



# GREG & LARA'S ALASKA CRUISE

Norwegian Encore • June 21-28, 2026

Seattle • Juneau • Skagway • Glacier Bay • Ketchikan • Victoria

Research Guide: [Parking](#) | [Ship & Packages](#) | [At-Sea Days](#) | [Ports](#) | [Hacks & Tips](#)

## 1. Your Booking at a Glance

<b>Cruise Line</b>	Norwegian Cruise Line
<b>Ship</b>	Norwegian Encore (Breakaway Plus class)
<b>Trip ID</b>	1015685575
<b>Cruise Confirmation</b>	64738941
<b>Dates</b>	Sunday June 21 – Sunday June 28, 2026 (7 nights)
<b>Embarkation</b>	Seattle, WA — Pier 66, Bell Street Cruise Terminal
<b>Cabin</b>	GTY Inside Stateroom, Sail Away Guarantee (IX)
<b>Travelers</b>	Gregory Clarke & Laura Caldie
<b>Package</b>	Drinks, Specialty Dining & WiFi (Free at Sea)
<b>Billed</b>	\$1,856.28 to Visa ending 1329

⚠️ *Action required: Pre-register at [ncl.com/nclweb/secure/bookedGuestLanding.html](https://ncl.com/nclweb/secure/bookedGuestLanding.html) before sailing — failure to do so could result in denied boarding.*

## Your Itinerary

<b>Day 1</b>	Sun Jun 21	<b>Embark — Seattle, WA (Pier 66)   Board from ~11am, depart ~5pm</b>
<b>Day 2</b>	Mon Jun 22	<b>At Sea — Full ship exploration day (Inside Passage)</b>
<b>Day 3</b>	Tue Jun 23	<b>Juneau, AK   ~7:00am – 4:30pm (est. 9.5 hrs)</b>
<b>Day 4</b>	Wed Jun 24	<b>Skagway, AK   ~7:00am – 8:30pm (est. 13.5 hrs — longest port day)</b>
<b>Day 5</b>	Thu Jun 25	<b>Glacier Bay   Enter park ~6:30am, scenic cruising all day, depart ~5pm</b>
<b>Day 6</b>	Fri Jun 26	<b>Ketchikan, AK   ~7:00am – 2:00pm (est. 7 hrs)</b>
<b>Day 7</b>	Sat Jun 27	<b>Victoria, BC   ~5:30pm – 11:59pm (evening call only)</b>
<b>Day 8</b>	Sun Jun 28	<b>Disembark — Seattle, WA   Dock ~7am, all off by ~9:30am</b>

## 2. Parking in Seattle


Norwegian Encore departs from Pier 66 (Bell Street Cruise Terminal), right in downtown Seattle. There's no free parking at the pier, but there are several solid options at different price points.

### On-Site: Bell Street Garage (Most Convenient)

- Operated by Republic Parking Northwest, connected to the terminal via a covered skybridge — you wheel your luggage straight across.
- Cost: ~\$33/day → ~\$231 for 7 nights. Convenient but the priciest option.
- Book in advance at [rpnw.com/cruise-parking](https://rpnw.com/cruise-parking) or via SpotHero (search 'Pier 66 parking').
- SpotHero sometimes lists this same garage slightly cheaper — always worth a quick comparison before booking direct.

### Off-Site with Shuttle (Best Value)

- Seattle CruisePark ([seattlecruiseparking.com](https://seattlecruiseparking.com)) — ~\$199 for 7 days, free shuttle every 10 minutes (~8-min ride to Pier 66). Book well ahead, especially for June peak season.
- SpotHero ([spothero.com](https://spothero.com)) — aggregates nearby lots, occasionally shows spaces from ~\$10/day. Search 'Pier 66 Seattle' for a live comparison.
- Republic Parking off-site lots — from ~\$17/day with advance online booking.

 *Tip: Take 2 minutes on SpotHero before committing anywhere — a guaranteed space removes embarkation day stress.*

### Budget Option: Park at a Light Rail Station (Free Parking)


Seattle's Link Light Rail (1 Line) connects southern suburbs directly to downtown. If you park at one of the suburban stations below, you can ride the train to within walking distance of Pier 66 — and it costs almost nothing.


#### Step-by-Step Instructions

- **STEP 1** — Drive to Angle Lake Station (International Blvd S, SeaTac WA 98188) or Tukwila International Blvd Station. Both have free surface parking lots open 24/7, no permit required. Angle Lake is the most popular for cruisers — arrive by 8:30am on boarding day as spots do fill up.
- **STEP 2** — Buy ORCA cards at the station (\$5/card, load any amount). Tap on and ride the 1 Line train toward downtown Seattle. Journey time: ~35-40 mins from Angle Lake, ~25 mins from Tukwila Intl Blvd. Trains run every 8-12 minutes.
- **STEP 3** — Exit at Westlake Station (downtown Seattle, 3rd Ave & Pine St). From here you have two options to reach Pier 66 (Bell Street Terminal), about 0.9 miles north:
  - Walk: ~18 minutes, mostly flat, manageable with rolling suitcases.
  - Rideshare: ~5 min Lyft/Uber ride, typically \$10-14. Request at street level outside Westlake Station.
- **STEP 4 (Return day)** — Ship docks around 7am. Same in reverse: Lyft/Uber or walk to Westlake Station, take the 1 Line southbound back to your car. First train is around 5am, so there's no waiting around.

