

Alaska: Journey to Sitka

KAYAKING, HIKING, AND CULTURAL ENCOUNTERS ABOARD THE WESTWARD



Wilderness Travel

Overview



TRIP DETAILS AT-A-GLANCE

- Length:** 8 days
Arrive: Sitka, Juneau, or Peterburg (depending on dates)
Depart: Sitka, Juneau, or Peterburg (depending on dates)
Lodging: 7 nights aboard the historic 8-guest Westward
Meals: All meals included (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
Activity: Sea Kayaking, Small Boat and Yacht Cruising, Small Ship Cruising, Walking, Whale Watching, Wildlife and Natural History
Trip Level: ① 2 3 4 5 6
Easy to moderate sea kayaking and hiking (no previous kayaking experience necessary)

QUESTIONS?

Our Area Specialists are your single point of contact and would be happy to answer any questions about your trip!
800.368.2794 | 510.558.2488

HIGHLIGHTS

- Travel aboard the elegant 8-guest Westward, listed on the US National Register of Historic Places
- Enjoy the knowledge of your on-board naturalist guide
- Get close to wildlife as you silently paddle your kayak in hidden coves
- Savor chef-prepared cuisine served in the cozy wood-paneled salon
- See brown bears feeding, humpback whales spouting, and eagles soaring
- Hike in remote coves, visit a salmon hatchery

Introduction



The ultimate way to explore the wildlife-rich wilderness of Southeast Alaska is aboard the historic 8-guest Westward, a classic wooden vessel. We offer four different journeys on this unique gem of a ship, bringing you into incredible bays, intertidal zones, and remote villages between Sitka, Petersburg, and Juneau. Depending on the itinerary, you might find yourself navigating through ice floes to a calving saltwater glacier or watching brown bears feast on the returning salmon. After each day's adventure, relax on the shaded back deck with a glass of wine, enjoy a gourmet dinner, and savor the long twilight of the Alaskan summer.

Note: This cruise is not exclusive to, nor operated by, Wilderness Travel, who acts solely as agent in booking your reservation with the ship operator. The itinerary, naturalists, and all other arrangements are subject to change at the discretion of the cruise operator.

TRIP DATES

May 28-June 4, 2025 Juneau-Sitka
June 6-13, 2025 Sitka-Petersburg
June 15-22, 2025 Petersburg-Sitka
June 24-July 1, 2025 Sitka-Juneau
July 3-10, 2025 Juneau-Sitka

Jul 12-19, 2025 Sitka-Juneau
August 8-15, 2025 Juneau-Sitka
August 17-24, 2025 Sitka-Juneau
August 26-September 2, 2025 Juneau-Sitka
September 4-11, 2025 Sitka-Petersburg

Itinerary (SITKA TO PETERSBURG)



DAY 1 ARRIVE AND EMBARK VESSEL

Depending on the date, you'll embark in the mid-morning or afternoon and make your way by vessel to your first anchorage. Please see pages 10-12 for more information on arrival and departure details...LD

About Sitka: This charming town surrounded by towering spruce forests was Russia's major Pacific trading port from 1804 until 1867, and before that, home to the Tlingit nation for 10,000 years. The blend of Russian and native culture makes Sitka unique, and its robust heritage is evident in the art galleries, architecture, and local museums. A stroll through town takes you past onion-domed St. Michael's Cathedral, part of Sitka's skyline for two centuries. The Tlingit heritage is visible in spectacular displays of masterfully carved Tlingit and Haida totems seen along pathways and in traditional dances held throughout the summer.

About Petersburg: This is the quintessential Alaskan fishing town, founded about a hundred years ago when Norwegian fisherman Peter Buschmann arrived and built a homestead and a cannery. Other Scandinavian settlers soon came and today "Little Norway" is the homeport to one of the most productive commercial fishing fleets in Alaska. The town is not a port of call for large cruise ships and is still a small, hospitable fishing community that proudly

celebrates its Norwegian heritage. Main Street parallels the waterfront with its canneries and wharves.

About Juneau: Although the region around Juneau had been Tlingit for millennia, the town itself was founded in 1880 by gold seekers Joe Juneau and Richard Harris. Juneau was chosen as Alaska's capital in 1906 and has since become a bustling regional trading center. It's a thriving city with a small-town feel. Not many cities can claim a glacier in their back yard, but Juneau has the spectacular Mendenhall Glacier not far from its downtown.

