



Iceland - Land of the Midnight Sun

ICELAND - TRIP CODE SUN

DISCOVERY

Why book this trip?

Follow Iceland's famous Ring Road and make the most of long daylight hours on this summer adventure. Discover Iceland's two cities, Reykjavik and Akureyri, and the volcanoes, waterfalls and glaciers that make up the countries dramatic landscape.

- **Golden Circle** - See the remarkable natural wonders of Thingvellir, Geysir and Gullfoss
- **Jokulsarlon Glacial Lagoon** - Drift past icebergs on a boat trip across the lagoon
- **Eastern Fjords** - Spot puffins and discover mountainous landscapes carved over the years by glaciers



INCLUDED MEALS
Breakfast: 7
Dinner: 1



TRIP STAFF
Explore Tour
Leader
Driver(s)



TRANSPORT
Boat
Minibus



ACCOMMODATION
1 nights simple
guesthouse
4 nights
comfortable hotel
2 nights simple
hotel



TRIP PACE:
Moderate



GROUP SIZE:
10 - 16

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

DAY 1 - Join trip in Reykjavik

Today the adventure begins with a transfer from Keflavik Airport (KEF) to our hotel on the public FlyBus shuttle bus service. On arrival at Keflavik Airport please proceed to the FlyBus desk which is located in the arrivals hall, a FlyBus representative will give you a voucher and direct you to the bus. Buses leave every 35-40 minutes and the drive to the hotel will take approximately 45 minutes. On the drive from the airport to the hotel you'll get your first glimpse of the blackened and rocky volcanic scenery found on this part of the island.

There are no activities planned today so you are free to arrive at a time that suits you. After checking-in to the hotel, you may have time to explore a little of the world's most northerly capital. Bustling with cosmopolitan energy and surrounded by pure, unpolluted nature, Reykjavik is a city of striking contrasts. Small colourful corrugated iron houses nestle next to futuristic glass buildings; state-of-the-art facilities lie beside rugged volcanic terrain and international influences mingle with Icelandic national traditions. All this creates a unique culture where old embraces new.

On this holiday you'll be accompanied by an Explore Leader from days 2 to 7, so this evening you are free to settle in and enjoy this charming city.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Klettur (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 2 - Explore the Golden Circle - Gullfoss and Skogafoss waterfalls, Thingvellir National Park and Strokkur Geysir

This morning we'll meet our Explore leader at 8:30am for a welcome meeting and to get excited about the plans for the week. We'll begin by exploring Iceland's major highlights in the Golden Circle, starting with Thingvellir National Park.

Thingvellir translates to 'the fields of parliament' and was once the meeting place of more than 30 clan leaders who came together to reconcile differences and create a united nation after years of turbulent fighting. For this reason Thingvellir plays a very important role in Iceland's heritage but its geology is equally fascinating. The west half of Iceland sits on the North American tectonic plate and the east half sits on the Eurasian tectonic plate and here at Thingvellir is the only place in the world where the Mid-Atlantic Rift can be seen above sea level and we can take a walk between two continents.

We move on to the 'Beauty' of Iceland, Gullfoss Waterfall. Arguably Iceland's most beautiful waterfall, here the water plunges into a deep ravine with tremendous force whilst its mists form colourful rainbows in the sun.

Close by is the Great Geysir. With the claim-to-fame of being the first spouting spring known to Europeans, Geysir has given all such springs their name. However, it is the Strokkur, meaning 'The Butter Churn', which is the main attraction these days, due to its impressive 30 metre eruptions every few minutes.

After some lunch we'll see one of Iceland's tallest waterfalls, Skogafoss. Standing at 62 metres tall it's an impressive sight, and if we are lucky with the light we should spot rainbows in the spray. We'll also stop at the Skogar Folk Museum. This quaint museum is home to 12,000 artefacts as well as life-size examples of traditional Icelandic houses with turf roofs, a church and school.

Seljalandsfoss waterfall is almost as tall as Skogafoss and here, weather permitting, we'll have the chance to walk behind the curtain of water! The pathway shows off the falls from the front, then circles around the back and emerges on the other side. Because of the constant spray the path is always slippery and can be closed in winter when the path freezes over.

Our base for the night is on the outskirts of Vik and we'll arrive here in time for dinner.

Hotel Katla

Located just a 5-minute drive from Vik's black sand beach, Hotel Katla is a countryside hotel that offers stunning views of the Mýrdalsjökull Glacier. Rooms are spacious & classically decorated, all including a TV & an ensuite. The hotel offers free Wi-Fi in the lobby, as well as free access to the outdoor geothermal hot tubs & fitness centre. The hotel also has an in-house restaurant that serves a buffet breakfast & local specialities for dinner.



ACCOMMODATION:

Hotel Katla by Keahotels (or similar)



Grade: Simple Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 3 - Walk on the Svinafellsjokull Glacier and discover the basalt cliffs on Vik beach

We'll spend time at Vik I Myrdal this morning, a rocky beach with incredible basalt cliffs that are said to have inspired Reykjavik's impressive cathedral. The beach is often incredibly windy and there are great photo opportunities of the waves crashing against the cliffs. From the shore we will see the oddly shaped Reynisdrangar stacks out in the ocean and if we're lucky we'll spot the resident puffins, fulmars and guillemots.

