CAPTAIN’S LOG

Today’s voyage takes us to wilderness areas bursting with towering mountains and numerous glaciers. Prince William Sound is America’s largest intact marine ecosystem carved by 15 million years of glaciations. The Sound encompasses 3,500 miles of coastline, over 100 glaciers, including 17 tidewater glaciers. Over 30 species of land mammals, a dozen marine mammals and more than 220 species of birds can be found in the Sound. All five species of North American Pacific salmon return annually to the pristine waters of Prince William Sound. While our cruise routes focus on glaciers, we may find wildlife in their natural habit along the way.

The Chugach National Forest surrounds Prince William Sound. This is North America’s northernmost rain forest, with dense groves of Sitka spruce and western hemlock. The Chugach is the second largest national forest at 5.4 million acres, which the encompasses the 2.2 million acre Nellie Juan-College Fjord Wilderness Study Area.

As we embark on this journey of discovery and encounter the magnificent panoramic beauty of Prince William Sound, we are reminded of the extraordinary splendor of this place that we call home.

Thank you for joining us today.

Sincerely,
Phillips Cruises & Tours, LLC

DISCOVER
GLACIER CARVED FJORDS
PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND
CHUGACH NATIONAL FOREST

WHITTIER, ALASKA

Whittier is the western gateway to Prince William Sound and is a vibrant recreational community. This busy cruise destination is also a year-round industrial port supplying goods to Interior Alaska. Whittier averages 15 feet of rain and 20 feet of snow annually.

During World War II, the Anton Anderson Memorial railroad tunnel was constructed. In 2000, it was transformed into the longest shared rail-vehicle tunnel in North America.

The tunnel is named after the army engineer who supervised construction of the rail spur through Maynard Mountain.

Two large buildings constructed during World War II dominate the skyline. The 14-story Begich Towers is home to the residents of Whittier, a population of fewer than 300 people. The Buckner Building was abandoned due to damage from the 1964 earthquake.

1964 EARTHQUAKE

The epicenter of the 1964 Good Friday earthquake occurred about 10 km east of College Fjord, measured 9.2 on the Richter scale, lasted almost 4 minutes followed by a tsunami that caused most of the damage to local communities.
TRY OUR
GLACIER ICE MARGARITA
The galley located on the first deck, will be open after we cast off from the dock. We have a variety of alcoholic beverages, sodas, hot chocolate and snacks available for purchase.

SEE UP CLOSE
We offer the use of professional grade binoculars for rent during your cruise. A crew member behind the bar can assist you with a pair to use during the entire cruise today.

DON’T MISS OUR Gift Shop
Buy plush animals, hats, shirts and more!


FIRST PEOPLE
Long before Westerners arrived, Aleut crossed the pass that separates Prince William Sound from Cook Inlet’s Turnagain Arm in search of fish. Miners later took the route to reach the gold fields of Turnagain Arm.

The Alutiiq migrated into Prince William Sound about 5,000 years ago as the glaciers began their retreat. Alutiiq are water people, whose lives centered on hunting and fishing. The Eyak, who shared the Sound, were people of the shore who came from Alaska’s interior.

These early people created small villages and lived in wooden houses. They made clothing from sea otter and seal, wove baskets from grass and spruce roots and used stones, bones, wood and shells to make tools. Today, about 1,000 Alaska Natives live in the Sound where their lifestyles range from traditional subsistence to leading major Alaska Native-owned corporations.

WORLD OF EXPLORATION
1741: Vitus Bering, a Danish navigator, served in the Russian Navy and discovered Alaska. Georg Wilhelm Steller, the famous German naturalist, was a member of the Bering Expedition, which made landfall at Kayak Island, approximately 100 miles southeast of Whittier. We will hear his name often today: Steller Sea Lion, Steller Jay, Steller Eider and Steller Sea Eagle.

1778: Captain James Cook entered the Sound on May 12th and called the area Sandwich Sound. The area was renamed by British Admiralty to Prince William Sound in honor of King George III’s third son, Prince William Henry. While Cook was trading goods with the indigenous people, William Bligh, later of Mutiny of the Bounty fame, took a small boat and paddled long enough to determine this was not the Northwest Passage. It was Bligh Reef that the Exxon Valdez struck in 1989.

1796: Captain George Vancouver mapped most of the western and eastern portions of the Sound, including much of the area we travel today. Vancouver was also a midshipman on the Cook expedition.

1899: Edward Harriman, one of the most powerful men in America at the time, embarked on a vacation to Alaska as ordered by his doctor to “get some rest”. Rather than go alone, Harriman brought a scientific community of arctic experts, botanists, biologists, zoologists, geologists, geographers, artists, photographers, ornithologists and writers along.

