

GOING WILD IN ALASKA'S 'SILVER TRIANGLE'

Small cruise ships give passengers an intimate look at the state's teeming wildlife

By ANNE Z. COOKE
and STEVE HAGGERTY
McClatchy-Tribune News Service

FREDERICK SOUND, Alaska — “There’s a whale right here, next to us!” whispered 15-year-old Will, leaning over the railing and frantically trying to focus his camera on the shiny black hump off the port side bow. “And there’s another one, right there!” he said, pointing at the second giant head that rose up and tipped sideways, fixing a round black eye on the ship.

Humpback whales, too many to count, circled the Sea Bird as the 62-passenger vessel, a Lindblad Expedition cruise ship, idled in Alaska’s Frederick Sound. Like kids at the circus, afraid of missing something, Will and his cousin Dagney — my nephew and niece — dashed back and forth across the deck, counting the whales: two close to Will, another four off the starboard bow and more in the distance. Gently rippling the water’s glassy surface, the behemoths rose, blew long frothy breaths and with a final flip of enormous white-flecked flukes, dived out of sight.

Warmed by long sunny days, the Inland Passage’s krill population explodes in summer, attracting hundreds of humpbacks, and in some places, nearly as many cruise ships. As long as the food lasts, the migrating whales — who haven’t eaten in five months — patrol the Sound, following the food, surfacing, diving, hunting and eating nonstop, putting on pounds for the return swim back to Hawaii.

“You don’t have to whisper,” said Jonathan, the ship’s onboard naturalist, out on deck to take photos of his own. “The whales can’t really hear us talk,” he told us.



Photos courtesy Steve Haggerty of Color World / McClatchy News Service

The Sea Bird sails into Glacier Bay during a tour of Alaska’s “silver triangle.”



Kayakers explore the coves in the Tongass Narrows, Ketchikan, on Revillagigedo Island, Alaska.

“They can hear banging and engine noises. High-pitched whines, too. If there were five or six ships here they might swim away. But we’re the only ship with the time to stay and watch.”

Being alone is what wildlife watching is all about, especially in the hidden inlets of the Inside Passage, the interisland coastal route between Vancouver and the Gulf of Alaska. Come July, however, if you chartered a float plane for an aerial tour of the main channel, you could count on spotting 10 mega-ships on the move and another 15 docked at ports

from Ketchikan and Sitka to Juneau and Skagway.

And on shore? Thousands of disappointed travelers standing in line when they’d expected to see eagles, orcas and sea otters. Precious vacation time spent waiting for tour buses and queuing up to pay for souvenirs. Towering 3,000-passenger ships so big calling at ports so small that the sidewalks feel like Times Square. Floating hotels so huge that Alaska is little more than scenery for onboard cooking demonstrations, yoga classes, floor shows and wellness seminars.



Ketchikan welcomes visitors to what it says is “The Salmon Capital of the World.”

That’s not my idea of wild country. I want to see the glaciers from a deck near the water, close enough to hear a fish jump. To kayak along the shoreline, looking for brown bears scratching up gravel in search of a meal. To snap photos of Bird Island, where sea lions haul out on the rocks.

For me, being in the scene is what Alaska cruising is all about.

Cruise West’s fleet used to sail these routes. But the company is gone now, folded in September 2010. Fortunately, five of its expedition-style ships still



Steller sea lions rest on rocks at an islet in Glacier Bay as seen from the Sea Bird of Lindblad Expeditions Alaska.

SOME THINGS TO KNOW IF YOU GO

Per person rates for Lindblad Expedition Cruises include all meals, guided shore excursions, and use of kayaks, sports and weather gear. Not included are alcoholic beverages and some outfitter-guided shore tours, mostly in Sitka and Juneau. To understand the region, invest in my favorite map, the “Inside Passage Cruise Guide,” from Coastal Cruise Tour Guides, at \$15.95, available at www.trektools.com.

ITINERARIES: Most small ship routes in the “silver triangle” sail half-circle routes between Juneau and Sitka. Check websites for specifics.

