

VOYAGE INFORMATION

Voyage Name	Aleutian Islands
Voyage Code	ALU002S
Dates	07–27 June 2023
Duration	16 days/15 nights
Embark	Anchorage, USA
Disembark	Tokyo, Japan
Ship	<i>Sylvia Earle</i>
Forms Due	07 March, 2023

Welcome to Aurora’s ‘Aleutian Islands’ expedition.

Board your expedition ship in the stunning, remote fishing port of Seward, Alaska, to begin exploring the rugged Alaskan Peninsula coast, where glaciers tumble from towering icefields into deeply carved fjords. Brown bears, whales, dolphins and seals call this coast home and the diversity of wildlife only increases as you traverse the Aleutians, a 1,900-kilometre/1,180-mile chain of 14 large volcanic and 55 smaller islands that form the Pacific Rim of Fire’s northern arc.

This natural boundary, a designated Mission Blue Hope Spot, separates the Pacific Ocean from the Bering Sea creating a dynamic environment that supports amazing biodiversity, including caribou, sea otters, sea lions, orca and gray whales. Delight in black-legged kittiwakes, peregrine falcon, tundra swans and much more. Landings reveal historical relics, ranging from Aleut villages and Russian fur trade depots, to remnants of World War II battles and Cold War bases. Every day promises something to fire your passion – especially Russia’s spectacular Kamchatka Peninsula.

ITINERARY OVERVIEW

Day 1	Arrive in Anchorage and transfer to your hotel for overnight stay. Welcome Reception and Pre-Embarkation briefing.
Day 2	Embarkation day. Complete final health screening/testing prior to embarking the <i>Sylvia Earle</i> in Pichilique.
Day 3	Kenai Peninsula
Day 4	Kodiak Island
Day 5	Geographic Harbor, Katmai National Park and Preserve
Day 6	Semidi Islands
Day 7	Unga Spit, Shumagin Islands
Day 8	Unimak Island
Day 9	Baby Islands, Dutch Harbor, Unalaska Island
Day 10	Islands of Four Mountains
Day 11	Adak
Day 12	Kiska
Day 13	Attu Island
Day 14	At sea
Day 15	Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy, fly to Tokyo
Day 16	Depart Tokyo

VOYAGE HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore deep fjords of the Alaskan Peninsula, where glaciers shed bergy bits, and brown bears and cubs forage along the shores.
- Island-hop the Aleutian chain of active volcanoes that form the Pacific Rim of Fire, separating the Pacific Ocean from the Bering Sea.
- Zodiac-cruise mist-shrouded coves, where colonies of Steller sea lions roar, humpback and gray whales blow, sea otters frolic and outcrops hold breeding colonies of puffins, auklets, terns, guillemots and dozens of other species.
- Enjoy tundra walks among wildflowers that add colour to a backdrop of smoking volcanoes. Explore abandoned military outposts, where Japanese and US military forces clashed in World War II.

EXPEDITION INCLUSIONS

- Transfer from airport to hotel on Day 1.
- One night's hotel accommodation in Anchorage including breakfast.
- Half-day city tour of Anchorage, and transfer to Seward on Day 2.
- Charter flight from Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy to Tokyo on Day 15.
- One night's hotel accommodation at Narita Airport, Tokyo, including breakfast on Day 15.
- Onboard accommodation during voyage, including daily cabin service.
- All meals, snacks, tea and coffee during voyage.
- Beer, house wine and soft drinks with dinner.
- Captain's Welcome and Farewell receptions including four-course dinner, house cocktails, house beer and wine, non-alcoholic beverages.
- All shore excursions and Zodiac cruises.
- Educational lectures and guiding services from Expedition Team.
- Complimentary access to onboard expedition doctor and medical clinic.
- One 3-in-1 waterproof, polar expedition jacket.
- Complimentary use of Muck Boots during the voyage.
- Comprehensive pre-departure information.
- Port surcharges, permits and landing fees.
- Gratuities for ship's crew.

