

2025
TRIP GUIDE



ALASKA EXPEDITION 30

A 30-day adventure camp for 10th, 11th, and 12th graders



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GRADES

10th - 12th

TUITION

\$7,195

DATES

6/25 - 7/24

- **For the 2024-2025 school year**
- **Included in tuition:** Food, lodging, and airport pick-up and drop-off; group and technical equipment; guided activities.
- **Not included in tuition:** Program and travel insurance; personal clothing and items; transportation to and from the arrival and departure airports



For 30 days, step into the Last Frontier, a wild region surrounded by turquoise fjords, lush forests, and massive glaciers. Explore the Chugach Mountains' mossy alpine meadows and spruce and birch forests, and ice climb on the impressive Matanuska Glacier, then hike through the Talkeetna Mountains, where rolling hills transform into jagged peaks. Navigate the bluest-green waters you've ever seen while sea kayaking in Prince William Sound. Finish your trip with a backpacking adventure in Denali State Park, where you might catch a glimpse of North America's highest peak, and a rafting trip on the Nenana River.

The Alaska Expedition is perfect for teens looking for the next level of challenge in the outdoors.



Who is Adventure Treks?

We believe in creating remarkable, life-changing experiences for teenagers. Since 1993, we've guided thousands of students through spectacular outdoor adventures across North America and the world. Our multi-week camps go beyond experiencing awe in the outdoors: While students explore some of the world's breathtaking landscapes, they're also developing confidence, leadership, optimism, and resilience—essential character traits that will help them achieve incredible things as they face the world.

Adventure Treks is where teens break out of their comfort zones to discover their best selves, forge lifelong friendships, and grow into capable young adults in a supportive, technology-free environment.

Our program is defined by an unmatched commitment to safety, communities that have resulted in consistently high return rates, and a focus on transformative personal growth. With the industry's best student-to-instructor ratio and qualified, caring staff leading the way, we foster an environment where everyone feels valued and inspired.

“Simply put, AT was one of—if not the—most formative experiences of my life. I wouldn't be the person I am today without the lessons I learned on those trips, and I'm still friends with folks I met 20 years ago.”

Brad Elkins, student from 2002-2006, currently a political consultant

ALASKA EXPEDITION 2025 >> our program goals



To maintain physical and emotional safety as our top priority



To offer fun and exciting outdoor activities that help teens gain valuable life skills and a greater sense of self



To take a sincere interest in the growth and development of young people



To empower students to create an inclusive and reflective community that maintains a culture of kindness, sense of humor, and spirit of cooperation and volunteerism



To inspire young people to develop a lifelong love of the outdoors and conservation ethic



To be a sustainable and responsive business, with a focus on our families and the quality of our programs



We have the **best student-to-instructor ratio in the industry**, with 4 students to every 1 staff

High student
& staff return
rate

More
experienced,
mature
instructors

All-inclusive
tuition

Our instructor-to-student ratio is the best in the industry. Most typical summer teen programs have a 6-7:1 ratio with only 2 staff; our programs maintain a 4:1 ratio with up to 5-6 staff. We also have:

- The highest student and instructor return rates in the industry (consistently between 50–85%);
- More experienced and qualified instructors with a broad range and depth of knowledge, skills, personality dynamics, and experience;
- All-inclusive tuition;
- And a hands-on director team!

ALASKA EXPEDITION 2025 >> AT vs other programs

It's important to know the specifics of the program you're choosing for your child. While every program operates a little differently, Adventure Treks' model is truly unique. We accommodate larger groups (up to 24 students), hire more instructors for each group with our 4:1 ratio, and have the highest retention with student and staff.

We recruit more qualified instructors with higher certifications and pay them a better wage than our competitors, ensuring that we're attracting top talent.

