



## Grand Tour of Iceland

Iceland is a country like no other, almost its own little planet with exceptional landscapes: some of the world's finest waterfalls, erupting geysers, stunning fjords, magical lagoons, active volcanoes, majestic glaciers, powerful lava flows as well as tranquil lakes with rare-breeding bird life.



YOUR  
ADVENTURE  
AWAITS

12 days/11 nights

### ITINERARY

#### Day 1, Monday: Welcome To Iceland (50 km/31 mls)

The Flybus shuttle brings you from Keflavík International Airport to Reykjavík where you spend the first night in Iceland. We provide ideas how to explore Iceland's capital on your own.

Total mileage in 10 days is about 2,800 km (1,738 miles), which is an average of 280 km (173 miles) per day. You spend about 4 hours per day on the bus, depending on road conditions, traffic, and daily distances. On some days, especially in the West Fjords, the driving might be longer than on some other days. This tour has an average of 1-2 hours of light walking each day, mostly short walks of 5-20 minutes, to explore and reach many of the natural treasures around Iceland. It is an easy tour for nearly everyone to participate. Grand Tour of Iceland is not a hiking/walking tour, but most trails in Iceland are nature trails which include uneven terrain, gravels, stairs and unpaved trails. Most hotels, farms, and guesthouses used on this tour are simple tourist-class category, many of them set in the most stunning locations.

#### Day 2, Tuesday: Golden Circle (290 km/180 mls)

We see classic highlights today. We explore Gullfoss, the beautiful double "Golden Falls" and we walk through the active geothermal area of Geysir, where Strokkur "the churn" spouts up to 25 meters (70 feet) every five to ten minutes. The next stop is the ancient Viking Parliament area and UNESCO world heritage site of Þingvellir National Park. The Þingvellir plain is situated on a tectonic-plate boundary where North America and Europe are slowly tearing away from each other. As a result, the plain is scarred by dramatic fissures, ponds, and rivers, including the great rift Almannagjá. We continue our journey along the scenic Hvalfjörður fjord. Overnight in Borgarnes, West Iceland.

#### Day 3, Wednesday: Snæfellsnes Peninsula, Lava Cave, Ferry to the West Fjords (290 km/180 mls)

Today, we explore the Snæfellsnes Peninsula, which juts out from Iceland's West Coast like a long arm with a clenched fist at its tip, and which is in many ways a microcosm of the whole island. A rugged mountain chain runs its length, capped by the 1,446-meter Snæfellsjökull glacier, a mystical cone-shaped stratovolcano. We travel around the Snæfellsnes Peninsula, through lava fields, and along the ocean with many classic Icelandic photo opportunities. We see the most popular sites at the Snæfellsnes National Park where volcanic craters, lava flows, an ice cap, glaciated peaks, fjords, sandy beaches, and high cliffs shape its landscapes. We follow the adventure of Jules Verne's classic science-fiction novel about "The Journey to the Center of the Earth". Do not miss your chance to go on your own trip to the interior of the earth under the glacier Snæfellsjökull! This lava cave tour takes you 35 meters underground and about 200 meters into the lava tube called Vatnshellir. During the trip, you reach two different sections of the cave by a long and narrow spiral staircase. The upper section has great features and unique formations of lava statues carved on the sides of the lava tube. In the lower part of the lava cave, you experience total quietness and even total darkness when your guide switches off the light. The duration of the lava cave tour is approximately one hour.



In the afternoon, we catch the car ferry Baldur from Stykkishólmur to Brjánslækur in the West Fjords. On the 2,5 hour journey over Breiðafjörður Bay, we pass the island of Flatey, which is inhabited only during the summertime. If the weather is nice, you enjoy a magnificent view of the bay's countless islands as well as the glacier Snæfellsjökull. We will stay two nights in the area of Patreksfjörður.

**Day 4: Thursday: Iceland's Westernmost Point (150 km/93 mls)**

We follow the coastline and stop at the folk and transport museum in Hnjótur. We continue through a very remote and sparsely populated region to the bird cliffs of Látrabjarg, the largest seabird cliff and the westernmost point of Iceland and Europe where you can see puffins from mid-May till mid-August. We take a walk in the wilderness to the top of the highest bird cliff in Iceland. Látrabjarg is known in the world for its density of Nordic birds. Puffins, razorbills, guillemots, fulmars, cormorants, kittiwakes and other cliff birds flock either in hundreds, thousands and even in millions. Látrabjarg is a place where you can get very close to the seabirds, and even if you're not into birdwatching, you are entertained by the comic puffins and mesmerized by the sheer number of birds. If weather and road conditions allow we travel to Rauðisandur beach with endless red sand. Well, not endless but 10 km is a lot. The magnificent hues of the sand differ with daylight, tides, and weather. This pure sand beach is home to countless of seabirds and seals and is an oasis of unique tranquillity. Forget everything, except maybe getting the perfect shot of the ever-changing hues of yellow, orange and red.

