

# Things to do and see in Alaska – with Anchorage as “Home Base”

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## College Fjord

(Flightseeing 50 miles east of Anchorage)

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## General Information

- The **city of Anchorage** has a complete web site of information for visitors:  
<http://www.anchorage.net/> including their 20 best things to do:  
<https://www.anchorage.net/blog/20-best-things-to-do-in-anchorage/>
- The “Official / Business” site is: <http://www.muni.org/>
- Some quick, **facts**: <http://www.anchorage.net/anchorage-population-and-other-fun-anchorage-facts>
- More info: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anchorage,\\_Alaska](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anchorage,_Alaska)
- **The State of Alaska** Visitor’s web site: <http://www.travelalaska.com/>
- **My Favorite quote**: “The great thing about Anchorage is it’s so close to ALASKA!”

## Things To Do in Anchorage

-The “**Log Cabin**” Visitor’s Information Center <http://www.anchorage.net/visit-anchorage-information-centers> at 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. and F St. which can provide free maps and info is a good place to start.



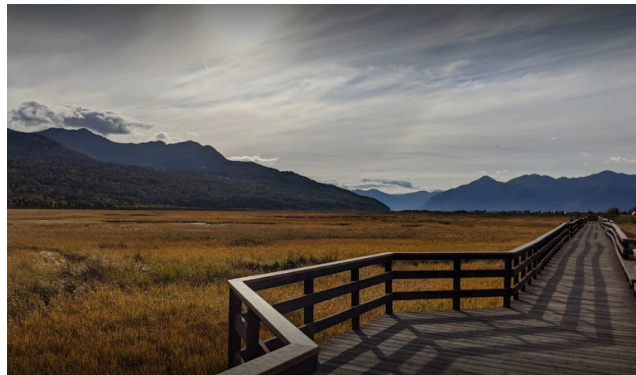
- In Anchorage, we enjoy over 250 miles of **trails**, 223 **parks** and 10,900 acres of municipal parkland. <http://anchorageparkfoundation.org/> A listing of the Anchorage Trails & Parks is available here: <https://anchorageparkfoundation.org/directory/>
- **Bicycling in Anchorage:** Enjoy the numerous paved trails all throughout the city. Bicycle rental is available at 4<sup>th</sup> between C&D streets: <http://www.alaska-bike-rentals.com/> (among others). A 132 page color document regarding bicycling in Anchorage: [here](#) and the City Ordinances: [here](#)
- **Viewpoint** at the Glen Alps Trail Head <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/aspunits/chugach/glenalps.htm> for a great view of the Anchorage bowl and the mountain ranges if the visibility is clear enough.



Access is shown on the Anchorage Trails map – at the southeast corner of town. Parking can be limited. Don’t park along the road approaching it – they issue \$200 fines. You can take any number of hikes from there (or other starting spots). You can check if the lot is full on the webcam: <https://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/units/chugach/glenalpswebcam.htm> Probably the most popular, but not-for-beginners hike is to Flattop Mountain from there. <http://aktrailhead.com/flattop/flattop.shtml>

- The **Alaska Aviation Museum** at Lake Hood. <http://alaskaairmuseum.org/>
- The **Anchorage Museum** <http://www.anchagemuseum.org/>
- The **Native Alaskan Heritage Center**. <http://www.alaskanative.net/>

- The Anchorage City **Trolley Tours** <http://www.alaskatrolley.com/> may be of interest to see sights around town. Departs from the Log Cabin.
- Drive around **Lake Hood Seaplane Base**. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Lake\\_Hood\\_Seaplane\\_Base\\_and\\_Gravel\\_Strip.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Lake_Hood_Seaplane_Base_and_Gravel_Strip.jpg) Over 300 floatplanes and land planes are based there.
- The Anchorage **Weekend Market** is back at 225 E Street northeast of the Hilton - full of arts & craft vendors on Saturdays and Sundays. <https://anchoragemarkets.com/anchorage-market/>
- ~June 21<sup>st</sup>: Summer Solstice - the longest day of the year. Many folks go to **Point Woronzoff** or **Earthquake Park** just north of the airport or climb Flattop Mountain, to watch the sunset at 11:41 PM that day. It will be light all 'night' long.
- Near Point Woronzoff you can stand on a spot on the bluff and the jet airplanes taking off or landing on Anchorage International's runway 15 / 33 will pass very close overhead. The wake turbulence from them shakes the trees and sometimes can blow your hat off.
- There is also a Summer Solstice Festival downtown.
- The **Sport Fish Hatchery** with salmon and trout is interesting to tour: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fishingSportStockingHatcheryInfo.williamjackhernandez>
- The **Alaska Zoo**. [www.alaskazoo.org](http://www.alaskazoo.org) hosts numerous wildlife native to Alaska.
- The **Potter Marsh** Wildlife Viewing area is at the south end of town: <https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm%3Fadfg=viewinglocations.pottermarsh>



