



## **Exploring Iceland**

*It's a surprising, even astonishing land; one of massive glaciers and rumbling volcanoes, bubbling mud holes and powerful waterfalls; hugely abundant bird life and just 340,000 people; and where the sun never sets for six splendid weeks. It's also perfect for exploring in a small group, as we discover traveling the breadth of the country and getting an up-close view of this natural "wonderland."*

**With an Post-Tour Extension:  
Reykjavik – On Your Own**

### **Itinerary**

Created on Sep 27, 2024

# Exploring Iceland

## Day-by-Day Itinerary

### **DAY 1: Depart U.S. for Reykjavik, Iceland**

### **DAY 2: Arrive Reykjavik/Selfoss**

Upon our early morning arrival in Iceland's capital, we meet our Odysseys Unlimited Tour Director, have breakfast at a local restaurant then enjoy a scenic drive east. We stop to view the geothermal exhibit at the Hellisheidi Power Plant. Mid-afternoon, we reach pastoral Selfoss, and our hotel. Tonight: a briefing on the journey ahead followed by a welcome dinner.

*Meals:* Breakfast, Dinner

### **DAY 3: Selfoss/Vik**

Today's highlights include the interactive Lava Center; Seljalandsfoss, one of Iceland's most visited waterfalls; and nearby Skogafoss, a popular waterfall known for its rainbows on sunny days. We continue on to lovely Vik, Iceland's southernmost town, where we're free to explore and shop for items of locally produced wool. This afternoon, we walk along the black-sand beach at Reynisfjara, lined with columnar, basalt-filled caves. En route to our hotel, we stop by the Solheimajokull "sliding" glacier.

*Meals:* Breakfast

### **DAY 4: Selfoss/Reykjavik/Akureyri/Lake Myvatn**

We transfer to Reykjavik this morning for the one-hour flight to Akureyri, Iceland's "northern capital," where, upon arrival, we travel to beautiful Lake Myvatn. One of the world's natural wonders, Lake Myvatn and its environs of bubbling mud flats, lava fields, and lunar-like volcanic craters comprise a stunning national park. We stop to explore the bizarre lava formations at Dimmuborgir, and also see the region's unique "pseudo craters," the boiling mud pots at Namaskard, the explosion crater at Viti, and the flat volcano system at Krafla.

*Meals:* Breakfast, Dinner

### **DAY 5: Lake Myvatn/Husavik/Vatnajokull National Park**

This morning we travel to Husavik, where we embark on a bird-watching cruise to Puffin Island. Depending on the season, we may see thousands of seabirds here, including puffins, black guillemots, fulmars, and Arctic terns. On departures that visit after the puffins have migrated for the season (typically in August), we take a whale watch cruise out of Husavik. This afternoon, we visit Vatnajokull National Park, yet another of Iceland's natural wonders. Here we see Asbyrgi, a huge canyon enveloped by towering walls; in the middle of the partially wooded canyon sits a hoof-shaped rock called "The Island." Next, we visit Hljodaklettur, where we explore the labyrinth of "echoing rocks" created by the spiral basalt formations of the arches and canyons here. Our last stop: jaw-dropping Dettifoss, Europe's most powerful waterfall and Iceland's "Niagara."

*Meals:* Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## **DAY 6: Lake Myvatn/Akureyri/Siglufjordur**

This morning, we stop at Godafoss, the “waterfall of the gods” named for the carvings of Norse gods discarded here when the country was declared Christian a thousand years ago. Mid-morning, we arrive in Akureyri, where we have free time to explore and for lunch on our own. We travel on to Siglufjordur, where we visit the unique Herring Era Museum then arrive at our hotel in time for dinner there tonight.

*Meals:* Breakfast, Dinner

## **DAY 7: Siglufjordur/Borgarbyggo**

We travel towards the southwest corner of Iceland today, passing through more incredible natural scenery. En route, we visit Glaumbaer, a folk museum featuring authentic turf houses. Later we stop at a Gauksmyri farm featuring famed Icelandic horses – small, hardy, and with long manes. We also enjoy scenic views at Grabrok Crater, and stop to view the thermal areas of Deildartunguhver and Hraunfossar Falls.

*Meals:* Breakfast, Dinner

## **DAY 8: Borgarbyggo/Snaefellsnes Peninsula**

Today we encounter the stunning Snaefellsnes Peninsula. We begin with a walk along the shell sand beach at the abandoned fishing village of Budir, surrounded by a vast lava field. We also explore the caves and bizarre rock formations along the rugged shore at Arnarstapi, site of thousands of nesting cliff birds. After lunch at a rustic oceanfront restaurant, we continue our exploration of this scenic region.

*Meals:* Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## **DAY 9: Borgarbyggo/Reykjavik**

En route to Reykjavik today, we visit Thingvellir National Park, known both for its historic import and as the place where the fissure between the geological plates of North America and Europe is most evident. It’s also a gem of nature, with canyons, caves, waterfalls, and ponds surrounded by snowcapped mountains. We learn about the historic parliament founded here in 930 CE, and walk along a gorge into the rift valley itself. Then we depart for famed Great Geysir and Gullfoss, Iceland’s immensely popular “golden” waterfall. We continue on to Reykjavik, arriving in time for dinner on our own in this stylish city.

*Meals:* Breakfast, Lunch

## **DAY 10: Reykjavik**

This morning we embark on a tour of the Icelandic capital. Then the remainder of today is at leisure to explore and enjoy Reykjavik as we please; those who wish can join in an optional tour to the Sky Lagoon. Tonight, we celebrate our adventure over a farewell dinner.

*Meals:* Breakfast, Dinner

## **DAY 11: Depart for U.S.**

Today we depart for the airport and our return flights to the U.S.

*Meals:* Breakfast

### **PLEASE NOTE**

#### **Iceland's Northern Lights**

Although many factors, including local weather conditions, contribute to the chances of seeing this natural phenomenon, generally the best opportunities for witnessing the Northern Lights in Iceland occur between mid-September and mid-April. Our September and October tour dates offer a good combination of touring conditions (still warm enough for outdoor activities/excursions) and shorter daylight hours with darker nights (prime elements for the *aurora borealis*).

This tour itinerary was generated for Exploring Iceland on Sep 27, 2024. Please visit the Exploring Iceland page at <https://www.odysseys-unlimited.com/tours/europe/exploring-iceland/> for the latest and most accurate information.