SEA TO SKY EXPEDITIONS

Yukon Territory

kluane base camp





Overview

Trip Duration	7 days
Grade	BC8abdfg — Strenuous
Activities	Hiking with a Full Pack
Summary	4 days hiking with a day pack, 3 days hiking with a full pack, 6 nights camping

Trip highlights

- It's Kluane! Home to the tallest peak in Canada and the second tallest in North America, and 17 of the 20 tallest peaks in Canada
- Glaciers and peaks! The largest non-polar icefield in the world
- Wildlife-grizzly bears and Dall sheep, caribou, moose
- Glacier Flightseeing Tour!
- Rich First Nations history
- A world class visitor centre with amazing displays and information
- The Thechàl Dhâl' Visitor Centre, developed in collaboration with local First Nations has interpretations by local elders

Trip start details

Getting to the pick up location

Whitehorse, Yukon Territory. SEA to SKY will pick up for all expeditions that originate in Whitehorse. Should any problems or miscommunication arise, please email our office and we will forward you the guide team's contact info. (cell number and email address).

Air Canada has daily flights to Whitehorse. Air North has scheduled flights from Calgary, Edmonton, Victoria and Vancouver.

Whitehorse Hotels
The following represent a cross section of available accommodation in Whitehorse. Former clients have stayed at these and have indicated a satisfaction with them.

Edgewater Hotel
1-877-484-3334
www.edgewaterhotelwhitehorse.com

Best Western Gold Rush Inn
1-867-668-9432
www.goldrushinn.com

Raven Inn
1-867-466-7777
www.raveninn.ca

Westmark Hotel
1-800-544-0970
www.westmarkhotels.com

Yukon Inn
1-867-667-2527
www.yukoninn.com

Midnight Sun B&B
1-866-284-4448
www.midnightsunbb.com

Note: pickup may not be possible at your hotel or B&B because of parking restrictions in the city of Whitehorse. Plan on being able to be picked up at the Yukon Inn or the Raven Inn.

Detailed itinerary

Day 0 – Arrival in Whitehorse, evening orientation meeting at a designated location, approximately 6:00 pm.

Day 1 – After you've had breakfast in Whitehorse, we will pick you up and start our day. We usually stop for coffee before heading out on the highway. Our first stop is the Yukon Wildlife Preserve, to see the big fauna of the Yukon up close. Next, we drive to Long Ago Peoples Place to get an experience of how the Southern Tutchone people lived traditionally on the land here. Next, we drive to Haines Junction. The Parks Canada Interpretive center in Haines Junction is full of history and information and where we will receive our Park orientation. Finally, we will settle in at our campground at Kathleen Lake or Pine Lake.

Day 2 – Today we do two "warm up" hikes in the area. The first is to a small lake-the St. Elias Lake Trail, about 7 km, return. The second is a short climbing hike up the Rock Glacier Trail. This is a unique microclimate in the area-being very arid because as the snow melts, it runs away immediately down into the rocks. We will see juniper and sage here. We return to or camp for the night, where we prep for our multiday trip to the backcountry alpine.

Day 3 – Today, we head into Haines Junction to register on our backcountry trip. Our multiday trip goes up the Auriol Trail loop, where we camp at the top of the loop. This is a 7.5 km hike uphill, with an elevation gain of about 345 m. We arrive mid to late afternoon and set up camp for the night next to a beautiful mountain stream.

Day 4 – On Day 4, we go off trail, up into the alpine area above the tree line. The temperature gets colder as we head into higher elevations. We go up to snow/ice patches, just below the glaciers that carve the sharp aretes and peaks of the Kluane Range mountains. We can see permanent snow pack glaciers nestled into the mountaintops here. We also get a feel for what walking on tundra is like in this harsh, but beautiful terrain. Back to camp at the end of the day. We will travel 5 to 7 km today, and gain 300 to 400 m in elevation.

Day 5 – On Day 5, we pack up and hike back down to the trail head, completing the other half of the loop. The viewpoints along the way show the large, converging valleys of the Dezadeash River and the Kathleen River, flowing down into Haines Junctions and into Kluane Lake. At the end of the hike, we drive into Haines Junction for a shower at the public showers and a dinner at the 1016 Mile Pub before heading out to our campground at Kathleen Lake or Pine Lake.

Day 6 – We have been building up to higher and steeper hiking, so today, we drive out to Kluane Lake and hike up the Sheep Creek Trail. As we climb up this 5 km trail (10 km, return), up 485 m in elevation, we begin to have vistas up the Ä'äy Chù (Slim's River) Valley, toward the end of the Kaskawulsh Glacier. We will see more mountain glaciers across the valley. If lucky, we will see the Dall Sheep on the side of the mountain. We return for our last night in the campground.

Day 7 – The Final Day and Journey Back to civilization (Whitehorse)
We pack up today and drive into Haines Junction to visit the Village Bakery for breakfast and coffee. After this treat, we drive back toward Kluane Lake, to the tiny village of Silver City. In Silver City, we connect with Ice Field Adventures for our flight-seeing tour over Kaskawulsh Glacier, and usually over much of the largest non-polar ice field in the world, the St. Elias Complex. After we fly, we will visit the Tachal Dhal Visitor Center, where we see more about the local area and have another chance to see the Dall sheep on the mountain and have our lunch. From there, we head back toward Whitehorse to make our returns to what we call "normal life," usually arriving late afternoon/early evening.

