

GLACIER TREK: DENALI NATIONAL PARK



Alaska Mountaineering School's (AMS) mission is to be the best source for wilderness and mountaineering expeditions in Alaska. On all of our programs we provide superior leadership, convey knowledge clearly and effectively, and instill lifelong appreciation for the wilderness environment. As a school, we provide excellence by offering hands-on education from our classroom--the remote wilderness of Denali National Park and Preserve. Our objective is to graduate safe and responsible mountaineers who understand all the mechanisms that result in a successful climbing expedition. We divide our core curriculum for mountaineering courses into four skill categories: Leadership, Wilderness Skills, Risk Management, and Stewardship and Sustainability. AMS's class progression and direct, personal approach bestow the confidence and competence for you to successfully pursue mountaineering for years to come.

THIS COURSE

Experience Alaska by spending 1, 2, or 3 days surrounded by glaciated mountains on a fly-in glacier trek to the heart of Denali National Park and Preserve. You'll depart from Talkeetna and land on one of the park's snow-covered glaciers. Once there, your guides will teach you basic mountaineering skills and travel and safety protocols. From base camp, and while wearing climbing harnesses and roped to your guides and other trekkers, you will go on short snowshoe forays to scenic vistas. Having lunch within close proximity to some of the world's most spectacular mountains makes your adventure an unforgettable experience. The Ruth Gorge, Don Sheldon Amphitheater, Little Switzerland, Kahiltna Glacier, and Eldridge Glacier are all locations we visit. No prior experience is necessary; participants are expected to be healthy and have good to excellent physical fitness. All specialty equipment is provided by AMS. The level of difficulty can be customized to the group's desires.

SPECIFICATIONS

Deposit: \$500 of tuition total, due upon registration
Workshop balance due: 30 days prior to the starting date
Group size: 2-6 people or custom

Cost includes: Roundtrip glacier flight from Talkeetna, guides and instruction, meals during the trek, insulation layers (parka, insulated overpants), double plastic mountaineering boots, all personal and group climbing equipment (harness, crampons, ice axe, ropes, etc.), snow shoes, sleeping bag and foam sleeping pads, camping gear (tents, kitchen), safety equipment (radio, first aid, repair), 24/7 support from AMS headquarters during your trek.

You are responsible for: Transportation to and from Talkeetna, lodging in Talkeetna, personal clothing, National Park Service entrance fee (\$10/person, to be paid in Talkeetna), guide gratuities.

FEATURES

- Excellent scenic opportunities
- Close-up view of crevasses
- Basic mountaineering skills: roped travel and self-arrest
- Natural history talks
- Snowshoeing or skiing, depending on participants' background
- Small peak ascent or scenic vista location

ENVIRONMENT

Glacier treks fly to predetermined areas in Denali National Park and Preserve, home to North America's

largest and most spectacular mountains. The flight is an unforgettable experience in its own right and a highlight to the adventure. The exact location of your trek depends on which area has the best snow conditions. Typically, we fly into one of the following mountain locations: Ruth Gorge; Pika, a.k.a., Little Switzerland; Kahiltna Glacier; or Eldridge Glacier. Each are unique and beautiful and well known by AMS to ensure the best possible experience. You travel and live on a snow-covered glacier for the entire trek.

REMOTENESS

AMS glacier treks visit remote glaciated wilderness areas where there are no physical structures or amenities. We live in the outdoors and camp in tents. There is no running water; we melt snow using camp stoves for drinking and cooking. We use Clean Mountain Cans for human waste. Safety is always our number-one priority and we equip ourselves with mountaineering clothing and survival equipment: tents, kitchens, medical supplies, as well as emergency radios and cell phones in the event unflyable weather prevents a timely return.

WHERE TO MEET

We meet at 8:00 am at AMS headquarters on East Third Street in Talkeetna. It is important to be on time as we do not want to miss a moment on the glacier. Muffins, juice, and hot tea/coffee are provided at AMS, but please eat a more substantial breakfast and take care of other personal business beforehand. After introductions, our instructors will make sure you are properly outfitted by checking personal equipment and clothing and issuing any items you need from AMS. Treks are scheduled to fly by 11 a.m. and return to Talkeetna at 6 p.m.

OBJECTIVES

All treks begin with orientation to the hazards of a glaciated environment and instruction on how to travel safely on a glacier. Lessons include: dressing appropriately, wearing a harness, roping up, belay, and self-arrest skills. Opportunities exist during longer treks to learn more about rescue and self-rescue techniques. Trekking routes are chosen for their minimal crevasse hazard danger, although it is not possible to altogether

eliminate the possibility of a crevasse fall on a snow-covered glacier.

TREKS OVERVIEW

You will be rewarded with stunning views and incredible landscapes. During a glacier trek, those with little or no mountaineering experience benefit from expert instruction on glacier travel techniques, snowshoeing, and ice axe use. Spending the night in the middle of Denali National Park is a wonderful experience with proper equipment and guidance. After flying in and landing on a snow-covered glacier with our experienced guides you, build camp just as you would on a true Denali expedition—with expedition tents and a pyramid tent for the kitchen and group area. Later, we discuss safety protocol before donning snowshoes, roping up for safety, and traveling to a scenic overlook. There we receive talks on glaciology and the climbing history of the park. Back in camp, an enjoyable evening is spent around a dining room table made of snow. With plenty of good food, don't plan on losing any weight on this trek! The summer midnight alpenglow brings out the mountains' true range of colors. After a hearty breakfast the following morning, you rope up for an extended tour on snowshoes, which may include a small peak ascent or the experience of being lowered into a crevasse, depending on the desires of the group. On this course there is something for everyone who enjoys being in the mountains and who appreciates the true, untamed beauty of the wilderness.

TWO- & THREE-DAY TREKS

The benefits of 2- and 3-day treks allow you to more fully immerse yourself in the mountains. With additional days, participants begin to understand living and thriving on the snow-covered glaciers of the Alaska Range. More days mean more time to connect with nature, more miles under your feet, and more terrain to explore. More days give you more opportunity to go deeper and learn a wider variety of mountain activities.

