

Wilderness Island Tours, LLC Elevates Icy Strait Hoonah Bear Viewing Tour with Safe Distances, and On-Tour Learning

Wilderness Island Tours enhances Icy Strait Hoonah Bear Viewing Tour with responsible stops, safe distances, and cultural-ecological education.

HOONAH, AK, UNITED STATES, August 20, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Wilderness Island Tours, LLC](#)

“

Our tours give guests a chance to experience bears in their natural setting while respecting the land, wildlife, and traditions that make Icy Strait so special.”

Owner

announced enhancements to its Icy Strait Hoonah Bear Viewing Tour, reinforcing a sustainability-first approach that balances unforgettable guest experiences with long-term wildlife and habitat protection on Chichagof Island. The locally owned company — operated by Alaska Natives of the Tlingit tribe — has refined route design, instituted minimal-impact viewing stops, and expanded on-tour learning to help visitors understand the ecology, culture, and safety practices that shape responsible wildlife viewing in Icy Strait/Hoonah.

To request information or reserve a time for the enhanced Icy Strait Hoonah Bear Viewing Tour, visit <https://wildernessislandtours.com/>. Early inquiries are encouraged for peak dates.

News highlights

- Sustainable route planning prioritizes existing roads and established pullouts to reduce habitat disturbance.
- Designated, minimal-impact stops and wildlife-safe viewing distances center on animal welfare and guest safety.
- Education-forward guiding adds natural history, Tlingit cultural interpretation, and safety briefings throughout the tour.
- Timed 2 to 3-hour land-based shore excursions align with cruise port calls at Icy Strait Point.
- Locally operated by lifelong Hoonah residents with 28+ years of tour experience and a punctual return-to-ship record.

Commitment to sustainable wildlife viewing

Chichagof Island is known for exceptionally high densities of coastal brown bears on the northern ABC Islands of Southeast Alaska. In response to growing interest in bear viewing, Wilderness Island Tours has formalized practices that limit off-road travel, emphasize existing pullouts, and maintain conservative wildlife approach distances so animals can continue natural behaviors without crowding or stress. These measures reflect best practices encouraged by wildlife managers in Southeast Alaska.

“Guests come to see bears in a way that feels authentic and respectful,” said a Wilderness Island Tours spokesperson. “Our enhanced Icy Strait Hoonah Bear Viewing Tour uses route design, guide training, and on-tour education to protect bears — and the visitor experience — for years to come.”

Education-first guiding with local insight

Guides are lifelong residents who share observations about seasonal bear behavior, salmon runs, eagle activity, and rainforest ecology, alongside Tlingit history and lifeways. Short, frequent briefings cover etiquette for wildlife encounters, photography from a distance, and how to help keep bears wild. Depending on conditions and time, guides may also highlight native plants and, in season, identify areas where guests can see wild berries from designated roadside locations.

Responsible stops and wildlife-safe distances

Tour leaders select established, minimal-impact stops and follow an “observe, don’t intrude” standard. Vans pull entirely off-road in permitted areas; guides position guests to avoid line-of-travel blockages and minimize time on the ground. Viewing distances are maintained to prioritize animal welfare and safety. While wildlife sightings are often frequent during peak periods, the company underscores that animals are unpredictable and bear sightings cannot be guaranteed.

Tour logistics are designed around guest safety and ship schedules

- Duration: 2 to 3 hours, aligned to cruise schedules.
- Pickup/Drop-off: Pickup at the Icy Strait Excursion Hub; drop-off at the Icy Strait Front Gate.
- Staging: Vans are staged 30 minutes before departure; multiple van options available.
- Operations: Daily service 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. during the operating season.
- Reliability: The operator notes a record of punctual ship returns across 28+ years of excursions.
- Policies: Hoonah tours require at least 24 hours’ notice; a staggered-refund cancellation policy applies.

Wilderness Island Tours underscores its position as the only land-based tour company originating from Icy Strait Hoonah that offers shore excursions for cruise guests. The focus on small-group, road-based wildlife viewing keeps trips efficient, comfortable, and well-matched to

port-call windows while limiting environmental footprint.

Community and conservation context

Biologists frequently cite Chichagof Island and the ABC Islands region (Admiralty, Baranof, and Chichagof Islands) for significant brown bear populations. Responsible viewing helps protect habitat use patterns while providing economic benefits that remain in Hoonah through locally owned operations, jobs, and services. Wilderness Island Tours' sustainability measures — from route planning to education — align with growing traveler demand for ethical wildlife experiences that respect animals and culture.

For background on Southeast Alaska brown bears and viewing considerations, see resources from state wildlife managers. According to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the ABC Islands support robust coastal brown bear populations and emphasize adherence to safe viewing practices and distance guidelines to keep bears wild and people safe.

About Wilderness Island Tours, LLC

Serving Icy Strait/Hoonah, Alaska, Wilderness Island Tours, LLC specializes in land-based, small-group wildlife excursions on Chichagof Island. The locally owned operator — led by Alaska Natives of the Tlingit tribe — offers competitively priced tours with breathtaking views, cultural interpretation, and plenty of photography opportunities. With 28+ years of experience and a track record of punctual ship returns, the team pairs guest safety with sustainable practices and on-tour learning.

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