

Your Destination Portfolio

to

Alaska & the Inside Passage



Holland America's ms Westerdam

August 3-10, 2025



CRUISING "NORTH TO ALASKA" WITH CARIE MCGHIE

Honoring the Life of DANIELA STOUT with Kathy & Mo

Prepared Especially for You

by

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ALASKA



More than twice the size of Texas, Alaska is the largest state in the USA, a land of vast natural splendor, abundant wildlife and few people. It offers unique experiences such as walking in unspoiled wilderness, spectacular cruising through the fjords of the Inside Passage, and frontier towns rich in gold rush history.

Its sense of undiscovered wilderness and promise of adventure is still as strong today as it was in the past and having attracted thousands of pioneers in search of gold, fur, fishing, logging and oil, this 'Last Frontier' today lures travelers in search of unspoiled beauty and close encounters with nature.

The southeast epitomizes classic Alaskan scenery, with its fjords, mountains, forests and glaciers. Alaska is one of the top cruise destinations in the world and the main drawcard for visitors to this region is the lack of roads between towns and scenic wonders that make the waters of the Inside Passage a major marine highway ideal for ship travel. The number one attraction in the interior heartland is Denali National Park, an area of untamed magnificence that also encompasses North America's highest mountain, the snow-covered Mt McKinley.

Despite a reputation for high prices and inhospitable winters, millions of people have discovered a piece of America that is worth every dollar. Nowhere else can that frontier feeling be truly experienced, a place where wilderness surrounds every part of the Alaskan way of life.

HOLLAND AMERICA'S ms Westerdam
Sailing Round trip out of Seattle, Washington
August 3-10, 2025

Itinerary

Date	Port	Arrive	Depart
Sunday, August 3	<u>Seattle, WA</u>		3:00pm
Sunday, August 3	<u>Puget Sound, WA</u> (Cruising)		
Monday, August 4	At Sea		
Tuesday, August 5	<u>Stephens Passage, AK</u> (Cruising) - watch for whales!		
Tuesday, August 5	<u>Juneau, AK</u>	12:30pm	10:30pm
Wednesday, August 6	<u>Endicott Arm/Dawes Glacier, AK</u> (Cruising)		
Thursday, August 7	<u>Sitka, AK</u>	8:00am	4:00pm
Friday, August 8	<u>Ketchikan, AK</u>	7:00am	1:00pm
Saturday, August 9	<u>Victoria, BC, Canada</u>	8:00pm	11:59pm
Sunday, August 10	<u>Seattle, WA</u>	7:00am	

JUNEAU, ALASKA

All photos taken by Barbara Carpenter

Juneau is the capital of Alaska. It is accessible only by air or water. While there are roads in and around the city itself, there are no highways leading to or from it. Juneau is the only city that has a glacier inside the city limits – Mendenhall Glacier.

Mendenhall Glacier is only 13 miles from downtown and quite close to the airport. It is accessible. It is one of 38 glaciers that flow from the Juneau Ice field, which sits just behind the city. The Ice field covers 1,500 square miles. The Taku River east of Juneau and 90 miles to Skagway. The Forest Service has a wonderful Visitor's Center at Mendenhall that is fully accessible for those with challenges. Tours are offered to the glacier



is quite from the Juneau. from the north to

Glacier mobility including

rafting trips down the Mendenhall River and hiking all around the area. You can also access it easily through the city transit system.



Glaciers appear to us to be a solid mass of frozen ice and appear to be perfectly still. But, in fact, they are constantly moving and flowing downhill just like a river. There is a mystical blue color that comes off the glaciers. That blue is from the unique crystalline structure that absorbs and reflects light. The deepest blue occurs in the crevasses and

when the ice breaks off or calves into the icy waters below. There is nothing more spectacular than seeing your first tidewater glacier and watch as it cracks and breaks off, then comes crashing down. The blue colors fade as the ice is exposed to the air and the crystalline structure begins to break down. The waters below the glacier amazed me and I am still in awe of the grayish/blue/aquamarine crystal clear waters. The color is incredible and difficult to describe. But believe me, once you've seen it, you'll understand what I'm trying to describe.



Juneau sits in the middle of the Gastineau Channel on the Inside Passage. It is a fabulous jumping off spot to go whale watching. We have done this and not only saw humpbacks but also came across a pod of orca/killer whales as well as hundreds of stellar sea lions basking in the sun and barking as they jumped in and out of the water. Juneau is also the jumping off spot for float plane trips to the Tracy Arm Fjord and the Twin Sawyer Glaciers. It is only about 45 miles south of Juneau. There is the North Sawyer Glacier and the South Sawyer Glacier. In addition to bear, deer, wolves, harbor seals and a variety of birds, you may also see some mountain goats.



In addition to the whale watching, Juneau is also home to many black bears that weigh anywhere from 200-600 pounds. They are often spotted around the city and are also found over on Admiralty Island, which is directly across the Channel from Juneau.



