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ISSUE 3, 2014

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JAKI WEST SIDE STORY

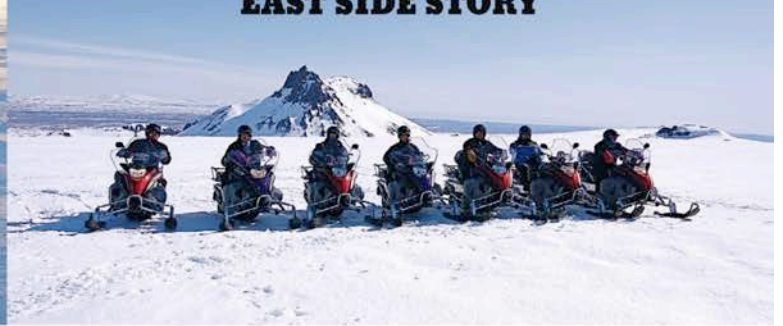


We offer snowmobiling tours for individuals and groups from our basecamp in Jaki, on the West side of Langjökull glacier. Open only during summer.

On the way the most beautiful sights of West Iceland are featured. In Borgarfjörður district you experience the historical place at Reykholt, Deildartunguhver, Europe's most powerful hot spring. Further inland you find Hraunfossar and Barnafossar waterfalls in river Hvítá and Húsafell woodland.

In the summer the roads are usually open for regular cars, but we can offer you a transfer for a small fee, for example from Húsafell woodland. Please be sure to contact us at least one day in advance for bookings.

SKÁL PANES EAST SIDE STORY



We offer snowmobiling tours for individuals and groups from our basecamp in Skálpanes, on the East side of Langjökull glacier all year around.

On the way you experience the some of Iceland's most famous and exciting natural phenomena. At Þingvellir National park you can breathe in the history of the Icelandic parliament which was founded in the year 930AD. From Þingvellir you experience spouting hot spring at Geysir area and Gullfoss waterfall (The Golden Waterfall).

In the summer the roads are usually open for regular cars but in the winter, when the roads are not accessible, we can offer you a transfer for a small fee, for example from Gullfoss waterfall. Please be sure to contact us at least one day in advance for bookings.

EXPRESS ACTIVITY TOUR WITH SNOWMOBILING



Enjoy an express tour to Langjökull glacier or a snow area in the mountains (depends on season). Once there, you'll join an exhilarating one-hour snowmobiling tour across the endless white snowfields. A great way to combine the adrenaline-filled activity of your choice with the aweinspiring scenery. Location of snowmobiles depends on snow conditions.

CUSTOM TOURS



Our expert staff members are more than happy to organize all kinds of private tours, for groups and individuals. Super jeep tours, snowmobiling, quad biking, river rafting, caving, snorkling, ice climbing and snow games are a few of the activities that we can offer you. Please don't hesitate to contact us for further information.

Price: Depending on activities

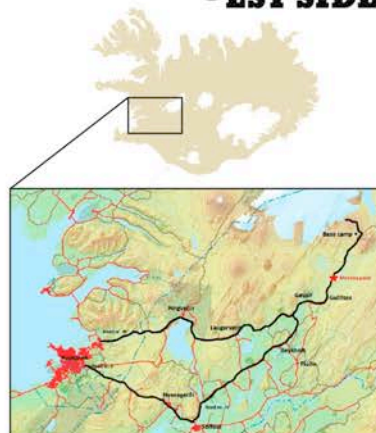
MINIMUM: 4 passengers
PICK UP TIME: 08:30-09:00
OPERATION: All year
DURATION: 7-8 hours
 (depends on season)
INCLUDES: Pick up from hotels/guesthouses in Reykjavik, transfer, one hour snowmobiling tour and all necessary equipment.

Please note:

Operation, choices of roads and availability of activities are condition dependent.

It is essential to present a valid driver's license in order to drive a snowmobile.

MEET US AT BASECAMP - EAST SIDE SKÁL PANES - EST SIDE JAKI



GPS coordinates

For Meeting point "Malbiksendi"
 (The end of the asphalt road):
 N64 25.185 W20 01.270

For Meeting point "Grjóta"
 (The Rock River):
 N64 18.612 W20 18.065

For Meeting point "Sandá"
 (The Sand River):
 N64 24.134 W20 03.199

For the BaseCamp at Geldingafell:
 N64.31.74.00 and W19.54.43.00

For the Skálpanes house:
 N64.33.26.00 and W19.59.27.00

NORTHERN HIGHLIGHTS

Editor in Chief

Karl Steinar Óskarsson | karl@birtingur.is

Layout

Elsa Jónsdóttir | elsaj@birtingur.is
Valgerður Gestsdóttir

Contributing writers

Dísa Bjarnadóttir, Sigríður Björk Bragadóttir, Jón Kristinn Snæhólm, Steingerður Steinarsdóttir, Kristín Ýr Gunnarsdóttir, Róbert Schmidt, Guðrún Baldvina Sævarsdóttir, Málfríður Garðarsdóttir, Hjördís Erna Þorgeirsdóttir, Wiktoria Joanna Ginter, Tómas Valgeirsson

Proofreading

Paul Michael Herman

Translator

Helga Dís and Kristján Hans

In-house photographers

Rakel Ósk Sigurðardóttir, Hákon Davíð Björnsson, Ernir Eyjólfsson, Heiða Helgadóttir

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many famous people are regulars here

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Pure Icelandic FESTIVALS

Over the past decade it has become increasingly popular for small towns out in the country to throw their very own town festivals. Even if it's mostly just locals and former townfolk having a party, these little festivals welcome everyone and can be an absolute joy for "outsiders". Then there are the bigger festivals, be it music festivals, art festivals or the many bank weekend holiday festivals happening simultaneously all over Iceland on the first weekend of August. You are going to have to miss out on most of them but with proper planning and the right information you just might get to the ones you really want.

Rauðasandur Festival 3 – 6 July

Rauðasandur Festival is a small newly established music festival held in the beautiful Westfjords of Iceland. Started in 2011 by a couple of friends who wanted to throw a big party in the countryside, it is now being held for the third time. Its main aim is to create a relaxed, creative and family friendly atmosphere with a lot of the local residents helping out to make the festival the best it can be. The musical focus is on up and coming pop, country,

blues and folk musicians mainly from Iceland. The atmosphere is family friendly with a lot of activities in addition to the many musical performances. There is yoga on the beach, walks to historical places, sand castle competitions, boat rides and various performances by all kinds of artists. This year's artists include: Emiliana Torrini, Sam Admidon, Lay Low, Ylja, My Bubba, Amaba Dama, Boogie Trouble, Vök, Soffía Björg, Nolo, Pascal pinon, Loji, Bob justman and Makrel. The concerts are held in the old barn at Melanes farm where you also find a camping ground and a beautiful amber sand beach where a lot of the activities take



place. You can even go for a swim in the sea. The beach heats up by the summer sun and the water can be up to and between 15-18°C which makes it a popular place to visit. Situated on the west coast of Iceland you can get there by car, bus or plane and it would make for a great road trip for a group of friends or the family.

For more information check out www.raudasandurfestival.is





LungA Art Festival 13 – 20 July

Running into its 15th year the LungA Art Festival has become an annual celebration of music, art, creativity and fashion in Seyðisfjörður, a small artistic haven in the east of

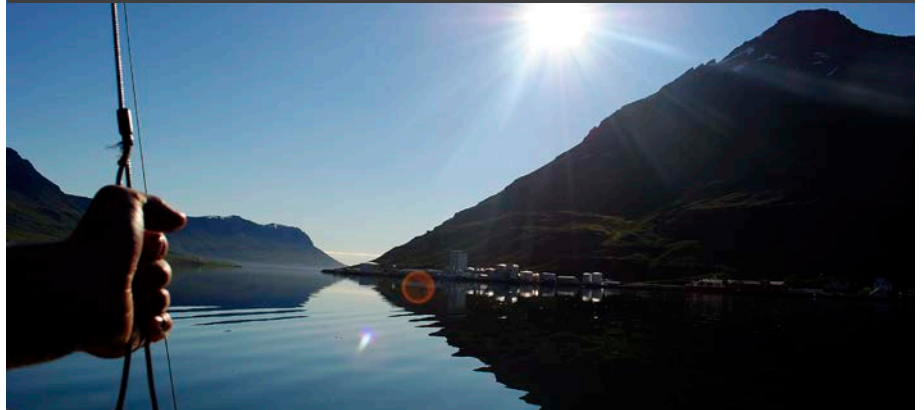


Iceland. This is a youth festival aimed at the next generation of artists and general experimental, alternative and art loving people. LungA goes on for a whole week offering a number of different workshops and ending with a big outdoor concert on the Saturday when many of Iceland's biggest bands play. The workshops range from theatre, dance and music to fashion design, photography, architecture, visual arts and last year there was even a magic workshop. The mentors are both Icelandic and foreign artists with a lot of knowledge in their field. In addition to the workshops there are lectures, performances, smaller concerts, film showings and other happenings arranged throughout the week. The Big Finale is then on the Saturday where participants of the many workshops present their work in different venues around town. The festival, which has grown tremendously in the past years, has become one of the best-known festivals in Iceland receiving several cultural awards. LungA Art.

For more information visit www.lunga.is or check out their Facebook page facebook.com/lunga.festival



Other festivals that might interest you



IsNord Music Festival 13–16 June

IsNord is a music festival which focuses on Icelandic and Nordic music. The festival takes place at several locations in Borgarfjörður on the west coast of Iceland.

Irish Days in Akranes 3–6 July

Akranes celebrates its Irish roots with a colorful festival. See more on www.irskirdagar.is

Danish Days in Stykkishólmur 15–17 August

Did you know that not so long ago the upper class of Iceland had the custom of speaking Danish on Sundays?

Lobster Festival 27–29 June

Höfn in Hornafjörður is dubbed the lobster capital of Iceland. Although our foreign visitors would probably call it langoustine, this wonderful gift of the sea is well worth a taste.

End of Eruption Festival 4–6 July

Every year the people of Westman Islands celebrate the anniversary of the day the eruption of Westman Islands ended. This year's festival is sure to be on the grander scale as they now celebrate the 40 year anniversary.

Car Days in Akureyri 13–17 June

Check out the car and motorcycle enthusiasts of Iceland. Races, shows, burn outs and more.

Siglufjörður Folk Music Festival 1–6 July

A very ambitious music festival with diverse musicians. Something for everyone.

Gásir Medieval Festival 18–20 July

About 11 kilometers north of Akureyri you will find Gásir the main trading post in northern Iceland during the Middle Ages. Archaeological digging in the area during the last six years has shown that it remained active up to the 16th century. Go there for a little glimpse of Old Iceland.

The Big Fish Day 8–10 August

Dalvík invites any seafood lover to come for a taste. On Friday night the people of Dalvík open their doors, literally, to everyone, offering delicious fish soup from their kitchens.

Við Djúpið (By the Deep) 18–23 June

The annual music festival and summer courses Við Djúpið are held in Ísafjörður on the West Fjords of Iceland around the summer solstice, offering a series of concerts and master classes. The master classes are held in close cooperation with the Iceland Academy of the Arts, and are accredited by its Department of Music.

See more on www.viddjupid.is

Act Alone Solo Performance Festival 6–10 August

Act Alone is a theater festival dedicated to the art of acting alone; monodrama, held in Suðureyri on the Westfjords of Iceland. See more on www.actalone.net

JEA 26–29 June

Egilsstaðir Jazz Festival is Iceland's oldest jazz festival. See more on www.jea.is

Eistnaflug Festival 10–13 July

During Eistnaflug the quaint, remote town of Neskaupstaður by the eastern coast of Iceland, lights up with the presence of the friendliest metalheads, rockers and overall party animals you will ever meet. More on www.eistnaflug.is

Bæðslan Music Festival 25–28 July

Bæðslan Music Festival has been held annually since 2005 in Borgarfjörður Eystri on the east coast of Iceland. The festival draws its name from the concert venue, an old rendering in Borgarfjörður called "Bræðsla" (fusion) in Icelandic. The off venue schedule usually starts on Wednesday or Thursday before the actual festival weekend, where many up and coming Icelandic artists perform. Sold out!

PUT YOUR RAIN boots on!

Iceland's biggest travel weekend of the Icelandic summer is **Verslunarmannahelgin**, held on the **August bank holiday weekend, August 1–4 this year**. This popular weekend, sometimes directly translated as "The Shopkeepers Weekend" or "The Shopping Mans' Weekend", occurs late July or early August, at the time of year when the days are still long and the summer is still holding in to its heat. If you're planning a visit to Iceland during this time of year, there are plenty of festivals all over, but choose wisely! Whether you like crazy partying or more family friendly activities, Verslunarmannahelgin has something for everyone.

It's all about the herring – Siglufjörður

The family festival *Síldarævintýrið*, or "The herring adventure", plays on Siglufjörður's fishing history. The festival gets its name from the great herring seasons and booming fishing industry during the twentieth century. With the herring disappearing almost overnight in 1968, fishing towns like Siglufjörður suffered a severe blow and ships lay in harbor for years gathering dust. Today, the small town of Siglufjörður honors its glory days with a weeklong festival each year, giving visitors a look into the past with locals dressing up as fishing workers. And be sure to drop into the Herring Museum, open all summer; always a good place to visit.



Festival guests come from all over Iceland to enjoy the weekend's events which include markets, live music and fishing. Guests can also enter a popular gourmet cooking competition with their best herring dish.



Locals dressed in last century's fashion, pickle the herring in front of a big audience.

Family fun Akureyri

Iceland's capital of the north, Akureyri, is a great place for fun, offering everything from skiing to fine dining, shopping and diverse cultural life. During this eventful weekend, Akureyri plays host to the family festival *Ein með öllu*, or "One with all", a phrase often used when ordering a hot dog with everything on it.



The lively band *Hvannaldsbræður* performing at an outdoor concert



Icelanders are suckers for fireworks and use every opportunity to put on a big fireworks show.



During the weekend, Akureyri can be quite crowded. Camping areas fill quickly with people coming from afar to join the festivities.

Fun for all ages – Neskaupsstaður

Neistaflug, or "Flying sparks", is held in Neskaupsstaður, a small town in the east of Iceland. If you want a fun packed schedule for the whole family, this could be the festival for you. Activities include a parade, concerts, neighborhood barbecues, "Kid Idol" and the list goes on.

Fire hose soccer might sound like a great idea but we do question its safety. Safety aside, this



AURORA REYKJAVÍK

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Learn

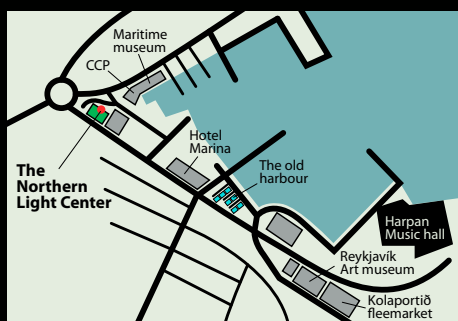
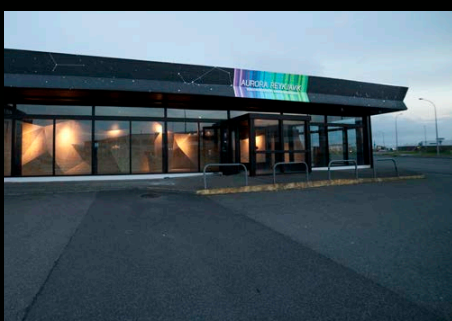
Discover



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inventive sport sure looks like a lot of fun. A camping area can be a great place to spend your nights during the Shopkeepers Holiday,



that is if you like to eat sitting on the ground, not sleeping, and waking up with spiders in your hair. At least you'll be making memories!

