

AN ICELANDIC ADVENTURE

8 days from Keflavik to Reykjavik

Iceland's beauty will transport you to an atmospheric land of geysers, glaciers, volcanoes and waterfalls. Relax in the natural geothermal pool of The Blue Lagoon, surrounded by black lava beaches. Visit the spectacular Gullfoss waterfall on our Iceland short breaks, and see a breath-taking cascade of water plummeting into a deep canyon. Gaze into the sapphire blue Geysir, and watch steam pillars erupt. A visit to the cosmopolitan capital, Reykjavik, will be a highlight. Overlooked by majestic Mount Esja, it combines the charm of traditional painted houses with a modern cultural metropolis. Our 8 day-Iceland itinerary offers all this and more.



DAY 1 - Blue Lagoon–Reykjavik.

Fly to Keflavik where you will be met by our representative. En route to your hotel, enjoy an included visit to the Blue Lagoon, a unique oasis-like pool and spa set in a large lava field edged by black sand beaches and brimming with geothermally heated sea water. Enjoy a relaxing dip in the warm, mineral-rich waters, which are thought to aid relaxation and relieve stress, whilst the white silica mud cleanses, tones and revitalises. The

lagoon is fed by wells up to 2000 metres deep and reaches temperatures up to 110 degrees Fahrenheit. We then take a short sightseeing tour around Reykjavik where you will travel past Hallgrímskirkja-Church, along the city pond to Lækjargata, into the heart of the capital city. We continue to the fishing harbour, past the Lutheran and Catholic cathedrals, the City Hall and the Icelandic Parliament, the Althingi.

Note:

It is advisable to pack a swimsuit in your hand luggage or within easy access of main luggage for use on arrival at the Blue Lagoon. Towels are included in the admission.

DAY 2 -Reykjavik–Snaefellsnes–Grundarfjordur.

Journey through richly fertile farmlands to the steep cliff stacks of Snaefellsnes Peninsula for a drive along the uniquely beautiful coastal road, overlooked by the Snaefellsjokull glacier made famous by Jules Verne in his novel 'Journey to the Centre of the Earth'. Enjoy plenty of stops to admire the cape's incredible natural wonders, including the harbour village of Arnastapi - for a walk along the cove to hear hundreds of seabirds singing, and the dramatic black basalt beach of Djúpálónssandur, before heading to Grundarfjörður for one night. (B,D)

DAY 3 - Grundarfjordur–Stykkisholmur–Akureyri.

Admire Iceland's irrepressible beauty as you drive through a landscape of glorious green pastures and ancient crooked lava flows. Pass the colourfully picturesque harbour town of Stykkishólmur and journey amidst the rolling hills of Haukadalur Valley to the replica farmhouse of Erik the Red, significant in Viking history as the site from which Erik and his descendants first sailed to Greenland and Canada, for an included visit. This afternoon, head



deep into the blissful Skagafjörður Valley, known as the Valley of the Horses, before driving to Akureyri, the largest town in northern Iceland, for two nights. (B)

DAY 4 - Lake Myvatn.

Visit Godafoss, the 'waterfall of the gods', before heading to the startling yet splendid volcanic vistas of Myvatn. Drive along the lakeshore, admiring the placid waters and abundant wildlife, before stopping at Skútustadir for a closer look at some intriguing volcanic pseudocraters. Next head to Dimmu Borgir's striking 'dark city', a dried up lakebed pierced by crooked yet haunting beautiful lava spires, before visiting the bubbling mud pools at Námaskard. Lastly, venture to the lake's true hot spot, Krafla, where volcanic eruptions have left the black, fissured landscape pocked with the brooding ochre glow of subterranean lava and dramatically veiled with swirling steam. (B)



DAY 5- Akureyri-Reykholt.

Drive to the spectacular geothermal hot springs at Deildartunguhver. Amongst the most powerful in the world, the springs are channelled through vents to heat farms and villages up to 60km away. Next, head to the appealing 'smoky hill' hamlet of Reykholt, set in a sweeping valley backed by dusky mountains and formerly home to the famed Icelandic writer Snorri Sturluson, before visiting the fascinating lava waterfall at Hraunfossar. Watch in awe as clear, fresh water seemingly 'appears' from the solid lava field before coursing down to mix with the glacial river water below. Later, stroll along the river shore to Barnafoss waterfall, where the glacial cascade has carved out eccentric rock formations, before returning to Reykholt for one night. (B,D)

DAY 6 - Reykholt-Thingvellir-Geysir-Gullfoss-Reykjavik.

Today, visit some of Iceland's most spectacular sights. Begin in Thingvellir National Park, a rift valley produced by drifting continental plates and home to one of Iceland's most important historical sites, the old parliament, where the national assembly was founded in 930 AD to rule the country. Next, head to the fascinating geyser area to admire the clear, sapphire blue pool of Geysir and watch mesmerizing steam pillars erupt from the earth's geothermal vents. Reaching 30m in height, the mightiest plumes erupt from Strokkur every 5-10 minutes. Later, view the magnificent 70m plunging cascade of 'Gullfoss' - the Golden Waterfall, set against a backdrop of towering basalt columns, before heading to Reykjavik. (B)

DAY 7 - South Shore-Reykjavik.



Explore the South Shore today including the graceful, ribbon-like waterfall of Seljalandsfoss and the awesome 60m cascade of Skógafoss waterfall. Visit the tiny settlement of Skogar, to admire turf-clad homesteads and perhaps view the



delightful folk museum before continuing to the seaside village of Vik, where a lunar-like landscape of black sand beaches and surreal rock stacks is home to wildlife such as puffins, which

are usually found in the summer, and seal colonies. Later, marvel at the beauty of the crisp ice of the Sólheimajökull glacier ice-wall and enjoy a visit to Eyrarbakki village before heading back to Reykjavik. (B,D)

DAY 8 - Reykjavik.

Your holiday ends this morning with breakfast. (B)

COME HOME WITH WONDERFUL MEMORIES OF THE TOUR!!!

Sightseeing:

In Reykjavik Blue Lagoon, Farmhouse of Erik the Red, Thingvellir National Park, Skogar, and Eyrarbakki village. Inside visits as shown in UPPERCASE in the tour description, including admission charges where applicable.

Guides:

English-speaking guide on tour

Scenic Highlights:

Hallgrímskirkja-Church, Icelandic Parliament, Snaefellsnes Peninsula, Snaefellsjökull glacier, Djúpálónssandur Black Beach, Harbour town of Stykkishólmur, Haukadalur Valley, Skagafjörður Valley, Valley of the Horses, Godafoss, the 'waterfall of the gods', mud pools at Námaskard, Dimmu Borgir's, Deildartunguhver hot springs, Hraunfossar Lava Waterfall, Thingvellir National Park, Geysir, 'Gullfoss' - the Golden Waterfall, South Shore, Seljalandsfoss & Skógafoss waterfalls, and Sólheimajökull glacier.

Transportation:

Private, deluxe air-conditioned motorcoach while touring.

Meals

7 breakfasts, 7 lunches, 7 dinners

ACCOMMODATIONS

REYKJAVIK Fosshotel Lind (ST)

GRUNDARFJORDUR Hotel Framnes (T)

AKUREYRI AREA Hotel Nordurland (ST)

BORGARFJOROUR Fosshotel Reykholt (ST)