

GRAND TOUR OF ICELAND

12 days/11 nights



Day 1: Welcome to Iceland

Individual transfer by Flybus shuttle bus from Keflavik airport to your accommodation in Reykjavik where you spend the night.

Overnight location: Hotel Klettur, Reykjavík. (50km / 31mls)

Day 2: Golden Circle

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 location: Icelandair Hotel Hamar, Borgarnes. Breakfast & dinner included. (290km / 180mls)

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Day 3: Snæfellsnes Peninsula & Ferry trip to West Fjords

Today, we explore the Snæfellsnes Peninsula, which juts out from Iceland's West Coast. 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 excellent 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 a 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. 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 beautiful, you enjoy a magnificent view of the bay's countless isles as well as the glacier Snæfellsjökull.

Overnight location: Fosshotel Westfjords, Patreksfjörður. Breakfast & dinner included. (290km / 180mls)



Day 4: Iceland's Westernmost Point

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 most abundant 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 bird watching, 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 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. Overnight location: Fosshotel Westfjords, Patreksfjörður. Breakfast & dinner included. (150km / 93mls)

Day 5: Beautiful West Fjords

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 and 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.

Overnight location: Vogur Country Lodge, Búðardalur. Breakfast & dinner included. (320km / 199mls)

Day 6: Heading North

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-looking 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. Afterwards, 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 for two nights in the capital of North Iceland.

Overnight location: Hotel KEA Akureyri, Akureyri. Breakfast, lunch & dinner included. (350km / 217mls)

Day 7: Northernmost Town

During a 6-hour excursion, we see spectacular fjord landscapes while travelling 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.

Overnight location: Hotel KEA Akureyri, Akureyri. Breakfast & dinner included. (160km / 99mls)

Day 8: Geological Wonders and Nature Baths

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 see 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.

Overnight location: Sel Hótel Mývatn, Mývatn. Breakfast & dinner included. (150km / 93mls)

Day 9: Secret of the East

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, an on-site service centre 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; offering an end of the road location. This charming village is built snugly next to the steep mountainside and getting there is dramatic and rewarding drive. The colourful mountains are unique and impressive.

Overnight location: Guesthouse Álheimar, Borgarfjörður Eystri. Breakfast & dinner included. (290km / 180mIs)

Day 10: Fjords, Glaciers & Glacier Lagoon

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.

Overnight location: Fosshotel Glacier Lagoon, Vatnajökull national park. Breakfast & dinner included. (450km / 280mIs)

Day 11: Vatnajökull National Park & The South Coast

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. Afterwards, we reach 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. Then we visit the Lava Center in Hvolsvöllur, where we watch a documentary film about volcanic eruptions in the past years in Iceland. Farewell dinner at a local restaurant in Reykjavík and we will spend the last night of the Grand Tour in Iceland's capital.

Overnight location: Hotel Klettur, Reykjavík. Breakfast & Farewell dinner included. (340km / 211mils)

Day 12: Departure Home

Individual transfer by Flybus shuttle from your accommodation in Reykjavik to Keflavik airport.

Breakfast included. (50km / 31mils)

NOTE: Itineraries may be subject to change at short notice during severe weather conditions and certain outdoor activities/day trips may be cancelled during the winter season in Iceland. In these rare cases, where situations of force majeure apply, excursions/activities cannot be refunded but the local guides will try their best to find reasonable alternatives where and whenever possible.

NOTE: Accommodations are subject to change.

Summer 2020 | Price, inclusions & exclusions

EUR 4.690 per person

(double/twin room, breakfast included) EUR 5.940 per person (single room, breakfast included)

EUR 450 for optional VIP-Seating supplement

Price Includes

11 nights accommodation, in rooms with shower/WC · 10 days escorted tour with English-speaking guide/driver-guide · Arrival & departure airport transfer by Flybus shuttle (no guide) · 11x breakfast · 1x lunch · 10x dinner · Explore three national parks · Lava cave in Snæfellsnes · Ferry trip to the West Fjords · Folk and transport museum at Hnjótur · Visit to Erik the Red homestead · Icelandic horse show · Herring museum · Visit to a micro beer brewery · Mývatn Nature Baths, including towel · Petra's stone collection · Boat trip on Jökulsárlón glacier lagoon · Lava Centre museum

Price Excludes · Any private expenses · Any additional services · Meals that are not listed under "included" · Single supplement (mandatory when in single room)

Complementaries · Entrance fees · Free Wi-Fi on the bus

Additional services · Extra night in Reykjavik before/after the tour – on request · Whale watching in Akureyri on day 7

Highlights & Experiences

- Complete escorted tour around Iceland including Snæfellsnes Peninsula & West Fjords
- Explore three national parks
- Dynjandi waterfall, elected „the most beautiful waterfall in Iceland“ by Icelanders
- Ferry trip to West Fjords
- Visit to a lava cave
- Soak in Mývatn Nature Baths
- Boat trip between floating icebergs on Jökulsárlón glacier lagoon
- Visit small local museums, cultural experiences and horse show
- See more sea-cliff birds than you can ever count