

Toms Skagway, Haines Alaska Cruise Port Guide Part 3 of 3



Eagle at the Chilkat River

Part 1 of the Skagway Guide covers a walking tour to all major attractions in, and near, Skagway City.

Part 2 of the Skagway Guide covers a White Pass train to Fraser, a bus tour to Emerald Lake, Caribou Crossing Trading Post, Carcross Native Village, and information on car rental touring from Skagway.

Part 3 of the Skagway, Haines Guide covers a walking tour of Haines, the ferry from Skagway to Haines, and a jet boat tour of Chilkat River in the Bald Eagle Preserve.

Toms Skagway, Haines Alaska Cruise Port Guide Part 3 of 3

1) Fast Ferry between Haines & Skagway, 2) Walking tour of Haines City, 3) Jet boat tour of Chilkat River in the Bald Eagle Preserve, 4) Rental car and shuttle bus independent touring.

Comparison of Skagway Vs. Haines: They're both excellent, but there are significant differences.

The development of Skagway was influenced by two factors:

1. Skagway is the “perfect” location for the northernmost, ice-free, deep water port in North America. Today, it serves as a year round transportation hub between Alaska, the Yukon Territory, Northwest Territories, Asia, and Europe.
2. Skagway port was the “gateway” for the gold rush. The large city of Skagway was quickly built to handle the influx of tens of thousands of stampeders. The White Pass train was built to solve the problem of crossing the mountains to Canada.

Today, Skagway has docks for four large cruise ships and a large city densely packed with historic buildings that house shops, saloons, restaurants, museums, etc. You can walk the city and/or use Smart Bus in the city. Popular tours outside the city are the White Pass train through the mountains to Canada and bus or rental car tours between Skagway and the Yukon Territory in Canada.

The development of Haines was influenced by two factors:

1. It's “a nature lover's paradise” with beautiful mountains, valleys, lush rain forests, lakes, and rivers with abundant wildlife including whales, seals, sea lions, otters, porcupines, fox, moose, bears, herons, swans, many types of fish, and the largest collection of bald eagles in the world.
2. The Tlingit Indians recognized the unique value and migrated to Haines. Hence, their culture, art and craftsmanship are preserved in Haines at art galleries, museums, culture centers, and crafts shops.

Today, Haines is an important cruise and vacation destination. It's the Adventure Capital of Alaska where visitors enjoy a unique experience that memories are made of. People travel from all over the world to see and photograph the wildlife via hiking tours with guides, bus, bike, ATV, boat, kayak, raft, and other vehicles. You can enjoy fly fishing, whale watching, visit the bald eagle preserve with the most bald eagles in the world, etc. Extreme sports are also available such as skiing down from the top of the mountains.

Visitors can enjoy the rich local art and experience the region's powerful Native Tlingit culture at art galleries and museums in the city and the Jilkaat Kwaan Cultural Heritage & Bald Eagle Preserve Visitor Center. On the first Friday of each month, shops along the main street in Haines and galleries throughout the city are open to showcase and sell art and crafts products.

Haines is a small city with a dock for one cruise ship. The major tourist activities in Haines are:

1. Walking tours of the city to the art galleries and crafts shops to see craftsmen at work, visit the museums and historic buildings, shopping, restaurants, breweries, etc., and
2. Guided tours outside the city to see and photograph as many as 15 types of wildlife.
3. You can rent a car in Haines to tour the area or use the Haines Shuttle to points throughout the city and tourist sites or hiking trails outside the city.

Travel between Skagway and Haines

It's not practical to drive between Skagway and Haines. The tourist website notes that it's a 353 mile drive around the mountains between Skagway and Haines. Use the Fast Ferry between Skagway and Haines.

The ferry season is ~ May 1 to Sep 30. The ferry takes 45 minutes. The “typical” schedule:

The ferry departs Skagway ~ 8 am and arrives Haines ~ 8:45 am

The ferry departs Haines ~ 1 pm and arrives Skagway ~ 1:45 pm

On some days, there's also an afternoon ferry departing Haines ~ 6:45 pm, arriving Skagway ~ 7:30pm

The adult price is \$37 One Way and \$72 Round Trip

See <http://www.hainesskagwayfastferry.com/> for schedules and details on the fast ferry

Best Source of Information on Haines and the surrounding area

For details on the history of Haines, a walking tour to every site in the city, and a detailed description of all the things to see and do in the area, download the Haines Vacation Guide pdf file.

The link is <http://www.visithaines.com/virtualguide/2017%20Haines%20Vacation%20Guide.pdf>

The official website www.VisitHaines.com is OUTSTANDING. I strongly recommend you study this website because it covers everything you need to know to choose and plan your excursion for your priorities.