	Adventure Treks	Outward Bound	Moondance Adventures	Wilderness Adventures	Apogee Adventures
Student-to-staff ratio	4:1	6:1	6:1	6-7:1	6:1
Student return rate	Consistently 50 - 60%	*	*	*	*
Staff return rate	Consistently 60 - 85%	*	*	*	*
Group size	Max 20 - 24	12-13	12-13	12-13	12-13
Extra fees and rental gear?	No. All-inclusive	All-inclusive	Must purchase/rent backpack, sleeping bag, & sleeping pad	Must purchase/rent backpack, sleeping bag, & sleeping pad	Must pay for bike rental, backpacks, sleeping bags, showers, & laundry
Director involvement on every trip?	Yes	No	No	No	No
Average staff age	Consistently 26 - 28	*	*	*	*
Minimum medical certification**	Wilderness first responder	Wilderness first responder	Wilderness first aid	Wilderness first responder	CPR, wilderness first aid, lifeguard

*Info not publicly available

**At minimum, Adventure Treks requires our instructors to be certified as wilderness first responders, which is an intensive 80-hour course that also includes CPR. Other companies only require wilderness first aid (16–20 hours) and CPR.

HIKE



ICE CLIMB



RAFT



SEA KAYAK





Days 1-2	Arrive in Anchorage, AK (ANC), and meet the group	Frontcountry camping
Day 2	Skills clinics in the afternoon	Frontcountry camping
Day 3	Day hike to Mt. Eklutna	Frontcountry camping
Days 4-7	Backpack in Denali State Park	Backcountry camping days 4-6
Day 8	Logistics: Laundry, shopping, cleaning, organizing	Frontcountry camping
Day 9	Whitewater raft the Nenana River	Frontcountry camping
Days 10-11	Ice climb on Matanuska Glacier	Frontcountry camping
Days 12-16	Logistics day, then backpack in Chugach State Park	Backcountry camping days 13-15
Days 17-21	Drive day, then sea kayak in Prince William Sound	Backcountry camping days 18-20
Day 22	Logistics day	Frontcountry camping
Days 23-28	Backpack in the Talkeetna Mountains	Backcountry camping days 23-27
Day 29	Alaska day! And begin to depart from ANC	Frontcountry camping
Day 30	Final departures from ANC	Back home!



DAY 1

Fly or drive into Ted Stevens International Airport (ANC) and meet Adventure Treks and your new friends! Students will begin arriving in the evening and will continue landing at ANC throughout the night and next morning.

DAY 2

Once everyone has arrived this morning, we'll begin rotating through clinics to refresh our knowledge and learn new skills in camp set-up, tarp shelters, river crossings, backpack packing, wildlife protocols, backcountry cooking, and more.

DAY 3

After making breakfast for each other, students will split up into smaller groups to hike to the 4,271-foot Mt. Eklutna in Chugach State Park. A steep yet rewarding hike, you'll emerge from treeline to hike over tundra and atop green ridges to reach a summit with miles-long views of the surrounding peaks and rivers. Along the way, stop to admire vibrant wildflowers like forget-me-nots, lupine, marigolds, shooting stars, and paintbrush.

DAYS 4-7

Here, we'll spend four days in the rugged territory that houses North America's tallest and most awe-inspiring mountain. Hike along the Kesugi Ridge through lush forests, vast tundra, and past an alpine lake. You'll definitely want to do a "clear day dance," as the view of the 20,308-foot Denali is jaw-dropping on a bluebird day!

DAY 8

Logistics day! Students and instructors will work together to get laundry done, refresh our food supply, and do a thorough van clean-up. Then we'll get ready to sea kayak for the next few days.

DAY 9

Get excited for a day on the Nenana River—one of the coolest rafting spots in Alaska. The gorge is home to neat wildlife like sheep, moose, bear, wolves, and golden eagles. Bordering Denali National Park, you're guaranteed a memorable and beautiful day!

DAYS 10-11

It's time for one of our students' favorite activities! Spend two days ice climbing on the massive Matanuska glacier. Learn how to ascend sparkling blue walls with ice tools and crampons, and pose for a superb photo op at the top of each climb. You may even get up close and personal with a crevasse!

DAYS 12-16

We'll have another logistics day, and then we'll set out for four days on one of the most scenic hikes in the entire range: Crow Pass (which follows the original Iditarod Trail). You'll pass over glaciers, through mine ruins and wildflower fields, and alongside waterfalls. You may see moose, caribou, goats, and other wildlife native only to this subarctic region. This ridgeline hike allows for unobstructed views in all directions on a clear day!

DAYS 17-21

After a rest and prep day, we'll head to Prince William Sound, where four days on these turquoise waters will heighten your appreciation for Alaska's wild nature even more. Glide through calm waters next to waterfalls, calving glaciers, and peaks soaring up to 9,000 feet. The wildlife is abundant: bald eagles, otters, porpoises, and maybe even Orcas! At night, surround yourself with your best friends while camping on black sand beaches.