PRICES: Rates for a seven-day cruise can range from \$3,000 to

\$7,000, depending on the cabin type and date: early season, mid-summer or late summer. All meals, table wines and use of kayaks, snorkels, rubber boots and Zodiac excursions are usually included; alcoholic beverages and tips may not be.

FOR MORE

Un-Cruise Adventures: www.un-cruise.com 888-862-8881.

Fantasy Cruises: www.smallalaskaship.com. 800-234-3861.

Lindblad Expeditions: www.expeditions.com. 800-EXPEDITIONS.

Silver Seas Cruises: www.silverseas.com. 800-334-6544.

sail in the “silver triangle,” the waterways roughly between Skagway in the north, Sitka in the west and Ketchikan in the south. A network of channels, bays and inlets protected by adjacent islands, the region teems with life.

Three of those ships now belong to Inner Sea Discoveries and its deluxe division, American Safari Cruises — rebranded Un-Cruise Adventures a few weeks ago (January 2013).

The new name reflects what the company has been doing all along, says Un-Cruise spokeswoman Sarah Scoltock. “We focus more on adventure and less on the on-ship experience,” she told me. “You can pick a ship and route that best fits your kind of adventure; luxury, active or heritage.”

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Jennifer Lawrence — no pretense, just skill

'Silver Linings Playbook' and 'Hunger Games' star seems completely at home with herself

By **GLENN WHIPP**
Los Angeles Times

LOS ANGELES — Jennifer Lawrence slides into a booth at the casually elegant Culina restaurant at the Four Seasons Hotel. She's on a lunch break from the daylong grind of promoting the international release of "Silver Linings Playbook," but she's not eating because she just shared a "brick" of homemade lasagna that a journalist gave her during her last interview. Lawrence does accept the focaccia bread and olive oil a waiter offers and politely declines another offering once she's finished.

"If I'm going to wear this skirt," Lawrence says, laughing, pointing to the white number she's sporting, "I can't fit another thing into my gut."

When the waiter touts the lightness of the bread, she interjects: "It's not a weight issue. Trust me. I'm barely fitting into my outfit!"

She then turns to her lunch companion. "So, I've had the lasagna," she says playfully. "What did you bring me?"

There's a refreshing lack of pretense with Lawrence, evident from the moment you meet her and she confesses that her iPhone bullies her, its Siri app calling her "Meredith" whenever she asks it a question.

But that's trivial compared to the disdain that the 22-year-old Kentucky native, who has received her second lead actress Oscar



The Weinstein Company / AP

Jennifer Lawrence, left, and Bradley Cooper are shown "Silver Linings Playbook."



Photo by Chris Pizzello of Invision / AP

Jennifer Lawrence is shown in Beverly Hills on Monday.

nomination with her turn in "Silver Linings," feels toward the sense of entitlement that runs rampant in the movie industry.

She's also acutely aware of the influence she has on young women, particularly now that she's playing the strong, self-possessed heroine Katniss Everdeen in the movies adapted from Suzanne Collins' young adult trilogy that began with "The Hunger Games."

"I was a teenager too — hard to believe, right? — and remember reading magazines and tabloids," she says. "I don't think the media realizes how much they glorify anorexia. You have an actress who loses a bunch of

weight for a role and she's explaining how she lost it. 'I ate one grape a day and I lost 25 pounds and I was dangerously underweight and now I get awards.'

"With Katniss, I never meant to make a big deal about it. It was just important she was strong and a warrior instead of being wasted away, especially when, without a doubt, she's going to be a role model for a lot of young girls. I thought it would be better for them to say, 'I could look like Katniss,' rather than 'I'll never be able to look like that if I keep eating.'"

Soon after signing to play Tiffany, the bullheaded young widow in "Silver Linings Playbook" who falls for a man fresh out of a mental care facility, Lawrence discovered a kindred soul in the movie's writer and director, David O. Russell, whose blunt honesty delighted her.