#### Cost Comparison: Light Rail vs. Pier Garage

Angle Lake parking (7 nights)	FREE
ORCA cards (one-time purchase)	\$5/card × 2 = \$10 (reusable on future trips)
Light rail fare (per person, each way)	~\$3.25 = \$6.50 round trip per person
Rideshare Westlake → Pier 66 (each way, for 2)	~\$10-14 × 2 trips = ~\$20-28 total
<b>TOTAL for 2 people round trip (est.)</b>	~\$33-47 total vs. \$231 at the pier garage
<b>You save approximately</b>	~\$185 — more than a good dinner in Seattle

 *Luggage check: Light rail cars have open floor space and luggage racks, so rolling cruise suitcases are manageable. That said, if you're checking in multiple large bags, the short Uber/Lyft to the pier is worth it — don't make embarkation day more stressful than it needs to be.*

 *Pro tip: Double-check Angle Lake Station parking availability on the Sound Transit website the week before sailing. On busy summer weekends the lot fills by mid-morning. Arrive early or have the Tukwila station as your backup plan.*

## 3. Norwegian Encore — Your Ship

The Norwegian Encore is a Breakaway Plus class ship, launched in 2019. It carries ~3,900 guests and is one of NCL's most feature-rich vessels — there's genuinely enough going on that you could fill every at-sea day without repeating yourself.

#### Included Dining

- **Main dining rooms:** Taste, Savor, and The Manhattan Room — open for dinner each night, no reservation needed, no charge.
- **Garden Café** — the main buffet, open all day. Great for a quick breakfast before port and has a rotating seafood section at dinner.
- **The Local** — NCL's signature pub with burgers, wings, and fish & chips. Included, no charge, often open until late.
- **Room service continental breakfast:** Leave the door card out the night before — free, delivered to your cabin.

#### Specialty Dining — 3 Nights Included in Your Package

- **Your Free at Sea bundle** includes 3 specialty dining credits each, covering the cover charge (\$40-60/person) at NCL's premium restaurants.
- **Book these ASAP** through the NCL app as soon as online check-in opens — Teppanyaki and Ocean Blue fill up months in advance.
- **50% off any additional specialty dining** beyond your 3 included nights.

#### Pescatarian Dining — Greg's Port-to-Table Guide


Good news: the Encore has an exceptionally strong lineup for pescatarians. Here's where to focus:

#### Top Picks for Your 3 Specialty Dining Credits

- 1. **Ocean Blue** by Geoffrey Zakarian — THE pick for a pescatarian. The entire menu is built around the sea — fresh fish, shellfish, lobster, crab, and creative seafood preparations. Easily the best specialty restaurant on board for you. Use one of your 3 credits here, full stop.
- 2. **Food Republic** — Asian fusion with an excellent seafood focus: sushi rolls, lobster bao, prawn dumplings, fish dishes, and multiple non-meat mains. Creative, fun, and rarely a bad choice.
- 3. **Le Bistro (French)** or **Onda by Scarpetta (Italian)** — Le Bistro always has excellent fish preparations (sole meunière, bouillabaisse-style dishes, seared salmon). Onda has superb seafood pasta and risotto. Either makes a perfect third night.

### Free Included Options (No Credit Needed)

- **Main Dining Rooms** — the MDR menu always features a fish of the day, often Alaskan salmon or Pacific halibut — fitting for this itinerary. Seafood starters and vegetarian options are standard.
- **Garden Café (buffet)** — the dinner buffet rotates a seafood station with shrimp, smoked salmon, and fish dishes. The salad and grain bar is excellent for plant-based meals too.
- **The Local** — has fish & chips on the permanent menu. A reliable fallback for a casual included meal.
- **Teppanyaki** — ask for the seafood option (shrimp, scallops) instead of the standard meat mix when booking. The chef will accommodate it at the hibachi table.

 Before you board: add a pescatarian dietary preference to your NCL online check-in profile (under My Account > Guest Registration). The MDR staff will flag suitable dishes and proactively suggest options at your table each evening.

### Bars & Drinks (Included in Your Package)


- 22+ bars and lounges on board — all covered by your drinks package.
- **Highlights:** Sugarcane Mojito Bar, District Brew House (50+ beers on tap), The A-List Bar, Spice H2O adults-only deck area.
- Lattes, cappuccinos & espresso drinks: YES, included. The ship's Java Café and bar-side espresso machines serve full specialty coffee drinks — typically \$5-6 each, well under the \$15/drink cap in your package. Order away.
- There is no Starbucks on Norwegian Encore. The onboard coffee is genuinely solid — it's not a deprivation.
- Non-alcoholic drinks are fully included too: mocktails, juices, specialty lemonades, hot chocolate, sodas. Great for sea days.
- Tea and still water from buffet stations are always FREE regardless of your package.

### Entertainment (All Free)

- **Kinky Boots** — 6x Tony Award-winning Broadway musical featuring Cyndi Lauper's music. The hottest show on the ship. Book the moment the NCL app opens check-in.
- **The Choir of Man** — Olivier Award winner, set in a working pub. Wildly popular and emotionally fun.
- **The Cavern Club** — Beatles tribute band, usually two shows per night. Excellent atmosphere.
- **Headliners Comedy Club** — stand-up with professional touring comedians, multiple shows per sailing.
- **ICONS: The Bands** — live rock concert experience celebrating music legends.

### Activities, Thrills & Costs

- **Go-Kart Track** — The Speedway on the top deck. ~\$7-15 per session (~8 laps). Extra cost, NOT included in any package. Book ahead via the NCL app — it sells out, especially on sea days. Port day = shorter queues.
- **Lost City of Atlantis Laser Tag** — ~\$7-10 per game (~10 minutes). Extra cost, not included. A 10-minute adrenaline blast. Buy a Play Pass bundle (4 activities ~\$30) if you're planning several paid activities — saves you \$10-15 vs. paying individually.
- **Galaxy Pavilion (VR experiences)** — ~\$7-35 per experience depending on the game. Extra cost. Fun on a rainy at-sea afternoon.
- **Aqua Park** with two multi-storey waterslides — FREE and included. Open during daylight hours.
- **Mini-golf course** — ~\$5 per round, or sometimes complimentary. Check the daily onboard newsletter.
- **Fitness center and jogging track** — FREE. The gym is well-equipped with ocean views.
- **Mandara Spa & Salon** — massages, facials, body treatments (extra cost). See Section 5 for thermal suite strategy.

 Port day tip: on days when most passengers are ashore, go-karts, laser tag, and Galaxy Pavilion all have shorter queues and staff sometimes run port-day promotions (10-20% off). Ask at each venue.

