

ICELAND ADVENTURE

October 26-November 3, 2018
\$2195.00 per person based on 2 to a room
Single Supplement \$875.00

OCT 26 – Depart home for Reykjavík. Transportation to Newark Airport included. Depart Newark in the evening. Meals D

OCT 27 – Arrive Reykjavik time to relax and enjoy with an afternoon tour of the city.

Welcome dinner this evening.

Overnight Icelandair Hotel Reykjavik - Meals BD

OCT 28 - Golden Circle & South Coast



We will visit Geysir, on the Golden Circle route

We will start as we mean to go on with a day rammed full of incredible natural wonders: enjoy the amazing attractions available on the **Golden Circle**, including Gullfoss, Geysir and the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Thingvellir. Then on your way home, you will see Seljalandsfoss and Skógafoss waterfalls.

Our first stop will be **Thingvellir National Park**, which has been recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, for both its historical and geological importance. There you will see the historic site of Althingi, site of the world's oldest operational parliament: Icelandic parliamentarians have been meeting at **Althingi** since 930 AD and the modern Parliament bears the same name. Althingi is one of the first democratic parliaments in the world: opening 300 years before the British one, known as 'The Mother of Parliaments'. Marvel at the 'Law Speaker's' dramatic platform, from where he would proclaim new laws with the imperious rift valley at his back. Thingvellir also straddles two continents: with the Eurasian and North American tectonic plates lying at the center of it. These two plates continue to edge apart, with the gap widening by about 2cm a year. This creates some of the most awe-inspiring geology that can be found anywhere on Earth and it is the perfect way to kick off the trip of a lifetime!

From there we will travel to the world-renowned Geysir hot spring area where you will see the incredible Geysers throw water and steam up to 25 meters into the air. The Geysir hot springs have become synonymous with Iceland and it is impossible not to appreciate the awesome power and violence of nature when you see them. Amongst them, you will see the famous '**Geysir**' from which the English word geyser was adopted and its younger brother was known as Strokkur.

Then we will move on to the majestic **Gullfoss** Waterfall (*golden falls*), so named because on a sunny day the water takes a golden brown hue as it cascades down to the Hvita (*White River*) below. If you are really lucky, a stunning rainbow will form over the canyon: providing an amazing photo opportunity. Gullfoss, Thingvellir and the Geyser hot spring area are all things that everyone who visits Iceland should see and on this tour, you will cross each one off your bucket list in one incredible day!

Then on our way back to our accommodation, at a country hotel near the village of Vik, we will stop at both The **Seljalandsfoss** and **Skógafoss** Waterfalls. Seljalandsfoss is a particularly interesting waterfall because you can walk behind the crashing waters, giving a truly unique vantage point.

Overnight – Icelandair Hotel Vik – Meals B



A seal chilling on an iceberg in Jokulsarlon Glacier Lagoon

OCT 29 - Vík - Skaftafell - Glacier Lagoon - Höfn

Day four is also packed full of incredible things: we will visit **Reynisfjara** black sand beach, famous for the **Reynisdrangar** peaks and dramatic black basalt columns. Cross the **Eldhraun** lava field, then go to **Skaftafell** in **Vatnajökull** National Park for a glacier hike. Visit **Jökulsárlón**, the surreal glacier lagoon with floating icebergs, and the nearby Crystal Beach. Spend the night in **Höfn**.

Our first stop will be the incredible Reynisfjara black sand beach, famous for being the best black sand beach in all of Iceland. Of particular interest are the two Reynisdrangar peaks, which local legend claims are two petrified trolls. We will also visit an amazing basalt column cave: the perfect start to your second day of fun!

We will then move on, from volcanic beaches to actual volcanoes, as we pass the legendary Mýrdalsjökull glacier, which contains one of the most notorious volcanoes in all of Iceland beneath its ice: the mighty **Katla**. If you are lucky to get a glimpse of Katla, you will truly begin to understand Iceland's nickname: the land of ice and fire!