### Restaurants in Anchorage

There are numerous **restaurants** downtown. A few we like:

- **Simon & Seafort's** - Excellent food and view <http://simonandseaforts.com/>
- The **Glacier Brewhouse** <http://www.glacierbrewhouse.com/>, or right next-door:
- **Orso** <http://www.orsoalaska.com/>
- A popular place for lunch is the **Snow City Café** – <http://www.snowcitycafe.com/>
- We love “**The Fancy Moose**” lounge <https://www.millenniumhotels.com/en/anchorage/the-lakefront-anchorage/fancy-moose-lounge/> to drink, eat and watch the floatplanes fly right overhead - located at the former Millennium Hotel - now “The Lakefront Anchorage” <https://www.millenniumhotels.com/en/anchorage/the-lakefront-anchorage/> on Spenard Road by the International airport. It can get crowded, but the setting and view is top-notch.



- Another Lounge / Restaurant with a deck on the southeast corner of Lake Hood is “Pipers” <http://www.pipersanchorage.com/>. It has 50% off appetizers from 5-7 pm.
- Also on Spenard Road is **Gwennie’s Old Alaskan Restaurant**. It has a full menu, but is well known for their huge breakfasts.
- A very popular pizza place is The **Moose’s Tooth Pizzeria**: <http://moosestooth.net/> (Rated 3rd Best in America!)
- A brewery with decks and views toward Denali and Mt. Susitna is **The 49th State Brewing Company** <https://www.49statebrewing.com> (formerly the Snow Goose). Try their “King Crabby Grilled Cheese” sandwich. Yum!
- **Sullivan’s** <http://sullivanssteakhouse.com/anchorage> has great steaks
- **Club Paris** <http://www.clubparisrestaurant.com/> also known for excellent steaks
- **Jen’s** <http://www.jensrestaurant.com/> quality European dining
- **Humpy’s** <https://www.humpysalaska.com/> is popular with a fantastic selection of draught beers, but for me, a bit loud.
- Due to the diversity in Anchorage many ethnic restaurants are available, including: Himalayan, Thai, Indian, Lebanese, Vietnamese, Korean, Japanese, Filipino, German as well as of course Chinese and Mexican. Several are along Spenard Road.
- The above list is only a tiny sample of the many dining options in town.



### North of Anchorage

- The **Eagle River Nature Center** <http://www.ernc.org/> is ~ 10 miles south east of Eagle River, thus about a :50 drive northeast of ANC. The hiking trails are always open but check the website for days that the building is closed.
  - You could take a 1 to 2 mile **hike at Thunderbird Falls**, <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/maps/thunderbirdfallsguide.pdf> near Eklutna, (~ :50 northeast of ANC)
  - Visiting **Eklutna Lake** <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/maps/eklutnalaketrailguide.pdf> is very scenic. Also ~ :50 northeast of ANC
  - In Palmer, 1 hour north is the **Reindeer Farm** <https://www.reindeerfarm.com/>

-We have visited the **Matanuska Glacier** and thoroughly enjoyed being able to drive to it and walk out on it. <http://www.matanuska-glacier.com/> 2 hours from ANC.



- For a bit more \$\$\$ you could take a Rust's Flying Service charter for **fishing or bear viewing**. [www.flyrusts.com](http://www.flyrusts.com) . We've done this a few times. One day of fishing: \$795 ea. Flightseeing from ANC starts at \$175 ea. to \$575 ea. (plus a 3% tax in 2024.)

- My favorite thing to do is **FlightSeeing** the glaciers and Denali. Rust's does this, or you could fly out of Talkeetna. I've flown this many, many times in our own airplanes, and on a nice weather day it is the most incredible, scenic flying anywhere in the world.

Rust's has a good video, try to watch it in full-screen, HD mode:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QqjdL4J-skQ>

Some images and a video from my web site on flying to Denali:

<http://www.experimentalairplane.com/navajo.html#alaska>

-Recent visitors took our recommendation to fly Talkeetna Air Taxi to see Denali and do a **glacier landing** (from \$398) which they say was unquestionably the best thing they've ever done. We did that several years ago and I highly recommend it for an unforgettable, once-in-a-lifetime experience. <https://www.talkeetnaair.com/>.



