

Hubbard Glacier Guide

Your Complete Guide to North America's Largest Tidewater Glacier



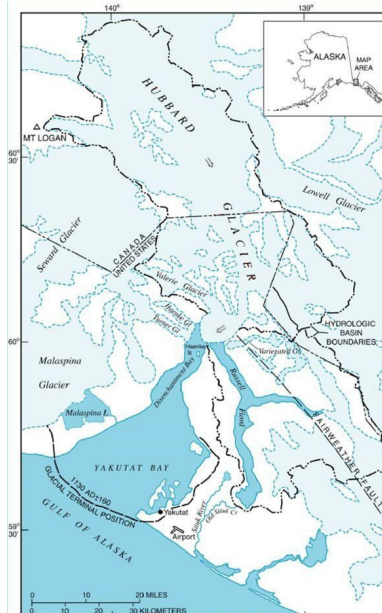
If size alone could define an Alaska experience, **Hubbard Glacier** would be at the top of the list. Stretching an incredible **76 miles** from the mountains of Canada to the waters of Alaska, Hubbard Glacier is the **largest tidewater glacier in North America** and one of the most active glaciers you'll encounter on an Alaska cruise.

Unlike many glaciers that are slowly retreating, Hubbard Glacier is one of the few major glaciers in Alaska that has **continued to advance** in recent decades. Its immense wall of brilliant blue ice towers hundreds of feet above the water, while even more ice lies hidden beneath the surface.

Watching Hubbard Glacier calve is one of Alaska's most dramatic natural spectacles, with enormous chunks of ice breaking away and crashing into the sea in thunderous displays of nature's power.



Where is Hubbard Glacier?



Hubbard Glacier is located near **Yakutat**, Alaska, where it flows into **Disenchantment Bay** and **Yakutat Bay**.

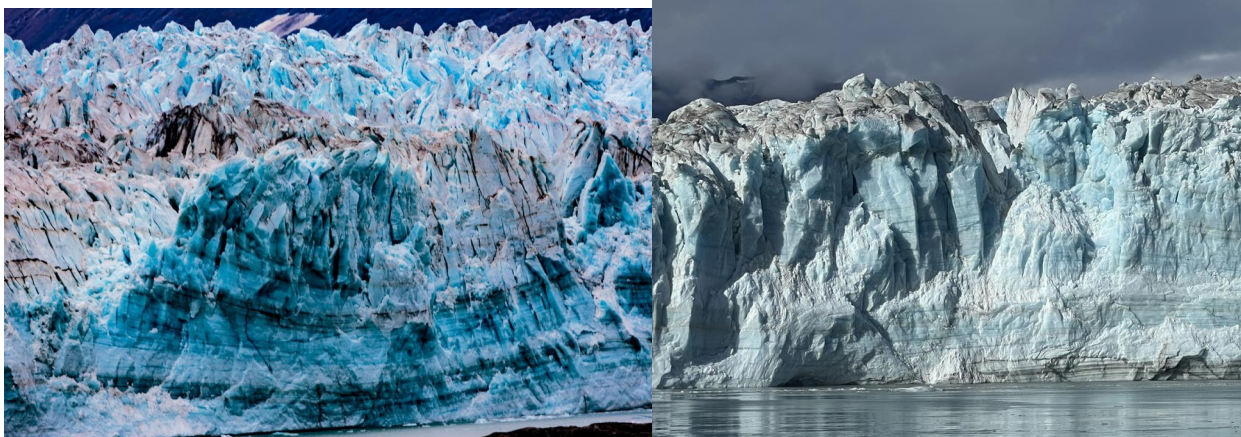
The glacier stretches:

- Approximately **76 miles (122 km)** long
- Nearly **6 miles (10 km)** wide at its face
- Over **400 feet (120 m)** tall where it meets the ocean
- Much of the glacier extends below the water's surface

Unlike Glacier Bay, Hubbard Glacier is typically the sole scenic cruising destination for the day, allowing ships to spend extended time enjoying the incredible scenery.



Why Hubbard Glacier is So Unique



Hubbard Glacier stands apart from many other Alaskan glaciers because it is still **advancing**, meaning the glacier continues to slowly move forward rather than retreat.

This creates:

- Towering ice cliffs
- Constant glacier movement
- Frequent calving events
- Brilliant blue ice
- Massive floating icebergs

Every visit is different because the glacier is always changing.

Glacier Calving

One of the highlights of visiting Hubbard Glacier is witnessing glacier calving.

Calving occurs when massive blocks of ice break away from the glacier and fall into the water.