EXPEDITION EXCLUSIONS

- International or domestic flights – unless specified in the itinerary.
- Transfers – unless specified in the itinerary.
- Airport arrival or departure taxes.
- Passport, visa, reciprocity and vaccination fees and charges.
- Travel insurance or emergency evacuation charges.
- Hotel accommodation and meals unless specified in the itinerary.
- Optional excursions and optional activity surcharges.
- All items of a personal nature, including but not limited to alcoholic beverages and soft drinks (outside of dinner service), laundry services, personal clothing, medical expenses, wi-fi, email or phone charges.

Aurora Expeditions operates in remote and challenging environments, and in the spirit of expedition travel, we encourage you to adopt a flexible and adventurous attitude when joining our voyages. This itinerary is a guide only and is subject to change due to weather, sea state and other conditions beyond our control.

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1 Arrive Anchorage

Having made your way to Anchorage, you will be met by a representative of Aurora Expeditions and transferred to our group hotel. Upon arrival, kindly remind hotel check-in staff to provide you with Aurora Expeditions cabin tags for your luggage. Please clearly label the tags with your name and ship cabin number.

This evening, enjoy a light refreshment as you meet your fellow expeditioners at a Welcome Reception and Pre-Embarkation Briefing. Afterwards, there's free time to dine at your leisure (Dinner not included).

Accommodation: Hilton Anchorage Hotel (or similar)

Day 2 Embarkation

This morning, your cabin luggage will be collected from your hotel and transferred directly to the port for sanitisation, clearance and delivery to your cabin ahead of your arrival on board. Please ensure that your luggage is fitted with cabin tags clearly labelled with your name and cabin number. Any valuables or personal items should be kept on you throughout the day.

After you have enjoyed breakfast in the hotel, we will conduct our final, mandatory pre-embarkation health screening and COVID-19 (rapid antigen) testing. Next, discover Anchorage on a sightseeing tour before transferring to Seward, where our Expedition Team will welcome you aboard the *Sylvia Earle* at approximately 4.00 pm.

You will have time to settle into your cabin before our important briefings begin. Enjoy the thrill of departure as we 'throw the lines' and set sail for Kenai Peninsula in the evening. Meet your Expedition Team and crew at the Captain's Welcome Dinner.

Day 3 Kenai Peninsula

By ship and Zodiac, explore the wild coastline of Kenai Fjords National Park, where nearly 40 glaciers descend from the sparkling Harding Icefield to the ice shelves below, calving into narrow waterways. Sail deep into the Northwestern Fjord and watch for wildlife at every turn.

Day 4 Kodiak Island

The second largest island in the US and part of the Kodiak Archipelago, Kodiak Island, is renowned for its brown bears and king crab, and its fascinating history as the centre of Russia's fur trade with Alaska during the 18th century. Visit the Alutiiq Museum, with its collection of art and cultural objects detailing the lives of the indigenous Aleut people who have lived here for more than 7,000 years. Hikers can explore the mysterious moss-draped forests, with their beautiful wildflowers and flowing streams, while birders can search for belted kingfishers, various thrushes and red crossbills. Later, Zodiac-cruise to one of the archipelago's outer islands, searching for humpback and fin whales along the way.

Day 5 Geographic Harbor, Katmai National Park and Preserve

Tucked away at the end of Amalik Bay, Geographic Harbor is set amid magnificent volcanic landscape. Experience spectacular scenery while Zodiac-cruising to explore offshore islands, searching for bald eagles, marbled murrelets, sea otters, harbour porpoise, and coastal brown bears feeding on salmon, clams, mussels and barnacles. Rising mist reveals stunning, dark volcanic landscapes splashed with the colours of early wildflowers in bloom.

Day 6 Semidi Islands

Zodiac-cruise beneath basalt bird cliffs at Aghiyuk Island, then stretch your legs on tundra hikes amid a colourful carpet of wildflowers on Aghiyuk or Chowiet islands. Aghiyuk Island is a haven for more than with 2.5 million nesting seabirds. In Zodiacs, we explore the island's sheltered coastline, listening to the cacophony of the seabird colony, which includes murrets, parakeet auklets, tufted and horned puffins, black-legged kittiwakes and northern fulmars. The surrounding waters abound with sea otters, seals, porpoise and whales.