-My wife Linda's favorite place is **Talkeetna**. <http://www.talkeetnachamber.org/> About a 2+15 drive north from ANC. (30 minutes in our plane...) It's a quirky, artsy town (its honorary mayor was a cat.) It has a fancy Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge <http://www.talkeetnalodge.com/> that is one of our favorites - just south of town with a deck high enough to view Denali on nice days.

You can also take the train <https://www.alaskarailroad.com/> to Talkeetna and Denali from ANC.

- Many take the train, bus or drive to **Denali National Park**. <http://www.nps.gov/dena/index.htm>. Many superlatives of beauty, wilderness and wildlife could be inserted here... A 4 1/2 hour drive north of ANC.

- Flightseeing is available near Denali National Park by **Denali Air** <https://denaliair.com/>



### South of Anchorage

- I strongly recommend a drive south of town along the **Turnagain Arm**, a very scenic byway with numerous viewing points. <https://www.alaska.org/guide/seward-highway>



- 40 minutes south along the Turnagain Arm is the Swiss Alps-style ski town of **Girdwood** and the **Alyeska Resort** <https://alyeskaresort.com/> where you can ride the **scenic tram**. The view is tremendous. If you go for dinner, the fine-dining “Seven Glaciers” restaurant at the top is very scenic, but quite expensive.

<https://alyeskaresort.com/product/seven-glaciers/>

- In Girdwood the **Double Musky Inn** <http://www.doublemuskyinn.com/> is well-regarded for its Cajun Cuisine.

- Also in Girdwood, **The Bake Shop** <http://www.thebakeshop.com/> has great soups and lunches.



### The Alyeska Resort in Girdwood

- The Phillip's 26 **Glacier cruise** <http://www.phillips cruises.com/> is an excellent, all-day event out of Whittier. Very well worth the \$149-189 price. You can drive there, or take the bus or train from downtown for \$89 / \$125 more. We've taken guests on this several times. Try to pick a good weather day, but even if marginal weather, it's still worth it. You can book it at their office on 4<sup>th</sup> St. or online.
- We enjoy the **Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center** [www.alaskawildlife.org](http://www.alaskawildlife.org) near Portage. (~ 1 hour southeast). You can get right up to a fence for each large animal species in Alaska – including black and brown bears, moose, caribou, etc. A large, nice habitat setting.



- Visit **Portage Glacier**. At Portage, ~ 1 hour southeast of ANC. The most-visited glacier in Alaska since it's so close to Anchorage. When we first visited Alaska the glacier was right in front of you but now you need to take a boat ride “around the corner” to see it. <http://www.travelalaska.com/Destinations/Communities/Portage%20Glacier.aspx>  
<http://www.portageglaciercruises.com/>
- Further south is Cooper Landing and the Kenai River for **fishing and camping**. <http://dnr.alaska.gov/parks/aspunits/kenai/kenaiindex.htm> King Salmon are usually near their peak in late June. Other salmon are available other summer months.

- Also on the Kenai Peninsula is **Seward**, <http://www.cityofseward.us/> a 2+30 drive. A very scenic drive and scenic town on the water - my favorite town in Alaska. The marina is quite impressive. The Alaska SeaLife Center is a first-class exhibit worth a visit. <http://www.alaskasealife.org/>
- **Kenai Fjords Tours** has day cruises to view wildlife with a salmon and prime rib meal on Fox Island that we have taken and recommend. <http://www.kenaifjords.com/>
- Near Seward is **Exit Glacier** <http://www.nps.gov/kefj/planyourvisit/exit-glacier-area.htm> A 1 ½ mile hike will take you to its edge.
- 5 hours south is scenic **Homer** <http://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov/> — literally “The End of the Road” in North America. You can drive to a very unique spot at the Lands End Inn at the end of “the spit”. <http://www.lands-end-resort.com/>. You can take halibut fishing charters out of Seward or Homer.

### **Weather**

- I strongly suggest bringing a day pack with a rain jacket and warmer jacket wherever you go, even on short hikes, because it can get cold, windy and rainy on very short notice.

### **Summary**

Keep in mind that much of the wild beauty that Alaska has to offer is not in the city of Anchorage, but I bet you'll find plenty to do in and near town.

As you can see from the list, two weeks will “only get you started...” ☺

If you get ‘hooked’ as we did, the following link will become useful:

<http://www.alaskarealestate.com/> ☐ ☐

Enjoy!

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# Map of Southcentral Alaska

