



Voyage of the Glaciers

On Board the Island Princess

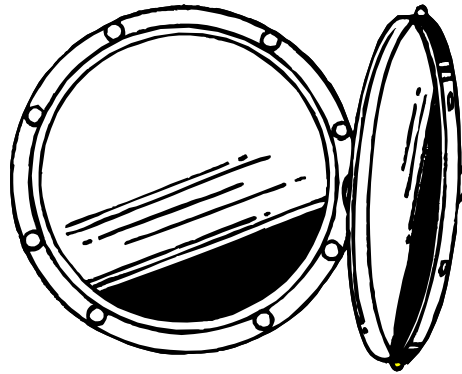
May 21-28, 2005



Ship Trip:
An Alaskan Cruise Journal
by Drake



Above the 49th Parallel!



Dedicated To

Rhonda Bigby

The *best* Travel Agent whose persistence got me an upgrade to a mini-suite.

Cruise Adventures, 1610 Locust St, Walnut Creek CA 94596
(925) 935-7447

And To All the Alaskan Authors That Inspired Me
Especially Dana Stabenow

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OVERVIEW

Princess Voyage of the Glaciers on the Island Princess

May 21 to 28, 2005: A Cruise to Celebrate My 30-year Work Service Anniversary

Voyage of the Glaciers Cruise is a spectacular 7-night cruise along Alaska's famed coastline including Glacier Bay, the Inside Passage and Colleege Fjord.

Photographs Taken	= 625
Postcards Purchased	= 230
Ballcaps Purchased	= 20
Total Expenses	= 1800 Cruise, Port Fees, & Insurance
	900 On Board & Excursions
	600 Pocket Money
	550 Airfare
	100 Hotel
	<u>60</u> Shuttle to Airport
	\$4010

ITINERARY



8 Day/7 Night Gulf Northbound Cruise Itinerary

1	Saturday, May 21	Vancouver, British Columbia	Embark 12:00 PM	05:30 PM
2	Sunday, May 22	At Sea		
3	Monday, May 23	Ketchikan/Misty Fjord	06:30 AM	02:30 PM
4	Tuesday, May 24	Juneau	07:00 AM	09:00 PM
5	Wednesday, May 25	Skagway	07:00 AM	08:30 PM
6	Thursday, May 26	Glacier Bay Scenic Cruising	06:00 AM	03:00 PM
7	Friday, May 27	College Fjord Scenic Cruising	05:30 PM	08:30 PM
8	Saturday, May 28	Whittier, Alaska	02:00 AM	Disembark 7:30 AM

	<u>Nautical Miles</u>	<u>Average Speed (Knots)</u>
Vancouver – Ketchikan	512	15.4
Ketchikan – Juneau	292	21.3
Juneau – Skagway	90	12.3
Skagway – Glacier Bay	111	13.4
Glacier Bay – Colleege Fjord	556	21.0
Colleege Fjord – Whittier	<u>72</u>	

Trip Total = 1633 (1878 Land Mile) [1 Nautical Mile = 1.15 Land Miles – 1 Land Mile = 0.87 Nautical Mile]

Average Speed = 10-20 Knots (12-24 MPH) [1 Knot = 1.2 MPH – 1 MPH = .9 Knots]

Captain = Andrea Poggi



DAILY DIARY

Pre-Cruise

May 3rd 2005 was my 53rd birthday and I decide to give myself a vacation to Alaska, something I had dreamed about doing for years. This is a cruise to celebrate my 30 year service anniversary. Alaska or Bust!

I am so glad I book this cruise only 3 weeks in advance of departure because oh, the wait! The anticipation! The worry about something happening to prevent me from going. However, the 3 weeks of waiting aren't spent idle. I read books on cruises and Alaska, shop for new luggage, and buy lots of memory cards for my digital camera. But finally the departure day arrives!

Friday Day 0 – Oakland Airport to Vancouver Canada

I take the shuttle to Oakland airport to fly Alaska Air to Portland, then Horizon turbo prop to Vancouver. I fail the packing test. I overpack, not knowing what all I would need on a cruise in Alaska, and have to pay \$25 overweight charges in both directions. The airline limit is 50 pounds per piece of luggage. I weighed in at 56. My new roller bag was too big! I would really regret this as I haul it around the rest of the week.

I take a shuttle to the hotel. On the way I see gas is 89 cents! I think wow, I need to move to Canada and take advantage of this. Then I begin the slow realization that it isn't gallons they are advertising but liters. One gallon is 3.79 liters so gas is actually \$3.37 per gallon. Yikes! Guess we are better off in the states.

After checking in, I walk Gastown, the center of early Vancouver, now the home of the only steam-run clock in the world. Then I have Salmon Wellington for dinner. Yes, I could tell I was in the Pacific Northwest now. The air is humid but cool and there are lots of fresh fish options on the menu.

I could easily live in Vancouver. The summertime temperatures won't exceed 80 degrees. That's my kind of weather since I must have inherited my blood from a secret Eskimo somewhere in my ancestry. The scenery in Vancouver is also inviting with a view of mountains on the north shore. Vancouver is the 3rd largest city in Canada and Canada's largest port. It also has the 2nd largest Chinatown in North America. I could tell this by the breakfast I had the next morning at the Irish Pub. It was run by a Chinese couple.

Saturday Day 1 – Embarkation at Vancouver

Sunrise: 5:21 AM
Sunset: 8:58 PM
Weather: Overcast with light rain at dusk

Today is the day! I wake, shower, and grab the camera to go to the pier and see my ship. (There may be 2900 other passengers and crew on board but for this one week, she is *my* ship!) There she is. And she is gorgeous! I have fallen in love at first sight. And she is big! She is a white floating city block. Imagine how small other boats will seem after riding on the Island Princess. In fact she will be bigger than any building in any port we visit. She is a self-contained city. She carries three times more people than two of the ports we will visit. Imagine how it would feel to "drive" something this big! I watch the loading of fuel from a double trailer tanker and the loading of the food and luggage that lasts all day.



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Pinch me. Am I really going on a Princess Cruise? For years I have stood on shore waving good-bye to the big cruise ships sailing out of Los Angeles and Miami. Well this time I get to go! This ship isn't sailing with out me. I feel like Jack London on a great adventure to the north.

We can't board until noon so I wander around Gastown again and buy a 4' totem pole I spotted in Victoria in 2001 and regretted not buying then. This will be one more thing to add to an already overextended load but I wasn't going to leave it behind this time.

I pick up my luggage at the hotel and head for the cruise check-in terminal. Somehow I miss baggage check-in and go through customs with out checking my bags. This means I have to carry all 80+ pounds on board myself. There's a big room where we all wait eagerly to board. Finally they let us on the ship.

There are only 3 words to describe this: Oh My God! The splendor, the elegance, the luxury... My travel agent has gotten me an upgrade to a mini-suite with balcony. Heaven is not on earth or the skies, it's on a cruise ship. My cabin is like a Class "A" RV on the sea. Living on the ship for a week is going to be like the rich live a lifetime. I unpack everything in 10 minutes then explore every inch of ship, taking photographs before it fills with people. Then it's off to my first lunch buffet.

Now, it's finally time to sail. I always envisioned the ship leaving port would be like scenes in the movies with crowds on deck waving goodbye and onlookers on the pier throwing confetti. There actually were only a handful of passengers on deck and fewer people under umbrellas on shore. It had started to drizzle. And where was the champagne? But no matter, now, I was on the other side of the rail this time. Instead of standing on the dock watching the ship sail without me, I am on board waving good bye to no one in particular.

Also, I thought tugs would come to pull us out but no, behold the modern marvel of side thrusters. The ship slides silently away from the pier so smoothly you can't feel the movement but you see the land slowly receding. We are on our way at last. North to Alaska! We sail out past Stanley Park, under Lions Gate Bridge, past West Vancouver and Howe Sound.

After I return to my cabin from dinner buffet, my bed is pulled down with chocolates placed on the pillows, the lights turned down soft, and music playing on the TV – the perfect end to a perfectly exciting day. As excited as I am, I'm so exhausted, I am asleep as my head hits the pillow.

