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## Sitka (Alaska) | Optional Shore Excursions

A distant land of bears, wild landscapes and icy adventures, sail between glorious islands and witness the diverse wildlife of the Inside Passage. Eagles watch over the scenery overhead, while whales and sea lions add glorious weight to the animal life that thrives and thrashes in these icy seas. With a quintet of Pacific salmon species filling the rich rivers and waterways with life, settle back to enjoy the show, as Sitka's immense setpieces play out before you. You might notice the onion-shaped dome atop St. Michael's Church – a relic of the area's Russian history. Sitka formed a part of the Russian Empire until a deal was struck in 1867, and the territory was sold to the United States, with the handover ceremony taking place here in Sitka. The native Tlingit culture is an important presence, and elaborate totem poles rocket up in Sitka National Historical Park. They mark the battleground of 1804, when the indigenous people clashed fiercely with the Russians. The snow-capped peak of the dormant volcano, Mount Edgecumbe, draws understandable comparisons with Mount Fuji's symmetrical cone. Climb to thrilling heights, as you arrive on Kruzof Island, and enjoy richly spellbinding views of the scattered Pacific islands, while hiking. Whether you want to spend your time flying above snow-dusted mountain ridges, fishing for colossal King salmon, or savouring Northwest frontier cuisine in waterfront restaurants, there's no shortage of ways to experience Sitka's natural wonders.

### Best of Sitka | SIT-001

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Minimal | Duration: 3.5 hours

Experience the culture and wildlife of Sitka during this picturesque, half-day sightseeing excursion.

#### **Sitka, Alaska Raptor Centre, Bird-Care, Educational Bird Presentation, Flight Centre, Habitat Areas**

Depart the pier for the short, narrated drive through Sitka en route to the Alaska Raptor Centre. The Raptor Centre operates with bird-care professionals assisted by volunteers to rescue birds, provide them with rehabilitative care, and, hopefully, release them back into the wild. Following your introduction to the centre, take in a presentation with one of the centre's educational birds. Afterward, view the flight centre, clinic window, outside deck, and habitat areas, and stop by the gift shop.

#### **Sitka National Historical Park, Totem-Lined Trails, Cultural Exhibits, Carving Room, Local Artists**

Next, re-board your coach and continue on to the Sitka National Historical Park. Site of the 1804 Battle of Alaska, the park boasts a delightful array of historic Tlingit and Russian cultural exhibits, totem-lined trails and carving rooms where native Alaskan artisans demonstrate their totemic art form. During your visit, you can walk the nature trail, view cultural exhibits and video presentations, or talk with local native artists about their cultural art form.

### **Fortress of the Bears, Brown-and-Black Bear-Viewing, Naturalist Commentary**

Leaving the park, re-board your coach and head to your final stop, the Fortress of the Bears. Your visit here enables you to get within approximately 25 feet (about 7.6 metres) of Alaska's brown-and-black bears in a naturalized setting. Observe three different bear populations from a covered viewing platform, and interact with an experienced naturalist from the ship. At the conclusion of your visit, you are dropped off in town to explore Sitka on your own. A shuttle runs every ten minutes back to the pier where the ship is docked.

**Please note: This tour involves a moderate amount of walking for approximately 0.75 miles (about 1.2 kilometres), at times over uneven and natural surfaces, with a few steps to negotiate to get on/off the coach and at the sites visited; a ramp is available at the venue with the most stairs. Walking in Sitka is at the discretion of each guest. This tour is not suitable for guests with limited mobility and guests who utilise a wheelchair. Guests are advised to wear warm, comfortable clothing in layers with flat, closed-toe walking shoes, and bring sun protection, a weatherproof jacket, and US Dollars for purchases from the ship. The tour sequence may vary.**

## **Taste of Sitka | SIT-002**

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Minimal | Duration: 3.5 hours

Explore the marine life, culture and flavours of Sitka during this immersive, half-day sightseeing excursion.

### **Sitka, Sitka National Historical Park, Cultural and Totem Exhibits**

Depart the pier for the short, narrated drive to the Sitka National Historical Park. Site of the 1804 Battle of Alaska, the park boasts a delightful array of historic Tlingit and Russian cultural exhibits, totem-lined trails and carving rooms where native Alaskan artisans demonstrate their totemic art form. During your visit, you can walk the nature trail, view cultural exhibits and video presentations, or talk with local native artists about their cultural art form.

### **Sitka Sound Science Centre, Incubation and Nursery Areas, Touch-and-See Marine Life**

Next, re-board your coach and head to the Sitka Sound Science Centre. Upon arrival, take a guided walking tour. Learn about the commercial fishing industry in Sitka, and how the hatchery keeps it alive. View the incubation and nursery areas, and touch-and-see the creatures of the sea that call Sitka Sound home.

