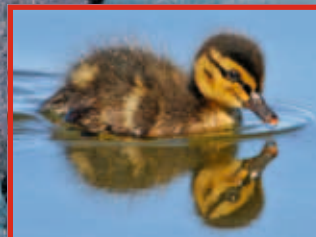


# OUTDOORS

– exploring the blue island

**Summer 2012**





# GLACIER WALKS

## AND OTHER EXCITING DAY TOURS



### GLACIER WALKS from SÓLHEIMAJÖKULL

DAILY DEPARTURES

IMG11 / IMG12											
Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
				09.30	09.30	09.30	09.30	09.30			
	10.00	10.00	10.00		10.00	10.00	10.00		10.00	10.00	
12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00
	14.00	14.00	14.00		13.00	13.00	13.00				
				15.30	15.30	15.30	15.30	15.30	14.00	14.00	

**IMG11:** Glacier Walk. 2 hours total.

**IMG12:** Glacier Walk. 3 - 4 hours total.

**Call to book now: +354 894 2956**

### GLACIER WALKS from SKAFTAFELL

DAILY DEPARTURES

IMG21 / IMG22 / IMG23 / IMG24 / IMG26									
Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.		
		09.00	09.00	08.30	08.30	09.00			
			09.00	09.00	09.00	09.00	09.00		
				09.30	09.30				
10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	10.00	
			10.30	10.30	10.30				
				11.00	11.00				
		13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00	13.00		
14.00	14.00	14.00	14.00	14.00	14.00	14.00	14.00	14.00	
			14.30	14.30	14.30				
				15.00	15.00				

**IMG21:** Glacier Walk. 2h30 total.

**IMG22:** Glacier Walk. 4 hours total.

**IMG23:** Glacier Expedition. 7 hours total.

**IMG24:** Ice Climbing. 4 hours total.

**IMG26:** Glacier Walk and Glacier Lagoon. 7 - 8 hours total.

**Call to book now: +354 894 2959**

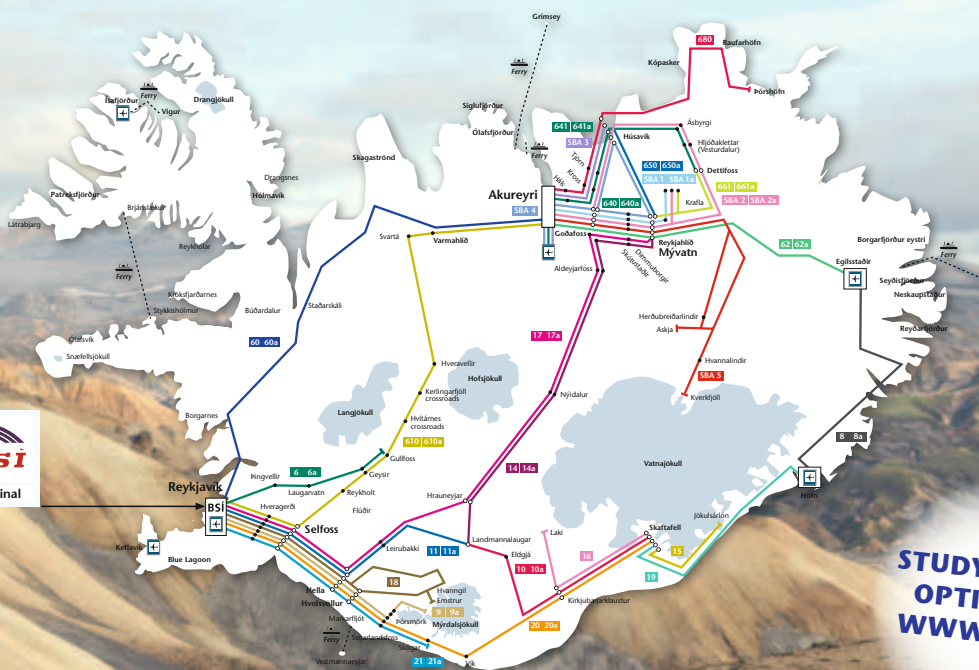
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– exploring the blue island

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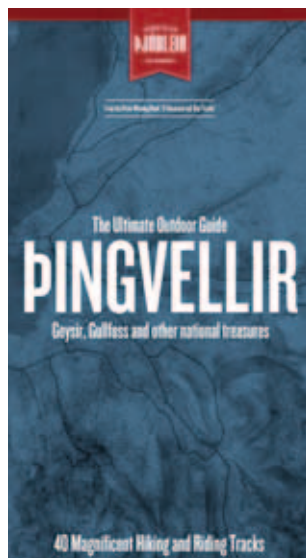
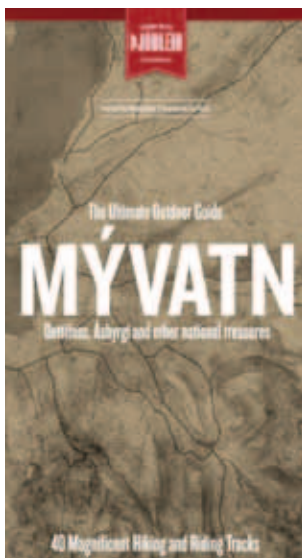
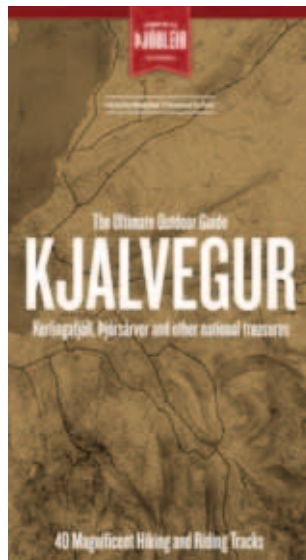
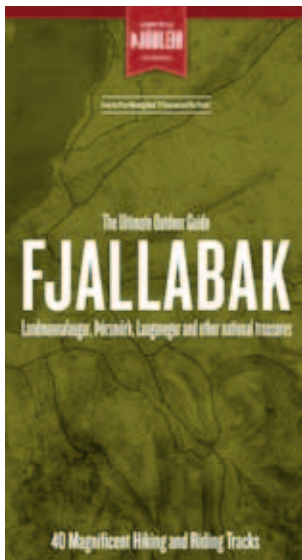
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# Reykjavik Excursions

## – A nice way to travel around Iceland



Travellers stopping at Frostastaðavatn.

Photos: Reykjavik Excursions.



One of Reykjavik Excursions' buses in Landmannalaugar.



"Our buses will be going to Þórsörk three times a day this summer", says Þórarinn Þór.

Reykjavik Excursions (RE) is a leading organizer of day tours in Iceland, operating one of the largest bus fleets in Iceland. "We offer daily tours and trips to a number of interesting places all around the country, as well as running the Flybus service between Reykjavik and the Keflavik airport", explains Þórarinn Þór, sales and marketing director of the company. "Our scheduled routes for the southern part of the country are connected to the bus system up north so people can travel by bus all around the country, whether you choose to circle the island or cross the highlands. We have, for example, scheduled stops in places such as Landmannalaugar, Þórsörk, Álfavötn, Emstrur, Skaftafell, Lakagigar craters and Jökulsárlón. Most of these tours are scheduled daily from the beginning of June till the first week of September."

Þórsörk is one of Iceland's most scenic spots, encircled by natural barriers such as mountains, glaciers and unbridged waters in all directions. It is only accessible by specially equipped vehicles with experienced drivers.

