

# Bears of Katmai

## Photography Workshop



- \* 7 Days: Starting and Ending in Anchorage, Alaska
- \* 6 Participants Maximum
- \* Trip Leader: David W. Shaw
- \* For Dates and Details: [CLICK HERE](#)



## Trip Overview

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# Bears of Katmai

Few places on Earth compare to Katmai National Park when it comes to geographic diversity, geological activity, and of course, wildlife. Thanks to the predictable and abundant salmon, the bears of Katmai are some of the largest in the world. And their singular focus on fish, means they are safely viewed and photographed.

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This unique photo workshop gets you up close to the giant bears of Katmai, safely. We will have three full days at the famous Brooks Falls, where viewing platforms provide perfect photo perches, and salmon runs permitting, we should be able to make the classic images of bears snatching salmon from the air. And while the classic image is great fun to make, Brooks offers far more to the visiting photographer.

After our days at Brooks Falls, we will venture south down the Kenai Peninsula to the idyllic fishing town of Homer, Alaska. With two full days in Homer, we'll have the opportunity to make images of the abundant Bald Eagles along the famous Homer Spit and at nearby Anchor Point, take a four-hour private boat trip on Kachemak Bay where we will photograph sea otters, seals, seabirds, and the mountainous landscape surrounding Kachemak Bay.

Finally, from Homer, we'll take a bush plane flight to the shore of Katmai or Lake Clark National Parks where we will have several hours to watch and photograph coastal bears before returning to town.

With remarkable opportunities to see and photograph bears, marine wildlife, and the landscapes of Alaska, this trip is as close to doing it all as you can find.

**\$6200/person (double occupancy)**



# Days 1-3: Brooks Falls, Katmai



## DAY 1

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**Travel:** Meet in Anchorage, fly to King Salmon and on to Brooks Falls.

**Night:** King Salmon, Antlers Inn

**Meals Provided:** L, D

**Key Points:** Scenic bush flights, bear photography in Katmai National Park

## DAY 2

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**Travel:** Local, Round-trip bush flight to Brooks Falls

**Night:** King Salmon, Antlers Inn

**Meals Provided:** B, L, D

**Key Points:** Full day of bear photography!

## DAY 3

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**Travel:** Round-trip to Brooks Falls, evening flight to Anchorage

**Night:** Anchorage, Copper Whale Inn

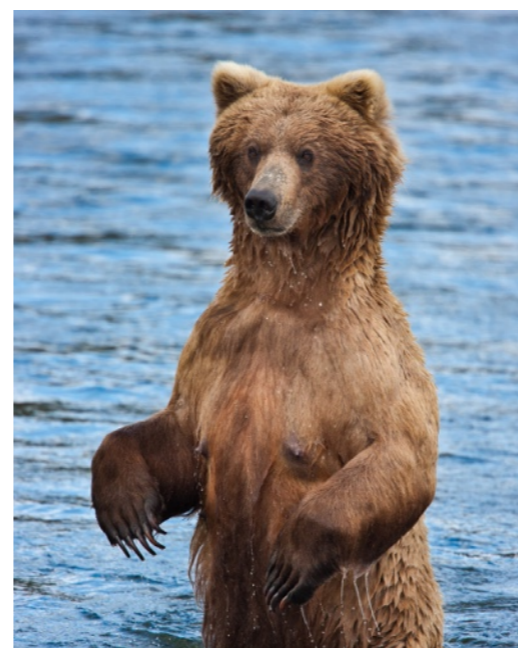
**Meals Provided:** B, L, D

**Key Points:** bear photography, optional day trip to the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes

Brooks Falls is unquestionably one of the premier places in the world to photograph bears. It is also the ONLY place to create the classic image of bears snatching salmon from the air. It is not uncommon to see over a dozen brown bears *at one time* while exploring the Brooks River. In July, hundreds of thousands of Sockeye (Red) salmon run up the Naknek River, into Naknek Lake, and on into the short, Brooks River. In the Brooks they meander through the mouth of the river and up into the shallows where subadult bears and females with cubs congregate to fish and scavenge.

