubberized rain gear will keep you dry, but

it is bulky and weighty to carry. Please do NOT bring a plastic or vinyl rain suit or poncho; these tend to tear easily and quickly.

### **Pants**

Two to three; one pair made of quick-drying, synthetic material. Include a pair of shorts, just in case! We recommend “convertible” pants, which zip-off into shorts for a “two-in-one” travel wardrobe mainstay.

### **Shirts**

Two to three, mostly long-sleeved. A long-sleeved, light colored, tightly woven shirt is helpful for bug and sun protection. Bring at least one non-cotton hiking shirt, preferably two – one long-sleeved and one short-sleeved.

### **Warm Jacket/Sweater/Vest**

Synthetic fleece or wool jacket and a sweater make great layers for warmth. A fleece or wool vest helps take the early morning or late-night chill off.

### **Wool or Synthetic Fleece Hat**

You won't be sorry you brought this!

### **Wool or Synthetic Gloves**

To keep your fingers warm while hiking, boating or photographing outside.

### **Brimmed Hat**

For sun protection. Some who don't enjoy a hooded jacket prefer a rain hat.

### **Socks**

Two pairs of wool or synthetic socks for hiking, plus adequate lightweight socks to meet your personal needs.

### **Long Underwear**

Two sets of polypropylene, capilene or thermax tops and bottoms are recommended. Synthetic fabrics are designed to keep you warm even when wet, wicking moisture away from the skin. Do not bring cotton long underwear; if it becomes wet it fails to insulate.

### **Underwear**

Enough for your personal needs.

### **Prescription Medications**

Make sure you bring an adequate supply for the trip.

### **One-Quart Water Bottle or Hydration Pack**

One-quart water bottle or hydration pack for each person. Clean, potable water is available at all lodge locations on our trips. We are a plastic water bottle-free company; please help us reduce plastic waste by bringing your own water bottle.

## **Small Flashlight or Headlamp**

Needed from late July through September.

## **Insect Repellent**

Creams and pumps are more environmentally friendly than aerosols.

## **Optional Items:**

### **Sunglasses & Sunscreen**

We are optimists, and sunshine in Alaska can be strong at times.

### **Field Guides**

For local flora and fauna.

### **Travel Alarm Clock**

Battery operated.

### **Binoculars**

Highly recommended and some guests feel that these are mandatory!

### **Hiking Poles**

If you prefer to explore the backcountry with hiking poles, please bring ones that pack easily (telescoping).

### **Neck Gaiter**

Fleece is best. Great for protecting your neck from the breeze off the water.

### **Boot Gaiters**

The Cordura variety made by Outdoor Research work well. Gaiters offer protection for your legs and pants from water, insects and brush while exploring on foot.

### **Cameras**

Virtually everyone who wishes to take photographs on their safari uses a digital camera, mobile phone or tablet. Most people find that a digital camera with a zoom lens rated between 200 to 300mm allows them the greatest flexibility in taking wildlife photos. Wide angle lenses are good for landscape photography. And the zoom feature is handy for framing your photo and the longer focal length will bring your subjects closer to you.

You will be able to charge your camera batteries at each place you stay. But make sure you have the proper adapter.

Digital cameras store their image files on memory cards. It's easy to fill up a card when using a digital camera, so we suggest you bring more than one. Some travelers bring a dedicated hard drive to store image files, allowing the cards to be reused throughout the safari.

**If you purchase new photographic equipment for your safari, please test it to make sure it is functioning properly.** And **be sure to bring extra batteries,** even if your equipment uses

rechargeable batteries. Batteries can run out of power while you are on a game drive and a spare will ensure that you won't miss a great photo opportunity. It is unlikely you will be able to purchase another battery while on safari, as some types of camera batteries can be difficult to find in Alaska.

**The use of drones is prohibited on our trips.**

### **Checklist: Miscellaneous**

- This safari guidebook
- Toiletries (toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo— if you wish to use your favorite, shaving cream, razors, deodorant, comb, tampons, etc.)
- Insect repellent
- Pre-moistened towelettes or baby wipes
- Facial tissues
- Hand sanitizer
- Binoculars
- Sunscreen and lip balm (A minimum SPF of 30 is recommended)
- Powdered laundry detergent (for your personal delicate items)
- Security pouch for carrying your money
- At least one extra pair of glasses or contact lenses
- A copy of your eyeglass prescription in case you lose or break your glasses
- Sunglasses
- Daypack (which doubles as your carryon luggage)
- Medications for diarrhea, colds, sunburn, upset stomach, etc.
- Basic first-aid kit (band-aids, antiseptic ointment, aspirin, etc.)
- Prescription medications you may need
- Written copy of your prescriptions with the chemical name of the medication (Keep this separate from your medications)
- Small notebook or journal and pens
- Sewing kit, rubber bands, duct tape
- Small flashlight
- Watch and/or travel clock
- Your favorite snacks that are not subject to heat damage (nuts, hard candies, mints, granola bars)
- TSA approved luggage locks
- Sports drink hydration tablets for staying hydrated and quickly replenishing trace elements (available at sporting goods stores)
- Paperback books, digital reader or other reading materials. Travelers often trade books on safari.