Sunday Day 2 – At Sea

Sunrise: 5:33 AM
Sunset: 9:44 PM
Noon Weather: Wind: Southeast Gale (39-46 MPH)
Sea State: Rough with southeasterly swell (18 feet)
Sky: Overcast and raining
Air Temperature: 50 F

My eyes pop open early next morning to see the sea and heavily forested islands of the Inner Passage. We have sailed into Alaskan waters. So much of the planet is uninhabited but we usually can't see it because we are all bunched together in cities. But out here it is millions of miles of nothing but Nature. Here and there I do see some evidence of clearcut logging, like green patches of scabies on the hillsides.



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Today is spent at sea. And it's a rough ride with strong wind and high seas. The creaking and rolling of ship is similar to a mild earthquake. But it doesn't make me seasick at all. The ship is so big, it still feels solid and the slow motion rolling is very relaxing to me.

I am spending this as a day of rest after the long day of running around yesterday. I read, nap, walk, and eat. I feel as though I am in a sanitarium at sea. There is no escape, just peace. I have brought a series of books written by Dana Stabenow, an Alaskan mystery writer. Each one of her books portrays a different aspect of Alaskan life with very independent and strong central characters.

I should have been a sailor. I thrive in the salty sea air. I love the mechanics of ships and sailing as much as the splendid Alaskan scenery. I would love to be an officer on a cruise ship (or any ship). I should have been in the Navy and if I were back at the start of my adult life, I would pursue it.

Something in the sea breeze turns me into a garbage disposal. The cruise lines help you to become this by giving you platters much bigger than normal plates to put your food on. I usually don't eat this much at home but I am eating lots of protein especially meats, fish, and eggs. Ok, ok, and also lots of desserts. I have a huge breakfast, later to mid-afternoon tea. They seat me at a table full of strangers. I decide then that the anxiety of social interaction isn't worth the food and service of the main dining rooms. So I only eat in the buffet the rest of the week. But the buffet was so good I never got bored! One day there was a buffet dedicated just to pastry and another day dedicated just to sushi.

Tonight I dress for my first show, which is a compilation of Broadway show tunes. Then I am on deck to watch my one (and it was to be the only one) gorgeous arctic sunset. I can't walk out of my cabin without my camera and my binoculars. They become additional appendages to my body. Then she blows! I spot plumes of mist, then hear the great whales exhale through their blowholes. They are swimming along with us towards Alaska. Afterwards it's another trip to the dinner buffet.

I do laps around the Promenade deck. 3 laps is a mile. I burn the extra calories I have consumed. It becomes a nightly ritual, this constitutional walk to help digest dinner. Walking the deck in the direction the ship is moving is like walking on a people mover. Walking in the opposite direction is like walking on a treadmill. You are expending the energy but not really moving forward.

It's time to turn in. We hit port very early tomorrow morning.

Monday Day 3 – Ketchikan, The First City

2:00 AM Cross over from Pacific Daylight Savings to Alaska Daylight Savings
Sunrise: 4:24 AM
Sunset: 9:04 PM
Noon Weather: Wind: Southerly Gentle Breeze (8-12 MPH)
 Sea State: Calm (2 feet)
 Sky: Overcast, raining at times
 Air Temperature: 57 F

My eyes pop open again this morning! I go out to the balcony, brrrrr, it feels like Alaska. Oh yeah, it is Alaska. Pinch me one more time so I know this is real. We are coming into Ketchikan, called the first city, because it is the first port of call going north. The city's name comes from the Tlingit phrase kitschk-hin, which means Eagle Wing River. Ketchikan used to be the Salmon Capital of the World but now is considered to be the Rain Capital



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of the US. At last all the words in the numbers of Alaskan books I've read are coming to life! I'm getting visual pictures to accompany those words. And surprisingly, it looks just like I imagined it to be.

I look down to see our Coast Guard escort. These guys mean business. They have the .50 caliber machine gun cocked and ready. They head off any boat within a mile of the ship. This will be a ritual at nearly every port.

I rush to shower and dress. Then do the breakfast buffet so I will be one of the first to disembark. The ship inches toward the pier. I am looking at my first Alaskan town. The town is just 3 miles long and 3 blocks wide. It was founded as a fishing camp and is built on steep hillsides. Let my feet touch Alaskan soil for the first time! I can now see the souvenir shops on the dock. Eagerly I wait. Let me off this ship to shop! Finally they let us off. Like a fisherman reeling in a large net filled with fish, I swoop through the port of call, reeling in postcards, scooping up ballcaps and shirts.

People always scorn souvenir shopping but I have a secret confession: I love it. It is one reason I like to travel alone. I am free to shop to my heart's content, not bothered by others' opinions, interruptions, or scheduling conflicts. I am especially a sucker for postcards. I collect them from everywhere I travel. They are good mementos, a cheap souvenir, and a good back up system if your own photographs don't turn out well. They also can be a good tour guide, pointing out the regional sites and cultural characteristics that should not be missed.

It's raining but it doesn't dampen my enthusiasm. We are in the Tongass National Forest, which is a rain forest. Ketchikan averages 162" precipitation per year, including 32" of snow. I go to the lumberjack show. We are divided into two teams. Each time a team wins, someone in the audience gets a woodchip. At the end of the show, I have all the lumberjacks autograph my chip.

Afterwards I walk the town taking photos. Ketchikan has one of the world's largest collection of totem poles, which I love looking at. I see some early-bird salmon spawning in a creek. The mad rush doesn't usually start until the end of June. Ketchikan calls themselves the salmon capital of the world. I see dandelions 3 feet tall, a result of the long days of sunlight in late spring-early summer.

Sadly we have to leave Ketchikan mid-afternoon. As a consolation, we are invited to a fish BBQ on deck. I am so starved from my Ketchikan excursion, I eat pizza, salmon filet, and 2 halibut sandwiches plus 2 helpings of slaw and potato salad. This will tide me over until dinner buffet time!

Tuesday Day 4 – Juneau, The Capital City

Sunrise: 4:14 AM
Sunset: 9:37 PM
Noon Weather: Wind: Southeast Gentle Breeze (8-12 MPH)
Sea State: Smooth (0 feet)
Sky: Overcast, raining at times
Air Temperature: 50 F

My eyes pop open again this morning! But now I have a routine worked out. I am the first off the boat. I do my shopping before the towns fill up with people. Then I take my catches of the day back to the ship and eat an early lunch. Some people drink. I do desserts. I get a plate of pastries to put in my room for later. Then I go out for my excursion of the day. Afterwards, I return for a late lunch. After that another stroll through town to make sure I didn't miss anything the first time.



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Today we are in Juneau, one of the largest cities in the US based on acreage (3,108 square miles). It is the capital of Alaska with the only capital building in the 50 states without a dome and the only capital inaccessible by road. The only way in is by air or sea.

Today's excursion is the highlight of my trip, the epitome of Alaskan-ness. I am being transported via helicopter to the Taku Glacier to mush with dogsled teams. Taku Glacier is Juneau Icefield's largest glacier. Located in the Coast Mountain Range, the Juneau Icefield covers 1,500 square miles of land and is 85 miles north to south and 45 miles east to west. It is estimated to be 800-4500 feet deep. It is at least 3000 years old and feeds 38 large glaciers. Annual snowfall on the icefield often exceeds 100'.

Our helicopter holds 5 passengers and 1 pilot. Three of us squeeze into the front cockpit so tight it makes me feel like an Apollo astronaut. The helicopter takes off as gently as the ship leaves the pier. I don't feel the movement but I see the ground fall away. We rise higher and higher until we get a bird's eye view of Juneau and the cruise ships. Then it's over the mountain to the glacier. I see the ice for the first time. There are real bright bits of blue the color of sky-blue popsicles we used to eat as kids. I call it Tydee-bowl blue. I ask the pilot what it is and he explains its ice that is so dense it absorbs every color but blue. The bluer the ice, the denser it is. White or clear ice has many air bubbles in it. And I always thought glacial would be white or clear.

As we approach the glacier we see rows of little dog huts. Each of the 250 dogs has his own private hut. Some are so excited they are standing on the roofs. They are all barking as they hear the whop-whop of the heli blades because they know they are going to run. Have you ever heard the sound of 250 dogs barking simultaneously "Pick me! Take me to run!?" I have forgotten my sunglasses and my eyes hurt and water from the bright whiteness. But surprisingly the air feels warm. It's almost 60°.