The screenshot shows the top of the HAINES Alaska website. The header has a dark background with the text "HAINES Alaska" in white. Below the header is a navigation bar with links: Home, What To Do, Where to Stay, Where To Eat, Getting Here, About Haines, Events, and Contact Us. The main content area features a large background image of a red kayak on a body of water with snow-capped mountains in the background. A red-bordered box with a white background contains two numbered instructions: "1) See www.VisitHaines.com for information about Haines, what to do, events, etc." and "2) Click on the link as shown below to see an outstanding video on the area, activities, tours, etc." Below this box is a video player titled "Welcome to Haines" showing a play button icon. A red arrow points from a text box to the play button. The text box contains the instruction: "Click here to see a very informative video introduction to Haines, what there is to see and do in Haines and the surrounding area, and an explanation of why Haines is the 'Adventure Capital of Alaska'."

Table of Contents

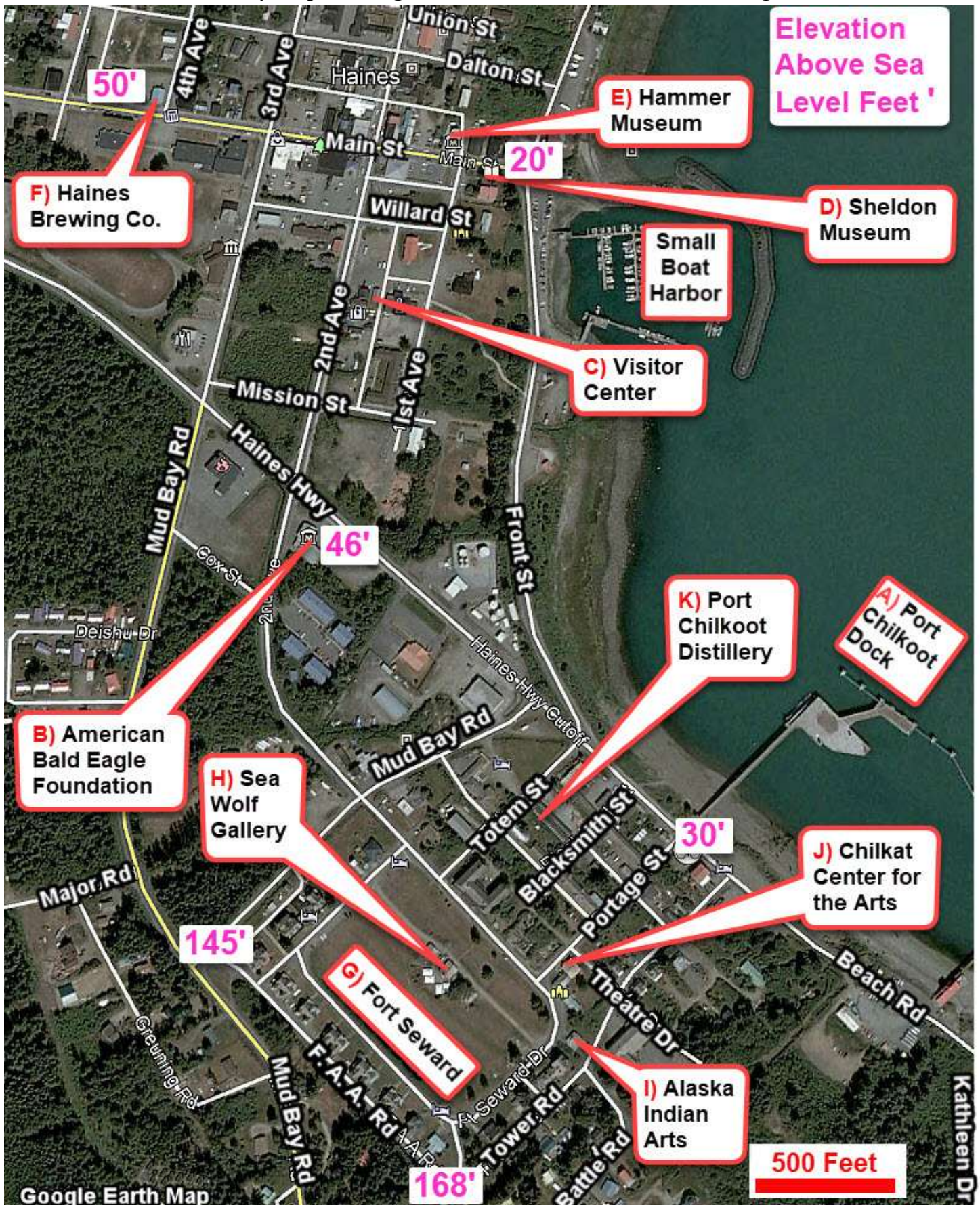
Subject	Pages
Haines city map showing Port Chilkoot Dock, museums, Fort Seward, and points of interest in the city	3
GPS Coordinates, Port Chilkoot Dock, American Bald Eagle Foundation, Haines Visitor Center	4
Sheldon Museum, Hammer Museum, Haines Brewing Co., Fort Seward, Sea Wolf Gallery, Alaska Indian Arts	5
Chilkat Center for the Arts, Port Chilkoot Distillery, restaurants near Fort Seward	6
Haines Shuttle, Avis Rental Car, Jilkaat Kwaan Cultural Heritage & Bald Eagle Preserve Visitor Center	7
Map showing our Jet Boat Tour of Chilkat River in the Bald Eagle Preserve	8
Map showing the Fast Ferry Catamaran dock in Skagway, description of our Princess jet boat excursion	9
Photos of Fast Ferry ride from Skagway to Haines	10-11
Photos of jet boat tour on Chilkat River, gorgeous scenery, bear, eagles nest, eagle in tree	12-15
My once in a lifetime photos of an eagle soaring above the jet boat dock	16-18
User Feedback, Copyright Notice, Terms and Conditions for use of Toms Port Guides	19