### **Checklist: In Your Carry-On or On Your Person**

- Credit card (due to security concerns, do not use debit cards)
- Cash in USD
- Medications (do not pack medications in checked luggage)
- Written copy of your prescriptions with the generic names of the medication (Keep this separate from your medications)



- Spare pair of prescription glasses or contact lenses if you wear them. If you wear contacts, we suggest you also bring along a pair of glasses. Eye drops.
- A copy of your eyeglass prescription in case you lose or break your glasses
- Cameras, digital memory cards, extra batteries, lens cleaning items
- Ear plugs, neck rest, eye shade for your overnight flights
- Spare set of underwear & socks in the unlikely event your luggage is delayed
- Something to read during your flights

## **Health**

### **General Health Considerations**

Before you leave for an extended vacation, especially one to an international destination, we recommend you consult your physician and a professional travel clinic. Make the doctor's appointment **no less than eight weeks before your departure**. You may need some prescriptions and perhaps some special advice that relates to your own physical condition. If you haven't had a physical examination recently, you should get one. Discuss your itinerary and describe your planned activities with your doctor if you have any questions about your fitness.

#### **If you have any medical condition that requires special care or medications, let us know.**

It is a good idea to bring along some general medicines as well. A broad-spectrum antibiotic is advisable. Be aware that some antibiotics (like tetracycline) can cause hypersensitivity to the sun. Diarrhea medicine is also advisable, as is medication for itches or rashes.

Be sure to bring enough of the prescription medicines that you are currently taking. Pack your medications in your carry-on luggage, not in your checked luggage. And don't take just enough in your carry-on luggage for the flight, assuming you will retrieve the rest when you get to your destination. Occasionally, checked luggage is delayed, and you could find yourself without medication. Carry a written copy of the prescriptions for any such medication you need, including its chemical (generic) name.

If you have any special condition or allergy that might possibly require attention overseas, have your physician write a letter describing the nature of the condition and the treatment — send a copy to us and carry the letter with you. If you should happen to need medical care away from home, your temporary physician will be able to treat you more efficiently and effectively.

If you have severe allergies that may require the use of an Epi pen, please be sure to bring them.

### **Dental Check-Up**

It's a good idea to see your dentist a few weeks before departure. A broken or lost filling can be very aggravating while traveling. You might also consider taking along one of the commercially available dental emergency kits. Such kits allow you to replace lost fillings, cement crowns or caps, and alleviate toothaches. Ask your dentist or pharmacist for a recommendation.

### **Eyeglasses And Contact Lenses**

If you wear eyeglasses, take an extra pair along on the trip. If you wear contact lenses, you may want to take an extra pair of contacts and a back-up pair of regular glasses. A copy of your eyeglass prescription will make it easy to replace your glasses, if necessary. Contact lens users should bring

plenty of any solutions they use. Wearers of soft contact lenses that need daily care should not hesitate to bring them. Please note that at some locations, electricity provided by solar power or generators may not be available 24 hrs. each day.

### **CPAP Machines**

If you use a CPAP machine, please be aware that some lodges and camps may not provide 24 hr electrical service. Portable, battery-operated CPAP machines are available.

### **Checklist: Health**

- Consult your physician and/or a professional travel clinic no later than eight weeks before your departure.
- Plan ahead and get the necessary inoculations well before your departure.
- Let Safari Professionals know of any medical issues you may have and carry a letter from your physician with relevant information.
- Hand-carry your prescription medicines and bring written copies of all your prescriptions in case you need to replace any while you are on safari.
- Take some personal medications for infection, headache, upset stomach, allergies, and diarrhea. Get advice and prescriptions from your doctor.
- Take out additional medical travel insurance if your insurance advisor recommends it after reviewing your own policy and the travel insurance provided.