"Our buses will be going to Þórsörk three times a day this summer. Travellers can reserve accommodations in Húsadalur valley in cabins run as hostels." In addition RE offers a great variety of special activity tours such as super jeep tours to volcanic and geothermal areas that are within easy travel distance from Reykjavik and snowmobile tours on Langjökull and Mýrdalsjökull glaciers in South Iceland and many more.

This summer RE will also arrange for trips to Laugarvatn for those wanting to visit the new steam bath, Laugarvatn Fontana, that opened in June last year. In addition to numerous day tours Reykjavik Excursions have scheduled buses running to the Blue lagoon every hour to/from Reykjavik as well as many departures from Keflavik Airport to the Blue lagoon. Þórarinn Þór points out that in spite of the constant rise in the price of gasoline, the company has managed to keep down the fares for bus tours and the Flybus.

### Incentive trips to Iceland

The staff of Reykjavik Excursions is

experienced in organizing tours and events and has been developing a new subdivision dedicated to incentive tours. "The incentive tours division, Reykjavik Incentives, was founded three years ago when we spotted an opening in the market. Incentive tours were taking a dive at the beginning of the financial crisis. We saw that by putting more effort into the development, we would have a highly functional and efficient division by the time the market would start picking up again. Thankfully this seems to have paid off, and now we also have a large number of foreign clients. The service level for incentive trips is high, and they are somewhat on the more expensive end of the scale. We offer a quality product in our incentive trips and have access to places that have not been accessible to tourists before. When weather allows we travel by helicopters and offer a selection of SUVs. We try to spice things up a little bit!"

[www.re.is](http://www.re.is) – [www.ioyo.is](http://www.ioyo.is)

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# A GEOTHERMAL ENERGY EXHIBITION

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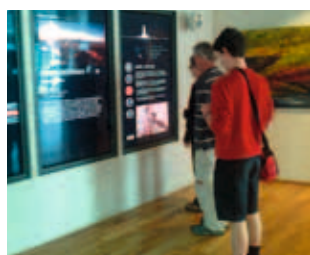
Stop by the Hellisheiði Geothermal Power Plant and see how they harness the geothermal energy.

Experienced guides are on-hand to provide informative presentations backed by multimedia shows about sustainable green energy as a global energy source and the geology of Iceland.

**Origin of the Geothermal energy – The production process – An illustrated guide to Hellisheiði – The earth core**

Exclusive collection of minerals and stones. An excellent hiking and outdoor destination - we provide information on hiking around the Hengill area. Enjoy our coffee shop and browse through a selection of educational material in the souvenirs corner.

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# Come Visit Us – A unique opportunity to experience energy production from renewable sources



Krafla power plant.



In the control room at the Fljótdalsstöð power plant.



Visitors at the Búrfellsstöð power plant can enjoy an interactive exhibition.

Photos: Landsvirkjun

Landsvirkjun is Iceland's largest generator of electricity and operates a total of 13 hydropower stations and two geothermal stations all over Iceland in five areas of operations.

This summer Landsvirkjun offers visitors an insight into renewable energy production and opens three of its power stations to the public.

## Burfell Power Station – Interactive Energy Exhibition

In all the corners of the world demand for renewable energy continues to rise. The exhibition at Burfell Power Station focuses on both the opportunities and limitations these types of energy sources present as well as providing a history of how these techniques have been used in Iceland over time.

Burfell Power Station is open every day 10:00-18:00 from 1st of June until 31st of August. After September 1st the exhibition is open by appointment only.

## Vegardur – Visitor Center in Fljótsdalur Power Station

The Visitor Center in Fljótsdalur Power Station is located in Vegardur in Fljótsdalur valley. The Visitor Center offers information on renewable energy production as well as the build up of the Karahnjúkar Hydropower Project, the largest of its kind in Iceland. Visitors have the option of taking a tour into the mountain and see the underground power station. Registration is in the Visitor Center. Vegardur visitor center is open every day from 10:00-17:00 from 1st of June until 31st of August.

## Krafla Geothermal Power Station – Visitor Center

Krafla Power Station is the largest geothermal station operated by Landsvirkjun and an interesting destination for travelers. The Visitor Center offers insight into the harnessing of geothermal energy and a walk through this volcanic area is an unforgettable experience.

The visitor center in Krafla Power station is open every day between 10:00-16:00 from 15th of June until 31st of August.

[www.landsvirkjun.com/visitors](http://www.landsvirkjun.com/visitors)



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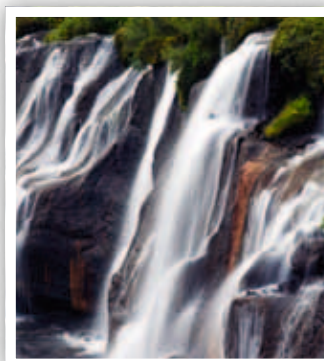
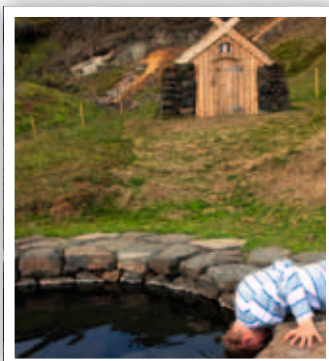
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# The West of Iceland

Close to the capital yet away from the bustle, the west of Iceland is a world where culture, nature and history complement each other, creating a unique Icelandic experience. This vast area consists of fjords, valleys, craters, glaciers and volcanoes. Travel through historical Borgarfjörður, home to most of the Icelandic sagas and their heroes, or venture close to the centre of the earth at Snæfellsjökull glacier on the Snæfellsnes Peninsula before crossing over to Dalir, the cradle of the great explorers Eiríkur the Red and his son Leifur the Lucky.

The short distances between popular destinations make it possible to enjoy the area at a comfortable pace, so hurry up and slow down in west Iceland.

## Useful links

West Iceland information and promotion centre	<a href="http://www.west.is">www.west.is</a>
Snorrastofa, culture and medieval centre	<a href="http://www.snorrastofa.is">www.snorrastofa.is</a>
Snæfellsjökull National Park	<a href="http://www.snafellsjokull.is">www.snafellsjokull.is</a>
Eiríksstaðir, Viking age living museum	<a href="http://www.eiriksstadir.is">www.eiriksstadir.is</a>
Centre for Puppet Arts in Borgarnes	<a href="http://www.bruduheimar.is">www.bruduheimar.is</a>

## Mountain Baula

Baula is a volcanic mountain of a very special pyramidal form. It measures 934 m in height. The mountain is a 3 million years old intrusion, consisting of liparit stone.

For people in good shape, it is well possible to hike up on the mountain from Bjarnardalur, road number 60. But its sides are very steep and there are big and loose stones on the way. On the other hand, the view of the top is very rewarding and you can write into a guestbook there.

**Location:** About 50 km from Borgarnes.  
Roadnumber 1

Source: [www.west.is](http://www.west.is)



Photo: Sigurður B. Sævarsson



Flatey has long been a favourite of both artists and scholars.

Photo: [www.west.is](http://www.west.is)

## Beautiful Flatey island

The beautifully preserved town on the island of Flatey bears witness to the prosperity and optimism prevalent in the area around 1900. The largest amongst a myriad of islands, it was formerly a centre for commerce in the Breiðafjörður bay; it also had a large fishing dock. The local church was built in 1926, and the paintings in the dome were created by Kristjana and Baltasar Samper, who sought inspiration in the local culture. Flatey has long been a favourite of both artists and scholars.

