

ICELAND

Rugged Iceland: Nature & Science Up-Close

9 DAYS | Choose your dates (May-Sept.)

About this trip

During this 9-day exploration, intrepid students will be rewarded with the chance to experience Iceland's natural beauty from a unique point of view. Learn about the geological forces that have carved these stunning landscapes and uncover how humans have interacted with the island throughout history until present day. Hike through geothermal areas, look for seals and stranded icebergs in a glacial lagoon, and step into the heart of a glacier on this up-close examination of Iceland's spectacular geology. Tent camping accommodations and simple meals prepared by a chef accompanying the group make this an ideal program for adventurous youth.

Your students will...

- Study and compare a variety of waterfalls, glaciers, volcanoes, geysers, hot springs, and other geological features.
- Observe sea birds like puffins, fulmars, and guillemots in Vík, the southernmost village on the Icelandic mainland.
- Visit the Lava Centre, an interactive, high-tech educational exhibition depicting volcanic activity, earthquakes, and Iceland's formation over millions of years.
- Walk the path at the top of Fjaðrárglúfur Canyon, whose sheer cliff walls rise 330 feet above the Fjaðrá River below.

Educational Connections



Interdisciplinary
Studies



Environmental
Studies



Earth
Science



Adventure
Learning

What's included?

- Bilingual local guide
- Driver
- Accommodations
- Activities
- Private transportation
- Meals
- Beverages with meals
- Carbon offsetting

Itinerary

BLD = BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER

DAY 1 - DEPART UNITED STATES

DAY 2 - REYKJAVIK

Upon arrival at Keflavik International Airport you will be met by your guide. After breakfast, drive around the peninsula with a stop at Orkuverið Jörðin and Power Plant Earth. Span continents as you step onto the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, the boundary between the North American and Eurasian tectonic plate margins. En route detour to observe pillow lavas that were extruded when this part of the Reykjanes Peninsula was submerged in the late Pleistocene. Visit the cliffs by Reykjanes lighthouse, which features breathtaking views across the North Atlantic over to Eldey Island, the island of fire that emerged from the ocean in the most recent sub-oceanic eruption in the area. Continue to the Krísuvík geothermal field. This evening receive an orientation before dinner. *Overnight at Hotel Cabin. (LD)*

DAY 3 - HAMRAGARDAR

Today, explore the Reykjanes Peninsula with its hot springs, mountains, bird cliffs, lunar landscapes and fishing villages. Your first stop is Grænavatn, a small green lake within a deep explosion crater. Next, explore Krýsuvík, an area with solfataras, fumaroles, mud pots, and hot springs. The soil is colored bright yellow, red, and green. Stop for lunch, then travel south through large lava fields, alongside mountains and the Atlantic Ocean. Arrive at the campground and set up camp. Simple meals will be prepared each day by a chef in a kitchen trailer accompanying the group. *Overnight in tent camping accommodations. (BLD)*

DAY 4 - SKAFTAFELL

After breakfast, pack up camp and head east. Pass Kirkjubæjarklaustur and the rivers of Skafta that have almost all dried up from the glacial river flood originating under the Vatnajökul Glacier in 2015, Skaftarhlaupt. The flood took a lot of land with it, leaving only sand and mud. Visit Skaftafell National Park, one of Iceland's most outstanding areas of natural beauty dominated by the glacier Vatnajökull, Europe's largest ice cap. *Overnight in tent camping accommodations. (BLD)*

DAY 5 - SKAFTAFELL

Start the day with a visit to Jökulsárlón glacier lagoon, one of the most beautiful and dramatic spots in the whole of Iceland. Huge pieces of ice calve from the glacier and end up floating in the lagoon and out to sea. Take a walk alongside the lagoon and on the black sandy shores, called Diamond Beach, and look for seals and stranded icebergs. In the afternoon visit the tiny turf church at Hof. This afternoon return to Skaftafell National Park to hike up to the waterfall Svartifoss, which is surrounded by black basalt columns. From there, walk to Sjónsker cliff, where you have a magnificent view of Hvannadalshnjúkur, Iceland's highest peak at 6,923 feet. *Overnight in tent camping accommodations. (BLD)*