**Day 5, Friday: Beautiful West Fjords (320 km/199 mls)**

We travel over mountains and along the shore of scenic fjords until we reach the majestic fjord Arnarfjörður, surrounded by high mountains. At the bottom of the fjord, we come across the unique waterfall Dynjandi with its seven levels of plunging water, declared the country's most beautiful waterfall by the people of Iceland. We continue over a mountain pass. The trip continues along the southern shores of the West Fjords which is a route less travelled and is characterized by sheer cliffs, deep cut bays and narrow stretches of coastal lowland. We overnight at the remote Vogur Country Lodge in West Iceland. This overnight location is a truly peaceful and beautiful place close to Breiðafjörður Bay, giving you the feeling of being all alone in Iceland.

**Day 6, Saturday: Heading North (350 km/217 mls)**

In the morning we travel mostly off-the-beaten-path, see abandoned farms, beautiful little country churches, and Icelandic horses. At Haukadalur, there's a rather authentic replica of the homestead of Erik the Red, the famous explorer who founded the Icelandic colony in Greenland. His son Leif-the-Lucky, born in Haukadalur, Iceland, was the first European to set foot in North America. Now the excavated and reconstructed farm in Haukadalur is a living Viking museum, a fun, informative and a photogenic place. The landscape is dominated by mountains, lakes, valleys, sea and wide open spaces. We head north and stop at a local farm for lunch and a horse show where we learn about the unique qualities of Iceland's special breed. Afterward, we travel through the fertile farmlands and fjord landscapes of Northwest Iceland before we reach the charming town of Akureyri, Iceland's second-largest city. We will stay two nights in the capital of North Iceland.

**Day 7, Sunday: Northernmost Town (160 km/99 mls)**

During a 6-hour excursion, we see spectacular fjord landscapes while traveling to Siglufjörður, Iceland's northernmost town and known as the herring capital of the North Atlantic. Siglufjörður is located on the mountainous Tröllaskagi Peninsula. On the way, we pass small fishing villages and stop at a deserted valley that even most Icelanders have not seen. Included is a visit to the Herring Museum and also beer tasting at Kaldi, a local micro-brewery. The rest of the day is free at leisure. Maybe you like to go shopping, visit a geothermal swimming pool, stroll through the local botanical garden or try an optional whale watching or horseback riding tour at 17:00. Overnight and dinner in Akureyri.

**Day 8, Monday: Geological Wonders And Nature Baths (150 km/93 mls)**

We explore Goðafoss, the waterfall of the Gods, and continue to Lake Mývatn, known for its abundant bird life and amazing volcanic lava landscapes. We visit pseudo craters, walk in the mysterious lava field Dimmuborgir, see the tephra cone Hverfjall, explore the hot springs, fumaroles and bubbling mud pools of Námaskarð, and travel to the explosion crater lake Víti in the Krafla geothermal fields. In the afternoon relax and soak at the Mývatn Nature Baths. Overnight near Lake Mývatn.

**Day 9, Tuesday: The Secret Of The East (290 km/180 mls)**

We travel to Dettifoss, Europe's most powerful waterfall in the northern part of Vatnajökull National Park. The round trip walk takes about 40-60 minutes. We continue east through the bare and sometimes deserted landscape with mountains all around. Along the way, we stop at Möðrudalur, the all-year residence at the highest altitude in Iceland, 469m above sea level. In the summertime, they run a service center there which is a perfect place to enjoy the view of Herðubreið, the queen of the Icelandic mountains. We visit the church at the farm, built by hand in 1949 by the former farmer in the memory of his late wife. From there we head through the uninhabited highlands to East Iceland. We explore the northernmost fjord on the East Fjord mountain range. The isolated village Bakkagerði at Borgarfjörður-Eystri has only 120 inhabitants and is a charming village, built snugly next to the steep mountainside. Driving to there is dramatic and rewarding. The colourful mountains are unique and impressive. We experience an unusual opportunity to visit a traditional Icelandic fishing village, still relying on the small boat fishing. Even so, Borgarfjörður-Eystri is one of Iceland's most beautiful treasures, this off-the ring road location remains still seldom visited. There is a coffee house in the village, displaying some works of Jóhannes Kjarval, a well-known Icelandic



painter who grew up in Borgarfjörður-Eystri. His hometown and its landscape have much influenced his job. We also see the remarkable altarpiece, an extraordinary artwork painted by Jóhannes Kjarval. Borgarfjörður-Eystri is home to an extensive population of elves – judging by the 172 local folk tales involving elves. In the village, we find Álfaborg, a protected site where the queen of elves is believed to live in a uniquely shaped rock castle. The elf stories provide a fascinating lecture, especially for the younger generation. We continue to the local harbor to look out for kittiwakes, puffins, and other seabirds. Overnight and dinner at a local guesthouse.

