



NEW

Iceland Self-Drive - Glamping in the Golden Circle

ICELAND - TRIP CODE PTIHR

DISCOVERY

Why book this trip?

This short break takes you to the heart of Iceland's Golden Circle, and as a self-drive itinerary you have the flexibility to explore the country's famous volcanic landscapes and natural wonders at your own leisure.

- **Nattura Yurtel** - Spend three nights sleeping in comfortable custom-made Mongolian yurts located on a working horse farm. The yurts have views of Strokker Geyser, a constant reminder of why Iceland is called 'the land of fire and ice'
- **Dramatic scenery** - Discover the thundering Gullfoss waterfalls and the black basalt cliffs at Vik I Myrdal
- **Volcanic eruptions** - Take the chance to see the lava flow from the impressive Fagradalsfjall Volcano, which has been erupting since March 2021



INCLUDED MEALS
Breakfast: 4



TRIP STAFF
None



TRANSPORT
Car



ACCOMMODATION
1 nights
comfortable hotel
3 nights
comfortable yurt



TRIP PACE:
Relaxed

Itinerary

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

DAY 1 - Trip begins at Keflavik Airport

Arrive into Keflavik Airport today at any time today, and head to the car hire depot to pick up your vehicle (detailed instructions of where to go will be in your final joining instructions). It's open 24/7 so you can pick up and drop off the vehicle at any time, but if you are booking your own flights please let us know your arrival time so that we can make the vehicle booking appropriately.

We have based the price of this trip on hiring a Toyota Yaris vehicle, or similar. This is a small-sized, 2WD automatic car. If you'd like to upgrade to a medium or large vehicle (for example a medium Nissan Qashqai or large Toyota Land Cruiser), these are available at an additional cost. None of the roads you'll be following in our suggested itinerary need 4WD or a larger vehicle, but of course the self-drive nature of this trip gives you the luxury and freedom to explore much further afield if you wanted to.

After picking up the car, drive for two hours on sealed roads to the Nattura Yurtel. You may just wish to bear in mind the time of year when you book. In Winter it gets dark around 4pm in Iceland. The roads up to the Yurtel are well-lit, tarmac and usually very quiet, particularly in the evening, so it's not a problem to drive at this time of night. However, if you'd rather spend the night in Reykjavik beforehand then we can organise accommodation for you.

The Nattura Yurtel is completely unique in Iceland. Built in 2019, it is set on a working farm, close to Gullfoss Falls and Geysir. The accommodation comprises 10 custom-made yurts, which are traditionally Mongolian in structure but have been carefully designed and furnished with an Icelandic twist. These round tents are comfortably furnished with twin beds, toilets and sinks with the added comfort of under-floor heating. Showers are located in a separate block and there are two large communal yurts to relax in. We'd recommend that you purchase duty-free drinks on arrival in Iceland; there's a large duty-free shop just before baggage claim in the airport. Alternatively you may decide to stretch your legs and go for a

walk around the farm.

There are a number of small restaurants within a short drive, and a pub that is within walking distance, so you may choose to head out to one of them this evening for dinner.



ACCOMMODATION:
Iceland Yurts (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Yurt



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 2 - Explore Iceland's south shore and the waterfalls at Skogafoss and Seljalandsfoss

You're completely at your leisure in this itinerary to get up when you choose, drive where you choose and spend as much time as you like exploring! The itinerary we've provided is a guideline that will allow you to discover the best of southern Iceland.

Iceland's sensational ring road is packed with scenery from towering cliffs to waterfalls, and you'll discover this today with a drive south-east. Set out through the Eyjafjallajokull region, where a 2010 volcanic eruption caused the now-infamous ash cloud, disrupting worldwide air travel for several days. It's up to you how far east you travel, but we recommend stopping at Vik, a rocky beach with incredible basalt cliffs. The beach is often incredibly windy and there are great photo opportunities of the waves crashing against the cliffs.

Work your way back west to one of Iceland's tallest waterfalls, Skogafoss. Standing at 62 metres tall it's an impressive sight, and if you are lucky with the light we should spot rainbows in the spray. We also recommend a 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.