### **Channel Club Restaurant, Sampling of Local Microbrew and Wild Alaskan Salmon, Free Time**

Leaving the Sitka Sound Science Centre, re-board your coach and proceed for your final stop, the beautiful *Channel Club* restaurant. Upon arrival, sample two locally-produced microbrews and wild-caught Alaskan salmon over a bed of rice with lemon sauce. At the conclusion of your visit, you are dropped off in town to explore Sitka on your own. A shuttle runs every ten minutes back to the pier where the ship is docked.

**Please note: This tour involves a moderate amount of walking for approximately 0.5 miles (about 0.8 kilometres), at times over uneven surfaces, with a few steps to negotiate to get on/off the coach and at the sites visited. Walking in Sitka is at the discretion of each guest. This tour is suitable for guests with limited mobility and guests who utilise a wheelchair, provided they are able to enter/exit the vehicle without assistance. Guests are advised to wear warm, comfortable clothing in layers with flat, closed-toe walking shoes, and bring sun protection, a weatherproof jacket, and \$USD for purchases from the ship. The tour sequence may vary. Space on this tour is very limited; we suggest you book in advance to avoid disappointment.**

## Sitka Sound Kayaking with Private Guide | SIT-003

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Extensive | Duration: 4.5 hours | A meal is included in the excursion.

Embrace the exquisite natural beauty of Sitka Sound in an active new way during this scenic and invigorating, half-day kayaking excursion.

### **Sitka, Safety and Kayaking Instructions and Practice, Guided Kayaking Adventure**

After receiving your kayaking orientation, skills, safety, and tour instructions and float plan, some time is made available to dabble about in the crystal-clear shallows to get comfortable with your craft. Next, don your safety gear, embark your kayak, and begin your guided, approximately 2.5-hour guided and narrated kayaking adventure.

### **Reefs, Kelp Forests, Uninhabited Islands, Marine Life, Seals, Sea Lions, Porpoises, Whales, Eagles**

Paddle at a leisurely pace for approximately three miles-six miles (about 4.8 kilometres-9.6 kilometres) in mostly sheltered waters near the shoreline. Whilst gliding through mazes of reefs, kelp forests, uninhabited islands and seldom-travelled passages, areas accessible only by kayak, your naturalist/guide helps you identify the colourful marine life visible below. Crab, sea stars, anemones, sea urchins, jellyfish, and more. At the surface, sea otters, harbour seals, sea lions, porpoises, whales, bald eagles, and a variety of marine birds are frequently spotted in these waters.

### **Secluded Beach, Beachcombing, Picnic-Style Lunch, Boat-Transfer, Free Time, Shopping**

During your kayaking adventure, step ashore on the secluded beach of a remote, seldom-visited island to stretch your legs, do a little beachcombing, and enjoy a picnic-style snack prepared by your guide whilst soaking in the majestic wildness and amazing views of Sitka Sound. Your guide explains some of the ecology of the area and tells you about the Tlingit people, who still harvest the ocean's bounty using knowledge passed down since the last Ice Age. At the conclusion of your visit, embark a shuttle-vessel for the approximately 30-minute cruise back to Sitka. Upon arrival, you are dropped off in town to explore Sitka on your own. A shuttle runs every ten minutes back to the pier where the ship is docked.

**Please note: This tour is sold as a private tour for up to 6 guests. Therefore only one person in the party needs to place a reservation. It involves an extensive amount of paddling for approximately 2.5 hours and a moderate amount of walking for up to 700 yards (about 640 metres), at times over uneven, sandy, gravel, cobblestone, slippery, and natural surfaces and inclines, with a few steps to negotiate to get on/off the coach and embark/disembark the kayak. Walking in Sitka is at the discretion of each guest. This tour is recommended for active guests who are in good physical**

condition, and can swim in water too deep to stand. This tour is not suitable for pregnant guests, guests with back and/or neck problems, guests with heart and/or respiratory problems, guests prone to seasickness, guests with limited mobility, and guests who utilise a wheelchair. Guests are advised to wear warm, comfortable, synthetic-fabric sportswear in layers with flat, closed-toe walking shoes you won't mind getting wet, and bring sun protection, a towel, change of clothing and weatherproof jacket from the ship; jeans and high-heels are not permitted. Guests must be at least six years old to participate on this tour. This kayaking tour operates in two-seat Necky sea kayaks. Guests over 6'5" (about 1.95 metres) in height cannot participate on this tour. Guests weighing more than 275 pounds (about 124 kilograms) cannot participate on this tour. Although frequently encountered on this type of tour, wildlife, fish and marine life sightings are not guaranteed. This tour operates in wet weather conditions, and a basic rain jacket, life vest, helmet, kayak, paddles, spray decks, waterproof gloves, and dry bags for each guest's personal items are provided. Please advise your guide of any health issues or previous kayaking experience. A signed waiver is required to participate on this tour. Space on this tour is extremely limited; we suggest you book well in advance to avoid disappointment.

