



## CHEESEMANS' ECOLOGY SAFARIS

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### Alaska

#### *Aurora and Arctic Wildlife*

October 10 to 17, 2021



Aurora Borealis  
© Hugh Rose

## SAFARI OVERVIEW

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Spend your days watching Alaska's iconic wildlife and your nights photographing the magical aurora borealis. Cross the Arctic Circle and then travel through the picturesque Alaskan landscape of the Brooks Range, decorated in fall colors, to the stark vastness of the Arctic Coastal Plain. Absorb the hypnotic, dancing curtains of color across the night sky as you photograph or simply enjoy the ephemeral phenomenon of the aurora borealis. Explore Arctic Alaska with local photographer and naturalist Hugh Rose where you'll learn wildlife, landscape, and aurora photography techniques and see nature's beauty at its finest.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Experience the colorful dance of the aurora borealis and learn how to capture its brilliance.
- Search for iconic Alaskan wildlife such as grizzly bear, caribou, muskox, arctic fox, and gray wolf.

- Observe birds of prey as they hunt the Arctic tundra and flocks of migratory birds as they head south.

**LEADERS:** Hugh Rose assisted by Amy Johnson.

**DAYS:** 8, including estimated travel time.

**GROUP SIZE:** 8.

**COST:** \$4,350 per person, double occupancy, not including airfare. See the Costs section on page 3.

Date	Description	Accommodation	Meals
Oct 10	Arrive in Fairbanks, Alaska for welcome dinner.	Pikes Waterfront Hotel, Fairbanks	D
Oct 11–12	Cross the Arctic Circle en route to Wiseman. Explore the Brooks Range and photograph aurora borealis.	Arctic Getaway, Wiseman	B, L, D
Oct 13	Search for wildlife driving north on the Dalton Highway through the Arctic Coastal Plains to Prudhoe Bay.	Aurora Hotel, Prudhoe Bay	B, L, D
Oct 14–15	Explore and photograph around Wiseman and hopefully photograph the northern lights.	Arctic Getaway, Wiseman	B, L, D
Oct 16	Drive south to Fairbanks, crossing the Arctic Circle with stops en route for wildlife.	Pikes Waterfront Hotel, Fairbanks	B, L, D
Oct 17	Depart homeward.		B

## LEADER



### Hugh Rose

Hugh has over 20 years of professional guiding experience. The vast landscapes and incredible wildlife of Alaska and the Polar Regions are his subject and passion, evident in his inspired leadership and stunning professional photos. Hugh receives unending praise for his amazing knowledge, delightful and accommodating personality, and attention to every trip detail.

## DETAILED ITINERARY

### Oct 10 ~ Arrive in Fairbanks, Alaska

Arrive in Fairbanks by this evening for a welcome dinner.

### Oct 11–12 ~ Drive to Wiseman for aurora and wildlife in the Brooks Range

You'll drive north to Wiseman on the scenic Dalton Highway, the only road in the United States that crosses the Arctic Circle. Pass through the White Mountains, crossing the mighty Yukon River, and into the Brooks Range, searching for wildlife along the way and enjoying the hillsides carpeted in fall color. Your destination is Wiseman, a gold mining town offering a glimpse into the recent human history of Alaska. Wiseman is located approximately 60mi north of the Arctic Circle at roughly 67°N latitude, an excellent location for aurora photography and perfect base for exploration of the Brooks Range. Conditions permitting, spend two

nights photographing the aurora and learning techniques to obtain stunning images of this spectacular and ephemeral phenomenon.

### **Oct 13 ~ Search for wildlife on the Arctic Coastal Plains**

You'll depart early to drive 240mi along the Dalton Highway to Prudhoe Bay at the edge of the Arctic Ocean. As you climb the Brooks Range, scan the boreal forest for gray wolf, moose, grizzly bear, and black bear. You'll go over Atigun Pass, the highest pass in Alaska at 4,800ft, and descend the north side of the Brooks Range into a world devoid of trees and home to many species of Arctic wildlife, such as muskox, red fox, gray wolf, and caribou. Birds of prey, including gyrfalcon, snowy owl, short-eared owl, and rough-legged hawk, hunt the open Arctic tundra while other migratory birds, like tundra swans, greater white-fronted geese, and Pacific loons, gather in flocks to migrate south ahead of the oncoming winter freeze. The Trans-Alaska Pipeline snakes over the open tundra parallel to the road, adding another component for landscape photography. You'll arrive in Prudhoe Bay in time to enjoy a hearty dinner.

