

ICELAND – THE LAND OF FIRE AND ICE

DETAILED ITINERARY

With so much to discover and explore in Iceland, this comprehensive tour highlights the natural wonders, the majestic landscapes, and the unique character of Iceland! This is a complete circle tour that provides the perfect blend of Iceland's rich history, culture, nature and stunning scenery.

DAY 1, Tuesday, July 27 - Depart for Iceland

DAY 2: Wednesday, July 28 – Reykjavik

We arrive in Iceland in the early morning and are greeted at the Keflavik Airport by our English-speaking guide. After gathering our luggage and clearing customs, we depart the airport for Viking World Museum where you will enjoy a traditional Icelandic breakfast along with a tour of the Viking Museum. Next, we pamper ourselves with a relaxing soak at the world-famous Blue Lagoon. Whatever the weather, bathing in the electric-blue, mineral rich geothermal waters, surrounded by lava fields, is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Afterwards your guide will provide you with a sightseeing tour of Reykjavík. You'll visit the Hallgrímskirkja church, one of Reykjavík's major icons, the old town center City Hall where we view the super-sized topographical map of Iceland, the Alþingi Parliament, the longest running parliament in the world, the Dómkirkjan Cathedral, Iceland's oldest church, and the beautiful harbor. We will also drive by Höfði House, where Reagan and Gorbachev met for the 1986 Iceland Summit.

Overnight: Reykjavik - Canopy Hilton City Center or similar

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 3, Thursday, July 29 - Golden Circle and South Shore

After breakfast, we depart Reykjavík for South Iceland. You will have the opportunity to view Iceland's famous Gullfoss, or 'Golden Falls', and the nearby Geysir hot spring area to see numerous spouting hot springs and boiling mud pools. Continue along the South Shore region, making a stop to admire Seljalandsfoss and Skógafoss waterfalls before arriving at the Dyrhólaey nature reserve. Here you have a good chance of spotting puffin colonies and many other different seabirds. Conclude your journey in the charming village of Vík, where you can take a walk on the beautiful black sandy beaches with powerful waves thundering in the distance.

Overnight: Vik - Hotel Kría or similar

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 4, Friday, July 30 - Skaftafell and Glacier Lagoon

After breakfast at your hotel, we cross Eldhraun, an impressive lava flow. Eldhraun is the largest lava flow to have occurred on earth in recorded history. We make a stop in the town of Kirkjubæjarklaustur with its green setting that contrasts with the surrounding lava fields and black-sand deserts. The tour continues over Skeiðarársandur volcanic sands to Skaftafell, a beautiful glacial area that is part of the vast Vatnajökull National Park. Continue to the stunning Jökulsárlón Glacial Lagoon and enjoy an optional boat tour on the Lagoon (for \$59 USD), sailing among the majestic icebergs. You might also glimpse seals sunbathing on the ice. Then we head to Höfn, enjoying magnificent views of the mighty Vatnajökull along the way, the biggest glacier in Europe.

Overnight: Hofn - Hotel Höfn or similar

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 5, Saturday, July 31 - East Fjords and Seydisfjordur

After breakfast at your hotel, we drive from Höfn through Almannaskarð pass, stopping to admire the magnificent coastline. Continue on for stunning views of the East Fjords with towering mountains that plunge vertically into the sea. Visit Petra's renowned collection of local stones and minerals. Here you can see a story told in stone about the East Fjords, one of Iceland's most ancient geological areas. Then proceed to Egilsstaðir for our overnight stay.

Overnight: Egilsstaðir - Icelandair Hotel Herad or similar

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 6, Sunday, August 1 - Egilsstaðir, Dettifoss Waterfall, and Ásbyrgi Canyon

After breakfast, we depart Egilsstaðir and make our way to the Ásbyrgi Canyon with a stopover at the Dettifoss Waterfall. Dettifoss is a waterfall in Vatnajökull National Park in Northeast Iceland, and is reputed to be the second most powerful waterfall in Europe after the Rhine Falls. The Ásbyrgi Canyon is a glacial canyon and forest in the north of Iceland. The horseshoe-shaped depression is part of the Vatnajökull National Park. The canyon is divided through the middle by a distinctive rock formation called Eyjan ("the Island"), from which a vast landscape is seen. The canyon's steep sides are formed by cliffs up to 330 ft in height. Within in the canyon is a woodland of birch and willow. Between 1947 and 1977, a number of foreign tree species were introduced, including spruce, larch and pine. The small lake Botnstjörn is home to a variety of waterfowl species. Proceed to the Lake Myvatn area for our overnight stay.

Overnight: Lake Mývatn – Icelandair Hotel Lake Myvatn

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 7, Monday, August 2 – Lake Mývatn, Goðafoss Waterfall and Akureyri

After breakfast, we explore the Lake Mývatn area. One of the first Mývatn sites you will visit is boiling mud pools of the Námaskarð pass. Other stunning scenery you will experience in this area are the crater-like region of Skútustaðir, the lava formations of Dimmuborgir, and the Laxá salmon river, one of the top salmon producing rivers in Iceland. The Mývatn area is home to more species of waterfowl than any other place in the world, as well as many other bird species. Travel towards the bustling northern port and town of Akureyri, making a stop at the magnificent Goðafoss Waterfall along the way. Akureyri, known as the cultural capital of the North, Akureyri is known to have some of the finest timber buildings in the country.

Overnight: Akureyri - Icelandair Hotel Akureyri or similar

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 8, Tuesday, August 3 – Akureyri and Stykkishólmur

After breakfast we depart Akureyri and head toward Stykkishólmur, located by Breiðafjörður Bay on the north of Snæfellsnes peninsula, surrounded by wonderful views of the innumerable islands. One of the defining landmarks in Stykkishólmur are the old houses which reside in the old city center and this is reflected in the atmosphere – it sometimes feels like a place from a different time. In 2008 Stykkishólmur was presented with a planning award in part for its renovation of the old houses. The town and its inhabitants have rehabilitated the houses, and they have gained new and exciting purposes – what once was a library is now an art installation, a fish packing house is now a restaurant, the old recreation center is now a volcano museum.

Overnight: Stykkishólmur - Fosshótel Stykkishólmur or similar

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 9, Wednesday, August 4 – Stykkishólmur and Snæfellsnes Peninsula

Today, embark on a full day excursion to the Snæfellsnes Peninsula. The Peninsula is a world of diversity, comprising of many of Iceland's unique features all on one peninsula. It is a legendary area of magic and beauty, as depicted in Jules Verne's *Journey to the Centre of the Earth* and has a reputation for being one of the seven most magical sites on earth. Then return to Reykjavik for our farewell dinner with our fellow passengers at a popular local restaurant.

Overnight: Reykjavik - Canopy Hilton City Center or similar

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 10, Thursday, August 5 - Depart Iceland for USA

Spend the final morning and early afternoon in Reykjavik shopping for souvenirs or embarking on an optional whale watching experience or other optional tour available. In the late afternoon, return to the airport for our return flight to the USA bringing home with us fond memories of the *Land of Fire and Ice*.

Meals: Breakfast

NOTE: Tour price does not include a driver and guide fee of \$99 to be paid in advance with the final payment. We reserve the right to alter routes without prior notice due to road and weather conditions as well as hotel availability. Prices subject to change due to fluctuations in currency or excursion price increases.