



## **SITKA** BY THE SEA

Sitka is a visually striking town located on the Sitka Sound with about 9,000 residents. Sitka is known for its **Tlingit** culture and picturesque remnants of its Russian heritage, including the onion-shaped domes and gold-colored crosses of the beloved **Saint Michael's Russian Orthodox Cathedral**. Sitka is a world famous fishing town, with amazing marine wildlife viewing opportunities as well. There are also brown bear viewing opportunities, as Baranof Island and nearby Kruzof Island have large brown bear populations. As small as Sitka is, there are some surprisingly great dining options! Sitka boasts quirky breakfast spots, fine dining destinations, vegetarian lunch options, a world-class brewery, and of course amazing local seafood!

### THINGS TO DO DOWNTOWN

Downtown Sitka features numerous art galleries, a fine bookstore, gift shops, several lodging options, and restaurants with great views and local seafood, all nestled between the mountains and the ocean. There are 22 buildings in Sitka on the National Register of Historic Places including the Russian Blockhouse, Russian Bishop's House, Princess Maksoutoff's Grave, and Castle Hill to name a few, so there's plenty of history to explore on a walk through town.

### HISTORIC SITES

The **Russian Bishop's House** is the oldest intact Russian building in Sitka, built in 1842 by the Russian American Company as a residence for the Bishop of the Orthodox Church. Bishop Innocent (Ivan Veniaminov) was its first resident. The house has been restored to the 1850s historic period when it functioned as a school, bishop's residence, and a chapel. The house is registered as a National Historic Landmark.

**St. Michael's Cathedral** in downtown houses an important collection of Russian Orthodox art and church treasures. Built between 1844-48, the original cathedral was destroyed by fire in January 1966, but was reconstructed and today houses icons and religious objects that were salvaged from the fire. The cathedral is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

### WILDLIFE REHABILITATION CENTERS

The **Fortress of the Bear** is a nonprofit education and rescue center with a three-quarter acre habitat for orphaned black and brown bear cubs. Visitors can get up-close views of the bears from covered viewing areas and listen to educational presentations about the resident bears.

The **Alaska Raptor Center** rehabilitates injured birds and releases them back into the wild. The few who don't regain flight remain housed at the center and are visible to guests. The center is home to eagles, owls, hawks, and falcons.

#### MUSEUMS AND CULTURAL CENTERS

Visitors to the **Sheldon Jackson Museum** have the opportunity to see one of the oldest ethnographic collections in Alaska. The Reverend Dr. Sheldon Jackson recognized the importance of saving cultural objects for the benefit of future generations, from Alaska Native watercraft to tools, equipment, clothing, and ceremonial objects such as masks. The Museum Shop also offers authentic Alaska Native handcrafted artwork along with publications related to the Museum's collections. Located just a 10-minute walk from the center of town, the present museum, which was the first concrete structure in Alaska, opened in 1897. The museum has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1972.

The **Sitka National Historical Park** features a remarkable collection of totem poles carved by **Tlingit and Haida artists** that are placed along a well-maintained trail in the forest. Located in the visitor center at Sitka National Historical Park, the Sika Cultural Center highlights Alaska Native culture through a studio for local Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian artists. This unique working artist studio provides a one-on-one experience for visitors to understand master Alaska Native artists and their traditions.

All elements of Sitka's history converge in one place at the **Sitka History Museum**. Packed with displays, photographs, and artifacts from Sitka's Tlingit, Russian, and American history, the museum is a worthwhile stop. Maps of Sitka's national registered landmarks can be found at the museum.

#### HISTORY

Sitka was first inhabited by the **Tlingit** people and is recognized as the heart of Russian influence in Alaska. The Russians arrived by 1741 and in 1804 attacked a Tlingit fort. The region's most famous battle eventually led to the creation of **Sitka National Historical Park**. Originally established as New Archangel, Sitka became the capital of Russian America in 1808. When Russia sold Alaska to the United States on October 18, 1867, the transfer ceremony took place on Sitka's Castle Hill.

## **GUIDED EXCURSIONS**

### **Sitka Historic Tour**

**3.5 hours. \$99**

Visit and learn the story of Sitka! Let us share the historical highlights of this former Russian Capital. Your local expert guide will cover the eras of the Tlingit Natives, Russians, and Americans, taking you through Sitka's National Historical Park, Sheldon Jackson Museum, attending a New Archangel Dance performance with a presentation of the Alaska Flag at Centennial Hall (when ships are in port), and also visiting St. Michael's Cathedral, the Russian Orthodox Church that stands in the center of downtown Sitka. This tour provides a little of everything!