One of the oldest and most important manuscripts in Iceland, the Flateyjarbók, was written in the fourteenth century and preserved in Flatey during the Middle Ages. A replica of the book is on display in the country's oldest library, built in 1864. The island has a hotel, guesthouse, and a restaurant, with daily ferry trips from Stykkishólmur on the Snæfellsnes peninsula and Brjánslægur in the Westfjords.



The seaside and the cliffs between Arnarstapi and Hellnar have been made a Natural Reserve.

Photo: [www.west.is](http://www.west.is)

## Arnarstapi

Arnarstapi was an important trading post in the past and had a much bigger population than it has now. Columnar basalt, ravines and grottoes surround the Arnarstapi pier. There is good anchorage for small boats.

There is quite a large arctic tern colony in the village itself. A walk along the coastline is recommended to watch the birds and the magnificent lava formations. The seaside and the cliffs between Arnarstapi and Hellnar have been made a Natural Reserve in 1979.

A very interesting old path follows the coastline where you can see old landing places of fishermen, lots of birds, like the kittiwake, the Arctic tern and the fulmar and pass through a lavafield. If you take a guided tour, you will also hear a ghost story.

A sculpture of Bardur Snæfellsas by Ragnar Kjartansson stands by the beach at Arnarstapi.

**Location:** On the southern side of Snæfellsnes peninsula, 119 km from Borgarnes.

Roadnumber 574.

Source: [www.west.is](http://www.west.is)



# Stykkishólmur can accommodate most every need!



In Stykkishólmur you can visit the Library of Water and the Volcano Museum.

Photo: www.west.is

Contrasts in the Icelandic nature characterize the country and the most impressive elements are fire and ice. In Stykkishólmur you can visit two interesting museums that give an exciting account of these elements:

on one hand is the Library of Water, a permanent installation by the American artist Roni Horn, and on the other hand is the Volcano Museum, exhibiting possessions of the well-known volcanologist Haraldur

Sigurðsson, who has studied volcanoes all around the world for over forty years.

## Something for everyone

Other places of interest include the swimming pool with its Fresenius-certified water – which locals claim has regenerative powers – as well as hiking trails, one of the few convents in Iceland, and a popular golf course by the seashore, to name a few.

Those who wish to explore the sea can take the ferry, Baldur, across the Breiðafjörður bay, stopping in beautiful Flatey on the way, or enjoy a tour around the bay's innumerable islands.

Whether you are camping or wish to stay in a nice hotel – or even in a local's guest bedroom – Stykkishólmur can accommodate most every need!

[www.eldfjallasafn.is](http://www.eldfjallasafn.is)

[www.libraryofthewater.is](http://www.libraryofthewater.is)

**Sea Kayaking, Ísafjörður**  
Say "Howdy" to a curious seal, "Relax" to an Arctic Tern, "Can I keep you?" to an Arctic Fox and "VÓÓÓ" to a giant whale!

**River Rafting, Skagafjörður**  
A spectacular combination of deep canyon scenery and relentless heart-pumping whitewater, the East Glacial River has consistently been rated one of Europe's best rafting rivers!

**Caving, Mývatn**  
You'll feel like Alice in Wonderland when you enter Lofthellir cave which boasts the greatest natural ice sculptures in Iceland!

**Trekking, Víknaflóðir**  
Imposing and colorful mountains that meet the ocean creating deep fjords, littered with secluded alcoves along magnificent coastlines. And let's not forget the ELVES!

**Hiking, Snæfellsjökull glacier**  
Go on a "Journey to the Center of the Earth" and if you don't find it, well... then the views will make up for it.

**Snorkeling, Silfra**  
Enjoy the view and glide along the crystal clear water between the tectonic plates of N-America and Europe.

**Snowmobiling, Langjökull**  
Explore the vast snowfields of Langjökull glacier by a snowmobile amid the jaw-dropping scenery.

**Glacier walking, Skaftafell**  
When in Iceland... it's an absolute must to get a picture of yourself holding an ice axe on the biggest glacier in Europe! It's basic.

**Super Jeep Safari, Fjallabak**  
Have you driven across a glacial river, a mountain ridge, a glacier or a black lava sand beach? Don't try it on a Yaris! Super jeeps are made for a reason.



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## Glanni Waterfall



The Glanni Waterfall is 30 km north of Borganes.

Photo: www.west.is

Glanni is an impressive waterfall in Nordura River. Nearby is Paradise Hollow, a beautiful small oasis.

Just before coming to Bifrost village you take a right turn by the sign post Glanni and pass a 9-hole golf course named after the waterfall Glanni.

From the car park there is a marked path to a viewing point over the waterfall. A coffee shop is at the car park, open during summer months.

**Location:** 30 km north of Borganes on Ring road no. 1 just before Bifrost.

Source: www.west.is

## The Impressive Lóndrangar

Lóndrangar are two sharp cliffs on the Snæfellsnes peninsula and they are impressive to say the least. The higher one towers 75 metres into the air and was first ascended 1735. The other one, measuring 61 metres was however not climbed until 1938. A variety of birds nest in these cliffs and according to old stories, an Eagle's nest was once on top of the higher cliff. Although there is no harbour beneath the cliffs the men from the area nevertheless set out to sea from there for many years. The lighthouse by the cliffs was built in 1917.



Photo: Sigurður B. Sævarsson



Photo: www.west.is

## Lava Waterfalls

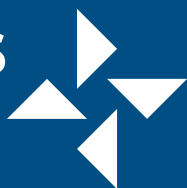
Hraunfossar - Lava Falls - are beautiful and unusual natural phenomena. Clear, cold springs of subterranean water seep through the lava and run as tiny waterfalls and rapids into the Hvita River.

Hraunfossar have been protected since 1987. There is a viewpoint at the car park offering an amazing view over the Lava Falls and Hvita River. A coffee shop at the waterfalls is open during the summer months.

**Location:** 55 km from Borganes, between Reykholt and Husafell. Roadnumber 518.

Source: www.west.is

**Veðurstofa  
Íslands**



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www.vedur.is



# West Iceland – Museums & Exhibitions



Statue of Snorri Sturluson (1206-1241) at Reykholt.

Photo: www.west.is



The Akranes Museum Centre.

Photo: www.west.is

**Reykholt** is an old culture and medieval centre situated where Snorri Sturluson lived in 1206-1241. In the research centre Snorrastofa preservation and promotion of the important history of the site is emphasised with exhibitions, a dynamic library, the visitors' centre and in various other ways.

At **Fossatun** in Borgarfjörður there is a Troll park where visitors can meet characters from the story the "Last Troll" by Steinar Berg, which takes place in Borgarfjörður.

**The Heritage Centre** in Grundarfjörður shows how modern history was made.

The **Akranes Museum Centre**, where twin-masted cutter Sigurfari sits in the yard, houses many museums, such as a specific sports museum and the Mineral Kingdom.

In Stykkisholmur, the **Volcano Museum** offers a unique exhibition of international art and objects related to volcanic eruptions and their impact.

**Brúduheimar** in Borgarnes is a centre for puppetry arts with a museum, exhibitions and seminars related to puppetry.

The history and culture of the area, and Iceland as a whole, is promoted in numerous

other locations such as the **Settlement Centre** in Borgarnes, where Egils Saga and the Settlement Saga are promoted, and in

**Eiríksstaðir in Haukadalur** which is a living museum.

Source: www.west.is

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## Exploring Eyjafjallajökull and Iceland's Beautiful South Coast

When Eyjafjallajökull erupted in April 2010, it was certainly newsworthy, as is any major volcanic event. But it wasn't until Eyjafjallajökull, also known simply as E15, began sending plumes of fine ash and smoke into the upper atmosphere, which caused mass air travel disruption in northwest Europe for six days, that it became famous. Or as the tens of thousands of stranded travelers would probably say "infamous," along with a few other choice expletives.