## 4. Your Free at Sea Package — What's Included

You booked with NCL's Free at Sea bundle covering drinks, specialty dining, and WiFi. Here's the full detail:

### Drinks Package


- Unlimited drinks for both of you — beer, wine, spirits, cocktails, mocktails, soft drinks, juices, anywhere on the ship.
- Gratuity on the drinks package is pre-paid and included in your booking.
- Specialty coffees & lattes: fully included. The \$15/drink cap easily covers any latte, cappuccino, flat white, or espresso drink on board. There is no Starbucks — the ship's own coffee bars are the venue, and they're good.
- Tea, still water, and standard coffee from buffet stations are always free regardless of package.
- The standard package covers a solid range of spirits and wines. 'Plus' upgrade (~\$50/person/day) unlocks premium top-shelf bottles and champagne brands — typically unnecessary unless you have specific brand preferences.

### Specialty Dining — 3 Nights Included

- For a 7-night sailing you receive 3 specialty dining credits per person, covering the cover charge (\$40-60/person) at premium restaurants: Ocean Blue, Cagney's Steakhouse, Le Bistro, Teppanyaki, Food Republic, Onda by Scarpetta, Los Lobos, and more.
- Book your preferred restaurants via the NCL app as soon as check-in opens — popular spots fill up far in advance.
- 50% off any additional specialty dining nights beyond your 3 included.

### WiFi — 150 Minutes Per Person

- You each get 150 minutes of WiFi (300 total between you). Norwegian Encore uses Starlink satellite, so speeds are genuinely usable — far better than older cruise ships.
- Log out when you're not actively using it to avoid burning minutes idle.
- Use free port WiFi aggressively in each town — most Alaska ports have public WiFi, especially near the dock areas. This is your biggest free hack.
- WhatsApp, messaging, and email are low-bandwidth and stretch your minutes well. Save video calls for ports.
- Unlimited streaming WiFi is available as an upgrade if you need it.

 Check your NCL booking on [ncl.com](https://www.ncl.com) — some Free at Sea promotions include a \$50 shore excursion credit per port. Worth confirming before booking anything independently.

## 5. The Thermal Suite — Is It Worth It?


The Thermal Suite is inside Mandara Spa — an adults-only, exclusive relaxation space that's worlds quieter than the main pool deck. Think heated stone loungers, saunas, steam rooms, hydrotherapy pools, and panoramic ocean views.

### What's Inside

- Heated stone and plush loungers with ocean views
- Hydrotherapy / vitality pools
- Steam rooms and Finnish dry saunas
- Generally uncrowded compared to public ship areas

### The Cost

<b>7-day pass</b>	~\$339/person (standard pre-booking price)
<b>Embarkation day deal</b>	Often ~\$250/person if you ask the spa desk on Day 1
<b>Day 2 deal</b>	Sometimes as low as \$199/person — prices can drop if passes are unsold
<b>Single day pass</b>	~\$69/person
<b>2-day pass</b>	~\$109/person

 Strategy: Don't pre-book. Head straight to Mandara Spa on embarkation day (before the muster drill) and ask: 'What's your best price on a full-voyage thermal suite pass?' Day 1 deals are real and common. If you're not happy with the quote, politely decline and say you'll think about it — Day 2 prices can drop further as unsold passes go soft.

### Verdict for Your Alaska Trip


- Strongly recommended for Alaska: you have Glacier Bay (a full scenic day where deck time is cold), one sea day, and multiple port days with cool/rainy conditions.
- If you use it on the sea day, Glacier Bay day, and one or two port mornings/evenings, the per-session cost works out very reasonably at the embarkation-day price.
- Alternatively: buy a 2-day pass and save it for the sea day and Glacier Bay day — two of the most 'lounge-worthy' days of the trip.

## 6. At-Sea Day — June 22 (Day 2)

Day 2 is your first full day at sea as the ship heads north toward Juneau through the Inside Passage. This is the day to discover the ship, lock in shows and dining reservations, and set the tone for the whole week. Here are two very different approaches:

<b>SCENARIO A — The Full Send (Adventure Day)</b>	
<b>7:00am</b>	Early breakfast at Garden Café — grab a good window seat for the Inside Passage views. Order a latte on your drinks package.
<b>8:30am</b>	Head to Mandara Spa. Secure a thermal suite deal before the masses find it. Buy a 2-day or full-voyage pass.
<b>9:30am</b>	Aqua Park waterslides open. Hit both slides while the queues are still short.
<b>11:00am</b>	Go-kart session at The Speedway (\$7-15/person). Book at the venue or NCL app — slot fills fast. The views from the rooftop track with Alaska mountains ahead are ridiculous.
<b>12:30pm</b>	Lunch at The Local pub (included). Try the fish & chips.
<b>2:00pm</b>	Laser tag at Lost City of Atlantis (\$7-10/person). Or try Galaxy Pavilion VR if you want something wilder.
<b>3:30pm</b>	Relax at Spice H2O (adults-only deck). Drinks included. Watch the Pacific coast scroll by.
<b>5:00pm</b>	Pre-dinner cocktails at Sugarcane Mojito Bar. Also a good time to check app for any remaining show bookings.
<b>6:30pm</b>	Specialty dinner — use Credit 1. Ocean Blue (seafood) or Teppanyaki. Book 6:30pm to give yourself time before the show.
<b>8:30pm</b>	Kinky Boots or The Choir of Man show (pre-booked). Best theatrical experience on the ship.
<b>10:30pm</b>	Howl at the Moon dueling pianos bar for a nightcap. It gets raucous. Drinks included.

