



BROOKS RANGE PHOTO CAMP

Creativity, Collaboration, and
Adventure in Alaska's Wildest
Mountains

20 to 28 August 2024



WHAT IS THIS TRIP?

Photographers, outdoor photographers in particular, are a solitary bunch. And within our ranks there are constant games of one-upmanship about who is shooting with better gear, whose images are sharpest, or what settings are “right”. We argue until we are blue in the face about whether it’s better to shoot in manual or aperture priority mode. We quietly diss each others photos, harrumphing to ourselves about how we could have done it better. And yet in all that talk, there is precious little about creativity, about making our images more compelling, lifting one another up, using our photos for good, or creating a career out of our passion.



THAT ENDS HERE.

This is not a photo tour, but you’ll make some of the best images of your life. This is not a workshop, but you’ll learn an extraordinary amount about outdoor and adventure photography, life as a professional photographer, and how to make money with your images. This isn’t a hiking trip, but I promise you’ll end up with tired feet.

Photo Camp is not any one of those things. It’s all of them, mixed up in a great big stew of creativity, collaboration, adventure, and straight-up fun.

IT’S SUMMER CAMP FOR ADULTS WITH CAMERAS.

WHO'S THIS FOR?

This trip is about what you want to become more than who you are. We don't care what you've accomplished, we care about where you want to go.

- 🌲 Photo Camp is for people who are passionate about photography, the outdoors, adventure, conservation, and wildlife.
- 🌲 It's for photographers who prefer to see the landscape from an alpine ridge rather than from the scenic pullout below.
- 🌲 This trip for people willing to put one foot in front of the other, many hundreds of times, in order to find that perfect shot.
- 🌲 For those who want to learn, collaborate, and connect with a like-minded photographers.
- 🌲 It's for professional photographers looking to grow their creativity and business.
- 🌲 Photo Camp for aspiring pros looking to make the leap.
- 🌲 It's for amateurs who live for the art.

MAYBE, IT'S FOR YOU.





WHERE IS THE BROOKS RANGE?

The Brooks Range are Alaska's northernmost mountains. The entire expanse of peaks lies north of the Arctic Circle. They stretch from the Canada's Yukon territory to the Chukchi Sea on Alaska's northwest coast. In that distance, the mountains are pierced by only a single road, the Dalton

Highway. The Brooks Range is the wildest place left in North America, and that's where we are going.

We'll drive north from Fairbanks, Alaska, up the Dalton Highway, ending up 70 miles north of the Arctic Circle in the tiny village of Wiseman, our home base.

WHO'S BEHIND THIS THING?



DAVID W SHAW

Dave is a full-time outdoor photographer, writer, and photo educator. He specializes in wildlife, landscape, and documentary photography. As a 23 year resident of Alaska, he has had the opportunity to explore most of the state's wild corners. And of all of Alaska's wild places, the Brooks Range is far and away his favorite. Dave's images and articles have appeared in hundreds of publications across the world, and his series of popular photo workshops are often booked up years in advance. An enthusiastic wilderness traveler, Dave has guided river and backcountry trips across Alaska and has extensive experience keeping others safe in wild places. Here is his [website](#).



ALYCE BENDER

Alyce Bender is a nature photographer, writer, educator, and adventurer. Camera in hand since childhood, her fascination for photography developed into a career after serving in the U.S. Air Force. Her passion for wildlife and the natural environment compels her to connect others with nature through sharing both visual art and in-field experiences that promote conservation, creativity, and ethical photography. She is a Tamron USA Ambassador, contributing writer for the Journal of Wildlife Photography, and her work has been featured in group and solo gallery shows across the US as well as in international publications from the UK to Japan. Visit her [website](#).

WHY AUTUMN?

Because there is no time better for photography in the arctic than late August and early September. The fall colors are booming. While the northeastern states get all the recognition for their autumn foliage, those hardwood forests have little on the arctic tundra. Orange dwarf birch, maroon blueberry, yellow willow, scarlet bearberry, gold aspens and paper birches. It's a cacophony of color that has to be seen to be believed.

For the first time since April, the nights are getting dark. Hundreds of miles from the nearest major city, the stars are incomparably bright. But it's the aurora borealis that makes this place unique. The Brooks Range lies within in the core of the northern aurora belt. Displays of northern lights can cover the night sky. And since the rivers and lakes have yet to freeze for the winter, there is potential for reflections, with the lights dancing above and below.

IT IS A PHOTOGRAPHIC PLAYGROUND.



TRIP ITINERARY

20 August 2024

We'll pick you up at the hotel of your choice in Fairbanks, Alaska around 9am. It's 275 miles to Wiseman, and the Dalton Highway is rough gravel most of the way. With many stops for images, wildlife, and a picnic lunch, we won't arrive until late afternoon. We'll have dinner, spend a couple of hours exploring locally, and (if the skies are clear) stay up late waiting for the aurora.