DAYS 22-28

Day 22 is our final logistics day before our biggest backpack of the trip! Then, wander through the Talkeetnas, home to long-extinct volcanoes, for six days. You and your friends will stand beneath and marvel at the surrounding sawtooth peaks and hang on to each other for support while you learn how to ford rivers and creeks. Make memories that last a lifetime on this incredibly varied terrain: You'll cross remnant ice fields, traverse ridges, stomp through bogs, and travel across tundra. Keep your eyes peeled for herds of caribou passing through.

DAY 29

Alaska day! Today, students will have a bit of freedom to explore downtown Anchorage with their instructors. This is a great chance to find unique souvenirs. This afternoon, we'll exchange contact info and say our goodbyes as students begin to depart from ANC this evening.

DAY 30

We promise you this: You won't want to leave! But it's time for our incredible adventure to come to an end. Our final students will depart from ANC this morning and early afternoon.

FUN, FRIENDSHIP, & A CULTURE OF KINDNESS

First and foremost, you'll have loads of fun. Our goal is for you to return home having made lifelong friendships, tried and succeeded at new and exciting activities, and had so much fun that you can't wait to do it all over again next summer with your new friends. We want you to laugh a lot, be yourself, and feel appreciated for who you are. We create a strong culture of kindness and sense of belonging to a community in which everyone feels valued, included, and supported. You'll feel like you've gained a second family.

We get that you're trusting us with their summer, and we're going to help make it your **BEST SUMMER YET**. In fact, our students have such a great time that most of them return to us for multiple summers. You'll also come home with the confidence that you can do **ANYTHING** you put your mind to.



IN ALASKA, EXPERIENCE IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

While our instructors are excited to teach new skills, we highly recommend that any new students applying to Alaska Expedition have previous experience with multi-day, backcountry activities like backpacking. This is a physically and mentally challenging trip with the possibility of inclement weather.

LARGER GROUPS

Most programs cap their student groups at 12 or 13; the Alaska trip will have a max of 20 students. There are lots of benefits:

- More students from a wider variety of backgrounds to befriend.
- The opportunity to spend time in the big group and in different smaller groups on the trip. In smaller groups, students get more personal time with each other and instructors and create strong bonds. In the large group we can all have fun together!
- Social dynamics are easier to manage. With a larger group, instructors can fluidly manage groupings to make sure everyone has an incredible experience and prevent exclusive cliques from forming.



21st CENTURY SKILLS

Adding to a fun summer, we strive for our Great 8 Outcomes to be learned through new adventures, immersion in nature, and face-to-face interactions with peers and caring role models. Our model of using close-knit communities and exciting, appropriately challenging outdoor activities makes Adventure Treks the perfect place to improve the interpersonal skills young adults need to thrive in the 21st century.

SAFETY

Risk management is at the core of everything we do. Adolescents need reasonable risk as part of their normal growth and development, but from the moment your children leave home until they return to you, minimizing this risk is our foremost priority. As we consider ourselves partners in the parenting process, we make every decision as if you were looking over our shoulders, and we have extremely thorough policies and protocols for each activity. By teaching students about judgment, probability, and consequences, we build a safety-conscious mindset that helps them learn how to make good decisions and take intelligent risks—habits that will apply to the rest of their lives.

EXPEDITION MENTALITY

Strong, inclusive communities develop quickly when there is a sense of mutual respect and trust among all members. Students quickly grow to understand that a good community includes both physical and emotional safety, and they'll discover how one's actions can impact the group. We encourage teenagers to have fun, challenge themselves, try new things, pitch in on group tasks, and maintain a positive mental attitude no matter the circumstances. This is a core tenet of the Adventure Treks experience.

Adding to an insanely fun summer, we strive for our **Great 8 Outcomes** to be learned through adventure, immersion in an outdoor environment, and interaction with great role models—allowing students to improve non-cognitive, interpersonal skills needed to thrive in the 21st century.