### **Safety**

#### **General Risks of Travel**

We make every effort to assure you a safe, healthy, and rewarding journey. Any travel, however, involves some risk. Whether you make your own arrangements or go with a group, the new and wonderful things that travel offers can be a potential source of danger. Although we believe such risks can be greatly minimized and will not pose a serious threat to you, no one is able to guarantee you the same level of safety or health that you might enjoy at home. Standards of health and safety vary widely around the world, and we have little control over local conditions or practices.

## **Section Two: On Safari**

You don't have to digest this all at once, but we ask that you read it through carefully at least once before you leave on your safari. Please use this as a reference during your journey. Included are descriptions of situations that you will probably never experience and procedures that you will never need to use, but that are important to know about just the same.

### **Valuables**

One of the recurrent problems of travel is losing items or having belongings stolen. Most people simply are not used to a nomadic way of life and don't keep track of their personal possessions very well while on the move. Remember also that travelers are usually quite conspicuous, and thieves thrive on carelessness. Here are some important points to keep in mind wherever you travel:

- Avoid wearing flashy items like jewelry and fancy clothes in public. It's best to leave your jewelry at home. Most thefts are of the "grab and run" variety.
- You may be particularly vulnerable while standing in lines, in baggage-claim areas, and in crowded public places where pickpockets lurk.
- Men should not carry a wallet in pant pockets. Women should carry bags with any flaps held toward them. Hold onto bags tightly in crowded places or leave your purse at home.
- Do not talk to strangers on the street. Don't listen to any plea for help or any other line that you may be given. Con artists of all sorts abound, so just ignore them and continue on your way. They have very convincing stories and are unbelievably good. If someone persists, go into a shop or other public place, and ask the manager for assistance.
- Always keep all of your important items in a safe place. It's best to spread valuables in different places rather than in one bag or pocket. Keep your carry-on bag with you at all times while you are traveling. Don't leave money or credit cards in your hotel room unless there is a safe in the room. Don't leave your purse, day pack, or camera bag unattended.

### **Lost Luggage**

It is a sad but true aspect of air travel that bags get delayed or lost. It doesn't happen often, but it does happen, and there is not much that we can do to prevent it. The hopeful note is that the odds of it happening to you are thousands to one. But if it does happen, please don't let it spoil your safari.

Fortunately, delayed bags are more common than lost bags. Our local team will help you purchase whatever you may need. To take advantage of your baggage delay and loss insurance keep your receipts for reimbursement. And your travel insurance company may help locate your luggage if the airlines cannot identify its location. To help your luggage find you, we recommend placing your home address and a copy of your complete itinerary in your luggage to help the airlines get it to you.

## **Health pt. 2**

### **Travel Fatigue**

According to an old expression, getting there is half the fun. A lengthy flight, however, can be downright exhausting. The sheer fatigue of air travel, coupled with jet lag, can precondition you for problems when you arrive, unless you take steps to ease its potential effects.

Travel fatigue is primarily caused by lack of sleep. Airplane seats become uncomfortable after a few hours and your feet swell during prolonged sitting. The in-flight routine of safety briefings, passing out of headsets and drinks, meal service, tray collections, miscellaneous announcements, shopping, and movies often seems like a three-ring circus designed to keep you awake. Other factors can also cause fatigue. Many cabins are pressurized at 5,000 ft. or more, which means that those who live at sea level will experience some oxygen deprivation. And the bone-dry air can cause a raw throat and dehydration.

Air travel experts and experienced travelers have techniques for combating travel fatigue. Here are some things you should do to reduce travel fatigue:

- Get plenty of rest the day before you leave.
- HYDRATE!** Avoid alcohol during the flight and drink plenty of other liquids. According to some experts, dehydration is the most debilitating part of air travel. Drinking at least eight ounces of fluid every hour is recommended.
- Eat lightly during the flight.
- Exercise. Although the cabin crew may disapprove if you jog around the plane, you can get up and stretch and walk about. There are also simple exercises that will relax your muscles and circulate your blood. Roll your feet, rotate your head, and contract and relax your leg muscles. Do some deep breathing. And if you're not the shy type, raise your knees to your chest and swing your arms over your head. This may result in some quizzical looks from passengers around you, but you'll be better off for it.
- Stretch out if there are some unoccupied seats. Take off or loosen your shoes.
- Use earplugs and an eye mask if you wish to sleep during your flight. You may ask your flight attendant to let you rest when they offer meals or other services.

### **Jet Lag**

When you travel across time zones, your circadian rhythms (or body clock) are thrown off schedule. For example, Alaska is in the GMT-8 time zone, which is 4 hours behind of EST. Your watch will tell you it's time to wake up, while your body convincingly argues that it's time to sleep. Coupled with general travel fatigue, jet lag can cause impaired body and mental functions.