She'd be in the middle of a scene, hurtling through a monologue, and hear Russell groaning at the monitor, offering a running commentary along the lines of "Ooooooh. That's so bad. Oh, God. Uuuuuuuh." Lawrence

would finish and ask, "Do you want me to do it again?" And Russell would answer, "Oh, God, yes!"

"It's so hilarious to me, especially after working in Hollywood where everyone tiptoes around actors and their feelings," Lawrence says.

"We're all doing the same thing. We're all making a film. Let's just cut the ... Don't tell me what I'm doing right. Tell me what I'm doing wrong, so I can fix it. I came from a sports family, so I respond better to that approach."

It would seem the whole team responded well to the vibe on set. The film received a total of eight Oscar nominations, including nods for picture, Russell for writing and for directing, one each for costars Bradley Cooper, Robert De Niro and Jacki Weaver, and one for editing.

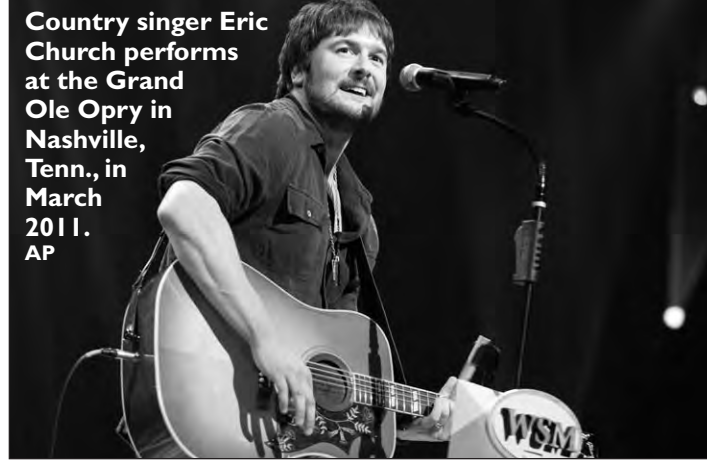
Russell, when asked about Lawrence, who auditioned for him via a Skype call from her parents' Louisville home, responds, interestingly, with a sports analogy, likening Lawrence's effortlessness to New York Yankees great Joe DiMaggio.

"She's a great natural athlete," Russell says. "She's not neurotic. She's very comfortable in her own skin and has such a presence about her."

Harvey (Weinstein, whose company financed the film) was very uncertain of her because of her age. But she seems ageless to me."

Cooper also picks up on the age thing.

"She's like 10 and 40 at the same time," Cooper says. "She would be sort of goofing around, and you think she's not really paying attention. And then she would turn on this instant laser focus and do something magical."



Country singer Eric Church performs at the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, Tenn., in March 2011. AP

Church gets seven Country Music Awards nominations

By **RANDY LEWIS**
Los Angeles Times

LOS ANGELES — Lionize your rock and country heroes in songs and good things will follow — it worked for Taylor Swift, who launched her career six years ago with her single "Tim McGraw," and it worked for Eric Church, who leads the 48th Academy of Country Music Awards nominations with seven, including his single saluting the Boss, "Springsteen."

The hit track, which recently scored Church a pair of Grammy nominations, earned Church ACM nods both as the single record and song of the year. He's also vying for album of the year with "Chief," which contains that single, as well as male vocalist, video and vocal event of the year.

Close on the Granite Falls, N.C., singer and songwriter's heels is fast-rising Louisiana-bred musician Hunter Hayes, who collected six nominations including song and single for his ballad "Wanted" and new male vocalist.

Miranda Lambert and Swift each got five nominations, pitting them against one another in the

top category of entertainer of the year, a distinction Swift has taken home three times, including the last two years in a row. Also up for the entertainer trophy are Jason Aldean, Luke Bryan and Blake Shelton.

Bryan, Little Big Town and first-time ACM nominee Kacey Musgraves collected four nods apiece, Musgraves making it into the always-heated competition for female vocalist of the year with Lambert, Swift, Martina McBride and Carrie Underwood.