Leaving the beach we'll visit Skaftafell, an area of wilderness inside the larger Vatnajokull National Park. Another day, another waterfall and today's will not disappoint. Svartifoss translates to Black Fall and it's easy to see why this waterfall adopted its name being framed perfectly by downwards facing black basalt columns. We will enjoy a half an hour walk along gravel paths to reach this gem that's hidden away from any main roads.

Our final visit of the day will be to Jokulsarlon Glacial Lagoon known as Iceland's Crown Jewels. Here the lagoon waters are speckled with icebergs and the surrounding black sand beach is littered with large, crystal-like chunks of ice. We'll take an exciting 30 minute boat ride to see the blue-hued icebergs up close and search for seals lounging on the floating ice.

Heading further east to Hofn, tonight we'll have time to relax and enjoy the curious experience of night-time sun. Hofn means harbour and on arrival it will be easy to understand the name as it's surrounded by oceans on three sides sitting on a small peninsular.

Hotel Jokull

Being located so close to the country's largest Glacier - Vatnajökull, Hotel Jokull boasts scenic views & is only a 5-minute drive from the Icelandic fishing town, Höfn. The Hotel also offers fantastic seafood buffets in the on-site restaurant. Most rooms include ensuite facilities and have basic but modern décor & furnishings.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Jokull (or similar)



Grade: Simple Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 4 - Discover the bird watching haven of the Eastern fjords, small fishing villages and spend the night in a traditional Icelandic house

The lesser-visited Eastern Fjords are a stark contrast to the flat, black sand beaches of the south coast and as we travel today we will see where glaciers carved deep into the mountainous green terrain over thousands of years. We'll leave the Ring Road to follow the natural bends of the fjords. Small fishing villages are dotted along the shorelines at the bottom of the white-capped mountains and herds of reindeer graze on the hillsides.

Along the way we'll visit some of the villages to experience the slow pace of life in this rural area and enjoy the natural surrounding beauty. Djupivogur is a historic trading village dating back to the 1589 and due to being nestled between two large lagoons is very rich in birdlife including the much loved puffin. In Faskrudsfjordur, also an old trading post, we'll have some free time where an optional visit to an isolated museum surprisingly dedicated to curious involvement of French fishermen in Iceland's past!

We'll continue our journey inland to the Wilderness Centre in time for lunchtime to allow us plenty of time to enjoy this wild surrounding. Here we will experience true Icelandic culture as we enjoy a traditional cooked dinner and sleep in either the 1940's originally-restored farmhouse or in what is by day a museum. The farmhouse features twin rooms which have been decorated in the fashion of times gone by and are true to the taste of the past owners, including original furnishings and objects. The museum has been created to show how families would have lived in the not so distant past. Families traditionally slept and lived in close quarters and a main dormitory room would have been the heart of any family home where the fire burned and the sagas were shared from generation to generation.

The facilities are simple at this unique accommodation, and rooms do not have en suite bathrooms, instead there are several bathrooms that will be shared by the group.



ACCOMMODATION:

Wilderness Centre (or similar)

Grade: Simple Guesthouse



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & DINNER

DAY 5 - Travel to Akureyri, stopping to explore Lake Myvatn on the way

Today we'll spent time exploring Lake Myvatn, a volcanic lake formed 3,800 years ago when a lava flow blocked the valley and which is now one of the most fertile spots in the world and attracts a wide range of nesting ducks.

We'll take a short walk on lava fields and discover Dimmuborgir dark castle, created from lava the arches

and columns here are said to resemble a castle and the landscape is a great spot for photography.

This afternoon we'll arrive in the 'capital of the north', Akureyri where we will stay for the next two nights. Iceland's second city has a wide array of places to enjoy a traditional Icelandic meal and a great spot to enjoy the long daylight hours as it is surrounded by mountains and sea.



ACCOMMODATION:

Hotel Nordurland, Akureyri (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 6 - Visit the giant rock formations of Asbyrgi and the thundering Dettifoss waterfalls

Our first stop today is at Asbyrgi, an enormous rock formation said to be the hoof print of Sleipnir, God Odin's eight legged horse, whilst other legends tell tales of these towering vertical cliffs being home to Iceland's hidden people, the Huldufolk. Our local guide will tell us more!

Then we'll visit the thundering giant that is Dettifoss Waterfall, Europe's most powerful falls with an amazing 44,000 litres of water tumbling over the crest every second. Dettifoss is Iceland's 'Beast' due to sheer cliffs and clouds of mist that can be seen from several miles away, whilst Godafoss in the south is known as 'Beauty' and here we will need to wear our waterproofs to enjoy the spray and roar up close.

We'll have a chance today to experience Iceland's geo thermal waters with a twist at the GeoSea baths close to Husavik village. These baths are set right at the waters edge, and are filled with naturally heated sea water which was discovered in the mid 20th century when locals were drilling in the hope of finding fresh water. With the coast on one side, and volcanic mountains on the other this is a wonderful way to relax for a few hours.