<b>SCENARIO B — The Slow Roll (Spa &amp; Indulgence Day)</b>	
<b>8:30am</b>	Continental breakfast via room service (free — hang the door card out the night before). Eat in bed watching Alaska scenery from your phone's ship tracker.
<b>10:00am</b>	Thermal suite — spend 2-3 hours here. Alternate between the heated loungers, hydrotherapy pool, and steam room. Genuinely transformative.
<b>12:30pm</b>	Brunch at Garden Café. Load up on the seafood station and salad bar. Get a flat white from the coffee bar on your drinks package.
<b>2:00pm</b>	The Observation Lounge at the bow — the most scenic room on the ship. Big windows facing forward, comfortable chairs, cocktail service. Often nearly empty on sea days.
<b>3:30pm</b>	Afternoon trivia or game show on the pool deck (check the daily Freestyle Daily newsletter). Fun, free, and social.
<b>5:00pm</b>	Afternoon cocktails at the District Brew House. Try one of their 50+ beers or a local-style craft option.
<b>6:00pm</b>	Get dressed up. This is the night to use your fanciest specialty restaurant reservation.
<b>7:00pm</b>	Specialty dinner — Le Bistro (French, perfect for pescatarians) or Onda by Scarpetta (Italian seafood pasta). Order the fish. Linger.
<b>9:30pm</b>	The Choir of Man show — a pub musical that genuinely surprises people. Very popular. Go in with low expectations and leave delighted.
<b>11:00pm</b>	Headliners Comedy Club late show. Touring stand-up comedians. A perfect end to the day.

 Check the Freestyle Daily: NCL's daily newsletter is slipped under your cabin door each evening for the following day. It lists every activity, show time, and special event. Read it the night before and plan your day over breakfast.



## 7. Ports of Call — Full Guide

### Port Towns at a Glance

Quick orientation before diving into excursion details for each port:

<b>Juneau (Day 3, Tue)</b>	Alaska capital, no roads in, lush rainforest + dramatic peaks	Steep Creek bear & salmon viewing, State Capitol	58-63°F / 14-17°C. Overcast, often drizzly. Layers + waterproof.
<b>Skagway (Day 4, Wed)</b>	Frozen-in-time Gold Rush town, entire downtown is a National Park	Klondike Gold Rush Historic Park ranger tour	60-65°F / 15-18°C. Often sunnier. Best weather of the itinerary.
<b>Glacier Bay (Day 5, Thu)</b>	UNESCO wilderness, no shore visit — scenic sailing all day	Bow deck viewing + Park Ranger commentary (free)	45-55°F / 7-13°C. Dress warmly, even if sunny.
<b>Ketchikan (Day 6, Fri)</b>	Salmon capital, totem poles, rainforest clinging to the hillside	Creek Street Boardwalk + Ketchikan Creek salmon	55-60°F / 13-15°C. Wettest US city — pack rain gear.
<b>Victoria (Day 7, Sat)</b>	British colonial charm, elegant inner harbour, Parliament Buildings	Inner Harbour evening walk + Parliament lights	65-70°F / 18-21°C. Pleasant evening temps. Evening arrival.

Key principle: booking excursions independently (Viator, GetYourGuide, or local operators) typically saves 30-50% vs. the same tour through NCL. The only caveat — if you book independently and the tour runs late, the ship won't wait for you. Don't cut it tight.

 Green = Free / Low-cost  Orange = Paid excursion All prices approximate per person.

### Day 3 — Juneau, AK (Tuesday, Jun 23) | ~7:00am – 4:30pm (est. 9.5 hrs)

What to expect: Juneau is Alaska's state capital but has no road connections to the outside world — it's only accessible by sea or air, giving it a pleasantly island-like feel. Ships dock along the waterfront with downtown a short stroll away. Expect lush rainforest, steep mountains rising directly behind the city, and reliably excellent wildlife sightings. Weather is mild (upper 50s-low 60s°F) but often overcast and drizzly — dress in layers with a waterproof layer.

★ *If you do one thing in Juneau: Book the Whale Watching Tour. Humpback sightings are essentially guaranteed in June — it's one of the most reliable whale watching spots on earth. Book directly with a local operator (not the ship) to save \$40–60pp.*

⚠ *New in 2026: Juneau has capped daily cruise passenger numbers. Pre-booking popular excursions (especially whale watching and Mendenhall shuttles) is essential — don't plan to wing it on arrival.*

● <b>Free</b>	Walk downtown Juneau	<b>Free</b>	Compact, charming. Red Dog Saloon, shops, waterfront — all walkable from the ship.
● <b>Free</b>	Alaska State Capitol Building	<b>Free</b>	Self-guided tours on weekdays — historical murals, legislative chambers, governor's office.
● <b>Free</b>	Mayor Bill Overstreet Park & Whale Fountain	<b>Free</b>	Life-size bronze humpback whale sculpture leaping from a water feature. Downtown.
● <b>Free</b>	Steep Creek salmon & bear viewing	<b>Free</b>	Near Mendenhall Glacier. Salmon run the creek in summer and bears are often spotted close by — a genuine standout moment.
● <b>Free</b>	St. Nicholas Orthodox Church (1893)	<b>Free (donations welcome)</b>	One of Alaska's oldest buildings, iconic gold dome. A 5-minute walk from downtown.
● <b>Low Cost</b>	Mount Roberts Tramway	<b>~\$35/person</b>	Rises 1,800ft above the waterfront. Panoramic views of Chilkat Range and Gastineau Channel. Cultural center and live eagle at the top.
● <b>Paid</b>	Mendenhall Glacier Shuttle	<b>~\$45/person</b>	Shuttle from cruise terminal, 30-min narrated ride, 2 hrs self-guided at the glacier. <b>BOOK AHEAD</b> — sells out. Nugget Falls trail is the highlight.
● <b>Paid</b>	Whale Watching Tour (3-3.5 hrs)	<b>~\$154-189/person</b>	The #1 thing to do in Juneau. Book via Viator or Juneau Whale Watch directly. Humpback sightings are extremely reliable in June. Save \$40-60pp vs. ship price.
● <b>Paid</b>	Mendenhall Glacier + Whale Watching Combo	<b>~\$199/person</b>	Combines both in one day. Efficient use of limited port time. Available via local operators.
● <b>Splurge</b>	Helicopter + Glacier Landing	<b>~\$350-500/person</b>	Land on a glacier and walk on ice. Jaw-dropping. Book very early, limited spots.
🍷 <b>Food</b>	Tracy's King Crab Shack	<b>\$30-60/person</b>	Legendary. Expect a queue but worth every minute. Crab legs, bisque, drawn butter. Right on the waterfront. Perfect for pescatarians.