Chief among the symptoms are restlessness and fatigue, digestive problems, altered kidney and bowel functioning, pronounced reaction to alcohol, cloudy vision and short-term memory loss.

Several factors can influence the seriousness of jet lag: the number of time zones crossed, the length of the flight, whether there is a stopover during the journey, and the departure and arrival times. In addition, traveling from west to east seems to be more difficult than from east to west. Ideas about how long it takes to adjust vary from "one day for each time zone crossed" to a complicated formula that computes a half dozen interrelated factors.

There are several things you can do to alleviate jet lag. First, follow the suggestions given above to combat general travel fatigue: rest before the flight, exercise, drink plenty of liquids and so on. Second, in preparation for your journey, you can consciously adjust your diet and sleeping patterns prior to your departure to put you more in sync with your destination's time frame.

We suggest you visit The National Sleep Foundation's informative website to learn more about jet lag: <http://www.sleepfoundation.org/article/sleep-topics/jet-lag-and-sleep>.

### **Avoid Dehydration**

During your flight be sure to drink plenty of liquids and avoid alcohol. After you arrive, continue to drink lots of liquids. If you aren't careful, you can quickly become dehydrated. You may find you need to drink more non-alcoholic beverages than you do at home.

If you feel you have become dehydrated, sports drink hydration tablets mixed with bottled water may quickly help you feel refreshed. As an example, we never travel without these tablets: <https://guenergy.com/products/hydration-drink-tabs>.

### **Motion Sickness**

For travelers prone to motion sickness, various methods of travel may cause significant discomfort. Traveling in the back of a bouncing safari vehicle or flying in a small aircraft may trigger motion sickness symptoms.

If you are subject to motion sickness, please review CDC's information about the prevention and treatment of motion sickness at this website: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/motion-sickness>.

Some of our travelers have found relief using pressure bands or devices that mildly stimulates the inside of their wrists. However, their effectiveness has not been proven in clinical studies. Others swear by the use of ginger and some studies have shown that ginger can be effective. We suggest you test any prevention or treatment options before departing on your safari.

### **Emergency Medical Care**

Should you become seriously ill or injured, it may be necessary for you to leave the safari. This may mean hospitalization or taking an early flight home. You may wish to consider purchasing travel insurance to cover any such medical emergencies. Safari Professionals can provide you a quote for travel insurance, at your request.

Medical emergencies are extremely rare, but rest assured that, in such emergency cases, Safari Professionals and our teams in Alaska will provide all the assistance we can to help you obtain the best treatment and appropriate transport back home. Be advised, however, that medical treatment and evacuation may mean that you'll have extra expenses. Please consult with your insurance professional to determine if your health coverage is adequate for your situation.

If you would like a quote for travel insurance, just let us know.

### **Post-Travel Health**

Some diseases may not manifest themselves immediately. If you become ill after returning home, tell your doctor where you have traveled. Most people who acquire viral, bacterial, or parasitic

infections abroad become ill within six weeks after returning home. However, some diseases may not manifest immediately. Tell your physician where you have traveled within the past 12 months.

## **Communications**

Wi-Fi and cellular reception are generally available in lodges and hotels as well as larger towns and cities, like Anchorage. But you should note that, just like at home, this is not always the case— certain areas may not have Wi-Fi or good cellular reception, so, please keep that in mind.

## **Safari Ethics & Etiquette**

Adhering to the following guidelines will help everyone enjoy their safari to the fullest.

- Do not ask your guide to approach any wildlife so close that it may be frightened or harassed. Guides must follow certain rules and regulations that are designed to protect the environment, wildlife, and travelers. Stiff penalties are imposed on guides who break the rules. If you wish to get closer to an animal, ask your guide, but accept their decision if that you are close enough.
- Do not crowd animals. If you see that several vehicles are near an animal already, your guide may suggest waiting or moving to another location.
- Do not disturb animals in any way. Please do not make loud sounds or throw anything to attract an animal's attention.
- Do not hang out of vehicle windows or sit on top of the roof of the vehicle. Do not get out of a vehicle within 200 yards of any game animal.
- Do not discard litter of any kind. Besides being unsightly, litter can choke or poison animals, including birds.
- Do not pick, cut, or destroy any vegetation or remove any object from the parks and reserves, particularly bones, feathers, or other animal trophies.
- Avoid abrupt movements or loud talking that can startle or scare away wildlife.
- Never feed animals, including birds.
- Watch to see that everyone has finished taking their photos before making any movements in your vehicle. Even the slightest movement can cause a photo to be out of focus.
- Smoking is not permitted in vehicles or at meals on this safari.

