

Haines Rafting Company

Expedition Trips

Tatshenshini River Rafting

TRIP DETAILS

The Tatshenshini is an international wilderness river flowing from the Canadian alpine to the Pacific Ocean. The glacially fed "Tat" bisects the largest contiguous protected land area on earth and is central to the associated UNESCO World Heritage Site. From the dramatic canyons of the upper river to iceberg-filled Alsek Lake, each day brings a new awe-inspiring experience. This is truly one of the best rafting trips in North America.

We will paddle 140 miles from the mountains to the coast in 16 and 18 ft. oar-rafts. Most of the rafting is flat-water though the current is always fast and the water cold. On our first river day we paddle the Tat canyon with Class II and III rapids (sometimes harder depending on the water volume). It is always exciting. Below the canyon there are some big waves and strong currents but no other technical whitewater. People don't come here for the whitewater, but rather the scenery, which cannot be beat.

Several layover days punctuate the trip allowing us to savor the country and explore the deep forests, rocky ridges, or tributary creeks. Wildlife such as black and brown bears, mountain goats, beaver and moose are all frequent sights. One of the many joys of this trip is observing the transition from the forests shaped by continental climate in the Canadian alpine to the coastal habitats shaped by the Gulf of Alaska. This trip is sure to delight not just naturalists but adventurous travelers of many stripes.

Our Tatshenshini rafting trip is long on variety with a little whitewater, occasional wildlife sightings, varied hiking, glaciers, sublime campsites, and truly the finest scenery imaginable. As a true wilderness expedition it has challenges and the weather is not always our friend, but with the help of our seasoned guides the trip is suitable for those with a thirst for adventure and a reasonable level of personal fitness. Join us for the trip of a lifetime.

ITINERARY

What follows is a general flow of events. Expect the unexpected and prepare to be flexible.

DAY 0: Arrive in Haines, AK in time for our 5 pm pre-trip meeting. You will be staying at the Hotel Halsingland (included) where we will rendezvous for the orientation meeting. Meals on your own.

DAY 1: 8:00 AM van departure up the Chilkat Valley and across the Canadian Border (You must have your passport) then to our put-in at Dalton Post. It is a 3-hour drive to where we rig the rafts and push out into the current. Once on the water we paddle through the canyon before making our first spectacular camp of the trip.

DAY 2-3: Time to hike. We spend the day walking up Sediment Creek into the alpine zone. Wildflowers are everywhere and views back up towards the canyon and down the river are sublime. Keep your eyes peeled for Dall sheep above, bears grazing in the avalanche chutes and wolves along the river below.

DAYS 4 - 6: We raft the Tatshenshini. The rapids are behind us but the fun has just started! Four or five hours on the river should get us to where we need to be and each camp offers a nice hike to end the day. It will be light until 11 pm, so we enjoy an abundance of time unique to high-latitudes in summer. On the night of the 6th night we arrive at the confluence with the Alsek River, perhaps the most spectacular campsite on earth!

DAYS 7 - 8: The Alsek is huge, one of the largest rivers in the largest State. Thick with glacial silt and split into a multitude of braids, it is a maze of water often merging with a grey sky. As we approach the coast, glaciers begin to dominate our views and we will plan for a layover day to hike to or on the ice.

DAY 9: Alsek Lake is world unto itself. At the terminus of the Alsek, and Grand Plateau glaciers the miles-long lake is filled with freshly calved icebergs, startlingly blue against the grey waters. We will paddle amongst the icebergs and listen to the active glaciers calve mountain-sized bergs into the lake before paddling across the lake and re-entering the current.

DAY 10: Dry Bay. From the fishing outpost of Dry Bay we catch a chartered plane to Yakutat, AK. Weather permitting you will arrive in Yakutat in time for the daily Alaska Airlines jet to take you to Juneau. This flight from Yakutat to Juneau (or Anchorage) has **not** been included in the trip price, as many prefer to book it along with other flight legs homeward.