John Muir was among the esteemed scientists on the famous exploratory voyage along the Alaska coast aboard the steamer, the George W. Elder. The expedition claimed to have discovered some 600 species new to science. From his voyage, he paid for the creation of many volumes of discovery that were published. The Harriman Expedition (1901-1910). The Harriman Alaska Series. New York: Doubleday, Page & Company.
Our cruises depart from Whittier, the western gateway to Prince William Sound. Heading east through Passage Canal we approach Decision Point where the 26 Glacier Cruise continues towards Esther Passage, College Fjord, and Harriman Fjord. The Glacier Quest Cruise travels south to view the glaciers and waterfalls in Shotgun Cove and Blackstone Bay.

**26 GLACIER CRUISE ROUTE**

Travel 140 miles in just 5 hours aboard our high-speed catamaran to Egg Rocks or Perry Island in Port Wells in search of Steller sea lions. Turning north, the route continues to scenic Esther Passage where only small ships can navigate the narrow channel protected by high mountains.

A panoramic view of College Fjord highlights glaciers along the northwest side that were named after prominent women's colleges on the East Coast, while those on the southwest side were named after men's colleges. As the route continues toward Harriman Fjord, a glacier-rich region whose namesake came from a science expedition led by American railroad financier Edward Harriman, we see Surprise Glacier, Harriman Glacier and the glaciers of Barry Arm. The Captain plots a path through the ice-filled waters up to the front of the glacier so passengers can watch for ice calving into the sea before returning to Whittier.

**GLACIER QUEST CRUISE ROUTE**

Discover 45 miles of scenic beauty along this route. Learn how Shotgun Cove earned its name and view the wreck of the old ferry boat Leschi. Continue to Blackstone Bay where ribbons of waterfalls glisten down the towering landscape capped with alpine glaciers. View tidewater glaciers, Blackstone, and Beloit, as your Captain cruises close to the face of these massive rivers of ice before returning to Whittier.

**CHUGACH NATIONAL FOREST SERVICE RANGER**

Through our valued partnership with the U.S. Forest Service, we bring rangers from the Chugach National Forest Service on board our vessels to share the history and describe the wildlife, glaciers, and geology of Prince William Sound.

**JUNIOR RANGER**

Families with school-age children will receive a Junior Ranger activity book. Towards the end of the cruise, children who have completed their activity book can participate in a pledge to be good stewards of our National Forests and earn their Junior Ranger badge.
GLACIERS

WHAT KIND OF GLACIER IS THAT?

TIDEWATER  Pressured by their own weight, active tidewater glaciers move toward the water, ending at the ocean's edge where they frequently “calve,” shedding slabs of ice that crash into the sea. These floating icebergs are so heavy that only 10-15% of their mass is visible above the water. Example: Blackstone, Beloit, Harvard, Harriman, Surprise, Barry and Coxe.

HANGING  Originating high on the wall of a glacier valley, a hanging glacier descends only part of the way to the surface of the main glacier. Example: Whittier, Northland

VALLEY  This glacier flows downward between the walls of a mountain valley. Example: Billings.

HOW DO GLACIERS FORM?

Glaciers form wherever more snow accumulates than is lost each year. All glaciers have an accumulation zone, areas where snow builds up, and an ablation zone, where snow and ice is lost.

1 ACCUMULATION ZONE
Snow accumulates in the upper altitudes.

2 SNOW BECOMES ICE
Snow gradually becomes ice under its own weight. New snowfall compresses the snow from pernicious seasons.

3 TRIBUTARY GLACIER
A small glacier that flows into a larger glacier.

4 MEDIAL MORaine
A ridge of moraine that runs downs the center of a valley floor. It forms when two glaciers meet and the debris on the edges of the adjacent valley sides join and are carried on top of the enlarged glacier.

5 LATERAL MORaine
These are products of rock fall onto the margin of a glacier. Rock fall is a result of frost weathering of the rock wall and of over-steepening of the cliff by glacial erosion, leading to rock slope failure. The rock debris is carried along the glacier edge as it moves towards the snout.

6 TERMINUS
Glaciers reach their maximum length when ice loss can no longer be replaced by snow accumulation in the upper regions. Glaciers retreat when ice loss is greater than snow accumulation and advance when snowfall is greater than ice loss.

WHY ARE GLACIERS BLUE?

Years of compression gradually forms very dense ice by forcing out the tiny air pockets between ice crystals. This dense ice absorbs the long wavelengths of light, but short wavelengths of light are transmitted and scattered reflecting the color blue. Glacier ice appears white when there are many tiny air bubbles trapped inside.
HOW TO TAKE A GREAT PHOTO!

“In every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks.” - John Muir

BE READY.
Bring an extra memory card, clear space for new photos and bring a USB cord to recharge as glacier viewing may drain batteries fast.

