

The Beyond Borders Collective
 TRAVEL BREAKS BARRIERS AND BRINGS US TOGETHER

Alaska: Anchorage (Girdwood), Seward, Denali/Talkeetna
 8 Day Itinerary (Late August/ Early September)

Summary Information

Transportation	
Airline	Alaskan Air, Delta
Airport	Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport (ANC)
Car	<u>Thrifty</u> In most areas, getting an uber or taxi is unavailable or difficult at best. There are many rental companies that operate out of the airport.
Alternative Option	<u>Alaska Railroad</u> If renting a car is not a possibility, the best alternative option would be to take the railroad. However, you will need to adjust this itinerary accordingly, as it is heavily dependent on a personal vehicle.

Accommodations	
Anchorage (Girdwood)	<u>Airbnb</u> NOTE: While staying in Anchorage is an option, we preferred an environment more emersed in nature and therefore chose to stay in Girdwood (45 mins from Anchorage). With a larger group, we also opted for an Airbnb, but there are hotel options available in Anchorage. I have provided some below.
Hotel option in Anchorage	<u>Hyatt Place Midtown Anchorage \$\$</u> 101 E Tudor Rd Anchorage, AK 99503 <u>Hotel Captain Cook \$\$\$</u> 939 West 5 th Avenue Anchorage, AK 99501
Hotel option in Girdwood	<u>Alyeska Resort \$\$\$\$</u> 1000 Arlberg Avenue Girdwood, AK 99587
Denali	<u>Denali Park Hotel \$\$</u> 247 George Park Hwy Healy, AK 99743

Important Things to Note Regarding this Itinerary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This itinerary is ideal for a road trip. If you are using the railroad, adjust and plan accordingly. - We chose to create a "home base" in Girdwood to avoid changing accommodations every few nights and did not mind driving several hours, daily. Moving city to city is also an option.

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1: Travel/ Anchorage (Girdwood)		
Evening		
Transportation	Arrive in Anchorage/ pick up rental car	Rental cars can be picked up at the airport on ground floor. Follow the signs.
Dinner		Most flights from the lower 48 (arrive in Anchorage late in the evening (we arrived at 9PM). There are minimal dining options at the airport and they close early. Restaurants in Anchorage also close relatively early, so plan accordingly.
Day 2: Girdwood/ Anchorage		
Morning		
Breakfast	<u>The Bake Shop \$\$</u>	Enjoy breakfast with a view! This is one of few breakfast options available in Girdwood, so expect a wait. Indoor and outdoor tables available.
Activity	Hike Virgin Creek Falls	Easy, 0.5miles, RT Input "Virgin Creek Falls Trailhead" into your GPS. It is located at the end of a neighborhood and there is no proper parking lot, so don't be alarmed. You will see a trailhead sign when in the right area.
Afternoon		
Lunch/Snack	Packed lunch Grocery stores in Girdwood: <u>Crow Creek Mercantile</u> 150 Hightower Road Girdwood, AK 99587 Carrs is the big local grocery store chain in Anchorage.	We planned to spend the full day hiking and exploring, so packing a lunch and snacks made the most sense for us.
Activity	Hike Flat Top Mountain in <u>Chugach State Park</u> (~2-3hrs)	Moderate to strenuous, 3.3mi RT Boasts panoramic views of Anchorage & fields of wildflowers Parking is limited, arrive early to trailhead.
Evening		

Dinner	<u>Seven Glaciers Restaurant</u> \$\$\$\$	<p>This mountain top restaurant in the Alyeska Ski Resort is only accessible by cable car, which runs every 15 minutes. Make sure you arrive on time.</p> <p>Only a 3 or 4 course prefixed menu is available. Reservations are required and can be made online.</p> <p>Go early to take in the views!</p>
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Day 3: Seward

Morning

Breakfast	<u>Alpine Café & Bakery</u> \$ 1 Alyeska Hwy Girdwood, AK 99587	Grab coffee, donuts and savory pastries to go. (No seating)
Activity	<p>Kenai Fjords Boat Tour by <u>Major Marine Tours</u></p> <p>6hrs (11:30AM -5:30PM)</p> <p>There are multiple tour options.</p>	<p>Drive the Scenic Seward Highway down to the Kenai Peninsula ~2hrs</p> <p>Check in for tour at Harbor 360 Hotel.</p> <p>Dress warm; even in summer it gets chilly on the water. Also bring sunglasses, sunscreen, binoculars & camera.</p>

Afternoon

Lunch/Snack	Included on boat tour	Special meals available (vegetarian, kosher, etc.)
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Evening

Dinner	<p><u>The Cookery (Seward)</u> \$\$\$ 209 5th Avenue Seward, AK 99664</p> <p><u>Coast Pizza (Girdwood)</u> \$\$ Mile 90, Seward Hwy Ste 10 Girdwood, AK99587</p>	<p>Note: We planned to eat in Seward at The Cookery, but last minute opted for PJs and pizza back at the Airbnb instead.</p> <p>Make reservations online for The Cookery.</p>
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Day 4: Seward

Morning

Breakfast	At Airbnb	
Activity	Drive Scenic Seward Highway	<p>There are endless places to stop along the route. Our stops are highlighted, but I've included other popular spots:</p> <p>Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center Portage Lake Bryan Glacier Hike Canyon Creek Moose Pass Kenai Lake</p>

