



# Kenai Peninsula

## Includes ➔

Hope.....	220
Seward.....	223
Kenai Fjords National Park .....	231
Kenai National Wildlife Refuge .....	236
Kenai & Around ....	242
Homer .....	245
Seldovia .....	256

## Best Places to Paddle

- ➔ Sixmile Creek near Hope (p220)
- ➔ Kachemak Bay State Park (p261)
- ➔ Aialik Bay (p232)
- ➔ Kenai Fjords National Park (p231)

## Best Places to Hike

- ➔ Lost Lake Trail (p225)
- ➔ Russian Lakes Trail (p235)
- ➔ Resurrection Pass Trail (p220)
- ➔ Glacier Lake Trail (p260)
- ➔ Harding Ice Field Trail (p231)

## Why Go?

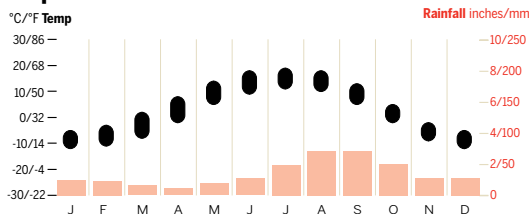
The Kenai Peninsula offers some of the most accessible wilderness adventures in Alaska. There are multiday hikes through the snow-capped Kenai Mountains and mind-blowing paddles through glaciated fjords. You'll camp on never-seen-before lost coves in remote corners of Kenai Fjords National Park and Kachemak Bay State Park, and battle some of the biggest fish around. And in every forgotten corner you'll be close to the natural world, the mountains, the lakes, the rivers and the people that make Alaska wild.

Approximately the size of Belgium, the eastern Peninsula is dominated by large ice fields, the jutting Kenai Mountains and the icy waters of Resurrection Bay. To the west it flattens out, with rolling hills, large lakes and a long coastline.

This is a top pick for first-time Alaska explorers. The wilderness is accessible by a good network of trails and navigable rivers, and there are several worthwhile towns, such as Seward, Hope and Homer that provide interesting cultural attractions and rip-roaring nightlife.

## When to Go

### Hope



**May** Beat the crowds for the best deals and excursions into the desolate wilderness.

**Jul** Hook a salmon as they jump upstream at the height of the summer season.

**Sep** The cruise crowds thin, and it's time for berry picking.

## History

For millennia, Dena'ina people made the Kenai Peninsula their home, as did Alutiiqs in the south and Chugach in the east. They largely subsisted as many modern residents do – by pulling fish from the area's bountiful waterways. In 1741 Vitus Bering, a Dane sailing for the Russians, was the first European to lay eyes on the peninsula; in 1778 British

explorer Captain James Cook sailed up the inlet that would bear his name, landing north of the present-day city of Kenai and claiming the area for England. Despite that, the first white settlement on the peninsula was Russian – St Nicholas Redoubt, founded at the mouth of the Kenai River as a fur trading post in 1791. Russian Orthodox missionaries arrived soon thereafter and many



## Kenai Peninsula Highlights

- 1** Watching whales breach as you sit in a kayak in **Kenai Fjords National Park** (p231)
- 2** Rubbing shoulders with hundreds of other anglers outside **Soldotna** (p240)
- 3** Hiking from cabin to cabin past splendiferous mountain scenes on the **Russian Lakes Trail** (p235)
- 4** Taking the train to **Seward** for a day of sightseeing on Resurrection Bay (p223)
- 5** Hiking up to one of the last remnants of the ice age, the **Harding Ice Field** (p231)
- 6** Escaping across **Kachemak Bay** (p259) for berry picking and mountain biking
- 7** Feasting on art, culture and home brews in peace-loving **Homer** (p245)
- 8** Rafting outside **Hope** (p220) before a night of waterfront bluegrass