

adventure

ALASKA

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Nineteen Ninety-Seven Another Great Year . . .

This past year was another wonderful one for Adventure Alaska. Our staff members were all back from previous seasons and all (almost) of our guests were exquisite. Memories were had aplenty and we managed not to lose or maim a single guest. The fact that we have the opportunity to meet and come to know so many folks with each their unique lives, is truly one of the most rewarding aspects of this enterprise. We even had a few "repeat offenders", returning for yet another taste of the north, be it for a different season or place. It's particularly when paths cross again, that one can't help feeling a bit like part of an extended family.

The biggest event for us this year, was the construction of our new lodging facility in Hope. Last August we drew a line in the sand (muskeg?) and dared ourselves to cross it. We naively did, betting that we could turn a patch of woods into a lodge before folks showed up expecting to sleep in something other than sawdust. Don't let anyone tell you that winter in Alaska is not absolutely the most pleasant time to build —construction projects without fail go so smoothly that it just wouldn't have been any fun without the cold, snow or darkness . . . Septic tanks, submersible pumps, pressure tanks —Christmas was extra special this year.

Bullheadedness and colorful language did though finally produce a two-story bathhouse/dining room and four log cabins, each being furnished and decorated seconds before the arrival of its scheduled occupant. The wished-for goal of being *finished* in June, was soon redefined as



Cabin #1 on Bear Creek



The new "lodge" - Hope, AK

operational and so we opted for the popular "hurricane aftermath" landscaping motif. The feedback from our guests was wonderful though, and that's truly gratifying after all the hard work. It's a thoroughly tranquil spot and we're delighted to be able to share it. A few more cabins are planned but *probably* NOT with as blistering a schedule.

Another highlight this year was the inauguration of the *Yukon Quest Adventure*. Traveling the river by dog team, the northern lights, fine company, toasty cabins —Eagle and the Yukon are especially magical in "the other season". Ironically, though a bit more severe, winter here is often less of an adversary than much farther south, where commuting, traffic and tight schedules can't help but steal some of its purity and beauty.

In sum, this past year was delightfully memorable. We hope that yours was equally fulfilling!

New Goodies For Next Season

No new lodges planned, though we're counting on a couple of additional cabins to keep the muscles from healing completely. The old stalwart itineraries won't be changing by much, but we've devised a few new ones to keep things lively. New turf it is with the *Arctic Explorer Tour*, heading to the ends of the furthest north roads of both the US and Canada, and exploring new worlds in the process. The latitude of this vast region is paramount in the way that it has shaped the land itself and the people that have done battle with it for eons. The tour leads from the Eskimo

whaling culture of Barrow to the oilfields of Prudhoe Bay to Canada's Dawson City and the Northwest Territories' Inuvik, featuring in between the fantastic Dalton and Dempster Highways, as well as the tiny outposts of Coldfoot, Eagle, and Ft. MacPherson. We're very excited.

New too this century is, the *Klondike Gold Rush Centennial Tour*. The search for gold has shaped every aspect of the north, from the land to the culture, and that is in part the fascinating story this new itinerary endeavors to explore. More than just history, this tour promises insight into some very special people and places, and will end up convincing one of just how much now has in common with then. Dawson, Skagway, Eagle, Juneau, Whitehorse —the names still stir the imagination and rightfully so.

We've long had request for something featuring the feet, and our answer to that is the *Day Hiker Adventure*. Each day of this trip is highlighted by a hike in a contrasting area, from the faces of two glaciers, to the alpine world above treeline, to a temperate rainforest. Three nights are spent camping in some wonderfully "secret" spots, with the other four nights featuring sheets and showers. We're anticipating definite popularity amongst the guides, and hopefully so the same with our guests.

Three new trips —just the ticket to rationalize another trip to Alaska!



7-Day "Happy Hour" Tour, christening the new deck in Hope

Staff Updates

The roster this year at Adventure Alaska remained unchanged, with the same wonderfully sordid crew in its employ. Masochists they must be, and we're hoping that will continue . . . And now for a bit of their news:

Jeannine continues to be the first voice most people hear when calling, handling all of the initial brochure requests and mailings from Ohio to speed delivery time. She and her sister-in-law had a grand adventure this spring, ferrying a new company van up from the Lower 48. (a Thelma and

Louise redux) She was also the Company Seamstress this winter, creating curtains for all the windows in Hope, each of varying size. Upon arrival she assumed Chief Gardener status and tempered our construction site with lots of flowers and color. We're hoping it's every year. Newly married **Barbra** and **Todd** pioneered a new honeymoon trend last fall, hauling logs and building cabins in the snow. (And no, a divorce is not imminent. In fact, they just bought a house and are moving to Hope.) They closed the season with a great fall trip up the Dempster Highway to Inuvik with Patrick, followed by a few weeks in Eagle doing projects and recuperating. In November they're heading to the Arabian Peninsula to see if they can get kidnapped by Yemeni tribesmen. **Patrick** as usual juggled



Patrick, Todd, Barb, and canine escort

consummately well, the summer's multi lingual and personality challenges. This fall he trickled south by road, a slate of competing adventures awaiting. He plans a return visit to France this winter before resuming his annual migratory pattern to his perch in the sun, La Paz, Mexico. And yes, each spring we scan the sky, fervently hoping he'll be among the returning geese. **Tim** gave a few good years of his life this spring, helping us finish the cabins in Hope before heading to McCarthy to guide raft trips. He's back in Anchorage for a winter of skiing and teaching others how to stay upright doing the same. **Heidi** and her husband Sean at last found their "peace" of property near Homer, and are in the process of making improvements on the existing cabins there. **Chris and Kathleen** are back in their "real" jobs, riding herd on their children and the cabin fever prone students of the Wasilla school district in their positions there, and most likely are already counting the days until the holiday break. This past year **Lorraine** continued her dog sledding program and demonstration in Homer for the summer visitors, to help support her extended (and extending) four legged family.

!!! Repeat Offender Program !!!

*ANNOUNCING JUSTIFICATION FOR THOSE GLUTTON-
OUS ENOUGH TO THINK OF RETURNING FOR A TRIP
WITH US* —If you've survived one before, you get a 10% discount on the next one. If you've already stumbled back before this offer, apply it to the NEXT trip. We'd love to see a few of our friends again!