

# LIFE ON DENALI

Welcome to your Denali climbing expedition with Alaska Mountain Guides. Denali is an incredible mountaineering experience with phenomenal views and a wilderness experience that expresses the character of Alaska!

Before we start climbing there are some important considerations we'd like you to know about to help AMG protect the wild and beautiful nature of Denali. In combination with following [the National Park Service's Clean Climbing Guidelines](#) we'd like to take a moment to explain how life on the mountain will follow some important aspects of the *Leave No Trace* ethics for wilderness travel.

## **1. Plan Ahead and Prepare –**

- a. Equipment** - You received an equipment list outlining gear needed for this adventure. Your guides will conduct an equipment check during the pre-trip meeting, this is intended both to help ensure all your equipment is ready for the challenging environment we might encounter on Denali and to advise you on what you'll need in your kit. Please don't hesitate to contact our office with any gear related questions, we're happy to help!
- b. What's the weather doing up there?** Guides will frequently use the satellite phone to contact our office, during these conversations we will be able to relay pertinent weather information. This allows our guides to shoot for the optimal weather windows, don't hesitate to ask questions about the forecast during your climb, but be aware that the nature of mountain weather is subject to change, don't turn off your awareness to changing weather on the mountain!  
For a look at the current weather forecast visit [NWS - Denali Climbing Forecast](#)
- c. What sort of emergency gear do the guides carry?** All trips are sent into the field with satellite phones, SPOT devices, ground to air radios, major medical kits, and an assortment of technical mountaineering gear useful for emergency rescue.
- d. Will we have enough food?** AMG uses a carefully planned menu to ensure a delicious and varied selection of meals on the mountain. Portions have been carefully vetted over decades of experience guiding around the world.
- e. What can I do before getting to Alaska?** Denali is a challenging objective for any mountaineer. To promote a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone AMG expects all guests to demonstrate a basic understanding of mountaineering skills. Additionally, you will want to begin training and conditioning for the climb, be prepared for extended time on your feet carrying loads between camps (~8 hours). AMG reserves the right to refuse its guide services to anyone who might compromise the safety of the group or themselves. Please don't hesitate to contact our office for training advice or to schedule an [expedition primer course](#) to brush up on those mountaineering skills!

## **2. Travel & Camping**

- a. What will the camping be like?** We'll utilize four season tents and snow platforms for the expedition. Careful excavation of the snow platform, ensuring tents are anchored securely and maintaining stout snow walls to buffer the wind will contribute to a more comfortable experience on the mountain.

### 3. Waste

- a. **How does AMG handle trash on the mountain?** Denali is a pack in pack out area, this practice helps ensure the next visitors receive the same experience as you! Each tent will be provided a smaller personal trash receptacle in addition to the main kitchen trash. Please help our guides reduce the impact on this beautiful place and take part in eliminating litter on the mountain.
- b. **What about when we need to use the bathroom?** The NPS implemented a program called *Clean Mountain Cans* starting in 2001 as a prototype, it has since grown to become a standard practice on the mountain. We will pack out all solid waste to help preserve the environment within the park. Each camp will have a designated bathroom area, as clean snow will be utilized for a “water source” it is important to keep these two areas separated.
- c. **What about the leftovers from my meal?** All food scraps will need to be filtered through a screen and put in the trash receptacle with other waste. Your guides will provide warm water and biodegradable soap for cleaning your personal mess kit.

### 4. Leave what you find

- a. **Leave that rock on the mountain!** Guests are often tempted to bring home a souvenir from the climb, but research shows that removing rocks and other natural resources from the wilderness area is extremely damaging to the environment. Take photos and leave Denali as you found it! \*Another practice of leaving rocks from other mountains or other foreign materials is also harmful to the wilderness character of Denali – AMG asks that you do not contribute to the practice of placing flags, rocks, or any other markers on the mountain.
- b. **Help us eliminate trash** – You can remove litter where you find it! If you see a snack wrapper or other piece of trash along the climb you are encouraged to help clean up the mountain and make the experience better for future visitors.

### 5. Minimize Impact

- a. **How will we cook meals on the mountain?** AMG uses white gas expedition stoves. The refillable containers dramatically reduce waste compared to alternative sources such as isobutane canister stoves.

### 6. Be Considerate of Others

- a. **Help others enjoy the wilderness** – We will often encounter other groups on the mountain; while moving up and down routes and in camp, help make everyone’s experience a good one by following these simple steps:
  - i. **Maintain reasonable noise levels in camp** – especially at night!
  - ii. **Yield to faster traffic where possible** – when it is safe allow downhill or faster traffic the opportunity to pass
  - iii. **Step out of the trail when resting** – this allows other groups to move past as we are taking our breaks / resting
  - iv. **Avoid walking in skin tracks** – early season trips may encounter ski mountaineers, where possible we will set separate tracks from the skiers.