### **Birds, Bears, and Barnacles**

**3.5 hours. \$119**

Your local driver/guide will present to you the Alaska Raptor Center. Growing from a backyard, volunteer operation, the Alaska Raptor Center has become Alaska's foremost bald eagle hospital and educational center, and one of the state's premier visitor attractions. You will be treated to the "bird on the glove presentation," the flight center, the clinic, and the outside deck habitat areas. There is also a charming gift shop which helps support the Center.

On to the Fortress of the Bear. Absolutely amazing! Enjoy seeing the bears up close and personal. You will learn all about the coastal brown and black bears while standing on a platform watching their loving handler feed, talk, and encourage development while eating and showing off. Eagles participate in this adventure too. It's something you won't forget!

The Sitka Sound Science Center is an excellent opportunity to learn, see and touch! It houses an active salmon hatchery, saltwater aquariums, and live fish tanks displaying many of the marine species found in Sitka's ocean waters. All ages enjoy this Sitka highlight!

### **Walk Sitka**

**2.5 hours. \$89**

Be introduced to "Beautiful Sitka By The Sea" while doing one of your favorite things—walking! Your well trained (prepared for the weather) guide, will show and tell all about Sitka.

Guests will see the Russian Bishop's House, Sitka Fine Arts Camp, Sheldon Jackson Museum, Castle Hill, and St. Michael's Cathedral, to name a few. Then the tour continues on to the Sitka National Historical Park (Totem Park) where

you'll stroll through the Tongass Rain Forest, viewing 18 totem poles, the battle sight between the Tlingits and the Russians, the Indian River where salmon spawn, and beautiful, picturesque vegetation.

And if that's not enough, you'll be taken into the Sitka Sound Science Center which displays an active salmon hatchery, salt water aquariums, and live fish tanks. This is a two mile comfortable walk you won't forget!

### **WILDLIFE EXPLORATION BY SEA PRICES VARY**

Three and four-hour excursions, as well as other more extensive trips, are available. Join us for up close and personal whale watching and bird watching. On our four-hour trips we routinely visit **Saint Lazaria Island** National Wildlife Refuge, the "center of the universe", in our minds! Here we immerse ourselves amongst incredible congregations of seabirds, as well as birds of prey, colorful inter-tidal organisms and marine mammals all in the setting of a dramatic volcanic island, steadfast, at the edge of the wide pacific and in the shadow of majestic Mount Edgecumbe. For those who love the natural world, especially bird watching, Saint Lazaria Island, with its surrounds, is a pinnacle of perfection!

### **SITKA ATV WILDLIFE ADVENTURE. \$325 4.5 HOURS ATV TOUR & CAMPFIRE PICNIC. \$350 6 HOURS (same tour with campfire)**

Your ticket to a fun filled day is a side by side OHV ride in the Tongass National Forest. This 4.5 hour adventure takes you to Iris meadow, arguably the best place in the Sitka area to view Alaska Coastal Brown Bears in nature. Iris Meadow is also filled with wildflowers in season and a great place to watch other wildlife like Sitka Blacktail Deer and American Bald Eagles. After taking in the scenery for a while continue on to north beach where you can relax and listen to the surf while enjoying a hot snack and watching seals and sea otters just offshore. Your guide will lead the way and share information about the forest and the plants and animals found there. The boat to and from Kruzof Island is an added bonus. Your captain knows the way weaving through islands and narrow channels be sure to watch out for Sea Otters and Stellar Sea Lions while you enjoy the passing scenery. Guests must be 18 to drive and there must be a licensed driver for each non driver booked.

### **ATV RIDING & FLY FISHING 8 HOURS. \$400**

Your trip begins at our fly shop in downtown Sitka where you will be outfitted for the days 8 hour excursion. then you will be taken by boat to Kruzof Island. The Meadows at Kruzof Island are arguably the best place in the Sitka area for viewing wild Alaska Coastal Brown Bears. There are 2 rivers that come together in the Iris meadows estuary they don't have official names but we call them the Shelikof River. It is easy wading and has a large open estuary at the bottom that is prime fly fishing. Shelikof river has healthy runs of Silver, Chum and Pink

Salmon and Dolly Varden Char. After fishing for a while ride to an ocean beach and enjoy a shore lunch. After lunch there is time for more fishing or riding which ever you prefer before heading back to the boat for the return to Sitka. The boat transfer part of the trip travels through mostly protected waterways. Sitka Blacktail Deer, Sea Otters, and American Bald Eagles are frequently spotted from the boat.