As the fish move further upstream, they encounter the iconic Brooks Falls, a 4-5 foot waterfall that the fish must surmount in order to continue their migration to their spawning grounds in Brooks Lake. At the base of the falls, the fish mill around in big numbers, and so do the bears. Here the big, adult bears claim their fishing spots. Snatching jumping salmon from the air may be the most dramatic fishing strategy, but each bear at the falls is a master of their own technique.

All this activity, and the Park Service infrastructure located nearby, makes Brooks an accessible and great place to view and photograph bears, which can make it crowded at times. However, most mornings, we will arrive before 8am, long before the day-trip tourists from Anchorage arrive. And we stay later, departing Brooks around 7pm providing afternoon and evening hours to ourselves. During the busy hours, we'll steer clear of the popular platforms, opting instead to stroll along the lake shore, where we may encounter bears, or spend time on the lower river, where we can get the best images of cubs and females. We'll save the best part of the day, the morning and evening, to capture the iconic images at the falls themselves.



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# Days 4-7: Homer and Katmai Coast



## DAY 4

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**Travel:** Drive Anchorage to Homer.

**Night:** Homer

**Meals Provided:** B, L, D

**Key Points:** Chugach Mountains and Cook Inlet landscapes, opportunistic wildlife photography

## DAY 5

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**Travel:** Local

**Night:** Homer

**Meals Provided:** B, L, D

**Key Points:** Bush flight from Homer to Katmai or Lake Clark Coast, coastal bear photography

## DAY 6

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**Travel:** Local

**Night:** Homer

**Meals Provided:** B, L, D

**Key Points:** 4 hour boat trip on Kachemak Bay, explorations around Homer, eagle photography at Anchor Point

## DAY 7

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**Travel:** Drive Homer to Anchorage (optional flight)

**Night:** On your own

**Meals Provided:** B, L

**Key Points:** early morning in Homer, scenic drive, opportunistic wildlife, return to Anchorage by 4pm.

Homer is one of my favorite communities in Alaska. Located on the north shore of Kachemak Bay, the town overlooks the bay and the glaciated peaks across the water. K-bay as the locals know it, is home to the densest population of sea otters in Alaska, several seabird colonies, many harbor seals, and itinerant populations of humpback whales and orcas.

The forested coast around Homer provides nesting habitat for hundreds of Bald Eagles, and the Homer Spit and nearby Anchor Point are some of the best places in the world to photograph this species. Too, the town has an abundance of excellent restaurants, bakeries, art galleries, museums, and scenery.

On one day (weather permitting), we will board a bush plane for a flight across Cook Inlet to the coast of Katmai, or Lake Clark National Park (depending on conditions and bear activity). There, we will have a few hours on the ground to photograph the coastal bears, in an environment very different from Brooks Falls. The coast of Katmai and Lake Clark is dramatic with big, glaciated volcanoes, open meadows of wildflowers, and miles of empty beaches. Though the bears are abundant as well, they are almost secondary to the dramatic landscape.

We will also take a half-day small boat trip through Kachemak Bay. This is our chance to photograph marine wildlife like otters, seals, puffins, seabirds, and if we are lucky, humpback whales and occasionally orcas.

Our final day, we will drive (or take an optional flight) back up the Kenai Peninsula to Anchorage. Upon return to Anchorage, you'll be dropped off at your hotel or the airport, where we will say farewell, until our next journey together.



**Signup, Dates, and Details**  
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**Disclaimer on Trip Itineraries:** These trip descriptions are accurate to the degree possible, however natural phenomenon and wildlife are dependent on conditions outside of our control. I put every effort into arranging my trips to encounter the best possible photography and viewing opportunities, but described situations cannot be guaranteed. Schedules and hotels are subject to change based on weather, local conditions, and availability.

Have Questions? Feel free to contact me:

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