Continue west to Seljalandsfoss waterfall - it is almost as tall as Skogafoss and here, weather permitting, you'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.

Make your way back to the yurts for the evening to relax and make the most of the beautiful, rural setting.



ACCOMMODATION:
Iceland Yurts (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Yurt



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 3 - Discover the highlights of the Golden Circle: Gullfoss falls, Strokkur Geysir and Thingvellir National Park

You have a couple of options today. You could explore the famous Golden Circle, which includes three of Iceland's most iconic sights - Gullfoss waterfalls, the Great Geysir, and Thingvellir National Park. Gullfoss is known locally as the 'Golden Waterfall', due to the way it cascades into a deep gorge with tremendous force. They may be biased but locals regard it as one of the most beautiful falls in the world! Geysir has the claim-to-fame of being the first spouting spring known to Europeans, and as such it has given all such springs their name. However, it is the Strokkur, just next door, meaning 'The Butter Churn', which is the main attraction these days, due to its impressive 30 metre eruptions every few minutes.

This Golden Circle excursion is a really popular day trip from Reykjavik, and we're in the incredibly lucky position of staying almost right next to Gullfoss and Geysir. We therefore highly recommend getting out in the very early morning or even late night (some of our staff members have been there at midnight! In summer when the midnight sun is in the sky, the light can be wondrous and you'll be the only people around). So you may decide to explore these places 'out of hours', and give yourself the day today for other exploration.

Firstly, head to the final site in the Golden Circle - Thingvellir National Park, a rare site of both historical and geological importance. Meaning 'Parliament Plains', this was the location of Iceland's first National Assembly for 800 years from 930AD and as such, is hugely significant in the country's cultural heritage. The impressive landscape sits on a unique spot where the Mid-Atlantic Ridge can be seen on dry land before disappearing to the ocean floor. This provides the quirky opportunity to place one foot on the North American tectonic plate and one foot on the Eurasian plate. The landscapes are really stunning in a very wild, windswept way and well worth the exploration.

In the afternoon you could try the most traditional transport method, the Icelandic horse. The working farm where the yurts are based is home to over 100 horses, so you can ride across open land at a relaxed pace, ideal for beginners with the focus being on taking in the vast landscape. If horse riding doesn't appeal then do as the locals do and visit the Secret Lagoon, a natural geo-thermal pool perfect for relaxing in the warm water.

You may even want to get up early and drive further east, where the landscapes become wilder and less explored. Equally, the changing weather in Iceland gives a great excuse to relax and watch the changing light on the landscape from the comfort of your yurt.



ACCOMMODATION:
Iceland Yurts (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Yurt



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 4 - Volcano hike - and drive to Reykjavik

Today you can leave the yurts at any time, but we'd recommend a relatively early start to make the most of your last full day in Iceland. Heading back towards the airport you will find Iceland's newest tourist attraction, the impressive Fagradalsfjall Volcano, which has been erupting since March 2021. Geologists think it might be ongoing for some years but this is something new to them and has been very unpredictable eruption.

The location of the volcano makes it extremely accessible and you may like to take the opportunity to walk to a viewing point and watch the lava flow, from a safe distance of course. The start point for the walk is a car park just outside of Grindavik (off Route 427). The pathway to the crater is constantly changing. It takes approximately 30 minutes to reach the lava flow (in June 2021). To get a good view of the crater, then you should allow another 1 hour hiking. The path is wide and clear but rocky in places so good footwear is a must, and as it's Iceland it's worth having a few layers in your bag. The conditions are closely monitored by local authorities so ask the yurt team if the route is open before you set off.

After returning to your car it's time to continue to Reykjavik, where you should aim to arrive mid to late afternoon. Depending upon the time of your flight tomorrow you may decide to stop on the way in the small town of Keflavik to get your Covid-19 rapid antigen test, which is currently (June 21) required for re-entry to many countries and should be obtained before departure. It's vitally important that you check the requirements for your own country, as the rules are constantly changing. Test should be booked on line in advance, - details are found here <https://www.oryggi.is/is/covid-19>

Keflavik is approx. 45 from the centre of Reykjavik. Reykjavik is a wonderful mix of traditional houses clad in corrugated iron, modern architecture, and a thriving waterfront where the work of the fisherman shows you the lifeblood of this small island nation.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Klettur (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 5 - Trip ends at Keflavik Airport

Your trip ends today and so you will drive back to the airport for your flight home. Just bear in mind that it is a hour drive to the airport and you need to take the car back, so leave plenty of time for the journey there. If you are on a later flight, it is possible to get your antigen test today in Keflavik, which is the nearest town to the airport. This must be booked in advance.



