Discovering Our Planet Together



Alaska's Grizzly Ship: Kodiak to Katmai

Meet Mighty Brown Bears Up Close on a Rare Boat-Based Wilderness Adventure

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Trip Details:

Days
8 Days / Jun–Aug

Price
From $11995 (+Air)

Alaska's Grizzly Ship: Kodiak to Katmai

Meet Mighty Brown Bears Up Close on a Rare Boat-Based Wilderness Adventure

Nature puts on few displays as arresting as Alaskan brown bears feeding on summer's bounty. These bears—the largest coastal grizzlies in the world—gorge on clams, mussels, sedges and spawning salmon as the fish swim up glacial-fed rivers that pour onto wild beaches. Our private chartered ship, the *Natural Habitat Ursus*, designed for exploring the Alaskan marine wilderness, offers an exclusive opportunity for just eight guests to follow and photograph bears as they fish, forage and amble along the shoreline. Ashore, we watch safely on foot with our Expedition Leader, an expert bear naturalist who knows these magnificent animals intimately. The grizzlies could not be more nonchalant about our presence! And you won't find a more remote and pristine setting in which to observe them. Here in Katmai National Park, experience this rarest of encounters with *Ursus arctos* in all its untamed majesty.

Trip Highlights

Extraordinary Close-Up Brown Bear Encounters

Guided by expert bear naturalists with decades of experience, you won't believe how close you'll get to giant coastal grizzlies —safely on foot!

A Private Chartered Ship for Exclusive Access

Following the Katmai coast aboard the *Natural Habitat Ursus*, just eight guests have unparalleled access for bear viewing and photography

Scenic Round-Trip Floatplane Flight from Kodiak

Explore Kodiak Island, then fly across Shelikof Strait to the roadless Katmai wilderness where the bears live, backdropped by the Aleutian Range

Ready to Book? Call an Adventure Specialist at 800-543-8917



Alaska's Grizzly Ship: Kodiak to Katmai Itinerary

Meet Mighty Brown Bears Up Close on a Rare Boat-Based Wilderness Adventure

Itinerary at a Glance

Day 1	Kodiak
Day 2	Kodiak Island
Day 3	Kodiak / Katmai
Days 4–6	Katmai National Park
Day 7	Katmai / Kodiak
Day 8	Kodiak



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Day 1

Kodiak

Arrive on Kodiak, a vast island of mountains, forests and brown bear country

- Explore Kodiak's walkable old town and its Alutiiq and Russian heritage
- Join your local guide for a welcome dinner and introduction to the journey ahead

Welcome to Kodiak Island! At 3,670 square miles, Kodiak is the second-largest island in the United States. Defined by high mountains, lush forests and a crenellated coastline, much of the island's wild terrain lies within the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge, home to 3,500 brown bears and a multitude of other wildlife. On your arrival at the airport, our local guide meets you and transfers you to our hotel in town. Depending on your arrival time, you may be able to explore some of Kodiak's Russian and Native heritage on your own this afternoon. Our adventure officially begins this evening with an informal welcome dinner and orientation hosted by our local guide.

Inhabited by Alutiiq natives for more than 7,000 years, Kodiak was colonized by Russian fur traders in 1792, whose harvest of sea otter pelts drove the species to near-extinction by the mid-19th century. As the first permanent Russian settlement in what would become Alaska, it served as the capital of Russian America until it was moved to Sitka in 1804. In 1794, the Russian Orthodox Church established its first North American mission in Kodiak. Reminders of this residency are on display at the Kodiak History Museum—formerly an 18th-century fur storehouse and one of Alaska's oldest wooden structures—and Holy Resurrection Church, rebuilt in the 1940s after the original 1795 building was destroyed by a fire. Both are walking distance from our hotel. Other options for free time include the Alutiiq Museum, the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center, and several galleries featuring the work of resident artists. All are centrally located in the compact town of Kodiak surrounding St. Paul's Harbor. Kodiak is also home to Alaska's largest fishing fleet, bringing in a great haul of salmon, halibut and herring each season.