DAY 6 - HVERAGERDI

After breakfast travel west to Fjaðrárgljúfur Canyon to witness a spectacular gorge. Hike on a path alongside the gorge, which leads to the top end of the canyon. There are spectacular views at several places on the way. The next stop is at Vík in Mýrdalur, the southernmost village on the Icelandic mainland. The area is rich in bird life, including puffins, fulmars, and guillemots. The world-famous Reynisfjara shore, near the village of Vík, is widely regarded as the most impressive black sand and pebble beach in Iceland and features an amazing cliff of regular basalt columns resembling a rocky step pyramid. Further off shore are the spectacularly shaped basalt sea stacks, called Reynisdrangar. According to folklore, two night trolls attempted to drag a ship to land but were turned into the Reynisdrangar stacks, still visible from the beach today. Further west you'll reach the 200 ft-high Skógafoss waterfall. Then journey along the famous Eyjafjallajökull glacier and volcano to visit the narrow and 213-ft-tall Seljalandsfoss waterfall. The waterfall has a trail that leads directly behind the falls -- but be prepared to get wet! End the day with a tour of the Lava Centre, an interactive, high-tech educational exhibition depicting volcanic activity, earthquakes and the creation of Iceland over millions of years. For the next two nights, camp at Reykjamörk in Hveragerði. *Overnight in tent camping accommodations. (BLD)*

DAY 7 - HVERAGERDI

Today begins with an exploration of Gullfoss, the beautiful double "Golden Falls" that tumble 110 feet into the Hvítá river and attract tourists and travelers all year. Journey into the Icelandic Highlands. The Kerlingarfjöll rhyolite mountain massif is colorful and rich in contrasts, with peaks and valleys, glaciers and snowfields, and lively geothermal activity. Hike about two hours to discover fuming steam vents, boiling mud pots and hot streams close to snow and ice. Once a year, Italian researchers and cryptographers come to Kerlingarfjöll to search for ancient manuscripts and "the Holy Grail," which according to accounts was buried here in 1217. This evening visit the active geothermal area of Geysir, where you can see Strokkur, "the churn," spout up to 70 feet every five to ten minutes. *Overnight in tent camping accommodations. (BLD)*

DAY 8 - REYKJAVIK

In the morning travel to Þingvellir National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and an area of exceptional geological and historical interest. The gravel mountain road, Kaldidalur takes you to Húsafell in west Iceland for a visit to the man-made ice tunnel and caves located on one of Europe's largest glaciers, Langjökull. The caverns are composed of an extensive system of tunnels and chambers that stretch close to 985 feet into the solid ice cap toward a breathtaking natural ice cave at the heart of the glacier. Make your way inside the glacier to explore various nooks and chambers and observe the massive ice crevasse. As you walk further along the tunnel, the ice gets older and its color gradually changes from white to deep blue; the acoustics inside the tunnel also change. Afterward, venture on an 8-wheel-drive monster truck expedition atop the glacier. In the afternoon visit the magnificent Hraunfossar and Barnafoss waterfalls. Your final stop for the day is at Deildartungahver, Europe's most powerful hot spring in terms of volume of water produced. Travel along Hvalfjörður fjord and reach Reykjavik in the evening. *Overnight at Hotel Cabin. (BLD)*

DAY 9 - DEPART

After breakfast transfer to the famous Blue Lagoon, where you'll be able to soak for about two hours in the warm, mineral-rich waters. Afterward transfer to the airport for your flight home. (B)

Program pricing

\$3,545 (20 participants + 2 leaders)

\$4,170 (14 participants + 2 leaders)

\$4,875 (10 participants + 1 leader)

International airfare, gratuities, and items of a personal nature are not included. Valid for travel in 2020.

Travel protection

Holbrook Travel purchases Travel Protection on behalf of all participants traveling in 2020 or beyond. These plans help provide coverage once the trip has departed and offer benefits for Baggage/Personal Effects, Accident & Sickness Medical Expenses, Emergency Evacuation and more. Refer to the Plan Document for more details.

Optional additional coverage is available in the form of the Group Deluxe Plan, which offers benefits for Trip Cancellation/Interruption, in addition to many other insurance benefits and non-insurance assistance services. If interested in this optional plan, we can provide you with rates and plan details.

The fine print

Rates are based on double occupancy for participants; complimentary leader accommodations may be single or double occupancy based on availability. International airfare is included for complimentary leaders. Holiday surcharges may apply. A \$200 per person deposit and enrollment form is due upon booking. This deposit is refundable until 95 days prior to departure excluding a \$100 cancellation fee. Final payments are due no later than 95 days prior to departure. Cancellations received less than 95 days prior to departure are non-refundable.