



Western Wonders and Hot Springs

The west's peaceful winter countryside represents Iceland in miniature with glaciers, waterfalls, seacoast, charming villages, powerful hot springs and a proudly-preserved history.



YOUR
ADVENTURE
AWAITS

6 days/5 nights

ITINERARY

Day 1: Keflavik-Reykjavik

Arrive Iceland at Keflavik airport and transfer by shared, scheduled transfer to your accommodation on the Reykjanes Peninsula which makes a unique and exotic introduction to Iceland. The unusual lava features and rugged seacoast give the impression of being on a different and beautiful planet. Today is open to relax. Perhaps you'll take a day tour of this peninsula, which is also a recognized UNESCO Geo-park for its volcanic features and tectonic ridge. You might take advantage of the hotel's complimentary transfer service to the Blue Lagoon (bathing fee not included; needs to be booked in advance.) If you want outdoor adventure, try an ATV ride in volcanic landscapes or hiking on the walking trails around the Blue Lagoon. If the weather cooperates, this is also a very good area for viewing northern lights.

Note: Check-in at most hotels begins at 14:00 (2:00pm). Overnight on the Reykjanes Peninsula (Northern Light Inn or similar). No meals included.

Day 2: Reykjanes Peninsula – Borgarfjörður Fjord – Hraunfoss Falls – Husafell

Viking Explorer Museum –Historical Fjord – Lava Waterfalls – Picturesque Lava Tube Cave – Nature Resort Breakfast at your hotel. Begin with a visit to the Viking World museum. The ideal West Iceland trip should begin with the Vikings; Western Iceland was one of the first places to be settled by Norsemen and you can still see their influence. This museum tells the tale of North Atlantic Vikings who settled Iceland and discovered Greenland and North America. View Settlement Age artefacts and the Islendingur Viking ship replica that sailed between Iceland and North America in 2000. Travel along the rugged Reykjanes Peninsula, skirting around Reykjavik. Take a cleverly-designed undersea tunnel that leads to West Iceland. Enjoy the lovely cliffs and coasts of Borgarfjörður Fjord, one of Iceland's first Viking settlement areas. Drive by Borgarnes and Reykholt, home of a Medieval Chieftain and Saga writer. Stop for lunch (on your own) at Bruaras Geo Centre, a new Information Centre with a focus on the area's geology and nearby natural attractions. One of those natural wonders is nearby: Hraunfossar or the Lava Falls. Stop to admire the view of glacial water bursting through lava formations. Lava also has created many caves in West Iceland. Visit Vidgelmir Cave with a local guide, enjoying the amazing colours and shapes created by ancient volcanic activity. This cave also was known to Vikings; artefacts have been found here. Afterwards, drive to Husafell, a beloved nature resort vacation destination for Icelanders.

You will be staying at the Hotel Husafell, where you can enjoy the hot spring-fed swimming pool. Dinner and overnight stay at Hotel Husafell (or similar).

Day 3: Husafell – Langjökull Glacier – Deildartunguhver – Stykkisholmur

Glacial Tunnel and Caves – Powerful Western Hot Springs – Geothermal Baths – Town of 1,000 Islands.

Breakfast at hotel. Today's western wonder focus is on glaciers! The western edge of the highland interior is home to Langjökull, Iceland's second largest glacier. The glacier has shaped much of Western Iceland. Today you will visit a unique man-made ice tunnel built into the glacier. Drive into the highland wilderness and up to the foot of Langjökull.

Board a uniquely-designed "monster" vehicle that will safely take your group up the slopes of the glacier and to the entrance of the Into the Glacier ice tunnel and ice caves. A local glacier-expert guide will bring you into the glacier itself and point out different features of the glacier. You will learn how glaciers are formed, why glacier ice is so blue and why glaciers are so important to Iceland's creation and the planet. You'll also learn why it is so important to protect glaciers. After lunch at Husafell (on your own), it's time to see the warmer side of glaciers with a visit to



Deildartunguhver. Created by volcanically heated glacial water, these natural hot springs are the most powerful in Europe. Walk along the edge of Deildartunguhver and listen to the powerful rushing, churning water. It is not possible to bathe here. Now it is time to head onto Iceland's longest peninsula, Snaefellsnes. The destination is Stykkisholmur, an eco-friendly town on the north side of the peninsula. The town looks over a bay dotted with thousands of tiny islands. The town centre has lovingly preserved historical buildings, giving it a feel of being from an older, simpler time.

You will stay here for the next two nights. Dinner and overnight stay in Stykkisholmur.

Day 4: Stykkisholmur – Snaefellsnes Peninsula – Snaefellsjokull National Park – Stykkisholmur

Scenic Soft Snowshoe Hike – Local Legends and History – Glacier and Coastal National Park.

Breakfast at your hotel. Today's focus is on the crown jewel of Western Iceland: Snaefellsjokull National Park, named for its mysterious glacial volcano. Enjoy a combination of soft hiking activity, local culture and sightseeing for a special experience of this national park. Drive along the northern coast of Snaefellsnes Peninsula to Hellisandur village. Here you'll take a special off road vehicle into the nearby mountains. Put on snowshoes and enjoy a short guided hike between lava formations to a hidden wilderness dome tent. Take a break here with traditional Icelandic hot chocolate and flat bread before hiking back, experiencing great views of Snaefellsjokull and the coastline. After lunch in a coastal village (on your own), discover more about the history of Snaefellsnes with a clever one-man performance in a former freezer plant that is now a theatre and culture centre (one-hour performance in English). Relax with a sightseeing tour through the varied landscapes of the national park, viewing wind-tangled sea cliffs, tiny villages and basalt columns. You'll also see the legendary Snaefellsjokull glacier from different angles. Return along the south peninsula to Stykkisholmur for your overnight.

