

# Mendenhall Glacier Guide

## Your Complete Guide to Alaska's Most Accessible Glacier



Located just **13 miles from downtown Juneau**, **Mendenhall Glacier** is one of Alaska's most visited natural attractions and one of the few major glaciers that visitors can easily experience without boarding a boat or aircraft. Flowing from the massive **Juneau Icefield**, this spectacular glacier stretches approximately **13 miles** from the mountains to Mendenhall Lake.

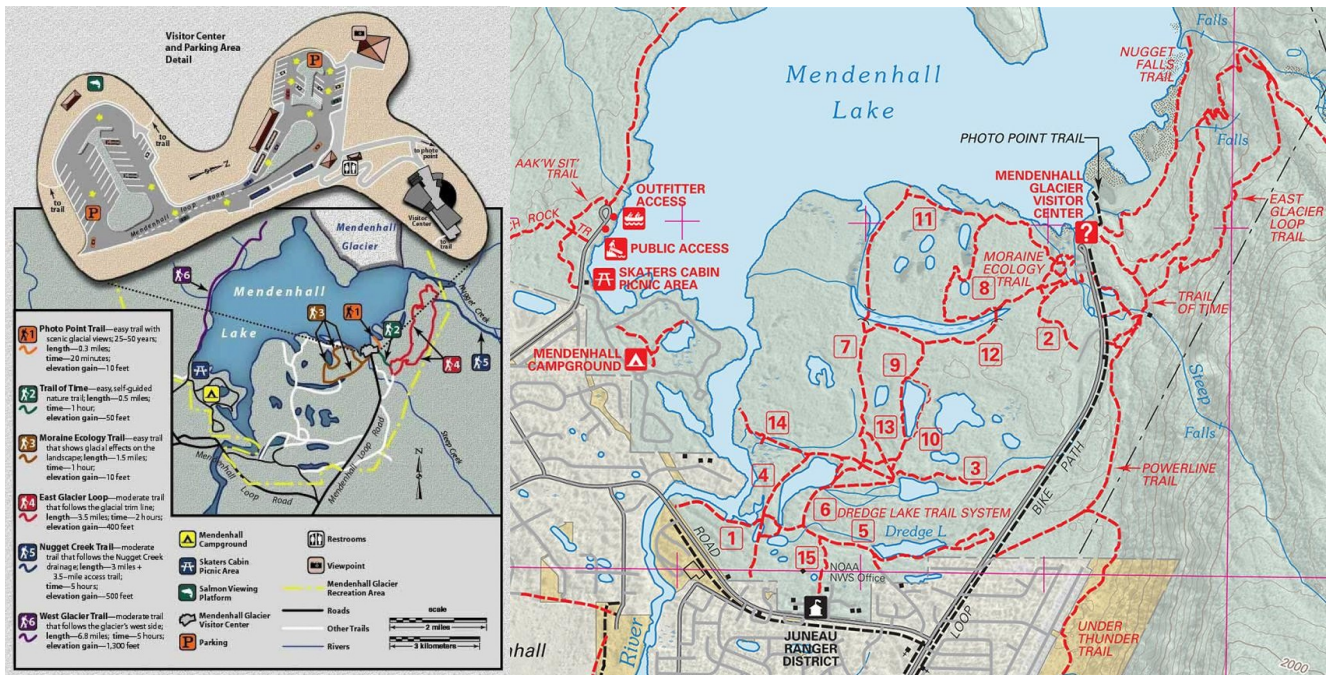
Whether you're visiting on an Alaska cruise or spending several days in Juneau, Mendenhall Glacier offers incredible scenery, accessible walking trails, waterfalls, wildlife viewing, and outstanding photography opportunities—all within a short drive from the cruise port.

For many visitors, Mendenhall Glacier becomes their first close-up encounter with one of Alaska's incredible glaciers.

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# Where is Mendenhall Glacier?



Mendenhall Glacier is located within the **Mendenhall Glacier Recreation Area**, about:

- 13 miles from downtown Juneau
- 20–25 minutes from the cruise docks

Visitors can reach the glacier by:

- Cruise line excursions
- Shuttle buses
- Taxi
- Ride-share
- Rental car

Unlike many Alaska glaciers, no boat or helicopter is required to enjoy spectacular views.



## Why Visit Mendenhall Glacier?

Mendenhall Glacier offers one of the easiest opportunities to experience a glacier up close.