Less nature please – Reykjavík

For those who aren't too keen on travelling, there are plenty of concerts and events in Reykjavík. Innipúkinn music festival answers the needs of those who like a good party but prefer not to sit, eat or sleep on the ground.



The Icelandic weather is as unpredictable as you can imagine so come prepared. An umbrella might do it but a good raincoat and boots are better.

Getting down and dirty ' – Ísafjörður

If you love sports and mud on your face, the Westfjords could be your dream destination during this crazy weekend. Mýrabolti, or Swamp soccer, is one sloppy activity you'll never forget.



This fun filled festival gives supposedly grown up people a chance to embrace their inner child and get covered in dirt without people looking at them funny.

The big one - Vestmannaeyjar

By far the most popular festival during this big weekend is Þjóðhátíð which basically translates as National Holiday. Locals held their first Þjóðhátíð in 1874, at the same time as mainlanders celebrated the 1,000 year anniversary of the settlement. Due to bad weather conditions, the people of the Westman Islands couldn't sail to the mainland to join in on the celebrations so they decided to throw their own festival and have ever since. Þjóðhátíð has been growing in popularity and every year this small village of 4,200 inhabitants is overflowing with around 11,000 – 13,000 people visiting the island to join the party.



Þjóðhátíð has something for everyone and locals consider it great family fun during the day. However, if you are not a fan of the drunk and disorderly, you might want to stay inside after midnight.



The red torches represent the island's volcanic eruption in 1973. If you get the chance, sit down with a local who remembers that fateful night and get him to tell you about being rushed to a boat and sailing away from the fiery island.



Former congressman Árni Johnsen, an island native, strums his guitar and leads the crowd in less than pitch perfect singing, but it's all good fun and it's part of the festival.



Groups of friends often dress up in colorful costumes and a special judging committee walks around Herjólfsdalur Valley in search of the very best costume.



Punkrocker and newly elected congressman Óttarr Proppé tests his vocal chords on stage at Þjóðhátíð. Iceland's congress is obviously a source of great talent.



The big white tents in Herjólfsdalur Valley belong to the locals who fill their tents with old furniture and plenty of food and drink. Don't be afraid to invite yourself in for some delicious smoked puffin and home baked goods.

READY FOR ICELAND'S LUNAR LANDSCAPES



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LUNGA SEYÐISFJÖRÐUR JULY 13 - 20

LungA is not only a music festival. It is a concept. Concept for art and creativity, promotion and celebration. LungA is a state of mind. This festival started in the year 2000. With interesting workshops and lectures during the week and concerts on the weekend. Shortly after that it gained a reputation of something not to be missed, and later gained a prestige. Prestige so great that in 2010 LungA was an inspiration for establishing a school in Seyðisfjörður, under the same name and general idea. The first team start this year, so you can only imagine what kind of festival it will be! It will be epic! Especially when you'll see the line-up.

CHECK OUT: WWW.LUNGA.IS

SECRET SOLSTICE REYKJAVÍK JUNE 20 - 22

That's a brand new one. It will be held for the first time this year and from what I know and read about and sniffed around, it will be amazing! It will be held at a walking distance from downtown, which is great. Sun doesn't set anyway. Or at least it feels like it. And of course the line-up! I will just mention Massive Attack and you can imagine how massive it will be. There we are: Secret Solstice is not so secret anymore. And I'm pretty sure it will be heard of for a while, not only in Iceland. Just check out their amazing web page!

WWW.SECRETSOLSTICE.IS

For the past few years Iceland has been developing more and more amazing music festivals. It is quite a surreal thing, if you think about it. A country with a population of a little over 300.000 people? It's like a small town in Europe. I could totally get away with claiming that Iceland has the biggest active music scene in the world, per capita of course. Anyway I'm just going to tell you what you should definitely see, if you will be spending time on our beautiful rock in the middle of the Atlantic during the summer.



EISTNAFLUG NESKAUPSTAÐUR JULY 10 - 13

The greatest metal/hard rock festival the Earth has ever spawned. And I'm not joking. It takes place in a tiny town with a population of about 1500 people on the East coast of Iceland. Besides the magnificent location, the people attending this event are the best people you will ever meet. You might think I'm talking crazy here, it's a METAL festival after all, but you just have to trust me on that one: it's the friendliest music festival I've ever attended (and I've been to quite few). The motto of this event is in Icelandic "Ekkert vesni!" which you might translate as "No bullshit!" Or maybe into something even more polite. Which is a callout for people to remind one another that festivals are for everyone and as long as it's about fun and having a good time together, it all makes sense. And it's all about love, peace and heavy metal! This year Eistnaflug (which you can translate into "Flight Of The Balls", don't ask me, ask locals about the reason) celebrates its 10th anniversary and I can promise, this will be a party from hell! Plus, if you haven't been "skinny dipping" in Iceland at Eistnaflug, you haven't lived. Period.

JUST CHECK THE LINE-UP AND WATCH THE VIDEO HERE:
WWW.EISTNAFLUG.IS

ATP ICELAND KEFLAVÍK JULY 10 - 12

All Tomorrow's Parties is a fifteen year old British organization specialized in promoting artists and festivals throughout the world. It's not only a music event but, like LungA, it's a concept which enriches the interest and appreciation for art and culture. The event is held in many other countries, including UK, USA, Japan and Australia. Last year's Nick Cave performance on the first ATP held in Iceland will go down in history as the performance where the artist fell off the stage, made people terrified of what they just witnessed but went straight back on, making the performance more dramatic and altogether unforgettable. This year Portishead decided to come over and visit and make us all happier. Let's hope no one will fall off the stage this time!

MORE INFO:
WWW.ATPFESTIVAL.COM/ATPICELAND

ÞJÓÐHÁTÍÐ VESTMANNEYAR AUGUST 1 - 3

A taste of Iceland. Literally. If you are looking for something Icelandic to see, to do and to listen to, this is the place for you to be. Just take a backpack full of warm clothes (Icelandic wool is priceless, believe me), a tent and a good mood. Someone to get warm with in the tent is quite a wise option but not a necessity. It is the biggest outdoor event in Iceland. A few thousand people come annually to the Westman Islands on the weekend before the first Monday of August, which is an Icelandic bank holiday, named after shopkeepers. It is a holiday and no labor day. There are a lot of bands and artists performing on a huge stage built up outdoors, there's lots and lots of beer, a large amount of people with families wearing lopapeysur (lopapeysa, traditional Icelandic sweater), and the whole "sing along" atmosphere makes you feel like you are part of the society. I have to mention that Vestmanneyjar are stunning. If you'll ever go there, check out the lava fields formed in 1973 by erupting volcano, Eldfell, which caused a lot of damage and forced the entire population of the islands to be evacuated. I also have to mention that Keiko, the orca that starred in Free Willy, was released to its freedom in that area. So yay! for the whales, beer, volcanoes and lopapeysur!



ENVIRONMENTAL COMMANDMENTS

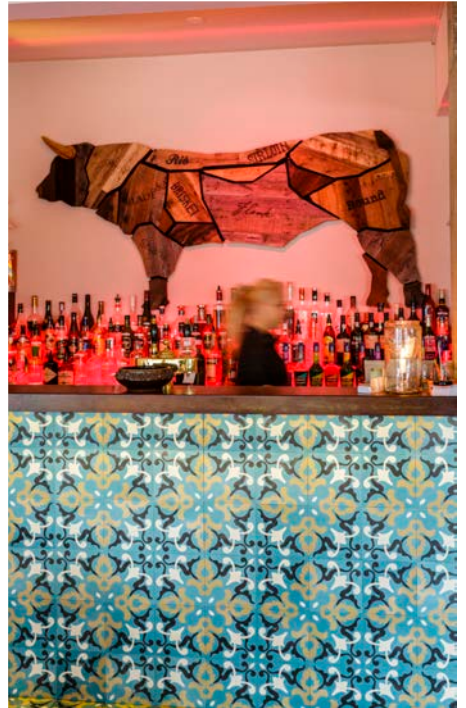
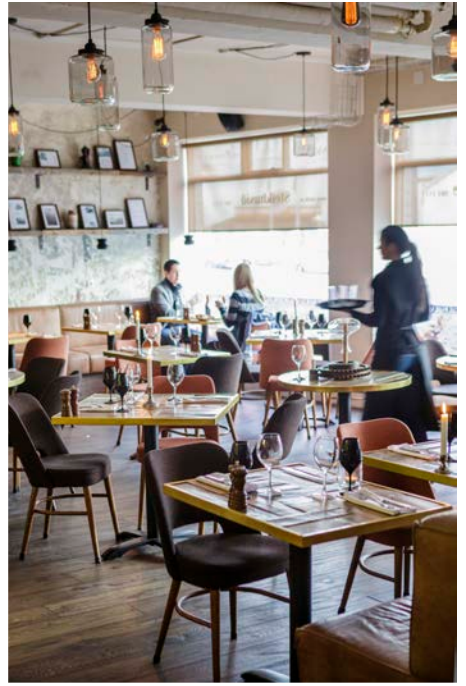
It's very tiresome to arrive at a nature resort and see plastic containers, drink cartons and other rubbish around the place. There aren't rubbish bins everywhere but it is not hard to take the waste back with you and throw it away when you see a trash can or a recycling bin. The Earth is not disposable and it is important to show it respect, just as you would do at a friend's house.

THE LAW OF THE TRAVELLER

1. Let's always leave destinations as we would like to arrive at them
2. Let's not leave trash in the open countryside or bury it.
3. Let's not build a fire in green areas
4. Let's not tear up rocks, nor build cairns without reason
5. Let's not spoil water reserves, nor ruin springs, hot springs or pools
6. Let's not damage vegetation
7. Let's not disturb animal life
8. Let's not ruin geological formations
9. Let's not disrupt the peace of the wilderness without reason
10. Let's not drive outside roads
11. Let's walk on paths where required
12. Let's respect the rules of conservation and requests from the guards of national parks

Text: Bergrún Íris

Photo: Liese Mahieu – Dreamstime.com



The steak house by the harbor

A WARMHEARTED RESTAURANT

if you like steak this is it! steikhúsið, which simply means “The steak house”, is a trendy new restaurant in the middle of reykjavik. The vibrant, beating heart of the premises is the spanish Mibrasa coal oven where guests can watch the deft hands of the cook, artfully preparing the sizzling steaks.

The beautiful coal oven, visible to guests above a bar table is used for grilling and baking. The distinct flavor from the coals gives the food a richer taste and enhances the tenderness of the meat, and speaking of tenderness, if the texture of supple, butter soft meat is to your liking, be sure to taste the “28 days” tendered meat specially cured by the chef. The excellent selections and innovative side dishes are all tantalizing and be sure not to miss the grilled Icelandic fish, a tasty delicacy worthy of your indulgence. Although the focus is primarily on steaks the vegetarian choice is excellent. A myriad of flavorful starters served with freshly baked bread will set the mood for your meal. The exciting list of side dishes gives every one the opportunity to design their favorite meal or why not be daring and try something new?

How about deep fried tempura vegetables or sweet potato French fries?

If selecting becomes too much of a dilemma there is always the set menus. These vary with the seasons and offer the freshest and most popular dishes available at any given time. The owners take pride in catering to the whole family so as you would expect the children’s menu is excellent.

ROUGH AND READY STYLE INTERIOR

The raw decoration and furniture made partly out of recycled materials create an ambience of old fashioned charm and history. The restaurant is situated just above the old harbor by the whale watching center of Reykjavik and therefore the interior, reminiscent of old harbor pubs, is fitting and adapt. Also it reflects on the

history of the house which was built to house a blacksmith’s smithy and metal works. But the main focus here is really on steaks so back to basics, this restaurant is situated firmly in the modern world. The drinks menu arrives on the table in the form of an iPad making it easy to browse, create a wide selection and change it when something new and exciting catches the sommelier’s attention. After a good meal in the warm atmosphere of The Steak House, a stroll along the harbor or through the lively neighborhood, of restaurants, cafés, artisan stores and workshops will give a fitting ending to a fun and enjoyable evening.

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- a. Harpa - Concert Hall and Conference Centre
- b. Borgarbókasafnið - The City Library
- c. Hafnarhúsið - The Reykjavík Art Museum
- d. Kolaportið - Flea market
- e. City sight seeing bus
- f. Reykjavík 871 +/- 2 - The Settlement Exhibition
- g. Austurvöllur - Public square
- h. Alþingi - The Parliament Building
- i. Dómkirkjan - The Old Cathedral
- j. Ráðhúsið - City hall
- k. Fríkirkjan - Church
- l. Listasafn Íslands - National Gallery of Iceland
- m. Stjórnarráðið - The Government House
- n. Hæstiréttur - The Supreme Court
- o. Þjóðmenningarhúsið - The Culture House
- p. Þjóðleikhúsið - The National Theatre
- q. Kling og Bang - Artist Run Gallery
- r. Sólfarið - The Sun Voyager (Sculpture)
- s. Nýló - The Living Art Museum
- t. Listasafn Einars Jónssonar - Sculpture Museum
- u. Hallgrímskirkja - Church
- v. Sundhöll Reykjavíkur - Indoor Swimming Pool





Sabraut

Skúlagata

Hverfisgata

Laugavegur

Grettisgata

Snorrabraut

Skúlagata

Frakkastígur

Hverfisgata

Laugavegur

Laugavegur

Grettisgata

Barónsstígur

Bergþórsgata

Lindargata

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Barnstígur

Kárafastígur

Skólavörðustígur

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Eiríksgröta

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Baldursgata

Skólavörðustígur

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Pingholtsstræti

Skólavörðustígur

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Öðinsgata

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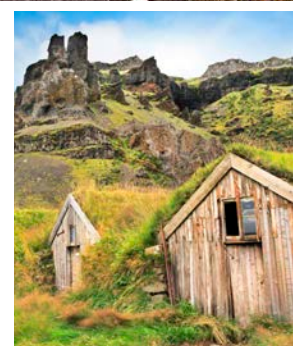
Bragagata

Njálsgata



FUEL EFFICIENCY WHILE DRIVING

Petrol and oil prices have risen immensely in the last few years which has resulted in fewer people travelling long distances around the country. But there are ways to save petrol cost.



