

DENALI | MCKINLEY EXPEDITION

ALASKA | 7 SUMMIT PEAK: NORTH AMERICA | 20,310', 6190M



CLIMB MCKINLEY WITH IMG DENALI

Whether you call it Denali or McKinley, it's the tallest mountain in North America and one of the most coveted of the fabled Seven Summits. In 2025, IMG Denali, LLC (IMGD) will conduct five scheduled expeditions via the West Buttress Route. If a custom expedition would better suit your needs, we offer Custom Programs for private teams of one or more climbers. Please reach out to us directly for further details.

Our leaders were among the first to guide on McKinley over four decades ago. Today, our guides continue the IMG legacy and culture of respect for the mountain, climber safety, and great customer service. Unlike many of our competitors, IMGD conducts McKinley expeditions at a stronger guide ratio of 1 guide per 2 climbers with a maximum of 8 climbers led by 4 guides. This 2:1 ratio provides our teams with significantly higher levels of experience, flexibility and customer support.

We provide personal consultation throughout the planning stages of your expedition. IMGD was created with the philosophy that a personal touch and attention to detail is integral to any successful expedition and especially one as challenging as McKinley.

THE CLIMB

McKinley is one of the most physically demanding climbs in the world. On McKinley there are no porters, yaks or donkeys to help carry our loads. As an IMGD team member, you will carry all personal equipment and your share of the group gear, food, and fuel. Climbers generally begin the expedition with about 120 pounds per person split between your sled and your backpack. To manage that weight, climbers must be in excellent physical condition.

There is no easy way "off" the expedition once it begins. The Park Service only allows helicopter rescues for truly life-threatening emergencies. Once we head up, we are committed. Be prepared for the tough conditions ahead. We recommend that climbers participate in an Expedition Prep Seminar to better anticipate and appreciate the demands and equipment necessary for their McKinley journey.

DATES & PRICES

McKinley West Buttress Route 2025 Expedition \$12,450

Team 1: May 12-June 2
Team 2: May 16-June 6
Team 3: May 20-June 10
Team 4: May 24-June 14
Team 5: May 28-June 18

[Contact us](#) for custom program availability and pricing

PREREQUISITES

Previous mountaineering experience is required! See full list of requirements [here](#).

QUICK LINKS

[Program Itinerary](#)

[Gear List](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)

REGISTER

- [IMGD MCKINLEY Application](#)
- Application Fee \$2000

FEE SCHEDULE

Non-refundable application fee is due at registration and applies to program fees. **Next installment of additional \$2000 is due 180 days prior to departure; final balance of remaining fees are due 120 days prior to trip departure.** Program fees are quoted in US dollars. All fees and payments are non-refundable and non-transferable. Payments are collected by ACH only through our online registration system. Price shown applies to scheduled programs only.

CONTACT US

(360) 569-2609 Ext. 1

IMGDenali@MountainGuides.com

THE GUIDES

IMGD guides are chosen for their demonstrated skills and experience from within the ranks of the IMG guides leading Rainier, Himalayan, Vinson, South American, and other IMG programs. Climbing with these guides on McKinley allows you to access the full spectrum of their experience worldwide. Together you will begin to build the bonds of climbers or continue relationships already forged with them on previous IMG programs. Either way, you will join a tightly knit community of top-notch mountaineering professionals who see each other as family both on and off the mountain and strive for excellence together. Our cohesive guide culture is one hallmark of every IMG Denali expedition.

THE ITINERARY

The expedition begins on Day 01 at our designated group hotel in Anchorage where you meet your guides at 12PM to conduct a full gear check. Climbers may need to arrive in Anchorage a day before Day 01 depending on the arrival time of your flight. In that case, you will be responsible for arranging your overnight lodging in Anchorage and then meeting the team at the group hotel at 12PM on Day 01. We can all then spend the afternoon of Day 01 exploring or picking up last-minute supplies and food items on your own in Anchorage. The first group night lodging in Alaska is arranged and paid by IMGD and will be spent in our Anchorage group hotel.

On Day 02, the team takes an early morning shuttle to Talkeetna where we spend the day making final preparations and attending a mandatory NPS briefing. Next day, our bush pilot treats us to a thrilling flight onto the Kahiltna Glacier. From there, we regroup and start climbing.

Our rate of ascent from there on will be dictated by the weather, route conditions, the strength of the group and gradual acclimatization. All climbing decisions will be made by the guides with the best interests of the entire group in mind. We will carry 21 days of food with supplements to stretch it to 24 days if necessary. An expedition with good weather might spend 14 days on the mountain, average is 18 days, but 22-24 days can happen and flexibility is imperative.

