



GODAFOSS

ICELAND

Icelandic Circuit: Energy, Innovation, and Volcanic Landscapes

10 DAYS | Choose your dates | Best season to travel: JUN - AUG

Delve into the rugged landscapes, rich cultural history, and dynamic earth forces of Iceland, where both climate change and successes in renewable energy are evident and fast-moving throughout the country. During this comprehensive, well-paced island circuit, you'll behold unusual geological features, examine sustainability initiatives, and see characteristic flora and fauna. Discover the trendy capital, Reykjavík, and fishing villages whose charming residents will inspire you with their creativity. With talks by local scientists and other experts, get an inside look at a small country having a large impact on how the rest of the world will see its future.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Travel along the famed "Golden Circle," including stops at Þingvellir National Park, the Geysir geothermal area, and Gullfoss waterfall.
- Meet one of Iceland's foremost climate scientists studying glacier melt, and then hike at Fjallsárlón Glacier Lagoon to put your experience in perspective.
- Partake in an innovative farm-to-table experience at an organic greenhouse in the Icelandic countryside.
- Witness Vík's black sand beaches, the jagged coastline of the East Fjords, and the peculiar lava formations of Dimmuborgir.
- Learn about rural development and Iceland's sustainable fishing quota system.

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

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



PHOTO BY LAURIE MCLAUGHLIN



PINGVELLIR BY JOHAN WIELAND

ITINERARY

BLD = BREAKFAST, LUNCH, DINNER

DAY 1 - DEPART US

DAY 2 - REYKJAVÍK

Upon arrival, after clearing customs and immigration, you will be met by your guide and driver. Head to a local restaurant for breakfast and a program orientation, then continue to the Blue Lagoon. Situated amid the dramatic lava fields of the Reykjanes Peninsula, the Blue Lagoon offers a relaxing wellness experience in mineral-rich waters. Enjoy a drink and a mud mask at the in-water bar. Afterward, take a city sightseeing tour of Reykjavík before arriving at your hotel for check-in. You'll have time to freshen up before meeting in the hotel conference room for a lecture by a local conservation expert. Dinner is on own tonight to experience local Icelandic cuisine. *Overnight at Centerhotel Midgardur. (B)*

DAY 3 - VÍK

After breakfast at your hotel, depart for Þingvellir National Park to explore the grounds of Alþingi, the ancient parliament site on the shores of Iceland's largest lake. Þingvellir showcases the dramatic continental drift between the American and Eurasian tectonic plates. This is also the site where "Game of Thrones" filmed the narrow paths at the entrance to the Eyrie. Next, visit Iceland's famous Gullfoss, or "Golden Falls," and the nearby Geysir hot spring area to see numerous spouting hot springs and boiling mud pools. Lunch will be at Friðheimar Greenhouses for an out-of-the-ordinary "stem-to-table" experience in the Icelandic

countryside. After an introduction to the greenhouse, enjoy a special lunch served among the plants. Sample classic tomato dishes like Friðheimar's famous tomato soup, as well as new creations made with a twist, like green tomato and apple pie or refreshing, homemade tomato ice cream. Afterward, watch a horse show and learn about the history of the Icelandic horse. Continue along the South Shore region. Visit the Lava Centre, an interactive exhibition on Iceland's geological forces, and stop to admire Seljalandsfoss and Skógafoss waterfalls before arriving at Dyrhólaey nature reserve. Here you have a good chance of spotting puffin colonies and other types of seabirds. (Puffins are usually in Iceland from mid-May to early August. Please note that Dyrhólaey is closed from mid-May to June 25 for nesting season.) Conclude your journey in the charming village of Vík, where you can take a walk on the beautiful black sand beach with powerful



REYKJAVÍK BY LISA PALMESE-GRAUBARD

waves thundering in the distance. *Overnight at Hotel Dyrhólaey. (BLD)*

DAY 4 - GLACIER LAGOON

This morning, traverse Eldhraun, a lava field created by an eruption in 1783-1784 AD. The resulting lava flow was among the largest in recorded history. Make a stop for lunch in the town of Kirkjubæjarklaustur, where the greenery contrasts beautifully with the surrounding lava fields and black sand deserts. Your tour continues over Skeiðarársandur volcanic sands to Skaftafell, a beautiful glacial area, part of the vast Vatnajökull National Park system. Hike around the mighty Vatnajökull, the biggest glacier in Europe. *Overnight at Fosshotel Glacier Lagoon. (BD)*

DAY 5 - GLACIER LAGOON

After breakfast at your hotel, meet with a local scientist who has been monitoring melting glaciers over time. Hike at Fjallsárlón Glacier Lagoon while listening to a lecture on climate change, putting your experience in perspective. Continue to the stunning Jökulsárlón Glacial Lagoon. Enjoy a boat tour, sailing among the lagoon's many floating icebergs, and possibly glimpse sunbathing seals on the ice. (Boat tour only operates from May to mid-October; subject to change due to weather conditions.)

