



## ST. ELIAS ALPINE GUIDES, LLC

# Glacier to the Ocean – 10 days

### ITINERARY

#### Day One

This morning you will meet your guides at our base, the Motherlode Powerhouse, where you will gather raingear and rubber boots and pack your clothing and other personal belongings into waterproof drybags. You will then head down to the Kennicott River, where the boats will be waiting. After loading your personal gear, there will be a thorough safety presentation and we will be ready to launch. The morning starts out splashy and fast, but after only an hour the Kennicott joins the Nizina and triples in size. Soon after this we will stop for lunch. This afternoon we meet the most exciting whitewater, as the river narrows into the mighty Nizina Canyon. The water boils and surges as it is forced around the tight turns. Tonight we will camp at the end of the canyon where it opens onto the broad Chitina Valley.

#### Day Two

Today we continue down the Chitina River, navigating the many channels that weave across the gravel bar. We will stop at clear streams and sloughs to search for spawning salmon and keep our eyes peeled for the grizzlies and eagles that feed on them. We can stop for short hikes, including the magnificent Nelson Mountain landslide and the secluded green waters of Nerelna Creek. Depending on the weather and water level, we will make camp either out in the open or along a sheltered stream. On the four-day option we will have more opportunities for hiking and lounging in camp.

#### Day Three

This last day on the river we will continue downstream to where the Chitina doubles in size as it meets the mighty Copper River at the edge of the Chugach Mountains. Spirit Mountain appears downstream, beckoning us on, but here we must end our journey. After stopping for lunch we will travel the last few miles, unload the boats and say our good-byes. From here you will have a chance to explore the tiny town of Chitina and watch dipnets and fishwheels scooping up the famous Copper River Red Salmon before continuing on your Alaskan Journey.

#### Day Four

We begin our journey near the confluence of the Chitina and Copper Rivers and the tiny town of Chitina. The joining of these two enormous, glacial rivers forms the truly impressive waterway that we will be following for the next week. We will meet at the river and you will transfer your luggage into drybags and participate in a thorough safety presentation. Soon after launching we enter Woods Canyon, where the huge river is tightly squeezed between towering cliffs. We may stop in the canyon for lunch or just to climb out on a point and watch the surging water. Tonight, like each night on this trip, we choose a camp that appeals to us, either beside a stream or on a beach or low bluff overlooking the river. Tonight, for the first time, we will be lulled to sleep by the sound of the river sliding by.

#### Days Five – Seven

Each morning we will wake to a delicious breakfast and load the boats for another day on the water. We will spend anywhere from four to eight hours on the water each day, depending on water level, wind, weather and opportunities for short hikes. As we move through the Chugach Mountains more and more glaciers hang out of the peaks all around, created by the giant annual snowfall dumped on these mountains each year. We might stop to hike up rocky Dewey Creek, explore an old railroad tunnel hidden in the alders, or check out bear and moose tracks on a sandbar. We will take small side channels and float underneath bald eagles perched on cliffs and trees. Other times we will follow the main current into the middle of the huge, broad river-bar. Each day we will stop for lunch and to take short hikes or explore the beaches and streams. We will enter float past vast sand dunes between the Bremner and Copper Rivers and alongside silent, steep bluffs. We will set camp each evening and you will have time to wander or rest while your guides prepare a delicious dinner.

#### Day Eight

Today we pass through the narrow Baird Canyon and across a wide, still stretch of river to Abercrombie Rapids. Here grizzly bears often line the banks to fish for the infamous Copper River Red Salmon that must travel through this narrow passage on their way upstream to spawn. We will ride the huge wave train into Miles Lake, where seals surround the boat in their curiosity and icebergs tower above us as they slowly move away from the face of Miles Glacier towards the Child's Glacier and the Copper River Delta. After spending a night with the sound of calving ice and a magnificent view of the lake, we will follow in their tracks.



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### Day Nine

Today we row across Miles Lake to where the current picks up again and the river sweeps us towards the towering face of the Child's Glacier. We will stop just upstream of the ice cliff in a safe location and you will have a chance to watch the glacier calve, sending waves across the water. We will then board the rafts again and make our way swiftly past the towering face. From here, the river begins to spread into the lush delta. We will follow the western channel for the rest of the day, keeping our eyes peeled for the abundant wildlife that inhabits the delta. This last night of our journey we will once again make camp alongside the flowing water.

### Day Ten

This morning we will load the boats one last time and float to Flag Point, where our van will be waiting. You will repack your personal items into your own luggage while your guides dismantle the boats other gear. We will then drive 25 miles into the small fishing town of Cordova for showers and dinner and a gradual re-entry into the world of other humans.

We suggest that you spend some time in the Kennicott Valley before your river trip. You can add a glacier hike or ice-climbing trip on the Root Glacier, a tour of the historic buildings in Kennecott and/or a day hike to one of the mine entrances as well as a night or more at the Kennicott Glacier Lodge.

Guests on our Glacier to the Ocean have the option to spend a night in the tiny town of Chitina halfway though the trip.

At the end of this trip, guests also have the option of spending one or more nights in Cordova or flying directly to Anchorage this evening. We are happy to arrange accommodation for you in Cordova. The Alaska Marine Highway ferry system has daily sailings from Cordova to Valdez and Whittier, for a marvelous alternative to flying. There are no roads to Cordova from the rest of the state.

Like all of our rafting adventures, the Glacier to the Ocean Journey features professional, experienced guides with a wealth of local knowledge and all necessary rafting gear including dry-bags, raingear, life jackets, rubber boots and tents (you provide sleeping bags and pads). Travelling by raft also enables us to carry excellent, fresh food, including fruits and vegetable, meats and cheeses, and many other items that are truly a luxury in this wilderness environment.