## Sitka Adventure by Private Catamaran | SIT-006

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Moderate | Duration: 3 hours

Explore Alaska's abundant natural beauty and wildlife via private catamaran during this half-day private excursion. It is an ideal option for families and friends, or dinner companions looking for a unique sightseeing experience in one of the more picturesque ports in Alaska.

### Private Catamaran

Depart for a cruise through Sitka Sound. Your 28-foot-long, expedition-style catamaran is specially designed to navigate south east Alaska's narrow island passages and bays, and permit spectacular wildlife viewing at close range. The vessel features a spacious, heated cabin equipped with deluxe seating, a restroom, and galley. Large wrap-around windows and an expansive open-air deck offer excellent viewing opportunities. Light snacks including locally-made chocolate, pastries, smoked salmon, and beverages are included.

### Sitka Sound

As the vessel navigates through the island-studded waters of Sitka Sound, be on the lookout for pristine coastal scenery and a stunning variety of wildlife species that includes whales, sea otters, sea lions, porpoise, seals, and bald eagles. Your captain understands their preferred habitats and patterns of movement, and also knows the best places to explore and photograph awe-inspiring glacier-carved peaks, secluded passages, and other natural wonders. Your Captain will provide commentary about this remarkable ecosystem throughout the tour. Weather permitting, you may wish to circumnavigate the rugged coast of St. Lazaria National Wildlife Refuge breeding grounds for thousands of seabirds, including puffins, auklets, and murre.

Your tour concludes at the pier to rejoin the ship.

**Please note: The price, exclusive of meals, entrance fees and gratuities, is per vehicle/vessel. Therefore, when making your reservation, please indicate the number of vehicles, not the number of guests. The vessel can accommodate up to 6 guests. Although only a minimal amount of walking is**

required, guests must be able to embark/disembark the vessel via steps, requiring some manoeuvrability. If planning to go ashore, guests must be able to walk without difficulty on terrain that can be wet, rocky, and slippery in spots. This tour is not suitable for those who utilise a wheelchair. Guests are advised to dress warmly in layers, wear sturdy, comfortable footwear, and bring a rainproof jacket to wear on the vessel observation deck. Please remember to bring your camera. Vessel is a new 28-ft (8.5 metre), expedition catamaran designed especially for private-party cruising adventures. Cabin is heated with panoramic windows, snack bar, restroom, outside decks, and drop-front bow for beach landings. Complimentary tour-use binoculars are available on board. Availability is extremely limited; we suggest you book in advance to avoid disappointment.

## Raptors and Ravens: Discovering Sitka | SIT-A

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Minimal | Duration: 2.75 hours

Discover Sitka's finest attractions and historic landmarks during this scenic introductory tour of the city.

Depart the pier with a local guide, who provides commentary and points out sites of interest during your scenic transfer to Sitka's raptor hospital. Pass by the Russian Bishop's House, St. Peter's by the Sea Episcopal Church and a National Cemetery en route to a close-up encounter with Alaska's bald eagle.

### **Alaska Raptor Centre**

The Alaska Raptor Centre is an educational facility that provides medical treatment to injured bald eagles and then releases them back into the wild. During your visit, the facility's trained staff escorts you through a variety of exhibits containing bald eagles and other birds of prey. The centre presents a rare opportunity to observe these majestic creatures at close range.

Next, depart for a visit to Alaska's oldest federally-designated cultural and historic park.

### **Sitka National Historical Park**

Upon arrival at the park, you may opt to stroll around independently or join your guide on a short exploration of the rainforest within the park. Your guide will cover a variety of topics that may include edible and medicinal plants found here, totem history, salmon cycles and rain forest ecology. The walk leads into the park museum, where you can learn about the 1804 battle in which the Native Tlingit people fought unsuccessfully against the Russians to retain their ancestral home. Visit with park rangers and see Tlingit artwork in various traditional forms.

During the final transfer see the heart of Sitka, St. Michael's Russian Orthodox Cathedral and Sitka Pioneers Home, from your comfortable coach as you head to the city's community house, Sheet'ka Kwaan Naa Kahidi.

### **Naa Kahidi Tlingit Native Community Clan House**

Next you'll visit a traditional-style Tlingit clan house built on the site of a former native-only government school. The Naa Kahidi Community House features the largest carved housescreen in the Pacific Northwest-the perfect backdrop for capturing your Alaskan memories. Admire the intricate designs on displayed traditional carved paddles as well as a rare Raven's Tail ceremonial robe and even learn to speak a bit of Tlingit with your guide. Your tour concludes with a transfer back to the ship.