21 - 27 August 2024

Everything in the arctic is weather dependent so it's impossible to lay down a firm schedule. If the weather is perfect, we'll drive north up the road to some spectacular hiking areas near the continental divide. If we get caught in the rain, we'll stick closer to home, work on digital photo editing techniques, or get creative with fog over the mountains and raindrops on the autumn foliage. Daily, we'll have micro-workshops on topics like outdoor portraiture, off-camera flash, aurora photography, landscape, wildlife, and adventure photography. We'll strive to understand what makes an image good, and how to recognize that shot in the field. And we'll have beers and campfires by the river in the evenings.

New in 2024, we will make an overnight excursion to the Arctic Coastal Plain spending a night in the oil field support area of Deadhorse. This will be our best chance for wildlife like caribou, musk oxen, grizzlies.

28 August 2024

On the final day, we'll retreat back down the Dalton Highway to Fairbanks. Though there will plenty of stops along the way, we'll aim to make better time on the journey south. We'll arrive back in Fairbanks by 4pm, in time to catch evening flights home.



YEAH, OKAY. BUT WHAT'S A DAY ACTUALLY LIKE?

You wake up, and peer out the window to see the gray light of morning. You are groggy, but it looks clear outside. On the porch there is a rustling, a curse, and the clunk of a dropped bag. Photographers are getting up because it looks like it's going to be a bonkers sunrise. From the lodge, it's a five minute walk to the river. You make it in three.

Frost covers the gravel bar along the Koyukuk, painting the seed heads of the avens silver. The river flows swift and blue, rushing over the rocks. In the Arctic, the sun rises slowly, arcing above the mountains, painting high clouds in vibrant pink. Around you, cameras click.

Breakfast.

It's a crisp and clear autumn morning, so the group converges with packed lunches, backpacks loaded with cameras, rain gear, and a warm layer. We load into the van, and drive north. There is but one goal for the day - Find someplace cool.

And we do.

When the van parks in a roadside pullout, everyone spills out into the morning sun. There is a discussion of bear-safety, cans of bear spray get passed around, and then we head out.

There are few trails in the Brooks Range, at least not many made by humans, so it's a bush-whack. The group climbs steadily, first through some dense trees, then onto open tundra above treeline.

The foliage simply glows. Yellow grasses, bright red bearberry, orange dwarf birch...

Cameras emerge. We discuss the benefits of using a polarizer in bright conditions, and then start creating photos. For a while it's independent, but then we converge and start talking about composition. We share ideas, pursue concepts, and start placing people in our photos.

Lunch on the tundra.

In the afternoon we climb toward some limestone spires that reach out of the ridge like enormous tombstones. Camera shutters go ballistic.

Late in the afternoon we descend to the van, and make our way back to Wiseman. It stays light surprisingly late, so when golden hour hits just after dinner, we head out again. Alpenglow falls on the western wall of Sukakpak Mountain, a limestone monolith a short distance north of Wiseman.

As it grows dark, back in Wiseman, we circle around a campfire by the river sipping beers. There is a discussion of night photography, camera settings and techniques. Then we wait, and wait, until sure enough, green curtains of aurora begin swirling overhead.

You make it to bed. Eventually.



WHAT'S INCLUDED? AND WHAT'S IT COST?

Be in Fairbanks by 9am on the morning of the 20th of August 2024, and we'll take it from there. Here is what you get:

- All transportation starting the morning of 20 August.
- 7 nights accommodation.
- All meals and snacks.
- Local excursions and hiking in the Brooks Range.
- Wilderness and bear safety instruction.
- Daily photo workshops, collaboration, and connection with your peers.
- Fun. All you can take.

\$3500/PERSON

I'VE GOT QUESTIONS.

Then, by all means, reach out!

Send any inquiries you've got to **David Shaw:**

DAVE@DAVID-W-SHAW.COM

OR CALL

907-590-7023





HOW DO I APPLY?

Wait. Apply? Yes, you'll be asked to fill out a short application, but we aren't passing judgement on your work. We don't care how many Instagram followers you have or how many awards you've won. We don't care how fit you are (though a good level of fitness is required). And even though we ask to see a few images, this isn't a photo competition.

What are we looking for? We want to see that you strive for creativity over repetition, that you are enthusiastic about the outdoors, and that you desire to take your photography (and perhaps your career) to a new level.

There are only 10 spots. We want the right people to fill them.

Here is the website with the information you'll need:

[CLICK HERE](#)

[HTTP://WWW.EXPLORE.DAVID-W-SHAW.COM/FALL-PHOTOGRAPHY-CAMP/](http://www.explore.david-w-shaw.com/fall-photography-camp/)