

Alaska Iditarod Tours

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21 Day Iditarod Race Extravaganza Itinerary February 27-March 18

Tuesday- 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 emailed flight details 2 weeks before the tour begins, 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. (Lunch, Dinner)

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 Burn. 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. We will have a 1:00 pm group lunch at the Iditarod Trail Cafe. Dinner will be held at the Hotel McGrath from 6:00 pm -7:00 pm (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. We will have a 1:00 pm group lunch at the Iditarod Trail Cafe. Dinner will be held at the Hotel McGrath from 6:00 pm -7:00 pm (Continental Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Friday : Today we leave McGrath and return to Anchorage. You will be emailed flight details 2 weeks for the return 2 weeks before the tour begins, limit your luggage to a 50 lb check-in bag and a 10 lb carry on. Clients are on their own for lunch and dinner. Lodging at the Hilton provided (Continental Breakfast)

Saturday: Today is a free day in Anchorage and a good time to visit the local art galleries and attractions in Anchorage. Clients can also rent a car and take a scenic 60 minute drive along Turnagain Arm to the community of Girdwood and

Alyeska Ski Resort. Skiers and snowboarders will enjoy fantastic runs and spectacular views from the mountain. Non-skiers can still take the tram half way up the mountain for a lunch with the same great views or schedule an incredible helicopter tour of the Chugach Mtns or snowmobile tour. These activities can be arranged through the Alyeska Resort Concierge at 1-800-880-3880. Lodging at the Hilton provided.

Sunday : Welcome to the Bering Sea and historic Nome Alaska! Clients arrive into historic Nome Alaska on their own flights. Tour leader will be there to meet you at the airport and bring you to your accommodation. Famous for the Nome Gold Rush of 1898 that saw the population balloon to over 10,000, this rugged town of 3,500 on the coast of Norton Sound is still a magnet for the adventurous and those with gold fever. Even during the winter, evidence of active gold mining can be seen out on the frozen sea where underwater exploration takes place under the sea ice. Clients will be on their own for meals today. **NOTE: CLIENTS BOOK THEIR OWN FLIGHTS TO NOME.**

Monday :Today we will get a feel for the history of Nome on a guided tour with local resident Carol Gales of Roam Nome. This informative tour will show you interesting points around town, such as Gold Dredge #7 and will explore Nome's vibrant gold mining history. See why the Nome Gold Rush drew such noted personalities such as Wyatt Earp to its shores. With a history of settlement for thousands of years by the Inupiat people of Alaska, and headquarters for the Sitnasuak Native Village Corporation and the Bering Straits Regional Native Corporation, Nome is a perfect place to see the integration of modern society into the lives of its traditional inhabitants. Visit the Native Arts and Craft Fair with fine examples of fur hats, mittens gloves, ivory carving etc... by local artists.
(Continental Breakfast, Dinner)

Tuesday : Today is the day that the Nome party usually clicks into high gear as the leaders approach the finish line. After seeing the teams at Unalakleet, you will be excited and primed for your dog mushing excursion with The Dog Lot Kennel. Here is an opportunity to see sled dogs up close, watch how experienced dog handlers interact with the dogs and appreciate how fast and powerful a team of sled dogs are as you negotiate the winding, icy trail with your team handler. Later in the afternoon we will visit the Nome Museum and listen to an informative talk about the history of the Iditarod Race presented by Howard Farley. Howard was one of the organizers of the Iditarod Race and one of the first mushers to run the race. Late evening or early Wednesday morning is when the 1st musher usually arrives in Nome and we will be there to cheer on the top finishers as they cross the finish. You will be amazed at how energetic these champion teams are as they strut

their stuff down Front St. to claim their place in Iditarod history. (Continental Breakfast, Dinner)

Wednesday: Morning flight along the coastline to the village of White Mountain where we will watch the mushers care for their dog teams as they take a mandatory 8 hour layover. (Continental Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Thursday : Today clients will take a scenic helicopter ride to the Safety Roadhouse checkpoint. This 90-minute ride along the coast is always the highlight of the tour as it gives us more opportunities to view the mushers heading to Nome along the Iditarod Trail and at the roadhouse. We often spot muskox in the surrounding hills on this flight. Your flight time will be determined on Wednesday (Continental Breakfast, Dinner)

Friday : We will get a greater appreciation for the history of Nome with a guided tour at the Nome Museum and the Cultural Center at 12:00 pm. Clients will continue cheering arriving dog teams as they cross the finish line. (Continental Breakfast, Dinner)

Saturday : Saturday morning is when clients can attend the mushers meet and greet for autographs and photos. Clients can also participate in teams AIT will organize for the Bering Ice Golf Classic, definitely the most unusual and challenging course you will ever play. Mushers will still be arriving into Nome and this is your last chance to pickup that beautiful fur hat, muskox scarf or incredibly warm fur mittens you have been admiring at the Art and Craft Fair.(Continental Breakfast, Dinner)

Sunday : St Patrick's Day!!! Each year our client's join the community in Celebrating St Patricks Day by participating the parade down Front St. to the Burl Arch. Later in the afternoon we will attend the Iditarod Finishers and Awards Banquet, recognizing mushers for their accomplishments during the race. This is a great opportunity to get a more personal understanding of the mushers and their experiences along the trail. You will hear fantastic stories as the mushers tell their tales from the race. (Continental Breakfast, Dinner)

Monday : Clients return to Anchorage on their own flights. (Continental Breakfast)

Getting around Nome: AIT will shuttle clients around as time and our schedule allow, but most clients walk around town or use one of the many taxis to get around.

Physical Requirements for this tour:

In Nome- The streets and sidewalks of Nome are always icy. It is recommended you wear grippers on your boots while walking around town. Clients staying at the Sluicebox Inn have a $\frac{1}{2}$ mile walk to the finish line on Front St.

In Unalakleet- The airport runway is $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from the checkpoint in Unalakleet. There is no cab service in Unalakleet and clients should plan on walking this distance. In the past we have been able to secure rides back to the airport from the checkpoint for those that need them, but it is not something we can guarantee.