Overnight at Fosshotel Glacier Lagoon. (BD)

DAY 6 - EGILSSTAÐIR

Today, drive from Höfn through Almannaskarð Pass, stopping to admire the majestic coastline. Continue for magnificent views of the East Fjords: towering mountains plunging vertically into the sea. Along the way, visit Petra's Stone and Mineral Collection. What started as the private collection of local resident Ljósbjörg Petra María in her home and garden is now a museum that tells the story of the East Fjords, one of Iceland's most geologically ancient areas. *Overnight at Lake Hotel. (BD)*

DAY 7 - LAKE MÝVATN

Depart for the Lake Mývatn area, stopping en route at Dettifoss, Europe's most powerful waterfall. Once you arrive in Mývatn, stop to explore the empty vastness of the highland desert plateau Möðrudalsöræfi and to visit Námaskarð Pass, with its boiling mud pools and vibrant colors. Explore the natural beauty of the Lake

Mývatn area, including the peculiar lava formations of Dimmuborgir, the pseudo-craters at Skútustaðir, and the swiftly flowing Laxá Salmon River. The Mývatn area is also known for its bird life, including more than a dozen species of duck, which nest in the thousands during the summer months. For "Game of Thrones" buffs, a few of the scenes north of the Wall were filmed in this area, such as Grjótagjá, a small cave, and Dimmuborgir. *Overnight at Fosshotel Mývatn. (BD)*

DAY 8 - LAKE MÝVATN

Today starts with a visit to Húsavík, a charming fishing town close to the Arctic Circle, for a whale-watching tour. Húsavík is the best spot to see the enormous humpback whale, with its giant flippers and incredible acrobatics. The boat tour also offers a chance to observe fantastic bird life and natural scenery. There are two islands in the bay, Lundey (Puffin Island) and Flatey (Flat Island), where many birds nest. Puffins, terns, guillemots, gannets, and others are frequently seen during the tours. *Overnight at Fosshotel Mývatn. (BD)*

DAY 9 - REYKJAVÍK

Travel toward the bustling northern port and town of Akureyri, the unofficial "capital" of North Iceland, making a stop at the magnificent Goðafoss waterfall en route. Akureyri is home to some of the finest timber

buildings in the country, beautifully restored to their original glory. Set in a scenic fjord, the town boasts a vibrant art and culture scene. This morning, attend two lectures at the University of Akureyri and learn about the Icelandic fishing quota system, considered one of the most sustainable professional fisheries of the world. Next, learn about rural development in Iceland and how the introduction of the quota system in the 1980s has impacted development. Then transfer to the airport for your flight to Reykjavík. Upon arrival, transfer to your hotel for the afternoon at leisure. Join your group this evening for a farewell dinner at a local restaurant. *Overnight at Centerhotel Midgardur. (BD)*

DAY 10 - DEPART

Check out of your hotel in Reykjavík and transfer to Keflavík International Airport for your flight back to the U.S. (B)



PUFFIN BY ISAFOLD AND HAUKUR SNORRASON

LAND PRICING

\$5,140* (15 participants + 1 leader)

\$6,140* (10 participants + 1 leader)

Price includes accommodations, meals, entrance fees, and activities as indicated in the itinerary, private transportation unless otherwise noted in itinerary, non-alcoholic beverages with meals, full-time guide for duration of program, and carbon offset.

International airfare, gratuities, and items of a personal nature are not included.

*Valid for travel June 1-Aug. 31, 2021. For travel in May 2021, price will be \$515 less per person. For travel in March, April, or September 2021, price will be \$670 less per person.

TRAVEL PROTECTION

Holbrook Travel purchases Travel Protection on behalf of all participants. 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.

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

A \$200 per person deposit and enrollment form is due to secure your reservation. This deposit is refundable until 95 days prior to departure excluding a \$100 cancellation fee. Non-refundable final payments are due no later than 95 days prior to departure.



This program includes optional carbon offsetting with ClimateSafe. Learn more at holbrooktravel.com/climatesafe



VÍK BY LISA PALMESE-GRAUBARD



ACTIVITY LEVEL **2** EASY-MODERATE

WHAT TO EXPECT

This journey has a cultural and geologic focus, with an emphasis on the impact of climate change on Iceland—and the larger world. The trip is moderately paced, visiting five different locations over ten days, with four one-night stays. There are no strenuous activities, but there are daily walks, sometimes over sandy, gravelly, and icy or slippery paths; and periods where you can expect to be on your feet for one to six hours, with rests. There is one whale watch aboard a small vessel where you may get wet; plus a boat tour in the Jökulsárlón Glacial Lagoon. The best season to travel is late spring/summer (May–September), when daily high temperatures in Reykjavik range between 49°–58°F, with cooler temperatures prevailing in the evenings and more northerly locations. Most travel takes place overland aboard private motorcoaches, with the longest scenic drive lasting about 5 hours. There is one internal flight.



GEYSIR BY JULIA MROZEK