CAVEAT

Information contained herein is believed to be accurate. PLEASE verify the information you use for your travel plans. Opinions expressed are my own. This port guide is protected by copyright law - see the last page of this guide for legal notices.

Tom Sheridan

Haines City Map Showing Points of Interest to Plan Your Walking Tour



The Haines Map on the previous page shows elevation above sea level to show where you will be walking up/down a hill. At Beach Rd and Portage St near the dock, the elevation is **30 feet above sea level**. At the intersection of Tower Rd and F. A. A. Rd near Fort Seward, the elevation is **168 feet above sea level**. Walking from the dock to the fort has an elevation change of $168 - 30 = 138$ feet. That's like climbing a 14-story building. Fort Seward is on the only hill in this section of the city. The rest of the city is relatively flat.

GPS Coordinates

GPS coordinates are a powerful tool to find tourist sites on Google maps and to see street-level photos. I include GPS coordinates for important locations for use with Google/Bing maps and GPS enabled devices. The format for GPS coordinates is Degrees, Minutes, and Seconds
ddd° mm' ss.ss" N ddd° mm' ss.ss" W

Copy and paste GPS coordinates from this guide into Google or Microsoft Bing maps

Or type GPS coordinate numbers and periods into the map search box replacing the symbols for degrees, minutes, and seconds with spaces.

**The Haines Cruise Ship Dock at Port Chilkoot has
GPS coordinates = 59°13'45.9"N 135°26'08.8"W**

Type **59 13 45.9 n 135 26 08.8 w** to find the Haines Dock on Google or Bing maps

For more information on how to use GPS coordinates:

See my Map User Guide at <https://www.tomsportguides.com/map-user-guide.html>

See my World Satellite Map and GPS <https://www.tomsportguides.com/world-gps-maps.html>

A) Port Chilkoot Dock GPS = 59°13'45.9"N 135°26'08.8"W

Cruise ships and the fast ferry (between Skagway and Haines) use this dock. If more than one cruise ship arrives in Haines, the second ship will have to tender passengers ashore.

There are two walking areas in the city:

1. To the north around Sheldon Museum and Main St: This is where you will find most of the shops, restaurants, and stores selling art and crafts products. On the first Friday of the month, the streets will be lined with artwork and crafts products for sale on Main St and on 1st and 2nd St.
2. To the southwest in the area around Historic Fort Sheldon: This area has several art galleries.

I assume you want to walk both areas of the city and have arranged this discussion accordingly.

From Portage St. and Beach Rd., walk northwest along Haines Hwy to the Bald Eagle Foundation.

B) American Bald Eagle Foundation 113 Haines Hwy at 2nd Ave GPS = 59°13'52.2"N 135°26'46.0"W

Our raptor center is home to twelve avian ambassadors, and the natural history museum has over 200 specimens on display. Plan on ~ 1 hour to tour the museum.

Check the website <https://baldeagles.org/> for special events such as a guided photography tour to the bald eagle preserve in Chilkat and for museum open hours. "Typical" open hours are 10-3pm Admission is \$ 10 Adult, \$ 8 Senior & Military, The Raptor Center is \$ 5 extra

Continue walking north on 2nd Ave, cross Mission St. The visitor center is the log cabin on your right.

C) Visitor Center 122 2nd Ave Photo below left GPS = 59°14'00.8"N 135°26'44.6"W



Stop at the Visitor Center to get maps for the city walking tour, hiking trails, information on current activities in the city, learn about Haines, the Inside Passage, Greater Alaska, and the Yukon.

In this photo, the Presbyterian Church is across the parking lot

on 1st St. There is a bell in front of the church that was cast in 1880 when there was a mission at that site.

Cross the parking lot to the church and turn left on 1st Ave. Walk to main street. This is the area in the city that has many shops selling art and crafts.

D) Sheldon Museum and Cultural Center 11 Main St GPS = 59°14'04.9"N 135°26'38.5"W

<http://www.sheldonmuseum.org/>

Exhibits describe the Chilkat Valley, the art and culture of the Tlingit people from pioneer days, through the gold rush, the Dalton Trail and life at Fort William H. Seward. It's an excellent place to purchase local and Alaskan books and art.

Summer Hours: Mon-Fri: 10am-5pm Sat-Sun: 1pm-4pm Extended hours on cruise ship days.