### **Oct 14–15 ~ Explore and photograph around Wiseman**

Before departing south to Wiseman, you will search the Prudhoe Bay area for arctic foxes, snowy owls, and other wildlife. During the drive south, you will have time to walk out to view muskoxen or wait by the road for herds of caribou to cross. If it gets dark on the drive south, you will stop to look for and photograph aurora in the high peaks of the Brooks Range.

### **Oct 16 ~ Drive south to Fairbanks, crossing the Arctic Circle**

Continue south toward Fairbanks. As usual, you will maximize wildlife viewing and photographic opportunities during this day of travel, searching the landscape for one last glimpse of Alaska's wonderful wildlife. Retrace your path south, crossing the Arctic Circle and Yukon River and returning to spectacular fall colors. The journey back to Fairbanks takes you through the historic gold mining community of Fox, Alaska, where you will stop for a farewell dinner together.



Muskoxen  
© Hugh Rose

### **Oct 17 ~ Depart homeward**

## **COSTS (ALL COSTS ARE IN US DOLLARS)**

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### **Cost**

Type	Cost per Person
Trip Cost, double occupancy	\$4,350
Single Supplement	Contact us

Costs are per person, double occupancy, not including airfare, singles extra. See *Included* and *Not Included* sections for more details.

If you are a single traveler, we will find a roommate for you, but if we cannot find you a roommate, we may charge you a single supplement. Single rooms cost extra, are subject to availability, and cannot be guaranteed throughout the trip.

### **Payment Schedule**

<b>Payment</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Amount per Person</b>
Deposit	Due now to reserve your space	\$1,000
Final	August 15, 2021	Remaining Balance

Payments are due based on the schedule above. All reservations require a deposit to confirm reservation of your space.

### **Cancellations**

Until the Final Payment due date, deposits are refundable minus a cancellation fee of \$500 per person, which can be applied toward another tour if reserved within one year of the cancelled trip's departure date. Cancellations are non-transferrable. No refunds are given after the Final Payment due date, unless Hugh can fill the space(s) you have reserved.

### **Included**

- All leaders, transport, park entry fees, landing fees, and permits for all activities unless described as optional.
- Airport transfers to and from Pikes Waterfront Hotel on October 10 and October 17.
- Accommodations for the nights of October 10 through October 16.
- Meals from dinner on October 10 through breakfast on October 17.
- Complimentary beer and wine in Wiseman.
- Insulated Arctic Muck boots for use during the trip.
- Trip Materials – information about flights, packing, entry and departure requirements, airport transfers, gratuities, etc.

### **Not Included**

- All airfare, airport and departure taxes, and excess baggage fees.
- Emergency medical and evacuation insurance and trip cancellation insurance. For more information see [www.cheesemans.com/travel-insurance](http://www.cheesemans.com/travel-insurance).
- Items of a personal nature such as laundry, telephone calls, medical costs or hospitalization, room service, alcoholic and other beverages, items not on the regular menu, etc. If you have special dietary needs, please indicate them on your Reservation Form.



## SIGN UP

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Please contact us first to check availability, reserve your space, and obtain a Reservation Form. To confirm your reservation, we require a deposit and signed form from each participant.

Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris

Email: [info@cheesemans.com](mailto:info@cheesemans.com)

Website: [www.cheesemans.com](http://www.cheesemans.com)

WhatsApp: (408) 741-5330 | Skype: CheesemansEcologySafaris

Phone: (800) 527-5330 or (408) 741-5330

## OTHER DETAILS

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### Climate

Keep in mind, the Arctic has ever-changing weather with temperatures that can swing drastically from below freezing to warm in a matter of hours. Expect daytime temperatures in the low 20s°F (-10°C), though perhaps up into the 30s°F (3 to -1°C), with nights dipping down from 0 to -10°F (-15 to -20°C). Snow is possible, so dress in layers with a waterproof and windproof outer shell, so you can remove or add layers as the temperature dictates.

### Fitness Level

This trip covers a great deal of ground, so photography from or near the vehicle is quite common. Walks are generally under a mile and are at a slow pace with stops for observation and photography. Peak aurora activity is statistically around solar midnight (2:00am, Alaska time); this means staying up late into the night, which may lead to sleep deprivation.

### Accommodations

Lodging throughout the trip is very comfortable albeit basic at times. Options are very limited in these remote locations, but we have found the best options to enjoy the rustic Alaskan experience. Excellent food and a personal touch can also be expected, especially in Wiseman where you'll enjoy home-cooked meals with your hosts. Most lodges have shared baths, except in Fairbanks, where every room has its own bathroom. Hugh has built good relationships with these lodges and we're happy to have the opportunity to continue coming here for unique wildlife experiences. Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns about the accommodations during the trip.

