

JULY

7 Days / 6 Nights

Starts and Finishes in Anchorage, Alaska

BEARS OF KATMAI



Trip Description

In July, millions of sockeye salmon make their way into the rivers of the Alaska Peninsula. One of the biggest runs of fish occurs in the Naknek River which winds from Bristol Bay to its headwaters at Naknek Lake. The fish swim en masse through the lake and to the tributary streams. One of those tributaries is Katmai National Park's Brooks River.

Brooks is famous for a good reason. Dozens of Brown Bears spend most of the summer fattening up on the abundant fish. Along the way, the salmon face many obstacles, but the biggest is Brooks Falls. There, they are forced to make a vertical jump of several feet to clear the falls, while dodging the swiping claws and biting teeth of the many bears.

It's one of the world's great wildlife spectacles; well worth seeing and photographing. On this trip, we'll spend the better part of three days at Brooks Falls with two nights in the nearby village of King Salmon, traveling back and forth to Brooks Camp. By arriving as early as possible in the morning, and departing late, we'll have plenty of time to experience the place during the uncrowded hours.

On our final day, we'll return to King Salmon in the mid-afternoon, and catch the short flight back to Anchorage. We'll spend the night in the Anchorage area, before making the drive to the beautiful town of Homer. Homer is one of my favorite places in Alaska. It's located near the southern end of the Kenai Peninsula, and on the shore of Kachemak Bay. The scenery is dramatic.

We have two full days in Homer, and we'll make good use of them. On one day, weather permitting, we'll board a small bush plane and make the flight from Homer to the coast of either Lake Clark or Katmai National Parks, for a few hours of bear photography away from the crowds. We'll catch the bruins as they graze the coastal meadows and dig for clams on the mud flats. On our second full day in Homer, we'll take a half day boat tour of Kachemak Bay where we'll have the chance to photograph nesting seabirds like puffins and murrelets, the bay's abundant sea otters, nesting eagles, and the unique scenery of Kachemak Bay.

Between excursions we'll photograph Bald Eagles on the Homer Spit and nearby Anchor Point, search for the elusive moose that live in the Homer area, and enjoy some great food.

The final day of the trip, we'll make our way back to Anchorage arriving in the city by mid to late afternoon, where we'll drop you off at your hotel, the airport, or wherever your next adventure begins.



ITINERARY

Day 1 - Morning pickup from your hotel in Anchorage, flight to King Salmon, and water taxi transfer to Brooks Falls. Return to King Salmon around 9pm. Night at the Antler's Inn, King Salmon.

Day 2 - Early morning departure by water taxi for Brooks Falls. All day at Brooks. Return to King Salmon around 9pm. Night at the Antler's Inn, King Salmon.

Day 3 - Early morning departure by water taxi for Brooks Falls. Return to King Salmon in the mid-afternoon in time for the evening flight back to Anchorage. Dinner in Anchorage and make the short drive to Girdwood. Night at the Hotel Alyeska, Girdwood.

Day 4 - Relaxed early morning with a departure for Homer around 10am. Picnic lunch along the way. Arrive in Homer around 5pm. Night at the Land's End Resort, Homer.

Day 5 - Morning bush flight to the Lake Clark or Katmai coast for bear photography (weather permitting). Afternoon in the Homer area for local explorations and photography. Night at the Land's End Resort.

Day 6 - Morning photographing in the Homer Area, likely chasing Bald Eagles at Anchor Point. Afternoon boat trip on Kachemak Bay to see otters, puffins, eagles, and the landscape of K-bay.

Day 7 - After breakfast departure for Anchorage. Lunch along the way with an arrival in Anchorage around mid-afternoon.

**This is a sample itinerary and may be subject to change. The hotels noted are our likely lodging, but not guaranteed.*

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WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- Flights between Anchorage and King Salmon.
- All ground transportation.
- 6 nights lodging.
- All scheduled excursions.
- Most meals.
- Photographic instruction.
- The best guides in the business.

WHAT'S NOT?

- Flights between your home and Anchorage.
- Pre and post-trip hotels in Anchorage.
- Tips

[Sign Up HERE!](#)







FAQs

Do you have the permits and insurance to operate in Alaska's National Parks?

Yes! All my trips are fully permitted by the National Park Service, BLM, Forest Service, and other land managers. I carry all required insurance.