Winter Hours: Mon-Sat: 1-4pm

Admission \$ 7

E) Hammer Museum 108 Main St GPS = 59°14'05.7"N 135°26'39.0"W

<http://www.hampermuseum.org/>

Check out the 2,000 hammers on display. Stroll through the exhibits and learn about the history of human ingenuity, from the practicality of those meant for the maritime trade to hammers in ancient times used to craft the perfect sugar cube to win a woman's hand. This museum is unique.

May – September Monday – Friday 10:00am to 5:00pm Saturday 10:00am to 2:00pm

Admission is \$5 for adults

If you are going to Haines Brewing continue west on Main St.

F) Haines Brewing Company 327 Main St GPS = 59°14'07.4"N 135°26'59.8"W

<http://hainesbrewing.com/>

Fresh seasonal and flagship brews are on tap, and during the right season we also offer vintage ales to savor in snifter glasses. Alaska brewery laws allow patrons to consume 36 oz/person/day on premise, and purchase beer to go by the liter or half gallon growler.

Walk back to 2nd Ave and head south to Fort Seward or you can walk along the harbor to the Port Dock.

G) Fort William H. Seward National Historic Landmark

<https://www.nps.gov/places/fort-william-h-seward.htm>

Established by Executive Order on December 31, 1898, and first known as Haines Mission, Fort Seward was the last of 11 military posts established in Alaska during the territory's gold rushes between 1897 and 1904.

The purpose was to preserve law and order among the gold seekers. The fort also provided a U.S. military presence in Alaska during boundary disputes with Canada. It was the only active military post in Alaska between 1925 and 1940. The fort was closed at the end of World War II.

Many of the buildings have been converted to bed and breakfasts, hotels, and inns. The area is clean and colorful with a large parade ground with excellent views down the hill to the harbor.

Take a self-guided tour, stopping at the new interpretive signs, to learn history of the area and buildings. Visit the tribal house in the middle of the Parade Grounds showcasing totem poles and panels.

H) Sea Wolf Gallery GPS = 59°13'36.9"N 135°26'35.2"W <http://www.tresham.com/>

Tresham Gregg describes himself as a multi-medium mystic or fantasy artist. He works in a number of mediums - woodcarving is his specialty, plus silk screen printing, painting, metal sculpture, talismanic jewelry, and puppet making.

I) Alaska Indian Arts 13 Ft Seward Dr GPS = 59°13'34.7"N 135°26'29.7"W

<http://www.alaskaindianarts.com/>

At Alaska Indian Arts, totem poles, masks, and jewelry are created in the Tlingit style. Meet the Native artists and watch them practice their skills of totem carving, silkscreen and silver carving. Products for sale include carvings, silkscreens and books.

Hours Summer: Mo-Fr, 9am-5pm and by request Admission \$2 per person for large tours, otherwise free.

J) Chilkat Center for the Arts 1 Theater Drive GPS = 59°13'37.0"N 135°26'26.1"W

A popular multi-purpose facility available for

- Live drama, dance, music performances and workshops;
- Film showings, radio and television production,
- Conferences, conventions, retreats,
- Community gatherings, weddings, funerals, parties
- Fitness classes, and more.

See <http://www.chilkatcenter.org/> for the schedule of events.

K) Port Chilkoot Distillery 34 Blacksmith St GPS = 59°13'41.9"N 135°26'30.9"W

Sip the local award-winning distilled spirits (vodka, gin, moonshine, whiskey, bourbon, absinthe) at Port Chilkoot Distillery tasting room. Local harvested herbs, fruits, and wild plants go into the handcrafting of small batches of whiskey, vodka, gin, and other spirits reflecting the unique flavor of Southeast Alaska. Tours, tastings, gourmet cocktails with local ingredients and gifts. 907-766-3434 | www.portchilkootdistillery.com

There are excellent restaurants near Fort Seward as shown on the map below

1) Mosey's Mexican Cantina, 2) Fireweed, and 3) Hotel Halsingland Commander's Room fine dining.



The Fort is the most scenic and historic part of Haines.

Popular overnight accommodations are:

- Hotel Haslingland
- Ft. Seward Bed and Breakfast (located at the top of the hill on "Officer's Row").
- If you're looking for a more do-it-yourself living situation, the Fort Seward Condos located in the former officer's quarters of the Fort providing guests with all the comforts of home.

Haines Shuttle

There is a shuttle service in Haines that connects the cruise ship/fast ferry dock with several points of interest in the area <https://www.hainesshuttle.com/>

Email: hainesshuttle@gmail.com

Text: 907-314-0042

Call: 907-766-3768

Our main function is to provide transportation between the Alaska Marine Highway System (AMHS) ferry terminal and downtown. For the summer we will meet every ferry arriving from Juneau whether or not we have had a call. We might not meet all the ones arriving from Skagway. If you need the shuttle and one is not already there, call or text us, or have the terminal call. If you need a pick-up in town to go to the ferry terminal, call or text.

