

Glacier Bay

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Glacier Bay National Park & Preserve
Alaska

(907) 697-2230
www.nps.gov/glba



View of Glacier Bay

Dear Friend:

Thank you for your interest in Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve. We hope the following information will help you plan your trip.

The Visitor Season

The main visitor season is from late-May through early-September with the peak being the month of July. The park is open the rest of the year, but visitor services are very limited.

Weather and Clothing

Summer temperatures average 50° to 60° F (10° to 15° C). Rain is the norm in southeast Alaska. It is best to be prepared to enjoy the park in any kind of weather, especially rain. Suggested clothing includes waterproof boots, rain gear, a hat, gloves, wool or pile layers or a warm coat.

Getting to the Park

There are no roads that lead directly to Glacier Bay. The park's headquarters, Visitor Information Station, Visitor Center and the Glacier Bay Lodge are located in Bartlett Cove, 10 miles by road from the small town of Gustavus. Gustavus is located about 65 miles northwest of Juneau. The Alaska Marine Highway System now provides scheduled ferry service between Juneau and Gustavus. Travel options from May through September include scheduled and charter air services, cruise ships, tour boats, and charter boats. Please refer to the park's area [visitor services listing](#) for specific businesses that provide services in Glacier Bay.

Juneau-Gustavus Ferry

Glacier Bay National Park visitors are now able to conveniently arrive in Gustavus along with their bikes, kayaks, and even personal vehicles aboard the ferry Le Conte. Although this new option affords both visitors and residents many new opportunities to travel with a personal vehicle, you may not find all the services and amenities one might expect in other road-linked Alaska communities. If arriving with a personal vehicle, please be aware that:

- Glacier Bay National Park is essentially roadless. Bartlett Cove is accessible by vehicle from Gustavus, but all other areas may only be reached on foot, by boat or small aircraft.
- National Park facilities in Bartlett Cove were not originally designed to accommodate visitors with private vehicles and parking may be extremely limited.
- Glacier Bay NP has one primitive campground. It is accessible on foot only.
- There are no RV facilities (dump station/hookups/etc.) or vehicle camping areas within in the park. Camping is not permitted in parking areas, or along the park road.
- To check sailing schedules and make arrangements, visit www.dot.state.ak.us/amhs or call 1-800-642-0066.

There are various lodging and other services available in the community of Gustavus. For more specific information please contact the Gustavus Visitors Association 907-697-2454 or www.gustavusak.com.

Private Boating

Glacier Bay is a wonderful place to visit by boat. Private boat permits are required to enter the park by boat from June 1 through August 31. Permits are free, but the number of permits issued for any day is limited. Permits may be reserved up to 60 days in advance. Late June through mid-August fills up quickly. Write the park requesting boat permit information or during the summer months contact the Visitor Information Station (VIS) at (907) 697-2627.

Other Services

In Bartlett Cove, the Glacier Bay Lodge offers rooms, a restaurant, a daily tour boat and fuel sales. For reservations contact Glacier Bay National Park & Preserve Concessions, LLC. (888-229-8687). Lodging, groceries, restaurants and charter boats and taxi services are also available in Gustavus.



Tour boat

Black bear

Tidewater glacier

Join a ranger

Glacier Bay Lodge

Park Activities

Whether you only have a few hours or an entire week there are plenty of activities to keep you busy while visiting Glacier Bay.

Join a Park Ranger:

The National Park Service Visitor Center is located on the second level of the Glacier Bay Lodge. We encourage you to take some time to look at the exhibits and attend some of the daily park-sponsored activities. Park rangers are available throughout the day to answer your questions. Rangers lead daily walks through the rain forest and show informative films in the auditorium. A ranger program is presented in the auditorium each evening. Children are encouraged to participate in the Junior Ranger Program. Books, maps and other materials are sold through Alaska Geographic (www.alaskageographic.org).

Daily Tour Boat:

The tour boat operated by the Glacier Bay Lodge travels up the bay on a nine-hour trip to the glaciers and back. A park ranger is on board to share information about the natural and cultural wonders of Glacier Bay.