Guest on the first morning departure may choose to stay in town. This will allow you to experience a truly unique Alaskan main street on your own, perhaps entering St Michael's Cathedral-the first Russian Orthodox cathedral in America-to view priceless icons and religious artefacts.

Otherwise, following your visit, re-board the coach for the return drive to the pier.

**Please note: A minimal amount of walking is required on this historic tour. It is suitable for guests with limited mobility and those who use a manual wheelchair; however, all guests must be able to embark/disembark the coach via steps. The optional rainforest walk in the park along a gravel parkway is at your discretion. The order of sights may vary.**

## Sea Otter & Wildlife Quest | SIT-B

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Minimal | Duration: 3 hours

Discover Alaska's abundant natural beauty and wildlife during this award-winning cruise through Sitka Sound, one of the world's most beautiful coastal environments. Search for local marine life on this halfday, scenic excursion.

Depart the pier or ship for a cruise through Sitka Sound. Your waterjet-driven tour vessel has been specially-designed to navigate south east Alaska's narrow island passages and bays, permitting spectacular wildlife viewing at close range. The vessel features a warm and comfortable cabin with indoor seating, large windows, a snack bar and restrooms. Or you may opt to visit the upper observation deck for unparalleled photo opportunities, and experience the surroundings with all of your senses.

Be on the lookout for sea otters and a variety of wildlife species during this excursion. Observe and photograph sea otters as you learn about their recovery following near extinction at the hands of Russian fur hunters in the 1800s. Your on-board naturalist guide will offer commentary about this remarkable ecosystem throughout the tour.

Your captain will vary the route to find the best wildlife viewing opportunities and guarantees you will see an otter, a whale, or a bear on the sea portion of your excursion. If not, you will receive \$100 cash refund at the end of the voyage.

Your tour concludes back at the tender pier or directly to the ship.

**Please note: This tour involves a minimal amount of walking; however, guests must be able to embark/disembark the coach and the boat via steps. This tour is not suitable for guests who utilise a wheelchair. Those sensitive to motion should take precautions at least 2-hours prior to tour departure. Vessel has main inside deck with panoramic windows; upper deck is an open observation deck. Tour-use binoculars are available on board as well as a take home souvenir route guide. Shopping is available on small on-board gift shop as well as after the tour (time permitting). USD cash and credit cards are accepted. Dress warmly and bring a rainproof jacket. This tour might be combined with SIT-D Sea Otters, Raptors & Bears.**

## Sea Otters, Raptors & Bears | SIT-D

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Moderate | Duration: 5 hours

Enjoy Sitka's "Triple Crown" of wildlife-viewing experiences: a cruise on the award-winning *Sea Otter & Wildlife Quest*, a guided tour through the world-renowned Alaska Raptor Centre, and a visit to Fortress of the Bear, a sanctuary for orphaned Alaska brown bears and black bears. The cruise portion of this tour features a \$100 "cash back" wildlife sighting guarantee.

First, board a water jet-powered catamaran and set out to explore the marine wilderness, to observe sea otters and other marine and wildlife. An on-board naturalist will explain the workings of this remarkable ecosystem as your skilled Captain manoeuvres the vessel to provide the best-possible views.

Next, take a short coach ride to the renowned Alaska Raptor Centre, where injured birds of prey receive medical treatment. A wildlife interpreter will guide you through the Bald Eagle Flight Building, and introduce you to some of the "raptors in residence" perched in outdoor habitats. You'll then have some time to explore the river trail and enjoy interactive exhibits.

Your adventure continues with a narrated drive along a winding, coastal road to visit the Fortress of the Bear rescue facility at Silver Bay. Here, you can view and photograph brown and black bears up-close from a raised platform, and learn about an Alaskan family's dream: offering a life-saving alternative for bears caught in conflict with their human neighbours.

The cruise portion of this tour guarantees you will observe sea otters, a whale or a bear. If not, you'll receive a \$100 cash refund as you disembark the *Sea Otter & Wildlife Quest* vessel. You will have free time to explore beautiful Sitka on your own after the tour.

Your tour concludes back at the tender pier.

**Please note: This tour involves a moderate amount of walking for approximately 250-300 yards (228275 metres) at the Raptor Centre and Fortress of the Bear. Guests must be able to embark/disembark the coach and the boat via steps. This tour is not suitable for guests who utilise a wheelchair. Those affected by motion sickness should take precautions at least 2-hours prior to the tour. Vessel has main inside deck with restrooms and panoramic windows; second deck is an open observation deck. Dress warmly and bring a rainproof jacket. Participation is limited; we suggest you book in advance to avoid disappointment. Complimentary tour-use binoculars available on the vessel as well as a take home souvenir route guide. There is a small gift shop at the Raptor Centre and Fortress of the Bear as well as on the catamaran. Shopping in Sitka is available after the tour (time permitting). USD cash & credit cards are accepted. This tour might be combined with SIT-B Sea Otter & Wildlife Quest and may operate in reverse order.**

## Ocean Raft Adventure | SIT-E

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Physically fit | Duration: 2.5 hours

Take off on this high-speed adventure excursion aboard a specially-designed ocean raft. Gear up in Coast Guard-style exposure suits and explore the volcanic coast line of Kruzof Island, with towering cliffs where the sea birds are nesting and volcanic sea caves lurk. Race over ocean swells and look for marine wildlife such as whales and sea otters.