Text: Helga Dís Björgúlfsdóttir
Photos: From collection

- ↪ Don't drive too fast. If you keep an eye on how the road lies, you will be able to avoid unnecessary breaking.
- ↪ Check the tyre pressure before heading on a long journey. Under-inflated tyres create more rolling resistance and the car will use more fuel. Check the handbook that comes with the car to see what the tyre pressure is supposed to be.
- ↪ It might surprise you, but the air conditioning will make the car burn more fuel if you're driving slow, but uses less at a greater speed. It's better to open the windows in towns and use the air-con on the highways.
- ↪ Don't travel with extra weight in the car. Get rid of everything you don't need.
- ↪ When you're at your destination there's no need to drive everywhere you want to go. It's good to leave the car parked once in a while. You'll get a different sense of the nature around you if you're walking or cycling. It's also possible you'll see something you could've missed in the car.
- ↪ Get the car serviced regularly to maintain engine efficiency. It can make a lot of difference in how the car runs and how much fuel it burns.
- ↪ You use most fuel when you stop and start driving again.
- ↪ Don't let the engine run idly to warm it. The engine warms up quicker when you're driving and you save fuel.
- ↪ If you're going to unfamiliar places, plan the trip ahead of time. Getting lost and having to reroute will burn precious petrol.
- ↪ The faster you drive the greater the fuel consumption. The car can use up to 10% more fuel driving at 110km than at 90km.



The disappearing café

TÍU DROPAR

Le Chateaux Des Dix Chuttes

Tíu dropar (Ten Drops) is a café located in the cellar of Laugavegur 27. This is one of the oldest cafés in Iceland and for the last 30 years to this very day they serve freshly baked pancakes and waffles á la the grandmothers of Iceland, with lots of whipped cream and Icelandic jam.

Ten Drops is also known for its homemade cakes, baked from scratch according to old recipes, and of course, their hot cocoa, known by many of their guests as 'The Only Real Hot Cocoa on Earth'. If you're not in the mood for old fashioned Icelandic goodies you can choose from an assortment of light dishes, tea, wines and beer. We recommend the French meat soup, a popular dish and another old favorite

WHERE DID THE CAFÉ GO?

Don't be surprised if you can't find the café after 18:00. Something happens around that time that transforms this little cellar into a French wine room known as Le Chateaux Des Dix Chuttes or the Castle of the Ten Drops. This is a lovely place to sit and enjoy good wines along with cheese, ham or other light dishes for as little as 500 ISK a plate, and don't worry, the coffee, cocoa and pancakes are still there! Lovely French music sets the mood and the ambiance is perfect for a deep conversation. Guests wanting to break out in song can have their turn after 22:00 on the weekends, as long as they can find someone to play the antique piano given to the café's owner, David Bensow, by a regular.

CHOOSE YOUR WINE

Guests can have their say on the wine list of Le Chateaux Des Dix Chuttes and David will make special orders to fulfill their wishes. In fact, he welcomes any suggestions making the wine list one of the more, well-endowed in Reykjavik. He's especially interested in serving good Port to his clientele.

INTIMATE CLIMATE

The little wine room and café seat only 40 guests and the mood is set in the early evening. It's safe to say this is just the kind of place that was missing from the brimming Icelandic bar and café scene a perfect setting for a small group of friends to reminisce over the good old days or for a first date. Be sure to taste David's "wine of the week" or let his fair beer prices amaze you.

Check out the ten drops twitter feed and find both café and wine room on Facebook.

TÍU DROPAR / LE CHATEAUX DES DIX CHUTTES

Laugavegur 27, 101 Reykjavik
Tel: 00 354 551 9380





ARE YOU FAMILIAR WITH WHAT'S UNFAMILIAR?

Following are some points to bear in mind when driving in Iceland. Even though you think you are a good driver, which you probably are, we highly recommend that you also visit www.drive.is where you can enjoy an interesting drive under the supervision of Elfis, the Icelandic elf. You can also visit www.safetravel.is for further information.

- **OFF-ROADING** is illegal in Iceland.
- **ALCOHOL & DRUGS:** Under no circumstances, is it permitted to drive when alcohol or drugs have been consumed.
- **SPEED:** The speed limit in populated areas is usually 50 km/h. Speed limit signs are

usually not posted unless it is other than 50 km/h for example 30 km/h. The main rule in rural areas is that gravel roads have a speed limit of 80 km/h, and paved roads 90 km/h.

- **ROAD CONDITIONS:** Foreign travellers requiring information regarding road and driving conditions should visit the The Icelandic Road and Coastal Administration english website at www.vegagerdin.is/english or call 1778.
- **SINGLE-LANE BRIDGES:** There are many single-lane bridges on the Ring Road. The actual rule is that the car closer to the bridge has the right-of-way. This sign indicates that a single-lane bridge is ahead.
- **GRAVEL ROADS:** Rural roads, where a paved road suddenly changes to gravel, are common place for accidents. It is very important that drivers reduce speed before the changeover to gravel. When driving on gravel roads, which

are often quite narrow, it is important to show caution when approaching another car coming from the opposite direction.

- **BLIND HILLS:** Blind hills, where lanes are not separate, can be very dangerous, and should be approached with caution.
- **BLIND CURVES:** There are many blind curves in Iceland that test a driver's skill and attention.
- **LIVESTOCK ON THE ROAD:** Sheep, horses and even cows can be in your path on Icelandic roads. Sometimes a sheep is on one side of the road and her lambs on the other side. Under these conditions, which are common, it is a good rule to expect the lambs or the sheep to run to the other side.

This article is based on information from the Icelandic Transport Authority (ICETRA), samgon-gustofa.is



The English Pub

SAVE WATER, DRINK BEER!

For years, Iceland has enjoyed a diverse selection of restaurants and often sophisticated bars. However, one tiny grumble occasionally surfaced from the country's Anglophiles – simply that there was no proper “pub”.

And so the English Pub was born. From modest beginnings it has built a hearty reputation, seeking out, with the advice and guidance of its dedicated customers, the finest ale available to mankind. Today it offers its enthusiastic clientele the chance to sample 50 beers from around the world, as well as a staggering 15 Icelandic brands.

WHISKY GALORE

Not content to rest on its laurels, the English Pub has ventured north of its virtual border and also offers the finest selection of whiskies anywhere in the country. The choice of some 60 malts include many of Scotland's finest, ensuring that numerous Icelanders and worldly travelers make the pilgrimage to the pub's humble door.

Located at the very heart of downtown Reykjavik, the walls of the English Pub are adorned with hundreds of photographs – like an album of the city's history just waiting to be explored over a quiet beer.

A SPORTING CHANCE

Live sporting coverage is amply catered for, with a choice of three big screens and TVs. In side the pub there is room for up to 150 people, and an outdoor terrace can accommodate plenty more on those balmy Icelandic evenings! Whether it is football (Premier and Champions League), rugby or golf, there are always special offers when live events are being broadcast.

Live music every night adds to the atmosphere and for anyone feeling lucky, there is the Wheel of Fortune. Regulars like nothing more than to spin the wheel and chance a “Sorry” or preferably win what used to be called a Yard of Ale. These days, it's inevitably known as a meter of beer, but the winners don't seem to mind!

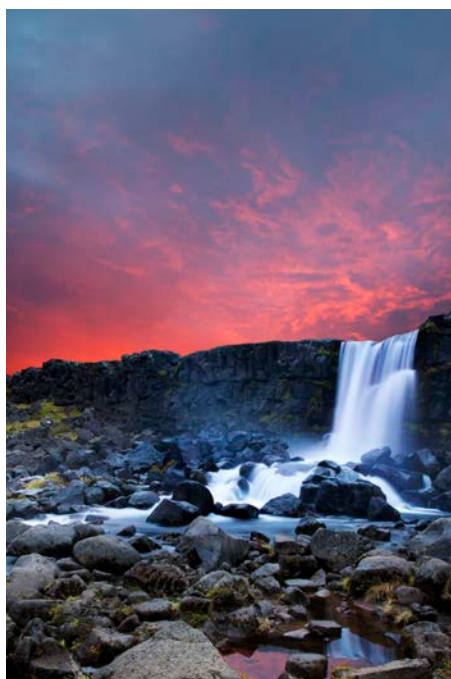
**The English Pub Austurstræti 12
101 Reykjavik
Tel: +354 578 0400 Mobile: +354 697 9003
enskibarinn.is**



MAJESTIC AND BEAUTIFUL WATERFALLS

Around the country a large number of waterfalls can be found that enhance it, each in it's own unique way. Photographer Snorri Gunnarsson has photographed many of them and we got him to tell us about a few that are his favourite. Snorri has been offering courses to foreign photographers and photographed for advertising agencies, companies and mass communication. His homepage is snorigunnarsson.com

Supervision: Ragnhildur Aðalsteinsdóttir
Photographs: Snorri Gunnarsson



ÖXARÁRFOSS IN ÞINGVELLIR

"There aren't many waterfalls that fall down a ravine formed by moving tectonic plates. Besides being more Icelandic than everything Icelandic, it's more beautiful than many other waterfalls on a good day."

DETTIFOSS

"Dettisfoss in Jökulsá á Fjöllum is awesome in every aspect, the surroundings are magnificent and the waterfall itself is incredibly powerful and big. It's possible to find innumerable places to photograph it, the place is very varied. It's easy to access, asphalt roads from the west, gravel road from the east."



FAXI IN SOUTHERN ICELAND

“The waterfall Faxi in Tungufljót is near Reyk-holt in southern Iceland. It’s not as extravagant as other waterfalls but can be incredibly fun when you find the right angle. It’s probably more popular with people in kayaks than photographers. It’s easy to access.”



BARNAFOSS IN HÚSAFELL

“Barnafoss is in Hvítá, at the straits at the edge of Hallmundarhraun, just upriver from Hraunfossar. It can be difficult to photograph this waterfall, there are dark shadows and it’s a bit chaotic, but if you find a pattern in the chaos you can get excellent photographs. Easy to access.”

GOÐAFOSS

“Very picturesque and beautiful waterfall, usually you get the most beautiful photographs from the east side of the river down by the deep place of it. Goðafoss is in Skjálfandaflljót, not far from Fosshóll farm at the start of Bárðardalur next to highway 1 and thus easily accessible.

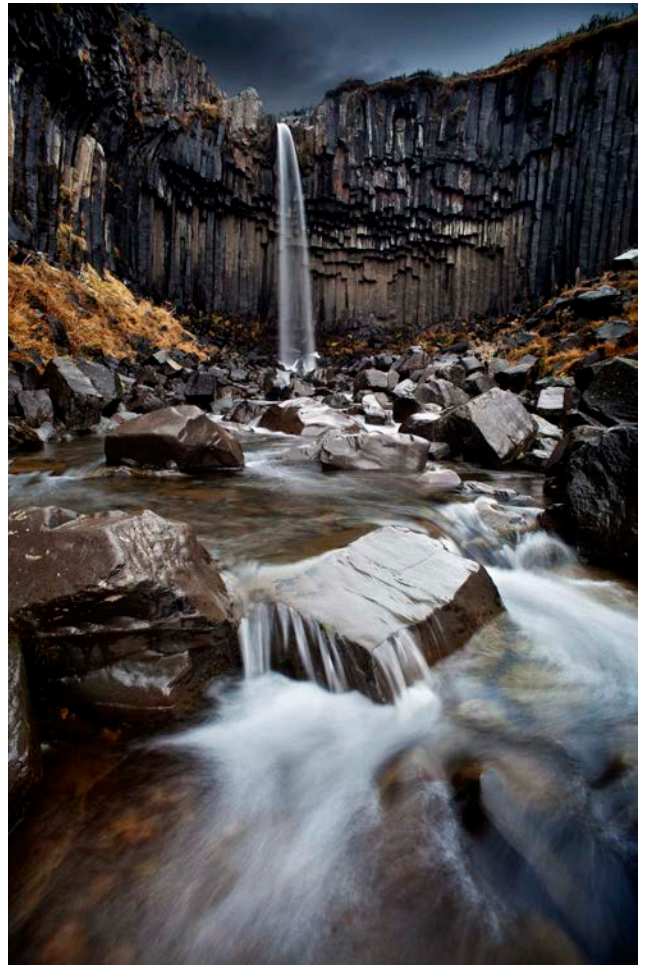


KIRKJUFELLSFOSS IN SNÆFELLSNES

"Kirkjufellsfoss is just outside Grundarfjörður and is probably one of the most photographed waterfalls in Iceland. The reason is that the waterfall is incredibly picturesque. The waterfall is on two ledges and you can photograph it from many different angles so it is possible to get a shot that isn't like every other. It's easy to access on a gravel road which every car can drive."

SVARTIFOSS IN SKAFTAFELL

"Incredibly beautiful, black columnar basalt frames the waterfall and the grand river gives many possibilities. You have to walk a short distance to the waterfall but in wintertime you can drive up the road to Bölta, and from there it's a walk of about one kilometre, if the state of the road is good. The road up to Bölta is often closed during summer which adds about one kilometre to the walk."





The Danish Pub

WHEN IN ICELAND, GO DANISH!

You know that Iceland used to be a Danish colony, right? Even though independence from the Danish Crown was necessary, Icelanders still celebrate every thing Danish, so don't expect to meet a big Danish crowd at The Danish Pub, they are all Icelanders just acting like they're Danish. Really!

This bar has made a name for itself in the Reykjavik social scene and is known locally as Den Danske Kro (we all just want a reason to speak Danish in public). This popular downtown venue serves a remarkable selection of beers including the famous Danish white beers, the darker more malt brews and of course the traditional and almost obligatory Tuborg and Carlsberg. If you come during the Christmas season you can taste some of the renowned Christmas brews, very popular in demand. Just ask for Julebryg ("you-le-bree").

DO AS THE DANES DO

The owners of the Danish Pub strive to create the true Danish atmosphere known among the Danes (and Danish-prone Icelanders) as "hyggelich". If you truly are Danish this can be your "home away from home". And in this spirit, check out the "house" within the pub – an off-the-wall design in its most literal sense!

Get carefree or "ligegladd" (leeglaath), shoot some darts, try the customary Gammel Dansk bitters or catch some live football. Watch the world go by on the outside terrace and have a taste of the traditional smørrebrød (fantastic open sandwiches). You can pre-order these delicious snacks for larger groups.

DOES THIS SOUND TOO TRANQUIL?

The Danish Pub is nothing if not a place to party. The atmosphere is easy going and you can choose from a variety of shots and even cocktails if you're not in the beer mood (Does that ever happen?). Reminder: If you thought you were in for a quiet night guess again, The Danish Pub features live music every night with special appearances and unadvertised happenings on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Put your musical knowledge to the test at the Wednesday night pop-quiz; the prizes will surprise you.

BEST LOCAL PUB IN REYKJAVÍK

Wherever you're from you'll want to have a great time while visiting Reykjavik. The people of Reykjavik do anyway, so they flock to The Danish Pub for a beer "en öl" during the Happy Hour every day from 16-19. The place is crowded and you're guaranteed to meet some fun, "lee glaath" people.

DEN DANSKE KRO

Ingólfsstræti 3, 101 Reykjavík

Tel: +354 552 0070

Opening hours: 14:00 – 01:00 Sun-Thurs

14:00 – 05:00 Fri-Sat

dendanske.is





PLOVER PLOVER PLOVER

In Iceland, the plover or "lóa" as we call it is considered the harbinger of spring. Sounds simple enough and it's actually quite logical, or it would be if we didn't have calendars.