Finally our team is hooked up and we start mushing. I get to ride in the sled and on the runners too. After our run the dogs love to be petted. They are very friendly. These are Iditarod dogs that train in summer by hauling around tourists. During the Iditarod they eat 8-10 thousand calories a day. They are used to running in sub-zero temperatures in winter. It is so warm on the glacier in summer, the mushers don't let them run for too long or too fast.

What can beat a helicopter ride up to a glacier to mush with the Iditarod dogs? Hmmmm, the only thing I can think of is I need to helicopter into a volcano in Hawaii when I go in November. From extreme cold to extreme hot. Anyway, after I return to ship, Libby Riddles is there to give a lecture about her life and dogs. She is the first woman to win the Iditarod back in 1985. Afterwards she autographs her autobiography.

Then guess what? Yep, time to eat again. I eat like there is a hole in my stomach and I spend money like there is a bigger hole in my pocket. It must be the sea air that stimulates my appetite. I eat my way through the day. But I am not gaining weight, in fact, I feel like I am losing because I am so active not sitting at a desk all day. I am climbing steps between decks, doing deck laps, and walking each port. I am getting buns of steel from the stairs. My cabin is on 9, the buffet on 14, and the central atrium of the ship with shops, bars, casino, and theaters are on 5, 6, & 7. The don't allow myself to take the elevator.

Wednesday Day 5 – Skagway, The Gateway to the Kondike

Sunrise: 4:06 AM
Sunset: 9:52 PM
Noon Weather: Wind: Southwest Gentle Breeze (8-12 MPH)
Sea State: Calm (2 feet)
Sky: Partly cloudy
Air Temperature: 55 F



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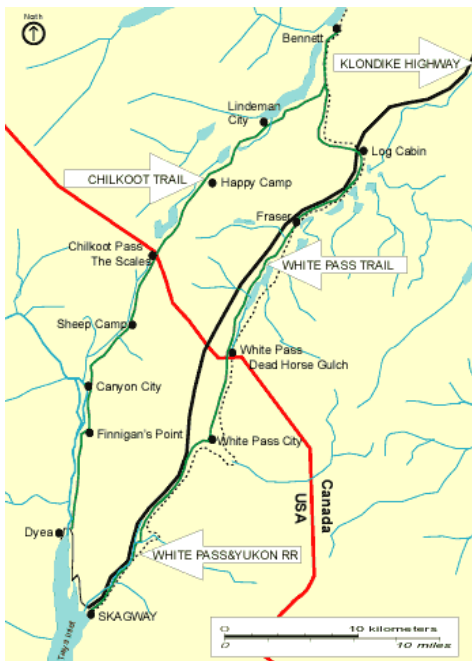
My eyes pop open again this morning! I am waking up as early as I do when I am working. But oh, what a difference waking up for this!

Today we are in Skagway, which is Tlingit for Home of the North Wind, was the gateway to the Yukon for the 1898 Gold Rush. Today the population is 845. Downtown is 7 blocks along Broadway. The buildings are historic and the town looks like an Old West movie set. One building, the Arctic Brotherhood Hall, has 20,000 pieces of driftwood attached and is the most photographed building in Alaska. I see a wooden shack with bear and wolf furs hanging. They are for sale at \$3000-4000 each. If they were hanging in California there would be a pack of animal protection protesters picketing the property.

We are having an Alaska heat wave. It's 62° because the sun has finally come out for the first (and it was to be the last) day. (Skagway gets 30-33" of rain per year). Today I am really dragging, bone tired, with a very sore lower back from lugging my camera every day. I don't know how I am going to do the mountain bike ride I signed up for. I am regretting not getting the train excursion instead. However, I buy some rapid-release Tylenol. After a quick lunch I take the van with bikes on the trailer to White Pass

We start our mountain bike ride at White Pass Summit (3292'). We stop for photo opportunities at several places. From one viewpoint we can see the actual White Pass Trail. It was one of two routes to the Yukon goldfields. Prospectors overloaded and beat their pack animals, forcing them along until they dropped. More than 3,000 animals died; many of their bones lie at the bottom of Dead Horse Gulch.

Nearby, Dyea was the starting point for the Chilkoot Pass Trail, the second route into Canada. This trail earned the nickname the meanest 32 miles in the world because men the slopes were so steep they could not use pack animals so they carried everything themselves. They struggled in blizzards and frigid temperatures. Where the trail shot up 1,000 feet in the final half mile, 1500 steps were cut in the snow and ice. These were called the Golden Staircase. Today hikers still follow these historical trails.



It was a total of 600 miles from Skagway/Dyea to the goldmines in the Yukon.



On our ride down, we also see many waterfalls. Especially beautiful is Pitchfork Falls. We see the White Pass & Yukon Route train cross over the bridge above it and I get a good photo. The air is so sweet you want to drink it in all day. The water is so sweet you do drink it all day. I am the oldest one on this mountain bike excursion, which caused some anxiety at first, but proudly I hold my own and don't embarrass myself. In fact, I am always the 2nd or 3rd rider in the pack. It's a good thing the major part of the trip was downhill though! When we get back to town, I remember that, amazingly, I am pain free and feeling completely refreshed.

Thursday Day 6 – Glacier Bay

Sunrise: 4:18 AM
Sunset: 10:02 PM
Noon Weather: Wind: Westerly Gentle Breeze (8-12 MPH)
Sea State: Calm (2 feet)
Sky: Overcast with occasional rain
Air Temperature: 48 F

My eyes pop open again this morning! Ok, it's becoming a ritual. But this morning we are cruising Glacier Bay National Park. The air temperature has dropped to 48°. I am wearing a cotton turtle neck, sweater, windbreaker with hood, and winter jacket. We really don't need refrigerators in our rooms now. We can just leave our food and drinks on the balcony. We don't need skin moisturizers as the air is always humid. We also don't need any suntan lotion!

The morning is devoted to glacier viewing. The two main attractions are the Margerie and Lamplugh Glacier. The Margerie Glacier is a tidewater glacier, a glacier that extends into a body of water. It is 250' above the water line and 100' below the water line. It is 1 mile wide and 21 miles long. It travels 2000' per year. The Lamplugh glacier is receding and in less than 100 years will no longer be a tidewater glacier. The Lamplugh glacier is 150-160' above water and 10-40' below water. It is .75 miles wide and 16 miles long. It travels 1000' per year.

We are lucky. We get to see some calving, the glacier's process of giving birth to icebergs. Our ship is almost dead in the water as we listen to sounds like thunder, cracking and popping noises. Several minutes later, a chunk of ice falls off the face and splashes into the bay.

Glaciers are made up of fallen snow that, over many years, compresses into large, thick ice masses. Due to sheer mass, glaciers flow like slow rivers, up to 7' per day. The highest concentration of tidewater glaciers are in Glacier Bay National Park that is 3.3 million acres. The glaciers are remnants of the Little Ice Age that began about 4,000 years ago but has been receding since 1750. The Fairweather Range supplies ice to all the glaciers in this region.

Many icebergs and bergie bits float by us destined for the Gulf of Alaska. These icebergs are formed when the glaciers calve. About 90% of an iceberg is below water with only 10% showing above water. Bergs have different colors:

- White - Holds many trapped air bubbles
- Blue - Very dense ice
- Greenish-blackish - Calve off glacier bottoms
- Dark-striped Brown - Carry morainal rubble

So here is a glacier joke for you. When two glaciers meet what do they say to each other? "Ice to see you."



It rains most of the day. Even though it rained every day except Wednesday, it never really rained at the critical times. I am disappointed it rained so much because I know fantastic scenery was obscured from view but accepted it because I told myself it is a taste of the “real” Alaska not the postcard Alaska. After all we are traveling in a rain forest. But rainstorm or sunshine, I would love this trip just the same. Maybe I even like the rain more because it makes the inside so cozy and the outside so clean.

This is the 2nd to the last night so it is formal night. The staff create a champagne waterfall in the atrium consisting of 725 glasses. The passengers throw confetti and it feels like New Years Eve at sea. A plate of chocolate covered strawberries are delivered to my room, compliments of my travel agent. Yes, I photographed them too! Then ate them. I attend another show called “Piano Man” with lots of good Broadway-style songs. The sun stays up late and so do I as I take my evening stroll around the Promenade Deck.