One Way: A ride into town or from town to the terminal costs \$10 per person. For a group the first two are \$10 each, then \$5 each for additional members. Little kids are free.

Day Trip: If you come from Juneau and are returning the same day the price into town is the same, and the return to the terminal is half-price.

Quick Town Trip: If you want to get into town and then right back to your ferry to continue to the next port the cost is \$10 for the round trip. Little kids are still free, but there is no group discount.

With every trip into town we give a quick tour. If you are in hurry we can skip the tour. If everybody on the ride has time to spare we'll do a longer tour.

Car Rental in Haines

<https://www.avis.com/en/locations/us/ak/haines/h84>

Avis rents cars at Hotel Halsingland (H84) in Fort Seward

Address: 13 Fort Seward Drive, Hotel Halsingland, Haines, AK, 99827, U S A

Phone: (1) 907-766-2733 Hours of Operation: Sun - Sat 8:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Jilkaat Kwaan Cultural Heritage & Bald Eagle Preserve Visitor Center

GPS = 59°23'55.2"N 135°53'41.5"W If you rent a car, consider driving 22 miles up Haines Highway to the village of Klukwan. See the map on the next page. www.jilkaatkwaanheritagecenter.org | (907) 767-5485

Experience the early legends, culture, and art of the Chilkat Tlingit at the Heritage and Cultural Center. It's a must-see destination unveiling the coveted Whale House art. Enter a replica of the traditional tribal Whale House with panels and totems, some several hundred years old, and considered some of most admired works of Northwest Coast Art in the world.

Open May through September 15th Monday-Friday: 10AM-4PM – Saturday: 12PM-3PM - Sunday: Closed

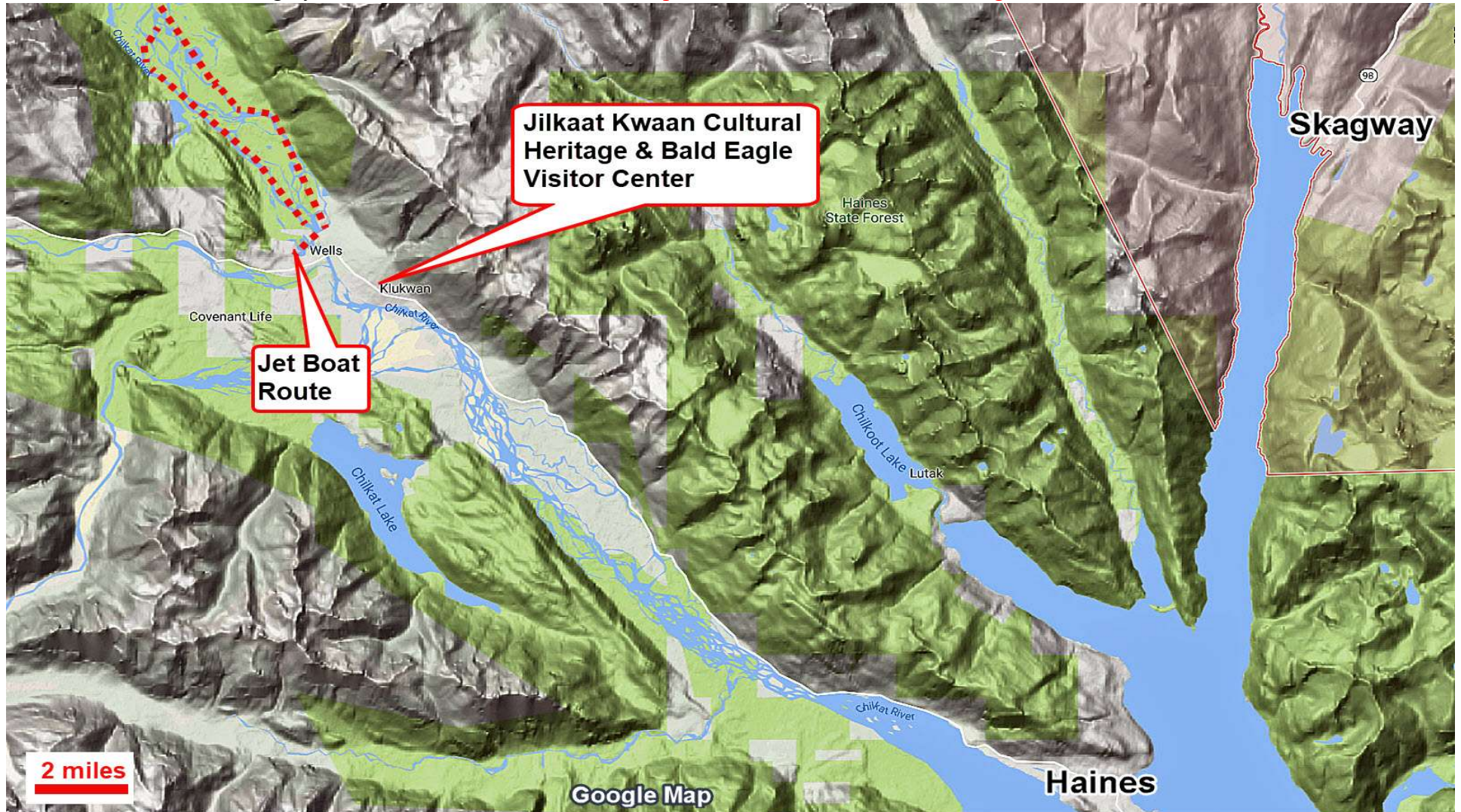
Self-Guided tour \$15/adult, \$7.50/Child, Military \$12.50 Senior \$12.50 Guided tours are available at higher prices. **Check the website to Plan your visit.**