The title of this article may look like an embarrassing typo but it's actually a translated quote from a famous Icelandic song by singer/song writer legend, Megas. The song "Lóa Lóa" from the album "Paradise Bird" is actually about a woman named after the golden plover but the album title says it all. Let's be honest, I am no bird expert, nor am I even a bird enthusiast. But the plover is no ordinary bird.

by Guðrún Baldvina Sævarsdóttir Photo: Einar Guðmann

With the rising sun in this remote North Atlantic island, a certain sense of hope fills the Icelandic sub consciousness, that old feeling that just maybe, despite the odds, spring is upon us again, and that it might actually bring another summer. It's what we live for and after a winter of darkness and cold you start to realize why. More enthusiastic sunworshippers than Icelanders are hard to come by as we go to incredible lengths to suck up all the sun we can get. A friend of mine, who moved to California a few years ago, told me that after 3 years of living in a completely stable and sunny climate, he still can't shake that urgent feeling of getting outside to bask in the sun, even though it's there for him 360 days of the year. So what does the sun have to do with a relatively large migratory water bird?

THE HARBINGER OF SPRING

In Iceland, the plover or "lóa" as we call it is considered the harbinger of spring. Sounds simple enough and it's actually quite logical, or it would be if we didn't have calendars. This migratory bird breeds in Iceland during the summer months but

flies as far south as North Africa for winter. When first spotted in spring, it makes headlines in all the newspapers, it is the first story on televised news and it replaces the weather as the most exciting topic of discussion for at least a week. Granted the two are often intertwined, the plover and the weather, and together they can make for lengthy chats and interesting predictions into the future: "Looks like we'll have a good spring, the plover is so early this year".

The plovers' behavior can be read as a sign of changing weather. Apparently it goes silent before a storm and sings in two voices before sunshine. I may be smirking as I write this but I'm fairly certain that I'll look up a longterm weather forecast the next time I notice the plover suddenly silent. That's the thing about Icelandic folklore, you think your years of hard earned academic achievement has made you rise above it, but then you find yourself lowering your voice next to an elf rock in order not to disturb anybody. It's embarrassing but true.

SINGING "GLORY TO THE LORD"

I personally believe that the popularity of the plover might also be helped by the fact that its singing is so recognizable and sweet, sounding some thing like dirrindee. One of my favorite stories about this bird is a folk story that depicts pretty much exactly how intimate our relationship is. According to Icelandic folklore, plovers were not created by God along with the rest of the world's creatures but rather were formed out of clay by children accompanying Jesus Christ. Jesus swept his hands over them, gave them life and as they flew away they sang "dirrin dee" which is plover speak for "dýrðin drottins" (God's glory) or, as my normally quite rational mother put it "dirrindee means glory to the lord", and she wasn't kidding.

Quoting a poem by Jónas Hallgrímsson,

one of Iceland's most beloved poets, "spring's tender messenger" is what we call the plover, though we all know he was writing about the sparrow. In order to explain this discrepancy, Icelanders have written theoretical articles on how he must have just needed a masculine gendered noun to fit the material of his poem instead of the feminine gendered lóa. It's funny 'cause it's true.

THE PLOVER'S WORK ETHICS

The plover graces our stamps, is protected by Icelandic laws and is the star of every other Icelandic folk song. It's probably because of one particular song that I associate the plover with the Icelandic national work ethic. This song heralds that the plover has arrived and will eliminate the snow, which is all good and predictable but it manages to drive home that crumbling ethical dogma that you should always be working more and preferably suffering from exhaustion as a result. It goes something like this:

*"she [the plover] has told me of my sins,
I sleep too much and do not work at all.
she has told me to stay awake and work
and embrace the spring, filled with hope."*

In the middle of March, shortly before this was written, someone spotted a plover which of course became headline news. The next day there were interviews and reports on how this one plover might just have been left behind here for winter after having missed the migratory bird train last fall. False alarm or not, my mind immediately wandered a couple of months into the future and I could see myself sitting in the green moss, watching the sun set in the middle of the night in complete silence except for the dirrindee of the plover. I take it back, I am a bird enthusiast.

Sterna



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PHOTO: SKOGARFOSS ON THE SOUTH COAST **5% ONLINE DISCOUNT**

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FEW BUT INTERESTING

Icelandic fauna is not very diverse. The island's isolation is probably the main reason. The Arctic fox is, however, indigenous to this country and greeted the first settlers when they landed. The rest of the wild fauna has been transported here by men and interestingly enough have managed to outwit those that brought them here.

by Steingerður Steinarsdóttir

SEA MAMMALS

Along our shores there are many seals although only two species are considered indigenous to Iceland. Many visit from Greenland and these are often seen among the other. The sea around the country is full of diversity and positively crawling with life. The many guests who go on tours looking for whales are rarely disappointed. The luckiest ones will catch a glimpse of a humpback or a blue whale, the biggest mammal in the world. A large number of small whales such as killer whales, harbor porpoises and minke whales are just offshore.



REINDEER ON THE EASTERN HIGHLANDS

Reindeer or caribou were brought here in the nineteenth century in an effort to increase the diversity of the wildlife. They only successfully managed to settle in the east and it is necessary to keep their numbers down since the vegetation in the highlands will only feed a certain number. Hunting caribou in the autumn is a popular sport and a few thousand hunters apply every year for a permission to catch one of the approximately 1200 animals allotted.





MINKS AND FOXES

Minks and foxes were imported in as farm animals but later escaped and now run wild. The foxes quickly blended with the Arctic fox that had been carried over here from Greenland on ice blocks long before man set foot on this island. Today the population of foxes and minks is growing much to the dismay of farmers and others that fear that this will cause havoc to bird life. The mink has on the other hand proven useful in keeping the black rat from becoming prevalent.



ICELANDIC FIELD MOUSE

Mice were stowaways on board Viking ships that first sailed to Iceland. They decided to stay even before their unaware transporters did. Mice have done well in Iceland and the Icelandic field mouse is larger and more resourceful than her cousin in Europe. The house mouse, however, has remained the same.



BUGS IN ABUNDANCE

All around the country there are a number of molluscs to be found and all kinds of bug like creatures that live either in the sea or on the beach. Some of these are colorful and truly beautiful. Those interested in entomology will get plenty of opportunities to study insects if they take the time to walk along any Icelandic beach.

BIRDS LARGE AND SMALL

Bird life in Iceland is, however, rich and varied. All kinds of birds come here from Europe and America to nest in the summer. Many of them travel far and wide, some even from Africa and the South Pole. The Arctic Tern is the greatest traveller of all, with some individuals covering more than 80,000 km annually. A great

number of ducks, geese, songbirds and sea birds can easily be spotted here to the delight of bird watchers from all over the world. Visitors in Iceland will almost certainly catch a glimpse of interesting birds without putting in any particular effort. The Icelandic raven is both common and unique and by now a city dweller all year round.



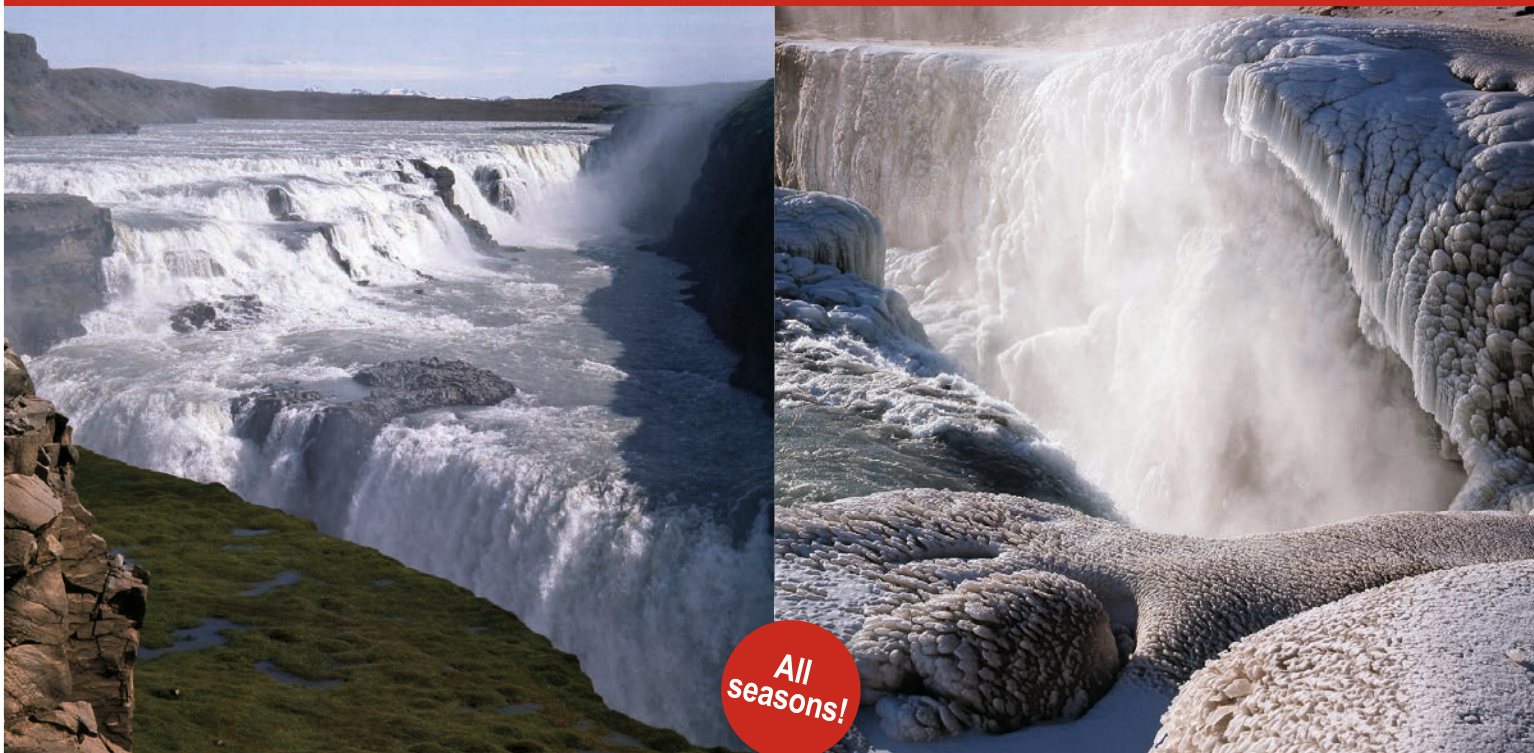
RATS, BROWN AND BLACK

The brown rat migrated to Iceland in the early nineteenth century but the black rat was first spotted when a ship ran ashore at the coast of Snæfellsnes in the mideighteenth century. Nowadays the brown rat is a firmly established inhabitant here but the black rat is firmly exterminated whenever spotted amongst goods imported into the country, so there are not too many of them turning up.

For a long time, history had it that the black rat had brought the Black Death to Iceland in 1424. On the other hand, recent archaeological excavations seem to prove that this was indeed, just a myth. People believed that Black Death had been carried from one individual to another via rat fleas but this is only true of one derivation of the disease.



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Blue Lagoon to Keflavik Airport
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* Via Keflavik Airport

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Grand Golden Circle

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Pick up time: Daily at 08:00

Duration: 8 hours

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PRECIOUS JEWEL IN THE CAPITAL

The Elliðaár rivers are among the best fishing rivers in the country and fewer acquire fishing permits there than would like to. I was lucky enough to join Karl Óskarsson on a fishing trip on a fair July morning. Karl has been fishing in Elliðaár since he was eleven years old and knows his craft.



Elliðaár are named after the ship of Ketilbjörn, the old settler. In the Book of the Settlements it says: "Ketilbjörn was named a fine man in Naumudalur; he was the son of Ketill and Æsa, the daughter of the jarl Hákon Grjótdarðsson. His wife was Helga, the daughter of Skeggi. Ketilbjörn went to Iceland, then the land was widely inhabited by the sea. He had the ship called Elliði. He arrived in Elliðaár estuary below the heath."

Elliðaár rivers run from Elliðavatn lake through Elliðaárdalur valley into Elliðavogur cove. The rivers branch out and are called Elliðaár rivers and not Elliðaá river. The first power plant in Iceland was built by Elliðaár rivers in 1921 and the rivers have one of the longest histories of angling in Iceland, the Reykjavík Angling Club (SVFR) was established around angling rentals there in 1939.

I met with Karl Óskarsson, who goes by Kalli among his friends, at the fishing lodge at around 6:30 a.m. on a beautiful July morning. Kalli joined SVFR in 1972 when he was eleven years old. He carries the membership number 188. The weather was perfect, cloudy and approximately 13 degrees. It had rained considerably that night and the river in the process of cleansing itself, but up until that night there had been very little rain in Reykjavík. Under such circumstances there is great hope of catching and we were quite excited. Kalli geared up and then we went into the lodge where the river guardian Þorsteinn Húnbogason offered a fresh brew of coffee. Þorsteinn went thoroughly over the rules and provided guidance as to which were the most promising spots for fishing. There are three fishing zones and six rods are permitted, two rods

per zone. Additionally there is quite a large free zone where the rule is "first come first serve" and anglers can spend as much time there as they want during their half day. There is a draw to decide where each rod starts and the fishing takes place upstream. Kalli got zone two. Fishing hours are between 7 a.m. and 1 p.m. and then from 3 to 9 p.m. and you are not allowed to fish for more than two hours at each zone, within a zone anglers do an hourly switch. SVFR only sells permits for half a day at a time to secure more fishing places over the summer.

Kalli had certain ideas as to where it would be best to start and hurried up to the free zone where one of the most generous deeps are, which is Árbæjarhylur. It was immediately apparent that the deep was full of fish, the sight of which sent surges of excitement and expectation across the body. Kalli only uses fly and angles with a float line and keeps a long rein, probably six meters long. First he put on the Red Frances no. 14, which is a tiny little critter. He ventured to the top of the deep and made an agile throw across to the opposite bank and reeled in quickly, this is called stripping. BANG he caught one immediately. Kalli decided to handle it forcefully so that he could draw it out of the deep up to the shallow to avoid disturbing the deep unnecessarily. This was a 60 centimeter long female and recently returned. Beautiful fish.

Kalli's eyes had started gleaming. This was going to be a great day. Now I received a rod and followed detailed pointers as to where and how to throw. First throw and the fly shot up the deep. BANG it was on. The fish took so strongly that it somersaulted around the deep and was on



the verge of ditching the angler, but it didn't work out and after the battle the male was conquered. 60 centimetres and recently returned. It was 7:30 in the morning and the quota already caught for you can't collect more than two fish per rod. "Now it's just catch and release," Kalli said and smiled. When catching to release Kalli prefers to only use the smallest flies to minimize the likelihood of harm.

Kalli caught one more salmon at Árbæjarhylur, which he of course released. Next we headed to a place called Hundasteinar ("Dog's Stones"). After trying out most of the traditional lure from the fly box Kalli decided to give the Sunray Shadow a try, which is considered to work very well under these circumstances. The second the fly hit the surface two salmon came rushing for it. Unfortunately it could only fit one of them and it was reeled in after a short fight. I put the Sunray Shadow on and threw it in and as soon as I began to reel in a salmon fiercely took it. Wow, this was fun. Three salmon were caught this way and three salmon were released.

