



## Best of South Iceland

Join this wonderful tour of the southern part of the island and view the highlights, from Reykjavik to the stunning glaciers and lagoons that are scattered along the south coast.



YOUR  
ADVENTURE  
AWAITS

8 days/7 nights

### ITINERARY

#### Day 1: Welcome to Iceland

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

Total mileage in 6 days is about 1,510 km (942 miles), which is an average of 252 km (157 miles) per day. You spend about 3.5 hours per day on the bus, depending on road conditions, traffic, and daily distances. On some days, especially in the interior highlands, the driving might be longer than on some other days. The hotels and cabins used on this tour are simple but clean, and all rooms offer private facilities. On September departures, there is a chance to see the Northern Lights. In case Landmannalaugar is not accessible during May and June departures, we travel only to Þjórsárdalur valley on that day. This tour includes some walking on uneven terrain and natural trails.

#### Day 2, Monday: The Blue Lagoon & Reykjanes Peninsula (200 km/125 miles)

At 09:30 meet your tour guide and fellow group members and travel to the Reykjanes Peninsula with its hot springs, mountains, bird cliffs, lunar landscapes and fishing villages. We warm up in the geothermal mineral rich waters of the famous Blue Lagoon. In the afternoon we explore Krýsuvík, an area with solfataras, fumaroles, mud pots and hot springs. The soil is coloured bright yellow, red and green. We continue through lava fields and coastal landscape to Strandarkirkja, a Lutheran parish church on the southern coast of Iceland. This small, beautiful wooden church, has been a beacon for those travelling at sea and is often referred to as the "miracle church" with the locals' longstanding belief that it has profound, divine powers. Next stop is the charming fishing village of Eyrarbakki with a large number of preserved houses from the period 1890-1920, and therefore a visit is like a journey 100 years back in time. We visit the local Maritime and Folk Museum. In the evening we reach Hella, a small village in South Iceland, where we stay for three nights in simple cottages. You might take a walk south alongside the riverbank to experience complete solitude and tranquillity.

#### Day 3: Landmannalaugar & Thjorsardalur

Today we drive the rough unpaved road to Landmannalaugar, an oasis in the barren highlands, surrounded by colourful rhyolite mountains. Group members have the options to explore the area on their own or join the guide for a short hike through a rough lava field and up the slopes with an incredible spectrum of colours. The highlight is a 90-minute round trip hike up toward Brennisteinsalda, the rainbow mountain of Iceland, which is one of the most spectacular volcanic mountains in Landmannalaugar. The name in English translates to "sulphur wave". It comes from the yellow sulphur spots which have coloured its sides. But there are other colours too: green from copper, black and blue from lava and ashes, red from iron in the earth and white from silica. It could very well be the most colourful mountain of Iceland, and so its picture is often found in books and calendars. The mountain is still "hot" where you can see sizzling sulphur springs and vapour at its sides. For this hike, good boots and walking poles are helpful. In Landmannalaugar there is also a natural geothermal stream where you can enjoy a refreshing bath. Have swimwear



and towel ready. On the way back to our accommodation, we stop at the beautiful waterfall Hjalparfoss in Þjórsárdalur valley surrounded by unusual basalt rock formations. Nearby we explore the Viking farm ruins at Stöng, which was completely buried in pumice during one of Mt. Hekla's bigger eruptions in 1104. A leisurely hike brings us to Gjáin, a green oasis in an otherwise rocky, barren moonlike landscape. Þjórsárdalur is off-the-beaten-path and is dominated by Mt. Hekla and other volcanoes in the vicinity. Hekla is one of Iceland's most active volcanoes; over 20 eruptions have occurred since settlement in 874. During the Middle Ages, Europeans called the volcano the "Gateway to Hell". Please note that in case Landmannalaugar is not accessible during May and June departures, we travel only to Þjórsárdalur valley on that day.

