



St. Elias Alpine Guides, LLC
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Alaska Backpacking – Fan Glacier Basecamp Hiking

One of our two base-camping options in the Chugach Mountains, the Fan Glacier Basecamp touts bush-plane access, stunning mountain views, and beautiful day hiking across alpine tundra and glaciers. Enjoy the rugged beauty of the Chugach Mountains on your bush plane flight into the Fan Glacier, and bask in the remoteness of your surroundings as you hear the buzz of the plane's engine fade off into the distance. Great for families and experienced adventurers alike, this trip is perfect for anyone who wants to experience the rugged Alaskan backcountry from the comforts of a base-camp.



With great hiking in every direction, the Fan Glacier provides opportunities to hike over varied terrain. Explore high alpine lakes to the south, and maybe even take a dip in the water on a warm day! Bring your cameras along as you explore the glacier to the west – the ice features along the edge are very active, and the calving, cracking, and icefall will keep even the amateur photographer content for an afternoon. Whichever direction you head from camp, the Fan Glacier is sure to provide a one-of-a-kind Alaska backcountry experience in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park.

Trip Highlights:

- Beautiful day hiking to alpine lakes and rugged glaciers
- Breathtaking views of the Chugach Mountains
- Spending time in the remote Alaska backcountry
- Great trip for people of all abilities

Fan Glacier Basecamp Hiking – Detailed Itinerary

The following 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 - Your Alaska base-camp hiking adventure begins in the rustic bush town of McCarthy, at the Motherlode Powerhouse (the St. Elias Alpine Guides home base). Here, you'll meet up with your guide, do a gear-shakedown to make sure you're properly prepared for the upcoming trip, and ask any last-minute questions. Next, it's off to the McCarthy airstrip to meet your bush pilot, and hop into the tiny bush plane for a beautiful flight south into the Chugach Mountains. Keep your camera

ready to snap pictures of the mountains and glaciers as you fly over.

With a little bump, your pilot will expertly land the tiny plane on the backcountry airstrip. After unloading your packs, you and your guide will step back and watch as the plane lifts off into the air. When the buzz of the motor fades, take a minute to appreciate the remoteness of the Alaska backcountry.

You and your guide explore the area around the airstrip, and find a nice flat place to set up camp, with views in every direction. After setting up camp, it's time to go hiking! You saw a river flowing north from the glacier, so you decide to head across the airstrip and check it out, looking for animal prints in the sand along the way.

DAY 2: After a hearty dinner and good night's sleep the night before, you wake up well rested to explore the Fan Glacier area. Since your legs are fresh, you decide to hike up high into the surrounding mountains, enjoying a birds-eye view of the area. As you look down towards the airstrip, you can barely make out your tent on the varied landscape. The views of the glaciers show the stripes, or "moraines" running down their length, and your guide gives you a description of glaciology and how moraines are formed. Taking a break for lunch, you have time to explore the mountains more before heading back down to camp for dinner.

DAY 3: The morning of the third day breaks clear and cool, and you decide to get an “up close and personal” view of the glacier you were observing yesterday from above. After a delicious breakfast, you don your day packs, and head west, out to an unnamed glacier. At the glacier’s edge, the ice is cracking and breaking off, providing a beautiful backdrop for lunch. If it’s



sunny, you might even see some activity as the glacier “calves” off pieces of ice. For the adventurous folks, your guide may even find a way to access the glacier, and you can don your crampons and explore the ice on foot. As you start to get hungry for dinner, it’s time for a quick snack before you head back to camp for your final night out at the Fan Glacier.



DAY 4: Waking up in the morning, you realize this is your last day exploring the Chugach Mountains, and you’re not quite ready to go. Fortunately, your flight is not until late afternoon, so you still have all day to hike. You pack up camp in the morning, leave a duffel at the airstrip, and head out to explore some of the local alpine lakes. The Fan Glacier is known for its beautiful ponds of crystal

clear water. On a still day, photographers can capture beautiful reflections in the still water. If it’s a warm day (and you’re feeling adventurous), you may even decide to take a dip in the chilly water to cool off! While exploring these beautiful alpine lakes, take a few minutes to appreciate the beautiful wildflowers that grow in this rugged alpine valley.

As you head back to the airstrip, you hear the buzz of the bush plane, and you realize that civilization is not far off. As the tiny plane takes off over the mountains and glaciers, you dream of a hot shower and delicious dinner. You also think back fondly on your last four days in the Chugach Mountains, and look forward to returning again.

What's Included?

As with all of our Alaska backpacking adventures, the Fan Glacier Basecamp Hiking trip includes professional, experienced backpacking guides with extensive local knowledge and medical training. We provide all food for the backcountry portions of your trip, including hot and delicious meals morning and evening and plenty of snacks and lunch food for mid-day nourishment. St. Elias Alpine Guides also provides shared group gear, including stoves, pots, and tents, as well as any technical gear, such as crampons. All you need to bring is your personal gear, (clothing, rain gear, boots, sleeping bag and pad) You can find a detailed list of the gear that we recommend you bring on our website: <http://www.steliasguides.com>.

If you would like us to arrange your transportation to McCarthy/Kennecott and/or lodging while in the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park, we offer this as a free service to our multi-day clients. Please email or give us a call to discuss the details.