

# Glacier Camp

## Frequently Asked Questions

### General

- *How many people can participate on this trip?*  
Most of our trips are of 2-4 clients with one guide, but we have enough gear to be able to accommodate large private groups of 15-20 clients.
- *What is the client to guide ratio?*  
Our trips maintain a maximum of 6 clients per one guide.
- *What dates is this trip available?*  
This trip is available late May through September.
- *Where are the glaciers you camp on?*  
All of the glaciers that we camp on are part of the Juneau Icefield and within a 20 minute helicopter flight from the Juneau Airport. Glaciers further away will offer a more remote and quiet setting, but cost more to get there.
- *What is your emergency response plan?*  
Our guides will carry with them cell phone, SPOT satellite messenger, or a satellite phone depending on the glacier destination. The glaciers we camp on most often have good cell phone coverage. In the event of an emergency one or more of these devices would be used to request help. A helicopter would be able to arrive at your location within 10-25 minutes.

### Camping Conditions

- *Where do you camp and what is the camping like?*  
We will camp on the surface of the glacier – cold, bare ice. Our guides will select a site that has flat areas for putting up tents and is free of any nearby major hazards. The view from the tents is filled with snow covered peaks, cascading ice falls, tall seracs and gaping crevasses. A portable toilet set a short distance from camp will serve as our backcountry outhouse. We will cook in outside or in the protection of a social tent.
- *Is sleeping on the ice cold?*  
It can be, but we provide you with a 0 degree sleeping bag and an inflatable sleeping pad. Most of our clients stay nice and warm. If you tend to sleep cold, then bring some extra layers and go to sleep wearing a dry pair of socks and a warm hat. Sleeping with a hot water bottle provided by the guide can add a little extra warmth as well.
- *What food is provided while camping?*  
Our guides are experienced backcountry cooks. We pride ourselves in providing high quality meals for our clients. All of our clients will complete a Client Expedition Form that requests information on allergies and food preferences. Based on these forms our guides will create a menu. Meals that have been cooked in the past include the following.

Breakfasts: breakfast burritos, egg-cheese-ham sandwiches, pancakes with fruit, yogurt and granola

Lunches: these are typically a combination of self-made sandwiches and wraps with fruit, snack bars, and a variety of trail mixes. Sandwich/wrap fixing often include – lunch meat, cheese, tomatoes, bell peppers, carrots, cucumber, hummus, condiments, peanut butter and jelly.

Dinners: salmon fillet with potatoes and vegetables, pesto pasta, chicken alfredo pasta with vegetables, burritos, fish tacos, backcountry pizza

- *What drinks are provided while camping?*

The drinks provided depend on clients preferences. Typically we will have coffee or tea in the morning and hot chocolate, beer, and/or wine in the evening. During the day we will drink water or water with flavored drink mixes added to it.

- *How do you treat your water?*

The water on the glacier is clean and does not need to be treated.

## Weather

- *What is the weather like?*

The weather is similar to the weather recorded at the Juneau airport. Expect to have overcast skies with intermittent showers. In Juneau there are about 300 cloudy days and 220 days with precipitation each year. The average temperatures are 5-10 degrees colder than in Juneau and range between 40-60 degrees. On warmer, sunnier days a strong, cold, downslope wind will develop (called a katabatic wind).

## Glacier Equipment

- *What equipment is used to travel on the glacier?*

We outfit all of our clients with a harness, helmet, ice axe, crampons, and sometimes a trekking pole. Our guides will also carry a rope and crevasse rescue kit. The area of the glacier that we typically travel on is bare ice. As such, all of the hazards are visible and we do not rope up together. If on snow covered glacier, then we will travel as a rope team.

- *What equipment is used to ice climb?*

In addition to the glacier trekking gear mentioned in the previous question we will use specially designed ice climbing tools. It is also important to wear stiff soled high top hiking boots to be able to successfully ice climb.

- *What camping gear is provided?*

Above and Beyond Alaska can provide all of the camping gear, if you have your own and want to bring it, then please notify us. We will provide: 2 or 3 person backpacking style tents (Mountain Hardwear and Sierra Designs brand or equivalent), 0 degree sleeping bags (Marmot and Mountain Hardwear brand), Therma-rest sleeping pad, social tent,

camp stove, cooking pots/pans, utensils, mugs/thermos', headlamps, and light weight rain gear.

## Travel

- *What kind of helicopters do you use? What is their carrying capacity?*

There are four different helicopter companies in Juneau and all of them primarily use Eurocopter A-Stars. These are 6 passenger helicopters that can carry approximately 1200 pounds. Generally we can fit 4 clients and 1 guide plus gear into a single helicopter.

- *What do you do in the event of a weather cancelation?*

Weather cancelations will be due to unsafe flying conditions caused by low clouds. If the weather doesn't improve by mid-day then we will attempt to reschedule the trip by one day. We recommend that you book your travel dates so that you have an extra day or two in Juneau following your trip to allow this as a possibility. If the trip is completely canceled by ABAK, then you will receive a full refund.

- *What happens if we can't return at our scheduled time due to weather?*

It is possible that the weather will worsen and low clouds will prevent the helicopter from being able to pick us up at the scheduled time. If this occurs we will have the helicopter pick us up as soon as the weather improves, note that this may not occur until the next day. We recommend that you book your travel dates so that you have an extra day or two in Juneau following your trip to avoid having to reschedule travel plans due to a late return. Our guides will have an extra days worth of food on all of these trips.

## Wildlife

- *Will you see wildlife on the glaciers?*

Generally speaking there is no wildlife on the glaciers. Occasionally an animal will use the glacier as a means of crossing a valley from one mountain ridge to another, but this is a rare occurrence.