Shuttle Destinations



Jet Boat Tour of Chilkat River in the Bald Eagle Preserve

Our cruise ship was docked in Skagway. Our tour included a 45 minute scenic ride in the Fast Ferry catamaran from Skagway through the fjord to Haines Chilkoot Port Dock. We boarded a bus and enjoyed a narrative about life in Haines from a charming young woman, school teacher. It was a 45 minute ride to **Chilkat River Adventures** <https://www.jetboat.alaska.com/> After lunch, we were provided with warm outer clothing, a hat, blanket, gloves etc. to protect us during the jet boat ride through the bald eagle preserve. We saw eagles, several grizzly bears, and enjoyed scenic views of the river, forest, and mountains. The jet boat ride was ~ 1.5 hours. Total round-trip time from Skagway was ~ 6.25 hours. My wife and I loved the tour and would highly recommend it. **Our tour did not stop at Jilkaat Kwaan Cultural Heritage Center.**



Map showing the Fast Ferry Catamaran dock in Skagway at the marina next to the Railroad Dock.



From Congress Way near the Security Gate, walk along the Marina to the Catamaran. GPS = **59°26'57.1"N 135°19'18.3"W**

We took the Princess Excursion SGY-700 | Skagway, Alaska \$ 210/person, 6.25 hours

Board a high-speed catamaran for a scenic 45-minute cruise along North America's longest and deepest fjord to Haines. Along the way, you'll witness spectacular views of waterfalls, ice-sculpted peaks and glaciers. Keep an eye out for wildlife.

Take a 30-minute bus ride on the Haines Scenic Byway into the heart of the Chilkat Bald Eagle Preserve. Where the road ends, the real Alaska begins and so does your adventure. Board a jet boat and part company with civilization. The boat will traverse many different channels on the Chilkat River traveling at least 20 miles into the wilderness. The open-topped boat allows you to view and photograph the majestic scenery and animals seen in an unhindered fashion. Warm outerwear and blankets will be provided. View bald eagles and their massive nests in their natural habitat. The preserve has the best moose habitat in the valley. Although there are no guarantees, chances of spotting moose and bears are very good.

The Fast Ferry Rachel Marie Catamaran is a large, comfortable boat.



Leaving the Skagway Dock. It was a beautiful day on June 3, 2017.



View of the Mountains behind Haines City



The ferry boat ride is through a beautiful fjord with snow covered mountains along the route. I took all my photos from the outside, upper deck for unobstructed views. We passed a waterfall (photo at left).

You're supposed to keep an eye out for wildlife during the boat ride for marine life e.g. whales and seals and eagles near the shore. We didn't see any wildlife.

