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Cape St. Elias/Lighthouse Q&A

Q: How do I make reservations for staying at the Lighthouse?

A: Please contact the folks at www.capestelias.org

Q: Where do we land?

A: If you are flying in by airplane, the spots I land are about 3 miles from the lighthouse, so there is a hike. The helicopter landing pad is at the lighthouse itself.

Q: How long is the flight from Cordova to the Lighthouse?

A: About 40 minutes.

Q: Do we need to land at low tide?

A: The area I land is not affected by the tide, however, the hike to the lighthouse is. There are several beach areas that are much better to cross at low tide. That being said, many people beachcomb and explore on the way and wait for the tide.

Q: How much stuff and people can we bring?

A: That's up to you, the lighthouse can sleep 8-10 people. The more there is, the more flights you will have.

Q: How much can you carry in the airplanes?

A: This is the question most often asked, the answer is: variable. The landing area is short and has obstacles, so the maximum loads that the airplanes can carry are not available at the Cape landing area. The rule of thumb is 2 people and gear in the Cessna, 4 people and gear in the Beaver. If your people or gear are especially light or heavy, things can change.

Please note: There is a longer stretch of beach on the North end of Kayak Island, if your group is large, I can use that beach fully loaded as an intermediate stop, there is an additional charge for this.

Q: How much can the helicopters carry?

A: The R66 helicopter can carry about 950 lbs. to the Cape helipad, and has 4 passenger seats. The AS350 Helicopter can carry about 1400 lbs. to the Cape helipad and has 5 passenger seats. Space in the helicopters is limited, multiple small soft bags are the best.

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Q: Is there drinking water?

A: Yes, there is a cistern that is spring fed, and catchment for rainwater as well. Standard water purification practices are always recommended.

Q: Can we fly with fuel?

A: Yes, with restrictions, you MUST advise the pilot. The Cape has a functional stove and is supplied with propane, so it is not necessary unless you are camping away from the lighthouse.

Q: Are there brown bears at the Cape?

A: Yes. That being said, the best bear protection is between your ears, if you have limited or no experience in Bear country there are many educational resources available. This one is good:

<https://www.udap.com/mm5/Bear-Safety-Tips>

Q: Can we fly with bear spray?

A: Yes, please advise the pilot and he will package it for you for travel. You MUST advise the pilot.

Q: Can we fly with firearms?

A: Yes, you MUST advise the pilot.

Q: Do cell phones work at the Cape?

A: Some do right at the lighthouse property, but the service is variable depending on your phone, carrier, etc. Texts can go through sometimes.

Q: How do we communicate with our pilot, our babysitter, etc.

A: The most reliable form of communication in this part of Alaska is the Garmin InReach, it allows text messages to be sent and received. Satellite phones are NOT desirable, they are unreliable, unclear, and require that the party calling and answering both are available at the time the call is placed.

Q: What is the weather like?

A: Coastal Alaska weather is highly variable. It can be hot and sunny, or blowing a gale, please plan and pack accordingly.

Q: Does the weather get too bad to fly?

A: Yes, Ridgeline Aviation is a visual operation, so if the weather is not good enough, we don't fly. Therefore, please don't plan important life events around your trip to the Cape. If it's not flyable, your job, babysitter, graduation, wedding, etc. will have to wait.

Q: If our trip gets canceled for weather, is there still a charge?

A: No, weather cancellations are fully refundable.

Q: What is 2025 Pricing for the Cape?

A: The Cessna is 700.00. The R66 Helicopter is 1750.00

The AS350 Helicopter is 3425.00

All fares are one-way.

Q: Why are the fares one-way?

A: Many people have variables that change from the flight out to the return flight i.e., the amount of food, variable departure or arrival dates, some want to use the helicopters to bring in groceries or less mobile members of their party, etc. One-way fares make it easy to customize your trip and plan costs.