

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA



JUST THE FACTS

With the midnight sun high overhead, the colossal, boreal forest of the Chugach Mountain Range looming on the horizon, and the sparkling waters of Cook Inlet summoning like a siren, Anchorage provides endless possibilities for adventure at every skill level and budget. Itineraries read like a wish list for those with a love of the natural world. Lose track of time on Anchorage's lush, maintained trails. Get up-close and personal with moose, bear and fox. Hike to the top of Flattop Mountain, glide along glaciers, reel in a huge king salmon or tee-off at 10 p.m. Anchorage embraces a Big Wild Life.

CITY SIZE

Anchorage is nearly the size of the state of Delaware. Stretching more than 70 miles (112 kilometers) from Portage Glacier to Eklutna, it encompasses 1,955 square miles (506,342 hectares).

LOCATION

The city sits at the base of the Chugach Mountains along the coast of Cook Inlet in Southcentral Alaska. Anchorage is as far north as Helsinki, Finland and as far west as Honolulu, Hawaii.

POPULATION

294,000 people or nearly 40% of the state's population live in Anchorage.
Median age: 33.5
Sex: 50.5% male, 49.5% female

WEATHER

Average Temperatures:
July: 65F (18C)
January: 20F (-7C)
Annual rainfall: 15.7 inches
Daylight:
19 hrs, 21 minutes in the summer
5 hrs, 28 minutes in the winter
Average Snowfall: 70.6 inches

MOUNTAINS

Six mountain ranges can be seen from Anchorage, including the Alaska Range (and Denali) to the north, the Chugach Mountains to the east, Talkeetna Mountains to the north, Tordrillo Mountains to the west, Kenai Mountains to the south and the Aleutian Range to the southwest. There are 200 recognized mountains, more than 50 glaciers and 30 lakes and ponds within Chugach National Forest and Chugach State Park – all within 50 miles of Anchorage.

TOP TRAILS

Anchorage has more than 135 miles of paved bike and multi-use trails and 90 miles of summer non-paved hiking trails. Residents enjoy more than 130 miles of winter walkways that are plowed, 140 miles of groomed ski trails, 30 miles of lighted ski trails and 36 miles of dog mushing trails. Anchorage's Kincaid Park is one of a few Nordic ski areas in the U.S. certified for international competitions. The city's trail systems have recognized by Bicycling Magazine, Runner's World and American Hiking Society.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND STORY IDEAS:
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ANCHORAGE BY THE NUMBERS

60

Glaciers within a day's drive of Anchorage.

1,500

Number of moose living in Anchorage.

100

Approximate number of languages spoken in the Anchorage School District. Spanish, Hmong, Samoan, Tagalog and Yup'ik each rank high after English.

97.25

Weight (in pounds) of the largest king salmon ever caught in Alaska. Caught south of Anchorage on the Kenai River by Les Anderson.

4

Number of times Anchorage has won the National Civic League All-America City designation (1956, 1965, 1984 and 2002).

135

Miles of paved, multi-use trails in Anchorage.

20,310

Denali's height (in feet). On a clear day, North America's tallest mountain is visible from downtown Anchorage.

 VISIT
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ANNUAL EVENTS

The calendar is packed with sports, festivals, performing arts and other events. Here's a short list of annual favorites:

- New Years Eve - Revelers fill Town Square as sculptors carve creations of ice and fireworks fill the sky.
- Great Alaska Beer & Barleywine Festival - With 30 breweries in Alaska, this annual festival is one of the best places to sample many at once.
- Alaska Ski for Women - Alaska's best female athletes share trails with teams of wildly costumed women during this charitable cross-country ski event.
- Anchorage Fur Rendezvous - Started by miners and trappers more than 80 years ago, this event has grown into a celebration filled with everything from snow sculptures to outhouse races.
- Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race® - This iconic Alaska dogsled race starts in Anchorage on the first Saturday of March. From here the teams face 1,049 miles of wilderness on their trip to Nome.
- Tour of Anchorage - Part of the longest running and largest citizen's Nordic racing and touring series, this event runs 50k, 40k, or 25k through city trails the first Sunday in March.
- Alyeska's Annual Spring Carnival & Slush Cup - Celebrate the coming spring with a music, food, and costumed skiers speeding across a slush pond in the ski town of Girdwood.
- NYO (Native Youth Olympics) - Alaska teens compete in games played to test endurance, agility and strength of traditional life in Alaska villages.
- Slam'n Salm'n Derby - King salmon run steps from downtown high rises, and anglers compete to haul in the biggest fish of the June run.
- Solstice Festival - Spend 22 hours of daylight celebrating in downtown Anchorage or head to Flattop Mountain for a peak party on the longest day.
- Mayor's Marathon & Half Marathon - On or near summer solstice, this events' course weaves through Anchorage parks and trails.

CUISINE

There are more than 1,600 eating establishments ranging from casual to fine dining, many featuring wild Alaskan seafood and locally grown produce when in season.

WILDLIFE

Anchorage and the surrounding areas are home to moose, bears, bald eagles and beluga whales. Also find Dall sheep in the nearby mountains, hundreds of migratory and resident bird species in marshes, and all five types of Pacific salmon in nearby waterways.

AVAILABLE ROOMS

Anchorage has more than 8,500 hotel/motel rooms and more than 850 bed and breakfast/hostel beds.

HISTORY

While the region was the site of Dena'ina summer fish camps, the city itself was established in 1915 as the headquarters for construction of the Alaska Railroad. In the city's first century, it has grown from a tent city on the banks of Ship Creek to a Alaska's transportation and business hub. Downtown streets still follow the plan laid out in 1915, but the city now embraces the edges of the Chugach Mountains and Cook Inlet.

ALASKA NATIVE CULTURE

While within the traditional territory of the Dena'ina Athabascans, Anchorage is now home to Alaska Native peoples from across the state. Combine this unique blend of cultures with the exhibits of the Anchorage Museum, the demonstrations and life-size traditional dwellings at the Alaska Native Heritage Center and that include Alaska Federation of Natives meetings, the Native Youth Olympics and the Indigenous World Film Festival, and Anchorage is the perfect place to explore the rich traditions and modern day life of Alaska Native peoples.

AVIATION

Alaska has more than 8,000 pilots, roughly six times as many pilots as the national average. The state has approximately 730 public and private landing areas (including seaplane bases). Lake Hood is the largest and busiest seaplane base in the world, with an average of 160 takeoffs and landings daily, and nearly 500 on a peak summer day. Merrill Field in Anchorage recorded 152,000 flight operations during 2011.

MEET ME IN ANCHORAGE

The Dena'ina Civic and Convention Center accommodates groups of up to 5,000 and provides 215,000 square feet of pre-meeting, meeting, ballroom and exhibit space.

The William A. Egan Civic & Convention Center offers more than 40,000 square feet of meeting, exhibit and pre-function space on two floors and includes two main halls.