Friday Day 7 – College Fjord in Prince William Sound

Sunrise: 4:38 AM
Sunset: 10:54 PM
Weather: Overcast and raining

Today my eyes don’t pop open. We are at sea today and it’s the first morning I have been able to sleep in. The other nights I averaged 4-5 hours of sleep.

Even though it’s a day at sea, there are plenty of activities to keep me busy. Each night a paper with the next day’s activities and information is delivered to our cabin. I make a schedule for the following day. Today I watch the Cooking Demo and take the Galley Tour. We are told the ship has 196 chefs, 55 dishwashers, and 200 waiters. Every single thing is made from scratch, even ice cream. They also butcher all the meat and bake all the bread and pastries. No wonder I enjoy eating so much!

I also take the Backstage Tour where they demonstrate how the show is produced and show us the dressing rooms. Then it was up on deck to watch the ice carving demo. Bridge tours are no longer given because of the post-9/11 heightened security. However I hear there is no longer a ships wheel but a pc and mouse that is used to steer the ship. It sounds very unromantic to me.

In the afternoon we enter College Fjord. It is in Prince William Sound and has 16 tidewater glaciers that were named for the Ivy League schools of the scientists who explored the area in 1899. There are 2 main types of glaciers in Prince William Sound: Apron (or hanging) glaciers, and valley glaciers. Apron glaciers cling to mountainsides. Valley glaciers fill valleys and they originate from large icefields. A valley glacier that reaches the sea is termed a tidewater glacier.

The weather is worse than yesterday. There is not much visibility, it is cold and raining. The water is so thick with ice chunks, the ship cannot get within 8 miles of the glacier we have come to see. Slowly we turn to head toward Whittier, our last port.

I am feeling a bit sad, knowing it’s the last full day of the cruise. You can feel the end coming soon in the atmosphere of the ship. I am dreading the final shipboard bill, the packing, and the long trek home, schlepping all my luggage. Packing has to be done early so the luggage can be taken down for disembarking. It only took 10 minutes to unpack when I embarked. Why does it take nearly 3 hours to repack it all?



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Packing up is like putting away Christmas decorations for another year. There is a let down, but there is also the memories, and the looking forward to the next adventure, which I must begin planning now. How spoiled I have become in such a short time. Next week I won't be able to wake up to the fabulous scenery. There will be no steward to make the bed, turn down the bed, or clean my cabin. There will be no chef to cook my meals. Will the rat race awaiting me seem even more drab than before this cruise?

The afternoon is spent taking care of business, filling out a survey of the cruise, writing some notes of accommodation for the steward and bartender, and passing out a few extra tips. I mark all excellent scores on my survey. During the week I noticed four truly amazing things:

1. How organized and how smoothly everything was run.
2. How clean everything was, including ship and ports.
3. How safe I felt on board and in port.
4. How I managed not to gain any weight.

At each port there are scores of workers cleaning and painting the ship as I vacation. There are also lots of people working security. When I see how many people are employed by the cruise lines I realize what a reasonable price my fare is. Every employee on ship is from a different country, with many accents to delight the ear.

The only line I stand in was at embarkation and at Ketchikan because it required an early return to the ship. There is no line at disembarkation because it is accomplished by color-coded groups leaving at staggered times.

This has not been a typical tropical cruise seen in commercials. This was not a party boat. Most passengers are 40 to 60 years old. There are few kids since school is not out yet. It is the perfect boat for me. I never feel uncomfortable traveling solo. As long as I have my books with me, I am never alone. I never felt crowded or claustrophobic. I have plenty of space to myself. But if I desire social interaction, everyone seems very relaxed, open, and friendly. There are many advantages to traveling alone such as the ability to keep one's own schedule and concentrate on one's own experience/interests. When I tell the younger folks in Alaska that I am traveling alone, they totally understand where I am coming from. One girl remarks that there is nothing like quality solo time. Alaska must attract independent personalities... It's the Call of the Wild.

Everyone should take one cruise a year for sanity's sake. So, treat yourself to a cruise: Tickle your taste buds with new foods, tantalize your eardrums with different accents, and titillate your circulation with deck walks in the brisk ocean air. I am so glad I am taking my first cruise later in life because I don't think I can top this. Vacation comes from the Latin word *dies vacantes*, meaning vacant days. But this vacation was the furthest thing from being vacant. Each moment is spectacular. While on the cruise, I completely forget I am employed somewhere. The real world ceases to exist. I am suspended in excitement, luxury, awe, and beauty. I want to cruise again and again. Will it be as thrilling as the First Time?

Well, it's the last full day so I eat like it is my last chance. I certainly can since I have stretched out my stomach over the last week! Friday night I do my last walk. I revisit every deck, every nook and cranny of my beloved ship slowly saying good-bye and savoring our last moments together.

Saturday Day 8 – Disembark Whittier / Anchorage

Sunrise: 4:42 AM

Sunset: 11:04 PM

Weather: Raining in Whittier, Overcast in Anchorage, clearing mid-evening



Ship Trip: An Alaska Cruise Journal

Drake - May 2005

I call Saturday Shock Day, the day the cruise line puts me back in the real world to function on my own again after being pampered and chauffeured all week like a king. After my last buffet breakfast I am expelled from my womb of luxury into the cold rain. (I also go into shock after reading my on-board bill total.)

We disembark at Whittier, which has a population of a whopping 178, all whom live in the same condo building. Whittier was created by the US Army in WWII as a port. It is 60 miles southeast of Anchorage. I don't like it because there is where to shop. Whittier lies at the base of the Chugach Mountains.

I board a bus to Anchorage. It has to share the 2.5 miles long Anton Anderson Tunnel with the train. There is only one lane that must be shared for vehicles and the train traveling in both directions. Since it is so long, the tunnel has 5 safe houses that can be used if something catastrophic happens. Bus entry is staggered so that only one bus passes a safe house at a time.

On the bus trip to Anchorage we see lots of wildlife including bald eagles and Dall sheep. On the other side of the tunnel close to Anchorage the weather starts to clear. I pick up a rental car at the airport and head for downtown Anchorage to peruse the souvenir shops.

Local Alaskans that live in the bush refer to Anchorage as Los Anchorage, but to me Anchorage is a big-town Northern Exposure set complete with reindeer sausage stands on the corner, bars with antlers over the entrance, SUVs with big furry huskies hanging out the windows, and a man walking his pet reindeer down the city sidewalk. Anchorage is Alaska's largest city with 42% of the state's population (261,446). It is 1,955 square miles, the same size as Delaware.

I take a Trolley tour that shows us the sights and the driver gives us a lot of history of the area. We visit Earthquake Park. It was named from the Good Friday Earthquake on March 27, 1964 that was the strongest ever recorded in North America, measuring 9.2 on the Richter scale. From here on a clear day you can see Mount McKinley, 130 miles north, and the Chugach, Kenai, Talkeetna, Tordrillo, Aleutian and Alaska mountain ranges. Then we drive by Lake Hood, which has the highest concentration of float planes in the world, averaging 600 flights a day in summer. Alaska has one registered pilot for every 58 residents, 6 times as many pilots and 14 times as many airplanes per capita as the rest of the US.

I eat dinner then before heading to the airport to catch the redeye flight As I arrive at the airport I see the sun come out. The radio says the forecast for the coming week is sun every day. Oh, well. While waiting for my 1 AM flight I am already planning next summer's return. This cruise is a lifelong dream fulfilled. So what will be the encore? For starters next summer I plan to take the Princess Landtour package from Anchorage to Fairbanks via Denali on the train. I still have to do the ATV, whitewater float, and floatplane excursions. Heck I might even take this cruise again.

By the time I reach Oakland I will have been traveling 29 hours from time of disembarkation. Thankfully it is cool and partially overcast when I arrive in Oakland. If it was 80-100°, the transition would have been brutal. When I hit the bed Sunday night I sleep a full 12 hours.

While not seasick on board, my inner ear takes a long while to adjust to land. Every day I was in port and for several days after my return to land, I feel like the world keeps moving. Sitting still, I feel as though I am sliding out of my chair.



