

LUXURY CRUISING · FREE PLANNER

Alaska Cruise Planner 2027

The best month, the best route, how to make sure you see a glacier, and what a week really costs, with real 2027 prices.

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Which month to go, which route to pick, how to see a glacier up close, and what a week really costs, all on three pages.

1. Pick your month

The 2027 season runs from late April to early October. There's no bad month, just different trade-offs.

Month	What it's like	Crowds and prices	Best for
May	Cool (50s°F), often the driest month, snow still on the peaks	Quieter, some of the lowest fares	Value, snowy scenery
June OUR PICK	Longest days, up to about 18 hours of light in Juneau	Busy, fares rising	First-timers, long evenings on deck
July	Warmest (60s°F), salmon runs begin	Peak season and peak prices, school holidays	Families, warmest weather
August	Still mild, wetter, bears feeding on salmon	Busy until mid-month	Wildlife
September	Rainiest, fall colors, darker nights	Quietest, often the cheapest	Bargains, fewer people

Whales? Humpback whales feed in Southeast Alaska all season, so every month gives you a good chance.
Northern Lights? Possible on clear, dark nights in late September, but never something to book a cruise for.

2. Pick your route

Most 7-night Alaska cruises fall into one of three types.

Round trip from Seattle

Easiest for most Americans

Same port in and out, so flights are simple and cheaper. Ships must call at Victoria, BC, and spend more time at sea on the outer coast.

- Usually the lowest fares
- Good if you want to drive to the port

Round trip from Vancouver

Best scenery from the ship

You sail the sheltered Inside Passage both ways, so there's coastline to look at for much of the trip.

- You'll need a passport
- Add a night in Vancouver

One way: Vancouver ↔ Seward or Whittier

Best for a bigger trip

Goes further north to glaciers such as Hubbard or College Fjord, and lets you add Denali by land.

- Flights in and out of different cities cost more
- Ideal for a cruise + land tour

Glaciers, cabin side and ports

3. Make sure you get a glacier day

Not every Alaska cruise spends a day in front of a glacier. Check the itinerary for one of these:

Glacier day	What it is	Who goes
Glacier Bay National Park	A full day inside the park, with rangers on board. Only a limited number of ships get permits.	Princess and Holland America most often, some Norwegian sailings
Hubbard Glacier	One of North America's largest tidewater glaciers, about 6 miles wide at its face	Many lines, mostly on one-way routes
Tracy Arm / Endicott Arm	A narrow fjord leading to the Sawyer or Dawes glaciers	Many lines; ice can stop big ships reaching the end
College Fjord	A fjord lined with more than a dozen glaciers	One-way routes near Whittier

4. Which side of the ship?

Northbound one way: book the starboard (right) side, which faces the mainland.
Southbound one way: book the port (left) side.
Round trip: it doesn't matter, you pass the coast both ways.

On glacier days the ship turns so both sides get a view. A balcony is worth more in Alaska than almost anywhere else: the scenery is the trip.

5. When to book

Now to March: the best choice of balcony cabins and the January "wave season" sales.

Spring: June and July sailings start to fill.

Last minute: May and September can drop, but popular dates rarely do.

6. The ports, in one line each

Port	Best for	Signature excursion
Juneau	Whales, glaciers, flightseeing	Whale watching plus Mendenhall Glacier
Ketchikan	Totem poles, Native culture, salmon	Misty Fjords floatplane
Skagway	Gold Rush history, mountain scenery	White Pass & Yukon Route railway
Sitka	Tlingit and Russian history, sea otters	Wildlife boat tour
Icy Strait Point	A quieter day, whales and bears	Point Adolphus whale watching

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What a week costs, and what to pack

7. What 2027 fares look like

Lowest 7-night fares we found for 2027, per person, inside cabins, including port fees:

One way, Whittier to Vancouver
$503
Norwegian Jade

Round trip from Seattle
$597
Norwegian Bliss

Seattle with Glacier Bay
$727
Norwegian Encore

Seattle, premium line
$923
Celebrity Edge

Prices checked on Trip.com in November 2026 for selected 2027 dates. Fares change daily and the lowest prices are usually for May and September. Balconies typically cost several hundred dollars more per person.

8. Budget for the extras

Extra	Typical cost	Tip
Daily gratuities	Around $18 to $20 per person, per day on mainstream lines	Often added automatically; some fares include them
Whale watching	Roughly $150 to $250 per person	Book early for June and July
Floatplane or helicopter	Often $300 to $700+ per person	The splurge most people remember
Drinks and Wi-Fi	Varies by line	Check whether a package or perk is included

9. Packing checklist

- [ ] Waterproof jacket with a hood
- [ ] Warm fleece or mid-layer
- [ ] Hat, gloves and a scarf for glacier day
- [ ] Waterproof walking shoes
- [ ] Binoculars (one pair each)
- [ ] Camera with a zoom lens
- [ ] Passport (needed for Vancouver; recommended for every route)
- [ ] Small backpack for port days
- [ ] Sea-sickness tablets for open-sea days
- [ ] Eye mask: June nights stay light

Ready to compare dates? We track 2027 Alaska fares and send the best ones to everyone on our Alaska list. Look out for our emails, or see this week's deals at luxury-cruising.com/cruise-deals

Independent cruise guide. Check each sailing's itinerary before booking.