## Ocean Rafting

Once introduced to your guide, don your issued equipment which includes a Coast Guard-style exposure suit, balaclava, safety glasses and gloves. Board your open-seating Adventure Raft. Specially-designed straddle seats provide comfortable and secure seating for your exciting trip out into nature. This thrill ride takes you off shore in ocean waters where you travel at up to 40 miles per hour (80 kph) on the waves. Experience a blast of fresh air in the fly over the sea swells while watching seabirds glide past. Watch for whales and sea otters on your way to explore the ravaged volcanic coastline of Kruzof Island. Your raft gets up close to towering cliffs, where sea birds nest and enters (weather permitting) the volcanic sea caves. At opportune times, the captain stops the boat and shuts down the engine so you can listen to the surf crashing off of volcanic cliffs and perhaps the songs of nesting seabirds or the sounds of whales breathing.

After an hour and forty-five minutes in your raft, return to 'terra firma', remove your gear and enjoy a quick snack before your return to the pier.

**Please note: This tour is recommended only for guests in good physical condition. Although little walking is required, guests must be able to manoeuvre in and out of the raft which involves a high step. Ocean ride involves fast acceleration and a bumpy ride that is jolting to the body. This tour is not suitable for guests with limited mobility, back/neck/hip problems, those who are pregnant or suffer from motion sickness or guests who utilise a wheelchair. Participants must be a minimum of 9 years of age, at least 60" tall (153 cm), weigh less than 350 pounds (160 kilograms/25 stone) and be able to fit into exposure suits. Full flotation & cold weather suits are provided as well as hood, glasses and gloves. Dress in layers, bring a jacket and wear sturdy, closed-toe shoes. You may be splashed. Space is extremely limited. Guests must book well in advance to avoid disappointment.**

## Wilderness Sea Kayaking Adventure | SIT-G

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Physically fit | Duration: 3 hours

Explore Sitka from a unique perspective as you travel by rigid hull inflatable to a floating kayaking base for your paddling expedition on this half-day adventure.

Meet your guide on the pier for a brief orientation before being outfitted with your protective raingear and life jacket. Climb aboard the fast, custom-built Seahawk vessel for an exciting sightseeing tour en route to a floating base camp. The knowledgeable captain will scan the sea for wildlife, including whales, and identify points of interest along the way.

Upon arrival at the floating base camp, your guide provides instruction in the use of safe, ocean-going, two-person kayaks. These stable yet manoeuvrable craft let you enjoy the beauty of the protected bays and inlets near Sitka from a serene, natural perspective. Take to the water for a 90-minute paddling excursion, interspersed with the guide's narration on the flora and fauna. Each of the waterways travelled holds unique attractions such as colourful inter-tidal invertebrates, eagle nests in the tree tops, and the lush rain forest. You may even see brown bear, harbour seal, or Sitka black-tailed deer.



Returning to the floating base camp, you are greeted with warm refreshments before re-boarding the Seahawk vessel for the 15-minute cruise back to the tender pier.

**Please note: This tour is recommended only for guests in good physical condition and requires up to 90-minutes of paddling. Although a minimal amount of walking is required, guests must be able to climb into the boat and kayak. It is not suitable for guests with limited mobility or those who utilise a wheelchair. Tour is conducted in 2-person kayaks in groups of up to 6 kayaks. We suggest you dress in layers and wear footwear that can get wet; rain gear & life jackets are provided. Bring extra pair of clean dry socks. Guests taller than 6'3" (190 centimetres) will not be able to steer with foot pedals and will be without a rudder. Guests must weigh between 40 and 250 pounds (18-113 kilograms/3-18 stone) and sign a waiver to participate. The minimum age to participate is 6 years. Children 6 to 12 years of age must to be accompanied by an adult. Children ages 13 to 17 must have a signed parental consent form to participate in the absence of a parent or guardian. We strongly suggest to book well in advance as space is very limited.**

## Tongass Rainforest Hike | SIT-I

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Physically fit | Duration: 3 hours

Explore the flora, fauna, and history of the Tongass National Forest, the world's largest temperate rain forest and the largest national forest in the United States, during this scenic hike.

### **Starrigavin Muskeg Trail**

Depart the pier for the coach transfer to the trailhead of Starrigavin Muskeg Trail. Next, disembark the coach and proceed along the path during a gradual, half-mile (800-metre) walk to the surrounding muskeg, or peat bog area. Upon arrival, your guide offers insight into the abundance of plants that thrive in the moist, acidic soil. This site also offers splendid mountain views in clear weather.

