

Endicott Arm & Dawes Glacier Guide

Your Complete Guide to One of Alaska's Most Scenic Fjords

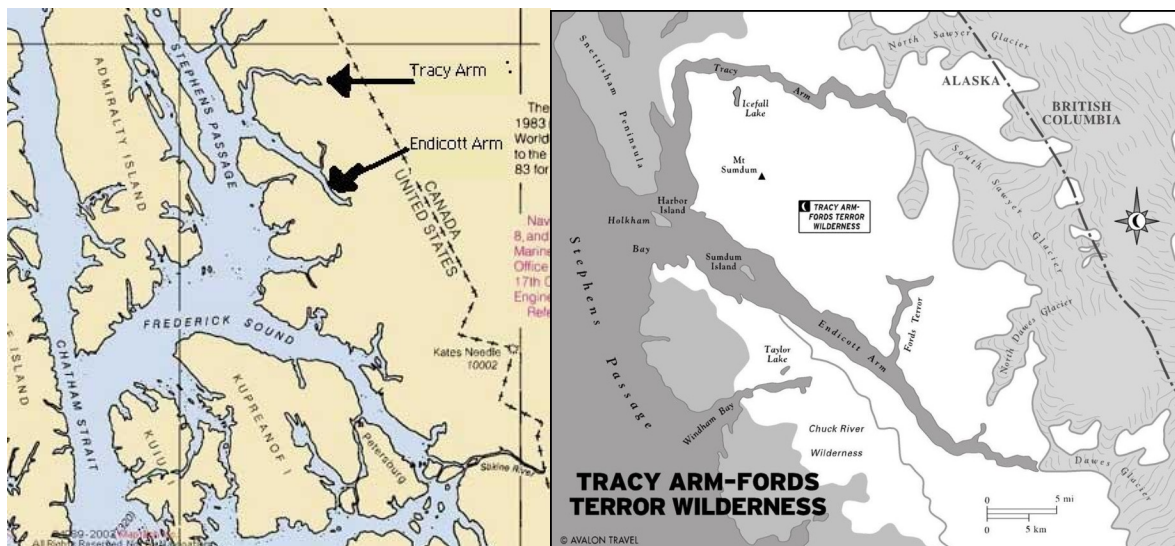


Few places capture the raw beauty of Alaska quite like **Endicott Arm Fjord** and **Dawes Glacier**. Located within the spectacular **Tracy Arm-Fords Terror Wilderness**, this breathtaking fjord stretches nearly 30 miles through towering granite cliffs, cascading waterfalls, floating blue icebergs, and pristine wilderness before ending at the face of the magnificent Dawes Glacier.

For many travelers, cruising through Endicott Arm becomes one of the most memorable days of an Alaska voyage. Unlike a traditional port stop, this is a day spent surrounded by nature, where every turn reveals another postcard-worthy view and wildlife sightings are common.

If weather and ice conditions allow, your ship will slowly navigate deep into the fjord, bringing you remarkably close to one of Alaska's most active tidewater glaciers.

Where is Endicott Arm?



Endicott Arm is located in **Southeast Alaska**, approximately **50 miles southeast of Juneau**, within the protected **Tracy Arm-Fords Terror Wilderness**.

The fjord features:

- Steep granite cliffs rising thousands of feet
- Numerous waterfalls
- Floating icebergs
- Dense forests
- Abundant wildlife
- Dawes Glacier at its northern end

Only cruise ships and small expedition vessels regularly travel through this spectacular wilderness.

Meet Dawes Glacier



Dawes Glacier is a massive **tidewater glacier** that flows directly into Endicott Arm.

Highlights include:

- Approximately 600 feet tall at its face
- Nearly one mile wide
- Constantly moving and changing
- Brilliant blue ice formations
- Frequent calving events

When large chunks of ice break away and crash into the water, it's known as **glacier calving**—one of Alaska's most unforgettable natural spectacles.

Wildlife Along Endicott Arm



The fjord is home to an incredible variety of wildlife.

Keep your camera ready for:

Harbor Seals

Often seen resting on floating ice near the glacier.

Spring is especially important, as many seals use the ice to give birth and care for their pups.

Mountain Goats

Watch the steep cliffs carefully.