#### Day 4 — Skagway, AK (Wednesday, Jun 24) | ~7:00am – 8:30pm (est. 13.5 hrs — longest port day)

★ *If you do one thing in Skagway: Ride the White Pass & Yukon Route Railway to the Summit. It's a narrow-gauge railway through jaw-dropping mountain wilderness built by Gold Rush workers in 1898. Sells out months ahead — book now at wpyr.com.*

What to expect: Skagway is one of the most atmospheric ports on any Alaska cruise. The entire downtown is a US National Historic Landmark — the preserved Gold Rush-era buildings are the real deal. Ships dock right in the heart of town, and it's one of the longest port calls on this itinerary (often 10-14 hours), so you have plenty of time. The mountains surrounding the town are dramatic and snow-capped even in June.

● <b>Free</b>	Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park	<b>Free</b>	The historic district IS the park. Free walking tour maps at the Visitor Center. Excellent ranger-led tours.
● <b>Free</b>	Skagway Historic Downtown Walk	<b>Free</b>	Broadway Street is lined with 1890s buildings. Arctic Brotherhood Hall (elaborate driftwood facade), Jewell Gardens, and the Corrington Museum all walkable.
● <b>Free</b>	Lower Dewey Lake Trail hike	<b>Free</b>	Easy 1.5-mile round trip from downtown through rainforest to a peaceful lake with harbour views. Allow ~45 mins.
● <b>Top Pick</b>	White Pass & Yukon Route Railway — Summit Excursion	<b>~\$120-155/person</b>	THE iconic Skagway experience. 2.75-hr return train ride on a narrow-gauge railway through stunning mountain scenery to the Canadian border. Sells out months ahead — book now at wpyr.com or Viator.
● <b>Paid</b>	Skagway Street Car Tour	<b>~\$50/person</b>	2-hr guided tour in a restored vintage car with guides in period costume. Great way to hear Gold Rush stories.
● <b>Paid</b>	Liarsville Gold Rush Camp	<b>~\$50-70/person</b>	Campfire, salmon bake, storytelling, and gold panning demos. Fun and relaxed.
● <b>Splurge</b>	Dog Sledding Camp (helicopter)	<b>~\$450-550/person</b>	Fly to a mountain glacier camp to meet huskies and ride a wheeled sled. Very popular — book early.
● <b>Paid</b>	Biking the Klondike Highway (downhill)	<b>~\$75-100/person</b>	Guided downhill bike ride from the Summit back into town. Stunning views, all downhill.
🍷 <b>Food</b>	Red Onion Saloon (built 1897)	<b>\$15-30</b>	One of Skagway's most beloved bars. Former brothel, full of history and character.
🍷 <b>Food</b>	Skagway Brewing Company	<b>\$15-30</b>	Locally brewed beer and pub fare. Famous spruce tip blonde ale. Good salmon dishes for pescatarians.

#### Day 5 — Glacier Bay (Thursday, Jun 25) | Enter ~6:30am, depart ~5pm — Scenic Cruising

★ *If you do one thing in Glacier Bay: Be at the bow when the ship reaches Margerie Glacier. Set an alarm, skip a slow breakfast if needed — the moment the ship turns and faces a wall of ancient ice is one of the great experiences of this itinerary. You can always warm up in the Thermal Suite afterwards.*

What to expect: This is not a port stop — the entire day is spent sailing through Glacier Bay National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the most spectacular wilderness areas on earth. No going ashore; the experience is standing on deck (or watching from the warm indoors) as the ship glides past towering glaciers, calving icebergs, and dramatic mountain wilderness. Only one cruise ship per day is permitted to enter the park. The ship makes a slow 360-degree turn at the main glaciers for full viewing from every angle.

● <b>Included</b>	National Park Rangers on board	<b>Included</b>	Rangers board at Bartlett Cove, provide commentary over the PA all day, hand out free maps, answer questions.
● <b>Included</b>	Margerie Glacier viewing	<b>Included</b>	The grand finale — the ship positions at the face of Margerie Glacier, a massive tidewater glacier that regularly calves huge chunks of ice into the bay. Spectacular.
● <b>Included</b>	Lamplugh & Johns Hopkins Glaciers	<b>Included</b>	Multiple glaciers throughout the day. Lamplugh has brilliant blue ice. Johns Hopkins Inlet is home to Steller sea lions.
● <b>Included</b>	Wildlife spotting on deck	<b>Included</b>	Humpback whales, orcas, harbour seals, sea otters, mountain goats, brown and black bears, bald eagles. Ship announces sightings on PA.
💡 <b>Tip</b>	Bow deck for best views	<b>Free</b>	Get to the bow (front of the ship) early — it fills up fast. Best unobstructed views. Dress very warmly even if it looks sunny.
💡 <b>Tip</b>	Hot chocolate service on deck	<b>Included</b>	The crew often serves hot chocolate on the bow on Glacier Bay day. Use your drinks package or it may be complimentary.
💡 <b>Tip</b>	Thermal Suite retreat	<b>See Section 5</b>	Perfect day to use the thermal suite — warm up after time on the cold deck, with heated loungers and panoramic ocean windows.

🔔 **Wake up early!** The ship typically enters Glacier Bay in the morning. Have breakfast by 7am and head to the bow. The first few hours inside the park are often the most dramatic. Bring a real camera if you have one.

## Day 6 — Ketchikan, AK (Friday, Jun 26) | ~7:00am – 2:00pm (est. 7 hrs)

★ **If you do one thing in Ketchikan:** Walk Creek Street, then cross the bridge to Married Man's Trail and watch salmon fighting their way upstream. It's free, it's five minutes from the ship, and it's genuinely unforgettable. Combine with a stop at Tracy's-style seafood nearby before you reboard.