Day	McKinley West Buttress Expedition Itinerary
Day 01	Upon your arrival at Anchorage (ANC) call the group hotel to arrange for airport shuttle to pick you up. Meet your guides and team at 12 Noon at the designated group hotel in Anchorage. Gear checks. Group lodging arranged by IMGD.
Day 02	Depart Anchorage early AM for shuttle to Talkeetna. Attend NPS briefing in Talkeetna, sort personal equipment, familiarize and divide group equipment, divide it up and get packed for the trip. Group lodging arranged by IMGD.
Day 03	Scenic 45-minute ski plane flight lands us at Base Camp on the SE Fork of the Kahiltna Glacier at 7,200 feet.
Day 04	Drag sleds ~5.5 miles on the low-angle Kahiltna Glacier to Ski Hill Camp at 7,600'. Don't let the distance fool you, with sleds at their heaviest this can be a challenging day on the mountain!
Day 05	Continue dragging sleds up to Camp 2 at 9,600'. This can also be accomplished as a double carry, caching at 10,000' and spending another night at Ski Hill Camp.
Day 06	Weather and energy permitting, we will move up to Camp 3 at 11,000'.
Day 07	Time for an active rest day, possibly "back carrying" to retrieve our cache at 10,000'.
Day 08	Carry gear and cache at 13,500' past Windy Corner. As the terrain becomes more complex above 11,000' we shift towards less weight in sleds and more weight in our packs.
Day 09	Move to 14 Camp, just above 14,000'. This is the location of the NPS climbing ranger post and can be like a small city during the height of the season.
Day 10	Another active rest day, back carrying to retrieve our cache at 13,500'. Second night at 14,000'.
Day 11	Rest and continue to acclimatize at 14 Camp.
Day 12	Carry food, fuel, and other supplies for our summit bid to cache at 16,700' or High Camp at 17,200'. Return to 14,000' for a fourth night.
Day 13	Fifth and final acclimatization day if needed at 14,000'.
Day 14	Move to High Camp at 17,200', potentially picking up our cache along the way.
Day 15	Possible rest day at High Camp or first chance for summit day!
Day 16	Second possible summit day!
Day 17	Descend to 11,000', Camp 3 for a quick bivy.
Day 18	Descend to Base Camp. If the timing is right and the weather holds, "fly off" with our bush pilot.
Day 19	Likely pickup by bush pilot and return to Talkeetna.
Day 20-	The expedition can run longer than average. Allow for at least 25 total days in your schedule, weather can delay us and a schedule cushion at the end will ease tension and facilitate patience that is often needed.

WHAT'S INCLUDED, WHAT'S NOT: Here is a summary of what is included and not included in your program fees:

Included

- Hotel lodging (shared) for the first 2 nights of the published itinerary
- Group shuttle from Anchorage to Talkeetna
- Bush pilot flights round-trip between Talkeetna and the Kahiltna Camp
- Use of all group equipment (tents, stoves, fuel, shovels, ropes, sleds, etc.)
- On-mountain breakfasts and dinners as well as hot drinks

Not Included

- NPS Climbing Permit Fee and Entrance Fee payable by you to the NPS in advance
- Airfare round trip to/from Anchorage and your home
- Hotel lodging for any additional nights other than the first two nights as stated in the published itinerary
- Transportation from Talkeetna to Anchorage after you fly off the mountain and return to Talkeetna
- Personal lunch and snack food on the mountain
- Meals in Anchorage and Talkeetna
- Required travel Insurance (medical, evacuation, repatriation).
- Any costs incurred for early departure from the expedition
- Guide gratuity

THE ODDS & ENDS:

Travel Insurance

The most common need for travel insurance includes is a problem before you ever leave home. If you are forced to cancel and withdraw from your program due to illness, injury, or many other personal reasons before (or during) your program, IMG Denali will not refund your program costs. You need Trip Cancellation / Interruption insurance to obtain any financial recovery. Understand what is and is not covered under various policies. Some suggested providers are listed on the [travel insurance page](#). Get coverage for a trip lasting 25 days. You will most likely be home before the 25-day mark, but you do not want your policy to expire while you're on the mountain.

If you require evacuation from McKinley, the National Park Service has sole authority to provide helicopter rescue for life-threatening emergencies. The cost of heli evacuation is covered by the NPS using your NPS permit fees. If a heli evacuation takes place, the NPS will fly you to Talkeetna. All costs incurred after landing in Talkeetna will be your responsibility. You will likely require further medical care in Alaska and the NPS will order a land or air ambulance to meet you at the Talkeetna Airport and transport you, at your cost, to a hospital in Wasilla or Anchorage. Have insurance that covers costs of ambulance and any further medical treatment in Alaska before you return home. Some health insurance policies cover you while traveling away from home, but some don't. You need to know.

Airline Flights

It is impossible to know exactly when any expedition will end, so we book a one-way airline ticket to Anchorage (ANC) for our IMG Denali guides to start their trip. When we finally know their return date, we book the flights home. There are multiple flights available each day from Anchorage to Seattle (primarily on Delta and Alaska Air). We encourage you to work with a travel agent, which enables you to make one phone call to arrange your return flight home once the end date of the expedition is known. The travel agent's help is well worth the cost of any service fees.

International Mountain Guides, LLC provides booking services for IMG Denali, LLC, an authorized concessioner of Denali National Park and Preserve.



**Authorized
Concessioner**