Fast forward to now and Eyjafjallajökull, located on Iceland's beautiful south coast, has become a highly popular tourist destination. And for a good reason, it is not often that everyday travelers get to experience, up-close and personal, a rock-star volcano. Today the craters and their surroundings are still steaming and the effects of the eruption

are readily visible on and around the volcano. Making it a unique and exciting destination to visit. When it comes to exploring and experiencing Eyjafjallajökull and the stunning areas that surround it, Iceland tourists have numerous tour options. The following Eyjafjallajökull and south coast tour options are presented by Icelandic Mountain Guides and Iceland Rovers, sister companies and two of the most trusted tour operators in Iceland:

### Hiking Tours & Glacier Walks with Icelandic Mountain Guides

Hiking tours on Eyjafjallajökull and the Fimmvörðuháls pass allow you to see and experience the craters Magni and Móði. These craters lie on the Fimmvörðuháls path and were the first to erupt in the 2010 event. The fresh lava fields are still steaming under the

surface and the heat of the lava can still be felt. Both hikes are rated as strenuous (but rewarding), so make sure you are capable and well prepared if you choose to join one of these tours. Rest assured that you'll be in safe hands with the well-trained and competent guides at Icelandic Mountain Guides.

The Eyjafjallajökull hike offers a unique chance to see, first-hand, the aftermath of the eruption on the glacier and the environment around it, as well as the many stunning views that this mountain is known for. This is a challenging, full-day hike (8-10 hrs) that combines mountaineering, hiking and sightseeing.

The Fimmvörðuháls Volcano Hike takes you up on Fimmvörðuháls pass right to Iceland's most recent lava. This is where the





Photos: Icelandic Mountain Guides (IMG)



Eyjafjallajökull eruption started, and is a real “hot spot” of exciting geological features and spectacular views. From this location you’ll enjoy a magnificent view of the **Pórsmörk** glacier valley, with its glacier tongues descending from Mýrdalsjökull and the black sandy beaches of the south coast beyond. This amazing and memorable tour can be done as a day tour from Skógar or as an overnight tour from Pórsmörk.

While in the south coast of Iceland, you won’t want to miss the Glacier Walks offered by Icelandic Mountain Guides on the amazing Sólheimajökull Glacier. These Glacier Walks are easy and accessible to everyone and the year-round daily departures make them the most popular activity in the area. Icelandic Mountain Guides operates information and sales offices in Skógar (S. Iceland) and Skaftafell National Park (SE Iceland) during the summer months. Don’t hesitate to stop by for additional information on the area and to book a tour.

### Super Jeep Tours with Iceland Rovers

For those seeking a less strenuous adventure, consider one of the most popular Super Jeep Tours offered by Iceland Rovers from Reykjavík or from Skógar up to the Fimmvörðuháls pass. The tour includes a fun off-road ride up to the pass, and a 3-hour (combined) walk from the jeep to the craters and back. Another popular Super Jeep Tour option takes you into Pórsmörk Glacier Valley where you can also take a closer look at the aftermath of the eruption as well as its beautiful scenery and unique geology.

These are just some of the activities available in this beautiful region of Iceland. But the options are almost endless, especially during the summer. So make sure to plan ahead. On behalf of Icelandic Mountain Guides and Iceland Rovers, we wish you a safe and pleasant journey in Iceland.

# Five new and exciting maps on hiking and horse-riding routes

Sögur Publishing House has recently issued five new and exciting maps on hiking and horse-riding routes. Available in Icelandic and in English, the maps come in plastic folders, convenient whether you are walking or horse-riding. Each map offers around 40 different routes. Features include enhanced contour lines (20 metres), more accurate ratio (1:100,000), historic references and picturesque descriptions that capture the landscape. The new maps feature the following areas:



## Fjallabak

An area where many of Iceland's most beautiful natural spots can be found, sheltered by steep glaciers and rugged volcanoes. These are places like Landmannalaugar, Þórsmörk and the popular hiking trail of „Laugavegur“ to name a few. In this area, rare rock formations are found in an array of colours; white, red, yellow, black and even pink.



## Kjalvegur

The diversity of Iceland's nature summed up in peace and quiet on a remote highland road. Among places of natural beauty en route are Kerlingarfjöll, Þjórsárver and Hveravellir to name a few.



## Snæfellsnes

For centuries the Snæfellsjökull glacier has been an attraction for travellers seeking the experience of the mystical powers apparently oozing from the glacier. Snæfellsjökull glacier, Löngufjörur beach and Búðahraun lava field combine to create unique surroundings for travellers.



## Mývatn

The tranquility at the breathtakingly beautiful lake Mývatn poses a stark contrast to the awesome volcanic powers that shaped the area thousands of years ago. Numerous bird species nest in the 40 small islands that dot the lake. More duck species nest in and around lake Mývatn than anywhere else. Dettifoss, reputedly Europe's most powerful waterfall, and the hauntingly beautiful Ásbyrgi and Dimmuborgir are not to be missed.



## Þingvellir

Iceland's holiest and most beautiful area. Various scenic routes take you from Þingvellir to the South and West of Iceland, including Geysir, Gullfoss and many others.



# Timesless woolen garments from Handprjónasambandið



Tourist often buy Icelandic woolen yarn and „lopi“ to knit their own garments.

The Handknitting Association of Iceland – Handprjónasambandið – runs two shops in Reykjavík, one at Skólavörðustígur 19 and the other at Laugavegur 64. A wide variety of woolen goods can be found at the Skólavörðustígur shop while it also offers yarn and „lopi“ for knitting. Customers can also buy pattern-books, knitting pins, buttons and zippers. At the Laugavegur store on the other hand, the emphasis is on souvenirs and ready made garments.

The products available at the Skólavörðustígur shop are all knitted locally from Icelandic wool. Most come in original woolen colours but there are also many other colour varieties on offer. Among the woolen garments for sale is a variety of knitted sweaters with traditional patterns, also available in childrens sizes. At the store, customers will find whole, buttoned and zipped sweaters along with hats and mittens.

## Admire the craftsmanship

Bryndis Eiríksdóttir, the manager of the Handknitting Association of Iceland, says most tourists come to buy knitted sweaters and want to make sure they are produced locally. „Customers love our products. They find them beautiful and admire the craftsmanship. I’ve even heard some of our customers describe the shop as true woolen heaven as they see so many sweaters that they can spend hours browsing through our range.“



The garments sold in the shop at Skólavörðustígur are all knitted locally from Icelandic wool.

As previously noted, the traditional woolen colours are the most popular and Bryndis says that fashion trends hardly affect the demand at all. „The sweaters are so traditional in their own right that you can hardly realize whether a sweater is brand new or a 10-12 years old garment unless it is visibly worn. As such, Icelandic woolen sweaters are timeless.“

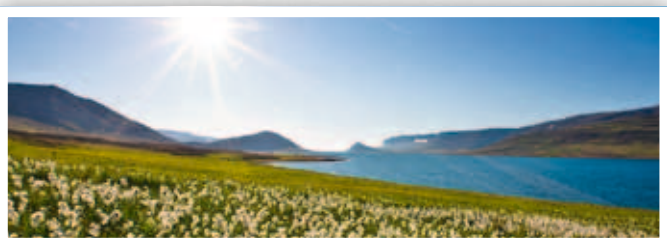
## Hats and mittens

There’s a lot more than sweaters at the Skólavörðustígur shop. Customers will also

find woolen hats and mittens that match the sweaters. Many tourists buy Icelandic woolen yarn and „lopi“ to knit their own garments. „We often get great knitting enthusiasts that come to buy our „lopi“ while also checking out the new patterns on offer since their last visit,“ says Bryndis.