### **Bird-Viewing**

Next, continue to Starrigavin Creek and proceed along the half-mile (800-metre) level boardwalk through the Starrigavin Estuary bird-viewing area. Keep your eyes peeled for great blue herons and other birds as you cross a stream that teems with salmon when they are in season.

Your walk then proceeds to the 1.5-mile (2.5-kilometre) Mosquito Cove Loop Trail, where the hiking path climbs approximately 300 feet (90 metres) to the highest point. The final trail provides mountain views and a variety of unique plant life that exists in Alaska's Muskegs. From here, follow the beach back to the campground and on to Old Sitka, the site of the first Russian encounter with Baranof Island.

At the end of the hike, re-board your coach for the return drive to the pier.

**Please note: This tour involves a hike of approximately 2-4 miles (3.2-6.4 kilometres), and is recommended only for guests in good physical condition. Participants set the pace of this tour, which means that the total distance covered may vary per group. It is not suitable for guests with limited mobility or those who utilise a wheelchair. Minimum age requirement for this tour is 8 years old. Participants must sign a waiver. Dress warmly in layers and wear sturdy, comfortable walking shoes. This tour operates in all weather conditions; rain gear is provided. Space is limited.**

## Sitka Bike & Hike Adventure | SIT-J

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Physically fit | Duration: 3 hours

Experience the outdoors of Sitka and its environs during this half-day bike and hike adventure. Your four-mile (6.4-kilometre) ride on a gently rolling coastal road is combined with a one-mile hike through the dramatic Tongass National Forest for a truly memorable outing.

After tendering ashore, a 15-minute drive takes you to Silver Bay where you are greeted by your guide. After being equipped with a mountain bike and mandatory helmet, listen to a short safety briefing. Begin pedalling along the gentle, coastal road for the approximately two-mile (three-kilometre) ride to Thimbleberry. Stop to admire the mountain views and the beautiful coastline and take photos of eagles and other wildlife you may encounter before arriving at Thimbleberry Trail.

At Thimbleberry, dismount your bike, remove your helmet and set-off on your hike of about one mile (1.5 kilometres) through Alaska's temperate rainforest, Tongass National Forest. This trek includes walking up a slight grade, crossing several low bridges, and passing a waterfall en route, with several stops along the lake's beach to look for wildlife and view the amazing surroundings. Return to your bike for the ride to Whale Park for a brief stop to admire the view from its beautiful overlooks. Scan for the blow of a humpback whale and the splash of a sea lion using fixed binoculars. See life-sized whale art and listen to live undersea sounds via a hydrophone.

Afterwards, peddle back to Silver Bay to re-board the coach for the drive back to the pier.

**Please note: This tour is recommended only for guests in good physical condition. It is not suitable for guests with limited mobility or those who utilise a wheelchair. Expect a gently rolling 4 mile (6.4 km) bicycle ride and 1 mile (1.6 km) of hiking. All riders are required to wear a provided helmet. The entrance to Whale Park is via steep stairways. Dress in layers and wear closed-toe shoes. Rain gear, pants and jackets are provided when needed; it is recommended to bring a bottle of water from the ship (available at the gangway). This tour operates rain or shine. Storage is provided for items not needed during the tour. Guests must sign a waiver and be a minimum of 4'10" (148 cm) tall. The minimum participation age is 8 years. Space is limited.**

## 4x4 Nature Safari Adventure (Self-Driven) | SIT-K

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Minimal | Duration: 3.5 hours

Cruise by boat through the scenic islands of Sitka Sound, gear-up and board your 4X4 for an exhilarating ride through the temperate rainforest on this true Alaska adventure.

This exclusive, 4X4 off-road excursion allows you the chance to experience the Alaskan wilderness on Kruzof Island. A brief van transfer takes you to the dock to board a boat for a 30-minute ride through the scenic islands and channels of Sitka Sound. Along the way, listen as the captain narrates your journey and helps you to spot marine life such as whales, seals, sea otters, and sea birds. The captain will also add narrative to enhance the passing view.

4x4 Off-Roading

Your guides greet you as the boat arrives at the landing on Kruzof Island and provide both your gear and a safety briefing, before you board a two-person, 4x4 off-road vehicle. Once instructed in the vehicle's operation, the guide leads the exhilarating ride through south east Alaska's lush temperate rainforest. Stop at Iris Meadows estuary, where the grounds are full of Alaska's beautiful vegetation and wild flowers, making it a great place to look for Alaskan brown bears and Sitka black tail deer, both common to the area. Take photographs and enjoy a beverage and a homemade snack. Then drivers will have the chance to switch positions re-board your RHINO and begin the ride back to the boat landing area.

