

Alaska Iditarod Tours

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Alaska Iditarod Tours' 11 Day Race Start and McGrath Checkpoint Tour

Dates: Feb. 27 – March 8

Tuesday Arrival- You will have to take a taxi or Uber from the airport to the Hilton as downtown hotels do not have shuttles. Your room reservations at the Hilton will be under your name when you check-in.

Wednesday- We will meet in the Hilton Lobby at 12:00 pm with a 12:30 pm departure to Big Lake and the Alaska Mushing School. You will be asked to sign a Waiver of Liability that is required before boarding the bus. Dinner- You will receive a \$25 gift certificate when we meet to use at the Bruins Pub in the Hilton, or you can eat out and use the certificate to cover a buffet breakfast.

Thursday - 8:30 departure to the Alaska Wildlife Center and Alyeska Ski Resort. We orient you to the resort and shuttle service in Girdwood and will pay for clients wishing to take the tram ride up the mountain. We are scheduled to depart Alyeska at 3:00. If you have booked optional activities through the resort, plan to be back by then. Group will meet in the hotel lobby at 4:30 and walk 10 minutes to the Dena ina Convention Center for the Iditarod Banquet Meet and Greet, followed by the Musher Banquet at 6:00. Admission tickets will be provided by AIT at the door. The default serving at the banquet is steak. Vegetarian and gluten free servings are available on request .

Friday- Friday morning is free time to explore downtown Anchorage. The group will meet for a group lunch at 12:00 at Sullivan's Steakhouse in 5th Ave. Mall. Fixed menu for the lunch is in this packet. Lunch will be followed by a tour to the Anchorage Museum of History and Art with insight to Alaska's history and land ownership provided by your tour guide.

Saturday - Clients are on their own to watch the Cermonial Race Start on 4th Ave followed by the running of the reindeer at 4:00 pm . We will provide information regarding where on 4th Ave. to watch the race on the Thursday

bus ride to Alyeska. Clients wishing to participate in the Running of the Reindeer can register at this website:

<https://www.furrondy.net/events/running-of-the-reindeer/>. This is a fun event with many participants wearing creative costumes. We will have a group dinner at the Glacier Brewhouse at 6:00 pm. Each client will receive a \$50 gift certificate to use at the restaurant as they wish for food and tip.

Sunday- 10:00 am departure for the Iditarod Museum in Wasilla followed by the race start in Willow at 2:00 pm. We will return to Anchorage after the start, stopping for a group dinner in Wasilla.

Monday : Today we fly to the community of McGrath on the Kuskokwim River. You will be given the flight schedule when we meet in Anchorage, limit your luggage to a 50 lb check-in bag and a 10 lb carry on. We will have a 1:00 pm group lunch at the Iditarod Trail Cafe. After lunch the group will take a guided walking tour to explore the town of McGrath and learn about the history of the Iditarod mining district. Dinner will be held at the Hotel McGrath with seating from 6:00 pm -7:00 pm.

Tuesday: Today we will fly to the Athabaskan community of Nikolai and watch as the lead mushers come in from their grueling travels through the Alaska Range and the Farewell Bend. The 1st flight will depart McGrath at 8:30 am. Nikolai is a great place to watch the mushers care for their dogs and experience a bit of life in a remote Native village. It is the furthest community up the Kuskokwim River that was visited by Russian explorers and the Russian Orthodox Church is still active in the community. Lunch will be provided in Nikolai. In the late afternoon we will return to McGrath and spend the evening watching the lead mushers come into the McGrath checkpoint. Dinner will be held at the Hotel McGrath from 6:00 pm -7:00 pm(Continental Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Wednesday : Today is a day to spend at the checkpoint watching teams entering and leaving McGrath. Many of the teams take their mandatory 24 hour layover at the McGrath checkpoint and being here is a great opportunity to watch how the mushers and vets care for the dog teams. (Continental Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Thursday : This morning is a great opportunity to spend more time at the checkpoint with the mushers and their teams. In the afternoon we will take a walk across the river and explore the remains of Old Town McGrath, the site

of the original trading post and community that was abandoned when the Takotna River shifted and the main channel broke through to the Kuskokwim River further downstream. (Continental Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Friday : Today we leave McGrath and return to Anchorage. (Continental Breakfast). Flight times TBD.