There is also a salmon hatchery in Juneau; and it is really interesting to take the tour and learn about their fishing industry. This is a most common place to spot bald eagles. And, if you happen to see a lot of eagles congregating in one area, most likely that will be a good fishing spot, as they are great fishermen themselves! I've had the pleasure of seeing a bald eagle take flight right before my eyes in the harbor in Juneau. When he spread his wings, I could see all the beautiful colors under his wings. It was amazing – so majestic and graceful!

Another popular attraction in Juneau is the Mt. Roberts tramway. It climbs from sea level up to the tree line at 1800 feet. The structure contains the loading and unloading platforms and a 3000 square foot viewing platform at the top and is connected by a bridge to the Mt. Roberts Observatory building which houses a restaurant, 2 gift shops, a theater, and restrooms. Nearby are the Mt. Roberts Nature Center owned by Gastineau Guiding, and a kiosk operated by the Juneau Raptor Center where a live Bald Eagle (one that cannot fly) can be seen. We have never been able to take the tram up to Mt. Roberts as it has always been raining when we have been there. But, it is definitely on our Bucket List and something we are going to try to check off the list in 2010 during one of our visits to Alaska. The picture to the left is courtesy of the Juneau Convention and Visitors Bureau.



We have eaten lunch at the Twisted Fish Co. in Juneau and thoroughly enjoyed the ambience of the building and the delicious fried shrimp and fish & chips. And, we have peeked inside the Red Dog Saloon, which is perhaps one of the most famous watering holes in Alaska. However, it would not be my first choice to go for a meal.



KETCHIKAN, ALASKA

All photos taken by Barbara Carpenter

Ketchikan is generally the first stop on an Inside Passage cruise either going round trip from Vancouver or Seattle and also for the northbound 7-day cruises going up to Seward or Whittier from Vancouver. Or, it will most probably be your last port of call on a southbound cruise. No matter when it is that you arrive, Ketchikan is a very fun town.

The first time we visit a new port, we feel that we should take the obligatory “city tour” to kind of get a feel for the area and what it has to offer. From there, we make our decisions of what we want to go back to and look into further. And, so, yes, we have taken the city tour of Ketchikan. It is actually very interesting; and you will learn about the historic Creek Street which is a Gold Rush historic landmark for the “red light district”. Creek Street is now home to many native art galleries and book stores. On your tour, you’ll hear stories all sorts of fun stories of the antics of people from the late 1890’s.



great view of the downtown and Tongass Narrows. Also there is a spectacular Southeast Alaska Discovery Center at 50 Main Street, just one block from the cruise ship dock. There are displays and guided tours available. If you have any lingering questions about natural Alaska, you'll find your answers here.

Ketchikan is home to one of the largest totem pole national parks. I believe there are about 12-15 totems there including a clan house. When you visit the park, your guide will explain what all of the symbols mean. Each totem has a specific meaning. They are each different in their own right because they tell a story. Each is specific to a certain Indian clan and the guides can tell you the history of each totem.

Ketchikan lies in the heart of the 16.8 million-acre Tongass National Forest, the nation's largest, and the Discovery Center showcases the region's natural and cultural history. Among the highlights are exhibits on totem poles, ecosystems, native traditions, Alaska's rainforest and natural resources. There's also a "fish cam" where visitors can view steelhead trout and the four types of salmon that spawn in Ketchikan Creek.

Halfway up the street and right across from the cruise ship dock, there is a tram that whisks passengers up a hill to a hotel, restaurant and civic center complex that has a



The totems at Totem Bright Park are replicas. They were meticulously reconstructed and are preserved today by the Alaska State Parks. We have been to the Totem Bight Park and have been inside of the clan house. It is very interesting to learn about the native heritage and traditions from the tour guides. There is also the Totem Heritage Center in Ketchikan which was started in 1976 to preserve the original totems found in uninhabited Tlingit and Haida village sites near Ketchikan. These original poles are on display as well as original artifacts from the Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian tribes.



North America and averages about 170 inches of rain per year. So, make sure you bring a light rain slicker and grab an umbrella, because you will most likely need it at some point during your day.



We have also taken a “Duck Tour”, which I highly recommend. You will start off on land in an amphibious vehicle and learn about the history of the area much the same as on the regular city tour. However, it differs from the bus tour and the best part comes when the tour guide drives the vehicle right into the Tongass Narrows and continues his descriptions of what you are seeing while you are cruising along in the water. When our vehicle drove into the water, the Captain cruised along the shoreline and past the small boat harbor. Perched on one of the rocks in the water was a beautiful bald eagle. Suddenly, the eagle was spooked by the noise of the boat engine and took flight right before our eyes. It was absolutely breathtaking to watch this majestic bird take flight. It was one of the real highlights of that tour for me.

Be aware, that it rains a lot in Ketchikan. Ketchikan has the heaviest rainfall in



SITKA, ALASKA

All photographs taken by Barbara Carpenter

Sitka, Alaska is located on the west side of Baranof Island. It is the fourth largest city in Alaska, and was named by the native Tlingit's. The name Sitka means "People on the Outside of the Shee". Shee is the native name for Baranof Island. Old Sitka was founded in 1799 by Alexander Baranof, the governor of Russian America who came under the auspices of forming a "semi-official" colonial trading company. The Russians were overthrown by the Tlingits, but eventually returned. The Russian flag was lowered and the American flag was raised on the day that Alaska was purchased by the United States in 1867. Sitka's past is a blend of Tlingit culture and Russian History. Sitka is situated on the outer waters of the Inside Passage and is accessible only by air and sea. The have annual rainfall of approximately 95 inches a year and are considered to be in a temperate rain forest. Nearby waters are popular feeding grounds for humpback whales in late fall and early spring. The wildlife adds to Sitka's charm and beauty.