DAYS 2-7

We will travel through canyons and fjords, stopping at beautiful anchorages at Admiralty, Baranof and Kupreanof islands, observing bears, whales, eagles and more along the way. Hiking or kayaking, accompanied by the on-board naturalist, we will learn about the fauna and flora of the area. Each trip varies depending on the weather; some highlights may include:

Stephens Passage: Sailing through waters frequented by humpback whales and orca, we will be on the lookout for their tell-tale blows. Finding our night's anchorage among the small bays and inlets that indent Admiralty Island, we will launch our kayaks and search for brown bears foraging along the shore.



Warm Springs Bay: Anchored for a few hours, we hike the trail up to the lake that feeds the magnificent waterfall that drops into the head of the bay. On our way back from the lake, we can stop and soak in the natural hot pools overlooking the head of the falls. After taking our fill of the restorative waters, we return to ship and resume our journey.

Freshwater Bay: The ship will be anchoring in a small cove in front of an estuary system that supports a large population of brown bears. During fish runs, bears congregate near the entrance of a fish ladder that allows returning salmon access to their spawning streams, bypassing the dam built decades ago to support logging operations. We will explore the bay by kayak and then anchor our skiff in the stream at the foot of the falls where we may have an opportunity to watch and photograph brown bears sharing (not something bears often do) the bountiful returning salmon. From this stable base we can sit quietly, watch and photograph the gorging bears.

Baird / Le Conte / Dawes Glaciers: Each trip includes a visit to one or two glaciers. Each adventure is different, exploring the newly foliated outwash plain exposed by Baird Glacier's retreating ice, cruising as close as a quarter mile of Le Conte's or Dawes' calving glacier face.

Hidden Falls / Baranof Hot Springs / Admiralty Island: The day begins with a visit to Hidden Falls hatchery, where you can go ashore and tour the facility. When the

salmon begin returning in late July, the brown bears also visit the stream near the hatchery to stock up on their fat reserves for the coming winter. Moving on, reach Baranof Hot Springs before lunch, with plenty of time to hike to Baranof Lake (approximately a mile round-trip). A post-hike soak in the hot spring pools will be a treat. By mid-afternoon, depart Warm Springs Bay and once again cross Chatham Strait, this time rounding Admiralty Island's southern tip to enter Stephens Passage. Anchor tonight in one of several deep bays that serrate Admiralty's southeast shoreline with time to launch the kayaks and poke along the edges of the cove.

Tenakee Springs: This is a unique community of homesteaders and vacation home owners drawn to this remote area by its mineral hot springs. We will explore this charming village individually or in small groups and then regathering at the general store or bakery, to return to the ship, hoist anchor and get underway for our evening's destination; a sheltered bay near the outflow of a mountain lake. Once securely anchored, we go ashore and walk the 3-mile round trip trail to the lake.

DAY 8 DISEMBARK AND DEPART

Make your way to the final landing. Bid farewell to the Captain and crew, disembark, and catch homeward-bound flights...B

Trip Cost, Payment & Insurance

2025 DEPARTURES	CABINS	SINGLE OCCUPANCY	CHARTER
May 28-Jun 4, 2025 (Juneau-Sitka)	\$8,400	\$12,600	\$67,200
Jun 6-13, 2025 (Sitka-Petersburg)	\$8,400	\$12,600	\$67,200
Jun 15-22, 2025 (Petersburg-Sitka)	\$8,400	\$12,600	\$67,200
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Sep 4-11, 2025 (Sitka-Petersburg)	\$8,400	\$12,600	\$67,200

TRIP COST INCLUDES

- Expert leadership of a Trip Naturalist and Captain
- Accommodations aboard a historic 86-foot vessel
- All meals included as indicated in the Detailed Itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- Beer and wine
- Kayaks, paddles, radios, PFDs (life jackets), and boat safety gear

TRIP COST DOES NOT INCLUDE

Airfare to/from points of embarkation and debarkation of the boat, any meals not specified after each itinerary day, accommodations in Sitka, Juneau, or Petersburg, travel insurance, optional gratuities to leaders or staff, additional hotel nights made necessary by airline schedule changes or other factors, expenses such as immunizations (if any), and other expenses of a personal nature.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

At time of reservation	20%
100 days prior to departure	Balance

CANCELLATION AND TRANSFER FEE SCHEDULE

Minimum fee: 50% of deposit
91-150 days prior to departure: 100% of deposit
90 days or less: 100% of trip cost