[www.handknit.is](http://www.handknit.is)









# The Westfjords

Looking like an enormous claw stretching out to sea, the Westfjords are known for sheer sea cliffs, some rising to a height of over 440 metres, and long, narrow fjords. A slender strip of land about 8 km wide connects the southernmost area with the rest of the country.

This part of Iceland is geographically rugged, a place where survival has always been uncertain, which explains its sparse population. The entire region comprises only about 8% of Iceland's land mass, while its ruggedly beautiful and meandering shoreline makes up about 35% of the country's coast.

Fishing villages have grown and prospered in the fjords closest to the rich fishing grounds, while other parts are virtually untouched. The northwest tip of the Westfjords is Hornstrandir, a now uninhabited 600-km<sup>2</sup> nature reserve of inspired natural beauty and undisturbed wildlife where nature lives in peace with itself.

For holiday travellers looking for something special, something unique, these enormous natural spaces of incredible landscapes and seascapes heighten the senses. It is truly a privilege to experience such splendour.

Boasting a unique culture and atmosphere, the locals are proud to welcome guests to this remarkable area.

## Useful links

Official travel guide for the area	<a href="http://www.westfjords.is">www.westfjords.is</a>
Hólmavík tourist info	<a href="http://www.holmavik.is/info">www.holmavik.is/info</a>
West Tours	<a href="http://www.vesturferdir.is">www.vesturferdir.is</a>
The Gísla Saga Project	<a href="http://www.westvikings.info">www.westvikings.info</a>
An exciting water project	<a href="http://www.vatnavinir.is">www.vatnavinir.is</a>
Museum of Icelandic Sorcery and Witchcraft	<a href="http://www.galdrasyning.is">www.galdrasyning.is</a>

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# Ísafjörður



Ísafjörður hosts an impressive array of events, many of which are world famous. Photo: Ágúst Atlason, gusti.is

Ísafjörður is an attraction in itself – “a cosmopolitan oasis”, according to the Lonely Planet guidebook. Take their word for it. Ísafjörður is the tourist hub of the Westfjords, the place where many a tourist stocks up and takes one last look at the map before venturing into a trek in the Hornstrandir wilderness.

Gourmands have a choice of restaurants. The hotel in town has a seasonal variety of local delicacies such as puffin and whale, while the celebrated restaurant Tjörúhúsið at

the maritime museum is all about fish. There is no menu; the waiter just informs guests of the fish on offer, depending on what the fishermen caught earlier in the day.

Ísafjörður also hosts an impressive array of events, many of which are world famous. Take the Aldrei fór ég suður music festival, held at Easter, and the European Championship in Swamp Soccer, held in early August. In the latter, a few hundred mad and glad people come together for a muddy competition in dirty tricks.



Photo: Ágúst Atlason, gusti.is

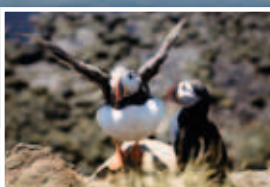
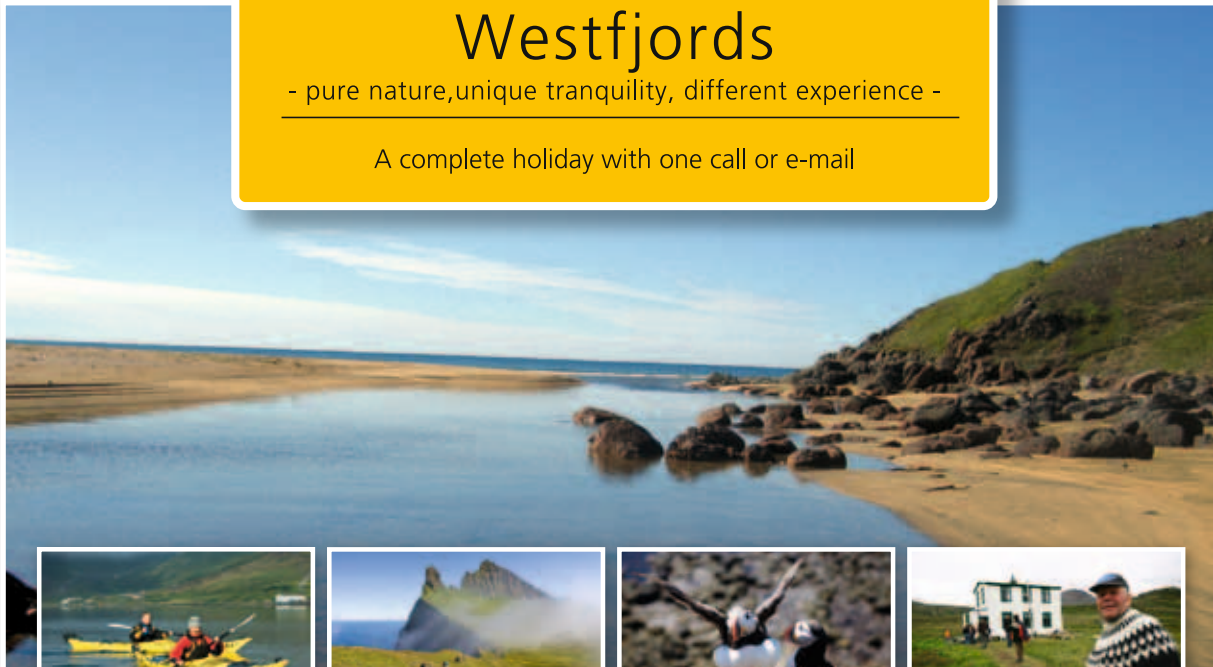
## Drangaskörð – A Mysterious Place

Drangaskörð is one of the more unique natural phenomenon in Iceland, situated north of Drangavík in Strandir. A sharp mountain ridge going into the ocean. The tip at the front is called Göltur and the pass next to it is called Litlaskarð. The next pass is called Signýjargötuskarð where a popular route once went through.

## Westfjords

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# How to spend 5 days in Westfjords?



Djúpavík on Ströndir.

Photo: Ágúst Atlason, gusti.is

This is a recommendation of a five-day tour around the Westfjords. It is intended as a part of a tour around Iceland, and assumes you are touring clockwise around the island in a car.

## Day 1

Start the day somewhere in West Iceland or even Reykjavík. Driving through region Dalir, stop at Reykhólar. Stay at or near Látrabjarg.

## Day 2

In the morning, check out Látrabjarg cliffs and Rauðisandur. Now change direction and head towards Ísafjörður, stopping at least at Dynjandi waterfall. Stay in Ísafjörður.

## Day 3

Today, pick from the smorgasbord of tours available in the Ísafjörður area. Tours to bird island Vigur and day tours to Hornstrandir nature reserve are the ones to check out first. Stay another night in Ísafjörður.

## Day 4

Before heading south, finish up your checklist of things to do around Ísafjörður. Sleep in Heydalur or Reykjanes or near Hólmavík.