Other album of the year nominees are Carrie Underwood's "Blown Away," Swift's "Red," Bryan's "Tailgates & Tanlines" and Little Big Town's "Tornado."

In addition to the Church and Hayes entries in the single record competition are the Eli Young Band's "Even If It Breaks Your Heart," Lambert's "Over You" and Little Big Town's "Pontoon," the latter having just earned the group a Grammy Award for country duo or group performance.

The ACM Awards will be announced April 7 in a ceremony to be held at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas and broadcast on CBS-TV.

Wild

from Page 6C

Un-Cruise's seven-ship Alaska fleet has been redesigned to carry fewer passengers, more crew and a lot more outdoor gear: kayaks, inflatable rafts, snorkel and scuba gear. The company's so-called "luxury yachts" offer extras such as yoga classes and spa treatments. The "active" ships are designed for travelers who'd rather join than watch, sportsmen on the go.

"We've gotten very good at breaking up large groups into units of eight or 10, each with a guide, so that when you're out in a Zodiac or walking along the beach, you feel like one of a very few," said Scoltock. "Even with 80 passengers on board — and that's not a lot — each person has a truly personal experience."

As for the Sea Bird, she sails where giant ships can't go, maneuvering in shallow coves and through narrow fiords. With flex time built into the schedule, her captain is free to follow a pod of swimming orcas or to stop to photograph a raft of sea otters.

"Each trip has an intended itinerary" said Brian Silver, an adventure specialist at Lindblad's headquarters. "But these are expeditions with a purpose, to show you wildlife and the wildness. And since animals travel and weather conditions vary, it's possible that you'll visit slightly different places."

The onboard naturalists on our trip — experts in marine biology, geology, regional history or native cultures — guided most onshore outings and led the daily pre-excursion orientations, sometimes with spot-on timing. We were standing by the rail, talking about melting glaciers just as a giant chunk of ice calved off into water.

Our only port-of-call was at Petersburg, a fishing village settled by Norwegians. We stretched our land legs on a guided "bog walk," then wandered about, visiting the history museum and the drug store (handy if you run out of toothpaste). And we sampled one of the town's several fish-and-chip joints, serving the world's best (no kidding)



Photo courtesy Steve Haggerty, ColorWorld / McClatchy News Service

Spawning salmon leap the fish ladders at the Macaulay Fish Hatchery near Juneau, Alaska, during the cruise.

fresh halibut, beer-battered and deep fried.

The Sea Bird's interior is small but efficiently designed, with several lounges, a dining room and 32 outside cabins. The decor, in simple blue and white, is renovated annually; the cabins are small but have adequate space and spotless efficiency bathrooms. Dress and meals are casual, with

buffet service at breakfast and lunch.

Hearty three-course dinners with white and red wine, were waiter-served at a single seating, with no assigned tables. That gave us a chance to move around and sit with passengers we'd met on excursions, kindred spirits with similar life experiences and sometimes even politics. "The people on these kinds of cruises are birds of a feather," said Joyce Hunter, a retiree from Michigan.

For this or any expedition cruise, I recommend hiking boots or sturdy tennis shoes. You may have to walk on a dirt path, a gravel beach, and will probably climb in and out of the Zodiacs. Our passenger contingent ranged from 35 to 65 years old, but there were exceptions: a toddler, two teenagers and several octogenarians. While we tramped on the beaches and paddled kayaks, the seniors were happy to watch from the deck or the lounge.

