

BOOK #004

The Smart Traveler's Alaska Packing Guide

Chapter 1 — Understanding Alaska Weather

Packing for Alaska begins with understanding the weather. Unlike tropical cruise destinations, Alaska experiences cool temperatures, changing conditions, and occasional rain throughout the cruise season. Fortunately, summer weather is generally pleasant, and you won't need a heavy winter coat.

Most Alaska cruises operate between May and September. Daytime temperatures typically range from the mid-50s to low-70s, while mornings, evenings, and glacier viewing can feel noticeably cooler. Weather can also change quickly, so it's common to experience sunshine, clouds, light rain, and cool breezes all in the same day.

Instead of packing bulky clothing, experienced Alaska travelers rely on a layering system. Wearing several lightweight layers allows you to adjust your comfort level as temperatures change throughout the day and from one excursion to the next.

Typical Summer Conditions

- May: Cool temperatures with fewer crowds.
- June: Longer daylight hours and comfortable weather.
- July: Warmest month with peak travel season.
- August: Mild temperatures with increasing chances of rain.
- September: Cooler weather, beautiful fall colors, and fewer visitors.

Aimee's Insider Tip

After four Alaska cruises, one lesson stands out: glacier viewing is almost always cooler than the forecast for the nearest port. Keep a lightweight jacket close by, even on sunny days—you'll be glad you did.