## Day 5

In the morning, dive into centuries past when sorcery was common, and witches were burned for allegedly casting spells on their neighbours at Hólmavík's Museum of Sorcery and Witchcraft. After lunch, head down south to continue your tour around the island. Welcome back!

Source: [www.westfjords.is](http://www.westfjords.is)

## Dynjandi Waterfall

From Dynjandisheiði heath in the west the great waterfall of Dynjandi tumbles. One of the most spectacular waterfalls in the country. It falls off the edge of a mountain some 100 metres down. Actually, it is a series of waterfalls, beginning with the most awesome, Fjallfoss, 30 metres wide at the top and 60 metres at the bottom. Then smaller waterfalls follow, Hundafoss, Strokkur, Göngumannafoos and Hrísvaðsfoss. Finally the last waterfall, Sjóarfoos carries the water that started falling hundred metres above, into the ocean.



Photo: Ágúst Atlason, gusti.is





Photo: Ágúst Atlason, gusti.is

## Vigur island



In Vigur you find the smallest post office in Iceland, as well as the only windmill and beautifully renewed houses.

Photo: Ágúst Atlason, gusti.is

## The Charm of Hornstrandir

Hornstrandir have, in the last few decades, become one of the most popular places in Iceland for outdoor activities. The last farm in the area was abandoned just before 1950 and for a long time very few people made the arduous trip up there. This has changed dramatically in the last few years. A very popular way to visit Hornstrandir is by taking a boat from Norðurfjörður to Hornbjargsviti and walk from there to Hornvík, Hlöðuvík and onwards north, to Hesteyri for example. Others take a boat trip from Ísafjörður or Bolungarvík to Aðalvík, and walk from there to Hesteyri. The opportunities are really endless and good service for tourists can be found in several places, at Hornbjargsviti, for example.

Vigur is an island in fjord Ísafjardardjup. To get to Vigur, there is a daily boat tour from Ísafjörður.

Puffins, eiders, guillemots and arctic terns are this island's magnets, and they are all abundant. Indeed, as the puffins, which nest in burrows, have dug through much of the island's soil, travellers have to follow a certain path to avoid falling into one. This small bird, by some dubbed the penguin of the north, is a clumsy flier but impresses visitors by artfully stacking its beak full of sand eel or small fish, carrying it home to its hungry chicks. Being the opposite of the

hospitable humans that live on the island, the Arctic terns fight to keep intruders away. Luckily, a stick held above the head does the trick. Eiders and humans share a mutual beneficence; eiders get protection by nesting in close vicinity of the people, who collect the precious down from the eider nests. One of the every day event is when locals feed a group of orphan eider chicks.

Since an end was put to milk production on Vigur island, the inhabitants spend much of the winter preparing the eider down, collected over the summer, for export.

Source: www.westfjords.is

## Látrabjarg cliffs



Látrabjarg is thus deservedly the most visited tourist attraction in the Westfjords. Photo: Ágúst Atlason, gusti.is

The cliff to end all cliffs, Látrabjarg is home to birds in unfathomable numbers. This

westernmost point of Iceland (and of Europe if the Azores are not counted) is really a line

of several cliffs, 14 kilometres long and up to 441 m high. And it's as steep as it gets, dizzyingly so. Safe from foxes, the birds are fearless, and they provide stunning photographic opportunities from close range – bird photography for dummies, you might say. The puffins are particularly tame and frequent the grassy, higher part of the cliffs. But look out: the edges are fragile and loose and the fall is far.

Látrabjarg is thus deservedly the most visited tourist attraction in the Westfjords. The cliffs are easily accessible by car and when you're there, a walk along the cliffs awaits. The whirling sensation will not fade, and neither will the memories.

# West Tours

## – Adventures in Nature

The Westfjords. Where ancient lore tells of magic and stories of ghosts are still told to this day. The west is somewhat like a fairy tale. It has tall mountains, it is rural, and the driftwood lines the coast like a memorial of a long journey across the ocean.

Lonely Planet recommends a trip to the Westfjords and yet, for many Icelanders, the West fjords are less explored than other parts of the country. For tourists, the region is a little bit other-worldly.

### Walking, cycling, sailing

West Tours, with offices in the town of Ísafjörður, offer a diverse selection of tours around the Westfjords. Nancy Bechtloff, manager of West Tours, says that although nature is a big draw for tourists, the many activities available and the hospitality of the people are also big factors in getting people to make the journey.

This year, the company will offer activities and accommodation throughout the whole of the Westfjords. Day trips, longer trips and specially tailored trips are on offer.

“We run a bike rental at Þingeyri, ATV adventure trips from Breiðuvík, sailing trips to Grímsey á Ströndum island, hiking trips on the sand of Rauðisandur, whale-watching trips on a RIB boat from Ísafjörður, Sea angling trips in the northern parts of the Westfjords and and from the town of Bíldudalur, horse riding trips in Dýrafjörður and Mjóafjörður and moped and bike rental in Ísafjörður to name a few,” Nancy says.

### Vigur, Hesteyri and Hornstrandir

According to Nancy, the most popular trips have always been to the island of Vigur and to Hesteyri as well as hiking trips to Hornstrandir, day trips as well as longer journeys lasting four days. Vigur is the second largest island in the Ísafjarðardjúp sea, with the largest colony of eider birds in Iceland. Also, some 80 thousand puffins stay there over the summer.



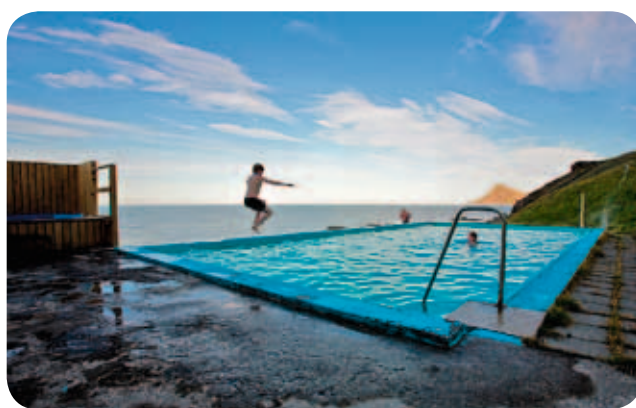
Nancy Bechtloff, manager.

Hesteyri is a small village that was deserted in the middle of last century but some of the houses are used as summer cottages. It is very interesting to walk around the area where generations of the past used to live and work.

Hornstrandir is the northernmost part of the Westfjords. With three towering cliffs teeming with birdlife, it is a very interesting place to visit for hikers – and everybody else.

[www.vesturferdir.is](http://www.vesturferdir.is)





# 66°NORTH

## wins the SOA Awards 2012

The Scandinavian Outdoor Awards (SOA) is a venue for Scandinavian outdoor gear companies to introduce new designs and technologies in the outdoor activities field. It is very proudly announced that the Snæfell jacket from 66°NORTH was awarded first prize, as well as receiving the „Overall Winner“ title for the winter 2011-2012. The competition was extremely hard, as all the biggest outdoors brands in Scandinavia took part.

This is not the first time in this year that the Snæfell jacket receives the highest respect in the industry. In 2011, one of the largest and most respected design awards in Europe in the outdoors field, the ISPO Outdoor Awards, were awarded to the jacket. Thus, it is a great honor for 66°NORTH and its chief designer, Jan Davidsson, to receive this recognition.