- 1 Communication:** Few ideas are the product of a single mind, and being able to effectively communicate in a constantly changing world is a much-appreciated skill. Teammates need to be able to share ideas and build trust, empathy, and understanding.
- 2 Collaboration and social achievement:** The ability to work well with others is vital—even when your team is not of your choosing. Creating and maintaining fun, substantive social connections is a hallmark of success.
- 3 Creativity:** The ability to generate multiple ideas and think out of the box is engendered by a supportive and free-thinking community.
- 4 Critical thinking:** The world's problems don't have simple answers. These challenges require the ability to critically analyze a situation and formulate potential solutions that are not often obvious.
- 5 Leadership:** We solve problems in groups, which need leaders with heart that bring out the best in its members.
- 6 Self-management:** Lasting success requires the ability to postpone short-term gratification or personal needs in pursuit of important long-term goals.
- 7 Resilience:** Everyone encounters challenges and failures. Those who rebound from failure and see problems as opportunities will succeed when others give up.
- 8 Optimism:** An optimist believes that problems are temporary and that they has the ability through effort and persuasion to effect positive change.

MEALS AT ADVENTURE TREKS

Students are always impressed by the food! Instructors will ensure there is plenty of food and plan balanced meals, and we eat family-style, sitting in circles so no one is excluded. There are always second portions (and usually thirds) available; meals include a good balance of protein and carbs; and we eat fresh fruits and vegetables often.

While instructors will have done most of the meal-planning and shopping before students arrive, trip meals are mostly executed by the students (with supervision). Beginning with a French toast breakfast on the second day, instructors will teach students about backcountry cooking and stove and knife safety. Then students will break into smaller groups to cook for each other to ensure that everyone is involved from start to finish.

We can easily accommodate vegetarians and many food allergies, including peanuts, tree nuts, soy, dairy, sesame, and gluten. And we always have a wide variety of snacks available throughout the day. Adventure Treks may choose to operate a trip free of a particular food (e.g., peanuts) due to allergies.

CAMPING IN TENTS

We'll camp in different places throughout our trip. About 60% of our nights are frontcountry camping (developed campsites with amenities like running water and toilets) at a public or private campground. The other 40% will be spent backcountry camping in wilderness locations where we are most likely out of cell phone service and away from our vehicles, electricity, and other amenities. Multi-day activities like backpacking take place in the backcountry.



Alaska has some of the most stunning campsites anywhere in North America!

Adventure Treks was the most significant life experience of my adolescence. AT introduced me to a community of individuals who would go on to be friends and mentors for years to come. My love for the outdoors was born out of summers with AT, and so many choices I've made from where I've lived to what jobs I've taken... My path to a career in medicine was heavily influenced by AT experiences as an instructor. I simply can't imagine who I would be if I didn't spend summers with AT.

Lauren Liebling, student from 2004-2006, currently a physician assistant

GEAR

Adventure Treks provides all outdoor gear, including a backpacking backpack, sleeping bag and pad, tent, cooking gear, and all activity-specific technical gear (like climbing shoes and helmets and rafting gear). Students will bring a daypack and duffel bag; clothing, footwear, and toiletries; and a few personal pieces of outdoor gear.

Before opening day, students will pack all of their items in a daypack and duffel bag; the daypack can be a school backpack and will act as carry-on luggage, and students will use this often throughout the trip. The duffel will be checked luggage and will act as a “closet” while on the trip: They are stored and locked in the U-Haul trailer that we tow, and students will pull whatever items they need for the next activity out of their duffels and pack them in their backpacking packs or daypacks.

TECH-FREE EXPLORATION

Our students have an unbelievable amount of fun—all without their cell phones. We unplug from technology so that we can connect with our natural surroundings and each other and build strong, inclusive, and kind communities. Upon arrival to Adventure Treks, students will call home and then turn their phone off to be stored throughout the trip (minus a few designated calls home—more info on page 17). No time for Snapchat or TikTok at Adventure Treks, and best of all, students will quickly realize they don’t even miss their phones.

Students are encouraged to bring a camera or GoPro for taking photos and videos!





GETTING TO ADVENTURE TREKS

Students will meet us at **Ted Stevens International Airport (ANC)** beginning on day one (they will continue arriving into day two). Most of our students choose to fly by themselves as they see this as a great exercise in independence. Our instructors will be at the airport to greet our students as they arrive by plane or car, and our office monitors all flights and is on hand to assist with delays and cancellations. Once your child meets their group, they'll call home to give a safe arrival notification.