Now we headed to a place called Hraunið, which is across from the stables in Víðidalur valley. A really beautiful place and relatively often full of fish according to Kalli. We decided to use the Black Brahan no. 16 and to strip rapidly. After a few runs a salmon, which turned out to be male, was hooked and after a little struggle it was released into the river. Then I put on a fly which I got from my late grandfather and is supposedly a classic salmon fly from 1973, the name of it however will not be printed here. The strange thing is the second it landed in the water



a salmon jumped on it and I hadn't even started reeling in. It was a double hook and very stuck in the salmon. So we had to employ great care to retrieve it without harming the salmon. We managed and the salmon returned to his deep confused and surprised at this nonsense. Kalli did a few runs after that but to no avail so I reintroduced my grandfather's fly and cast it. Wouldn't you know it, the salmon took it immediately and now began a battle as this salmon was considerably larger and stronger than the previous ones, but thankfully it charged upriver and we managed to land it unharmed, but the fly came out rather damaged. It will be taken to a professional fly tyer for copying. That's for sure. By now we had caught nine



salmon and the shift was hardly half finished. Then Kalli said: "Let's catch one more and then move to try out new places."

We headed up to Símastrengur which is located just above Hraunið and there Kalli took one salmon on the Red Francis. Ten salmon caught and we were feeling quite elated, but that morning the total catch was twenty-five salmon on six rods. Not bad for a river that runs in the capital. I know I have been to more renowned rivers and caught considerably less in a whole day.

Kalli decided to take me to Kerlingaflúðir, since they are located under the Árbær bridge I didn't expect much success there, but Kalli knows this river so I proceeded after him with cars swooshing overhead. We tried out a small deep where fishing is primarily done with worm. There we wanted to try hitching, that's when you put on a small plastic tube fly and let it skate on the surface, creating a V-shaped riffle. Neither one of us is very apt at this technique so this was an optimal opportunity to

practice the art of hitching. We each got one salmon to take the fly, but they took so subtly that we lost them. More salmon were keen and surfaced splashing their tails, but none took. We unbelievably counted fifteen salmon there.

Finally we moved to Teljarastrengur which is located right by the old power plant. It is a beautiful deep and lots of fish there, but no matter how we baited they didn't take. We discussed this behavior of the salmon and agreed that someone must have preceded us with worm and shied the deep. It was an acceptable excuse and we proceeded with satisfaction back to the lodge where Þorsteinn the guardian weighed and measured the catch. A fun and educative fishing trip had come to an end. What privilege it is to have such fishing rivers in the capital, the Elliðaár rivers are among the most generous salmon rivers in Iceland, and that's not a small statement.



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UNFORGETTABLE FOOD FROM ICELAND

Icelanders seldom do anything halfheartedly and usually want to be the best at everything. Despite towns not being that different from each other it is possible to find very diverse cuisine in different parts of the country. We collected a few examples from various towns.

Text: Helga Dís Björgúlfsdóttir



PIZZA WITH SALTED FISH ON A DISH

For many, it is impossible to go to Akureyri without stopping at Greifinn restaurant. They have a varied menu and everyone is welcomed, families and singletons alike. "Whenever possible, the restaurant offers dishes where most of the produce is from food companies located in Akureyri and around the town. The dishes are specially marked with local produce," says Arinbjörn, pizza baker and manager. "On our pizza speciality menu you can find pizzas with a different twist. The pizzas have interesting toppings which people don't generally see. For example the Bullfighter pizza has béarnaise sauce instead of the regular pizza sauce. The toppings are thinly sliced beef, french fries, cheese and black pepper. On the Salt fish pizza is the best salted fish in the world, which is manufactured by Ektafiskur at Hauganes but it is marinated in ketchup and cheese-mix made by Greifinn. In addition there are olives, tomatoes and onions. The pizza is served with sweet-chilli sauce."



LOBSTER FOR THE SUMMER

When the owners of Húmarhöfnin decided to open a restaurant in 2007 they realised they had to dedicate it to lobster. Höfn is one of the bigger lobster fishing towns in Iceland but since the opening of the restaurant their lives have revolved around lobster. "It was decided very early on to only use and serve local produce at the restaurant, so there's a lot more on the menu than just lobster. For example we offer salted fish, potatoes and eggs all from Hornafjörður," says María, one of the owners.

"We buy the lobster intermediary from Sigurður Ólafsson and Skinney-Pinganes who both fish and unload from Höfn. We were the first Icelandic restaurant to offer a whole lobster on our menu, since most Icelanders only eat the tail. You can find delicious meat in the claws and the liver is very tasteful as well."

Bryndís Pálsdóttir, who is studying design at the Iceland Academy of Arts helped Húmarhöfnin at designing their placemats which shows people the best way to eat the lobster. "It is a bit of a "ritual" since you have to use special tools and a bib. Then you have to use your fingers which can be very messy. Foreign guests love the Icelandic lobster but the Icelanders themselves have been a little slower on the uptake and usually just order the tail."



THE OFFSPRING OF A DONUT AND "SNÚÐUR"

In Almar's bakery in Hveragerði you can get deepfried "snúður." Almar says there are two different stories about how it came to be. "The version I like is that the American donut and the Icelandic "snúður" got together and had an offspring. The original story isn't nearly as much fun. One day I wanted to do something different, so I deep-fried a few "snúður" but I decided to use the donut dough instead of the regular dough plus a little bit of a cinnamon-sugar blend, and it came out great. Our flatbread is a bit different as well. I managed to get a hold of an old recipe and the flatbreads are sweeter and thicker than the regular kind. Instead of frying them on a pan, we cook them with an open flame not unlike people use when they make "svið,"" says Almar cheerful.

HVERABRAUÐ OG SILUNGUR HOT SPRING-BREAD AND TROUT

The chefs at the Vogafjós restaurant and guesthouse strive to use as much of their own produce as possible, since Vogafjós is also a farm. "We use meat and milk from the farm, we also smoke the meat and trout ourselves. In addition, we make cheeses and bake all the pastries here," says the chef at Vogafjós. "The hot spring-bread is a special treat but we let it stand for 24 hours in Bjarnarflag where it bakes from the heat. Our goal is to use only high-quality produce in our dishes and our guests get to experience local food. One of our smaller dishes include double smoked lamb with cottage cheese and homemade blueberry jam. This is served with hot spring-bread. Then we have hot spring-bread with trout as well."





BLUE MUSSELS, WHALE AND GUILLEMOT

The seatown Stykkishólmur is very beautiful. The centre of town is home to many restaurants and one of them is Narfeyrarstofa. Many businesses have been run in the house that originally was built for residence in 1906. The owners of the restaurant try to use only Icelandic produce. "All the dishes on the menu are named after place names from around here and there are explanations in the menu for those who are interested," says the owner Selma. "The dish Hvítabjarnarey is very popular. You get freshly fished blue mussels from Breiðarfjörður, french fries and salad. The pièce de la resistance is the iced ceramic mug filled with Icelandic beer from Einstök which compliments the food well. The mug is manufactured by Leir 7, a local company." Selma says the hors d'Oeuvre Sker is very popular as well. "It includes shark from Bjarnarhöfn, blue mussels, sea plants from Breiðarfjörður and Icelandic schnapps. This is all served on a stone from the beach. The course Borg includes Guillemot and mink whale with sauce made of dulce, barley and fresh vegetables. There's a lot to choose from and the author of the dishes is our chef, Guðbrandur Gunnar Garðarsson," says Selma.

LARCH BOLETE AND BRAMBLEBERRIES

Klausturkaffi opened in 2000 and is in Skriðuklaustur, the house of Gunnar Gunnarsson. They offer Icelandic cuisine which is sourced from nearby farmland, such as reindeer, lamb, barley, brambleberries, angelica, sour weed and Gerville's Bolete. Klausturkaffi's owner, Elísabet says the brambleberries and Gerville's Bolete are great raw material from the region. "We will offer lunch and teatime buffets every day this summer where you can eat a selection of delicacies from the eastern fjords.

Larch grows in the region and where there's larch, there's Larch Bolete, which grows in the late summer. I use it in my Larch Bolete soup. We sometimes get visitors who tasted the soup a few years ago and ask if I don't have it anymore. I always offer it as part of the lunch buffet but it is also possible to order it off the menu. Brambleberries grow both in Fljótisdalur and Hallormsstaðaskógur, which is near to here. I pick them in the fall and make fruit juice which I use to to make brambleberry-mead and delicious skyr-cake. Originally it was a brambleberrycheesecake but I changed it into a skyr-cake which I think is much more nationalistic and better.



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HVERINN (THE HOT SPRING) IN REYKHOLTSDALUR VEGETABLES, SPICES AND MORE

The travel company Hverinn is run at the farm Björk at Kleppjárnsreykir in Reykholtsdalur and offers a camp site, restaurant, wine bar and tourist shop. Björk operates a diverse horticulture and their products – vegetables, fruit and spices – are used as ingredients for the restaurant menu and sold directly to customers at the tourist shop. There you can also buy most necessities, Icelandic handiwork and design merchandise from the surrounding area and beyond, as well as certified organic herbal creams by Villimey.

At the camp site electric hook ups with 3,3 kw voltage are accessible on 60 lots. With access to WC, hot and cold water as well as showers, washing machine and drier, outdoor grill, RV dump station and car washing lot. A playground for children, swimming pool with a hot tub a 150 m away. *More information on hverinn.is*

VELKOMIN Á TAPASHÚSIÐ



BJARTEYJARSANDUR IN HVALFJÖRÐUR LAMB, ORGANIC PORK, PRESERVES, DANDELION HONEY AND MORE

At Gallery Álhöll at Bjarneyjarsandur you can find a range of goods produced by locals and craftsmen from the surrounding area. Glass art, baleen jewelry, caps, mittens and other wool products, skin products, preserves, bread and dandelion honey to name a few. You can also buy lamb and organic pork all year round, although there is a seasonal difference in products and services. A restaurant will be run there in the summer, where the main menu ingredients are direct from farms.

At Bjarneyjarsandur an Open agriculture is practiced, guests can go on guided tours around the farm, outhouses and the neighboring area, learn about the operation, engage in personal dialogue with farmers and producers and familiarize themselves with the way farm animals are cared for. Walks around the neighboring area and to the shore are always popular and guided tours to other areas of Hvalfjörður are available. Guests can lodge at Bjarneyjarsandur, whether on the campsite, in a summer cabin or at home at the farm. *For further information go to bjarneyjarsandur.is.*



SKYR, YOGHURT, CHEESE AND MORE

At Egilsstaðir in Fljótdalshérað region there is a free range dairy farm equipped with a robot cow milker. Recently they have opened a shop and café named The Egilsstaðir Cowshed Corner, which offers produce and a dining experience based on the farm's production. Dining guests are welcome to take a look at the cowshed and a guided tour around the farm is available for groups on order. Among available produce at The Cowshed Corner are skyr (milk curd), yoghurt, cheese, milk and beef. *For further information go to beintfrabyli.is/egilsstadir.*



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MRS LAUGA FARMERS MARKET IN THE CITY

Mrs Lauga is a neighborhood shop in Laugarnes that offers fresh food from Icelandic farmers from around the country. Quality and traceability are her passion. She also imports delicacies from farmers on the mainland, primarily from Italy. A great opportunity for farmers and small producers to sell their goods directly to the customer. Now Mrs Lauga can also be found downtown, since she branched out in December and opened for business at Óðingsgata 1 in the Þingholt district. *For more information go to frulauga.is*



LJÓMALIND AT BORGARNES REGIONAL FOODS AND HANDIWORK

During the weekend of Whitsun the food and handiwork market Ljómáland was opened at Borgarnes. A group of thirteen individuals from all over West Iceland established the market. Part of the group ran an open market in Borgarnes before Christmas, which was a great success and as a result it was decided to put more effort into selling produce from the region.

Available is a variety of produce from Direct from Farms farmers, such as vegetables, meat, cheese, preserves and more. For sale is also handiwork, like wool products, gift shop items and greeting cards. Summer flowers are sold there as well as various arts and crafts. Supply is diverse and it is possible to apply for products to be sold on consignment. An independent committee assesses submitted products as emphasis is put on good quality. The market is located at Sólþakki 2 in Borgarnes, just north of the roundabout at the intersection toward Snæfellsnes. *For further information call 437 1400 or look up Ljómáland on Facebook.*

SÓLHEIMAR AT GRÍMSNES ORGANIC CULTIVATION AND BEAUTIFUL ORNAMENTS

Sólheimar at Grímsnes run organic cultivation stations. There you also find a number of workshops, including a candle workshop, art workshop, ceramics workshop, weaving workshop, herbal workshop and a wood workshop. At the premises are an organic café, guesthouse and bakery. All of their products are available at the Vala shop. In the residential area you will find a church,

a sculpture garden, an arboretum, art gallery, the sustainability center Sesseljúhús and a sports hall. Sólheimar's culture festival runs throughout the summer with art shows, concerts, nature walks and lectures. *For more information about the programme and the Sólheimar community go to solheimar.is.*



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Mjóeyri

LOOKING IN ON FARMERS

Each has his own way of travelling and everyone chooses their own way of doing so. Here in Iceland we are lucky enough to get to choose from various modes of accommodation. Apart from sleeping in a tent, tent trailer, caravan or a camper, we can also choose to sleep in a mountain lodge, in farmhouse accommodation, in a hostel, guesthouse, motel or hotel.

Farmhouse accommodation is a relatively new phenomenon which has been gaining popularity lately. Farmers who offered travellers a bed to sleep in grew in numbers in the sixties. In the first year there were only five farms that offered this kind of accommodation in cooperation with Flugfélag Íslands. The idea was to give foreign travellers the chance to sleep in Icelandic country homes. The first five farms were Stóra-Borg in Víðidalur in western Húnavatnssýsla, Efri-Hreppur in Skorradalur in Borgarfjarðarsýsla, Hvítárbakki in Bæjarsveit, Laugarbakki

in Miðfjörður in western Húnavatnssýsla and Fljótstunga in Hvítársíða in Mýrarsýsla. This turned out to be popular and soon more farmers decided to take part but Icelanders weren't allowed to use this accommodation for the first few years. The first time an Icelander stayed the night at Fljótstunga in Hvítársíða was in the year 1976 and three years later a married couple stayed there for a whole week. Icelanders were 65% of guests in 1988 and today there are 180 farms that offer this service, which shows how popular this type of accommodation is.

Text: Sigríður Arna Arnþórsdóttir
Photographs: From each farm





VATNSHOLT

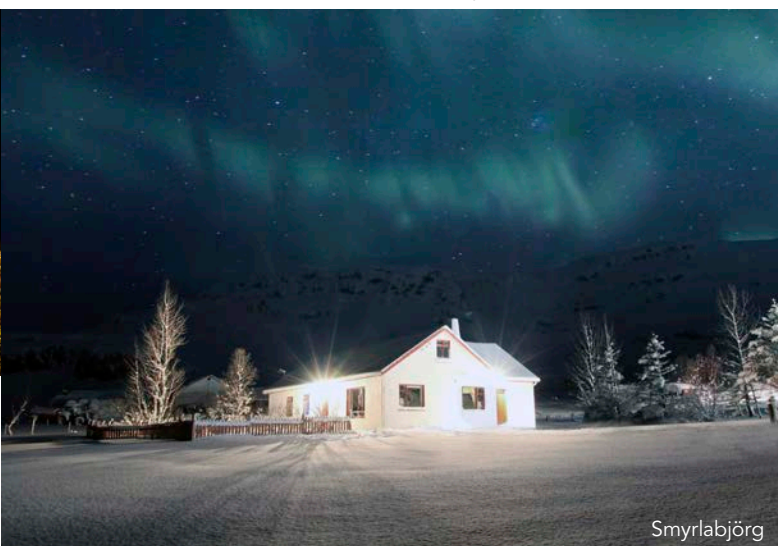
Let's travel around the country and stop at a few farms. We go to the south from Reykjavik and after a good day's journey after we've behaved like real tourists, looked at and walked around Þingvellir, seen Strokkur gush and viewed Gullfoss, we come to the first place to stay. Vatnsholt is a beautiful farm, 16km from Selfoss. The view is panoramic and Vestmannaeyjar, Eyjafjallajökull, Tindafjöll, Hekla and Hellisheiðar are in clear view. It's possible to choose between a room and a flat if you are travelling with your family and it is possible to either use the barbecue or eat at a nice restaurant which serves food from the farm. There's a hot tub which you can use if you want a cozy evening and bicycles to rent for those who want to explore. It is possible to take a rowboat onto Villingaholtvatn and fish, plus there's a good area for children to play, and of course all the animals on the farm.