From there we will drive across the **Eldhraun** lava field to **Skaftafell** in the Vatnajökull National Park. Eldhraun is amazing and you will gain a new insight into how volcanic activity has crafted its stunning landscape. Then we will reach Skaftafell, an oasis of lush green birch forests and rich vegetation: an emerald jewel set in the center of a harsh desert of black sand. The natural wonders that you will see here will take your breath away, as you drink in the wildly contrasting scenes.

After that, we will take a magical three-hour glacier hike up Vatnajökull, the largest glacier in all of Europe. This hike will be guided by one of our specialist glacier guides, ensuring that you are safe throughout the climb: they will also be on hand to teach you more about this incredible outlet glacier and all the amazing things that you will see from it.

We will finish by visiting the famous **Jökulsárlón** Glacier Lagoon: a truly mesmerizing sight and another great place for a photo or two. You will gaze in wonder at its jaw-dropping beauty: crystal clear, sapphire water; lapping up against coal-black sands, which are peppered with pearl white and ocean blue icebergs that have been washed ashore. It is a supernatural sight, which will send shivers down your spine. You may also recognize it from a couple of films: the most famous of which is the James Bond movie that was shot there. We will then go to our accommodation in the town of **Höfn**, feted as the lobster capital of Iceland.

Overnight Hotel Jokul Hafn – MEALS B D



Skogafoss waterfall is one of the stops on the south coast

OCT 30 - East Fjords - Djúpvogur - Egilsstaðir

We will visit the fishing village at **Djúpvogur** in the morning, before moving onto the charming **Hengifoss** and **Litlannessfoss** waterfalls and then finish at **Egilsstaðir** where you will stay at a country hotel.

On day three you will marvel at the Eastern fjords of Iceland: as we thread our way along the coastline, we will see **Hvalnes** a remote and beautiful peninsula and the stretch of coast around the **Þvottárskriður** landslides between **Lóns** and **Álftafjarðar**. All of which is stunningly beautiful and we guarantee that your eyes will be glued to the incredible views all around you.

Our first stop of the day will be **Djúpvogur**, a traditional fishing village which is also home to a fine outdoor sculpture, **Eggin í Gleðivík** (meaning The Eggs of Merry Bay). The sculpture has become iconic within Icelandic culture and consists of 34 eggs (*it looks a lot better than it sounds!*).

Then we will move on to **Egilsstaðir** where we will relax in a country hotel.

Overnight Hotel 1001 Nott – MEALS B



We will visit Akureyri, the largest city in north Iceland

OCT 31- Dettifoss - Mývatn - Goðafoss - Akureyri

We will see Dettifoss, the waterfall with the highest flow rate in Europe, along with the stunning beauty of Goðafoss waterfall, and then relax in the Mývatn Nature Baths before finishing at Akureyri; your accommodation will be nearby.

On day four we will head towards the north of Iceland, traveling to Möðrudalur: Iceland's highest farm. Here you can relax and grab a quick bite to eat in Iceland's highest restaurant: standing a mighty 469m off the ground and offering stunning panoramic views over the incredible wilderness below.

Then we will stop at Dettifoss, Europe's most powerful waterfall, the violent cascading water is truly awesome and will give you a new perspective on the power of nature. Then we will move on to the incredible world around Lake Mývatn: a beautiful crystal clear lake, with an abundance of incredible birdlife. After that, we will make the short journey to the steaming lunar landscapes of the Námaskarð geothermal area. Námaskarð is like nothing else on this planet: an arctic desert replete with boiling hot springs, steaming fumaroles and technicolor bubbling mud pots. Its barren beauty is a wonderful contrast to all the other luscious areas that you will see on the tour and is an experience that will stay with you for the rest of your life. Following this alien world, we will travel on to the Hverfjall crater and the unique Dimmuborgir formations, known as the Dark Castles: these strange lava formations are steeped in mythology and our friendly tour guide will tell you all about them. The different sides of nature, which you will see on this day of the tour are truly life-altering: majestic unique geology, luscious lakes rich in life, barren arctic deserts and much, much more!