Mountain goats are frequently spotted navigating seemingly impossible terrain high above the fjord.

Bald Eagles

Look for eagles soaring overhead or perched in tall trees along the shoreline.

Whales

Depending on conditions, you may spot:

- Humpback whales
- Orcas

Usually near the entrance to the fjord rather than close to the glacier.

Sea Otters

Occasionally seen floating peacefully in protected waters near the fjord entrance.

What You'll See

One of the best parts of Endicott Arm is that the scenery constantly changes as your ship moves deeper into the fjord.

Expect to see:

- Towering granite cliffs
- Waterfalls cascading hundreds of feet
- Floating blue icebergs
- Dense evergreen forests
- Snow-covered mountain peaks
- Crystal-clear glacial water
- Dawes Glacier

Even if weather prevents reaching the glacier itself, the journey through the fjord is spectacular.

What to Expect on Cruise Day

Unlike a traditional port day, scenic cruising is all about slowing down and enjoying the landscape.

Most cruise lines:

- Enter the fjord early in the morning
- Cruise slowly toward the glacier
- Rotate the ship so both sides have great views
- Provide narration from naturalists or park experts (when available)

If ice conditions are favorable, your ship may come surprisingly close to Dawes Glacier.

Photography Tips



Bring:

- ✓ Camera
- ✓ Binoculars
- ✓ Extra batteries
- ✓ Extra memory cards
- ✓ Zoom lens (if available)

For the best photos:

- Spend time on the open decks
 - Dress warmly in layers
 - Keep your camera ready for wildlife
 - Use burst mode during glacier calving
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Weather

Expect cool temperatures, even during summer.

Typical conditions:

- **40–60°F (4–16°C)**

It often feels colder near the glacier because of:

- Glacial winds
- Moist air
- Wind from the ship's movement

A waterproof jacket, gloves, and a warm hat are highly recommended.

Why Every Visit is Different

No two visits to Endicott Arm are exactly alike.

Conditions vary based on:

- Weather
- Ice flow
- Glacier activity
- Wildlife sightings
- Tides

Some cruises reach within a short distance of Dawes Glacier, while others may turn around earlier due to heavy ice.

That's part of what makes each visit unique.



Small Boat Glacier Adventures

On select cruises, some guests can book a special excursion that transfers them from the cruise ship to a smaller sightseeing vessel.

These excursions may allow you to:

- Travel farther into the fjord
- Get closer to Dawes Glacier
- Navigate among floating icebergs
- Enjoy additional wildlife viewing
- Capture incredible photographs

These excursions are extremely popular and often sell out well before sailing.



Premium Travel Group Tip

Scenic cruising days are not "days at sea." In many ways, they become the highlight of the entire cruise. Set an early alarm, grab a warm drink, and head outside before your ship enters the fjord. Some of the most dramatic scenery appears during the journey to the glacier, not just when you arrive.

Even if it's chilly, spend as much time on deck as you can. The sounds of cracking ice, waterfalls echoing through the fjord, and the possibility of seeing wildlife make this one of Alaska's most unforgettable experiences.



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Why Visit Endicott Arm & Dawes Glacier?

Endicott Arm offers everything travelers imagine when they dream about Alaska—towering mountains, untouched wilderness, brilliant blue glaciers, waterfalls tumbling from sheer cliffs, and incredible wildlife. Whether you're fortunate enough to witness a dramatic glacier calving event or simply enjoy the peaceful beauty of the fjord, this is one of those places that reminds you just how powerful and beautiful nature can be.



Joe's Logbook

One of the things I love most about Endicott Arm is that it makes everyone slow down. There's no shopping, no schedules, and no rushing from one attraction to another. It's simply you, your ship, and one of the most spectacular wilderness areas in North America.

If I can offer one piece of advice, it's this: don't watch Endicott Arm through a window if you can avoid it. Bundle up, grab a cup of coffee or hot chocolate, and spend time on the open deck. You'll hear the glacier cracking, feel the cool air coming off the ice, and experience Alaska in a way that's impossible to appreciate from inside the ship.

And remember, every sailing is different. Some days you'll see whales, some days mountain goats, and if you're lucky, you may witness the unforgettable roar of Dawes Glacier calving into the fjord. Those are the moments that stay with you long after the cruise is over.