Saint Michael's Russian Orthodox Church, which sits in the center of town, was built in 1848. The original church burned to the ground and rebuilt in 1966. The church is probably the most distinctive landmark in Sitka and it's now turquoise, copper dome stands out on the horizon as you look down the main street. Inside the Church now, there is a museum. It costs only a small donation to enter. There are some beautiful artifacts and native art inside that are quite interesting to look at. It is not large and does not take much time to go through.

While walking around town, we came across the Sitka Pioneer's Home which is built on the old Russian parade grounds. There is a small gift shop located on the first floor where you can buy native handicrafts. It is interesting to walk around and see the beautiful gardens. On the front lawn, there is a tall, bronze statue of William "Skagway Bill" Fonda, a Sitka pioneer.

There are several places of interest and lots of things to do and see in Sitka. The Raptor Center is very interesting and the Center's goal is to release back into the wild all rehabilitated birds of prey. Unfortunately, there are some who will never be released back into the wild because of the damage they have endured. Those birds are part of the outdoor displays.

You might also want to visit the Sitka National Historical Park which contains a wonderful exhibit of Tlingit totem poles and has a great museum which houses many original totems as well as Tlingit and Russian Artifacts.

In addition, Sitka has a wonderful Whale Park which gives visitors a chance to view wildlife from a boardwalk. It would not be unusual to see humpback whales in the late fall and early spring. Whale Park is located about six miles south of downtown and has a small picnic area and viewing scopes. There is also a hydrophone located in the main shelter where you can listen to the whales as they talk to each other.

VICTORIA, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA

All photographs taken by Barbara Carpenter

Victoria is the capital of British Columbia; and is located on the southern tip of Vancouver Island. Victoria has a temperate climate with mild, damp winters and relatively dry, mild summers.

One of the most beautiful things to see in Victoria are the hanging baskets of flowers on the city's lampposts. They are beautiful, bright colors with intense scents that symbolize Victoria's passion for gardening. Flowers bloom year round in Victoria which makes for magnificent colors in all four seasons. We have visited Victoria in May, June, July, August and September; and we have experienced different flowers each time we visit. There are stunning beds of every type of tulip and every color as well, from multi-colored yellow and red to pink ruffled tulips. No matter where you go in and around Victoria, you will be treated to beautifully manicured



gardens and parks. When they are in bloom, the azaleas and the cherry blossoms are simply stunning.

One of the most impressive and well-known buildings in Victoria is The Empress Hotel. The stone walls are now covered with ivy. The Empress is known for serving high-tea every afternoon in its elegant lobby. Though we have not partaken in this English tradition, we have gone into the gift shop at The Empress and bought both of our Mothers a box of Empress English tea bags and a beautiful porcelain cup and saucer.



The Royal British Columbia Museum is across the street from The Empress and the copper roofed Parliament Building. On the opposite side of the entrance is a beautiful example of native totem poles. The museum is one of the finest of its kind in the world, offering



dramatic dioramas of natural landscapes and full-scale reconstructions of Victorian storefronts. The museum features outstanding displays on the province's artifacts,

documents, history and culture, as well as national and international feature exhibits. It is well worth some time to walk around and see the museum if you get a chance.

One of the most delightful ways we found to see parts of Victoria was purely by chance. We were tired after walking around all day and did not want to wait for the ships' shuttle, so we hired a Pedi Cab to drive us back to the ship for "something a little different". We jumped in and soon began to realize we were in for a real treat. If you have the time and get the chance, I highly recommend it!

Our Pedi cab driver happened to also be a history major; so he and Jim really hit it off. One of the most beautiful places he took us through was Beacon Hill Park. It is honestly like a sanctuary downtown, and we had no idea that it even existed until this Pedi cab ride. Our driver explained that the park had been renovated and now is the home to the world's tallest totem pole which stands 128 feet high. The park is landscaped with bridges and ponds and has absolutely perfect views of the Olympic Mountains. From the moment we sat down in our Pedi cab, we became drawn into an almost surreal and serene part of Vancouver that we had no idea even existed. We were taken through the park and along the waterfront back to our ship and our excursion was over sooner than we wanted it to be.

Perhaps the place that Victoria is most known for is Butchart Gardens. They are probably the best known gardens in Western Canada. We have had the pleasure of visiting Butchart Gardens several times, and each time is remarkable. Butchart Gardens is a series of gardens that all incorporate into one magnificent adventure. From the hanging baskets to the thousands of flowers that are meticulously maintained daily by a large staff of gardeners, it would be sad if you did not experience them at least once. As soon as you enter, you are drawn into a magical world of every different species of flower and color. The fragrances are wonderful and this is truly a place where you can "Stop and Smell the Roses".