There will be time today to take an optional whale watching trip for anyone who wants to stop and spot these enormous, gentle giants.



ACCOMMODATION:

Hotel Nordurland, Akureyri (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel





SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 7 - Return to Reykjavik, stopping at Kolugljufur canyon en route

We'll make our way back to Reykjavik today. The drive will take approximately five hours but we'll be rewarded with more of Iceland's beautiful, volcanic scenery as we go. We'll break the journey at Kolugljufur Canyon, a deep canyon carved by the Vioidalsa River. Following the path to a viewing platform we can see the water change from a calm flow to a dramatic waterfall cascading over multiple rock faces.

After checking in to our hotel for the night we'll head out to the harbour area and try out one of the city's great restaurants for our last dinner together.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Klettur (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 8 - Trip ends in Reykjavik

Our trip ends after breakfast this morning. The transfer back to Keflavik airport (KEF) will be on the public FlyBus shuttle bus service and your leader will provide you with the details of your pick up time and with your voucher for this service.



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

Trip information

Country information

Iceland

Climate

Iceland has a cool and temperate climate and, despite its location just south of the Arctic Circle, its northerly latitude is counteracted by the warm waters of the North Atlantic Drift which encircles the island. Temperatures in winter can fluctuate between about 10°C and -10°C and precipitation in the form of rain, sleet or snow is to be expected at any time. Days will be short, with daylight often only guaranteed between about 11 am and 4 pm in December. The best time for seeing the Aurora Borealis is October to March. Summer is generally cool with average temperatures for June and July around 12 - 15 degree centigrade in Reykjavik, although is known to be warmer in other parts of the country. In June and July you can enjoy continuous daylight and see the Midnight Sun, whilst late spring and early autumn offer long twilights.

Time difference to GMT	Plugs	Religion	Language
0	2 Pin Round	National Church of iceland	Icelandic

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Akureyri: Whale Watching ISK 10.990

Clothing

In Iceland weather conditions can change rapidly - sunshine, drizzle, rain and snow may all occur in the same day. You'll need warmer clothing for outdoor activities and cooler evenings, so pack layers. A good quality wind and waterproof jacket and trousers are essential. We also recommend that you bring a swimming costume plus a towel with you as there will be plenty of chances to swim on the tour. If you are planning to join a whale watching excursion then we recommend wrapping up warmly as it can be very chilly out at sea, so take a woolly hat, scarf, jumper and gloves with you.

Footwear

We recommend taking walking boots with a sturdy tread and also trainers. Soft indoor shoes are recommended as it is normal in Iceland to have special house shoes. For swimming you may also find a pair of flip flops useful.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

One main piece of baggage, a soft grip bag is ideal (not a framed rucksack) and a small daypack.

Tipping

Explore leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Local crew

Tipping is not a recognised part of life in Iceland for meals etc, though if you do wish to tip your local representative (entirely at your discretion) it will no doubt be appreciated.

Iceland

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price	Dinner price	Beer price	Water price
£12.00-16.00	£18.00 - 24.00	£4.00 - 6.00	£2

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

Icelandic Krona (ISK).

Recommended Currency For Exchange

Both GBP and USD are readily exchanged at banks and post offices.

Where To Exchange

Both GBP and USD are readily exchanged at banks and post offices

ATM Availability

Cash can be drawn on credit cards from ATM's in Reykjavik and at the airport.

Credit Card Acceptance

Most shops and restaurants take credit cards.

Travellers Cheques

Can be exchanged at banks and post offices.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Boat, Minibus

Accommodation notes

Throughout this trip we use simple accommodation. The majority of hotels in Iceland are decorated in a plain style and many weren't originally built as hotels, but were instead converted from things such as old schools. Rooms can be small and the facilities can be basic. Most accommodation won't have hairdryers or teas and coffee making facilities in the room and some may not have a television, but the scenery outside is so stunning that after a busy day exploring you're unlikely to miss having one.

Our stay at the Wilderness Centre will be in twin share rooms however this unique accommodation does not offer en suite bathrooms therefore on this night we will use shared bathrooms.

Essential Information

Government Travel Safety Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa and Passport Information

Iceland: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens.

Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may be able to apply through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

Transfers

Find out more about [Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions](#) before you book.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The complimentary transfers will be arranged from the Explore designated airport or train station to your trips joining point, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. Generally the airport or station that Explore have selected will be the one that is closest to the town or city where the trip starts, or the one nearest to the joining point. It will be either an airport or train station but not both.

The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. Read more about them here.

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Iceland

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory; tetanus recommended. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at Explore Travel Health and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

Additional Information



Why book this trip

Iceland is a destination where you can still get up close to its many and varied natural attractions. You can touch the point where tectonic plates meet, feel the spray of roaring waterfalls against your face and stare in awe as icebergs float pass you. The people are friendly and have a wonderful sense of humour. They'll tell you tales of elves and Norse gods, which have helped to shape this magical island.

Reviews



**AWARD WINNING
EXPLORE LEADERS**



**PRICE GUARANTEE
PROMISE**



**AIRPORT
TRANSFERS**