These awards both show and prove that 66°NORTH can be compared against all the best known outdoors brands in the world, and even beyond that. The panel of judges said, in their discussion of the jacket, that „the jacket is very comfortable and breathes well. The cut of the hood is perfect, protecting the wearer's face against wind and weather without blocking eyesight. What appeals the most to the judges is that it is simple, clear-cut and not too over-thought. Snæfell is the perfect jacket for all seasons.“

Founded in 1926, 66°NORTH is one of Iceland's oldest manufacturing companies. For eighty-five years the company has dedicated itself to producing protective clothing for Icelanders on land and sea alike. For over forty years, 66°NORTH has proudly provided the Icelandic Search and Rescue teams with protective clothing. The ICE-SAR is the largest volunteer search and rescue team in the world. These are brave people who face all kinds of weather and situations. Whether there has been an avalanche or an earthquake, ICE-SAR volunteers brave the elements as long as needed in order to help others. They can testify to the quality and durability of 66°NORTH clothing.



Snæfell Jacket from 66°NORTH.



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# The Geothermal Energy Exhibition at the Hellisheiði Power Plant

Geology, technology, history, architecture and natural science. All this is covered at the exhibition at the Hellisheiði Power Plant. Visitors gain an insight into geothermal energy and the harnessing of it that Icelanders have become famous for. An art exhibition is also open to visitors as well as a coffee shop. The facilities are very well suited for meetings and conventions.

The Geothermal Energy Exhibition at the Hellisheiði Power Plant gives visitors an interactive insight into the harnessing of geothermal energy in Iceland. The exhibition is done in cooperation with Gagarín, a multimedia company. Guests can see how much power the plant is generating at any given time and if you step into the earthquake simulator you can get an impression of the larger earthquakes that have happened in Iceland through the ages. Last but not least, you can create your own earthquake! Also, the exhibition covers the the history of the surrounding area and folk tales connected to it. Everything is presented in various languages.

## Outdoor Paradise

"The Hellisheiði Power Plant is situated in beautiful surroundings and the area is outstanding for hikings trips of all difficulties," says Auður Björg Sigurjónsdóttir, one of the owners of Orkusýn. In her opinion, the diversity of the area is extraordinary and the hiking trips can range from two hours to two days. A map with hiking routs is available and the staff of Orkusýn will happily assist you and provide information about the area. "The place is rich in history as the old route between Reykjavík and Southern Iceland led through these parts," says Auður Björg Sigurjónsdóttir.





The area surrounding the Hellisheiði Power Plant is great for hiking trips of varied difficulty.

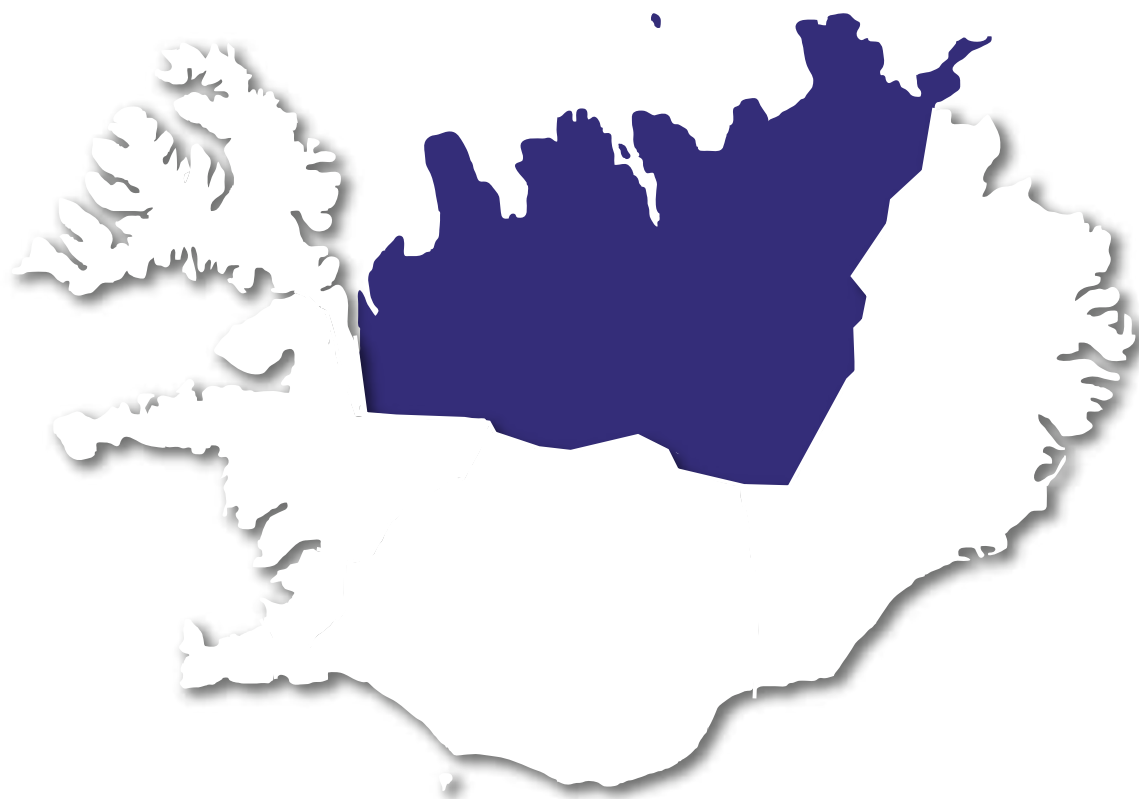


Auður Björg Sigurjónsdóttir and Helgi Pétursson are the owners of Orkusýn, the company that created the Geothermal Energy Exhibition.









# The North of Iceland

The north of Iceland is a true natural paradise, offering a multitude of adventurous activities, attracting people of all ages. From the country's largest geothermal fields to beautiful islands exuding folklore and one of Iceland's most popular skiing resorts, the north of Iceland offers a myriad of possibilities for outdoor recreation. Visit Europe's mightiest waterfall, Dettifoss, or the world-famous Mývatn area and the cliffs of Dimmuborgir comprise a wondrous world of their own. Akureyri is the centre of culture, education and leisure activities in north Iceland. With a population of about 17,200, the town is by far the largest outside the Reykjavik capital area. We also recommend going on organized excursions or outdoor activity tours taking you from town to town, out to the islands or into the highlands – allowing you the chance to see the magnificent landscape the north has to offer. Nearly every area has an outdoor swimming pool, and facilities for tourists are top-notch.

## Useful links

Official travel guide for the area	<a href="http://www.northiceland.is">www.northiceland.is</a>
Akureyri tourist guide	<a href="http://www.visitakureyri.is">www.visitakureyri.is</a>
Akureyri Art Museum	<a href="http://www.listasafn.akureyri.is">www.listasafn.akureyri.is</a>
Hof Cultural and Concert Centre	<a href="http://www.menningarhus.is">www.menningarhus.is</a>
Whale Museum in Húsavík	<a href="http://www.whalemuseum.is">www.whalemuseum.is</a>
Akureyri Museum	<a href="http://www.akmus.is">www.akmus.is</a>
Gásir – Medieval trading place	<a href="http://www.gasir.is">www.gasir.is</a>
Icelandic Folk and Outsider Art Museum	<a href="http://www.safnasafnid.is">www.safnasafnid.is</a>
Aviation Museum	<a href="http://www.flugasfn.is">www.flugasfn.is</a>

## River Rafting in the North



Why not try out river rafting for yourself?

Anyone seeking excitement will find river rafting down Jökulsá Vestari or Jökulsá Austari ideal. Trips on these two adventurous glacial rivers are extremely popular, since the streams run through unique, spectacular canyons which tempt ever more people to try this fabulous experience.

