



YOUR FIELD GUIDE · KING SALMON, ALASKA

HOW TO PLAN YOUR BROOKS FALLS BEAR- VIEWING TRIP

A King Salmon local's step-by-step guide to seeing the bears, without the stress of piecing it together yourself.

KATMAI B&B

The #1-rated B&B in King Salmon on TripAdvisor

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START HERE

THE ONE THING EVERYONE GETS WRONG

Brooks Falls is the best place on earth to watch wild brown bears catch salmon. The hard part was never the bears. It is the logistics, and almost everyone underestimates them.

Here is the single fact that changes how you plan: **there are no roads into Katmai National Park.** You cannot drive to Brooks Falls. Getting there is a short chain of a flight and a water crossing, and the whole thing answers to the weather. Once you understand that, the right plan becomes obvious.

The local's rule: base yourself in King Salmon and go out to the falls across two or more days. A single day trip bets your whole experience on one morning's weather. A stay gives you more bears, more time, and a buffer if a day gets fogged out.

WHEN TO GO

Bear viewing at Brooks is strong from **July through September**, and each stretch has a different feel. There is no bad time once the salmon arrive, only trade-offs between bear numbers, crowds, and light.

WINDOW	WHAT IT'S LIKE
Late June	The sleeper. First bears, empty platforms, and you could be the first person to see a bear all year.
Early–mid July	Peak. The salmon are running and the falls put on their classic show, with the most bears at once. Busiest, too.
Early August	The best-kept secret. Much like July, with lighter crowds.
September	Fat-bear month. The biggest bears, golden light, and real room to breathe. (Brooks Lodge closes around Sep 18; we run guests to the falls to Sep 30.)

No bear count is ever guaranteed, but 20 to 40 bears can work the falls at peak.

GETTING THERE

THE TRIP, IN THREE SIMPLE LEGS

- 1. Anchorage to King Salmon.** You fly Alaska Airlines, about an hour, commonly around \$500 round trip. This is the one leg you book yourself, and we tell you exactly which flights to take.
- 2. Sleep in King Salmon.** The only lodging inside the park is Brooks Lodge, booked by a lottery most people never win. So you base in town and go out to the falls each day. That is what we are built for.
- 3. King Salmon to Brooks Falls.** No road here either. You cross by floatplane (about 25 to 35 minutes) or water taxi (about 45 to 60 minutes). Both answer to the weather.



Why the backup matters: fog and wind can ground the floatplane, and heavy weather can stop the boat, but rarely on the same day. We keep both on standby and pick the right one each morning. That is how we get guests to the falls about **99% of the time.**

HOW MANY DAYS YOU NEED

For a real trip, plan on **at least three nights and two full days at the falls.** Two days builds in a weather buffer, so if one morning is socked in, you still have the other. Add nights for more bears, more light, and a more relaxed pace. And always get to King Salmon the day before your first falls day, so a foggy morning doesn't cost you the trip.

BE READY

WHAT TO PACK FOR A DAY AT THE FALLS

Dress for all four seasons in one day. You are outside on an open platform for hours. Print this and check it off:

- ☐ Waterproof rain jacket **and** rain pants
- ☐ Warm mid-layer (fleece or light down)
- ☐ Base layer, warm hat, light gloves
- ☐ Waterproof boots (rubber boots are ideal)
- ☐ Head net + insect repellent (the bugs are real)
- ☐ Binoculars
- ☐ Telephoto zoom lens (100–400mm is perfect)
- ☐ Dry bag or rain cover for your camera
- ☐ Water bottle, snacks, sunscreen
- ☐ One small, soft daypack (mind the plane weight limit)

Note: floatplanes have real weight limits, and tripods are restricted on the platforms during busy periods. Pack light and plan to shoot handheld.

IS IT SAFE?

Yes, remarkably so, and it is no accident. You watch from **elevated platforms**, the National Park Service runs a mandatory **bear school** for every visitor on arrival, and rangers manage the platforms and trails. The bears are focused on salmon, not people. Your job is simple: stay calm, keep your distance, and follow the rangers. Families and first-timers do this every year and leave grinning.

THE EASY WAY

LET US HANDLE THE WHOLE CHAIN

You came to watch bears, not to become a travel agent. When you stay with us, the logistics are ours and the trip is yours.



Included in a stay

- Your floatplane to Brooks, with the water-taxi backup
- Breakfast every morning
- Airport pickup and daily shuttle
- Katmai park access fees
- The Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes tour
- Free trip-planning help before you arrive
- Starlink wifi, and hosts on site the whole time

Why guests pick us

- The only dedicated bear-viewing riverfront lodge in King Salmon
- Never more than six guests at a time
- About a 99% success rate reaching the falls
- The #1-rated B&B in King Salmon on TripAdvisor
- Local hosts who run this trip every day of the season

Your next two steps

1. **Watch the free 17-minute webinar**, "How to Visit Brooks Falls," for the full walk-through: youtube.com/watch?v=zpdNUmOzv9I
2. **Send us your dates and group size** and we'll build the trip around you, with a real number in writing before you commit:
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