#### Day 4: Golden Circle

Today, we visit three of Iceland's most famous spots: Þingvellir National Park, Geyser hot springs, and Gullfoss waterfall. We start the day at the ancient Viking Parliament area of Þingvellir National Park, a UNESCO world heritage site. 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. Next stop is at the Geysir geothermal fields with a variety of hot springs and bubbling pools where you see the steam pumping from the ground as if beneath it there were lots of little smoking devils. The original geyser is now dormant and has been replaced by Strokkur, "the Churn", which erupts at 5-10 minute intervals. Gullfoss, "the golden falls", is a double waterfall that tumbles 34 meters into the Hvítá river originating from the glacier Langjökull. After the three "must-see" sights on the Golden Circle, we add a little extra. There is a small waterfall called Faxi, "the Main". Nearby, we show you a traditional sheep pen, where Icelandic farmers sort the sheep in September after the sheep had been rounded up in the mountains. We continue to Skálholt, which is one of Iceland's most historic and holy places. It was the centre of ecclesiastic power in Iceland for more than 700 years. The first bishopric was founded here in 1056, with the first bishop, Ísleifur, taking the seat. From then on, it became the centre of learning, culture and worldly power in Iceland. The church in Skálholt has the most beautiful altarpiece made with mosaic and colourfully stained windows, both designed by a famous Icelandic female artist. You might like to visit the local geothermal swimming pool with hot tubs to top off your sightseeing day the Icelandic way.

#### Day 5: The Westman Islands

A short ferry ride brings us to the Westman Islands, where we explore the town of Heimaey and this extraordinary island by foot and by bus. The volcanic eruption in 1973 is considered the largest natural disaster in Iceland in recent history. The eruption began on January 23 in the outskirts of the town of Heimaey, the only populated island in the Vestmannaeyjar archipelago. After the evacuation of the 5300 inhabitants, and during the 5 months while the eruption lasted, there was much uncertainty as to whether or not the island could ever be repopulated. During our tour to the Westman Islands, we explore bird cliffs, walk up a volcano crater and visit "Pompeii of the North", a volcanic excavation project. There you observe a "house" which was dug up from the thick layer of pumice after 40 years. There is also an exhibition about Surtsey Island that was born by volcanic eruptions between 1963-68 and preserved today by UNESCO. You have the afternoon free to wander around the town of Heimaey, with its birds and signs of recent volcanic eruptions. We travel with the 4 pm ferry back to the mainland and continue to our accommodation near the village of Vík in South Iceland, where we stay for two nights.

#### Day 6: Vatnajökull Glacier and Ice Lagoon

Today we travel to Vatnajökull, Europe's second largest national park, which has Iceland's highest mountains, an alpine environment, and Europe's largest glacier. A 5-kilometre round-trip hike takes us through the national park to Svartifoss waterfall, which is surrounded by impressive basalt columns. In the afternoon we head over to the famous Jökulsárlón glacier lagoon for a cruise, sailing between the icebergs of all shapes and sizes, which float in the clear blue water. After the glacial lake experience, there is time to go down to the black sand beach, the so-called Diamond Beach, in case we find icebergs that have floated all the way from the glacier lagoon into the Atlantic Ocean.

#### Day 7: The South Coast, Glacier Hike and return to Reykjavik

We start the day with a walk along the black lava beach and bird cliffs at Reynisfjara. We see interesting basalt columns, and rock formations called the petrified trolls. Next, we stop for an easy 1,5 to 2-hour glacier hike in the impressive Sólheimajökull glacier tongue, suitable for beginners. An experienced glacier guide leads you safely through the icy wonderland of strangely shaped ridges, deep crevasses, enormous water cauldrons and different ice formations. We continue to the thundering Skógafoss waterfall, which tumbles 62 meters over a rocky scarp, kicking up vast sheets of mist. Further west we reach the high but narrow Seljalandsfoss waterfall where you can follow a slick and wet trail and walk right behind the falls. Come prepared and bring a raincoat and good boots, as you will get wet! The Best of South Iceland program ends with a short Reykjavík city tour before we reach the hotel in Iceland's capital.