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TELEVISION

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SUNDAY EVENING FEBRUARY 17, 2013

	6 PM	6:30	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30	11 PM	11:30	
BROADCAST	KOBI (5.1) (5) NBC 5 News at 6 p.m.	Academic Challenge "Rogue River vs. St. Mary's"	Dateline NBC (CC)		Betty White's Off Their Rockers (CC)	Betty White's Off Their Rockers (CC)	Saturday Night Live in the '90's: Pop Culture Focusing on the highs and lows of the 1990s with classic moments and new. (CC) (N)				NBC 5 News at 11 p.m.	(40) Law & Order "Past Imperfect" (CC)	
	KSYS (6.1) (8) Oregon Art Beat (CC)	Oregon Field Guide (CC)	Antiques Roadshow "Boston (Hour Three)" Folk art carvings at the historic Sleeper-McCann House. (CC)		Himalaya With Michael Palin "Bhutan to the Bay of Bengal" Meet once-feared headhunters. (CC)		Masterpiece Classic "Downton Abbey, Series III" The Crawleys head to a Scottish hunting lodge while the downstairs staff stays behind. (CC)		Janson Movie Star Package "Audrey Hepburn Remembered" Friends reflect on one of movie's best-loved stars. (CC)		News 10 at 11 p.m. (CC)		CSI: Miami (CC)
	KTVL (10.1) (10) News 10 at 6 p.m. (CC)	CBS Sunday Evening News (CC)	60 Minutes (CC)		The Amazing Race "Business in the Front, Party in the Back" Teams skydive from 10,000 feet in Bora Bora. (SP) (CC) (N)		The Good Wife "Red Team/ Blue Team" Office politics come to a head during a mock trial. (CC) (N)		The Mentalist "Red in Tooth and Claw" The team delves into the cutthroat world of academics. (CC) (N)		NewsWatch 12 at 11:00		Paid Program (CC)
	KDRV (12.1) (12) NewsWatch 12 at 6:00	ABC World News With David Muir (CC)	America's Funniest Home Videos A woman's reaction to ultrasound results. (CC) (N)		Once Upon a Time "Manhattan" Mr. Gold and Emma go in search of Gold's son Bae. (CC) (N)		Revenge "Sacrifice" Jack and Amanda sail off on their honeymoon. (CC) (N)		Revenge for Real "Rocky Mountain Retribution" A woman is killed by a hitman hired by her husband. (CC) (N)		NewsWatch 12 at 11:00		Paid Program (CC)
	KMVU (26.1) (13) The Big Bang Theory (CC)	The Big Bang Theory (CC)	The Simpsons "Moonshine River" (CC)	The Cleveland Show (N)	The Simpsons "Hardly Kirk- ing" (CC) (N)	(35) Bob Burger "Lindapendant Woman" (CC) (N)	Family Guy "Chris Cross" (CC) (N)	American Dad "The Limit, One More Time" (CC) (N)	Fox 26 News First at Ten (CC)	(35) Two and a Half Men (CC)	(05) The Office (CC)	(35) The Office (CC)	
	KFBI (48.1) (3) First Family (CC)	First Family (CC)	Mr. Box Office (CC)	Mr. Box Office (CC)	Leverage (CC)		Leverage (CC)		Live From Daryl's (CC)		Crook and Chase (CC)		Scrubs (CC)
	KBLN (23) (2) 3ABN Today (CC)	Revelation In. "The Millennium"		Liberty Insider	Daily Living	Revelation Speaks Hope (CC)		Studies in Matthew		Celebrating Life in Recovery			
	TBN (41) (91) Voice of Victory	Creflo Dollar	Praise the Lord (CC)		Liberty Insider	Daily Living	People Who Met Jesus		SecretsBible	The Well (CC)	BehindScenes	Praise Lord	
	KDOV (44) (18) The Brody File	Heart in Caroli.	Feature (CC)	Feature	Joni&Friends	World Know	Christian News	God's Mighty	All Over World	Answers	Restoration	Rock Nations	
	CW (10.2) (11) Are We There Yet?	Are We There Yet?	King of Queens "Class Struggle"	King of Queens "Dark Meet"	*** Cheatin' Hearts (1993, Western) Sally Kirkland, Rene Estevez, James Brolin. A husband returns to the family he abandoned. (CC)		Seinfeld "The Nose Job" (CC)		Seinfeld "The Alternate Side"	Rules of Engagement		Rules of Engagement	