Dinner is on your own. The town has several excellent restaurants reflecting its history and coastal heritage. Overnight stay in Stykkisholmur.

Snowshoe Hike information: Hiking level is easy to moderate. Total hiking time is around 1 hour. Hiking distance is about 1 km (a little over half a mile) with a total elevation gain of 100 meters (about 3 feet). Participants should be in reasonable physical shape.

Day 5: Stykkisholmur – Borgarnes – Reykjavik

Guided Town Walk – Local Legends and History – Iceland's Capital City.

Breakfast at your hotel. Start the day with a refreshing and interesting town walk led by a local guide. Stykkisholmur was one of the country's first towns to become completely sustainable, with a huge focus on environmental and historical preservation. On this tour you'll learn about how the town harnesses the area geothermal energy and visit some of the places involved in the process. Your guide will also tell you about the history of the town and life in a small coastal village. During the walk you'll take a break to enjoy a taste of Stykkisholmur with a small picnic. Afterwards, there is the option to relax in the hot tubs at the town's geothermal pool. (Not included in price). Then it is time to say goodbye to Snaefellsnes and West Iceland. Drive to Reykjavik, Iceland's vibrant capital city, arriving in the afternoon.

The rest of the day is on your own to enjoy the museums, galleries and cafes of Reykjavik. Dinner is on your own. Reykjavik has an amazing variety of restaurants, so it will be fun finding your perfect place. Overnight in Reykjavik.

Day 6: Reykjavik – Keflavik

After breakfast, check-out of your hotel and shuttle back to the airport (extra cost) to catch your flight home.

This day by day itinerary is subject to change by the tour operator without advance notice. The tour operator's itinerary takes precedence over this outline.

Details

Group Size: Max. 16

2017-18 Winter Departures:

November: 13, 27

February: 07, 14, 21, 28

2017-18 Pricing:

US\$2,405 – twin

US\$2,827 – single

Prices are shown in US\$ per person based on two people sharing a twin room and one person in a single room. Triple rooms are not available on this tour. Prices are set in US\$ and CA\$ prices are not available for this program.

Trip Code:



008202-W25

INCLUDED

- Shared, scheduled arrival transfer from Keflavik Airport to hotel
- 1 night of hotel accommodation in Reykjanes Peninsula
- 1 night of hotel accommodation in Husafell
- 2 nights of hotel accommodation in Stykkisholmur
- 1 night of hotel accommodation in Reykjavik
- Breakfast daily at hotel (except morning of arrival)
- Fully guided, small-group tour from day 2 to the end of day 5
- 2 three-course dinners with coffee/tea in the countryside on days 2 and 3
- Admission to Viking World Museum, Reykjanes Peninsula
- Guided tour of Vidgelmir Cave
- Into the Glacier tour
- Guided snowshoe hike with light refreshments in Snaefellsness
- One-actor stage performance at the Freezer Theatre and Culture Centre in Rif
- Guided geothermal-themed walking tour in Stykkisholmur

NOT INCLUDED

- Airfare to/from Iceland
- Breakfast on morning of arrival
- Meals, drinks and refreshments not indicated
- Swimsuit at Krauma (rentals available)
- Transfer on day of departure from Reykjavik to Keflavik
- Optional tours not listed above
- Early check-in at hotel on day of arrival (usual check-in is 2pm)
- Travel insurance
- Gratuities
- Items of a personal nature
- Passport and visa fees, if necessary

TOUR NOTES

This specially-crafted small winter group tour is ideal for those who want something more than classic sightseeing in bustling areas.

Experience Iceland's geology from many angles: deep within a lava cave, inside a vast glacier and along rugged coastline. Get closer to Iceland's culture through locally guided walks and a unique one-person theatrical performance. Discover Viking treasures and how West Iceland reflects Viking history. Take an easy snowshoe hike in a famous national park. Relax in geothermal pools fed by natural hot springs. Overnight in picturesque communities off the tourist track, mingling with the locals. If the weather conditions are optimal, you'll also be in ideal areas to view northern lights. Above all, you'll experience Iceland's nature and culture in a special way.

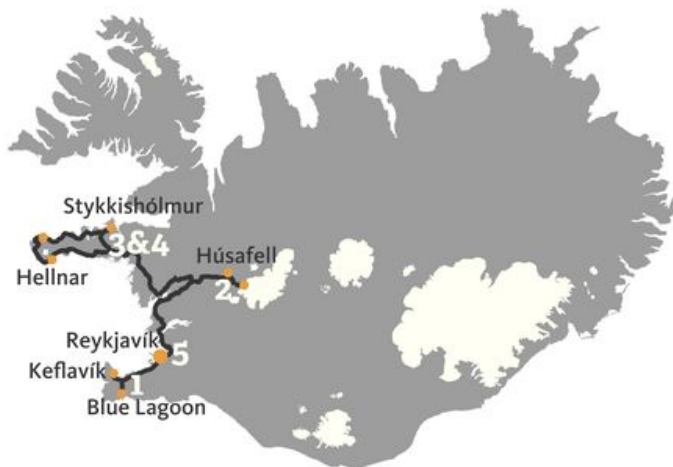
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ROUTE MAP



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