*Please note that this differs from our regular catalog departures.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

We highly recommend you purchase travel insurance. You can take advantage of a comprehensive Travel Protection Plan designed for Wilderness Travel by Travelex, or purchase other insurance on your own. See our website for details:

www.wildernesstravel.com/toucan/travel-insurance

Westward

We are delighted to invite you aboard this unique and historic 86-foot wooden vessel. A “gentleman’s yacht” designed specifically for exploration, she is ideal for discovering the wonders of Alaska and the Sea of Cortez. You’ll find a lovely wood-paneled salon aboard—a great space where we can unroll the charts and share the route you’ve explored that day and discuss the adventures that lie ahead. There is a spacious covered back deck, the ultimate spot for watching marine life (think whales, seals, and more!) as you relax with a glass of wine or a cup of hot chocolate. You won’t believe the meals that our on-board chef produces from the galley, including fresh-baked goods and wonderful fish from the bounty of the surrounding seas. There are four cabins, each with a double bunk below and a single bunk above, accommodating either couples or friends traveling together. Each cabin has its own private en suite bathroom with a sink, toilet, and shower.

With the vessel’s relatively small size, shallow draft, and yet powerful engine, we’ll be able to explore remote coves and islands by day, and at night we can enjoy beautiful secluded anchorages. As you may have guessed, we absolutely love this vessel for the incredible adventures it makes possible, but do keep in mind that she is a relatively small vessel, and set your expectations accordingly. The cabins are well designed but will be far smaller than what you would find on a massive cruise ship. We find her intimate size (just eight passengers!) absolutely perfect.

Launched in 1924 as the flagship of the Alaska Coast Hunting and Cruising Company, the vessel pioneered hunting, fishing, and adventure travel in remote regions of Washington, British Columbia, and Alaska for over 20 years (including serving such VIPs as Bing Crosby, Walt Disney, John Wayne, and Marjorie Merriweather Post). During World War II, she served as a patrol boat off the California coast, then post-war was converted to a private yacht and charter vessel. She has benefitted from continuous upgrades to her engine, systems, structure, and accommodations, including an extensive rebuild in 2005-2006 that created the four guest cabins she has today, and full below decks refit in 2015 that added private bathrooms to each cabin. She is listed with the US National Register of Historic Places. Since each double cabin also has both a double and a single bunk, it is possible for a family of three to book a cabin.



Arrival & Departure

AIR TRAVEL

You are responsible for making your own arrangements for flights to Juneau, Sitka, or Petersburg and return. Air service into Juneau and Petersburg is available on Alaska Airlines, with multiple flight arrivals every day.

Alaska Airlines

www.alaskaair.com

1-800-252-7522

There are many online consolidators for booking travel, but for more personal help arranging air transport, you can contact Exito Travel at 970-818-8459 in the US or Canada. They are very adept at putting flight itineraries together, to even the most far-flung places. More information can be found on Exito's website at www.exitotravel.com.

It is necessary to depart from your hometown a day prior to Day 1 of the trip itinerary. The name on your airline ticket must exactly match the name on the government-issued photo ID you plan to use while traveling.

Please do not purchase your tickets until you are confirmed on the trip. Once your tickets have been purchased, please send us a copy of your airline schedule. It is your responsibility to ensure your flight times coordinate with the arrival and departure logistics for this trip.

EXTRA HOTEL NIGHTS IN SITKA

For extra hotel nights in Sitka, we suggested the following:

Wild Strawberry Lodge. 800-770-2628

wildstrawberrylodge.com

Frank and Gloria's Place. 907-747-8711

sitkadream.com

Super 8 Sitka. 800-454-3213

super8.com/sitka

EXTRA HOTEL NIGHTS IN JUNEAU

For extra hotel nights in Juneau, you have many options including the following:

Best Western Grandma's Feather Bed Hotel. 907-789-5566

www.grandmasfeatherbed.com.

Alaska Capital Inn. 888-588-6507

www.alaskacapitalinn.com

The Prospector. 907-586-3737, www.prospectorhotel.com

The Westmark Baranof. 800-544-0970

www.westmarkhotels.com

EXTRA HOTEL NIGHTS IN PETERSBURG

For extra hotel nights in Petersburg, we suggest the following:

Scandia House. 800-722-5006

www.scandiahousehotel.com

Tides Inn. 800-665-8433, www.tidesinnalaska.com

Heron's Rest B&B. 907-772-3373

www.heronsrestalaska.com

SITKA TO PETERSBURG ARRIVAL & MEETING PLACE

The expedition vessel

Sitka, Alaska

Suggested arrival time: It is necessary to arrive in Sitka the day before the trip starts.