Overnight Hotel Kiarnalundur Akureyri – MEALS B L



A Whale watching tour is included



In wintertime we'll hopefully see the northern lights!

NOV 1 - Whale watching in Dalvík - Siglufjörður -Tröllaskagi - Bifröst

On day 7 we will explore **Akureyri** then move on to **Dalvík** for some whale watching, it is also possible to do some fishing while we are there, after that, we will take a look round **Siglufjörður**. Your hotel is at **Bifröst**.

Day seven is dominated by Iceland's incredible wildlife and is an animal lover's dream! In the morning you will get the chance to explore Akureyri, the Capital of the North. This picturesque town is located right in the heart of Eyjafjörður (the Island Fjord) and offers spectacular views in every direction. Then we will travel to Dalvík, to go and see one of nature's most incredible marine animals: the whale!

The three-hour whale spotting trip will give you the chance to see the power and majesty of the whale in the flesh. We usually see minke whales, white-beaked dolphins, harbor porpoises, and humpback whales, with some lucky travelers managing to see the biggest animal to ever live: the Blue Whale! Seeing these magnificent creatures in their natural habitat is an experience that will last you a lifetime. They often swim close to the boat: frolicking around you and guaranteeing you get a new perspective on the natural world. We may also see some amazing avian species, including puffins and many more. Then our friendly guides will teach you a lesson on how to do some sea angling, allowing you to fully immerse yourself in Icelandic culture.

Once we reach the shore, we will travel on to **Siglufjörður**, a quaint fishing village steeped in history before continuing around **Tröllaskagi** (*the Troll Peninsula*): rich in local legend and folklore. The charming villages on this peninsula will really give you a great insight into how people live in remote Icelandic villages. Our scenic drive will take us through some thriving agricultural areas on our way to **Bifröst**, a small university community, where you will spend the evening.

Overnight Bifrost - MEALS B



Hraunfossar in West Iceland

NOV 2 - Borgarfjörður - Reykholt - Hraunfossar - Hvalfjörður - Reykjavík

Your amazing trip will finish with a visit to the **Deildartunguhver** hot spring, followed by the **Barnafoss** waterfall; then you will see the water pouring straight out of the lava at the **Hraunfossar** cascade. The tour will end with an amazing visit to **Reykholt**, home of **Snorri Sturluson**, historian, and writer of many Icelandic Sagas.

We will spend our final day in Western Iceland: an area which Lonely Planet voted as one of the best holiday destinations in 2016. We will spend the majority of our time in Borgarfjörður, which has many spectacular natural sights and is famed around the world for its majestic beauty. We will begin at the bubbling Deildartunguhver hot spring and marvel at its gorgeous steamy waters; then move on to the legendary waterfall, Barnafoss, (the Children's Waterfall), so named because to errant children are rumored to have perished there in Icelandic folklore; then it's on to the Hraunfossar cascade, a low and wide falls where the water pours directly out of a lava field.

From there we will travel to the historic and charming site of **Reykholt**, home to Snorri Sturluson, the Icelandic historian, lawyer, politician, poet and the author of some of the Icelandic Sagas. Snorri Sturluson is one of Iceland's most famous sons and lived between the 12th and 13th centuries: his accounts of Nordic mythology are truly incredible and reading them will really help you to appreciate Iceland. You will see Snorralaug, Snorri's pool, where you can dip your fingers and feel the temperature of the water in the place where Snorri is likely to have bathed. The pool itself was built in the 10th century and may well be the oldest man-made structure in Iceland. Then we will drive around scenic fjord, **Hvalfjörður** (Whale Fjord): so keep your eyes peeled for more incredible wildlife and stunning scenery. Before we arrive back in **Reykjavík**.

Overnight Icelandair Hotel Reykjavik – MEALS B D

NOV 3- Flight home.

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