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## Alaska River Rafting: Copper River Expedition

The Copper River is the only waterway to cut through the mighty Chugach Mountains, from the dry interior of the Wrangell-St. Elias to the lush Copper River Delta. Our journey is one of the most awe-inspiring in the world, as glaciers and waterfalls spill out of the mountains all around us. We are likely to spot a wide variety of wildlife, possibly including eagles, bears, salmon, seals, otters, beavers, arctic terns and many others birds and mammals.



We will travel through a wide variety of landscapes, from narrow canyons to wide open sand dunes to lush channels lined by dense underbrush. As we move downstream, the scenery gets more and more spectacular, until we careen through Abercrombie Rapids and into Miles Lake, where two magnificent glaciers calve into the water. After floating in front of the towering ice-face of the Childs Glacier and into the Copper River Delta, our journey ends less than ten miles from the salty waters of Prince William Sound.

### Trip Highlights:

- Steep and towering Chugach Mountains
- Waterfalls and glaciers pouring from green peaks
- Wildlife such as grizzlies, eagles, seals and salmon
- Huge Miles and Child's glaciers calving into the river

### COPPER RIVER EXPEDITION: DETAILED ITINERARY

This is a sample itinerary for this trip. Due to individual abilities and goals, as well as the demanding environment of Alaska, all of our trips are customized as they unfold. The guide will constantly make decisions based on weather, logistics and group dynamics to maximize each

day's experience. There can be quite a bit of variation, but we always strive to make every trip your best ever.



**DAY 1** - 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 2-3** - 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 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 4** - 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. We will spend the night with the sound of calving ice and a magnificent view of the lake.

**DAY 5 (If on the 7-day trip)** - The optional extra day most commonly allows us a full day on the lake to explore on foot the edge of the Miles Glacier and the stunning views of both the Miles and Child's Glaciers calving into the water. There are some great hikes available and the campsite is a spectacular place to just relax and take in the scenery as well!

**DAY 5 OR 6 (second to last day of trip)** - 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 make our way swiftly past the imposing ice, watching as it calves into the river and dodging icebergs as we continue down stream. From here, the river begins to spread into the lush delta. We will follow the western channel for the next few hours, keeping our eyes peeled for the abundant wildlife that inhabits the delta. Our final night's camp will be far from the opposite bank as the river delta grows wider and wider.

**FINAL DAY** - After a few hour float, we will end our river journey at "Flag Point", where the Copper River Highway (Alaska-speak for gravel road) crosses the river. Here 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.

At the end of this trip, guests 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. Please contact us to discuss the options.

### **What's Included?**

Like all of our rafting adventures, the Copper River Trip 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). Traveling 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.