### **BUSH PLANE & REMOTE FLY FISHING. PRICING VARIES - 8 HOURS**

On a Bush Plane Fly Fishing Trip with Sitka Alaska Outfitters you will have opportunity to fish remote rivers for the most prized sport fish in Alaska. A bush plane on floats is your mode of transport to the river ensuring easy access to the shoreline and a fast comfortable ride. Depending on what river your guide decides is best to fish that day you will have approximately 6 hours to fish on this 8 hour full day excursion. Your guide will take you to the rivers with the best fishing for Salmon or Trout according to your preference and the season. This trip includes all wading and fishing gear and snacks beverages and a shore lunch. Not included is Alaska Sport Fishing License these trips are strictly catch and release your guide will take pictures for you to take home. These trips are a great way for you to experience what fly fishing in remote Southeast Alaska is like.

### **NATURE OF SITKA BY RAFT & ATV. 7 HOURS. \$375**

Your excursion begins at the outfitting shop at 105 B Monastery St. in Sitka Alaska where you will be outfitted for your excursion. Your gear for this trip will include a special clothing that will protect you from the elements allowing you to be warm and comfortable outdoors in Alaska. Then your captain and guide will take you on an ocean adventure to St Lazaria Island. This island is part of the Alaska Maritime Wildlife Refuge Home to thousands of nesting sea birds. The volcanic geological features of this island are nothing short of breathtaking and there is no better way to appreciate them than from the open seating of the ocean rafts. From St Lazaria your captain will steer a course along Kruzof Island home to the Mt Edgecumbe Volcano. This coastline is a mix of black sand beaches and lava flows from the volcano. This unique geology is perfect habitat for A multitude of species of birds, fish, whales, marine mammals in a setting so beautiful it can hardly be described.

After touring for approximately 2 hours on the ocean raft you will arrive at Mud Bay where you will disembark. Now you will get to drive Yamaha Rhino OHV's in the Tongass National Forest. This is a very special experience because there are only certain places in the forest where you can drive OHV's and Kruzof Island is a great one. The trails lead through mixed forest and muskeg areas and along the way your guide will stop to tell you about the forest. After riding for about 40 minutes you will arrive at a beautiful estuary called Iris Meadows. In season you will find fields of Purple Irises and Alaska cotton as well as many other wildflowers. This estuary is a great food source for Alaska Coastal Brown Bears and Sitka Blacktail Deer. The open vistas of the meadows make for great

locations for viewing wildlife and taking pictures. After enjoying the scenery you will ride on another 20 minutes or so to a beautiful ocean beach called North Beach. You can ride right down at the waters edge in the black sand. Your guide will direct you to a location where you will stop and have lunch while taking in the views and listening to the surf. After lunch you will ride back to the rafts that will take you back to Sitka through the island passages. Back at the outfitting shop you can enjoy refreshments and share memories as you gear down from your excursion. The memories made on this excursion are sure to last a lifetime.

### **VOLCANO COAST OCEAN COAST ADVENTURE 2.5 HOURS \$200**

Explore the rugged volcanic coastline of Kruzof Island on this 2.5 hour eco-adventure. Home to Mt Edgecumbe volcano the south coast of Kruzof island has some very unique geological features that are both interesting to look at and provide excellent habitat for a diverse array of marine life. Just offshore of Kruzof are a couple of smaller volcanic islands they are Low Island and St Lazaria Island each with its own unique features and wildlife. You can expect to see towering cliffs, jagged rocky outcrops and sea caves. St Lazaria is part of the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge set up to protect the thousands of seabirds that nest there. Whales, Sea Lions, Sea Otters, Tufted Puffins, and myriads of seabirds are common in the area and you will have opportunity to view these animals in the most beautiful setting imaginable. You don't need to worry about having special gear because everything is provided that you will need to stay warm and comfortable in the open air seating of the ocean raft. Be sure to bring your camera this excursion is great for taking pictures.

### **SITKA FLIGHTSEEING**

Explore the rugged coast of the North Pacific by air. This is an exciting and unique way to see the unique scenery in Sitka. Keep your eyes open for whales and sea otters as you fly by sea stack cliffs, grotto beaches, and kelp beds. If the weather allows, you'll see Mount Edgecumbe volcano, mountain glaciers, and mountain lakes.

### **FISHING CHARTERS**

Freshwater **fly-fishing** in Sitka's lakes and rivers target salmon, char, trout, and steelhead. Ocean **fishing charters** offer world-class salmon and halibut fishing. Sitka is home to several fishing lodges that feature multi-day fishing itineraries and include comfortable accommodations and meals.

### **YOUR ALASKA CONCIERGE TEAM**

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