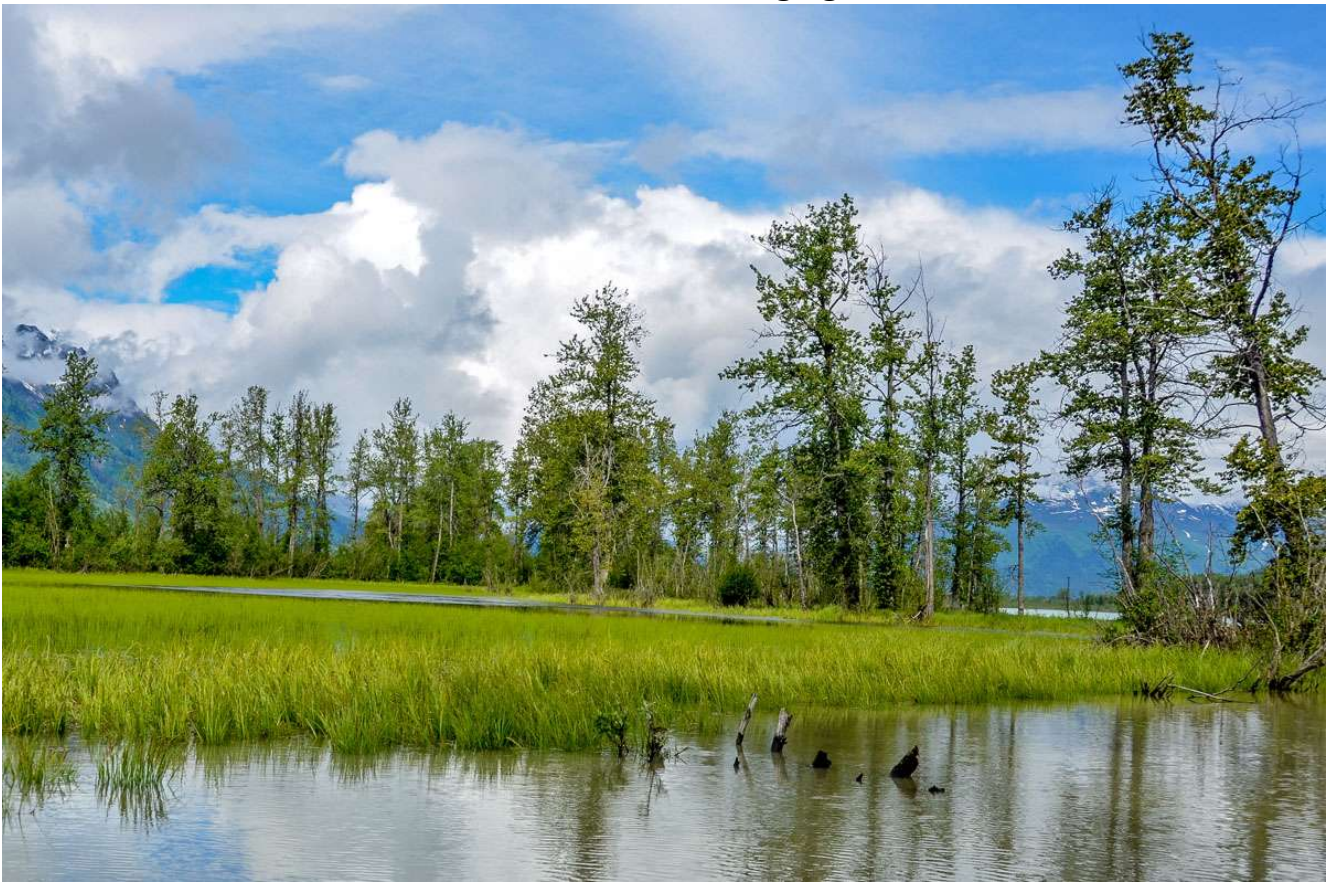
The photo below is a view of Haines city from the Haines Dock.



The captain of our jet boat is one of our nation's finest. He's a retired Coast Guard Captain. The jet boat has two 150 hp outboard engines and is capable of impressive speed through the river. It's a comfortable ride.



The Chilkat River area is gorgeous.



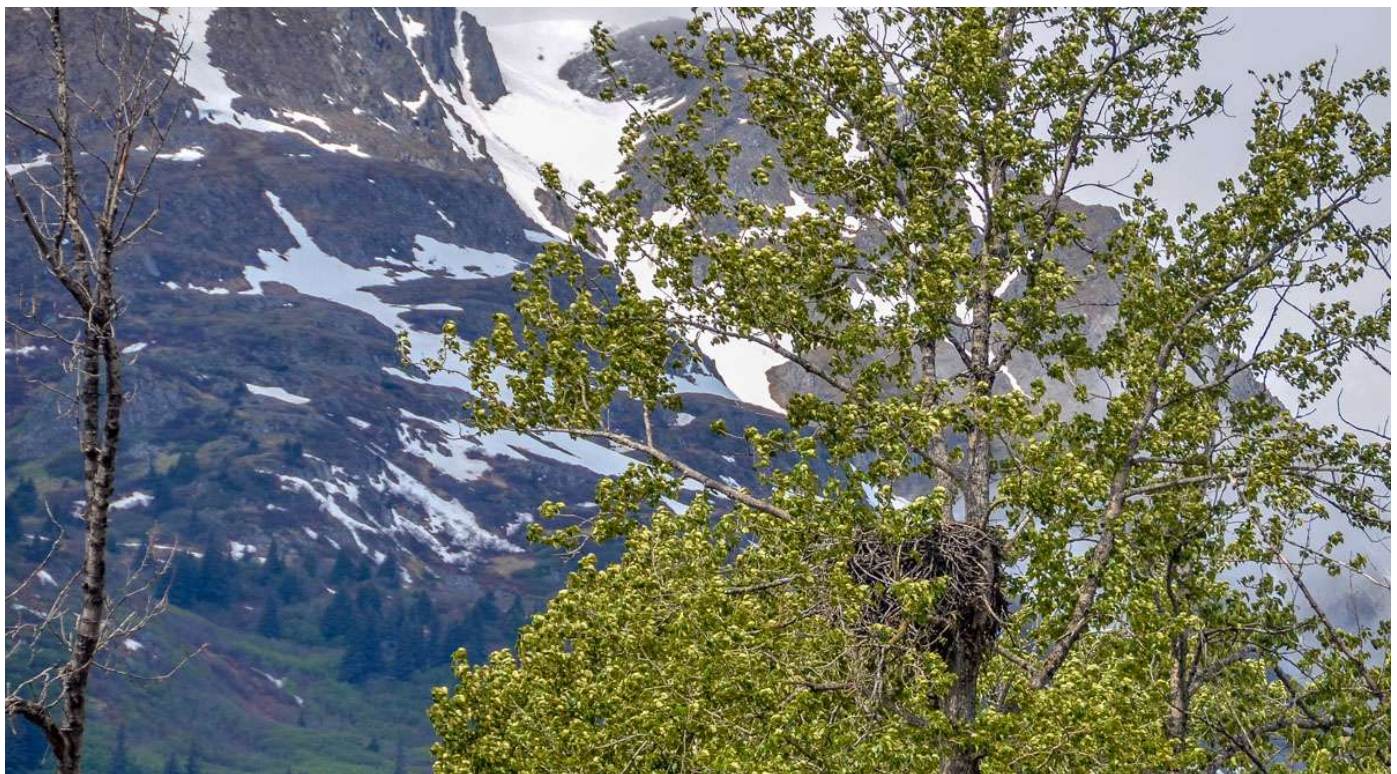
We saw three bears. They ran into the woods. Then, the largest one came back. It was unafraid of us in the jet boat close to the shore. This is a huge animal. Fortunately, it ignored us.



