

# The Iditarod and Alaska's Northern Lights

**Highlights...** Anchorage • Turnagain Arm • Iditarod Race • Talkeetna • Alaska Railroad • Fairbanks • Dog Mushing • Northern Lights Excursions



10 Days • 14 Meals: 9 Breakfasts • 5 Dinners

*March 1-10, 2023*

## **Stefan's "Join the Fun" Group Package Includes:**

- *Airfare*
- **Overnight Car Parking from Viera & Ormond**
- **Transportation to Orlando International Airport r/t with Gratuity to Driver Included**
- **Gratuity to your Tour Guide & Driver on your Tour**
- **Group Meet N Greet for Q & A**
- **Tour Package**
- **10 Meals**

### Collette experiences

- Search for the northern lights in Fairbanks' star-filled sky.
- Hop in a sled and experience dog mushing like a local.
- Spend two nights at the Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge, taking in unparalleled views of Denali and the Alaskan Range.

### Must-see inclusions

- Peruse antique cars and glamorous fashions of the past at the Antique Auto Museum.
- Enjoy a scenic ride from Talkeetna to Fairbanks via Alaska Railroad.

### Culinary inclusions

- Enjoy a taste of wild Alaskan salmon.
- Dine at one of Alaska's most popular micro-breweries.

  
guided by travel

*Local fans cheering at the starting line. International mushers gearing up for the cold. Packs of sled dogs wiggling in their harnesses. 1,049 miles of barren snow, unpredictable weather, and tense competition. This is the Iditarod Race, a world-renowned event that creates heroes, feeds legends, and produces an incomparable reward of accomplishment. Unlike most sporting events around the world, the Iditarod is mostly done behind the scenes – meaning the public eye is closed off outside of checkpoints and anticipatory ceremonies. Get a glimpse into the exciting mystery at the Musher's Banquet, where you will be able to connect with beloved (or rookie!) mushers and take photos before the big event. Cheer on your favorite dogs at both race starts – the ceremonial start and the official restart – and feel the contagious excitement in the air. There's nowhere else in the world you can see this pure form of competition, and Alaska sets the stage for an unparalleled event.*

**Day 1: Anchorage, Alaska - Tour Begins**

Your journey starts in Anchorage, a city on the edge of the snowcapped Chugach Mountains and 60 sparkling glaciers. This is your gateway to wilderness and adventure.

**Day 2: Anchorage**

Get acquainted with Anchorage on a panoramic city tour before heading to the Anchorage Museum, Alaska's largest museum, which tells the story of Alaska and the North. Explore the full diversity of Alaska Native cultures. Tonight, get into the spirit of the Iditarod at the exclusive Musher's Banquet dinner. Chat with the stars of the race, enjoy local entertainment, and watch the mushers draw their starting positions from a *mukluk* (Arctic boot). *Today breakfast and dinner will be included.*

**Day 3: Anchorage - Wildlife Conservation Center - Anchorage**

Drive along the Turnagain Arm to the Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center. With a local guide, discover where orphaned or injured bears, wolves, porcupines, and moose are cared for in a 200-acre rehabilitation site. Enjoy the remainder of the day at leisure to explore Anchorage on your own. *Today breakfast will be included.*

**Day 4: Anchorage - Iditarod Ceremonial Start**

Welcome to the ceremonial start of the legendary Iditarod. Cheer on mushers, take photos of the energetic dogs, and peruse the local food vendors lining the streets. Perhaps you'll try a bite of reindeer sausage. After the excitement of the day, relax with dinner at a local restaurant. *Today breakfast and dinner will be included.*

**Day 5: Anchorage - Willow - Iditarod Official Start - Talkeetna**

Venture to Willow and feel the adrenaline in the air as the Iditarod mushers line up at the starting line for the official start of the race. Mushers leave in 2-minute intervals, starting their 1,049-mile journey to the finish line in Nome. Cheer amongst the locals for your favorite dogs at this bucket-list event. Continue on to Talkeetna as Denali, North America's tallest mountain, looms large over the landscape. Check into the iconic Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge, perched on a ridge offering unforgettable views of Denali. *Today breakfast will be included.*

**Day 6: Talkeetna**

Begin your day with a lecture from a local expert on Alaska's unique flora and fauna, as well as the state's down-to-earth lifestyle. This afternoon is yours to spend as you choose. Perhaps you will relax at your hotel, enjoying unparalleled views of Denali and the Alaskan Range, or venture out for an exploratory walk through the surrounding winter wonderland. Tonight, enjoy dinner and beer at one of Alaska's most popular micro-brewers – the Denali Brewing Company. *Today breakfast and dinner will be included.*

**Day 7: Talkeetna - Alaska Railroad - Fairbanks**

Hop on Alaska Railroad's Aurora Winter Train for a full-day journey to Fairbanks. Sit back and relax as you are whisked away, through snow-covered mountains and striking valleys. Have your cameras ready – the train conductor will point out wildlife as you pass by. Dinner is included in the train's dining car. This evening you arrive in Fairbanks, your home for the next three nights and one of the best places in Alaska to see the northern lights. *Today breakfast and dinner will be included.*

**Day 8: Fairbanks**

Feel the brisk air and discover Fairbanks, the perfect juxtaposition of nature and civilization. Look into the past at the Antique Auto Museum, where vintage cars sit between timely artifacts and fashionable designer dresses from times gone by. Hop in a car yourself, throw on some flapper accessories, and pose for a perfect souvenir snapshot. In the afternoon, embrace the Iditarod spirit and try your hand at dog mushing, stepping into a sled with an expert guide and gliding over the snow with your very own pack of sled dogs. Late this evening, chase the legendary northern lights, considered to be one of the most amazing natural spectacles in the world. Walk out in the snow under an unspoiled bed of stars and search for the shimmering hues of purple and green. *Today breakfast will be included.*



### Day 9: Fairbanks

Enjoy a full day at leisure in the city of Fairbanks. Take this opportunity to relax or flex your sense of adventure with optional excursions: consider flightseeing to the Arctic. Toast to your Alaskan adventure at a farewell dinner in a local restaurant. Later in the evening, enjoy a final chance to spot the northern lights. *Today breakfast and dinner will be included.*

### Day 10: Fairbanks - Tour Ends

Enjoy a relaxing morning before heading to the Museum of the North, the University of Alaska's collection featuring 2.2 million years of biodiversity and thousands of years of human history. The remainder of your day is at leisure. Because many flights from Fairbanks do not depart until the evening, your room has been extended for your use before your transfer to the airport. *Today breakfast will be included.*

### Your itinerary at a glance

Days 1 – 4

Hilton, Anchorage, AK

Days 5, 6

Talkeetna Alaskan Lodge, Talkeetna, AK

Days 7 – 9

Pikes Waterfront Lodge, Fairbanks, AK

On some dates alternate hotels may be used.

- **Collette's Flagship:** Collette's tours open the door to a world of amazing destinations. Marvel at must-see sights, sample regional cuisine, stay in centrally located hotels and connect with new and captivating cultures. These itineraries offer an inspiring and easy way to experience the world, where an expert guide takes care of all the details.



**Package Cost: Double \$5,529 or SOLO \$6,529**

\*Are you a Solo Lady, call stefan if you're looking for a Travel Mate, Limited Solo Rooms available, to Book Call Stefan at 386-235-3443, to be part of the Group with Perks