**Day 10, Wednesday: Fjords, Glaciers, And Ice (430 km/267 mls)**

It's a day to admire the dramatic fjord landscape and its tiny fishing villages at the end of twisty roads in the East Fjords, and en route we visit Petra's fascinating rock collection. A naturalist and a collector are two terms that have been used to describe Petra since she was a little girl. From the day she opened her eyes for the first time she perceived her surrounding differently from most of her compatriots, and it is almost as her parents knew when they named her. The word "Petra" simply means "stone" in Greek. Petra collected for nearly 80 years this unique treasure of rocks, crystals, zeolites, quartz and more, all from the nearby area in the Eastfjords. The rocks and stones are beautifully laid out in her home and garden. Her descendants proudly take good care of this unique exhibition. In the afternoon we see Vatnajökull, Europe's biggest glacier that is visible all over Southeast Iceland. Past the town of Höfn, we stop for a boat ride amongst the floating icebergs on the magnificent Jökulsárlón glacial lagoon, considered one of the highlights on tour around Iceland. We spend the night near Skaftafell in the southern part of Vatnajökull National Park.

**Day 11, Thursday: Vatnajökull National Park And The South (370 km/230 mls)**

Today we visit Vatnajökull National Park which covers about 14 % of Iceland, making it Europe's 2nd largest national park in terms of area after Yugyd Va in Russia. We explore the region of Skaftafell that is nestled below Iceland's highest mountain and the second biggest stratovolcano in Europe, the 2,110-meter high Hvannadalshnjúkur. We walk close to one of the many glacial tongues in the area – a Kodak moment. We cross a sandy desert and drive along the south coast, always between the sea, rugged mountains, glaciers, and waterfalls. We stroll along the black lava beach and bird cliffs near the village of Vík. We stop at the Skógafoss waterfall, another must-see location in South Iceland. The crashing water creates a mist that results in frequent and magical rainbows, just adding some more memorable experiences to the sheer beauty of this stunning scenery and place. At the Eyjafjallajökull Information Center, we learn how it is to live next to a glacier and an active volcano. Afterward, we reach Seljalandsfoss waterfall where you can follow a slick and wet trail and walk right behind the falls. Come prepared and bring a rain coat and good boots as you will get wet. Farewell dinner at a local restaurant in Reykjavík and we will spend the last night of the Grand Tour in Iceland's capital.

**Day 12, Friday: Departure Home (50 km/31 mls)**

The Flybus airport shuttle picks you up at your hotel and takes you to Keflavík International Airport.

**Details**

**Group Size:** Max. 20

**2019 Departures:**

June: 03\*, 17, 24

July: 15, 29

August: 12, 26

Prices shown do not reflect the sale discounts or promotional reductions. The adjusted sale price will be quoted to you at the time of your inquiry.

**2019 Pricing:**

US\$6,149, reduced to \$5,227 – Triple

US\$6,149, reduced to \$5,227 – Twin

US\$7,775, reduced to \$6,609 – Single

VIP Package: Guaranteed window seat and the seat beside, near the front of the coach, US\$649 per person.

Prices are shown in US\$ per person based on three people sharing a triple room, two people sharing a twin room and one person in a single room. Above prices are subject to change due to currency fluctuation.



### Trip Code:

008201-W20

### INCLUDED

- Arrival and departure transfers by Flybus airport shuttle (no guide)
- 11 nights of accommodation with private facilities
- Breakfast daily, days 2-12
- 10 dinners (served 3-course set menu or buffet)
- 1 lunch, day 6
- Visit to three National Parks
- Admission to settlement centre in Borgarnes
- Entrance and visit to lava cave on the Snæfellsnes peninsula
- Ferry trip to the West Fjords
- Entrance fee to folk and transport museum at Hnjótur
- Visit to Erik the Red homestead
- Horse show in northwest Iceland
- Entrance to Herring Museum
- Visit to micro brewery
- Entrance fee and towel to the Nature Baths at Lake Mývatn
- Visit to stone collection in the East Fjords
- Boat trip between floating icebergs on glacial lagoon
- Documentary film at Lava Center in Hvolsvollur

### NOT INCLUDED

- Airfare to/from Iceland
- Meals not indicated in itinerary
- Travel Insurance
- Gratuities
- Items of a personal nature

### TOUR NOTES

**Private transfers** from Keflavik Airport to downtown Reykjavik and return are also offered as an option.

1-3 passengers, US\$223/vehicle

4-6 passengers, US\$299/vehicle

**NATURE FEES:** There is a possibility that some of the natural attractions around Iceland might charge an entrance fee during the trip. These entrance fees are not included in the tour price and need to be paid by all tour members additionally on the spot when entering any of these natural sites. Locations, amount of entrance fee, form of payment and other details are not known at present and are subject to change.

*Disclaimer: We do our utmost to ensure that information posted on our website is correct at the time of publication, however trip details are subject to change without notice by the suppliers and operators involved. We update the information as soon as possible when changes are advised to us, however, we cannot assume responsibility for such changes made by the suppliers and operators.*

### ROUTE MAP







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