Day 2

Kodiak Island

Cruise Kodiak's secluded coast in search of whales, seabirds and sea otters

- Explore quiet bays and rocky shorelines aboard a private catamaran
- Watch for sea otters, puffins, sea lions, bald eagles, humpback whales and fin whales
- Photograph tidal pools, kittiwake rookeries and the island's rugged coast

While Katmai's brown bears will be our main focus, Kodiak Island is an impressive wildlife destination in its own right, and today we explore its coastal waters on a half-day private boat trip aboard the *Trophy II*, a custom-built catamaran designed for day charters. Stable, fast and quiet, it's an ideal platform for wildlife viewing and photography, with a spacious deck and walk-around cabin that provide unobstructed views from nearly anywhere on board. A cruise among Kodiak's secluded bays and rocky shorelines, past tidal pools and kittiwake rookeries, may reveal sea otters, puffins, bald eagles, sea lions and sometimes humpback and fin whales. For comfort between sightings, the boat includes a bathroom with an electric toilet and a small galley to stow extra gear, lunches and snacks. Kodiak is remote, not often visited by travelers to Alaska, and our sense of an intimate encounter with nature is palpable as we glide among its rockbound coves and islands. Birdlife is impressive, with more than 240 species identified in the Kodiak archipelago. Later, dinner at a local restaurant offers a chance to try fresh Alaskan seafood.

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Day 3

Kodiak / Katmai

Fly across Shelikof Strait to board the Natural Habitat Ursus

- Visit a local photographer and gardener at her island home
- Travel by floatplane to the remote coast of Katmai National Park
- Settle aboard the *Natural Habitat Ursus*, your private expedition ship

Before departing Kodiak today, we visit with a locally acclaimed photographer, artist and gardener at her home. Get a personal perspective on life on this isolated island as we hear stories, including her bear photography adventures, and learn what it's like to grow plants and flowers on Kodiak as we tour her colorful garden. Then it's time to head to the floatplane base for our flight to Katmai National Park where our privately chartered ship, the *Natural Habitat Ursus* awaits. Our plan is to fly out late morning, but timing is flexible in the event of weather delays, in which case we'll explore more of Kodiak as we wait for the clouds to lift. Once on board, we fly west over Kodiak's steep green mountains and across Shelikof Strait to the Katmai Peninsula, where the backbone of the ice-crowned Aleutian Range rises behind the shoreline. Our pilot is in radio contact with the *Ursus,* and soon we're taxiing along the water to pull up alongside. Exiting the plane, we embark the vessel that will be our floating home for the next several days.

The 73-foot *Ursus* was built as a deep-sea fishing boat called *Time Bandit*, which navigated the stormy Bering Sea in pursuit of the lucrative king crab catch. Its successor, the second *Time Bandit*, gained fame in the Discovery Channel TV series "Deadliest Catch." The original boat was later transitioned for research use by the National Park Service and Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Since retrofitted for custom tourism charters, this sturdy veteran of Alaskan waters now offers simple but comfortable accommodations in this remote marine wilderness. The *Ursus* (which means "bear" in Latin) cruises slowly along the coast, where we commonly find brown bears, or coastal grizzlies, foraging for food. Since we are mobile, we can cruise to wherever the bears are, following them from bay to bay depending on weather and sea conditions. Along the way, the friendly captain and staff of the *Ursus* ensure we're welcomed, safe and attended to.

Days 4–6

Katmai National Park

Walk among coastal grizzlies along Katmai's wild shoreline

- Go ashore by skiff to observe bears on foot with expert guides
- Watch for grizzlies fishing for salmon, sparring or tending cubs
- Look for wolves moving through the same remote coastal habitat

While we've all seen footage in nature documentaries of Alaskan brown bears in the wild, nothing prepares us for the drama of an actual encounter with these magnificent beasts. They are North America's largest land predators, and an adult male can weigh well over 1,000 pounds. As we cruise just off the coast, bears often dot the shoreline. We go ashore by skiff for a closer view, traversing tidal flats and gravel bars on foot, possibly fording a few streams to find the best vantage point for bear watching. It's not uncommon to find several massive grizzlies at once. And far from dozing lethargically, these bears may put on quite a show in their efforts to fill up on enough protein-rich food to prepare them for a long winter in hibernation.