SMYRLABJÖRG

After a good night's rest at Vatnsholt we continue our journey across the country and drive east. We drive to Seljalandsfoss and stop there for a while because one must walk up to it and look behind it, get a little bit wet and then run laughing around it. The next stop is

Þorvaldseyri where the farmers have opened a visitor's lounge which is worth looking at. It's possible to watch an interesting short film which tells all you need to know about the people in the area and their experience of the Eyjafjallajökull eruption in 2010. There's a long day of driving ahead so we need to march on. We need to get to Smyrlabjörg which are about 35km east from Skaftafell. Of course we stop to look at the waterfall and museum at Skógar and we eat our lunch there, if the weather is good we eat outside. We drive until we arrive at Dverghamrar, a unique work of nature next to the highway, just east of Foss á Síðu. It's late in the day when we reach Smyrlabjörg, a friendly country hotel next to Vatnajökull and we go straight to the buffet and enjoy the good food. During the summer they offer a buffet made from local produce. The same family has owned Smyrlabjörg for many years and it is now the fifth generation that lives on the farm with their children. Smyrlabjörg has also been mainly a sheep farm but there are also horses, cattle, chickens, ducks and dogs. If you want to explore and take walks, there's a lot to choose from. You can take walks in the national park Skaftafell, take a boat ride on Jökulsárlón or take a jeep or snowmobile ride on Vatnajökull to name a few.

pastries and it's hard not to buy one. On the drive around the Eastern fjords we enjoy the spectacular colours of the mountains which many choose to call "the Eastern fjords Alps". Their shape and colour are both awesome and intriguing. Our next stop is at Stöðvarfjörður where we look at Petra's splendid and unusual Stone collection. The Stone collection, which is the town's pride and joy, came to fruition when the late Petra walked up the mountains and picked stones she thought beautiful. She quickly ran out of room inside her house and soon her garden filled as well. You can see an incredible array of stones and minerals that charm children of all ages. The sun is setting so we hurry to the place we're going to stay at which is in Eskifjörður. Mjóeyri is by the seaboard in Eskifjörður, just outside the town, but still just by to the "Eastern fjords Alps" and within ten minutes from the ski slopes in Oddskarð which is one of Iceland's most popular ski destinations in winter. It's very enchanting to use farmhouse accommodation next to the sea and be able to choose between cottages and guest houses. Besides the possible use of the hot tub, you can choose between various leisure activities which include guided reindeer tours. We enjoy going to the beach crest and looking at the ocean or renting a kayak and rowing in the stillness of the evening to wait for the eastern fjords fog. The famous Randulfs house is at Eskifjörður, a restaurant which is great to check out when you get hungry. If we are there around summer solstice it is good to know that Fjarðarbyggð has a week long walk around that time. The walks include fun walks with a guide and sometimes light food is included, and even music or other cultural events. The next day we arrive at Egilsstaðir, but on a good day it can get very warm in the area and when the heat is high there's nothing else to do than to get ice-cream, sit on a bench and watch people go by.



MJÓEYRI

The next destination is Ferðþjónustan Mjóeyri in Eskifjörður. On our way there we drive through Höfn in Hornafjörður but we stop in Djúpavogur and have a look around Langabúð, which is a very beautiful house. It is the local museum and it houses the collection of the sculptor Ríkhartður Jónsson. There's also a lovely coffee house which sells homemade



Fosshóll

FOSSHÓLL

From Egilsstaðir we go to Möðrudalsöræfi. In years gone by the wilderness was hard to pass but we're lucky today that most roads are now asphalt. We stop at Sænautasel, an old hut or turfed farm building which was in residence for a century from 1843, but in 1861 there were 16 farms in the area. People moved away from the farm in 1943 but it was rebuilt in 1992 and again in 2010. Sænautasel is open over the summer for those who want to look at this beautiful turfed farm house and even get something nice to eat as well. After this lovely time in the heath we keep on going and before long we're at Mývatn. We're going to spend the day here, since there's a lot to look at. We look at the craters in Skútustaðir, walk around in Dimmuborgir, and on Hverfell and look at Sigurgeir's bird museum. It's good to end a good day by going to the Mývatn's Nature Baths but they have benefitted from using the nature baths since the settlement, they are unique after all; the warmth comes from the ground and warms springs in crevices. Mývatn's Nature Baths opened in 2004 and now everyone can use the unique refreshing baths. We are greeted by a bright yellow farmhouse when we arrive tired at Fosshóll ferðapjónusta. The farm stands next to a hill by Skjálfandafjót where Goðafoss falls and we can choose between sleeping on the farm or in a separate house. The surroundings offer wonderful walks over the old bridge and to the waterfall or in Bárðardalur when the sun sets. There's a restaurant for the hungry but if people want something lighter, there's also a small shop in the area.

SKJALDARVÍK

We wake up early in high spirits to keep on driving because we're going to go to Aðaldalur and Húsavík. There we step onto an oak boat to go whale watching but it is particularly fun to see the giant animals break the surface and spout water, or when they lobtail with a big splash. It's well worth it to take a boat ride in the beautiful oak boats and see the whales. After the trip we go and have something to eat at Gamli Baukur. After eating we continue on our way because we're going to Ásbyrgi and Dettifoss today, but this is what the northerners call the Diamond ring. After a second night

at Fosshóll we go to Akureyri, the capital of north Iceland. It is wonderful to be there and there's much to see, considering there are many interesting museums in town.

We start at the Aviation museum which is next to the airport, we visit the Industrial museum where you can see old designs, the Iðunnshoes and Skinna sheepskin jackets which were manufactured in Akureyri last century. The next farm accommodation we visit is in Skjaldarvík, just outside of Akureyri. There are many great horseback routes around Skjaldarvík but it's also fun to see other animals on the farm. It's lovely to let the exhaustion melt from your bones in the hot tub or in a hammock in the back garden on a beautiful summer evening.

GAUKSMÝRI

The travellers are looking forward to going to Tröllaskagi when we start our journey the next day. We say good bye to Skjaldarvík and drive to the end of Eyjafjörður, we drive through Dalvík and see the beautiful island, Hrísey. We rush to Ólafsfjörður and through Héðinsfjarðargöng, but on the other end we see Siglufjörður with its beautiful, colourful houses. It's always fun to come to Siglufjörður because it is the town of positivity. A ticket to the Herring Era Museum, gives access to three other museums so it's well worth it. The Folk music centre of Bjarni Þorsteinnsson is one of the museums, a lively and fun museum. But now people are getting hungry so we sit down at a beautiful restaurant, either Hannes Boy or Kaffi Rauðka, whichever we feel like. The restaurants are positioned next to the harbour and are painted in bright colours. The boats lie by the pier and rock in the swell. We say goodbye to Siglufjörður knowing that we'll come back. We have to go through the one-lane tunnel again which was revolutionary for the town's people of Siglufjörður when it opened in 1967. We don't stop until we get to Hofsóss and we go to the renowned swimming pool. The pool is great and it is almost like swimming in the ocean because the pool is built near the seaside. After a good day there's nothing left to do but to go to the house we're staying in for the night, which is Gauksmýri in Húnaþing. We hear of a barbecue buffet which is on offer over the summer and we're going to enjoy it before the programme fills. Gauksmýri is a large horse ranch so it's the right place to go horse riding but it's also possible to see great horse shows where the Icelandic horse shows all its gaits. The Gauksmýri pond which within walking distance from the farm, is home to many birds and you can watch the birds from a special bird

watching house.

KRÍUNES

We're entering the latter half of our journey but the country has so much to offer that it would undoubtedly be possible to travel for weeks on end without getting bored. We set off and drive to Hrítafjörður where we stop at Staðarskáli and buy provisions to eat at lunch in Borðeyri. It's a beautiful sunny day and it's not long before we're in Borðeyri in Hrítafjörður, which is the smallest village in the country, with only about 20 inhabitants. Some time ago Borðeyri was one of the major sailing and trading harbours in Iceland and it has been a legal trading centre since 1984. It's not long since the oldest house in the village, Riis-hús, was renovated but it used to be a store. We go over Laxárdalsheiði and we see Dalir. We look over Hvammsfjörður and instinctively you think about Auður djúpuðga (the deep minded) and other settlers. We go to Eiríksstaðir in Haukadalur to get to know more about the history of the settlers. Eiríksstaðir is designed and based on nearby ruins and research of the area. The museum is live-action where the guides are dressed in costumes from the time, inform guests about history and show them ancient craftsmanship and old objects. The next destination is quite different but it's the Rjórnabú at Erpsstaðir, where they make ice-cream about 15km from Búðardalur. There it's possible to taste many different types of ice-cream. They also manufacture skyr-candy, cheese, regular skyr, beestings and cream so it's far from being one-sided farming. It's a very exciting and challenging line of work where everything is possible. If you are too full to keep on going, you can reside at Erpsstaðir and enjoy resting under the valley sun. But we keep on going and our next stop is in



Kríunes





Skjaldarvík

Borgarnes where we stroll around the unique Bjössaróló. It's good to wash off the travelling dust in the local swimming pool but it's now late in the day so we go to our next accommodation. Ahead is our last night on our journey and we close the ring in the outskirts of Reykjavík, at Kríunes next to Elliðavatn. It's a singularly beautiful place with a view over the lake. If we don't want the vacation to end it's a good idea to rent a boat and go out on Elliðavatn with a fishing rod to try and get trout. It's also possible to rent a canoe, kayak, paddle boat or a bicycle. There's also a golf putting course apart from countless hiking paths.

We have now travelled around the country and had a look around, alongside staying in farmhouse accommodation. We have found how comfortable and varied this type of accommodation is. We got closer to nature and country living and we got a chance to see animals in their natural habitat. We got to know the inhabitants and the best things each region has to offer in food and entertainment. When the journey is over we look forward to scheduling another trip and we won't hesitate to stay at farms again. It's high tide to have a look and choose what to do on www.sveit.is but that's what was done for this journey.



Gauksmýri



AN ENIGMATIC MONUMENT FOR A FLOURISHING FARM

Photographer Nökkvi Elíasson has always been enchanted by abandoned houses and decided many years ago to photograph the mysteriousness that emanates from them. He's published three books on the subject and we got him to tell us a little bit about this hobby of his and tell us about a few farms.

Supervision: Ragnhildur Aðalsteinsdóttir
Photographs: Nökkvi Elíasson



"I started shortly after I got my first camera in 1987. In the beginning it was only when I had the chance to go somewhere or was driving by an abandoned farm on my way around the country. Around 2002 I decided I wanted to publish a book and I started to organise trips. My first book was published in 2004 and was called *Abandoned Farms* or *Eyðibýli* in Icelandic." says Nökkvi and keeps on. "The houses are memorials for the life that once was and it captured me and I realised I like the feeling. Next to the abandoned farms I managed to handle the camera in a way that was gratifying." The photographs were taken over a 25 year period and he's photographed many hundreds of farms. Sadly it was impossible to show them all in the book because there were too many photographs. "The book was first and foremost supposed to be a photography book and a collection of poetry, not educational. While looking for the abandoned farms I used maps which detailed their locations. But it happened many times that the houses had been torn down when I arrived and there was little to indicate human habitation. People also gave me information about abandoned farms around the country which I just had to see. That information was invaluable."

MOST SHOT ON FILM

Most of the photographs were shot on black and white film which Nökkvi developed himself in his own dark room. "There's a certain texture that comes from the film which I wanted to get and I captured the mysteriousness by having them black and white. I used a digital camera for some of the newest photos and developed them on Photoshop. Digital photos need a different work process and it's more difficult to get the same influence as the black and white film gave." After an exhibition in Reykjavik Museum of Photography in 2001, he and the poet Aðalsteinn Ásberg Sigurðsson, decided to try and find a publisher who was willing to publish a book with photographs of abandoned farms by Nökkvi, decorated with poetry by Aðalsteinn. "Edda publishing house agreed to publish the book, *Abandoned Farms*, in 2004. When the book sold out, we went to another publisher, Uppheimar, to publish my second book, *Black Sky* (2011) or *Hús eru aldrei ein*. The book was rereleased in 2012 in a smaller format under the name *Blue Sky - Vanishing Iceland*. The poetry adds depth to the photographs and they become even more mysterious.

Aðalsteinn's poetry is particularly beautiful and gives a fascinating view of a world gone by. A house that was once a flourishing farm is just ruins today and the only life around is obese sheep and a few ghosts. In my opinion it would have been hard to find a better man for the job than Aðalsteinn, who met the project head on. He got inspiration from my photographs and I in return got inspiration from his poetry."



HREPPSENDÁÁ IN ÓLAFSFJÖRÐUR, NORTH ICELAND

Abandoned: 1963
Photographed: 2001
Format: Trix 400 film

"This is the innermost farm in the valley and there's no road leading up to it. I had to wade through a big river in waders to access the house. The gloomy sky and snowy mountains gave me an opportunity to frame the farm beautifully. This is one of my favourite photos. The remains of human habitation interplay with the somber landscape in such a way they almost become one. The house was never finished so the raw concrete gives an interesting atmosphere in the black and white photo. There was little more than curtains inside the house, which hit the broken window frame in the living room."

HOF IN MJÓAFJÖRÐUR, EASTERN ICELAND

Abandoned: 1970
Photographed: 1991
Format: Trix 400 film

"I found this beautiful abandoned farm when I was travelling alone around Mjóafjörður in 1991. I only took this one photo because I didn't think the subject was interesting at the time. The fog annoyed me because I wanted to get the view of the mountain on the other side of the fjord. I stopped the car for a very short time, almost decided against it but ran out to take the photo. It wasn't until 15 years later, when I looked at the film that I saw it. I saw that this could be an interesting photo and since then this has been one of my favourites and probably my most famous one. It adorns the cover of my first book after all."



**GLETTINGANES IN
BORGARFJARÐARHREPPUR,
EASTERN ICELAND**

Abandoned: 1952

Photograph: 2001

Format: Trix 400 film

"This is an old lighthouse keeper's home, and was abandoned in 1952. It's on a small lawn surrounded by mountains and sea on one of the longest spits of land in Iceland. Because there are no roads leading up to the house, it's only possible to access it by sea or walk down a steep green hill, which is about 150 metres tall. But it was fun to go there and the clouds in the sky didn't spoil the experience while I was shooting. The day trip was well worth threading the narrow sheep paths on the steep mountainside. The farm is said to be very haunted and only those brave enough stay the night."



