

15-DAY ADVENTURE

VOLCANOES DESERTS AND GLACIERS

Iceland



A journey through the heart of Iceland's wild and rugged interior, a remote and exhilarating adventure, far from tarmac roads or popular trekking trails. On this trip we will navigate our way through the center of Iceland, using 4x4 vehicles to forge our way through rivers, across deserts and lava fields and beneath creaking glaciers. We will climb to the summit of Brennisteinsalda for magnificent views of Landmannalaugar, swim in thermal springs and see active lava flows and explosive geysers. An action packed trip for those seeking adventure far beyond the normal tourist routes. Mesmerizing waterfalls, ancient lava tunnels, rhyolite mountains and vast glaciers are waiting to be discovered.

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore the Rhyolite mountains of the Kerlingarfjöll massif
- Discover Goðafoss, the waterfall of the gods
- Hike on the Vatnajökull ice cap
- Cross remote and rugged landscapes in 4x4 vehicles



ITINERARY

DAY 1

ARRIVAL

Arrival at Keflavik airport where a member of our local team will be ready to greet you. We transfer to our accommodation in Reykjavik and pass by the new volcano of Geldingadalur. If we are lucky, the plume of molten lava may be in sight!

Accommodation: **Hotel**

DAY 2

REYKJAVIK - KERLINGARFJÖLL

This morning we set off early from Reykjavik and quickly find ourselves on the Mosfell Moor, a totally different atmosphere descends as we enter the Icelandic wilderness for the first time. We soon reach Thingvellir, the valley of the parliament, a high place of Icelandic history. This is where the summer sessions of the ancient Icelandic parliament established in 870 were held. We continue our journey north, stopping at the majestic Gullfoss waterfall and the Strokkur geyser, which spouts out every 5 to 10 minutes. After visiting the Geysir, we enter the highlands of Iceland between the Hofsjökull and Langjökull glaciers and scenery grows ever more impressive. Finally, we arrive in the Kerlingarfjöll region and settle down at our refuge for the night.

Accommodation: **Refuge**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 3

KERLINGARFJÖLL

Today is devoted to the discovery of the Kerlingarfjöll massif which literally translates as "witch mountains". Spectacular colours and contrasts are created by Rhyolite, a crumbly orange-coloured rock that makes up this unique landscape. We walk amongst solfataras (volcanic steam vents) and fumaroles and discover hot springs steaming in the cool air. After a full day of exploring we return to our refuge for another night.

Hiking time: **5 - 6 hours**

Accommodation: **Refuge**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 4

KERLINGARFJÖLL - SKAGAFJORDUR

This morning we set off north again on the Kjölur track. We pause at the geothermal site of Hveravellir, where we can observe beautiful fumaroles surrounded by geyserite. We then come to Blöndulón, a huge natural lake offering superb views. There is also the option to visit the Glaumbaer peat farms (€15 payable locally). At the end of the afternoon, we reached the Skagafjörður fjord and our accommodation.

Hiking time: **2 - 3 hours**

Accommodation: **Refuge**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 5

SKAGAFJORDUR – MÝVATN

Today we cross the troll peninsula to reach Akureyri, where we make a short stop. The town has just 18,000 inhabitants but is still the second largest city in Iceland after Reykjavik. We continue our journey to reach the Lake Mývatn region, pausing to gaze in wonder at the phenomenal Goðafoss waterfall, the fall of the gods. Today there is the opportunity to take a wild swim in the "blue lagoon" of Mývatn.

Hiking time: **2 - 3 hours**

Accommodation: **Guesthouse**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 6

MÝVATN

Get ready for a day of exploration around the geothermal area of Lake Mývatn. We visit a place called Hverir where bubbling pools of boiling mud are interspersed with solfatares and fumaroles. Around the Krafla volcano we find vast lava fields that were formed during its 9 eruptions between 1975 and 1984. We use lava flows as our pathways through the landscape and visit lava tunnels that are more than 200 years old. After six or seven hours of hiking, a soothing dip in the natural hot water baths is the perfect way to finish off our day.