Suggested Arrival Airport
Sitka, Alaska (airport code SIT)

Date: Day 1

You will meet the group aboard the boat at 12:00 pm and cast off by 12:30 pm.

DEPARTURE

Petersburg, Alaska

Date: Day 8

Suggested departure time: after 11:25 am. Morning flights depart about this time, perhaps a bit later (it varies year to year). The morning flight gets you to Juneau in time to catch a mid-afternoon flight to Seattle.

Suggested Airport for Departure
Petersburg, Alaska (airport code PSG)

You will arrive into the dock near downtown Petersburg by 9:30 am on Day 8 for disembarkation. This will allow you enough time to transfer to the airport for departure on the late morning or afternoon flights or settle into your hotel room if you are staying on in Petersburg. It is a 10-minute cab ride from the dock to the airport.

SITKA TO JUNEAU ARRIVAL & MEETING PLACE

The expedition vessel

Sitka, Alaska

Suggested arrival time: It is necessary to arrive in Sitka the day before the trip starts.

Suggested Arrival Airport
Sitka, Alaska (airport code SIT)

Date: Day 1

You will meet the group aboard the boat at 12:00 pm and cast off by 12:30 pm.

DEPARTURE

Juneau, Alaska

Date: Day 8

Suggested departure time: after 1:30 pm

Suggested Airport for Departure
Juneau, Alaska (airport code JNU)

You will arrive into the dock near downtown Juneau by 10:00 am on Day 8 for disembarkation. This will allow you enough time to transfer to the airport for departure on the late morning or afternoon flights or settle into your hotel room if you are staying on in Juneau.

Arrival & Departure (cont'd)

PETERSBURG TO SITKA ARRIVAL & MEETING PLACE

The expedition vessel
Petersburg, Alaska

Suggested arrival time: It is necessary to arrive in Petersburg the day before the trip starts.

Suggested Arrival Airport
Petersburg, Alaska (airport code PSG)

Date: Day 1
You may board the boat at 12:30 pm. The vessel will be docked at either North Harbor (ramp adjacent to the Harbor Master's Office) or South Harbor. After lunch aboard the boat, cast off in the early afternoon.

DEPARTURE Sitka, Alaska

Date: Day 8
Suggested departure time: after 12:30 pm

Suggested Airport for Departure
Sitka, Alaska (airport code SIT)

You will arrive at the dock in Sitka in the early morning. You will have enough time to transfer on your own to the airport for departure on the afternoon flights, or settle into your hotel room if you are staying on in Sitka.

JUNEAU TO SITKA ARRIVAL & MEETING PLACE

The expedition vessel
Juneau, Alaska

Suggested arrival time: It is necessary to arrive in Juneau the day before the trip starts.

Suggested Arrival Airport
Juneau, Alaska (airport code JNU)

Date: Day 1
The boat will be moored in downtown Juneau in the vicinity of the Mount Roberts Tram base station. You may board at 12:00 pm, and after lunch aboard the boat, and cast off by 12:30 pm.

DEPARTURE Sitka, Alaska

Date: Day 8
Suggested departure time: after 12:30 pm

Suggested Airport for Departure
Sitka, Alaska (airport code SIT)

You will arrive at the dock in Sitka in the early morning. You will have enough time to transfer on your own to the airport for departure on the afternoon flights, or settle into your hotel room if you are staying on in Sitka.

Trip Details

WHAT THE TRIP IS LIKE

This trip is Level 1+, easy to moderate, according to our trip grading system. You'll explore remote coastlines and fjords by day, then enjoy the comfort of the ship in the evening for good food, fine company, and a comfortable cabin. With just a few hours of cruising each day, there is plenty of time for walking, wildlife watching, or sea kayaking all in the company of an on-board naturalist who shares insights into the local botany, natural history, and native culture.

The three hikes average 3-5 miles each, round trip. The Thomas Bay hike is in a rainforest with uneven terrain (exposed roots, slate steps, and a good boardwalk). The Baird Glacier hike is over small rocks and stones, spongy lichen beds, and sand. For the Warm Springs hike on Baranof Island, you walk a narrow, muddy trail with exposed roots and some portions covered by planks.