### Transportation

Distances are large in Alaska and a significant amount of time will be spent in vehicles searching for wildlife and driving to destinations. You will make your journey to the Arctic in Hugh's custom Mercedes Sprinter van, specially modified for these photo trips. The Sprinter is outfitted with tall, un-tinted, sliding windows for superior viewing and the ability to photograph from the van, while the tall roof allows you to stand inside. These features make wildlife viewing and photography possible from the van, which also acts as a blind for animals and birds you see along the roadway.

## Flights

Unless listed as included, airfare is not included in trip costs. Detailed logistical information and the contact information for our recommended flight-ticketing agent are included in the Trip Materials we will send you. Please let us know if you are arriving earlier or staying later as we are happy to assist you with any extra overnights that you might want to arrange.

Flights you (or a travel agent) book: Arrive in Fairbanks, Alaska (FAI) on October 10 in time for your 6:30pm welcome dinner. Depart from Fairbanks, Alaska (FAI) anytime on October 17, or if necessary, after 10:00pm on October 16.

## Terms and Conditions

Read our current Terms and Conditions at <https://cheesemans.com/terms-and-conditions>.

## Conservation

Cheesemans' Ecology Safaris is passionate about conserving the precious regions that we travel to and supports many conservation efforts. By visiting these areas, we contribute to sustainable conservation of these valuable wildlife habitats. We urge you to support conservation organizations that protect and restore natural habitats and write letters to tourism and government agencies to promote work in preserving wildlife.

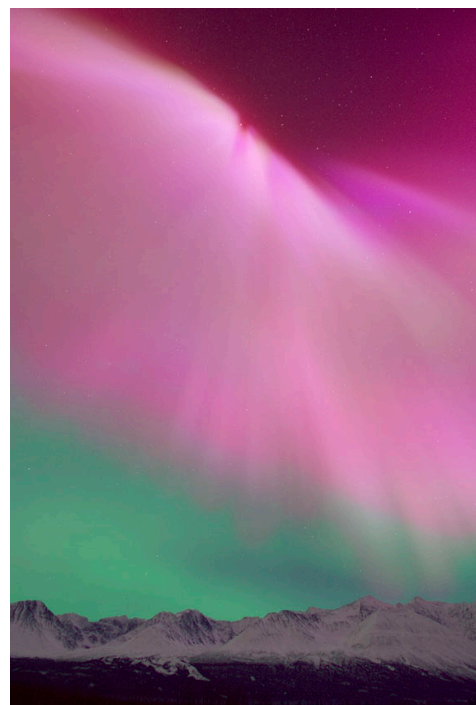
We aim to make all our trips carbon neutral by splitting the cost of carbon offsetting with our participants. For your convenience, the optional donation amount for your half of the carbon offset will be indicated on your invoice. We source high quality offsets through CarbonTree Conservation Fund, a non-profit we helped found, supporting pioneering forest conservation in the Rio Bravo Reserve in Belize, a Nature Conservancy project ([www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/latin-america/belize/rio-bravo-conservation-area/](http://www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/latin-america/belize/rio-bravo-conservation-area/)).

## FAQS

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### What is the aurora borealis?

The aurora borealis, or northern lights, is an ephemeral phenomenon that occurs at extreme northern latitudes (along with the aurora australis, or southern lights, that occurs in southern latitudes). The sky lights up when streams of charged particles emitted from the sun impact atoms of oxygen and nitrogen gas in the earth's atmosphere. The gas then goes into an unbalanced state and stabilizes itself by giving off energy in the form of light. The charged particles impact all over the earth, but the earth's magnetic field attracts the particles into a halo around the magnetic poles. The "Auroral Zone," where aurora is concentrated, is a ring or band centered approximately around the earth's magnetic pole. Auroral displays vary in brightness from barely visible to bright enough to read by and vary in color based on type and altitude of the gas, with green being the most common color.



Northern Lights  
© Hugh Rose

**When is aurora observation best?**

Peak aurora activity is statistically around solar midnight (2:00am, Alaska time), so aurora photography means staying up late into the night. Aurorae can occur at any time of year and are often fickle and transitory, but activity tends to peak around the equinox when Alaskan nights are just getting dark long enough to allow viewing, making September an ideal time of year to photograph the northern lights.