What to expect: Ketchikan calls itself the 'Salmon Capital of the World' and sits at the foot of a steep hillside covered in lush rainforest, with the town clinging to the waterfront on stilts. The ship docks right downtown and most attractions are walkable. Ketchikan is the wettest city in the US (annual average 160 inches of rain), so waterproof clothing is especially worthwhile here. June is relatively drier, but always bring a layer.


📌 **Note:** Some larger ships dock at Ward Cove, a few miles from downtown, requiring a shuttle. Norwegian Encore typically uses the downtown docks — confirm on embarkation day.









● <b>Free</b>	Creek Street Boardwalk	<b>Free</b>	The most photographed spot in Ketchikan. Historic boardwalk over Ketchikan Creek, once home to the town's brothels. Charming shops, galleries, and salmon visible in the creek below.
● <b>Free</b>	Waterfront Promenade	<b>Free</b>	Boardwalk along the harbour with views of the city and access to Harbor View Park.
● <b>Free</b>	Self-guided historic walking tour	<b>Free</b>	The Ketchikan Historical Society provides a free walking tour map near the docks.
● <b>Low Cost</b>	Southeast Alaska Discovery Center	<b>\$5 adult / kids free</b>	Excellent small museum with a recreated temperate rainforest and cultural exhibits. Spotting scope for mountain goat viewing.
● <b>Low Cost</b>	Dolly's House Museum (Creek Street)	<b>~\$5</b>	The famous green 'dollhouse' — preserved 1919 brothel with antiques, photos, and a bootleg whiskey trapdoor. Fun and atmospheric.
● <b>Top Pick</b>	Saxman Native Village & Totem Park tour	<b>~\$50-80/person</b>	World's largest collection of standing totem poles. Guided tours include Tlingit cultural performance and carving demo. Book via local operators, not the ship.
● <b>Paid</b>	Great Alaskan Lumberjack Show	<b>~\$37 adult / \$18.50 child</b>	Hour-long pro lumberjack competition — log rolling, axe throwing, pole climbing. Touristy but genuinely fun, right next to the docks.
● <b>Paid</b>	Rainforest Canopy Zipline	<b>~\$150-180/person</b>	7-line zipline through the Tongass National Forest canopy. Great for adventure lovers.
● <b>Splurge</b>	Misty Fjords Flightseeing	<b>~\$250-350/person</b>	Floatplane over Misty Fjords National Monument — sheer cliffs, waterfalls, fjords. Absolutely spectacular. Weather dependent. Book early.
● <b>Paid</b>	Deer Mountain Tribal Hatchery & Eagle Center	<b>~\$20/person</b>	See live bald eagles up close and learn about Ketchikan's salmon culture. Short walk from downtown.
🍴 <b>Food</b>	Alaska Fish House	<b>\$20-35</b>	Waterfront seafood restaurant. Excellent for pescatarians — fresh halibut, salmon chowder, Dungeness crab. Right on the dock.

## Day 7 — Victoria, BC (Saturday, Jun 27) | ~5:30pm – 11:59pm (evening call only)

★ **If you do one thing in Victoria:** Walk the Inner Harbour at dusk. The Parliament Buildings light up around 9pm and the harbour is breathtaking in the evening. Grab fish & chips from Red Fish Blue Fish on the water, then stroll past the Empress Hotel as the lights come on. Perfect for a last night.

What to expect: Victoria is a beautiful, elegant city with a strong British colonial character — afternoon tea, formal gardens, grand Victorian architecture, and a spectacular inner harbour. Important caveat: Norwegian Encore typically arrives in Victoria in the late afternoon (often 5-7pm) and departs in the evening or late night. This means you're exploring Victoria largely at dusk and evening — which is actually lovely, as the Parliament Buildings are lit up and the harbour is atmospheric at night. But it does limit longer daytime excursions like Butchart Gardens.

 Check your exact arrival time in Victoria once confirmed — this is typically a short evening call. Plan for the walkable Inner Harbour rather than far-out excursions.

 Free	Inner Harbour walk	Free	The centrepiece of Victoria. Parliament Buildings, Fairmont Empress Hotel, street performers, harbour views — all right here. Breathtaking in the evening when Parliament is lit up.
 Free	Government Street stroll	Free	Victoria's main shopping street — boutiques, Rogers Chocolates, Murchie's Tea, Munro's Books. Shops often stay open late when cruise ships are in town.
 Free	Beacon Hill Park	Free	Beautiful park overlooking the Strait of Juan de Fuca with Olympic Peninsula mountain views. About 20 mins walk from the harbour.
 Free	Chinatown & Fan Tan Alley	Free	Canada's oldest Chinatown. Fan Tan Alley is the narrowest street in Canada — atmospheric and easy to walk from the harbour.
 Low Cost	Harbour Ferry hop	~\$7-10 CAD/hop	Tiny water taxis zip around the inner harbour. A fun way to see it from the water.
 Paid	Hop-On Hop-Off Bus Tour	~\$40-50 CAD/person	Stops at 15 attractions including right outside Ogden Point cruise terminal. Good if you want to cover more ground in limited time.
 Paid	Butchart Gardens	~\$40 CAD entry + transport	World-famous botanical gardens. About 30 mins from downtown. The evening illumination is beautiful if you arrive at dusk — only viable if the ship arrives early enough.
 Paid	Afternoon Tea at the Empress Hotel	~\$100-120 CAD/person	Iconic Victoria experience. Book well in advance. Better suited to an early arrival — confirm port times first.
 Food	Red Fish Blue Fish (on the harbour)	\$18-25 CAD	Beloved local institution in a shipping container on the harbour. Fantastic Pacific halibut fish & chips. Perfect pescatarian dinner.
 Food	The Nautical Noodle or local sushi	\$20-35 CAD	Victoria has excellent sushi and Pacific Rim seafood — look for spots on the harbour or just off Government Street.

## 8. Unethical Hacks & Power User Moves

Everything in this section is within NCL policy and completely legal — the cruise line just doesn't advertise it. Use these with zero guilt.