The bear activity we witness will vary according to the season, weather conditions and timing of the salmon runs, but there's always something riveting to watch. Early in the season, mothers with cubs gallivanting on the shore provide amusing entertainment. Later on, we may see bears fight to capture salmon in their jaws, trying to seize spawning fish that make their way up the streams flowing over the intertidal area. As omnivores, bears also dig for clams and mussels in the sand and browse on protein-rich sedges. Depending on the time of our visit, we may see bears mating or males sparring over females.

On most Alaska bear trips, you'll watch grizzlies from viewing platforms or vehicles. Not here! In coastal Katmai we are on foot, carefully wandering the area in our small group under the cautious guidance of our Expedition Leader, who offers thorough coaching in safe bear etiquette. Sometimes we see wolves, too, observing their interesting interactions with the bears. While occasionally there may be another boat in the region, we're usually alone in the wilderness, moved by a profound sense of solitude, peace and raw beauty. This trip offers an encounter with the Alaskan wild that we trust will thrill you beyond expectation.

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Day 7

Katmai / Kodiak

Cruise beneath glacier-crowned peaks before returning to Kodiak

- Explore Katmai's shoreline by skiff on a final morning in the wilderness
- Watch for bald eagles, kittiwakes and oystercatchers along the coast
- Return by chartered floatplane to Kodiak and explore the historic town

One last morning is set aside for exploring the wild waters and shoreline around us before our planned return by floatplane to Kodiak later today, although weather will always dictate our timing. Cruising in an open skiff, we look for a glimpse of the glaciers that crown the tall mountains behind Katmai's lonely coastline. Typically these peaks are cloaked in clouds while evocative mists weave in and out of the bays, providing the moisture that keeps Katmai so lush and green. Deep ash covered the region after the massive 1912 eruption of Mount Katmai and adjacent Novarupta, and revegetation in the century since has come mostly as a thick blanket of willow and alder bushes, though some stands of spruce thrive as well—keep an eye out for bald eagles in the treetops. Seabirds abound, too—look for kittiwakes, terns, mergansers, pigeon guillemots and black oystercatchers.

Inevitably, it's going to be hard to leave here. Most travelers never get such an immersion in genuine wilderness, let alone the chance to sit in solitude with some of the world's most magnificent carnivores. We're sure to come away awed by the access the bears grant us to their world, and inspired to protect them from the very real threats of mining, oil and gas development, climate change and other forces that may impact the ecosystem that sustains them—especially the salmon runs they rely upon.

Our plan is to return by chartered floatplane to Kodiak at midday, where our local guide meets us on arrival and takes us to lunch. Afterward, we see more of this historic town this afternoon. Depending on weather and timing, our activities may include a walk through the coastal rainforest at Fort Abercrombie State Historical Park where relics remain from a World War II coastal defense installation, a visit to the Kodiak Fisheries Research Center with aquarium and touch tank, and/or a drive up Pillar Mountain for sweeping views over the town and sea, when weather permits. This evening, gather for a farewell dinner at a local restaurant. Fresh seafood is always on the menu, along with other varied choices.

Day 8

Kodiak

Depart Kodiak after your Katmai grizzly adventure

- Transfer to the airport for homeward flights

Our Alaska bear adventure comes to a close today as we depart from Kodiak. The hotel shuttle will provide a transfer to the airport in time to meet your departing flight. We recommend guests book an afternoon flight out in case inclement weather prevents us from flying back to Kodiak on Day 7 as scheduled—occasionally, weather delays may require a morning flight today from the *Ursus* back to Kodiak.

Please note: *Most floatplane flights will depart Kodiak to meet the* Ursus *by late morning on Day 3 and return to Kodiak by midday on Day 7. The exact timing will vary according to weather, marine conditions and other logistical factors.*

Click here *to view the seasonal variations of our Alaska grizzly-viewing encounters.*

Ready to Book? Call an Adventure Specialist at 800-543-8917



Alaska's Grizzly Ship: Kodiak to Katmai Accommodations

Meet Mighty Brown Bears Up Close on a Rare Boat-Based Wilderness Adventure



M/V Natural Habitat Ursus

A sturdy former crab fishing boat retrofitted for tourism, our privately chartered 73-foot ship offers exclusive access to the roadless coast of Katmai National Park without leaving a footprint, providing accommodations for just eight passengers.