Highlights include:

- Stunning glacier views
- Visitor Center
- Scenic hiking trails
- Nugget Falls
- Wildlife viewing
- Photography

- Canoe and kayak tours
- Accessible viewing platforms

It's one of the best family-friendly glacier experiences in Alaska.

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## ★ Top Things to Do

### 📦 Visit the Mendenhall Glacier Visitor Center



Begin your visit at the Visitor Center.

Features include:

- Glacier exhibits
- Interactive displays
- Ranger programs
- Educational films
- Panoramic viewing windows
- Gift shop

The outdoor viewing decks provide spectacular views of the glacier and Mendenhall Lake.

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## Walk to Nugget Falls



One of Juneau's most popular hikes.

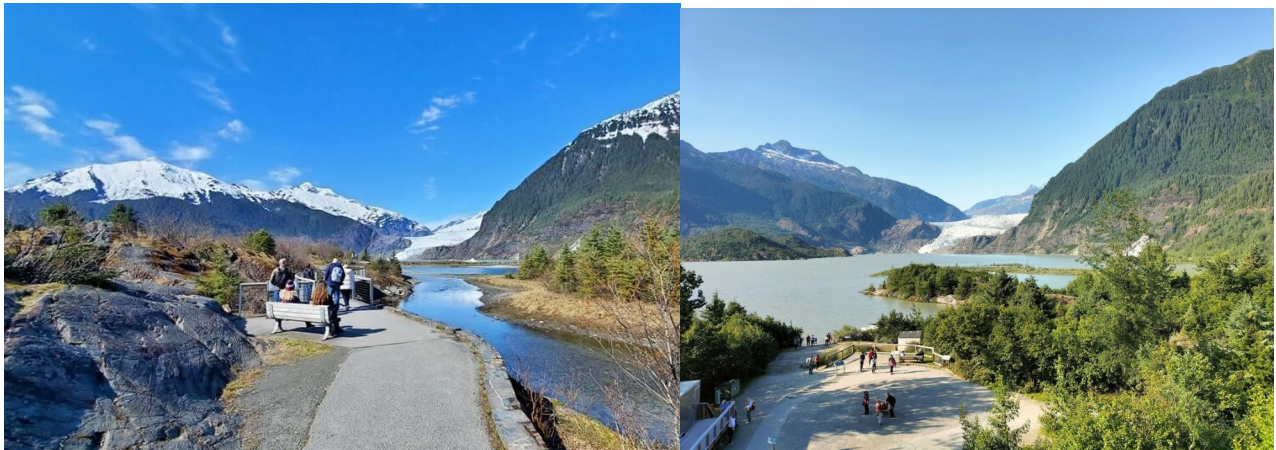
Trail highlights:

- Approximately **2 miles round trip**
- Mostly flat and easy
- Wheelchair accessible for much of the route
- Incredible waterfall views
- Glacier viewpoints

Standing beside the 377-foot waterfall with the glacier in the background is one of Alaska's classic photo opportunities.

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## Photo Point Trail



A short walk from the Visitor Center leads to one of the glacier's best viewpoints.

Perfect for:

- Family photos
- Sunrise and sunset photography

- Glacier panoramas
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## Canoe & Kayak Adventures



For a more adventurous experience, guided tours allow visitors to paddle across Mendenhall Lake toward the glacier.

Some excursions include:

- Canoeing
- Kayaking
- Guided interpretation
- Close-up glacier views

These tours often sell out well in advance.

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## Helicopter & Glacier Trekking



One of Alaska's bucket-list experiences.

Many tours include:

- Scenic helicopter flight
- Glacier landing

- Guided glacier walk
- Ice formations
- Crevasses
- Blue ice

Some excursions even combine glacier landings with dog sledding.

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## **Wildlife Around Mendenhall Glacier**



Keep your eyes open for:

### **Black Bears**

During salmon season, bears are frequently seen fishing in Mendenhall Creek.

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### **Salmon**

Late summer brings impressive salmon runs.

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### **Bald Eagles**

Often spotted soaring above the lake or perched in nearby trees.

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### **Beavers**

Occasionally seen in quieter sections of the recreation area.

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# Popular Hiking Trails

## Easy

- Photo Point Trail
- Nugget Falls Trail

## Moderate

- East Glacier Trail

Offers elevated views overlooking the glacier.

