Valor Tours, Ltd.
The Forgotten Front - Aleutians
The Thousand Mile War
2018

June 10 to 24, 2018 - Adak to Dutch Harbor
ALEUTIAN ISLANDS CRUISE/ TOUR
to Dutch Harbor, Umnak, Atka, Adak, Kiska and Attu. Begins and ends at Anchorage Airport.
While most World War II theaters of operations are well understood, very little is known about the Aleutian Campaign and the Kuril Operations that followed. The Aleutians were the scenes of the only carrier base and land base bombing of the North American targets, and the only time since the War of 1812 that a foreign power had occupied American soil on the continent.

The Aleutian Campaign occurred early in the war and quickly became overshadowed by other World War campaigns and battles. It became “The Forgotten Front.”

Five Aleutian World War II locations Adak Army Base and Naval Base, the Attu Battlefield and U.S. Army and Naval Airfields, Dutch Harbor Naval Operating Base and Fort Mears, Fort Glenn on Unmak Island and the Japanese occupation site on Kiska are listed as National Historic Landmarks. Additionally, the Attu Battle site, the Kiska Japanese occupation site and the B-24D wreckage site on Adak have been designated Valor in the Pacific sites, three of nine.

Finally, Dutch Harbor has been made a World War II National Historic Area. It is the site of a sizable coastal defense position and the location of two museums, one concentrating on Aleut cultural and the other on World War II, and an impressive memorial park.

Valor Tours offers a unique opportunity to visit these places. They are not your typical well manicured Civil War and European battlefields, but sites that have retained their natural settings and artifacts of war. The tour also affords an opportunity to visit the Aleutians islands, to go ashore, and experience the relatively unspoiled flora and fauna of a National Wildlife Refuge.
Today, the war sites, especially Attu, Atka and Kiska, in the Aleutians are extremely difficult to reach because of their remoteness. All three contain remnants of war, especially the uninhabited Kiska with its many Japanese coastal defense and anti-aircraft positions. Valor Tours has been fortunate to secure the services Alaska Marine Expeditions and its 72-foot steel hulled motor vessel, MV Puk-Uk, owned and operated by Billy Choate of Homer, Alaska, an old hand in Bearing Sea and North Pacific waters.

As a warning, the voyage through the Aleutians and walking ashore are not easy. They require physical ability and endurance. This is not your typical battlefield tour, but more of an expedition to a seldom visited place. The term Valor in the Pacific and Valor Tours apply to this trip.

In addition to the WWII sites and theme of this tour, our passengers will be treated to the best viewing of bird life, marine life and nature’s beauty during our trek through the Aleutians.

Left: Kiska, Gertrude Cove. On the left, sunken Japanese transport wreck, the Borneo Maru, and our vessel, the Pukuk to the right.
The 72’ MV Pukuk was custom built for Alaska chartering. State of the art safety and comfort features make this vessel ideal for customers with limited experience at sea or who have reservations about living on and traveling by boat. The Pukuk also has an advanced electronic hydraulic stabilization system, which enables the boat to ride more comfortably in rough weather. This is a particularly important feature for passengers with little boating experience who may be concerned about motion sickness. Below deck is a common area for meals, relaxing, visiting and entertainment. This area includes the galley, cushioned bench seats and tables, a flat screen TV and DVD player. An excellent location for presentations. The galley is equipped with a full time cook and all meals onboard are included. Please let us know if you have any food allergies.

There are four staterooms below deck: three staterooms have two berths each and one large stateroom has four berths – all are bunk style. Each stateroom has a bronze porthole which opens, multiple power outlets, hooks, shelves and adjustable heaters. The vessel can accommodate up to 10 passengers. Each berth has memory foam mattress, bedding and a personal reading light. The four staterooms share two bathrooms on the same deck.

A utility room with washer and dryer is available for passengers’ use. There is plenty of room for passengers who are interested in spending time in the pilothouse. Enjoy the scenery from every direction as you learn about the navigation electronics. The Pukuk has two ship-to-shore skiffs with outboard engines to get passengers ashore.

Itinerary subject to weather and tidal conditions. Roads are not maintained so lots of walking here. No vehicles. Travel tips on what to expect and what to wear/pack are sent to each participant upon application.
Passengers on this cruise/tour must be mobile, able to climb into and out of zodiacs which take you ashore, get into a survival suite and must be prepared for lots of walking as there is no vehicle transport on these islands, except Dutch Harbor and Adak. One must be able to walk long distances over uneven terrain. You can always stay onboard the vessel and choose not to go ashore at any port. Even though it will be summer, weather conditions can change in an instant, so be prepared for possible rough seas. You must be able to climb on and off our vessel while it is bobbing up and down. One must be physically fit. If over the age of 60 a medical release from your doctor may be required.

We dedicate this expedition to Col. John Cloe, retired Air Force historian and author of several books and articles on Alaska’s military past. John came to Valor Tours in 2012 with the idea of an expedition by vessel through the Aleutian Islands, and so with his help we embarked on the first ever WWII cruise/tour through the Aleutians to Kiska, Attu, Adak, among others, in 2013. It was a great success, due in large part to John’s expertise. He was scheduled to take the 2017 expedition but passed away on Dec. 26, 2016 after a brief illness. We know we have his blessing to continue this expedition this year and next, especially in light of the 75th Anniversary. Thank you John for everything you have done for keeping WWII history alive.

President Bush designated Attu, Kiska and the B-24 remains on Atka as three of the nine Valor in the Pacific sites. The Secretary of the Interior has designated Attu and Kiska as Historic Landmarks.

“Adak was fun. Tons of stuff. I have seen lots of Cold War and WWII installations all over the World, so it is interesting to see the parallels and share the information.” Michael Van Best 2015 tour

“I had a great time in June and would love to return for a future expedition.” John Lukacs (author) 2013 tour

"Aleutian’s trip went well although walking was difficult at times in the tundra." Paul Holland 2013 tour

“The Aleutian Islands 'boot camp' was an awesome experience! I'm glad to have been a part of it. Truly the road less traveled. Tis a place few have visited. Wow!” Passenger in 2015 trip

Travel Insurance
This tour package includes emergency travel insurance: trip delay, missed connections, baggage delay/lose, evacuation/repatriation, accident & sickness medical, 24 hour AD&D, travel assistance and concierge. It does not include cancellation coverage which is available for additional cost: $7000 of coverage $435.00 per person; $8000 of coverage $498.00 per person.
Cost based on min/max 9 passengers per cruise $7,500 per person, twin share or quad share basis. First come – first served. Includes air fare from Anchorage to Adak and from Dutch Harbor to Anchorage, or visa versa depending on the trip you chose; one night Grand Aleutian Hotel; 13 nights aboard the MV Pukuk; all meals onboard; services of historian John Cloe as tour leader; vehicle tour of Adak and Dutch Harbor sites (no vehicle transport available on islands inbetween); emergency medical/evacuation travel insurance; National Wildlife Refuge System Commercial Activities Special Use permit fee and Coast Guard permit fee.

One night will be spent at the Grand Aleutian Hotel at Dutch Harbor. One may stay additional nights for about $200 per night.

Montage by Michel Van Best, participant on 2015 cruise/tour.