LOOK AROUND.
Embrace all 360° of the many spectacular sights surrounding you. View Alaska’s grandeur through your five senses. LISTEN to the sounds of the glaciers, SEE the wildlife looking back at you, SMELL the fresh clean air fill your lungs with the TOUCH of wilderness, and TASTE ice from a glacier.

PHOTOGRAPHY TIPS.
1. Change your point of view. Take photos from different angles.
2. Place the main focal point in one third of the frame.
3. Let technology auto balance the exposure by tapping the screen.
4. Hold steady and exhale to take a more focused photo.

*Please be courteous to others and avoid extending a selfie stick more than 12 inches.

WHAT DID YOU SEE TODAY?

SEA OTTER (Enhydra lutris kenyoni)
A relative of the weasel, an estimated 12,000 sea otters live in the Sound and are considered the “playboys” and “good time girls” of the ocean. The smallest of the sea mammals, they measure four to five feet long.

HARBOR SEAL (Phoca vitulina)
Also, know as the spotted seal, these inquisitive and elusive animals average six feet in length and weigh 120-370 pounds. Their coats vary in color from white to dark gray.

PIGEON GUILLEMOT (Cepphus columba)
The pigeon guillemot is a species of bird in the auk family, Alcidae. One of three species in the genus Cepphus, it is most closely related to the spectacled guillemot.

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE (Rissa tridactyla)
The black-legged kittiwake is the most prevalent of all bird species in the Sound. The Passage Canal colony near Whittier has more than 10,000 kittiwakes that nest in the surrounding sea cliffs.

BALD EAGLE (Haliaeetus leucocephalus)
The bald eagle is a sea or fish eagle and our national symbol. The Sound provides year-round and seasonal habitat for about 6,000 bald eagles.

STELLER SEA LION (Eumetopias jubatus)
The Steller sea lion is the largest member of the eared seal family. Male sea lions weigh 2,000 pounds and are 10 feet in length. Mature males develop a heavy muscular neck with a mane of long coarse hair.

DALL’S PORPOISE (Phocoenoides dalli)
The Dall’s porpoise is found only in the North Pacific. It’s thick body and small head makes it easily distinguishable from other cetacean species. Are capable of swimming 30 knots.

MOUNTAIN GOAT (Oreamnos americanus)
The mountain goat is the only North American envoy of a group of ungulates called the Kupicaprinae, or rock goats. They are characterized by relatively short horns and live in rugged terrain. Adult males weigh about 260 pounds.

BLACK BEAR (Ursus americanus)
Black bears are plentiful along the northern and western shorelines. Adult black bears stand about 29 inches at the shoulders and measure about 60 inches from nose to tail.

HUMPBACK WHALE (Megaptera novaeangliae)
Humpbacks are baleen whales, Adults can weigh 40 tons, grow to 55 feet and have extremely long flippers measuring 25 to 30 percent of their entire length. Humpbacks swim practically non-stop for 6 to 8 weeks each fall and spring, covering a total of 6,000 miles between Alaska and Hawaii, the longest annual migration of any mammal.

ORCA/KILLER WHALE (Orcinus Orca)
The killer whale is the largest member of the group of marine mammals known as dolphins. Adults grow to 27 feet in length and weigh as much as 10 tons. More than 160 killer whales in eight resident pods can be found in Prince William Sound and Kenai Fjords National Park.
ABOUT US

Brad and Helen Phillips, the founders of Phillips Cruises and Tours, pioneered cruises between Valdez and Whittier in the late 1950’s with the vessel M/V Gypsy, an 85-foot vessel lost in the great 1964 earthquake. In 1985, the company was the first to pioneer the use of high-speed catamarans in Alaska providing a much smoother experience for passengers than mono-hull vessels.

The “26 Glacier Cruise” was developed in 1987 and the custom-built M/V Klondike Express arrived in 1999. Phillips commissioned Shannon Leigh to produce the “Native Series” of aluminum wall sculptures at the snack bar on the M/V Klondike Express. This series represents the three most common weather features in the Sound: wind, rain, and snow. The sculptures include a beaver, bear, whale and totem pole. Brad died in 2009 at the age of 84 and Helen passed the following year. The M/V Klondike Express is one of their lasting contributions to the Alaska visitor industry.

The M/V Glacier Quest was added to the fleet in 2012. A route into Blackstone Bay was developed and named the Glacier Quest Cruise. In 2019, the M/V Bravest will join Phillips’ fleet of high-speed catamarans in Prince William Sound.

Phillips Cruises & Tours, LLC has grown to be Alaska’s premier day cruise tour operator offering their first-class service exclusively on smooth cruising, high-speed catamarans. Operating in the calm waters of Prince William Sound provides the perfect venue for passengers to experience spectacular tidewater glaciers, abundant wildlife, and amazing scenery. Our “fast cats” whisk passengers on their adventure in style while our “No Seasickness” guarantee comforts those with any nervousness about being on the water.

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