Hiking time: **6 - 7 hours**

Accommodation: **Guesthouse**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 7

MÝVATN – KVERKFJÖLL

In the early morning light we climb to the explosive crater of Hverfjall for outstanding views and mind blowing geography. We then begin our journey south, following the F88 track which plunges straight towards the Vatnajökull glacier. We cross endless expanses of pumice stone, the black desert of Ódáðahraun, and finally the glacial region of Kverkfjöll, with it's "end of the world" ambiance.

Hiking time: **3 - 4 hours**

Accommodation: **Refuge**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 8

KERKFJÖLL – ASKJA

This morning we hike to the foot of the Vatnajökull ice cap. Equipped with crampons, we walk out across the largest glacier in Europe (roughly the size of Cyprus). After a picnic lunch, we depart by vehicle and head for the Askja caldera and the impressive Drekagil waterfall (dragon waterfall). We explore Iceland's largest caldera on foot, the last eruption here was in 1961 left behind an impressive lava field, five characteristic craters and a small island in the middle of the lake. Depending on the conditions, you may want to have a swim in the lake before we head to our refuge for the night.

Hiking time: **4 - 5 hours**

Accommodation: **Refuge**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 9

ASKJA – NÝDALUR

Our adventure continues as we begin traveling down track 910 in our 4x4 vehicle. This is a long journey on a road that feels like it will arrive on a different planet at any moment. North of the track we can see immense lava fields and to the south, the Vatnajökull glacier.

In the heart of the Sprengisandur desert, we reach the oasis of Nýdalur where we will spend the night.

Accommodation: **Refuge**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 10

NÝDALUR – LANDMANNALAUGAR

We leave Nýdalur this morning on another legendary Icelandic track, Sprengisandur (F26), known for its sudden changes in weather! We reach the Landmannalaugar within the Fjallabak nature reserve and finish our day by relaxing in the hot water river and exploring our new surroundings.

Hiking time: **1 - 2 hours**

Accommodation: **Refuge**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 11

LANDMANNALAUGAR

Our trail today winds through gorges and multicolored hills, towards the interior of the Torfajökull massif. Here the rhyolite mountains are adorned in shades of red, green, blue, black and yellow. We discover the hot springs of Stórhver and climb to the summit of Brennisteinsalda. After pausing to enjoy our location and take some photos, we descend from the peak via ridges which offer us a breathtaking view of the Laugahraun lava flow. We can continue by climbing to the top of Blahnukur mountain from where we have a beautiful view of the entire massif. We end the day by soaking tired feet in the hot river of Landmannalaugar.

Hiking time: **6 - 7 hours**

Accommodation: **Refuge**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 12

LANDMANNALAUGAR – JÖKULSÁRLÓN

We take the F208 track to cross the Landmannalaugar massif and pass by the Illagil ravines before reaching the Elggjá fault, "the fault of fire". We cross the fault on foot towards our morning objective, the surprising waterfall of Ófærufoss. If conditions allow, we will stop for a short hike on the Laki moss on route. In the afternoon we jump back in the 4x4 and head in the direction of Skaftafell, where our refuge awaits us. In the Skaftafell region the Breidamerkurjökull glacier sends icebergs crashing down from its headwall to drift off along the coastline.

Hiking time: **3 - 4 hours**

Accommodation: **Guesthouse**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 13

SKAFTAFELL NATURAL PARK – REYKJAVIK

Once again at the foot of the largest glacier in Europe (but on the other side this time), we wander through the Skaftafell Natural Park on balcony trails above the glacial tongues. Incredible views of the glaciers, the Morsardalur valley and the wood of Baejarstadarskokur await us. In the late afternoon, we depart in the direction of Vik before continuing our journey back to Reykjavik.

Hiking time: **6 - 7 hours**

Accommodation: **Hotel**

Meals included: **Breakfast / Lunch**

DAY 14

REYKJAVIK

There is lots of possibilities today as we have a whole day to explore Reykjavik and relax a little after our adventure. In the morning, we will have the option to visit the Reykjanes peninsula and the Fagradalsfjall volcano. The volcano began erupting in March 2021 following strong seismic activity on the peninsula. Torrents of lava gush out of two craters before pouring out through other faults and volcanic cones. Other activities like whale watching, a visit to the blue lagoon or tour of the museums are also available.