Kodiak Compass Suites

Located in the heart of town, Kodiak''s newest hotel is an all-suite accommodation offering spacious rooms with harbor and mountain views, steps away from the town's main attractions including museums, galleries and shops.

For detailed descriptions, visit nathab.com/alaska-nature-tours/alaska-grizzly-adventure/accommodations.

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The World's Most Intimate Grizzly Encounter!

Alaska's Grizzly Ship: Kodiak to Katmai

You've seen pictures of Alaska's enormous brown bears lumbering over tide flats, feasting on salmon, nurturing frisky cubs. Many travelers come to Alaska expecting to see and photograph them. But the fact is, very few will. These coastal grizzlies live in the roadless reaches of Katmai National Park, far from any cruise ship or tour bus route. Few visitors to Alaska get to the heart of brown bear country, and certainly not the way we do, on the ground in very small groups, as up close and personal as you'll ever safely get with wild bears. **Click here** to read about the "ebbs and flows" of a grizzly bear season—what sorts of behaviors and activities you can expect when**.** If you're looking for the *ultimate* Alaska bear experience, this is it!

1 **A Maximum of Just 8 Travelers**

We charter a small ship for our Alaska expedition cruise, hosting just eight guests. A very small group is essential to approach the bears safely without disturbing them. You won't find a more intimate setting in which to observe and photograph bears, nor will you find a better guide-to-guest ratio on any Alaskan tour.

2 **An Exclusive Itinerary into the Heart of Brown Bear Habitat**

Our itinerary—offered solely by Nat Hab—focuses exclusively on nature and bears—wasting no time in cruise ship ports and tourist towns. In fact, you can't get here by cruise ship or by road—we access this untouched wilderness by private floatplane, then transfer to our chartered expedition vessel to explore the uninhabited coast. No standard Alaska tour package can provide these matchless bear observation and photography opportunities.

3 **Our Privately Chartered Ship**

We're based aboard our chartered vessel, the *Natural Habitat Ursus,* where we are the sole guests. This converted research ship, originally a crab fishing boat that has been retrofitted to comfortably accommodate guests, is ideal for exploring the scenic bays of Katmai National Park. With a shallow draft, *Ursus* cruises close to the coastline, offering views of bears foraging in the meadows and clamming on the tide flats—plus we travel ashore by skiff to view and photograph them on foot. And since we sleep aboard, our route can be flexible—we follow the bears!

4 **Watch Bears on Foot—Often Just Feet Away!**

It's hard to fathom that we can stand on the ground with Alaska's mighty brown bears at close range, getting thrilling photos from yards, or even feet, away. Yet that's exactly the amazing opportunity this rare adventure affords. When we step ashore among the bears, we are generally the only humans around—and the bears are completely nonchalant about our presence! They often wander past in such proximity that you won't even need your telephoto lens.

5 **Gain Exclusive Access with Help from Our Guides**

You may think a trip like this is outside your physical capacity, given the remote nature of our destination and the way we reach bear territory (in open skiffs to the shore, then on foot in wild terrain wearing waders)...but your Expedition Leader and the *Ursus* crew are by your side to lend a hand. Mobility is important, but you don't need a big degree of physical fitness to participate in this mostly sedentary adventure.

6 **Explore Kodiak Island by Chartered Boat**

Remote Kodiak Island isn't typically featured on Alaska tour itineraries. But its scenic shores offer rich photography opportunities, with abundant wildlife in rockbound coves and tidal pools. On a private boat tour, we're likely to see sea lions, otters, puffins and bald eagles, and we often see whales. Look, too, for less frequently seen moose, black bear or coyotes on shore.

