

A NATURAL WONDER YOU MUST SEE BEFORE YOU DIE Alaska's Frozen Jurassic Park

TAGGERING! THERE'S NO OTHER WORD FOR IT. And silent. Utterly, awesomely silent. A freaky, other-worldly, "shh-don't-talk" kind of silence that's broken only by an occasional sound the Tlingit Indians call 'white thunder'. A massive rolling, rumbling sound. Followed by a gunshot-like crack that tells you a glacier is calving.

We're in **Alaska**, North America's Final Frontier, famous for whales and wildlife, teetering peaks and crunching ice. And there's no point exaggerating because everything we've seen so far on this rugged, rocky coast is pinch-me-please stunning!

Take yesterday, for example. We got to ride a helicopter (in convoy with five other helicopters) up-up-up into Alaska's spectacular mountains – where we eyeballed jagged peaks, tortured valleys, cascading waterfalls and massive glaciers, before landing on the mighty Meade Glacier for a guided walking tour.

reling a certain reverence as you knowing that this surreal ands of years to form. We

You couldn't help feeling a certain reverence as you stepped out onto the ice ... knowing that this surreal landscape had taken thousands of years to form. We clomped around in oversized glacier-boots, gazed into the distance, tasted pure meltwater, tried not to fall down spooky-blue crevasses, and kept muttering: "This is fantastic! Simply fantastic!"

TODAY WE DONNED LONG UNDIES, WARM layers and woolly hats and cruised slowly into the World Heritage Park known famously as **Glacier**

Bay. Only 200 years ago, these ancient shorelines were themselves buried under an impossibly-thick icy slab.

And, today, more glaciers meet their end in these chilly waters than anyplace else in the world.

wide) finally reached the sea, they began breaking up ...

Alaska's 'rivers-of-

ice' (like the one we walked on

4000 years ago, as frozen snow

iceblocks in your fridge. When

their packed-down weight got too much they began inching

landscape and gathering rubble

on the way. And when their

front-ends (often kilometres

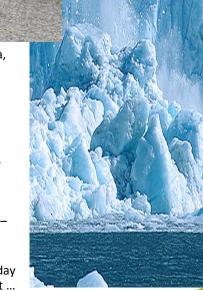
yesterday) began life some

- 10 times denser than the

downhill, reshaping the

It's called 'calving'. It happens with a thunderous roar, when a huge chunk of glacier splits off and crashes into the Bay – shooting torrents of water high in the air, and rocking your boat if you're close. When that submerged chunk of glacier pops back up to the surface – behold, an iceberg is born!

And it happens every gob-stopping, eye-popping day in Alaska! You've gotta see it ...



Midlife Madness Cruises & Tours

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