

AYSS Agent Profile

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“The Inside Passage” by Rex Westergard, Yacht Services of Alaska

The gem of the State of Alaska for yachting is the "Inside Passage" with its protected waterways. The "Inside Passage" of the Southeast Alaska panhandle is an amazing superyacht destination. Some of the other regions of Alaska, although equally spectacular, are often overshadowed by the quaint little coves and bays of this temperate Southeast Alaskan rain forest.

Glacier Bay National Park is a stunning place to spend a day or two. Glacier Bay requires a permit to cruise within its confines but Tracy Arm is equally as beautiful having no permit requirements. A cruise through the "Inside Passage" will be remembered for a lifetime. The Alexander Archipelago of Southeast Alaska is best seen between April 1st and October 15th. Weather is best from May through mid September. Bring your rain gear; it is a rain forest.



The remaining coastline of Alaska is so vast and picturesque that one could cruise for months and see only a fraction of the calving glaciers, ruggedly beautiful bays, and estuaries teeming with fish. Prince William Sound is a place of particular interest with over 30 glaciers, numerous sea lion haul outs and majestic mountainous scenery.



Resurrection Bay at the South end of the Kenai Peninsula has a mystical quality on those mornings when it is shrouded in fog. Homer is one of the most beautiful towns in Alaska. Moving westward, Kodiak Island can give yachters a chance to witness with their own eyes the largest bears on earth. Kodiak City is a bustling fishing community with ample harbours. The Aleutian Islands string their way to the Southwest from Kodiak. The Aleutian's are unique in their own right; convergent weather can be a factor as the Islands are the only thing standing between the Pacific and the Bering Sea/Arctic Ocean. For those adventurous Superyachts the Pribilof Islands can provide bird lovers and bird

watchers with an unforgettable experience ...again if the weather cooperates. Best time of the year to travel in the Aleutians is in July and August.

Finally, the Northwest Passage is a wildly unique experience not for the "feint of heart". Cruise along the ice flows and see arctic scenery very few in the world have ever witnessed. This type of cruise

takes a couple of years of planning and requires the right electronics. An ice navigator is recommended as well. Four yachts navigated the Northwest Passage in 2009.

The government has a way of taking some of the "shine off" however. Alaska does have some regulations that should be addressed prior to arriving. There are pilotage regulations. Vessels from 19.8 meters (65 feet) to 53.4 meters (175 feet) length overall (LOA) should apply for a pilotage exemption. Vessels over 53.4 meters (175 feet) are required to hire a pilot full time while navigating in Alaska waters.

Yachts over 300 Gross Tons are required to obtain two separate documents, an Alaska Certificate of Financial Responsibility (Alaska COFR) and submit an Alaska Oil Spill Contingency Plan (NTVRP).

Any non-US registered pleasure craft that has been out of the Continental US, Canada, or Alaska within the last two years must undergo a vessel purge administered by the US Department of Agriculture. Hawaii is considered foreign in this regard because of their unique species of flora and fauna. This allows a vessel to dispose of refuse at any US port. The purge consists of a supervised inspection of the galley and the food service areas with a possible sanitized wash down of all food preparation and storage surfaces including the coolers and freezers. All foreign garbage and food containers would be "bagged and tagged" for proper disposal by sanitization or incineration. After completion of the purge the Agriculture folks will issue a *report of inspection* which should have the verbiage "Purged Now Domestic" in the comments section on the inspection report. This allows the vessel to dispose of waste anywhere in the US thereafter. Purging is not an ominous process just a good spring clean.

Yacht Services of Alaska is Alaska's premier yacht agency. Our family owned parent company has been a key player in the maritime industry of Alaska for 56 years. YSA has offices and agents in almost every port and village along Alaska's seacoast. Logistics is our specialty. We handle all the pre-arrival requirements plus support the vessel from arrival to departure as they cruise the scenic waterways of the rain forest, the glacial bays and rocky shores of "The Land of the Midnight Sun".



As your yachts sail up or down the West Coast of North America, Yacht Services of Alaska works closely with other agencies, including AYSS member Mark Drewelow at C2C in San Diego, to provide seamless service from the Mexican border to Prudhoe Bay, Alaska.

If your agency has any questions please call us, we would be glad to get to know you. Mention the "Inside Passage" and Yacht Services of Alaska to your customers wanting something special. We would be glad to hear about the uniqueness of your area so we could reciprocate the "passing of the word".

For more information contact Rex Westergard, Yacht Services of Alaska operations@norpac1.com