7 **The World's Finest Naturalist Guides**

The Expedition Leaders on our grizzly adventures are professional naturalists and bear experts, with years of experience in the field. They know these bears and their behaviors intimately, and their depth of knowledge is integral to a successful bear safari. We take pride in employing Alaska's most qualified, dedicated and passionate natural history guides—our Expedition Leaders average more than 15 years' experience each. They also receive additional training from WWF scientists. While our Expedition Leaders regale guests with their in-depth knowledge, they're also close at hand to ensure safety and comfort in every respect. See Expedition Leader bios and traveler comments regarding the quality of our leaders.

8 **Our Quality-Value Guarantee Ensures Your Outstanding Alaska Bear Encounter**

Natural Habitat Adventures offers an exclusive guarantee, which clearly states that we will meet the lofty expectations established in our promotional materials. To our knowledge, this is the most ambitious guarantee made by any adventure travel company. **Read our important promise.**

9 **Feel Good About Your Carbon-Neutral Journey**

We care deeply about our planet, as we know you do. When you travel with us, the carbon emissions from your trip are 100% offset—including your round-trip flights from home. Natural Habitat Adventures has been the world's first carbon-neutral travel company since 2007.

10 **Natural Habitat is WWF's Travel Partner**

Because of our commitment to environmentally friendly travel, as well as the exceptional quality of our adventures. World Wildlife Fund—the planet's leading environmental conservation organization—has named Natural Habitat Adventures as its worldwide travel partner, a designation that makes us exceedingly proud!

Ready to Book? Call an Adventure Specialist at 800-543-8917



Dates & Pricing Summary:

Price
From $11995 (+Air)

Group Size
Limited to 8 Travelers

Alaska's Grizzly Ship: Kodiak to Katmai Dates, Pricing & Info

Meet Mighty Brown Bears Up Close on a Rare Boat-Based Wilderness Adventure

2027 Departures

Departure – Return	Pricing	Notes
Jun 27 - Jul 4, 2027	**$11995** +internal air	
Jul 1 - Jul 8, 2027	**$12295** +internal air	
Jul 5 - Jul 12, 2027	**$12795** +internal air	Photo Expedition
Jul 9 - Jul 16, 2027	**$12795** +internal air	Photo Expedition
Jul 13 - Jul 20, 2027	**$12295** +internal air	
Aug 3 - Aug 10, 2027	**$12295** +internal air	
Aug 7 - Aug 14, 2027	**$12295** +internal air	
Aug 11 - Aug 18, 2027	**$12295** +internal air	
Aug 15 - Aug 22, 2027	**$12295** +internal air	

Departure – Return	Pricing	Notes
Aug 19 - Aug 26, 2027	**$12295** +internal air	
Aug 23 - Aug 30, 2027	**$12795** +internal air	Photo Expedition
Aug 27 - Sep 3, 2027	**$12795** +internal air	Photo Expedition
Aug 31 - Sep 7, 2027	**$12295** +internal air	

2028 Departures

Departure – Return	Pricing	Notes
Prices and dates not confirmed for 2028		
Jun 26 - Jul 3, 2028	**From $11995** +internal air	
Jun 30 - Jul 7, 2028	**From $11995** +internal air	
Jul 4 - Jul 11, 2028	**From $11995** +internal air	
Jul 8 - Jul 15, 2028	**From $11995** +internal air	
Jul 12 - Jul 19, 2028	**From $12495** +internal air	Photo Expedition
Jul 16 - Jul 23, 2028	**From $12495** +internal air	Photo Expedition
Aug 2 - Aug 9, 2028	**From $11995** +internal air	
Aug 6 - Aug 13, 2028	**From $11995** +internal air	
Aug 10 - Aug 17, 2028	**From $11995** +internal air	
Aug 14 - Aug 21, 2028	**From $11995** +internal air	
Aug 18 - Aug 25, 2028	**From $11995** +internal air	
Aug 22 - Aug 29, 2028	**From $11995** +internal air	
Aug 26 - Sep 2, 2028	**From $12495** +internal air	Photo Expedition
Aug 30 - Sep 6, 2028	**From $12495** +internal air	Photo Expedition

See https://www.nathab.com/alaska-nature-tours/alaska-grizzly-adventure/dates-fees for the latest pricing details.