Along the way, stop for a short walk on a bridge over a rushing river where salmon may be seen during spawning season.

The waiting boat will return you to town. Once in Sitka, a van transfers you back to the tender pier.

**Please note: This tour requires a minimal amount of walking, however 4X4 off-roading involves a bumpy ride that is jolting to the body. This tour is not suitable for guests with limited mobility, back/neck/hip problems, those who are pregnant or suffer from motion sickness or guests who utilise a wheelchair. Participants must sign a waiver and be a minimum of 9 years to participate; those wishing to drive the 4X4 vehicles must be a minimum of 18 years of age and possess a valid license. Guests ride two per 4X4 vehicle. The trails may be wet and muddy; wear suitable clothing that can get splashed with water and/or wet mud. Dress in layers, bring a jacket, and wear sturdy, closed-toe shoes. This tour operates in the Tongass National Forest under a Special Use Permit issued by the U.S. Forest Service. Space is extremely limited. Guests should book well in advance to avoid disappointment. Animal sightings cannot be guaranteed.**

## Remote Alaska Fly Fishing | SIT-O

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Moderate | Duration: 6 hours | A meal is included in the excursion.

Experience the thrill of fly-fishing on remote southeast Alaskan rivers during this relaxing, full-day fishing excursion to the Tongass National Forest.

Depart the pier for a short drive to the fly-fishing shop where you will purchase your Alaska Sport Fishing License, receive your safety and tour instructions and fishing gear. Afterward, embark your awaiting, aluminum runabout boat, which was custom-built to ensure easy access to the shoreline and a fast, comfortable ride. After 30 minutes boat ride, get ashore then proceed to a remote river on the Tongass National Forest which almost no one else fishes. Depending upon the rivers with the best fishing for species that are in season, your guide decides which river is best to fish that day.

### Fly-Fishing and Lunch

Upon arrival at the river selected, begin your approximately four-hour fly-fishing session. These excursions typically target steelhead, salmon, trout and char, depending on what is running, and there are always dollies available when there are salmon in the rivers. Possible wildlife sightings include Alaskan coastal brown bears, Sitka black-tail deer and eagles. This fishing trip includes all wading and fishing gear, snacks, beverages, and lunch served onshore. All fishing is catch-and-release only. At the conclusion of your fishing excursion, re-board the boat for the approximately 30 min ride back to town, return your gear and return back to the pier.

**Please note: This tour involves an extensive amount of walking and standing for approximately 1.24 miles (about two kilometres), at times over uneven and slippery surfaces, with a few steps to negotiate to get on/off the coach and embark/disembark the boat. This tour is not suitable for guests prone to motion sickness, guests with limited mobility and guests who utilise a wheelchair. Guests are advised to wear warm, comfortable clothing in layers with tall socks and flat, closed-toe walking shoes, and bring sun protection, a towel and weatherproof jacket from the ship. Waders up to Size 3XL, boots up to Size 14, raingear (if needed) and fishing equipment is provided. Guests must be at least 12 years old to participate on this tour. A signed waiver is required to participate on this tour. This tour operates in the Tongass National Forest under a Special Use Permit issued by the U.S. Forest Service. Guests are required to pay a US\$25 fishing license fee to participate on this tour. Although frequently encountered on this type of tour, wildlife, fish and marine life sightings are not guaranteed. Operation of this tour is subject to weather conditions. Space on this tour is extremely limited; we suggest you book well in advance to avoid disappointment.**

## Back-Country Hiking Adventure | SIT-P

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Physically fit | Duration: 5.5 hours

Indulge your senses with the pristine natural beauty of the Tongass National Forest during this half-day, back-country hiking excursion.

### **Sitka, Boat-Ride, Camp Coogan Bay, Residential Float-House**

Depart the pier aboard a boat for the scenic, approximately 30-minute ride to a residential floating house in scenic Camp Coogan Bay. Upon arrival, gear up at the float-house; rain suits, boots, backpacks, and snack lunches are provided.

### **Tongass National Forest Hike, Waterfall, Old Growth Forest, Muskeg, Lake, Campfire**

Next, begin your guided hike in the Tongass National Forest. Hike past a lovely waterfall in an old growth forest, then through a muskeg (bog) to a beautiful, upper-elevation lake. Upon arrival, a temporary camp is set up for a snack, which includes an opportunity to cook hot dogs over a campfire and make s'mores, a favourite campfire treat. If time allows, inflatable kayaks are provided for optional lake paddling, as well as fishing gear for those wishing to try their luck for trout.

### **Wildlife, Boat-Ride, Float-House**

Wildlife sightings may include whales, bear, deer, sea lions, sea otters, seals, eagles, spawning salmon, and a variety of seabirds and songbirds. At the conclusion of your tour, hike back to the float-house, then embark your boat for the approximately 30-minute ride back to the pier.