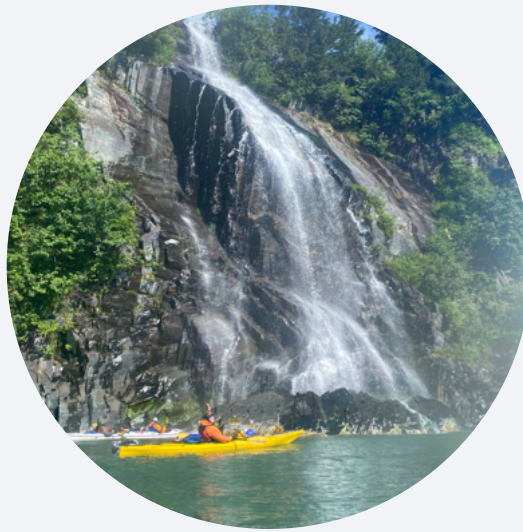
While we provide travel guidelines and can help find flights that work, it is the family's responsibility to book travel. We will happily help coordinate travel for students traveling to and from the same home airports. For all students flying to Adventure Treks, we recommend purchasing refundable airfare and/or travel insurance.

If flying

- Arrive ANC between 6 pm on day 1 and 12 pm on day 2
- Depart ANC between 7 pm on day 29 and 12 pm on day 30

If driving

- A director will be in touch beforehand to confirm a time and meeting location.



COMMUNICATION DURING THE TRIP

Instructors will take photos and videos throughout the trip, which the office will provide to families. Because of the wilderness nature of our trips, there are limitations regarding the frequency of updates and the number and size of photos sent to the office. During multi-day backcountry activities, trip updates will not be available until the group comes back into cell service. Our goal is to provide at least one update per week on each trip.

Written updates will be emailed to families. Photos and videos will be uploaded directly to an online album, and we'll send your child's specific album link about a week before your child's trip starts.

Additionally, you can expect one or two brief phone calls from your child during the trip.

The summer office hours are 8–6, but someone is always on call for after-hours emergencies. We'll provide an emergency contact number parents can use for urgent or time-sensitive situations, such as canceled flights or family emergencies. If your child's trip begins or ends on a weekend, the office is open and happy to assist with travel.

“AT dramatically boosted my ability to adapt to new situations and go with the flow. It was also a great social environment, and I'm thrilled whenever I run into someone I know from AT (which last happened in January 2024). It was great to spend summer with other people excited to try out new things, have fun, and be silly. Most concretely, AT made me a lifelong lover of the outdoors and taught me the skills I needed to enjoy it fully.”

Grant Clovin, student from 2009–2011, currently a lawyer

Weather

Alaska weather is (in)famously finicky and unpredictable. You'll likely experience rain and cloudy skies along with sunny weather and pleasant temps—and probably even a storm or two. Some nights will be chilly. It's very important to bring high-quality rain gear, synthetic or wool clothing for backcountry activities, and warm layers in case temperatures dip.



“My experience with AT gave me a love of the outdoors and being in nature. It helped me build resilience and trust in my own body and my ability to push through challenges and setbacks. It gave me a sense of belonging and community with my fellow AT friends, as well as several very close friendships that made me feel seen and loved. I still feel like it was one of my most formative, treasured experiences of my teen years.”

Zoe Fishman Sitrin, student from 2004-2007, currently in product marketing

Did you know?

- Of the U.S.'s 20 highest peaks, 17 are in Alaska, including North America's highest mountain, Denali (20,320 feet).
- Dog mushing is the official Alaska state sport, and the Alaskan malamute is the state dog!
- Fairbanks, AK, is one of the most reliable places in the world to see the Northern Lights.
- Most of the United States' glaciers are located in Alaska.
- While you won't find poison ivy or oak in Alaska, you have to watch out for other rash-causing plants, like cow parsnip!

ALASKA EXPEDITION 2025 >> enroll now!



Ready to enroll? It's easy!

1

Complete our [online application](#) and submit a deposit to secure a space.

2

Submit admissions forms, including parent questionnaire, student questionnaire, health history, and character reference.*

A \$1,000 deposit must accompany the application to secure your child's spot, which will be applied toward the full cost of tuition. In the event a student is not accepted to Adventure Treks, the deposit is fully refunded. Please visit adventuretreks.com/terms-conditions for more information regarding our cancellation and refund process, payment options, trip insurance, and more.

**New students will attend a director interview to ensure a mutually good fit for Alaska.*