

SEPTEMBER

8 Days / 7 Nights

Starts and Finishes in Anchorage, Alaska

FAT BEARS OF KATMAI

Trip Description

The National Park Service's "Fat Bear Contest" has made the bears of Brooks Falls (and their unsurpassed ability to put on weight) an internet phenomenon. But why just watch the contest online when you can experience the bears at their chonkiest?

On this trip, we'll spend 3 days at the Brooks River, traveling back and forth from our accommodations in the village of King Salmon. We'll fly out the afternoon before our first trip to Brooks, then spend two full days, and one partial day exploring the river and falls. In my opinion, this is THE time to visit Brooks. The summer crowds have evaporated, and the bears are looking their best as they put on the final pounds before their winter hibernation. Plus, the autumn foliage is appearing, setting a beautiful backdrop for our images.

After three days at Brooks, we'll head back to Anchorage for a night before venturing on to one of my favorite towns in Alaska: Homer. But we've got one stop first.

As we drive down to Homer, we'll detour for a few hours to Lake Clark National Park (weather permitting). We'll catch a bush plane just outside the town of Soldotna and make the short and dramatic flight over to a remote lake where we'll spend a few hours photographing brown bears as they fish for the last of the spawning sockeye salmon. From a skiff, we'll be able to approach close to the bears without disturbing them, and capture some stunning images along the way. In the afternoon, we'll wing back to town, and continue on our way Homer.

Homer, Alaska is incredibly scenic, located at the southern end of the Kenai Peninsula and on the shores of beautiful Kachemak Bay. We'll have two full days in Homer, and we'll make good use of them. On one day, we'll spend the afternoon on a small boat, touring Kachemak Bay. K-Bay is home to one of the largest populations of Sea Otters in the world, and we should have the chance to see and photograph dozens during our trip. Too, we'll keep our eyes peeled for Tufted Puffins, Common Murres, Bald Eagles and other birds that call the bay home.

Our second full day is left open for explorations. We may take a water taxi across the bay and make the short hike to the Grewingk Glacier, one of the most photogenic locations in the Homer area. And we'll certainly make some time to look for and photograph eagles at nearby Anchor Point.

On the final day of the trip, we'll say goodbye to Homer, and make our way back to Anchorage, where we'll drop you off at the airport, your hotel, or the start of your next adventure in Alaska by mid-afternoon.



ITINERARY

Day 1 - Afternoon pickup from your hotel in Anchorage for the flight to King Salmon. We'll settle into our hotel, have dinner at the local restaurant and rest up for our first day at Brooks Falls! Night at the Antler's Inn, King Salmon.

Days 2 and 3 - Early morning departure by water taxi for Brooks Falls. All day at Brooks. Return to King Salmon around 7pm. Night at the Antler's Inn, King Salmon.

Day 4 - Early morning departure by water taxi for Brooks Falls. Return to King Salmon in the mid-afternoon in time for the evening flight back to Anchorage. Night at the Copper Whale Inn.

Day 5 - Morning departure for Soldotna. Flight to Lake Clark National Park (weather permitting) for few hours of bear photography at a remote lake. Return to

Soldotna in the afternoon and continue on to Homer. Night at Land's End Resort.

Day 6 - Morning explorations around Homer, with an afternoon boat trip on Kachemak Bay. Night at Land's End Resort.

Day 7 - Day open for explorations. Possible water taxi across Kachemak Bay and hike to Grewingk Glacier, eagle photography at Anchor Point and the Homer Spit, or independent time in Homer.

Day 8 - After breakfast, we'll depart for Anchorage. Lunch along the way with an arrival in Anchorage around mid-afternoon.

**This is a sample itinerary and may be subject to change. The hotels noted are our likely lodging, but not guaranteed.*

[Sign up HERE!](#)

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- Flights between Anchorage and King Salmon.
- All ground transportation.
- 7 nights lodging.
- All scheduled excursions.
- Most meals.
- Photographic instruction.
- The best guides in the business.

WHAT'S NOT?

- Flights between your home and Anchorage.
- Pre and post-trip hotels in Anchorage.
- Tips

[Sign up HERE!](#)







FAQs

Do you have the permits and insurance to operate in Alaska's National Parks?

Yes! All my trips are fully permitted by the National Park Service, BLM, Forest Service, and other land managers. I carry all required insurance.

What do I need to bring?

Well in advance of the trip, I'll send you a comprehensive packing list with everything you'll need.

Are there weight limits?

We will be flying Alaska Airlines or a regional carrier to King Salmon, and their weight limits will apply for the Brooks Falls part of the trip. Otherwise, there are not restrictions as such. However, there is no need to overpack. If your equipment can't fit in a camera pack, and a standard sized duffle or suitcase you are packing too much.

What fitness do I need to have?

During our time at Brooks Falls we will be spending a lot of time on our feet and may cover 5-6 miles over the course of the day on relatively smooth, and mostly flat trails. The optional day hike in Homer to the Grewingk Glacier is 4 miles with about 350 feet of elevation gain. I'm happy to answer more questions about this if you have them.

What and where will we eat?

During our time in King Salmon/Brooks Falls, I'll provide basic breakfast foods (granola, milk, yogurt, fruit, etc.), and we'll have dinner at the local restaurant in the village. Lunches throughout the trip are diverse picnics. In Homer, we'll eat breakfast at the hotel, and dinner at a selection of Homer's excellent restaurants.

I have dietary restrictions. Can you work with that?

In almost all cases, I can work around dietary restrictions. Please reach out to me with specific questions.

What photography experience do I need?

I welcome all levels of photographers on my trips, from those just wanting to document their experiences, to professionals looking to expand their portfolio. I even get non-photographers who are eager to experience the locations we visit.

Do non-photographers get a discount?

No. Costs for the this trip are the same regardless of your photographic interest.

Will the bears eat me?

No! The bears we will be photographing are habituated and usually preoccupied with eating and interacting with one another. As long as we treat bears with respect, and follow their rules, our time with them will be safe.









YOUR GUIDE

David W. Shaw

Dave is the owner and lead guide of David W. Shaw Photo Workshops. A professional photographer, writer, and photo educator he splits his time between Alaska and Colorado. Dave's images and writing have appeared thousands of times in publications across the world.

He has both undergraduate and master's degrees in wildlife biology and is an expert naturalist with a deep love for all wild things.

Dave is a 20+ year resident of Alaska and has spent most of those decades exploring the state's many wild corners with his camera and leading others on wilderness trips, photography expeditions, birding, and natural history tours.

Above all, Dave is passionate about protecting the world's wild places and animals and believes in the power of travel and photography to inspire conservation efforts in communities and people the world over.

Learn more, and check out all of Dave's Workshops and Tours right [HERE](#).