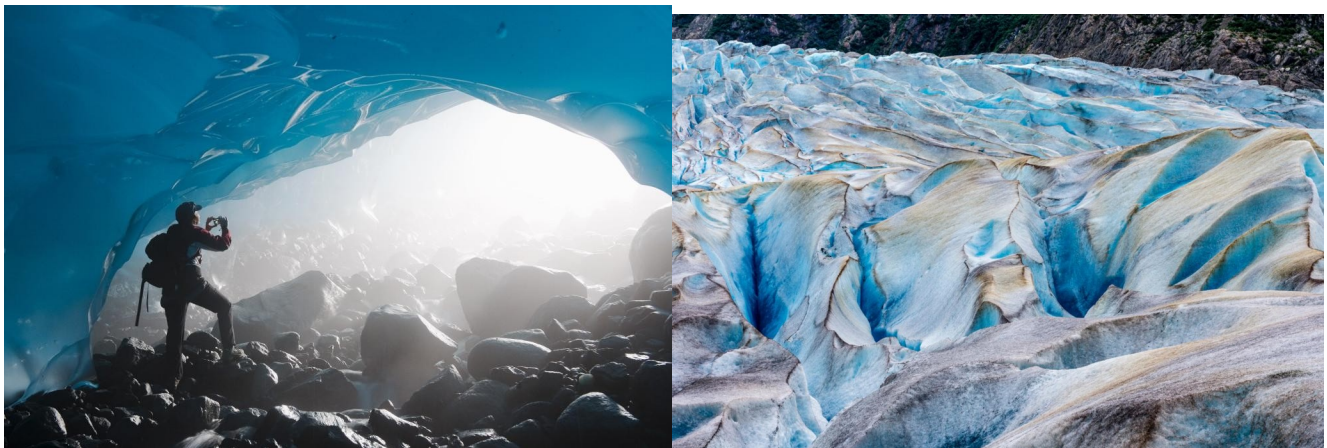
## Challenging

- West Glacier Trail

Requires experience and proper preparation.

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# Photography Tips



Bring:

- ✓ Camera
- ✓ Zoom lens
- ✓ Binoculars
- ✓ Extra batteries
- ✓ Waterproof jacket

Morning and evening often provide the best lighting for photographs.

Cloudy days can actually enhance glacier colors by reducing harsh glare.

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## Weather

Summer temperatures typically range from:

**50–65°F (10–18°C)**

Expect:

- Light rain
- Cool breezes
- Changing conditions

Dress in layers and bring waterproof clothing.

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## Getting Around

Visitors can explore:

- Paved walkways
- Viewing platforms
- Hiking trails
- Visitor Center
- Parking area

Most attractions are easy to reach on foot.

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## What to Pack

Bring:

- ✓ Waterproof rain jacket
  - ✓ Comfortable walking shoes
  - ✓ Camera
  - ✓ Binoculars
  - ✓ Small backpack
  - ✓ Water bottle
  - ✓ Layered clothing
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## Premium Travel Group Tip

If you're visiting Mendenhall Glacier on your own, try to arrive early in the morning or later in the afternoon when crowds are lighter. If your schedule allows, don't stop at the Visitor Center. Take the easy walk to Nugget Falls, where you'll enjoy one of the best glacier views in all of Alaska.

If you're looking for a once-in-a-lifetime experience, consider a helicopter glacier landing. Standing on the surface of a glacier is something few people ever get to do—and it's an experience you'll never forget.

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## Why Visit Mendenhall Glacier?

Mendenhall Glacier offers one of the easiest and most rewarding glacier experiences in Alaska. Whether you're admiring the view from the Visitor Center, hiking to Nugget Falls, paddling across Mendenhall Lake, or landing on the glacier by helicopter, you'll gain a deeper appreciation for the incredible power and beauty of Alaska's icy wilderness. It's no surprise that Mendenhall Glacier is one of the state's most popular attractions.

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## Joe's Logbook

Mendenhall Glacier is one of those places that truly lives up to the hype. The first time you see that river of blue ice flowing down from the mountains, it's hard to believe you're standing just a short drive from downtown Juneau.

My biggest recommendation is simple: **don't just look at the glacier from the Visitor Center.** Take the time to walk to Nugget Falls. The trail is easy, the scenery is incredible, and standing near the waterfall with the glacier in the background is one of my favorite photo opportunities in all of Alaska.

If your budget allows, a helicopter landing on Mendenhall Glacier is an experience you'll talk about for years. But even if you stay on the ground, Mendenhall Glacier is one of those places that reminds you just how powerful and beautiful nature can be.