#### Day 8: Depart Iceland

The Flybus airport shuttle picks you up at your hotel and takes you to Keflavik airport.

## Details

**Group Size:** 20



**2020 Departures:**

Cancelled

**2020 Pricing:**

From US\$2,290 – Triple or Twin

From US\$2,930 – Single

VIP Seating: US\$390 (guaranteed window seat on the coach with seat beside left empty, in front rows of the coach, first come first served basis)

**2021 Departures:**

TBA

**2021 Pricing:**

From US\$tba – Triple or Twin

From US\$tba – Single

VIP Seating: US\$390 (guaranteed window seat on the coach with seat beside left empty, in front rows of the coach, first come first served basis)

Prices are “starting from” rates, shown in US\$, per person based on three people sharing a triple room, two people sharing a twin room or one person in a single room.

Prices shown do not reflect discounts for sales and special promotions. Reduced prices, if applicable, will be quoted at the time of your inquiry.

**Trip Code:**

008201 - W20

**INCLUDED**

- Airport transfers on day of arrival and departure (unguided)
- Six day escorted coach tour
- English speaking guide or driver-guide
- Seven nights of moderate accommodation, with private facilities
- Breakfast daily, days 2-8
- Visit to two national parks
- Entrance and towel rental at Blue Lagoon, including silica mud mask and a drink of your choice
- Round trip ferry to the Westman Islands
- visit to the Pompeii of the North excavations
- Boat trip on Jökulsárlón glacial lagoon
- 1.5-2 hour glacier hike
- Entrance to Eyrbakkí Maritime and Folk Museum

**NOT INCLUDED**

- Travel to/from Iceland
- Gratuities to driver, guide and hotel staff
- Meals not indicated
- Optional tours
- Nature fees added by natural attractions, to be paid locally in Iceland
- Travel insurance



- Passport and visa fees, as required
- Items of a personal nature

## TOUR NOTES

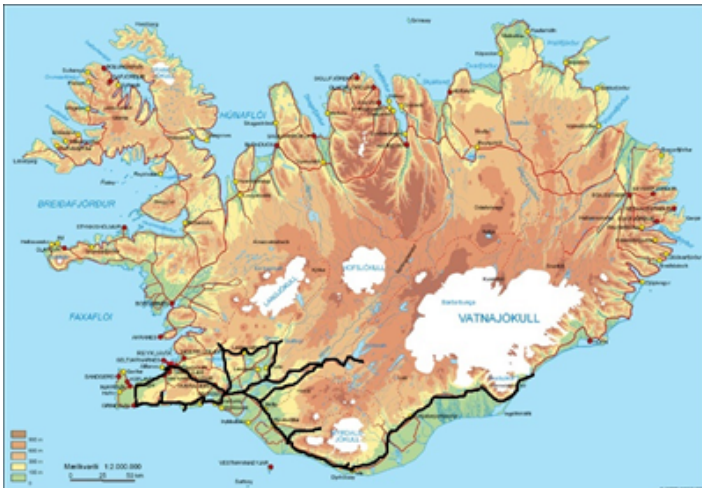
Extend your stay in Reykjavik before or after the tour for even more fun! We can provide accommodation in all categories to suit your budget.

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

**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



## Contact

### Winnipeg

164 Marion Street  
Winnipeg, MB, Canada  
R2H 0T4  
Phone: 204.949.0199  
Fax: 204.949.0188  
Toll Free: 800.661.3830

### Edmonton

(formerly Butte Travel Service)  
11733 95th St. NW  
Edmonton, AB, Canada  
T5G 1M1  
Phone: 780.477.3561  
Fax: 780.477.9871  
Toll Free: 800.661.8906



Accredited  
Agent



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