Post-Cruise Debrief

Living in California I don't get any snowtime unless I travel somewhere. This year I got my winter on the glaciers of Alaska. On this trip I found that Alaska is more than a state, it's a way of life, a culture, a genre all to its own. I didn't meet one Alaska resident that wasn't raving about living in Alaska, that wasn't full of pride for the state. In 1898 adventurers came seeking a gold mine. It turns out that Alaska's real gold find is its pristine wilderness. And a continuous source of gold can be found lying in tourists' wallets. All of us flock to view a land not yet submissive to Man. Alaska's environment reminds humanity to be careful when playing with Mother Nature. She plays hard to tame. But she is also gorgeous to view. So we continue to come.

For years I have held Alaska on a pedestal. After actually visiting would it fall from grace? Would I be disappointed? Have I suffered from HE (high expectation)? Would I be let down? NO! Now I want to graduate from cheechako (newcomer) to sourdough (someone who has lived through an Alaskan winter)!

I am having separation anxiety from my ship. She left me to go back to sea, the unfaithful vagabond hussy. Every night I check out her webcam on the internet so see where she has wandered to. For an entire week, I think, what was I doing at this moment one week ago? I am home a full week before I feel I am returning to my regular self, my regular routine. My body has to return to work but my heart, mind, and soul are still living on that ship.

It's now going on 3 weeks since I have been home and I still have a post-vacation high that usually wears off a day after returning to work. I am still reading about Alaska and gathering interesting tidbits here and there. Knowing I am going back next summer is helping. And this journal, my photographs, and my postcard collection will help keep my memories alive for years. I feel like a hero returning from Alaska. Everyone is interested to hear about it and see my pictures.

Yes, I have been touched by the magic of Alaska, and it's not ever going to evaporate.



Bon Voyage!

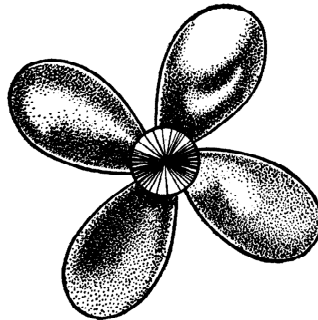


Cruises Float My Boat by Drake

After 30 years of paying on-the-job dues
It was time to treat myself to a cruise
Full of awesome Alaskan views
And animals only seen before in zoos.
Wow, how come no one passed the news
That on this kind of vacation, you couldn't lose?
Now to me, the sea loudly woo's
And I feel no blues or boo's
As I plan on future trips to cruise,
Europe & the Med, the Caribbean & Panama, too.
These are exotic places I dream of when I snooze.
So I am telling all of youse
Traveling is the best when you cruise.



The Last Frontier!



I Wanna Be A Sourdough by Drake

O, I no longer wanna be a Cheechako -
I wanna become an ole sourdough.
I wanna put my soul to the test
Of enduring a long winter like the best.
Could I last the solitude, dark, and cold
While waiting for the spring sun of gold?
I'd worship the glaciers of ice and mountains of snow
Gladly to raise my status from cheechako to sourdough.
Like a bear I'll hibernate to a snug cabin
There books to read and journals to pen
As I munch away the day like a moose
Then take a frosty walk to let cabin fever loose
While watching the Northern Lights,
Mother Nature's cinema projected on wintery nights.
Then in Spring, like a salmon, I'll start
My long swim upstream to the start
Of a new life as Alaskan. Like an eagle
My heart will soar, high and regal
So happy at last to know
I can pass the test to be an ole sourdough.



ALASKA TRIVIA (From miscellaneous internet sources)



“Alaska is more than a state, it’s a state of mind...” –Northern Exposure TV Series

Alaska came from an Aleut word for great land, though some believe the Aleut word meant mainland. This name is a corruption from the original word Al-ak-shak or Al-ay-ek-sa. From Alayeksa the name became Alaksa, Alashka, Aliaska, and finally Alaska. Other names for Alaska have been Territory of Baranov, for Alexander Baranov, the early Russian leader on this continent and Seward's Folly, or Seward's Icebox, for Secretary of State William Seward, who proposed the often-ridiculed purchase. Of course, that was before Alaska was discovered by gold seekers, oil companies and tourists.

William Henry Seward was secretary of state under President Abraham Lincoln when he began negotiating a deal for the United States to buy Alaska from Russia for \$7.2 million, or 2 cents an acre. The purchase agreement was approved in 1867. In 1917, the 3rd Alaska Territorial Legislature created Seward's Day, usually the last Sunday in March, to mark the signing of the treaty. That same year, lawmakers also designated Oct. 18 as Alaska Day. Alaska Day is the anniversary of the formal transfer of the territory and the raising of the US flag at Sitka on October 18, 1867. Alaska was first a district, becoming an organized territory on August 24, 1912. Alaska became the 49th state on January 3, 1959. The state capital is Juneau, located in the southeast region of Alaska.

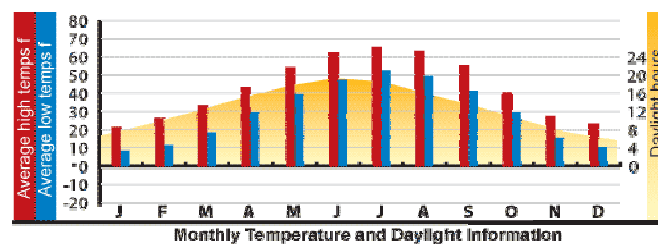
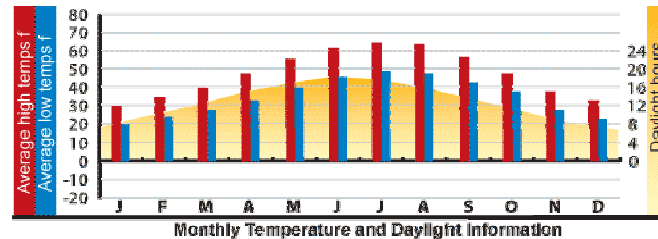
Time Zone	1 hour behind Pac Time
Nickname	Great Land, Land of the Midnight Sun, Last Frontier
Origin of Name	Aleutian meaning peninsula
Original Name	Alyeska, meaning the great land
Song	Alaska's Flag
Motto	North to the Future
State Flag	8 stars of gold on a field of blue, representing the Big Dipper & the North Star
Tree	Sitka Spruce
Flower	Forget-Me-Not
Bird	Willow Ptarmigan
Fish	King Salmon
Insect	Four-Spot Skimmer Dragonfly
Gem	Jade
Land Mammal	Moose
Marine Mammal	Bowhead Whale
Sport	Dog Mushing
Mineral	Gold
Highest Point	20, 320' Mt McKinley aka Denali, meaning the high one
Population	649,000
Average Age	32.7
Area	570,000 sq mi
1 st Largest City	Anchorage pop 274,000
2 nd Largest City	Fairbanks, The Golden Heart City pop 30,000
3 rd Largest City & Capital	Juneau pop 31,000
4 th Largest City	Ketchikan pop 8,000



1867
1959

Purchased from Russia for \$7.2 million (.02 per acre)
49th state

Average Temperatures and Daylight Hours



- Alaska's 570,373 square miles is one-fifth the size of the continental U.S. and over twice the size of Texas.
- Of the nation's 20 highest peaks, 17 are in Alaska. That includes the legendary Mt. McKinley, the tallest mountain in North America.
- Alaska has an estimated 100,000 glaciers, which cover almost 5% of the state. There are more active glaciers in Alaska than in the rest of the inhabited world.
- The Trans-Alaska Pipeline transports approximately 1.8 million barrels of oil a day from the North Slope to the port of Valdez in Prince William Sound. Oil moves at a rate of 5-7 MPH and takes under 6 days to travel the 800 miles from Prudhoe Bay to tankers in the port of Valdez.
- Alaska has its own time zone, which is one hour earlier than Pacific Time. The westernmost Aleutian Islands are on Hawaii-Aleutian Time, 2 hours earlier than Pacific Time.
- The Alaska Marine Highway System consists of Alaskan ferries traveling a route covering 3,500 miles and serving 30 Alaskan ports.
- The largest known concentration of bald eagles, over 3,000, converges near Haines from October through January to feed on late run salmon in the Chilkat River.
- Alaska has 3 million lakes, over 3,000 rivers and more coastline (47,300 miles) than the entire contiguous United States.
- Alaska has 15 National Parks, Preserves and Monuments, and 3.2 million acres of State Park lands. One-half of all U.S. national park land is in Alaska.
- At Barrow (the northernmost town in US) the sun does not set from May 10 to Aug 2 and does not rise in winter for 67 days.