Note: This itinerary can change due to weather, wildlife and other circumstances.

SEA TO SKY EXPEDITIONS

Climate and Weather

Much of Kluane National Park & Reserve has a dry, cold continental climate, though south-eastern portions of the Park are subject to coastal influences, including more precipitation. Because of its location north of the 60th parallel, summers are generally warm, with long hours of daylight (up to 19 hours), while winters are long and dark (as little as 4 hours of daylight).

- Mean temperature in June: 11°C (52° F)
- Mean temperature in January: -21°C (-6°F)

Mountain weather is **highly unpredictable**. It can change quickly and/or vary greatly from one location to another. At higher elevations the temperature is generally colder and the weather is more unpredictable. Rain or snow can fall at any time of the year and freezing temperatures are possible even during the summer. The best way to deal with the weather is to **prepare for all conditions**.

Food and Dietary Needs

Provided we are advised in advance of your departure we are able to cater for special dietary requirements and can assist with medically recommended diets (allergies and intolerances). Please ensure you discuss your requirements with us well in advance (ideally, months prior to your trip/at time of booking) to determine whether we can cater to such dietary requirements on your tour. There may be times when those with special requirements may need to provide their own food. While have control over what we bring as the tour operator, we are limited by the information we receive and the control over what guests and other travelers bring, so we are unable to guarantee a peanut-free or allergen-free trip; and therefore, we strongly encourage that guests with life-threatening or severe allergies take all necessary medical precautions to prepare for the possibility of exposure. Guests must travel with all necessary medications for food allergies and be capable of self-administering these medications.

Packing and Weight

You are backpacking for 3 hiking days—you need a pack big enough to fit everything you will need for that long. Realistically, that is a 65 litre or larger pack. We recommend 70 to 80 litres. Expect the weight of your fully loaded pack to be between 35 and 40 pounds (16 to 18 kg). Before we depart on the multiday portion of the trip, we will give you about 6 to 7 pounds of food, plus a tent or portion of a tent, about 3 pounds, and a piece of group gear, up to 2 pounds. Expect to add about 12 pounds to your pack. If you want to hike with less than 35 pounds, you need to make sure your arrival pack weight (with 2 litres of water-about 2 pounds) is no more than 22 pounds.

What's included

Items that are covered in the tour price:

- Transportation from the point of origin and return
- Entrance and tour fees to the Yukon Wildlife Preserve
- Entrance and tour fees to Long Ago Peoples Place
- Flightseeing glacier tours with Icefield Discovery Tours.
- Coins for showers after the multiday portion
- Snacks/beverages on the expedition
- All meals while on the camping and backpacking portion**
- Meal preparation
- All Camping/backcountry fees
- Exceptional guides for entire journey
- Cooking gear/camp stoves/water filtration
- Tents & tarps
- Emergency radio/satellite phone/major first aid supplies
- † We can provide sleeping bags, sleeping pads, backpacks, poles for rent

What's not included

Items that are NOT covered in the tour price:

- Transportation to point of origin, transfers, personal equipment, accommodation and food other than included in the itinerary.
- Gratuities are not included. Our guides make every effort to ensure your holiday is all you expected and more. Recognition of a job well done is always appreciated; $10-20/day per guide is recommended.
- Single tents †(available for a single supplement charge)

**The coffee stop, 1016 Mile Pub meal, and breakfast/coffee at the Village Bakery are not included.

History and Background

The Kluane area, located in the southwestern corner of the Yukon Territory in Canada, boasts a rich and diverse history that spans thousands of years. Here's a brief overview:

1. **Indigenous History**: Long before European contact, the Kluane area was inhabited by Indigenous peoples, including the Southern Tutchone. These First Nations communities have a deep connection with the land, relying on its resources for sustenance and spiritual guidance. Their knowledge and traditions remain integral to the region's cultural heritage.
2. **European Exploration**: European exploration in the Kluane region began in the late 19th century. Prospectors and traders arrived, drawn by the lure of mineral wealth and fur trading opportunities. This period marked a significant shift in the area's history, leading to increased interactions between Indigenous communities and European settlers.
3. **The Gold Rush Era**: The Klondike Gold Rush of the late 1890s brought a surge of prospectors and settlers to the Yukon, including the Kluane area. Although Kluane was not a central focus of the gold rush, the region felt the impact of this influx of people and the resulting social and economic changes.
4. **Establishment of Parks and Reserves**: In the 20th century, the Canadian government recognized the unique environmental and cultural significance of the Kluane area. This led to the establishment of Kluane National Park and Reserve in 1972, protecting much of the region's spectacular wilderness, including Canada's highest peak, Mount Logan.
5. **Modern Developments and Conservation**: Today, the Kluane area is known for its breathtaking natural beauty and diverse wildlife. It's a popular destination for outdoor enthusiasts and scientists alike. Conservation efforts continue to play a crucial role in preserving the area's ecological integrity, while also respecting the rights and traditions of the Indigenous peoples.

Throughout its history, the Kluane area has remained a place of profound natural beauty and cultural significance, reflecting a complex tapestry of human and natural history.

SEA TO SKY EXPEDITIONS