



Welcome To Glacier Bay National Park & Preserve

Congratulations on your new position here at Glacier Bay. Here in Southeast Alaska, an amazing adventure awaits you. In the hopes that your transition to Glacier Bay runs smoothly, we have put together some basic facts and information that you may find helpful as you plan for seasonal employment at Glacier Bay.

The Glacier Bay Story

Glacier Bay is an incredible place. The park is 3.3 million acres; the bay itself is 65 miles long and just 250 years ago a massive glacier completely covered it. In the last two centuries since the ice melted, the land has been re-colonizing with plants and these new habitats create an environment for various wildlife species. It's an amazing story. Glacier Bay was set aside in 1925 to study life's return in the wake of retreating ice. Each year about 450,000 visitors come to Glacier Bay to get a glimpse of the ice ages...the way much of the earth once was. Most come between mid-May and September; about 90% of those arrive on cruise ships.

On an average summer day here you can see whales, bears, mountain goats, puffins, icefalls, and rain. Lots of rain! Glacier Bay receives about 70 inches of annual precipitation. But when it's raining here at sea level, it's snowing up in the Fairweather Mountains, and it's that snowfall that gives us the glaciers. There are 100's of glaciers, including a few that reach all the way down and calve ice into the sea. It is a wild and exciting place, offering a lifetime of memorable experiences. Your position at Glacier Bay, whether working for interpretation, maintenance, administration, protection, or natural/cultural resources is vital in helping us preserve and protect this place for present and future generations.

How to Get Glacier Bay National Park

Traveling to and from Glacier Bay is probably a little different than what you may be used to. There are no roads that lead here.

MAP IMAGES:

The park is located in northern southeast Alaska, also known as the inside passage, or panhandle. The nearest city, is the state capital Juneau 55 miles as the raven flies to the east.

To get to Glacier bay, you should start by arranging travel to Juneau with Alaska Airlines. From there, most arrange a flight with a small air taxi to the tiny community of Gustavus. A trip that will take 25 minutes. Alaska Airlines provides jet service from Juneau into Gustavus, but only during June, July and August.

The Alaska Marine Highway Ferry System is another option from Juneau. There is once-weekly service during the winter and 3 trips/week during summer months. You can check the current sailing schedule on the AK marine Highway website to see if these timings may work for your arrival.

Area Orientation

Bartlett Cove

Where once there was ice, today you will find a spruce-hemlock forest growing on top of the old glacial moraine that marks the former terminus of the last glacier advance. Park headquarters and primary seasonal housing facilities are located in Bartlett Cove. Bartlett Cove is the only developed area in the park and can only be accessed by boat or the 10-mile road that connects Bartlett Cove and Gustavus. Also situated in Bartlett Cove is the Glacier Bay Lodge composed of 56 rooms, a restaurant, a gift shop, a lounge area, the park visitor center and auditorium. Other visitor facilities include a public dock, a fuel dock, a visitor information station (VIS) and a primitive walk-in campground. In summer months Bartlett Cove is a flurry of activity with visitors hiking, boating, exploring, fishing, and enjoying the views.

Gustavus

The nearby community of Gustavus is home to approximately 400 year round residents. The surrounding mountains make a wonderful backdrop for the surprisingly flat terrain. The flatness of the land is due to the past flow of a glacial outwash river. This is small town Alaska at its finest. In Gustavus you will NOT find a movie theater, a shopping mall, a McDonalds, or a bowling alley. You WILL find a post office, public library, an airport, clinic, public dock, a school, a small grocery store, a few eating establishments and friendly people. On days off, you may enjoy spending time in Gustavus. The flat terrain and paved road makes it an easy bike ride away. Many summer employees choose to purchase a used bike in town for their use, and it is usually pretty easy to catch a ride.

Your new address

You may want to bring all your gear with you as you travel, but most find it easier to mail some items up by mail before you arrive. To do so, address them to yourself, and they will be held at headquarters until your arrival. Your personal address while working in Glacier Bay is:

Your Name P.O. Box 99 Gustavus, AK 99826-0140

Housing

Our housing is some of the best in the NPS and includes apartment complexes built in 1993, and duplex apartments built in 1998. These are wonderful 2, 3, and 4-bedroom apartments surrounded by trees, yet close to the water. Seasonal housing quarters assignments are arranged by your supervisor and the park's housing committee before you arrive. Your rent is calculated between approximately \$250-\$500 per month depending on the unit and number of housemates. Rent is deducted directly from your paycheck. You will need to bring your own towels and bedding. Basic dishes, appliances, and cooking utensils are provided. The bedroom closets are not equipped with hangers, so you might want to bring some. If you've forgotten a few household items, the local second hand store is well equipped.

Cleaning

Before you move into your apartment it is cleaned and carefully inspected. You will be checked in, and during your stay you are responsible for keeping these quarters clean. Your quarters will be closely scrutinized again before you leave, so plan accordingly. Our housing facilities are very nice and we'd like to keep them that way.

Laundry

Laundry facilities are provided for the seasonal employees at no extra charge. However, you will need to provide your own laundry detergent, fabric softener, etc. For our system, we use soaps, detergents, and cleaning liquids that are biodegradable, and don't contain phosphates or free chlorine.