Wildlife

During the summer months, more than 2,000 humpbacks are known to feed in the waters off Alaska. Killer (orca) and beluga whales are equally abundant. In Prince William Sound, seals, sea otters, and sea lions congregate. Salmon, famous for its gravity-defying leaps up waterfalls and streams in order to spawn, start their trek in June.



Grizzly and black bears can be found farther inland, in places like Denali National Park. In addition to bears, Denali is an ideal place to observe caribou, moose, gray wolves and Dall sheep. Together, these animals constitute the "Denali Big Five," a sightseer's dream.

There are more than 300 species of birds that can be found here. Some 40,000 bald eagles, which have a wingspan of up to 8 feet, reside in Alaska today, with most nesting near water for easy fishing. Other signature birds include the puffins, which thrive on the western end of Prince William Sound and along the Kenai Peninsula; the kittiwake, which nest in colonies along Glacier Bay; and the red-tailed hawk, a fixture at Wrangell-St. Elias.

Land Animals:

Black Bear: Usually black, with narrow pointed muzzle.

Brown/Grizzly Bear: Black to blond, large head, dished face, shoulder hump.

Beaver: Broad, flat tail, small ears.

Bald Eagle: White head and tail, dark-brown body.

Caribou: Both sexes have antlers; brown with white neck and rump.

Coyote: Small, slender wolf.

Deer: Sitka blacktail; Southeast, Kodiak, Prince William Sound.

Red Fox: Several color phases; bushy tail, sharp nose.

Snowshoe Hare: Gray to brown, with black, white and red; white in winter.

Hoary Marmot: Large, silver-gray, burrowing mammal; whistles an alarm.

Moose: Largest member of deer family; bull has antlers.

Mountain Goat: Slender black horns, shaggy white coat and beard.

Muskrat: Large rodent with flattened scaly tail, water dweller.

Pika: Guinea-pig size, round ears; rocky slope dweller.

Porcupine: Black, yellow-tipped hairs and quills, small head, large body.

Ptarmigan: Chicken-like birds, ground dwellers, white in winter, brown in summer.

Raccoon: Distinctive black mask, introduced species.

Common Raven: Larger than a crow.

Bighorn Sheep: Light coat, large curled horns; Canadian Rockies.

Dall Sheep: White coat, golden curled horns; Alaska, Yukon.

Stone sheep: Darker than Dall; northern British Columbia.

Arctic Ground Squirrel: Rounded head and ears, burrower.

Red Squirrel: Rusty red, tree-dweller.

Wolf: Averages 100 lbs., varying colors.

Marine Mammals:

Dolphin: Pacific White-Sided, distinctive high jump.

Sea Otter: Webbed hind feet, floats on back while eating. Carries young on belly.

Dall Porpoise: Black and white, to 7 feet, cavorts around moving ships.

Steller Sea Lion: Hauls out on rocks.

Harbor Seal: Earless, hair seal.



Northern Seal: Eared, active on land.

Beluga Whale: All white, to 16 feet, no dorsal fin.

Gray Whale: Mottled gray, to 50 feet, no dorsal fin, large flippers.

Humpback Whale: Small dorsal fin on hump

Killer Whale (orca): Black and white. Males have tall, erect dorsal fin. Females have curved dorsal fin.

Minke Whale: White band on flipper, small with narrow, pointed head.

Iditirod – Anchorage to Nome

It's called "The Last Great Race on Earth." It is a grueling, 2-week trek across unforgiving terrain and icy temperatures. Every year, on the first Saturday in March some 70 teams, made up of one musher and 15 dogs on average, compete for a share of the \$400,000 purse. The Iditarod Trail measures more than 1,150 miles and the race usually lasts up to 2 weeks. It is the longest dog sled race in the world. There are 27 checkpoints along the trail. There are 2 routes to the trail, a northern and a southern route, which racers alternate every other year. Because of their adaptability to the cold, Alaskan climate, most sledding dogs are Alaskan Huskies. However, any Northern breed suitable for Arctic travel, as determined by race officials, is eligible to enter the Iditarod.

Yukon Quest – Fairbanks to Whitehorse

The Yukon Quest gets its name from the highway of the north, the Yukon River, and routes followed by prospectors and later mail/supply carriers traveling between the gold fields of the Klondike and the Alaskan Interior. Covering 1000 miles during the depths of the Arctic winter, the Yukon Quest is the Toughest Sled Dog Race in the World. Each February, teams of one human musher and 14 canine athletes, travel for 2 weeks, racing through some of the last pristine wilderness remaining in North America. 10 checkpoints lie along the trail, some more than 200 miles apart. The starting point alternates between the two cities, even years from Fairbanks, odd years from Whitehorse. At the halfway mark in Dawson there is a long, required layover of 36 hours.

Alaska Lingo

Alaska Tuxedo – Sturdy wool work suite in gray, brown or green.

Alcan – Alaska Highway which runs 1520 miles from Dawson Creek, BC to Fairbanks.

ANWR – Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Aurora Borealis (Northern Lights) – Streaks of light in the atmosphere caused by gas particles colliding with solar electrons and protons. South of the equator it is called Aurora Australis.

Alaskan Horses – Mosquitoes, big ones.

Arctic Circle – The latitude (~66°34') at which the sun does not set for one day at summer solstice (Jun 20-21) and does not rise for one day at winter solstice (Dec 21-22). At geographic north pole the sun remains above the horizon from spring equinox to fall equinox and below the horizon from fall equinox to spring equinox.

Aurora Borealis – Northern Lights. Massive electrical discharge thought to be caused by solar wind hitting the earth's magnetic field.

Babiche – Rawhide strips that are used to keep things together when nails won't do.

Banya – Steam bath.

Bear Paws – Fat round showshoes worn while doing chores.

Beaver Fever – Giardia, a bacteria found in freshwater streams.

Bidarka – Kayak.

Billikin – Little guy with pointy head made of ivory.



Blazo – Liquid fuel.

Blue Cloud – Southeastern term for break in a cloudy sky.

Blue Ticket – One way passage out of Alaska.

Boomer – Someone lured to Alaska by the chance to make big money. (furs, gold, salmon, construction jobs)

Booties - Footwear for sled dogs made out of a durable fabric such as Gore-tex or leather to protect their paws from ice build-up or injury

Breakup – The time in spring when ice begins to melt and the rivers start to flow, signaling the end of winter.
Opposite is freeze up.

Bush – Any part of Alaska inaccessible by road, accessible only by boat or aircraft.

Bush Pilot – A pilot who services remote areas in a small plane which is commonly equipped with floats or skis.

Cabin Fever – The state of being house bound due to inclement weather and darkness.

Cache – Small structure built on stilts to protect food from animals; also used to refer to small corner stores.

Calve – The action by which glacial ice breaks off from a glacier to form icebergs.

Cheechako – A newcomer to Alaska.

Chinook – Unseasonably warm winds in the Chugach Mountains.

Chinook (King, Tyee) Salmon – The largest salmon averages 20-40 pounds. This is top of the line salmon for grilling

Chilkoot Pass/Trail – Path trodden by thousands of prospectors on their way to the Klondike gold fields in 1897-1898. Climbs from sea level to 3739' and ends at Lake Bennett Yukon Territory.

Chum (Dog) Salmon – Average 7-18 and up to 32 pounds. Natives fed these salmon to their dogs.

Coho (Silver) Salmon – Average 8-12 up to 36 pounds. Great for poaching or grilling.

Clear-cutting – Wide scale logging practice that clears a whole section of forest by cutting down all the trees.

Eskimo Ice cream -- Traditionally made of whipped berries, seal oil, and snow.

Gussuk – Native word for white person.

Greenie – Environmentalist. Bunny hugger, tree hugger, posy sniffer.

Honey Bucket – Modern chamberpot, bucket with a toilet seat on it.

Ice Fog - A thick winter fog made of suspended ice particles that leaves the trees coated with ice crystals.

Iditarod – The 1000 mile sled dog race from Anchorage to Nome held annually in March.

Kuspuk – Cloth parka cover usually brightly colored and often worn as a summer overall.