Hiking time: **3 - 4 hours**

Accommodation: **Hotel**

Meals included: **Breakfast**

DAY 15

DEPARTURE

Morning transfer to the airport for your return flight.

Meals included: **Breakfast**

TRIP INFORMATION

DIFFICULTY

This trip through the wilds of Iceland is not very demanding and is achievable by anybody in good health with a reasonable level of fitness. You will need to hike for between 4 and 7 hours with elevation gains up to 500m. Although there is no technical difficulty, the terrain can be rocky and unstable and care will be needed to avoid slips and trips. The weather can also play a big part in the difficulty of the trip. If conditions are poor, you could be hiking in very cold conditions with strong winds and rain. To talk about your suitability for this trip, please feel free to contact us.

FOOD & DRINK

Each day will start with a breakfast of cereals, bread, jam and honey, fresh fruit and plenty of tea and coffee. After breakfast we prepare our own picnic lunches to throw in our daypacks. There will be bread to make sandwiches and a range of fillings to choose from (cheese, cold meats, vegetables) as well as salads, dried fruits and cakes.

Your help in the kitchen is expected and much appreciated, particularly in the evenings with food prep and washing up. We like the whole group to work as a team to cook dinner, it creates a pleasant atmosphere as we reflect on the days adventures together. We are proud of the healthy and delicious meals we provide even out in the Icelandic wilderness! There will always be plenty of fresh vegetables and you will have the opportunity to taste skyr, smoked salmon, leg of lamb and other tasty Icelandic delicacies. Every meal will include some kind of local meat or fish.

If you have special dietary requirements please inform us of this when completing your participant forms and include as much detail as possible. For example, if you are vegetarian, please inform us if you eat fish or not. Our guides will do their best to meet your requirements but you may like to bring one or two products with you. For example, gluten free products are not readily available in Iceland so you could bring a small bag of GF pasta and maybe a pack of your favorite GF biscuits. Please feel free to contact us and discuss this if you would like more information.

In Iceland, alcoholic drinks are sold only in state stores and alcohol is very expensive due to high levels of taxation. If you would like a drink in the evenings, it is a good idea to purchase something at duty free as you exit the airport.

ACCOMMODATION

During this trip we will stay in a mixture of hotels, guesthouses and refuges.

In Reykjavik we stay in comfortable hotel accommodation in twin rooms with en-suite bathroom facilities.

Guesthouses are usually large typically Icelandic houses with 5 to 10 bedrooms. Accommodation is in dormitories of 4 to 6 people with shared bathroom facilities. Single or double rooms can be booked on request and subject to availability.

The refuges are much like the mountain huts you would find in mainland Europe. Large buildings in exceptionally beautiful locations with basic dormitory accommodation and shared bathrooms. Single beds or bunk beds are provided but you need to bring your own sleeping bag. There will be hot showers and charging for phones and cameras available for a small fee. Most of these refuges are owned by the Iceland Touring Association and you can see pictures and learn more about the accommodation by visiting their website [here](#).

At every location on our Iceland trips there will be access to flushing, western style toilets.

LUGGAGE

You will need to bring a 70-80 litre duffel bag or backpack for the bulk of your luggage and a smaller 30-40 litre daypack to carry with you each day. Please do not bring a rigid suitcase as this is not as practical to transport during your trip. Your luggage will travel with you in a 4x4 vehicle and it is a good idea to pack anything you do not want to get wet into dry bags.

HOW DO I GET THERE?

You will need to arrive in Reykjavik on day 1 of your itinerary. Reykjavik's international airport is called Keflavic (KEF) and is located 48km outside the city. The journey from the airport into the city will take around 45mins. Reykjavik's city airport is used for domestic flights only.

From the UK, there are direct flights to Keflavic from London Heathrow (LHR) with British Airways and Icelandair. Easy Jet also offer direct flights from London Luton (LTN), Manchester (MAN) and Edinburgh (EDI). The flight time is roughly 3 hours depending on which airport you depart from.

For those traveling from the USA, Icelandair have direct flights from New York (JFK), Boston (BOS), Washington (IAD) and Seattle (SEA). Delta offer convenient flights via New York from San Francisco (SFO), Los Angeles (LAX), Phoenix (PHX) and Atlanta (ATL).