Recycling in the Park

Glacier Bay National Park is committed to managing solid waste in as environmentally sustainable manner. The main goal is to divert as much waste from the incinerator as practicable. In each apartment there are collection containers and in the housing area there is a disposal station. Anticipate having to sort waste prior to disposal - paper, aluminum, corrugated cardboard, compost, and *rinsed* steel, glass, and plastics. The rest goes in the trash. Hazardous materials are not to be disposed of in Bartlett Cove. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask - we are very serious about recycling!

Smoking

Smoking is not allowed in any government building, including seasonal quarters.

Pets

Pets are not allowed in seasonal housing.

Guests

While you are living in Alaska, many friends and relatives will want to come up and visit. This is great, but consider the impact this may impose on your housemates and neighbors. Therefore Glacier Bay has set a guest policy allowing each seasonal employee to host guests in housing for a maximum of 14 user nights total per year. You should clear this with your housemates before making final plans.

TV/Radio

Seasonal housing is not set up for cable tv or satellite connections, however in the employee recreation room, AKA "The Erratic" the park has provided a tv/dvd/vhs system and there is a rather large video library for you to enjoy. Radio reception is very poor to non-existent in Bartlett Cove.

Telephone Service

Please be aware that cell phones will NOT work in Glacier Bay and Bartlett Cove. You will find limited cell phone coverage in the town of Gustavus. Upon arrival you may arrange for telephone service connected to your apartment through the local phone company.

Computers

Due to our remote location, Glacier Bay NP allows for personal use of government desktop workstations during off-duty hours, as approved by your supervisor. Many seasonal employees arrive with a personal laptop. If you wish to bring your own computer, you may sign up through the local internet provider and use wireless internet within park housing. Be aware that we are very remote, and bandwidth is frequently an issue, so you shouldn't plan on streaming Netflix movies or downloading huge files, or engage in online gaming. In Gustavus, the public library has free wireless service and public computers that you are welcome to use.

Medical Services

There are limited medical services in Gustavus, in the form of a community clinic with a nurse/practitioner. There are also several EMTs on the park staff and the Gustavus Emergency Response Team (GER)-911. In a medical emergency a medivac must be arranged, weather permitting, to Juneau, Anchorage or Seattle.

Weather and Clothing

You must come prepared! A warm coat, hat, gloves, long underwear and warm socks, a good rain jacket/ rain pants and waterproof boots are a must. You'll want to bring some clothing that stays warm even when wet (such as wool or synthetics). Southeast Alaska is typically a cool and rainy place. In the summer months the temperature is generally below 65°F, but it can vary to extremes. The annual precipitation is about 70 inches. Spring and early-mid summer are usually less wet and late summer to early fall is sometimes drenching. Xtratuf (brand name) neoprene rubber boots are extremely practical here. This particular brand has been approved as part of the official Glacier Bay NP uniform. Xtratufs can be purchased through various stores in Juneau. The Mercantile in Gustavus has limited size ranges.

Groceries/ Supplies

Because of Glacier Bay's remote location, obtaining groceries and supplies will be a somewhat different and interesting experience than the grocery shopping that you are accustomed to. Planning ahead is the key. Most seasonal employees set up an account with a grocery store in Juneau such as Carrs/Safeway, Costco, or Super Bear and have their groceries sent over either by U.S. Mail or by air taxi. It is suggested that when you arrive you bring a few boxes of food to last for at least a couple of weeks. Every season we have employees who show up with an insufficient amount of food. Keep in mind that you are responsible for getting your food here and for making the arrangements with the stores in Juneau. In Gustavus you will find the tiny Beartrack Mercantile, Toschco, and a health food store. The prices tend to be a little on the expensive side and selections are limited, however you may be interested in growing your own at the community garden.

Recreation

Popular forms of recreation around here include hiking, backpacking, kayaking, camping, fishing, berry picking and boating. To fish in Glacier Bay you must have a state fishing license which may be obtained in Gustavus, or various merchants in Juneau. If you fish, don't forget your fishing gear. The Bartlett River is a great place for fly fishing or with a spinning rod. For halibut fishing, which would most likely be done from a boat or skiff out in the bay, a heavier rod is used. Be sure to attend a mandatory backcountry orientation through the Visitor Information Station before camping or boating.

There are three maintained hiking trails in the park and all are located in Bartlett Cove. These trails are great for day hiking. The Bartlett River Trail winds its way through the forest up to the Bartlett River. The Bartlett Lake Trail leads you up to a peaceful lake and the Forest Loop Trail loops down the beach and then up through the forest. Xtratufs, sturdy leather or Gore-Tex hiking boots are recommended for hiking over the rough and often wet terrain.

Libraries:

There is an informal book and video exchange in seasonal housing. Feel free to borrow any of the books and/or donate your own. The Park Research Library has a variety of books relating to the park that may be checked out for up to two weeks. The Gustavus Public Library is wonderful. You can get a library card and enjoy books, videos, your favorite periodicals, and meet lots of nice people.

Your worklife is only a part of the memorable experience of seasonal employment at Glacier Bay. Many of your best memories may come from time spent with your coworkers and friends at potlucks, parties, weekend camping trips, dances, music nights, and the myriad of other social functions in Bartlett Cove and Gustavus. Plan to have fun!

Learn before you come

If you are interested in learning about Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve before you arrive, a great source is the park website at www.nps.gov/glba.

Again, congratulations, the entire park staff is glad to have you as part of our team and look forward to your arrival. If you should have any questions about your upcoming summer in Glacier Bay National Park please do not hesitate to call. See you soon!

Contacts:

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www.nps.gov/glba
www.facebook.com/GlacierBayNationalPark
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