You should be ready for a variety of weather conditions. Layered clothing works best in the changing weather conditions typical of the Pacific Northwest Coast and Southeast Alaska. Layers are easier to pack and more versatile than a single heavy coat. Don't bring down jackets or ski clothes (they don't dry well in the damp climate). Good rain gear is essential; it will enable you to remain comfortable in the wind or rain. Bring your high rubber boots (or use the ones provided on board) for wading and for use in the kayaks and small boats (you will wear these everywhere you go).

No previous kayaking experience is required. Unlike whitewater kayaking, sea kayaking skills can be learned quickly and easily. The waters kayaked in are protected from the open ocean and are generally calm. It is not the intention to kayak on stormy days or when sea conditions are truly "rough" with high winds and waves (such occasions are infrequent in these waters during the summer). Nevertheless, unpredictability is the rule for the weather in Alaska, and good kayaking weather throughout cannot be guaranteed. And with such a comfortable "mother ship," you can always opt out of any kayaking or hiking to enjoy a cup of hot chocolate and the great views from on board.

Complimentary beer and wine is offered on board. You are welcome to bring any special wines, liquors, and mixers you enjoy. Soft drinks, coffee, and tea are always available.

WEATHER

Be prepared for temperatures ranging from the low 30sF to a high of 70F. Southern Alaska has a marine climate, which means rain is to be expected at some point on every trip. The rain itself is often a gentle mist, casting an aura of magic and mystery over the land. We hope for sunshine but recommend that you plan for wet, cool weather. You will be comfortable as long as your rain gear is adequate! Calf-high rubber boots are a necessity.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT TRIP

Adventure travel often involves exotic destinations, unusual levels of physical exertion, or activities you may not have participated in previously. We work hard to help you choose the right trip for you, paying attention to your individual interests, abilities, and needs. If you have questions about the level of comfort or any of the activities described in this itinerary, please call Wilderness Travel at 1-800-368-2794 and ask for the North America Manager or email us at northamerica@wildernesstravel.com.

REFERENCES

We'd be happy to put you in touch with a past client that has traveled with us on this or a similar trip.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

At www.wildernesstravel.com, you can find out about added departures, last-minute deals, and special WT Expeditions that aren't listed in our catalog. You can also access a complete library of our detailed itineraries and browse the customized reading guides for each of our adventures.

HELPFUL LINKS

Wilderness Travel has compiled a list of useful websites for travelers. Find the Client Forms & Helpful Links page of our website: (www.wildernesstravel.com/toucan/links).

Average Daily Max/Min °F					
	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Southeast Alaska	50/36	56/43	59/47	60/46	55/41
Rainfall - Inches					
Southeast Alaska	9	6	8	11	18



WILDERNESS TRAVEL HAS BEEN AWARDED:

Best Travel Specialists in the World: *Conde Nast Traveler*, 2024, 4-time winner

World's Best Tour Operators: *Travel + Leisure*, 11-time winner

Best Wildlife, Hiking & Walking Trips: *AFAR Magazine*, 3 years in a row

Best Adventure Travel Companies: *USA Today*

Trip of the Year: *Outside Magazine*, 9-time winner

50 Tours of a Lifetime: *National Geographic Traveler*, 9 years in a row

Best Adventure Travel Companies: *National Geographic Adventure*, 3-time winner

Please be advised that California has established a Travel Consumer Restitution Fund under the California Seller of Travel Law that took effect January 1, 1996. This fund is designed to protect consumers from unscrupulous practices by discount airfare ticket sellers or air charter operators. Unfortunately, this law does not cover non-California residents and, even in the case of California residents, it does not cover any foreign travel where the foreign "providers of transportation or travel services" are not in compliance with the Sellers of Travel Law (compliance being defined as registered as a Seller of Travel in California and a participant in the Travel Consumer Restitution Fund). Thus none of Wilderness Travel's tours qualify and we are required by law to advise each client that they are not covered by the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires sellers of travel to maintain a trust account or bond. This business has a trust account. California Seller of Travel #100769640

While as accurate as possible at the time of printing, this itinerary should be considered an approximate indication of the schedule and scope of activities and trip routing, rather than an inflexible schedule of events; it is subject to change due to circumstances beyond our control. This trip is subject to the Limitation of Liability and all the terms and conditions as detailed in the General Information section of the Wilderness Travel Catalog.

Revised: November 13, 2024 9:47 AM