### On Board: Drinks & Dining

- **Port Day MDR magic:** On days when most passengers are ashore, the Main Dining Rooms run at 20-30% capacity for dinner. You get your best table, attentive service, zero wait, and staff who aren't rushed. One of the genuinely best dining experiences of the cruise happens on port evenings.
- **Pre-dinner bar trick at specialty restaurants:** Arrive 30-45 minutes early and ask to sit at the restaurant bar while waiting for your table. You're not 'seated' yet, so your dining credit hasn't started. Enjoy complimentary bread, amuse bouche, and drinks package cocktails before the credit clock begins.
- **Teppanyaki seafood sub:** When booking Teppanyaki, call or note in the reservation that one guest is pescatarian. The chef will substitute shrimp and scallops for the steak and chicken portions at no extra charge — actually often the better choice.

### Activities: Get More, Spend Less

- **Port day activity discounts:** Go-karts, laser tag, and Galaxy Pavilion VR all run with shorter queues on port days (when 60% of passengers are ashore). Staff at these venues sometimes run port-day promotions — up to 20% off. Ask at each venue before paying.
- **Play Pass bundle:** If you're doing 3+ paid activities (go-karts, laser tag, VR), ask for a multi-activity 'Play Pass' bundle. Typically 4 experiences for ~\$30, vs. paying ~\$10-15 each individually. Not always advertised — ask specifically.
- **Fitness centre sauna:** The main fitness centre has a basic sauna included for free with gym access. It's not the thermal suite, but it's free. Good for a quick warm-up before port on cool Alaska mornings.
- **Observation Lounge sunrise hack:** The bow Observation Lounge is the best forward-facing room on the ship. Very few passengers are there before 8am. On the Glacier Bay day, stake it out early with a coffee — the panoramic view of glaciers coming into view is arguably the single best moment of the trip, and you'll have it nearly to yourself.

### WiFi: Stretch 300 Minutes into What Feels Like Unlimited

- **Port WiFi is your biggest hack:** in Juneau, Skagway, Ketchikan, and Victoria, free or cheap public WiFi is available near the cruise docks. Disconnect from the ship's network the moment you step ashore and use port WiFi for everything — messages, maps, social media, calls. Don't touch your ship minutes until you're back on board.
- **Offline download before sailing:** Download offline maps (Google Maps, Maps.me) for each port before you leave Seattle. Download any playlists or podcasts. Removes 90% of your wifi need entirely.
- **WhatsApp voice notes instead of calls:** Voice notes use a fraction of the bandwidth of a voice or video call. Save your 150 minutes for actual browsing needs rather than burning them on FaceTime.

### Money & Perks

- **Thermal suite Day 1 negotiation:** Head to Mandara Spa within the first hour on board. Quote them the online price and ask what they can do. Spa staff have discretion to offer Day 1 promotions. If you're not happy, say you'll sleep on it — they often reduce

further on Day 2 as unsold passes become a problem.

- **Captain's Reception:** Usually held on Day 2 or 3, this is an open event despite occasionally feeling like an invite-only thing. Ask Guest Services on Day 1 when and where it is. Good canapes and a chance to meet the officers.
- **Art auctions:** The Park West art auctions run on sea days — no obligation to bid, but they're an easy way to kill an hour and see some interesting work. A/C is a bonus.
- **NCL Shareholder perk:** Own 100+ shares of Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings (NCLH) and submit the shareholder benefit form before sailing — you receive \$50-\$250 onboard credit per voyage. At current NCLH prices, a 100-share position is inexpensive. Not financial advice, but worth knowing.
- **Shore excursion credit check:** Ask Guest Services on Day 1 to confirm whether your Free at Sea promotion included any shore excursion credit. Some NCL promotions add \$50 per port — easy to overlook in the booking confirmation fine print.
- **CruiseNext certificates:** Before disembarking, consider buying a CruiseNext certificate at the desk on board (\$250 purchase = onboard credit on your next NCL booking). Good value if you think you'll cruise NCL again. They often run 2-for-1 deals on the last sea day.

## At Each Port

- **Free maps at the gangway:** NCL staff hand out port maps at the bottom of the gangway. These include walking distances, free activity highlights, and a time check for all-aboard. Grab one every single port day.
- **Shorter port excursion wait times:** The cruise ship delivers 3,900 passengers to tiny towns like Skagway (population ~900). The first 90 minutes after docking, every venue is slammed. Head ashore immediately with a plan, or wait 90 minutes and walk into an emptied town.
- **Leave port just before all-aboard:** The reverse applies — most passengers rush back 30-60 mins before all-aboard. Head back 20-25 minutes before the listed time and avoid the dock stampede. (Do NOT cut it under 20 minutes — the ship will leave without you.)

## 9. Discounts, Perks & Insider Tips

### Before You Board

- Pre-register online NOW at: [ncl.com/nclweb/secure/bookedGuestLanding.html](http://ncl.com/nclweb/secure/bookedGuestLanding.html) — required before sailing.
- Download the NCL app — book specialty dining, entertainment, and manage your onboard account.
- Book specialty dining (Ocean Blue, Teppanyaki) and shows (Kinky Boots) ASAP — they fill up months in advance.
- Add a pescatarian dietary preference to your guest profile in the NCL app/website before boarding.
- Link a credit card to your onboard account through the app before sailing to skip the front desk queue.

### On Embarkation Day

- Complete online check-in and have your eDocs ready on your phone — dramatically speeds up boarding.
- Head straight to Mandara Spa for a thermal suite Day 1 deal before the crowds find it.
- Book any remaining specialty dining or entertainment at the venues or through the app as you explore.
- Embarkation day is often the most relaxed meal at the buffet — explore and find your favourites before it gets busy.

### Saving Money On Board

- Continental breakfast via room service is free — hang the card on your door the night before.
- Coffee, tea, and water from buffet stations are always free whether you have the drinks package or not.
- Go-karts and Galaxy Pavilion on port days = shorter queues and sometimes port-day discounts.
- Check the Freestyle Daily newsletter each evening — it lists any special events, free tastings, and promotions for the next day.