Lower 48 (Down South) – Local reference to the contiguous United States.

Midnight Sun – The sun above the horizon at midnight on the longest day of the year.

Mukluks – Sealskin or reindeer-skin boots traditionally worn by the Inuit.

Mukluk Telegraph – Commercial radio program that delivers messages to people in rural Alaska where telephones are rare and mail delivery sporadic.

Muktuk – Whale fat with the skin attached, an Eskimo delicacy.

Muskeg - Grassy swamp land.

Musher - A person who travels with dogs over a trail. Sometime he rides on the dogsled, and other times he helps by running alongside the dogsled.

No-See-Ums – Nearly invisible bugs that bite.

Oosik – The penis bone of a walrus.

Outside – Any place not in Alaska.



Paniqtaq – Meat or fish that’s been hung out to dry into jerky.

Parka - Traditionally a hooded fur coat made and used by northern natives, but now it can also be insulated with modern manmade materials like thinsulate, and may have no fur at all, although usually winter parkas will have a fur ruff. Summer parkas of the more traditional styles have a skirt attached and are pulled on over the head.

Pay Dirt – A mining term referring to placer gold that was sure to bring a profit to a miner.

Permafrost - Permafrost is ground that remains frozen all summer.

Pilot Bread – Big round crackers that keep well.

Pink (Humpback, Humpy) Salmon – Average 3-4 pounds. Often used as bait fish.

Poke – Leather bag with drawstring used to hold gold.

Quaq – Fish or walrus meat frozen and eaten raw usually with seal oil.

Qiviut – Wool from the Alaskan musk ox.

Skookum – Pretty darn smart.

Solstice - This refers to the point when the sun is at its greatest distance from the equator.

Sockeye (Red, Blueback, Kokanee, Landlocked) Salmon – Average 4-8 up to 16 pounds. Best for smoking.

Southeast – A local term for Southeast Alaska, Ketchikan to Glacier Bay.

Sourdough – Anyone who has managed to weather an Alaskan winter or an old-time resident.

Spenard Divorce – Noisy, fatal way of ending a relationship I.e. by shooting partner.

Squaw Candy – Salmon jerky.

Stink Heads, Stinky Fish – Fish buried until rank then dug up and eaten.

Sucker Hole – A tiny spot of blue in an otherwise completely overcast sky. It’s a sucker hole because the sight often inspires a hopeless optimist to say, “Look, its clearing up.”

Sundog – Colorful circle around the sun seen in cold weather.

Taku Wind – A sudden gale from the ice cap behind Juneau gusting up to 100 MPH.

Taiga - Russian word for northern evergreen forest, describes the scant tree growth here near the Arctic Circle.

Termination Dust – The first snowfall marking the beginning of winter.

Tongass – 17 million acre forest in southeast Alaska. This area is a rain forest the largest temperate rainforest in North America.

Trans-Alaska Pipeline – The \$8 billion, 800 mile pipeline from Prudhoe Bay to Valdez.

Tundra - At the top of the world around the North Pole. The most distinctive characteristic of the tundra soil is its permafrost, a permanently frozen layer of ground which can be 2000 feet thick.

Ulu – Fan shaped knife used for chopping meat.

Wanigan – Small house built on floats, a small cabin built on skids, or a lean-to built onto a trailer.

Williwaw – Sudden gusts of winds up to 110 MPH.

Yukon Quest – The 1000 mile sled dog race from Fairbanks to Whitehorse held annually in February.



PRINCESS CRUISES & THE ISLAND PRINCESS



Debuting in May 2003, Island Princess is a ship in the Sun Class. (The ship does have a Love Boat name to live up to. She succeeds the TV show's original floating star, the former Island Princess.) With sister ship, Coral Princess, Island Princess spends summers on the Voyage of the Glaciers in Alaska. The rest of the year the ship sails on 15-day roundtrip voyages to Hawaii from Los Angeles.

Date Launched	May 2003
Builder	Chantiers de l'Atlantique (France) Shipyard of St. Nazaire France
Cost	\$360M
Registry	Hamilton, Bermuda
Classification Society	Lloyd's Register of Shipping, London
Class Notation	100 A1 Passenger Ship
Official Number	733727
IMO Number	9230402
Call Sign	ZCDG4
Officers	British & Italian
Crew	International
Gross Tons	91,627
Length	964'
Beam	106'
Draft	26'
Height Above Keel	203'
Propulsion	2 Gas Turbine
Cruising Speed	22 Knots
Maximum Speed	23.4 Knots
Fuel Capacity	1899 Tons Heavy Fuel Oil, 1602 Tons Marine Gas Oil
Fresh Water Capacity	2199 Tons
Passenger Decks	11
Passengers	2368
Crew	810
Crew/Passenger Ratio	2.1/2.8
Suites	208
Outside Doubles	144
Inside Doubles	108
Verandah Cabins	727
Total Cabins	987
Outdoor Pools	4
Jacuzzis	5
Bars/Lounges	8
Elevators	12



Island Princess Decks

4	Gala	Medical Center
5	Plaza	Atrium, Bordeaux Dining Room, Passenger Services Desk
6	Fiesta	Casino, Explorer's Lounge, Princess Theatre, Provence Dining Room, Universe Lounge
7	Promenade	Bayou Café, Churchill's, Princess Theatre, Sabatini's, Crooner's Bar, Universe Lounge, Wheelhouse Bar
8	Emerald	Internet Café, Library
9	Dolphin	Cabins only
10	Caribe	Cabins only
11	Baja	Cabins only
12	Aloha	Churchill's, Fun Zone
14	Lido	Fitness Center, Lido Pool, Lotus Pool, Lotus Spa
15	Sun	Golf, Grill
16	Sports	Shuffle Board, Court, Splash Pool

Features

Daily scheduled activities organized by cruise staff
Shopping galleria with dutyfree shop, drug store, jewelry shop, Princess logo items
Destination & shopping lectures and shore excursions
Full service Lotus Spa with oceanview massage & aromatherapy rooms, beauty salon
Fully equipped oceanview gymnasium with Cruisercise health & fitness program and health juice bar
Acres of open and protected decks for swimming, sunning and viewing
Wraparound promenade deck for walk-a-mile
3 swimming pools on 3 different decks, including one covered by retractable dome for all weather swimming
5 Whirlpool Spas to soak your cares away
Deck sports include shuffleboard, basketball court, paddle tennis and ping-pong
Princess Links computerized golf center with mini golf course and virtual reality courses for the golf enthusiast
Princess Fine Art Gallery displaying masterpieces and offers art auctions
Photo Gallery & Photo Shop with film and developing
The Fun Zone children's center with supervised activities and splash pool
Off Limits teen center with disco, games and lots of cool atmosphere
Pelican's Playhouse children's area with open deck space, splash pool and whirlpool
Wedding Chapel for wedding ceremonies and renewal of vows
The library with listening chairs and CD-ROM access
Card room for bridge, backgammon, games and puzzles
Internet Cafe for surfing and email at sea
ScholarShip@Sea Program include pottery lessons, computer classes, and cooking demos
Self-service Laundry

Dining & Drinking

2 Main Dining Rooms: Provence features traditional, assigned dinner seating at either 5:45 or 8:00 pm and Bordeaux offers Personal Choice Dining, which means open seating at breakfast, lunch and dinner.
Sabatini's Trattoria for Italian meals of pizza, pasta and tiramasu
The Bayou Cafe is the first New Orleans-style restaurant at sea
Crooners Martini Bar
La Patisserie serves freshly made pastries and specialty coffees
Princess Pizza serves up freshly baked slices
Horizon Court offers 24-hour breakfast & lunch buffets and sit-down, casual dinners
Pool-side Grill serves burgers and bites outdoors overlooking the pool



Ship Trip: An Alaska Cruise Journal

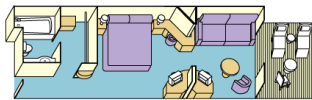
Drake - May 2005

The Rat Pack Bar serving special wines, martinis and caviar on ice
2 poolside bars serve cocktails and refreshing drinks
Ice cream bar for sundaes & sweet creations
Daily afternoon tea
24-hour room service with hot & cold entrees