**HORN IN HORNSVÍK,
SOUTH ICELAND**

Abandoned: 1984

Photographed: 1998

Format: Trix 400 film

"One of the most beautiful abandoned farms in the country because the Eystrahorn mountain towers over it majestically. The farm is closed off and the view is spectacular as you drive up to it. An old radar station was nearby by the sea, but is has been mostly removed by now. The day was very low cast when I came and the grey buildings harmonised with the gravel hill behind the house and the fog on the mountain tops. The film As in Heaven (Svo á jörðu sem á himni) was partly filmed there. The house on the left has been torn down now, but I don't know why."

ARNARNÚPUR IN DÝRAFJÖRÐUR, THE WESTFJORDS

Abandoned: 1966

Photographed: 2001

Format: Trix 400 film

"This beautifully ugly house immediately captured my attention when I was travelling around the Westfjords in the spring of 2001. It stood lonely and abandoned in the sun and had the black cliffs behind it which rose like a wave out of the sea and looked like they were going to devour the house. The farm has the same name as the mountain. I left my hiking boots somewhere around there when I forgot to put them in the boot of the car after the photography session. They'll be a monument for my stay there for times to come."



GRÆNABORG IN VATNSLEYSUSTRÖND, REYKJANESI

Abandoned: 1966

Photographed: 2002

Format: Trix 400 film

"This is my favourite place to go and photograph. It's possible to find almost infinite angles to photograph this house, which is even worse for wear today since this photo was taken, but the house burnt for a second time a few years ago. The house stands on a mossy lava field and is uniquely magnificent where it stands alone and abandoned, looking at the ocean. There's no road leading up to the farm and it's difficult to access due to the rugged lava."



BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

TRY THIS!



SOAK

Make sure you visit at least one public swimming pool!

TRY ALL THE CANDY!

Pristur (thristuhr), Tromp and filled liquorice strings (Fylltar reimar from Appolo) are the top three of the many that are locally made and delicious.

DRINK AS MUCH TAP WATER AS YOU POSSIBLY CAN!

It's the best in the world!

VISIT THE BEACH

Most Icelandic beaches are grayish black because of the volcanic soil.

VISIT HARPA CONCERT HALL

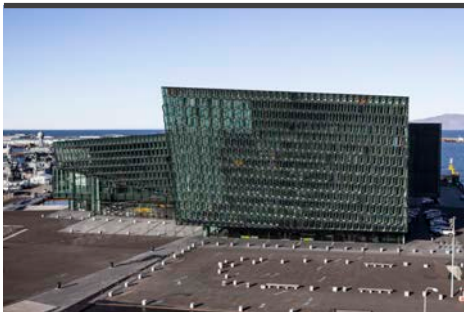
It's the multicolored music house right downtown. Admission to the building is free and it's as much fun to see it from the inside as it is to view its many colors from the outside.

GET IT AT HOME

If there is something you saw while you were here and would like to buy later, we just recently discovered nammi.is, which sends Icelandic goodies and much more (CDs, DVDs and clothing) all over the world.

VISIT PERLAN

At the top of Öskjuhlíð, our little patch of forest right in the city, Perlan, The Pearl, sits on top of what used to be hot water tanks. With wrap around decks from which you can see every angle of the city, The Pearl is a must see place, and at the very top there is a four star restaurant which actually rotates. The meals are delicious, and with the breathtaking view, you've got it all. There is no admission fee and you can stay out on the observation deck as long as you like. Just remember to wear warm and wind resistant clothing.





TRY A PULSA!

Pulsa (puhlsah) is the Icelandic hot dog and sold in most gas stations as well as smaller shops, drive throughs and special hot dog stands. The toppings offered are mustard, ketchup, remoulade, raw onions and fried onions. The fried onions are a must! Most popular are one with everything or one with everything except raw onions. The best place in town to get it is the country's "most popular restaurant" called Bæjarins Bestu, located on Hafnarstræti in Reykjavik Center. The "restaurant" even offers a great view of the Harpa Concert Hall.



GOTOABAR

Strike up a conversation with a friendly local during happy hour (see also on page 60).



CHECK OUT THE MUSIC.

Some of our favorites include Ásgeir Trausti, Retro Stefsson, Of Monsters and Men and Moses Hightower. Most CD shops will let you listen for free before you buy and if you wish to buy digital, www.tonlist.is offers a great selection.

TRY OUR BEER!

We're so proud of it, because it's made from the best water in the world! Some good ones to try are Einstök, Kaldi and Brío from Borg (an award winning brew). During special seasons like Thorri, Easter and Christmas you should try the specialty beers made in limited editions. They are usually sold out very fast.



TASTE SOME DAIRY

Skyr is an exclusively Icelandic dairy product, which originated here and you can almost only get here. It's low fat, high-protein, calcium rich and an inexpensive item to buy and eat on the go. Our súrmjólk (similar to yogurt) and our yogurt are also very good, inexpensive and easy to eat (or drink) on the go.



BUY A SOUVENIR

Kraum in Aðalstræti sells only items made and designed in Iceland by Icelanders and in all price ranges. If you see something that's a bit too much for your budget, remember you can get a VAT form to fill out and then you get some of the money back!



OMINOUS GHOST STORIES

I WILL TELL YOU A STORY...

The Icelandic folktale tradition has accompanied the nation through the centuries and are ghost stories the favourite of many. Stories of spectres and strange happenings have both been told to pass time and as a word of warning.

YOU AIN'T SEEN NOTHING YET

Finnur the sorcerer was so old and evil that everyone was afraid of him. When Finnur died there was no one to be found who was willing to sew the shroud around him. There was a woman who tried but when she was half way done she lost her mind. Another woman came forward who didn't miss a beat, not matter what the corpse did. When she was almost finished, Finnur said: "You ain't seen nothing yet". She replied "I've seen everything I wanted to see". Then she snapped the twine, broke the needle in two and stabbed the halves into the sole of the corpse. There are no stories of him doing anything ever again.

THE HAUNTING IN MÖÐRUDALUR

The farm Háreksstaðir was small and the owners very poor. A man named Andrés lived there. He was a widower and had many young children. One time he didn't have enough food. He went down to the fjord to try and find something to eat but he hadn't much luck.

An evening, shortly afterwards, the household had a nap at twilight. When they woke up they saw Andrés had committed suicide. When it came to funeral arrangements they really wanted to bury him in holy ground. They asked the bishop for permission and which he granted. A grave was dug in one corner of the cemetery. There was no ceremony nor a priest but the master of the Möðrudalur farm sang a beautiful song. It was soon clear that Andrés didn't lie peacefully in the grave. Andrés tried night after night to enter the farm but the farm dogs stopped him from entering. Jens, Andrés' oldest son, stopped sleeping and he felt like there was something that stopped him from falling asleep. Oddrún Snorradóttir got the idea one night to make a sign of the cross over the patio. That night she dreamt Andrés came to her and said: "Why are you preventing me from seeing my son?" The next

night when the dogs started barking as usual, Oddrún went to Andrés' grave in the cemetery and said: "You who have gone to rest, stay here and leave us alone. Don't think about associating with the living since you thought life was too long and bitter..." After the visit Jens could sleep again and no one noticed any ghosts again.

THE FIANCÉ

Once upon a time there was a boy and a girl who were engaged. Over the winter he went out to sea but he promised he'd write her regularly and thoroughly. Just before Christmas the girl started having very vivid dreams about her fiancé, so vivid she couldn't sleep. She went to an old woman and told her about her problem. The woman told the girl to go to sleep in the coming evening but she would stay by the door. During the night she dreamt her fiancé came to her and said: "It was mean of you to close the door on me; I can't come to you from now on, I wanted to be your dream man instead and it was mean of you to deny me access." He followed it with this poem:

*"The sea filled our beds,
it came without foretelling;
It's quiet here in heaven
I praise the mighty god."*

After this the boy left but the girl woke up and wanted to commit suicide. The household managed to stop her but the boy never visited her again.

MÓÐIR MÍN Í KVÍ, KVÍ

A young woman who lived on a farm became pregnant, when she gave birth she set the child out to die of exposure. Not long afterwards she was invited to attend a dance. The woman was poor and had no clothes that would be good enough for such a dance. She wasn't happy with not being able to go. On the day of the dance the woman was out milking the ewes in the fold with another

woman and started complaining that she didn't have any nice clothes for the dance. Just when she finished the sentence they heard the following song:

*"My mother in the fold, fold,
you don't need to be sad, sad,
I'll lend you my castoff rags
to dance,
and dance."*

The woman took such a fright that she lost her mind and remained insane for the rest of her life.

EXPOSURE

A worker in Vík was on his way to Fjörðu in North-Iceland to visit his fiancée around Christmas. Half way there he heard outlandish noise and a dark bundle rolled forward, like it wanted to get ahead of him. The worker didn't scare easily, so he started to howl and wail at the phenomenon. The sounds from the being became poignant and sounded like agonising crying from a baby. The worker arrived at the farm safe and sound but the cries of the bundle haunted him. He was quiet when he came and unlike himself. He stayed over Christmas and went by sea back to Flateyrdalur. In the spring the worker went back to Fjörðu the same way as before, but he vanished into thin air and no one heard from him again. People speculated the exposed child had killed him.

HELLO, MY DEAR GRANDFATHER

Once there was a priest who had three daughters. One time he was on his way home when he heard said from the pile of dirt next to him: "Hello, my dear grandfather." When he looked he found baby bones, which he took home. He asked his daughters about the bones and the youngest one admitted that she had taken her baby out to die, which she had in secret.



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MAY 15 TO SEPTEMBER 15
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SEVEN DAYS A WEEK AT

10:00 14:00 12:00

ADULTS € 25
CHILDREN 7-15 YEARS € 13
CHILDREN 0-6 FREE

HOTEL PICK-UP € 5
(CHILDREN € 2)

SCHEDULE

MAY 15 TO SEPTEMBER 15
DURATION: 3 HOUR

SEVEN DAYS A WEEK AT

17:00

ADULTS € 65
CHILDREN 7-15 YEARS € 35
CHILDREN 0-6 FREE

HOTEL PICK-UP € 5
(CHILDREN € 2)

MÍNUS

Mínus is a band you should not miss. I am talking about a group, which started hardcore rock music scene here in Iceland, despite everything and everyone, just because they had something to say and to express: in other words – band made of true blood, the one which shared w with legends like Metallica, Foo Fighters and Queens of the Stone Age.

Text: Wiktoria Joanna Ginter

Photographer: Hákon Davíð Björnsson

Between the sharp, twisted guitar riffs and some badass drumming, you can drown in honesty and realism of the lyrics, wrapped up in pure, sexy and angry vocals, with a hint of sadness in them. Because talking about life, the real one, which happens in front of your nose, never should be altered, like pictures in Photoshop or sound in pro-tools these days.

WHO FOUNDED THE BAND AND WHEN?

Bjarni Magnús Sigurðarsson (guitar): It was kind of joined venture. There were two bands doing similar kind of music, back in 1997 or... **Krummi Björgvinsson** (vocals): It was 1996-97.

B: Yeah, and then we merged together and shared the rehearsing space. And it was kind of "side-project".

K: I was in a band, which I played drums in, called Ungblóð and they (Bjarni and Bjösssi, the drummer, red.) were in a band called Spitsign.

B: And at one point we shared the bass player and the rehearsal space.

K: Basically I and the guitar player from Ungblóð decided to do something extreme and we talked to them, to form this hardcore/punk band...

B: And we were making jam sessions and we were calling ourselves Mongols (laughs) just to make it more crazy. And our work together somehow felt right.

K: Yeah, I started on a guitar and went straight to vocals. Then we did couple of local shows, which went really well. It was something needed at the time. There was no scene here with this kind of music.

It was all "water-down-stream" pop music.

B: And we started the hardcore scene here in Iceland. Before, there was just nothing.

K: Yeah, just some bands doing covers of popular bands.

B: And the heavy music was existing just in form of old school punk rock and death metal bands and stuff like that.

K: It was totally dead, there was nothing happening in here for years.

And then we, some angry kids, started to do that and people came to listen and they liked it and it all kind of blew up. We did this demo in 1998 with 6 songs, with small amount of money...

B: And we were selling it at gigs mostly.

K: We did the cover of it and we had this little label called Mannaskítur (Feces, red.) and we started to grow. People were buying the demo and thought it was kind of cool! oh! there is this band performing and you can buy a demo on the spot! And it was all "do-it-yourself" kind of thing.

B: And quickly a lot of other people started to do similar things.

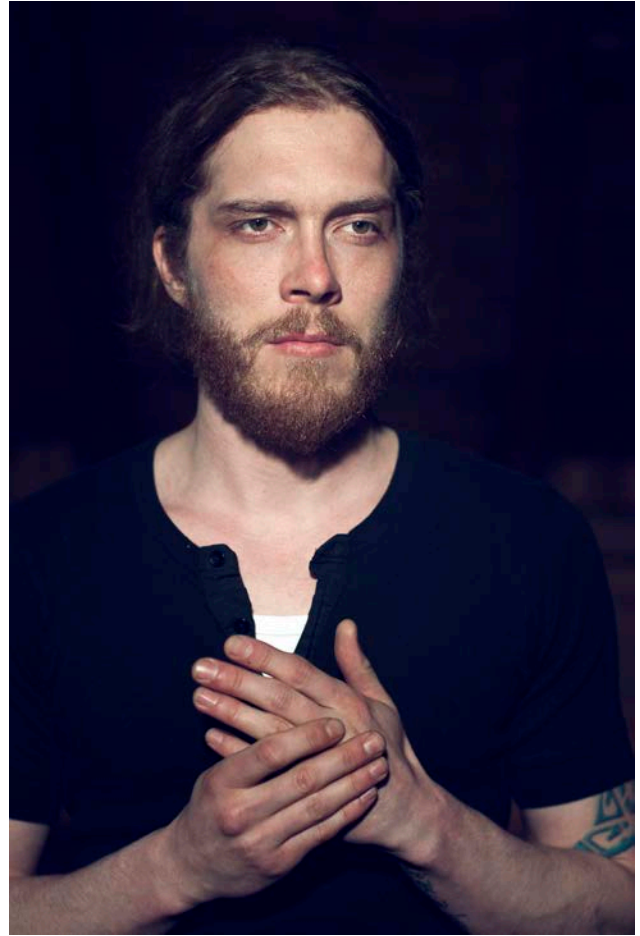
K: And then in 1997 we participated in The Battle of The Bands (Músiktilraunir: the most accredited young bands music contest, red.)

B: Yeah and we just came in there and just... destroyed the stage (laughs)

K: That went very well, we won that competition and we got some hours in the studio to record an album. And it was kind of messed up, because we didn't know, what we were doing.

B: It was really notorious and weird.





K: Because most of the Icelandic bands are usually happy-go-lucky.

B: And we were just a gang (laughs)...

K: We were noise, anger. Singing about stuff that people didn't really want to talk or sing about. And we were always talking shit in the papers.

B: And we never liked any band or anything (laughs).

K: And it was something that was needed for the youth: because we were part of the youth and it needed some voice, some kind of angry voice or something. And we became a band for that.

B: But as soon as the scene got really big, we just stopped playing that aggressive music.

K: We just got better actually.