### After Your Cruise — Latitudes Rewards

- After this sailing you'll be enrolled in NCL's Latitudes Rewards at Bronze tier, earning 1 point per night sailed.
- Higher tiers unlock priority boarding, free specialty dining, and discounts — every NCL sailing builds toward them.
- CruiseNext certificates: buy one on board for \$250 and receive onboard credit on your next NCL sailing.

### The NCL Shareholder Perk

- Own 100+ shares of **Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings (NCLH)** and you qualify for \$50-\$250 onboard credit per sailing. A niche but genuine perk — see Section 8 for details.

## 10. Packing List

Alaska in June is not typical summer weather. The key principle: layers. Temperatures range from 45°F (7°C) on cool port mornings to 65°F (18°C) on sunny afternoons. Ketchikan averages rain 300+ days per year. Pack light, but pack smart.

### Documents & Money

- Passport (valid 6+ months beyond Jun 28, 2026) — required even though this is a US departure roundtrip; you'll need it in Victoria, BC
- NCL booking confirmation / eDocs (printed or phone screenshot)
- Photo ID (driver's license)
- Travel insurance info + emergency contact card
- Credit/debit card for onboard account + port purchases
- Small amount of USD cash for tips and small port purchases
- \$10-15 CAD cash for Victoria (some harbour vendors prefer it, though USD is widely accepted)

### Clothing: The Alaska Layering System

The golden formula: moisture-wicking base layer + mid fleece/down + waterproof outer shell. You'll add or remove layers throughout the day. One day can go from 45°F on deck at 7am to 62°F in town at noon.

- Waterproof jacket (non-negotiable — Ketchikan in particular; Gore-Tex or similar)
- Waterproof pants or at least water-resistant hiking pants (deck on Glacier Bay day can be wet and cold)
- Fleece or down mid-layer (zip-up preferred — easy on/off)
- Moisture-wicking base layer tops (2-3) — merino wool or synthetic
- Regular t-shirts / casual tops for warm port afternoons and ship days (3-4)
- One smart-casual outfit for specialty dining (no formal night on NCL, but Ocean Blue and Teppanyaki suggest smart casual)
- Jeans or casual trousers (2 pairs)
- Comfortable shorts (1-2 pairs for sunny warmer days)
- Swimsuit / swim trunks (2 — for the pool, aqua park, hot tubs; wet suits need to dry)
- Underwear & socks (enough for the trip + 1 extra day)
- Warm hat / beanie (essential for Glacier Bay bow deck)
- Gloves or lightweight liner gloves (Glacier Bay bow can be surprisingly cold even in June)
- Sunglasses (glacier reflection is intense; UV protection important)
- Lightweight scarf or neck gaiter
- Sleepwear / loungewear for the cabin

### Footwear

- Waterproof walking shoes or light hiking boots (your most-used item — prioritise these)
- Comfortable casual shoes or sneakers for ship days and nicer port strolls
- Flip flops or sandals for the pool deck, spa, and cabin
- Optional: trail runners if doing the Skagway Klondike hike

### Electronics & Entertainment

- Phone + charger
- Portable power bank — port days can be all-day away from outlets
- Camera + extra batteries / memory cards (Glacier Bay will push your storage limit)
- Binoculars (1 pair minimum — transformative for Glacier Bay whale watching and wildlife spotting from deck; borrow if you can, or buy a cheap pair)
- Universal travel adapter if needed (standard US outlets on board)
- Earbuds / headphones
- Kindle, book, or offline entertainment for sea days

### Health, Hygiene & Comfort

- Seasickness medication (Dramamine, Bonine, or prescription patch) — the Inside Passage can get choppy, especially near the open ocean sections
- Sunscreen SPF 50+ (deceptive sun reflection off water and snow)


- Lip balm with SPF
- Insect repellent (useful for rainforest port excursions in Ketchikan and Juneau)
- Personal medications (7+ days supply, keep in carry-on)
- Basic first aid: blister plasters (blisters happen fast on Skagway cobblestones), ibuprofen, antacids
- Hand sanitiser (cruise ship habit, and useful ashore)
- Small day pack / packable backpack for port days
- Reusable water bottle (free water at buffet stations; saves money at ports)


## NCL-Specific Packing Tips

- Power strip (without surge protector — surge protectors are prohibited; a basic multi-outlet strip is fine). Norwegian cabins have limited outlets.
- Magnetic hooks or over-door organiser: cabin walls are magnetic — hooks are great for coats and bags in tight cabin space.
- Highlighter or pen for marking the Freestyle Daily newsletter each evening.
- Zip-lock bags: waterproof your passport and phone for rainy port days and whale watching boat trips.
- Laundry: Norwegian Encore has no self-service laundry — it's send-out valet only. Drop items off by 9am for next-day return (~\$2-\$20/item). For a 7-night trip, pack enough to avoid it or plan one send-out mid-week.
- Binoculars: genuinely worth it. Essential for Glacier Bay (spotting bears, seals, and calving ice from the deck), and useful at every port for wildlife. A compact travel pair is fine.

## Leave at Home

- Formal wear (NCL Freestyle — no black tie nights, no formal dress code)
- Hair dryer (provided in all cabins)
- Full-size toiletries (small sizes for the trip; ship provides shampoo/conditioner/soap)
- Dangerous: surge protectors, candles, irons (prohibited; ship provides irons on request)

 *Alaska weather tip: Check the 10-day forecast for each port in the week before departure. June 2026 conditions will obviously vary — but the layering system above handles the full range. The one thing to never skip: the waterproof jacket. You will need it.*

 *Have an incredible trip! Alaska from a cruise ship is one of the most spectacular journeys in the world — the combination of Glacier Bay, the wildlife, the charming historic ports, and knowing you have lattes covered by your package is genuinely hard to beat. Pack your waterproofs, book your shows early, and enjoy every moment.*