

Bob's Travel Tips

I traveled in the 1990's as a grad student and more recently too. Here are my thoughts and recommendations.

I rented an RV recently. Thus, the recommendation below center around RVing Alaska but they apply broadly. We rented from <https://www.greatalaskanholidays.com/> you can probably get a cheaper rental from <https://www.outdoorsy.com> but we went with a traditional rental.

Denali

Denali is often considered a once in a lifetime experience. There is plentiful wildlife and amazing scenery. Although it can be expensive and crowded.

Traveling to Denali

There is not a lot between Anchorage and Denali. From Anchorage to Wasilla can be heavy traffic, once you are out of Wasilla there is not much, gas up and buy any groceries before leaving Wasilla.

You can do a few diversions on the way, see [Anchorage To Denali | 13 Incredible Stops To Make On The Way](#) . We went straight through and I do not regret it because we did not have a lot of time. Although if we had more time we would have done some of the diversions. When you get to Denali National Park there is NO VIEW OF THE MOUNTAIN from the visitor center. You can only drive your own vehicle the first 15 miles of Denali National Park unless you have reservations for **Teklanika River Campground**. There is a potential view of the mountain from mile 13-15. There is a much better view of the mountain from Denali State Park, thus, if you have a clear day driving to Denali take your time and stop along the way. MAKE SURE TO STOP AT **Denali View South at Mile 135.2**, it is poorly marked but is the best view of the mountain, there is a small trail to two viewing locations, both are spectacular. You should also stop at **Denali View North at Mile 162.7**. See <https://www.alaska.org/advice/denali-mt.-mckinley-viewpoints-great-places-to-see-the-great->

You can generally reserve reservations for any of the campgrounds ahead of time. Many also have first come first serve. I got the impression that during the week you can find a spot without a reservation, but weekends are booked. We stayed at **Quartz Creek Campground**. The campground is directly on Kenai Lake. You can walk along the shore (it is muddy) and see lots of waterfowl.

Seward

Seward is a touristy town due south of Anchorage on the **Kenai Peninsula**. We stayed at the Seward Municipal Campgrounds right on the beach between the Alaska SeaLife Center and the docks. It is basically a parking lot, not so great, but very convenient location.

The **Alaska SeaLife Center** is well worth the time. It is not very big so you can do it quickly. The highlight is a room with many of the sea birds including puffins that you can interact with directly. They also have a series of hands on petting of sharks, rays, crabs, sea cucumbers, etc. Of course, there are some sea lions, the focus is exclusively on the local sea life.

Most people go to Seward for the boating opportunities. You can kayak or do day cruises. There is a fjord quasi-nearby. The smaller the boat, the closer you can get, but the more expensive.

The day we were there was too windy for boating. Instead, we hiked along the beach. You can drive to **Lowell Point** (just passed town). Go to the **Caines Head Trailhead**, there is an extensive trail system, however much of it is tide dependent. We went to just north of **Tonsina Cabin** and sat on the beach and saw sea lions, otters, loons, and lots of other sea birds. The forest is a unique temperate rainforest with lots of moss. While we did not stay there, Millers Landing RV Park looked pretty nice. Regardless they have a fun restaurant with a balcony along the bay with good food and a fantastic view.

Exit Glacier is a must do, the **Harding Ice Trail** goes along the glacier. At the top you get a view of the **Harding Ice Field**. The trail is pretty busy and straight up, but it is well worth it. Make sure to dress in layers, at the top you typically will need to walk across some snow patches and there is often a strong wind coming off the ice field that can be very cold.

Homer

I visited Homer a long time ago with my dad. We went halibut fishing and sea kayaking. Homer is a great destination, but it is a further drive and can be expensive because most of the wildlife excursions are across the bay (hence you need a ferry across).