Afternoon

Lunch/Snack	Packed lunch	
Activity	<p>Hike Harding Ice Field in Kenai Fjords National Park</p> <p>On a personal note, this has to be one of my favorite hikes I have ever done!</p>	<p>There are two hikes available from the same starting trailhead: Exit Glacier & Harding Ice Field.</p> <p>Exit Glacier hike is the bottom of the glacier and is much more easily accessible/ low impact.</p> <p>The full hike to the top of Harding Ice Field is over 8 mi RT and is strenuous, but there are 2 stops along the way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Marmot Meadows – 2.8 mi RT (2-4hrs) - Top of Cliffs – 4.8 mi RT (4-6hrs) - End of Trail – 8.2 mi RT (6-8hrs) <p>If you can – try to make it to the Top of the Cliffs. The views are incredible!</p>
Evening		
Dinner	<p>The Lone Chicharron \$\$ 215B 4th Avenue Seward, AK 99664</p> <p>Seward Brewing Company \$\$\$ 139 4th Avenue Seward, AK 99664</p>	<p>Quick, order at counter style dining. Get the burrito!</p> <p>Seward Brewing Company is also an option. However, be prepared to wait. The do not accept reservations.</p>
Day 5: Talkeetna/ Denali		
Morning		
Breakfast	Middle Way Café \$\$ 1200 Northern Lights Blvd Anchorage, AK 99503	Stop in Anchorage for a quick bite – get there when it opens.
Activity	Drive to Denali National Park	~4.5hrs from Girdwood
Afternoon		
Lunch/Snack	Packed lunch	Dining options are limited and restaurants along the route have sporadic days of operating. To avoid any issues, we packed our lunch.
Activity	Talkeetna Air Taxi (~1.5hrs) 14212 E Second Street Talkeetna, AK 99676	<p>We did the Mountain Voyager tour, which included the glacier landing, but there are several options available.</p> <p>I highly recommend it! It was our favorite thing we did in AK.</p> <p>If possible, give yourself some time to explore the quaint town of Talkeetna (~2 mins from airstrip). It is a great place to grab a bite or local brew.</p>

		Nearby is also Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge , if you want to take in panoramic views of Denali Mt. from their deck.
Evening		
Dinner	Denali Brewing Company \$\$ 13605 E Main Street Talkeetna, AK	Try the Mango beer and Halibut Fish & Chips.
Day 6: Denali		
Morning		
Breakfast	Black Bear Coffee House \$\$ Mile 238.5, Parks Hwy Denali National Park, AK 99755	The breakfast potatoes are delicious! Location is right outside the entrance of Denali NP.
Afternoon		
Activity	Hike Savage River Loop Trail (2mi RT, easy) in Denali National Park Savage Alpine Trail also starts here. It is a more moderate hike.	You can only drive your personal vehicle to mile 15 (the park road is 90mi long). Past that point a bus tour is required. There are several tour options available. Book in advance. Due to a mudslide, the park was closed past mile 30 when we went, so decided not to not do a tour and instead explored on our own.
Evening		
Activity	Drive back to Anchorage/Girdwood	Remember to fill up on gas, there are limited stopping points along route.
Dinner	International House of Hotdogs \$\$ 415 L Street Anchorage, AK 99501	Vegetarian options available. Ask for the spicy sausage!
Day 7: Anchorage		
Morning		
Breakfast	At Airbnb	
Afternoon		
Activity	Matanuska Glacier Walking Tour (~2hrs – other tour options also available)	Tours done daily at 11AM and 2PM. Reservations encouraged. Wear closes toed shoes, dress in layers and bring camera!
Evening		
Dinner	My Thai Downtown \$\$ 333 W. 4 th Avenue, Suite 228 Anchorage, AK 99501	We happened upon this restaurant, so I wouldn't necessarily recommend this restaurant, but it is in the heart of downtown Anchorage.
Day 8: Anchorage/ Depart		
Morning		

Breakfast	At Airbnb	Checkout of Airbnb @10AM.
	Hike Winner Creek (Girdwood) & make stops along Seward highway, heading back to Anchorage from Girdwood.	Easy, 1mi RT. Stops: - McHugh Creek Falls (- Beluga Point - Potter's Marsh
Afternoon		
Lunch/ Snack	<u>Taste of India \$\$</u> 5011 Arctic Blvd I Anchorage, AK 99503	Local restaurant in a strip mall, very unassuming. This wasn't a planned stop, but I am glad we found it – food was delicious! They do not serve alcohol, but you can BYOB. Liquor store is next door.
Activity	Explore Anchorage downtown	Opportunity to buy souvenirs and check out the Tony Knowles Coastal Trail (11mile trail) NOTE: Due to COVID-19, many stores have unfortunately closed.
Evening		
Dinner	<u>Glacier Brewhouse \$\$\$</u> 737 W. 5 th Avenue, Suite 110 Anchorage, AK	Beautiful, rustic interior. Lots of seafood options
Head to Airport	Return Rental Car	The airport is about 10 mins from downtown.

Travel Tip #1: Rent a car

Ubers/Lyfts are not available in most areas and Taxis are limited. Your ability to get around and truly experience what Alaska has to offer will severely be limited without your own car.

Travel Tip #2: Pack layers & plan for rain

The weather in Alaska can be unpredictable, so it is in your best interest to be prepared and dress in layers. Rain is often expected, so pack waterproof jacket and footwear.

Travel Tip #3: Download directions in advance

Cell service throughout the state can be spotty, so it is a good idea to download and save directions in advance.

Travel Tip #4: Carry Bear Spray

Alaska is bear country, so pickup bear spray at most local grocery stores or gas stations.