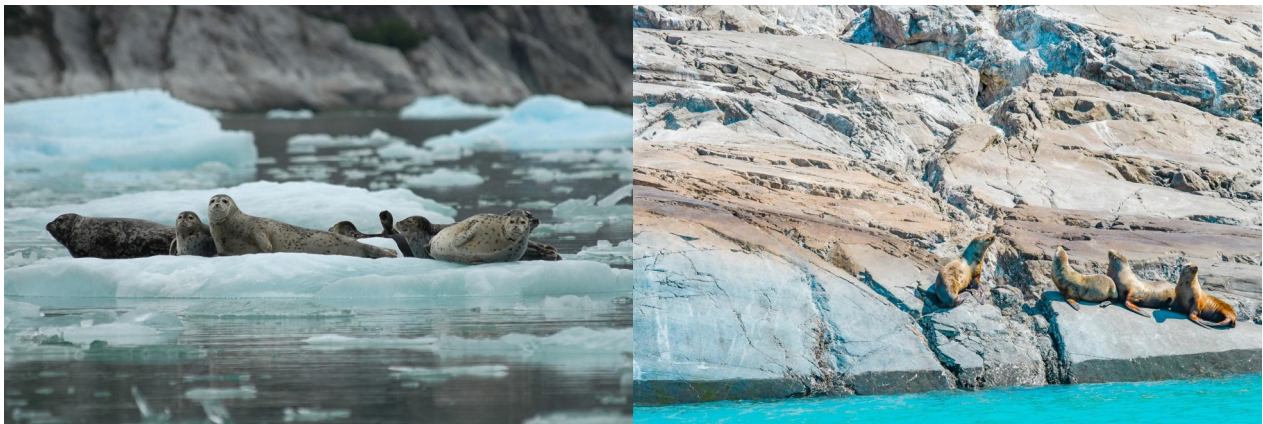
Visitors may experience:

- Loud cracking sounds
- Deep rumbling
- Thunder-like booms
- Large waves created by falling ice

Sometimes you'll hear the glacier long before you actually see the ice fall.

Patience often rewards guests with unforgettable moments.

Wildlife Around Hubbard Glacier



The waters surrounding Hubbard Glacier support a variety of wildlife.

Keep an eye out for:

 **Harbor Seals**

Frequently seen resting on floating ice.

 **Sea Otters**

Occasionally spotted floating in calmer waters near the bay.

 **Bald Eagles**

Often soar overhead or perch along the shoreline.

 **Humpback Whales**

Sometimes seen in Yakutat Bay before reaching the glacier.

 **Steller Sea Lions**

Occasionally observed on nearby rocky outcroppings.



What to Expect on Cruise Day

Unlike a traditional port visit, Hubbard Glacier is experienced from the ship.

A typical day includes:

- Scenic cruising through Yakutat Bay
- Approaching the glacier slowly
- Ship rotation to provide views from both sides
- Naturalist narration (on many cruises)
- Time for photography and wildlife viewing

Because Hubbard Glacier is so large, ships often spend considerable time near the glacier when conditions allow.

Photography Tips



Bring:

- ✓ Camera
- ✓ Zoom lens
- ✓ Binoculars
- ✓ Extra batteries
- ✓ Extra memory cards

For the best photos:

- Head outside early.
- Use burst mode during calving.
- Capture wide landscape shots as well as close-ups of the glacier's brilliant blue ice.
- Watch for wildlife between glacier viewing opportunities.

Weather

Temperatures near Hubbard Glacier remain cool even during summer.

Typical temperatures:

- **40–60°F (4–16°C)**

Conditions may include:

- Wind
- Mist
- Light rain

- Cold glacial air

Dress in layers and bring:

- Waterproof jacket
 - Warm hat
 - Gloves
-

Why Every Visit is Different

Every cruise to Hubbard Glacier is unique.

Weather, tides, wind, ice conditions, and glacier activity all influence how close ships can safely approach.

Some days ships may get remarkably close to the glacier's face.

Other days heavy ice or changing conditions may require captains to remain farther away.

Either way, the scenery is extraordinary.



A Living Glacier

Hubbard Glacier is one of the few glaciers in Alaska that occasionally advances enough to block nearby fjords and rivers.

This natural process has happened several times over the years and reminds visitors that glaciers are constantly changing landscapes rather than frozen, motionless walls of ice.



Premium Travel Group Tip

Don't judge your Hubbard Glacier experience solely by how close the ship gets. Every captain must balance guest experience with safety, and conditions can change by the hour.

Instead, take in the entire scene. Watch the floating ice, listen for the thunder of calving, scan the shoreline for wildlife, and appreciate the sheer scale of one of North America's greatest natural wonders. Sometimes the journey through Yakutat Bay is every bit as memorable as the glacier itself.



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Why Visit Hubbard Glacier?

Hubbard Glacier is one of the most awe-inspiring natural wonders in Alaska. Its immense size, vibrant blue ice, and constant movement create a spectacle that few places on Earth can match. Whether you're lucky enough to witness a dramatic calving event or simply stand in amazement at the towering wall of ice before you, Hubbard Glacier offers a powerful reminder of the beauty and strength of the natural world.



Joe's Logbook

One thing that surprises almost everyone about Hubbard Glacier is its sheer size. Pictures don't do it justice. As your ship gets closer, you begin to realize just how massive it really is, and it gives you a whole new appreciation for the power of nature.

My advice is to be patient. Glacier calving doesn't happen on a schedule, and sometimes the best moments come when everyone is quietly watching and waiting. Keep your camera ready, but don't spend the whole time looking through the lens. Take a few moments to simply listen. The cracking ice, the deep rumble echoing across the bay, and the cool air drifting off the glacier create an experience that no photograph can truly capture.

If you're fortunate enough to have Hubbard Glacier on your itinerary, treat it as more than just another scenic cruising day. It's one of the rare places where you can witness a living glacier still shaping the landscape before your eyes.