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### **Iceberg Lake Basecamp with Ice Climbing**

Combine the remote beauty of a fly-in basecamp hiking trip with the thrill of ice climbing on a glacier located deep within the Chugach Mountains. This 4-day trip is a great fit for folks who want to try their hand at ice climbing, explore the area with day hikes, and enjoy the beauty of wilderness camping. Surrounded by glaciers and peaks in every direction, there are limitless opportunities for exploration on your “rest days” from ice climbing. Head south to gain beautiful views toward the Bagley Icefield, or north to hike a high alpine pass and view a pristine turquoise lake, nestled in between the steep mountain walls.



On climbing days, you and your guide will hike north, onto a wide, flowing glacier where you will set up ropes and climb. Experienced in glacier ice climbing, your guide will “teach you the ropes,” including how to belay, how to properly use your equipment, and how to use proper ice climbing technique. As you dial in your ice climbing skills, you may choose to move to another area of the glacier with more challenging climbing terrain. At the end of the day, you and your guide will return back to camp, enjoy a hot meal, and prepare for the next day’s adventures.

#### **Highlights:**

- 3 nights camping out in the rugged Chugach Mountains
- Beautiful views of sharp peaks, hanging glaciers, and the Bagley Icefield
- Expert ice climbing instruction from our professional guides
- Spectacular bush plane flights!

## Iceberg Lake Basecamp with Ice Climbing – 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 trip begins in the historic Motherlode Powerhouse, where you'll meet your guide, get outfitted with ice climbing gear, pack some personal snacks, and do a final "gear shakedown." Then it's off to the airstrip, and into a bush plane, where you'll be flying across the wide Chitina valley, and deep into the rugged Eastern Chugach Mountains. Don't forget your camera, as the rugged mountain views are beautiful! As you touch down on the sandy airstrip and unload your bags,

take a moment to revel in the surrounding beauty before you hear the rev of the engine, and the bush plane takes off and disappears from view.

After orienting yourselves and muscling-up your backpacks, it's time to stretch those legs and head off towards your camp. Hiking a few miles away from the airstrip places you by a good water source, and shortens your hike to ice climb the glacier the following days. Coming into camp, you take a few minutes to set up your tent before packing a lunch and exploring the surrounding area. You may choose to head south, scrambling up a rocky hillside towards a high alpine pass, affording beautiful views of the valley and a turquoise alpine lake on the backside. Returning to camp, it's time for a hot meal, as you revel in the surrounding natural beauty. Then, it's time to snuggle up in those sleeping bags, awaiting the excitement of ice climbing the following day.

**DAYS 2 & 3** – As the morning dawns clear and cool, you enjoy a hot breakfast before packing up your ice climbing gear and hiking off towards the glacier. At the edge of the ice, your guide will





assist you with strapping on your crampons, and provide instructions in their usage. Then, it's time to explore the icy glacial terrain! Coming to a steep wall, you can enjoy a snack while your guide sets up the ropes, and outfits you with a harness, helmet, and ice tools. Now, it's time to get climbing!

You may choose to climb at one location all day, or move to a second (more challenging) spot in the afternoon – whatever you choose, you're sure to have a great time scaling the vertical ice! As your body tires and the light begins to fade, it's time to pack up the gear and return back to your cozy camp for a hot meal and a good night's sleep.



**DAY 4** – Today you must break camp and return to the airstrip for your flight home. But there's still plenty of time before the plane arrives for you to take an exploratory hike. Packing up camp, you return to the airstrip, drop your heavy packs, and continue on southward with light daypacks full of layers and snacks. Approaching the iceberg filled lake and expansive glacier to the south, you scramble over rocky and

sandy terrain, remnants of the exposed land where a glacier once flowed. Gazing over to the Bagley Icefield, you can enjoy your lunch, and take some time to explore the glacier's edge before returning to your airstrip for your flight home. Back in McCarthy, it's time for a hot shower, and a tasty meal before continuing onto the next phase of your adventure.

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

As with all of our Alaska wilderness adventures, the Iceberg Lake Basecamp and Ice Climbing trip includes professional, experienced 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 and ice axes. 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 backpacking 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.