What do I need to bring?

Well in advance of the trip, I'll send you a comprehensive packing list with everything you'll need.

Are there weight limits?

We will be flying Alaska Airlines or a regional carrier to King Salmon, and their weight limits will apply for the Brooks Falls part of the trip. Otherwise, there are not restrictions as such. However, there is no need to overpack. If your equipment can't fit in a camera pack, and a standard sized duffel or suitcase you are packing too much.

What fitness do I need to have?

During our time at Brooks Falls we will be spending a lot of time on our feet and may cover 5-6 miles over the course of the day on relatively smooth, and mostly flat trails. The day-trip to the coast of Katmai or Lake Clark requires walking on uneven, often muddy terrain, for 2-3 miles. I'm happy to answer more questions about this if you have them.

What and where will we eat?

During our time in King Salmon/Brooks Falls, I'll provide basic breakfast foods (granola, milk, yogurt, fruit, etc.), and we'll have dinner at the Brooks Lodge before we return to King Salmon. Lunches throughout the trip are diverse picnics. In Homer, we'll eat breakfast at the hotel, and dinner at a selection of Homer's excellent restaurants.

I have dietary restrictions. Can you work with that?

In almost all cases, I can work around dietary restrictions. Please reach out to me with specific questions.

What photography experience do I need?

I welcome all level of photographers on my trips. For those just wanting to document their experiences, to professionals looking to expand their portfolio. I even get non-photographers who are eager to experience the locations we visit.

Do non-photographers get a discount?

No. Costs for the this trip are the same regardless of your photographic interest.

Will the bears eat me?

No! The bears we will be photographing are habituated and usually preoccupied with eating and interacting with one another. As long as we treat bears with respect, and follow their rules, our time with them will be safe.









YOUR GUIDES

David W. Shaw



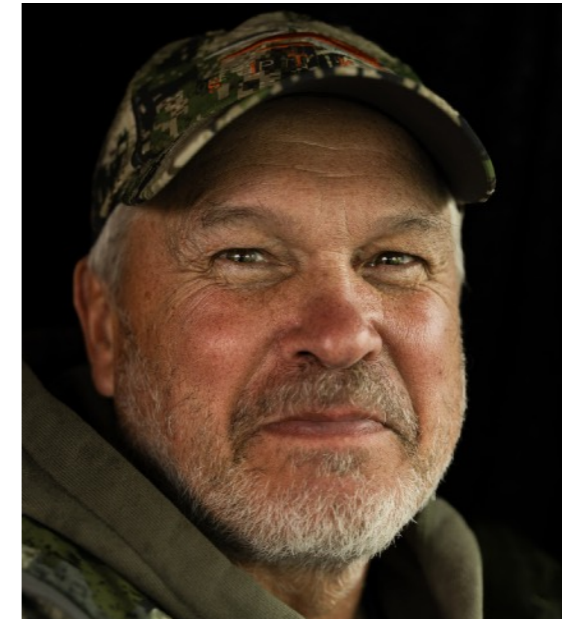
Dave is the owner and lead guide of David W. Shaw Photo Workshops. A professional photographer, writer, and photo educator he splits his time between Alaska and Colorado. Dave's images and writing have appeared thousands of times in publications across the world.

He has both undergraduate and master's degrees in wildlife biology and is an expert naturalist with a deep love for all wild things.

Dave is a 20+ year resident of Alaska and has spent most of those decades exploring the state's many wild corners with his camera and leading others on wilderness trips, photography expeditions, birding, and natural history tours.

Above all, Dave is passionate about protecting the world's wild places and animals and believes in the power of travel and photography to inspire conservation efforts in communities and people the world over.

Mark Lindberg



Dr. Mark Lindberg retired as a Professor of Wildlife Ecology in 2022 after a 38 year career as a biologist and faculty member. Mark spent most of career (27 years) studying population dynamics of wildlife from Ptarmigan to Moose throughout Alaska.

He resurrected his interest in photography in 2018, which has led to great enjoyment and a number of accomplishments including being selected as a finalist for the 2023 wildlife photographer of the year competition and development of an outdoor photography column for an Alaska newspaper.

Mark enjoys sharing his passion for wildlife science and photography with other photographers with the hope that they may more fully appreciate their subjects.