



## **Windstar's Alaska: Gets Travelers Closer with Adventurous *Signature Expeditions* Launching Directly from the Ship; Renovated *Star Breeze* to Sail Alaska in 2020**



*Windstar's Signature Expeditions Program features six full-time onboard Expedition Leaders on every voyage to lead a range of water excursions directly from the ship by kayak and Zodiac, nature hikes, and fascinating lectures.*

**Seattle, WA, May 21, 2019** — Tomorrow, [Windstar Cruises'](#) embarks on its second consecutive Alaska cruise season, running May 22 through September 12 and featuring the award-winning *Signature Expeditions* program. Windstar does Alaska differently, sailing to smaller ports on longer voyages that bring cruisers closer to calving glaciers and elusive wildlife, delivering authentic Alaskan experiences. Windstar also offers in-depth Cruise Tours for the comprehensive Alaska experience combining coastal cruises with in-depth overland explorations to Denali, Fairbanks, and [now the Canadian Rockies](#).

Next year for the 2020 Alaska season, Windstar announces [Alaska Glaciers & Prince William Sound](#), a brand-new itinerary with first time visits to tiny ports like Valdez and quaint Petersburg, as well as new scenic cruising to the massive Hubbard Glacier and spectacular College Fjord in northern Prince William Sound that features five tide-water glaciers where the ice meets the sea.

Windstar's newly enhanced *Star Breeze*, the first Windstar ship to emerge from the [\\$250 Million Star Plus Initiative](#), will sail Alaska next summer offering 22 different journeys beginning May 16, 2020. The 312-passenger ship will showcase 50 new suites including a 1,374 sq. ft. Grand Owner's Suite, new restaurants, enhanced spa and fitness center, elevated pool, and even more enhancements, as well as new, more environmentally-friendly engines.

Beyond the new ship and port offerings, however, Windstar is continually focused on providing the best shore excursions in the region with their innovative [Signature Expeditions](#) program and expert team.

“We are honored to have our Alaska itinerary recognized on *Conde Nast Traveler’s 2019 Hot List* that noted, ‘As far as Alaskan expeditions go, this itinerary gives passengers more access to so many aspects of the state’s culture than any competitor...’ It’s true, our Alaska destination delivery stands out from all others – our elegant small ship visiting out of the way, small ports, and launching *Signature Expeditions* right from the ship, to explore nature with expert guides – cruising Alaska doesn’t get any better,” said Windstar Cruises President John Delaney.

## **Expert Instruction from a Team of Scientists Sets *Signature Expeditions* Program Apart**

Six Signature Expedition experts – naturalists, glaciologists, marine biologists, photographers, historians, and others – are on board throughout every Alaska voyage. The Expedition Team shares the history of the region, cultural tales, scientific discoveries, insider knowledge and local tips. Guests will attend scheduled lectures and enjoy expert narration while scenic cruising, as the team points out wildlife and explains the natural surroundings. Windstar’s guests can ask questions and really learn from the Expedition Team at daily talks, and even while socializing over dinner or a cup of coffee.

The excitement peaks when the lessons and on-ship enrichment take to the waters on optional, adventurous *Signature Expeditions* in spectacular remote waterways like Kenai Fjords and Endicott Arm. The Expedition Team of scientists and naturalists lead kayak and Zodiac excursions directly from the ship giving guests more time for extreme close-up views at sea level. The tours offer breathtaking perspectives on the icebergs, calving glaciers, gorgeous natural habitats, and experience the active wildlife of Alaska first-hand while cruising by rafts of sea otters, spotting sea birds overhead or sea lions lounging on mini-icebergs, all while keeping an eye on shore to spot bears and more.

The Expedition Team are made up of [experts](#) like Hannah Hindley, a naturalist who focuses on understanding Alaskan glacier communities on the forefront of climate change; and Alberto Montaudon, a photography teacher and underwater videographer who has guided tours in Arctic Norway, Greenland, Galápagos, and more. The Expedition Leader, Captain Simon Hook, grew up entranced by ocean wildlife in northern California. His love of nature led him to Sitka, Alaska, where his maritime career began as a deckhand on passenger vessels, he has called Sitka home for over a decade now.

The *Signatures Expeditions* Team has a robust schedule featuring nearly 20 locally-inspired lectures:

- *Knee Deep in Herring* – A look at the historical and cultural significance of Alaska’s Pacific herring, as well as the current issues and controversy involving the Sitka Sound commercial harvest.
- *Chokers, High Riggers, and Whistle Punks* – A history of logging in the Tongass National Forest and the Pacific Northwest.
- *Killer Whale Culture* – A peek at the social relationships, unique dialects, and coordinated foraging strategies used by groups of killer whales (also known as orca).
- *Video Editing 101* – A workshop that’s part trivia, part hands-on learning, and part sharing, which will 100 percent come in handy to show friends highlights of the trip back at home.

With this range of experiences bringing Alaska to life, there is no better way to access one of the world’s most incredible wild destinations than on the most highly-awarded small ship cruise line in Alaska. In 2019 and 2020, Windstar offers 45 cruises and Cruise Tours ranging from 11 to 22 days, starting at \$2,199 per person. To learn more about authentic cruising with Windstar, contact a travel advisor or Windstar Cruises by phone at 1-800-258-7245, or visit [www.windstarcruises.com](http://www.windstarcruises.com).

Editor's note: for open download of images visit: <https://windstarcruises.webdamdb.com/bp/#/assets>.

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**About Windstar Cruises**

Windstar Cruises operates a six-ship fleet of masted sailing ships and all-suite motor ships cruising throughout Europe, the Caribbean, Costa Rica and the Panama Canal, Asia, Alaska and British Columbia, Canada and New England, Tahiti and the South Pacific, Mexico and U.S. Coastal cruises. Windstar's fleet is the market leader in small ship cruising with a total of 1,242 passenger berths calling on off-the-beaten-path and popular ports in nearly 80 countries. The boutique line carries less than 350 guests on each sailing and takes travelers on cruises that are 180 degrees from ordinary. Windstar is known for immersive experiences and destination authenticity, port-intensive itineraries, exceptional award-winning service, and an innovative culinary program with culinary-themed cruise as the Official Cruise Line of the James Beard Foundation. Windstar Cruises is a part of Xanterra Travel Collection, an award-winning, globally diversified travel company offering once in a lifetime experiences in some of the most beautiful and iconic places on earth.