Entertainment

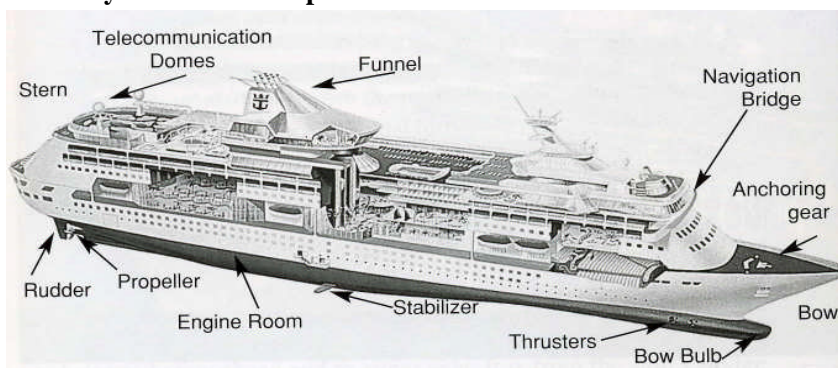
Princess Theater, Universal Lounge and the Explorer's Lounge are 3 main show rooms featuring top-notch entertainment, Vegas-style revues and cabaret performances
The London-themed Casino has slots, blackjack, craps, roulette, Caribbean stud poker and all popular table games
Princess Plaza atrium with comfy chairs, live music and inviting bar, the perfect spot for meeting friends and people watching
Wheelhouse Bar with nautical memorabilia and cocktails
Churchill Lounge is Princess' first cigar bar at sea

Anatomy of a Mini Suite



Passengers in the mini-suites (280-302 square feet with balcony) get waffle-weave robes. These top categories all have a sitting area, two TVs, fridge, walk-in closet, and shower/tub combination in the bathroom.

Anatomy of a Cruise Ship



The bulbous bow is included on modern ships to save fuel. It channels the water in front of the ship. This cuts down on bow resistance and allows the ship to more easily move through the water. A bulbous bow can reduce fuel consumption by 5%.

Bow thrusters are propellers built into the hull in the front of the ship. Stern thrusters are propellers built into the hull at the rear of a ship. Instead of propelling the ship forward (like the main propellers do), these thruster propellers move the ship from side to side. The ship's captain will bring the ship parallel to the dock, then push



it laterally towards the dock using the bow and stern thrusters. Thrusters also allow the ship to spin on axis. This means it can turn 360-degrees in a very tight space.

Cruise ships have stabilizers. The stabilizers look like retractable wings that pop out of the ship's hull beneath the waterline. These wings discourage drastic rolling from side to side.

Cruise Ship Horn Sound Signals

1 long blast is a warning that the ship is about to move from a position and that the captain may be unable to see other boats. This signal is commonly used when leaving port.

3 short blasts mean the ship is backing out of a slip.

5 short blasts signify danger.

1 short blast and 2 short blasts signify intent and acceptance in overtaking (passing) situations.

Cruise Dictionary

Aft - A nautical term meaning toward the rear or stern of the ship.

Berth - The sleeping capacity of a stateroom. Most cabins feature two berths, but some are available with third or fourth berths.

Deck - The levels or floors of the ship. Princess ships feature up to 19 decks.

Disembark - To leave the ship

Embark - To board the ship

Fleet - A group of ships under the same ownership.

Fore - A nautical term meaning toward the front or bow of the ship.

Port - A nautical term for the left side of the ship, facing forward.

Port of Call (Port) - A city or destination where the ship stops, usually for a full day, to give passengers an opportunity to disembark and visit the area attractions.

Sea Day vs. Port Day - During a sea day the ship is sailing to its next destination, giving passengers a relaxing day to enjoy all of the amenities of the ship. Port days offer the opportunity to go ashore and explore the highlights of the ports of call.

Shore Excursion - Organized tours designed to make sightseeing easy and convenient for passengers during their time in port.

Starboard Side - A nautical term for the right side of the ship, facing forward.

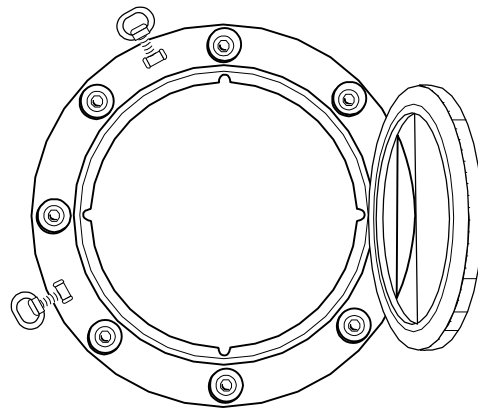
Stateroom - A passenger's cabin or hotel room.

Tendering - When the ship cannot pull up directly to the dock, passengers are shuttled to shore via smaller tender boats.

Trade - The general destination in which the ship is sailing (for example, Alaska, Europe and Mexico are all trades).



North to Alaska!

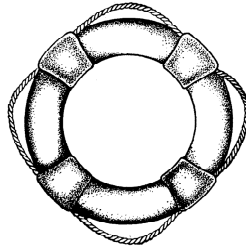


The Heart of the Sourdough by Robert Service

There where the mighty mountains bare their fangs unto the moon,
There where the sullen sun-dogs glare in the snow-bright, bitter noon,
And the glacier-glutted streams sweep down at the clarion call of June.
There where the livid tundras keep their tryst with the tranquil snows;
There where the silences are spawned, and the light of hell-fire flows
Into the bowl of the midnight sky, violet, amber and rose.
There where the rapids churn and roar, and the ice-floes bellowing run;
Where the tortured, twisted rivers of blood rush to the setting sun --
I've packed my kit and I'm going, boys, ere another day is done.
I knew it would call, or soon or late, as it calls the whirring wings;
It's the olden lure, it's the golden lure, it's the lure of the timeless things,
And to-night, oh, God of the trails untrod, how it whines in my heart-strings!
I'm sick to death of your well-groomed gods, your make believe and your show;
I long for a whiff of bacon and beans, a snug shakedown in the snow;
A trail to break, and a life at stake, and another bout with the foe.
With the raw-ribbed Wild that abhors all life, the Wild that would crush and rend,
I have clinched and closed with the naked North, I have learned to defy and defend;
Shoulder to shoulder we have fought it out -- yet the Wild must win in the end.
I have flouted the Wild. I have followed its lure, fearless, familiar, alone;
By all that the battle means and makes I claim that land for mine own;
Yet the Wild must win, and a day will come when I shall be overthrown.
Then when as wolf-dogs fight we've fought, the lean wolf-land and I;
Fought and bled till the snows are red under the reeling sky;
Even as lean wolf-dog goes down will I go down and die.



Alaska or Bust!



Alaska By Ward Mailliard

Clever Raven watches
As we dreamers enter
the land of the grey green mists
Mountains are
laughing in waterfalls,
gentle raindrops pattern the sea.
We wander.
Eagles soar.
Tipping Glacier, stares through topaz eyes,
shedding in thunder
her icy blue knowledge of time.
Mountain Goat, mildly musing,
observes our far passage below.
What do we discover
on gently lapping seas?
Tentative inquiry
of binocular vision
Only what has always been,
Clever Otter, Kingly Bear,
and Mighty Whale, who's misting spout
punctuates a graceful dive
beneath our understanding.
We laugh and cheer at acrobatic skill,
and then she rises with the question,
Who are we in the presence
of such eloquence and power?
Through our looking glass
we create ourselves anew.
In lodge pine bogs
the tiny flowering Sundew offers

sweet amber temptation
to Unsuspecting Fly.
Leviathans breach from the sea,
slapping semaphores to us,
her far gazing cousins.
Great twined in small
joined briefly by wonder.
We are just part,
no less and no more.
Now we can notice ourselves.
Do we fit in as divine totem dancers,
or only with hammer and fire?
Who will we carve on our totem?
The Eagle, or Otter, or Bear?
Can we join all the pieces
of a fragmented world?
Rest on the soft mossy banks
covering fallen hemlock and spruce.
Gaze at snowcapped spires
that push against the sky.
Drink in the potion,
meadowed greens, watered blues,
so profusely overwhelming,
Until we are only breath
in a vast opened world
Let us dance this life
beneath the totem of our gods
And shower thanks
on Clever Raven
who dreamed us into being
for a while.



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