We saw a bald eagle in a tree. It ignored us.



Bald eagles build huge nests in the trees.



Feeding the eagle near the dock.

Inject air into a dead fish and throw it in the river. The fish will float giving the eagle time to snatch it up in it's claws and fly away with it.

At least that's the theory. Our eagle wouldn't cooperate. It flew from the tree to look at each fish that was thrown in the river, but ignored all the fish.

That was OK with me. I got my, once in a lifetime photos of an eagle in flight.







I can't say enough about our Fast Ferry from Skagway to Haines and the jet boat tour of the Chilkat River. For me, it was a photo opportunity of a lifetime. This was the first time I was close to bears in the wild and eagles in flight in a gorgeous area of the river with forests and snow covered mountains in the background. The jet boat ride was fantastic!

Checkout the photos and video at **Chilkat River Adventures** <https://www.jetboat.alaska.com/>
This is god's country!!



User Feedback Is Welcome

Goal

My guides are designed to help you plan a great cruise vacation by providing information such as where the ship docks, location of tourist sites, public transit, walking tour maps, things to see and do, travel issues unique to the port, etc. Knowledge of ports is important when planning shore excursions because you have to make many decisions and commitments long before your ship docks. I believe the information in this guide is accurate, however you are responsible to verify accuracy of the information that you use to plan your vacation. Information on cruise ports frequently changes such as bus routes, admission fees to sites, rental car locations, etc. Cruise Critic is the best source for up-to-date, detailed information on travel details for shore excursions, reviews of cruise ships, etc. There are many knowledgeable people on Cruise Critic who are willing to share their expertise and travel experience. I highly recommend www.CruiseCritic.com; it's free to join.

Why feedback is important

User feedback helps me make corrections and improve the format and content in my quest to produce the “ultimate” port guides. I welcome offers to collaborate with me or provide materials for use in my guides.

PLEASE Help “spread the word” about my website

The only negative feedback I get is, “I wish I knew about your port guides before my vacation”. Please tell your friends and post a reference to my guides and website on the blogs. To receive email notification when new guides are available, send your email address to me at TomsPortGuides@gmail.com

Copyright Notice & Terms and Conditions for Use of My Guides

My port guides and everything on my website www.TomsPortGuides.com is copyrighted by Thomas Sheridan with all rights reserved, and protected by international copyright laws.

PERMITTED USE: Personal, non-commercial use of my port guides and/or material from my website.

I allow individuals to take my guides apart for personal, non-commercial use. Many cruisers carry a map or a few pages from my guide on a shore excursion. That's OK. I also allow people to post my guides on websites they set up for fellow travelers to share information on shore excursions such as the websites set up by Cruise Critic members for the Roll Calls. That's OK. My guides are for use and enjoyment of individual travelers.

PROHIBITED USE of my port guides and/or material from my website.

NO person, company, organization, website, etc. is permitted to use material from my website for a commercial purpose, to sell, require a membership to download my port guides, or use any of my copyrighted material for a commercial purpose.

NO person, company, organization, website, etc. is permitted to distribute excerpts from my guides or material from my website as electronic, digital, or paper copies. My Port Guides must be kept intact, as downloaded from my website, with this copyright notice.

NO Cruise Ship employee, representative, contractor, port lecturer, etc. is permitted to distribute excerpts from my guides or material from my website as electronic, digital or paper copies. My Port Guides must be kept intact, as downloaded from my website, with this copyright notice.

A blatant example of violation of my copyright was a cruise ship docked in Copenhagen where the shore excursion desk personnel removed maps from my guide, removed my name as the copyright owner, and copied/distributed my maps.

Fortunately, a friend of mine on that ship complained to the purser and the ship stopped violating my copyright.

If there is any question about use of my guides, contact me at TomsPortGuides@Gmail.com

Tom Sheridan