**Please note: This tour involves an extensive amount of hiking for approximately 1.5 miles (about 2.4 kilometres), at times over uneven, steep, muddy, slippery, and cobblestone surfaces and inclines, with a few steps to negotiate to embark/disembark the boat. This tour is recommended for guests that are in good physical condition. This tour is not suitable for pregnant guests, guest with neck and/or back problems, guests with heart and/or respiratory conditions, guests prone to motion sickness, guests with limited mobility, and guests who utilise a wheelchair. Guests are advised to wear comfortable clothing in layers with tall socks and flat, closed-toe, and non-slip hiking boots, and bring sun**

protection, a towel, backpack, and raingear from the ship. Guests must be at least seven years old to participate on this tour. A signed waiver is required to participate on this tour. Although frequently encountered on this type of tour, wildlife, fish and marine life sightings are not guaranteed. Operation of this tour is subject to weather conditions. Space on this tour is extremely limited; we suggest you book well in advance to avoid disappointment.

## Alaska Zodiac Adventure & Fin Island Lodge | SIT-Q

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Moderate | Duration: 3.75 hours | A meal is included in the excursion.

Experience the spectacular coastline, wildlife and flavours of Alaska in a unique new way during this panoramic, half-day cruise excursion with lunch.

### Sitka, Zodiac Boat-Ride

Depart the pier for the short walk to your awaiting Zodiac boat. These nimble vessels provide an opportunity for exploration of shallow-water areas not accessible to larger craft, and offer guests a unique and up-close view of Sitka's amazing biodiversity. Upon arrival, receive your safety and tour instructions, along with waterproof gear to help keep you dry during the expedition (this gear is not insulated, so guests are advised to dress in warm layers of synthetic materials or wools, regardless of the weather). Afterward, begin your scenic, approximately two-hour Zodiac exploration with a cruise along the Sitka coast.

### Rainforest Islands, Reefs, Rock Pinnacles, Kelp Forest and Wildlife Search

Adjacent to Sitka lies a network of dozens of picturesque, rainforest islands that provide a barrier from the swell of the open Pacific Ocean. As your captain skilfully navigates these island groups, see reefs and rock pinnacles that jut out of the water, and provide lookout perches for bald eagles and beautiful seabirds. A look downward reveals rapidly growing kelp forests that disappear into the depths of the sound. In shallow water areas, inaccessible to larger craft, you may even notice sea stars, anemones, and other invertebrates. This area is teeming with wildlife, including sea otters, whales, and sea lions. Your captain is trained to approach animals in a way that does not disturb their natural behaviour, providing excellent photography and viewing opportunities.

### Fin Island Lodge, Lunch, Beach and Campfire

Next, proceed for a 'Fin Island Feast' at the Fin Island Lodge. Upon arrival, disembark the zodiac and walk to the lodge. Here, indulge in Alaska king crab, wild salmon cooked over an alder wood-fired grill, prime rib, homemade side dishes, and dessert are included. In addition, coffee, tea, cocoa, lemonade, and water are all complimentary. Alaskan-brewed beers, wine, and soft drinks are available for purchase at the expense of each guest. After lunch, some free time is made available to explore the beach and beautiful grounds of this exclusive island, or simply relax next to a cosy beach fire and take in the stunning vistas of Sitka Sound. At the conclusion of your visit, embark your zodiac and commence the short cruise back to the boat-dock.

**Please note: This tour involves a moderate amount of walking for approximately 0.5 miles (about 0.8 kilometres), at times over uneven, gravel, and slippery surfaces and inclines, with a few steps to negotiate to embark/disembark the Zodiac boat, 200 steps up the dock and stairs from the beach to**

**the lodge. This tour is recommended for guests who are in good physical condition. This tour is not suitable for pregnant guests, guests with neck and/or back problems, guests suffering from motion sickness, guests with limited mobility, and guests who utilise a wheelchair. Guests are advised to dress warmly in layers of synthetic materials or wool, with tall socks and sturdy, flat, closed-toe, and non-slip hiking boots. Raingear and a life vest are provided. Guests must be at least three years old to participate on this tour. Although frequently encountered on this type of tour, wildlife sightings are not guaranteed. The tour sequence may vary. Operation of this tour is subject to weather conditions. Space on this tour is very limited; we suggest you book in advance to avoid disappointment. The tour might run in reverse order. If the lodge will be visited in the morning, a breakfast twist option will be offered.**

**OPTIONAL Shore Excursions.**

Tours and Itineraries are subject to change and availability. Contact Cruise Connections for details and pricing.

Toll Free: 1-866-796-WAVE (9283) | Email: [info@cruise-connections.com](mailto:info@cruise-connections.com) | [www.cruise-connections.com](http://www.cruise-connections.com)

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