On arrival in Iceland, after clearing immigration and collecting your luggage, please look out for a member of our team in the arrivals area. They will be holding a large "KANDOO" sign.

BUDGET & CHANGE

The local currency in Iceland is the **Icelandic Krona** (ISK). For the most up to date exchange rate please visit www.xe.com.

Iceland isn't a cheap place to visit. Restaurants often have lunchtime special menus which are great value (around £20-30pp for a soup and fish of the day). A meal out for 2 will cost around £60-100 (fish) or £80-120 (meat). When getting around in Reykjavik an exciting and cheap option is to use the electric scooters parked up around town. Simply download the app and scoot away. If this feels too techy, a taxi starting price will cost roughly £4.30 or going on foot is more than appropriate as Reykjavik has a small city centre. Souvenirs can cost anything from ~£5 to £500. It is also worth knowing that as a tourist, you can claim back the value-added tax (VAT) on certain goods over the value of ISK 6,000 (£36) at Keflavik airport before your flight home. As long as this is all on one tax receipt, you can claim back the tax.

TIPS

Tipping customs vary all over the world and can be very confusing when travelling to a new country. Tipping is always appreciated - it is not obligatory and should be left to the discretion of each individual in Iceland. Tips are not a substitute for good wages: our guides are all well paid and well looked after. If you are satisfied with your guide's services, we recommend a tip between **£30-40 per person** (equivalent to 5000-6600 ISK) for the entire trip. On the other hand, if you receive bad service or have not been treated well, you would not be expected to tip at all.

FORMALITIES & HEALTH

PASSPORT

Most travellers will require a passport valid for at least 6 months after your return date. It is your responsibility to confirm your specific requirements and please be aware that proof of onward travel may be required.

VISA

Travelling to the Iceland is visa free for up to 90 days, for UK and US citizens

VACCINATIONS

No vaccinations are required.

INSURANCE

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are fully and adequately insured for the duration of your trip. Please ensure that all activities, excursions and destinations in your itinerary are included in your travel insurance policy, in addition to your regular cover for cancellation and medical expenses. We ask that you keep a copy of your policy summary (containing policy number and the emergency contact number for your insurer) in your day sack at all times, so that we can access this information should we need to contact the insurer on your behalf.

MEDICATION

Your guide carries a first aid kit at all times but we recommend you carry the following items:

- Painkillers
- Anti-diarrhoea tablets
- Sunscreen (high factor) for lips and skin
- Moisturising cream
- Elastic bandage and regular bandages
- Sanitary products
- Mosquito spray
- Blister bandage

EQUIPMENT & CLOTHING

CLOTHING TO BRING

- Hat for sun protection
- Hat for warmth
- Scarf or head scarf that can be wet
- Sunglasses
- Long sleeve shirts or cotton t-shirts
- Jumpers, 1 light weight and 1 warm
- Windproof and waterproof jacket with hood
- Breathable fast drying underwear
- Warm gloves
- Comfortable long trousers (fast drying)
- Waterproof trousers
- Thermal long sleeved vest and leggings
- Trainers or sandals for evenings
- Walking socks
- Hiking boots (high rise, sturdy soles)
- Swimming costume may be useful

EQUIPMENT TO BRING

- Sleeping bag with minimum comfort rating of 0°C
- 2 x 1 litre water bottles or hydration pack
- Walking poles (highly recommended)
- Head torch with spare batteries and bulb
- Toiletries (including wet wipes)
- Dry bags for keep clothes dry in your luggage
- Container for any toxic rubbish (batteries, sanitary items etc)
- Duffel bag (80 to 90 litres), flexible and water resistant
- Daypack (30 to 40 litres) to carry with you each day

OTHER USEFUL KIT

- Camera
- Binoculars
- Insect repellent
- Thermos flask

HOW TO BOOK THIS TRIP

1 CHOOSE YOUR DATE AND CHECK AVAILABILITY

A full list of available dates can be found on our website.

2 CONTACT US

Contact us by phone, email or through our website. We will answer any questions you may have and send you a personalized itinerary and quote.

3 COMPLETE BOOKING AND PAYMENT

When you are ready to book, we will send you a link to our online booking forms and participation agreements. We accept all major credit and debit cards and require a low 20% deposit to secure your place.