Day 7 Unga Spit, Shumagin Islands

We land on Unga Spit to explore the petrified remains of a 25-million-year-old sequoia forest, and a picturesque ghost town surrounded by wildflowers. Wander along a spectacular coastline covered with fragments of fossilised wood, all remnants of an ancient Metasequoia forest, dating back some 70–14 million years. Watch for bald eagles, peregrine falcon and a host of seabirds, while otters and Steller sea lions patrol offshore. Explore an eerie village that was abandoned in 1969.

Day 8 Unimak Island

False Pass marks our exit from the Alaska Peninsula and our arrival in the Aleutian Islands. Unimak, the largest of the chain, is 93 per cent wilderness and inhabited by brown bears, caribou, wolves and the odd wolverine. On foot and by Zodiac, we explore the island, from the bustling fishing port of King Cove, to the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge, where migratory birds arrive in their hundreds of thousands, including black brant, emperor geese, Steller's eider, some 30 migratory shorebird species and many seabirds. In the sheltered coves and bays around Unimak Island, search for orca and humpback whales. Weather permitting, you will see the near-perfect cone of Mount Shishaldin, the Aleutian's highest (and active) volcano.

Day 9 Baby Islands, Dutch Harbor, Unalaska Island

Dynamic tides and whales make for exciting Zodiac-cruising among the Baby Islands, none of which is higher than a few metres above sea level, where you will be enthralled by whiskered auklets, puffins, petrels, murrelets, guillemots and perhaps even a Laysan albatross. At Alaska's busiest fishing port, Dutch Harbor, where more than 600 bald eagles nest close to town, you will find relics of the Japanese invasion during World War II, and visit the Museum of the Aleutians, and the oldest Russian church in Alaska.

Day 10 Islands of Four Mountains

The seldom-visited Islands of Four Mountains are a group of volcanic islands teeming with seabirds including fulmars, Laysan albatross and black-footed albatross. In the waters surrounding the islands you can expect to see humpback whales and perhaps orca. Weather conditions permitting, enjoy a hike over black volcanic sand that contrasts starkly with the lush green of ryegrass. From a lookout, you may get to see both the Bering Sea and the North Pacific Ocean.

Day 11 Adak

'Where the winds blow and friendships grow' is the motto of Adak, Alaska's southernmost city on the island that separates the Bering Sea from the Pacific Ocean. Not always so friendly, Adak was a military installation that allowed US forces to mount successful operations against the Japanese in World War II, and housed a community of some 6,000 people during the Cold War. Today only a few hundred remain, welcoming visitors to explore a near-ghost town set among spectacular tundra, where introduced caribou roam.

Day 12 Kiska Island

When Japan captured Kiska in 1942, it marked the first loss of US soil to foreign forces since the War of 1812. Today, many World War II relics remain, including a Shinto shrine and a two-man submarine. Ptarmigans, Lapland longspurs and bald eagles nest in the shadow of the active Kiska volcano.

Day 13 Attu Island

The westernmost of the Aleutian Islands, Attu, marks the site of the only World War II battle to be fought on North American soil during WWII. Today, the attraction is birds with exotic names like Siberian rubythroat, far eastern curlew and Mongolian plover, plus many of the migratory species and seabirds that you have come to love.

Day 14 At sea

Sea days are ideal for editing photos, attending fascinating talks presented by our team of experts or enjoying a massage at the wellness centre. Remember to also step outside to enjoy the many seabirds, whales, dolphins and seals on show as we approach Russia's Kamchatka coast. Celebrate the end of your voyage at our Captain's Farewell Dinner.

Day 15 Disembark Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy, fly to Tokyo

Disembark in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy. Bid farewell to the crew and Expedition Team and transfer to the airport to board our charter to Tokyo, where we spend the night.

Accommodation: Hotel Nikko Narita, Narita Airport

Day 16 Depart Tokyo

Depart Tokyo and continue your journey.