Included

Trip price includes: Accommodations, services of Nat Hab's professional Expedition Leader(s), boat crew and local staff, all meals from dinner on Day 1 through breakfast on final day, beer and wine on board the Ursus, some gratuities, airport transfers upon arrival and on the final day, bear viewing gear (chest waders and boots, Gore-Tex rain jackets, waterproof gloves, mosquito head nets, binoculars, and monopods), all activities and entrance fees, all taxes, permits and service fees.

Not Included

Travel to and from the start and end point of your trip, some alcoholic beverages, some gratuities, passport and visa fees (if any), optional activities, items of a personal nature (phone calls, laundry, etc.), airline baggage fees, airport and departure taxes (if any), required medical evacuation insurance, optional travel protection insurance.

Internal air: All float plane flights within the itinerary (this will be listed separately on our invoicing).

Important Information About This Trip

This trip involves watching grizzlies on foot in unprotected open areas. While bears are unpredictable and sighting them can never be guaranteed, our groups have never missed seeing them. The unpredictability of bears can also lead to dangerous situations. They are wild animals, and we ask travelers to heed the rules set by our staff and to understand that this trip can, potentially, present harmful situations. We ask that all travelers take their own safety into consideration when signing onto this (and any) adventure. On this rare adventure, we encounter giant Alaskan brown bears from an uncommon and fascinating perspective, at eye level! Very few people in the world have an opportunity to see these powerful and beautiful creatures in such an intimate context, and we are very proud that our guests are among the select few who do.

Mandatory Insurance

Since the areas we travel to are remote and wild (that's why we go there!), we require that all guests have, at minimum, medical evacuation insurance for this program. This is for the safety of all guests. We require that your chosen independent insurance plan includes at least $250,000 in medical evacuation coverage.

To protect your investment and to provide peace of mind while you travel, we also strongly recommend purchasing comprehensive travel insurance. Plans may cover everything from medical treatment to trip cancellations and delays and lost luggage. Please contact our office if you would like more information about the medical evacuation and comprehensive travel insurance policies we offer by calling 800-543-8917.

Getting There & Getting Home

This trip begins and ends in Kodiak, Alaska. **You must arrive in Kodiak in time for a 6:30 pm welcome dinner and orientation on Day 1**. Flights between Kodiak and the *Natural Habitat Ursus* vary according to weather and other logistical factors, and timing is often adjusted to take advantage of safe flying conditions. For guests who come in early, recommended hotels will be included in your pre-departure materials.

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We are scheduled to return to Kodiak on Day 7, and **you may depart from Kodiak anytime on Day 8**. However, we strongly recommend choosing an afternoon departure in case poor weather delays our return by float plane. If inclement weather requires you to remain in Kodiak longer than anticipated, any additional expenses will be your responsibility.

Our Natural Habitat Adventures Travel Desk can best assist with your travel reservations, as our staff is familiar with the specific requirements of this program and can help arrange the most efficient itinerary. Please call us at 800-543-8917. While we offer the best available rates to us on airfare and additional nights accommodations, you may occasionally find special web rates or lower fares online.



Alaska's Grizzly Ship: Kodiak to Katmai Extensions

Meet Mighty Brown Bears Up Close on a Rare Boat-Based Wilderness Adventure



Nat Hab's Alaska Bear Camp

A secluded immersion with brown bears in the wilderness of Lake Clark National Park—enjoy total privacy and comfort at our deluxe fly-in wilderness camp accessed via chartered bush plane from Homer.

$9495 (+air)



Ultimate Alaska Wildlife Safari

See more of wild Alaska on this wide-ranging, small-group adventure including Alaskan brown bears, a fly-in backcountry lodge in Denali National Park, marine life of Kenai Fjords, and the scenic Alaska Railroad to Seward.

$18995 (+air)



Alaska's Inside Passage

A small-ship voyage through the narrow channels and fjords of Southeast Alaska's storied Inside Passage—meet wildlife up close in the company of top naturalists.

$7000

Natural Habitat & WWF: Discovering Our Planet Together

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