B: So we decided to put our distance into it and just say: fuck these kids, we will do what we want! We never fitted into any kind of patterns, so we decided to change something.

K: Which is a good thing, you know.

B: Evolution, baby!

K: Shortly after we won this competition, we recorded our first album called "Hey, Johnny!" which came out in 1999. It was the first hardcore album. There were of course some loud bands, which were doing some off the wall rock music, but this one was more metal oriented punk hardcore, it was actually called new-school-hardcore. And we were pretty happy about that album, we played a lot of gigs.

B: We were always playing live at the time and after playing so many

live gigs... we changed so quickly. We were sick of doing the same thing over and over again.

STILL, IT'S THE WEIRDEST...

K: We were progressing constantly. We were always getting into the new bands. It was a lot going on in this genre of music all over the world. We were always discovering new acts, doing like this really strange, abstract, hardcore music. We were totally into that time signature, off beat, really chaotic, noise core.

B: And there was no way to get this kind of music, which we were listening to, in the record stores.

K: We had to order records and then wait for them.

B: We are the generation before Facebook and Myspace and all that shit, and we really needed to dig deep into the Internet to find some stuff.

K: So it took us two years to evolve and produce another album, which gave us opportunity to perform abroad, "Jesus Christ Bobby", which was more of an experiment.

B: Yeah, I listened to it the other day and it's a fucking awesome album!

K: Still, it's the weirdest...

B: Yeah, you can't really pinpoint it, because it's all over the place.

K: We worked with the artist Curver and we worked really well together so we did this artistic album. We were always into art so we tried to do different things, trying new sounds.

B: No rules.

K: That album got us a deal with a huge hardcore record company in



America called Victory Records and they were huge. They released Deadguy and Bloodlet and stuff like that. And the guy that owns the company, he contacted us.

B: We never actually had to search for anything. We were always getting some offers.

K: Shortly after the release we went on our first tour. After the month tour we did for the first time with Charger and Matter 23 actually...

B: That was the year when we got into Roskilde and all.

K: And after Roskilde the guy from Victory Records made a deal with us for re-release "Jesus Christ Bobby" and then we just started touring. We had a huge audience. We had a good distribution, so the record was landing into hands of the right people.

B: Yeah, we didn't have to think about stuff that musicians have to think about these days, you know. The musician has to calculate everything in excel files and what not. Back then we were just crazy, young guys having fun with touring and making music. And it was always just a dream of young people to be able to do that.

K: We did few tours and we did very well, then we had to make the third album. We threw in there all this touring and all these rehearsals, we got older of course, and we progressed into more of a... we were experimenting with different sounds...

„Yeah, we didn't have to think about stuff that musicians have to think about these days, you know.“

B: It was some sort of after effect, after all this touring we wanted to make a straight rock album.

K: We TRIED to make a straight rock album, but it came out, of course, a really fucked up album with a lot of hardcore and sleazy-rock elements.

B: It was just a picture of where we were at that time.

K: We had a good backup from Smekkleysa, they were supporting us 100% in every way.

B: And we were just these guys going on tours and performing our music.

K: Well, at first we had to drive in this shittiest bus ever, with a hole in the floor (laughs) and sleep on people's couches and floors, and we did that for few years. And it happened after third album that we were

going out in tour buses. We made a lot of friends at the time.

B: The third album, "Halldór Laxness" came out so fast. We were really quick in writing music together. It was so natural and we were really professional about it. We were always rehearsing and we felt like a proper team.

K: We never cared about anything or anybody else. We were just into music. And we had no idea that this album would be so popular. It kind of blew us out into the scene. And our audience became so much bigger than before. All of a sudden they started to book us on events like 17 Júní (17th of June, Icelandic Independence Day, red.) and festivals attended by people with families.



„I started on a guitar and went straight to vocals. Then we did couple of local shows, which went really well. It was something needed at the time. There was no scene here with this kind of music. It was all “water-down-stream” pop music.“

B: But if you listen to that album it's not like soft rock or anything like that.
K: Well the album was more about songs than total noise and craziness. We just became focused on vocals than just vocal extremities.
B: We kind of grew up and we were more into this classic rock n roll image, A little bit cliché, but we took that cliché...

WE WERE GETTING RIDICULOUSLY GOOD REVIEWS.

K: The success of “Halldór Laxness” really changed us. We had to sacrifice a lot of things, just to be on the road. And being this young on the road, constantly for few years, it was great, it was amazing, but still... you know... you get older, you change, you get tired...
B: It was time better spent than being at the university (laughs).
K: And at the “Icelandic Grammy”, or whatever you can call that, it was chosen the album of the year and so on... some stupid shit we didn't give a fuck about. But we got the recognition or whatever.
B: But Icelandic people are like... there were some critics here that liked us or loved us, but the general public never got us until we got pretty big and well known somewhere else. It used to be the Icelandic syndrome: they are great abroad, so they must be good.
K: Yeah, this cool guy likes them then I should like them too. It's a total bullshit crap that I hate and I don't believe in. But that's the way it is. But we just kept on not giving a shit.
B: We were always partying at this time you know... there was all of a sudden some bad actor from some tv station wearing a Minus shirt.
K: But we were young, totally into music and we had a lot of people who believed in us. And we always delivered. We didn't even think about the deadlines and we were never stressful about anything. We were just doing what came naturally. That is how it was with the band all the time. We were getting ridiculously good reviews.
B: People appreciated that we were just doing what we wanted and we were expressing ourselves. And people made the whole thing kind of... deeper.
K: It was much deeper than most of the things that were going on at that time and people liked it. There was no other band at the time that went on all these tours and attended these festivals like we did.
B: And for us it didn't matter if we performed in front of 10.000 or 50 people...
K: Or nobody!
B: The best shows were probably with just like 10 guys (laughs).
K: When we started touring we were sometimes playing just in front of the bartender and the bartender at some point just went into the office or whatever and we played just for ourselves (laughs).
B: We just said, fuck it and we still went all the way in and poured ourselves in there.
K: We just kept on going, kept on going, kept on playing. We worked our fucking asses off. And two years after that, all of a sudden

we started to play for sell-out shows because we really worked for it. We were traveling all over the world and always so into that thing that we were doing, we became like this mysterious gang of crazy Viking guys, I don't know... It was just something that clicked with the people. And it became really heavy at that time. We were constantly touring for like 6 years or something. And of course we got older and... we were all dealing with alcoholism and stuff like that. So things started changing after year 2007.

THAT WAS THE YEAR OF THE RELEASE OF THE WHALE KILL, RIGHT?

K: We did that record in L.A. It was a follow up to “Halldór Laxness”, but it took us... like 4 years to do that record. Because after all the touring we were so tired and we just didn't have the time. Then we got an interest from Joe Barresi, producer of Tool (also Chevelle and Queens of The Stone Age, red.).
B: Yeah, fucking asshole! (laughs)
K: He was really cool with ME... He was actually really cool with everybody. We were just not in a good place to do a record with such a big producer...
B: Yeah, he was a cool guy. He taught us some professionalism, which we took with us into the future, but at that moment, he was telling us about the tuning, the American style of recording and we were resisting. He wanted the sound to be perfect. We want brilliance, not perfection.
K: It was cool, but that album totally flopped for us and broke our spirits a little bit down.
B: We as well tied that strings around our necks by ourselves: we had a naked fifteen year old girl on the cover and we called it “The Great Northern Whale kill”...
K: It's still absolute art, man...

Destruction?

B: The best thing, which I like about it is that people were expecting us to release a pop-rock record and we just... put their expectations down (laughs)
K: Nobody was into rock music then, it came out at a totally wrong time. And it was too many years between “Halldór Laxness” and this album.
B: And we were a touring band. We didn't just sit at home and study music or anything else. We just became this rock and roll animal.
K: And we kind of lost our interest in this shit.

What about “KOL”, the fifth album, which you guys recorded and it's still not released?

B: This record will be brilliant. It is just still in the incubator.

So you have not recorded it yet?

B: Yes, we did. It's nearly 90% finished. Just ambition and...

„And it was something that was needed for the youth: because we were part of the youth and it needed some voice, some kind of angry voice or something. And we became a band for that.“

Stamina?

B: ...money (laughs). And we all just went to do different things. But it will come out and it's going to be a beautiful project.

I know that many people are waiting for that album...

B: Yeah, but then again we never did anything for other people, so... (laughs).

K: The Instagram generation doesn't deserve any kind of record from us (both laugh)

B: But you know, we do music for us. And Bjössi is currently an actor. Me and Krummi are currently in other musical projects.

KRUMMI YOU ARE DOING SOME STUFF WITH ESJA AND LEGEND. YOU, BJARNI, YOU PLAY WITH THORUNN ANTONIA? ANYTHING ELSE?

K: Esja is currently inactive. Legend is totally mine. It is going very well. We are always playing, we are releasing records. It's totally like my little baby. It's totally the shit I want to do. And it's really time consuming.

So you are right now completely in there.

B: We are all very busy.

K: yeah, and the thing is, we couldn't really finish this album because we ran out of money and...

B: I moved to Norway. Bjössi moved to Denmark...

But then again I have all the tracks and I have what I need...

K: We just need to finish some overdubs, some vocals, get it mixed and get it mastered. That can cost a lot of money.

So it will come out when it will come out?

K: Yeah, if ever... It's been so many years...

B: It is a good album...

K: It is a good album, I really would like to hear it finished. We haven't build any anticipation for it. Because it's the worst thing: being under a pressure, because people are waiting for it.

B: But that's us. We have never done music for anyone but ourselves.

I think it's kind of romantic that we are leaving this one in the oven for so long. And if we would have released it two years ago we would not had been able to promote it. Our spirit is not tied to the Mínus machine you know. Maybe in some years. We just really want to do it well.

K: We will never be a touring band, probably ever again.

We will do some shows if it comes out.

B: Mínus is different we are not entertaining or doing anything in that way. It takes... personally for me... you go into this zone and after making music for so many years together you are just pouring your heart in there. When you get old... why do it?

K: The great thing in this new album is that we got a new bass player,

Siggi, and we wrote all the songs together.

B: He was one of our first big fans. He even made his own Mínus t-shirt.

K: Yeah, he was such a cool kid and we liked him. He was like a perfect candidate to come in and play with us. He is really great guy, very talented. And we wrote the new album in this renovated barn, called Kolstaðir. We just basically lived there.

B: We went there for two one-week sessions. And we just recorded it...

K: ... and it came to halt.

B: Yeah and most of our friends from other bands are like: this is the best stuff you ever made, why are you not releasing it (laughs)

SO YOU ARE ENJOYING IT A LITTLE BIT WHEN YOU TEASE PEOPLE WITH IT?

B: It's like keeping something cool in your pocket and ask: you want to see? You want to see? (laughs) No, no. We are just too busy with other things. Life is what happens when you're making plans.

K: I'm not even bummed about it...

B: Yeah, I know it's there. Mínus machine will never end. There is always the possibility, at least as long as I am alive. I think I am the only guy who knows the riffs (laughs)

K: No, I can sing the riffs!

B: Really?!

K: No. I write lyrics. I have always written all the lyrics.

B: But for me, true bands should always be like a socialistic affair, you know. So Krummi never had to face a situation with some guy coming and saying: hey! I wrote these lyrics, now you sing them!

The reason why I paid attention to you guys was mainly because of the lyrics, which are quite... bitter. There are no other bands in Iceland writing and singing about stuff you do.

K: I wouldn't call my lyrics bitter. They are more psychedelic, abstract and poetry in style of Timothy Leary, Bukowski and William S Burroughs. I was always into Jim Morrison. That's not bitter. It is just challenging, good stuff. There is maybe one bitter lyric about a guy that kills himself, about a girl that gets raped and kills everyone, about that fucking "liquid courage" which I hate and people get when they drink too much. That's not bitter. It is just realism.

B: People always tend to mistake bitterness for honesty.

K: They say you are weak when you are bitter. I think they are wrong. You are much stronger than any of them. And this is not bitterness, this is real life, things we see and the way we see them.

B: And some philosophers would call that pessimism.

K: I don't really know what more to say...

We just don't fucking give a shit! (both laugh).



Let's go to the...

LEBOWSKI BAR

The Reykjavik venue that rocks!

From the entrepreneurs that brought you Café Oliver and Vegamot, comes Lebowski Bar. You can take a quick guess where the name and inspiration comes from and even if you didn't like the infamous 1998 movie we are certain you will love this bar.

Just walking in to this retro American bar puts a smile on your face and the mood is very 1960's. You can hang out at the old fashioned porch and imagine you are in a real action movie. They don't make bars like these anymore ... oh wait they do, this one! Four big screens adorn the walls, so it's also a great place to hang out when there are big events and sporting highlights to be seen. And there's also an "outside" area decorated in a zappy Miami-sunshine yellow that will cheer even the dullest of days.

DINE AND JIVE

Lebowski Bar really captures the diner style with cosy booths and a fabulous jukebox containing over 1,600 songs guaranteed to get those hips swaying. If that's not enough there's a DJ on every night of the week so you won't feel the pressure of selecting all the music by yourself.

The menus are the biggest in Iceland ... no literally! Their physical dimensions are huge! Doesn't everyone say that size really does matter? Try their amazing burgers, there's cheese, bacon, a béarnaise sauce option and succulent beef tenderloin. If that's not enough, choose from one of the 12 kinds of milkshakes to go with it. "Careful man, there's a beverage

here!" Jeffrey 'the Dude' Lebowski, the protagonist of the Coen brother's comedy, is renowned for his penchant for 'White Russians' – vodka based cocktails featuring coffee liqueurs and cream or milk. Lebowski Bar has taken this now-iconic drink to a new level, offering an astounding 18 varieties of White Russian, along with an extensive bar list.

BOWLING AT THE BAR

The real icing on the Lebowski cake, however, is the bar's genuine bowling lane – it's a classic. How many bars have a bowling lane? In Iceland, not many, unless you count the bars at actual bowling alleys that certainly don't have the cool vibe of Lebowski Bar. DJs and a bass player add to the music mix at weekends and there's room to dance. Check it out dudes, you're guaranteed a good time.

THE LEBOWSKI BAR

Laugavegur 20a, Tel: +354 552 2300

info@lebowskibar.is

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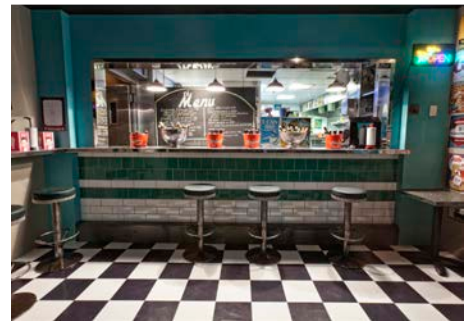
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Open 11:00 – 01:00 Sun-Thurs

and 11:00 – 04:00 Fri/Sat

lebowskibar.is



Lebowski Bar is my favorite place to hang out at. I love grabbing a good beer, a burger & topping it with a delicious milkshake.

Lebowski Bar plays oldies music which makes the vibe like none other in Reykjavik.

They also have happy hour from 4-7pm and who doesn't love that! Bottom line, Lebowski Bar is a great mainstream bar where you can meet fellow travelers and have a drink with locals. Practice the word 'SKÁL' (Cheers) ~ Inga,@TinyIceland

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