CABLE STATIONS	ROOT (23) Car Warriors (CC)	NCAA Basketball USC vs. California (L) (CC)		WPT Poker World Championship		NCAA Basketball Oregon State vs. Washington (CC)							
	ESPN (24) (5:00) Track & Field	Sport Science		Best of the NFL	SportsCenter (CC)		SportsCenter (CC)		SportsCenter (CC)				
	A&E (36) Shipping Wars	Shipping Wars	Storage Wars	Storage Wars	Storage Wars	Storage Wars	Storage Wars	Storage Wars	Storage Wars	Storage Wars	Storage Wars	Storage Wars	
	TNT (38) (5:00) NBA Basketball All-Star Game (L) (CC)	NBA Basketball All-Star Game Site: Toyota Center -- Houston, Texas (CC)		*** Jackie Brown (97) Samuel L. Jackson, Pam Grier. (CC)		Law & Order: S.V.U.		Law & Order: S.V.U.		Ocean's Thirteen (07)			
	USA (40) Law & Order: S.V.U.	Law & Order: S.V.U.		Law & Order: S.V.U.		Law & Order: S.V.U.		Law & Order: S.V.U.		Ocean's Thirteen (07)			
	TBS (41) (5:30) *** Why Did I Get Married? (07) Tyler Perry. (CC)	*** Why Did I Get Married Too? (10) Janet Jackson.		*** Why Did I Get Married Too? (10) Janet Jackson.		*** Why Did I Get Married Too? (10) Janet Jackson.		*** Why Did I Get Married Too? (10) Janet Jackson.		*** Why Did I Get Married Too? (10) Janet Jackson.			
	FX (44) (5:00) *** Live Free or Die Hard (07, Act) Justin Long, Timothy Olyphant, Bruce Willis. John McClane takes on terrorist hackers. (CC)	*** Tron: Legacy (10, Action) Garrett Hedlund, Olivia Wilde, Jeff Bridges. The son of a virtual world designer ends up inside one of the world's his father created. (CC)		*** Tron: Legacy (10) Jeff Bridges. A son looks for his father in a virtual world. (CC)		*** Tron: Legacy (10) Jeff Bridges. A son looks for his father in a virtual world. (CC)		*** Tron: Legacy (10) Jeff Bridges. A son looks for his father in a virtual world. (CC)		*** Tron: Legacy (10) Jeff Bridges. A son looks for his father in a virtual world. (CC)			
	DISC (50) Moonshiners "Moonshine Treasure Hunt" (CC)	Moonshiners "Hat in Hand" (CC)		Gold Rush "The Night Shift" (CC)		Gold Rush "Bedrock Blowout" (CC)		Gold Rush "Redemption Road" (CC)		Gold Rush "Bedrock Blowout" (CC)			
	TLC (52) Here Comes Honey Boo Boo "A Very Boo Christmas"	Gypsy Sisters "Blood Is Thicker Than Bling"		Gypsy Sisters "The Queen of All Cons"		Gypsy Sisters "Last Fling Before the Ring" (N)		Here Comes Honey Boo Boo "A Very Boo Christmas"		Gypsy Sisters "Last Fling Before the Ring"			
	SPEED (85) The Day "Remembering Dale Earnhardt" (CC)	My Classic Car (CC)	Car Crazy	Speed Center (CC)		NASCAR Auto Racing Daytona 500 Pole Qualifying (CC)		The Day "Remembering Dale Earnhardt" (CC)		Unique Whips "TKO"			
	GOLF (88) (4:00) Golf	PGA Golf Northern Trust Open Final Round Site: Riviera Country Club -- Pacific Palisades, Calif. (CC)		PGA Golf Northern Trust Open Final Round Site: Riviera Country Club -- Pacific Palisades, Calif. (CC)		PGA Golf Northern Trust Open Final Round Site: Riviera Country Club -- Pacific Palisades, Calif. (CC)		PGA Golf Northern Trust Open Final Round Site: Riviera Country Club -- Pacific Palisades, Calif. (CC)		PGA Golf Northern Trust Open Final Round Site: Riviera Country Club -- Pacific Palisades, Calif. (CC)			

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