Day Hiking:

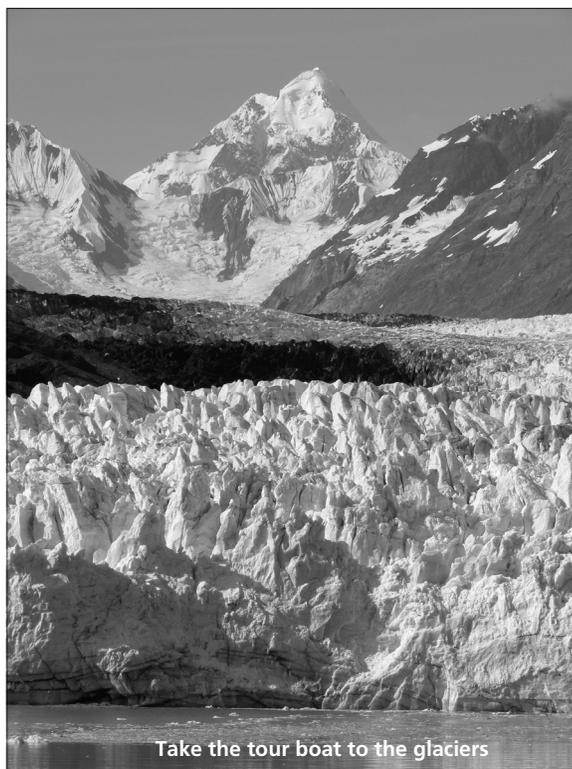
Three trails of varying lengths are located at Bartlett Cove. These trails tend to be somewhat muddy and wet, so bring boots. Hiking the shoreline around Bartlett Cove is another good option.

Camping:

A multitude of camping experiences awaits you, ranging from a stay in our free walk-in campground at Bartlett Cove to a wilderness experience up in the bay. A daily boat provides a camper drop-off service at designated locations. Rangers at the Visitor Information Station provide camper orientations, issue backcountry permits and bear-resistant food containers.

Kayaking:

Sea kayaking is a popular way to experience the wilderness of Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve. Kayak trips can originate from Bartlett Cove, or the daily tour boat will drop-off kayakers. Making reservations well in advance for a kayak and the daily tour boat is recommended. If you prefer, guided day and overnight kayak trips into the park can be arranged. Check the enclosed Visitor Services Directory for kayak rental and guiding companies. If you are trying to transport a hard-shelled kayak to the park, it will need to be transported by boat and not by air.



Take the tour boat to the glaciers



Experience the wilderness

River Rafting:

The Alsek River runs through a portion of Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve. Permits are required for private trips on the Tatshenshini/Alsek; contact the Yakutat Ranger Station (907)-784-3295 or listen to a river information recording at (907) 784-3370.

Fishing:

Glacier Bay offers sport fishing opportunities for both fresh and saltwater fish. Alaska State fishing regulations apply, and a valid fishing license is required.

Safety

When planning for your trip to Glacier Bay, remember that the environment here is very dynamic, and can be unforgiving to the ill-prepared. To protect against hypothermia, a hat, gloves or mittens, and rain gear are essential. Sturdy, waterproof outdoor gear is essential.

Bears:

Both black and brown/grizzly bears are frequently seen throughout the park. These are wild animals and should always be considered to be potentially dangerous. When hiking or strolling the beaches of the park, you can lessen your chance of a bear encounter by looking for bear sign, making noise, and traveling in groups. It is important that bears never come in contact with human food, so please NEVER leave food unattended. When stopping for a snack or a meal, eat in the intertidal area so that the next high tide will wash away traces of your presence. If you do encounter a bear, remain calm, identify yourself as a human (talking to the bear) and stand your ground. Do NOT run. You can not outrun a bear and fleeing may trigger the bear's chase response.

Recycling

 Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve operates an award-winning recycling program. We are committed to managing solid waste in an environmentally sustainable manner. The park goal is to divert as much waste from the incinerator as possible.

Anticipate the need to sort your waste. There is a sorting station comprised of bear-proof bins near the Visitors Information Station located at the Bartlett Cove dock. Please help us by separating all aluminum, cardboard, compost, glass, and plastics. Hazardous materials can not be disposed of in Glacier Bay.

Hopefully, this letter has answered most of your questions. For more detailed trip planning information, be sure to visit the park's website at www.nps.gov/glbs. We look forward to seeing you in Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve!

Philip N. Hooge
Superintendent