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

Trip information

Climate and 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.

Horse riding - 6000 ISK per hour. Horse riding can be booked for an hour or a full day, typically a two-hour ride gives a great taste. It is suitable for complete beginners and is a very relaxed pace, all about enjoying the landscape.

Secret Lagoon - 3000 ISK per person entrance fee, 700 ISK towel rental and 1000 ISK for transport there and back. Relax in this natural hot springs, with the water temperature around 38 degrees all year round and a small geyser that erupts every few minutes which you can watch as you soak in the water.

Clothing

In Iceland weather conditions can change rapidly - sunshine, drizzle, rain and snow may all occur in the same day. You'll need to take warm clothing for outdoor activities so pack layers. A good quality heavy duty wind and waterproof jacket and trousers are essential and in winter add thermal layers to your packing list.

We recommend taking walking boots with a sturdy tread or trainers. Soft indoor shoes or slippers are recommended as it is normal in Iceland to have special house shoes.

Equipment

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

Car

Accommodation notes

The accommodation for this trip is the unique Nattura Yurtel, where you will stay in custom-made Mongolian yurts which are located on a working horse farm.

Each yurt is one room - which is 6m in diameter and is fitted out with twin beds which can be pushed together to create a double. A number of yurts have day beds in them as well as comfortable chairs, and these can be used for children to make the yurt into a triple room if necessary. To ensure that the glamping experience is as comfortable as possible every yurt has a toilet, which is discreetly housed in a small curtained area, as well as a sink area which has hot and cold water - towels are provided. There is a small fridge in each yurt, as well as a kettle along with tea and coffee.

Showers and further toilets are available in a separate block on the site.

Simple traditions are maintained at the Yurtel - for example all yurts are 'shoe free' (you may want to bring along some slippers for your stay), and everyone is encouraged to step into the yurt 'right foot first' as this is the traditional way.

There two large communal yurts on the site which are furnished with comfy sofas and have plenty of space to relax after a day of exploring. Both of these yurts have large viewing windows built into them, and so are ideal places to watch the northern lights in the winter, whenever the free light show decides to make an appearance.

Breakfast is served each morning in one of the communal yurts - look out for a recycled table made from wood left over from the construction.

The second communal yurt, which includes the reception - has more of a bar-type atmosphere, and is where evenings are spent chatting and looking out through the viewing windows towards Geysir. Whilst this yurt has a bar-feel, it is very much a case of 'bring your own' to the bar, as drinks are currently not served there. So make sure you take advantage of the excellent value duty free shopping on arrival at Keflavik airport

There is no Wi-Fi at the Yurtel, but there is very good 3G coverage. Even with this coverage there is no doubt that Nattura Yurtel is an ideal place for a digital detox.

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 citizens, check the latest Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office advice.

Please refer to our COVID-19 entry requirements page for any country-specific conditions of entry. Whilst we strive to update this on a regular basis we recommend you also check the FCDO website for the latest advice on entry requirements in this fast-evolving situation. Information can change at any time.

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](#)

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 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 known for experiencing a whole range of seasons on any given day, but as a visitor there are two specific seasons to consider when you choose when to travel. If the Northern Lights are on your bucket list then travelling in the winter months is essential. With their long hours of Darkness October, November, February and March are typically the best months to see the Northern Lights.

Travelling in the summer months means long hours of daylight, in June and July it doesn't go dark at all! These long days are ideal for exploring at a relaxed pace then spending the evenings spent outside soaking up the endless views of Iceland's incredible landscape.

Reviews



**AWARD WINNING
EXPLORE LEADERS**



**PRICE GUARANTEE
PROMISE**



**AIRPORT
TRANSFERS**