While floating down these rivers, you will see plenty of impressive scenery and noteworthy locations. Why not try out river rafting for yourself, where the conditions are the best in Iceland? The excitement and the pretty nature of Skagafjörður is a wonderful mixture! Experienced Icelandic and foreign



Do you dare?

guides accompany the rafts, ensuring complete safety.

You are not likely to forget your time spent in the whitewater of any of these glacial rivers.

Source: [www.northiceland.is](http://www.northiceland.is)

## The farmstead Gauksmýri in Húnaþing – Hotel for lovers of horses and nature



At Gauksmyri you can learn all about the Icelandic horse.

Photo: [www.gauksmyri.is](http://www.gauksmyri.is)

The farmstead Gauksmýri in the west of Húnaþing offers holiday services with an emphasis on nature and horsemanship, offering accommodation, refreshments, and a variety of activities.

“We don’t see Gauksmýri as a hotel,

although we do offer the same standards and comforts as traditional hotels do”, say Jóhann Albertsson and Sigríður Lárusdóttir, the hosts at Gauksmýri. “We do emphasize the fact that Gauksmýri is first and foremost a working farm, that people are visiting a farmstead.

That’s the experience we want our guests to have.”

The Icelandic horse is definitely at the heart of Gauksmýri. Jóhann and Sigríður are horse breeders and offer rides, riding instruction, and a variety of information on horses. Throughout the summer there are organized riding trips four times a day, and all you need is to show up dressed comfortably for riding: helmets and horses will be provided. “We also offer horse exhibitions and introductions to the Icelandic horse, but those need to be ordered in advance.”

The surrounding area is a treasure trove of hiking paths, where travellers can see some of Iceland’s most beautiful nature. “It is well worth the visit to spend some time here, and as we say in Iceland, we always have a warm cup of coffee ready for visitors.”

[www.gauksmyri.is](http://www.gauksmyri.is)



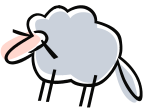
# Skagafjörður

- For people of all ages!



## Football

Play football in excellent football areas in Sauðárkrókur, Hofsós, Hólar and Varmahlíð.



## Playgrounds

Skagafjörður is dotted with fun playgrounds.



## Horseback Riding

Riding tours that suit your needs in Skagafjörður.



## Sandy Beaches

Borgarsandur beach by Sauðárkrókur has a lot of sand to play with.



## Bird Watching

Skagafjörður has fascinating bird-life.



## River Rafting

River rafting is very popular as it combines fun, excitement, and travelling through amazing landscapes.



## Jig Fishing

You can easily catch a fish by the pier – the harbour at Sauðárkrókur can lend you a life jacket.

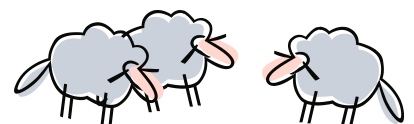


## Swimming Pools

and hot pots in Sauðárkrókur, Hofsós, Varmahlíð, Hólar, Bakkaflöt, Steinsstaðir or Sólgarðar.

## So much more

You can do so much more for entertainment and fun in Skagafjörður, for further information go to [www.visitskagafjordur.is](http://www.visitskagafjordur.is)



# Skagafjörður

– unique interplay of nature, history and culture



## Tourist Information Center in Varmahlid

The Tourist Information Center in Varmahlid is open all year around. There you can obtain maps, books of photographs and brochures.

At the center you can also obtain Icelandic handcrafts, souvenirs and woollen goods, made by Skagafjörður residents. Free access to the internet and free coffee.

Tel: +354 455-6161

Email: [info@skagafjordur.is](mailto:info@skagafjordur.is)





In Skagafjörður it is possible to enjoy both the rich cultural life and lifestyle. The district is an ideal place to enjoy Icelandic nature, horsemanship and activities and events for the whole family. Historical sites are many, including museums and exhibits.

There are few places where museums and exhibits have flourished as in Skagafjörður, which has a rich cultural heritage and an abundance of historical sites. The Skagafjörður Heritage Museum engages in exhibitions, conservation and research. In the old turf farmhouse at Glaumbær, the museum has for over half a century been showing visitors what 18th and 19th century life was like in rural Iceland. There are also numerous other institutions and exhibits which are interesting to visit, for example the

Icelandic Emigration Centre in Hofsós, the Víðimýrarkirkja turf church near the village of Varmahlíð, the Minjahúsið museum in Sauðárkrúkur, the Skagafjörður Transport Museum and the historical bishop's seat of Hólar in Hjaltadalur valley.

Skagafjörður's unique interplay of nature, history and culture makes it an exciting destination, offering a wide variety of experiences for your holiday. The heritage of stories occurring locally, such as the Saga of Grettir the Strong, the Saga of the Sturlungs and numerous folktales, in addition to the many cultural relics, will make your vacation fascinating and memorable.

[www.visitskagafjordur.is](http://www.visitskagafjordur.is)



## A Cathedral with Character



Photo: [www.northiceland.is](http://www.northiceland.is)

The cathedral at Hólar in the Hjaltadalur valley is one of the most picaresque churches in Iceland consecrated in 1763. Laurids de Thurah, the Danish main architect designed it and a young stonemasons apprentice was sent from Denmark to build it. It is the seventh church to be built at the site and the fifth cathedral. It houses many cultural treasures. The tower, separated from the church itself and built much later, or in 1950, was erected as a monument to Jón Arason, the last catholic bishop of Iceland.



Hveravelli is situated by Kjalvegur.

Photo: [www.northiceland.is](http://www.northiceland.is)

## Hveravellir

The "hub" of the Kjölur Route, is a geothermal area of fumaroles, and multicoloured hot pools. There are two mountain huts with kitchen facilities and a nice hot pool just outside the hut.

**Location:** 109 km from Blönduós.  
Roadnumber 35.

Source: [www.northiceland.is](http://www.northiceland.is)

# Welcome to Gauksmýri



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Gauksmýri 531 Hvanumstangi Sími: 451 2927 Fax: 451 3427 [gauksmyri@gauksmyri.is](mailto:gauksmyri@gauksmyri.is) [www.gauksmyri.is](http://www.gauksmyri.is)



# The Aviation Museum



The Icelandic Aviation Museum contains many types of aircrafts.

Photo: www.northiceland.is

The Icelandic Aviation Museum is located at Akureyri Airport in the north of Iceland.

Aviation and Akureyri have had a close

relationship since 1928 when the first scheduled passenger flight operated in Iceland arrived in Akureyri from Reykjavík via

Ísafjörður and Siglufjörður. The aircraft was a Junkers F.13 operated on lease to a newly formed Icelandic airline named Flugfélag Íslands (the second of four companies to bear that same name). The aircraft belonged to Deutsche Luft Hansa and the pilots, mechanics and operations manager were also supplied by the German airline.

Since first opening the Museum has annually held a „Flying Weekend“ on the last weekend in June. Included in the weekend's programme is the Icelandic National Aerobatics Competition as well as an array of displays and other activities.

**Location:** South of the Akureyri Airport. Roadnumber 821.

Source: www.northiceland.is



Photo: www.northiceland.is

## Gásir – A Trading Place in the Middle Ages

Gásir, situated 11 km north of Akureyri on the shore of Eyjafjörður, is a unique place. In no other place in Iceland is it possible to find so many antiquities from a trading post from the Middle Ages. Gásir was the main trading post in northern Iceland during the Middle Ages, and the place is mentioned many times in Old Icelandic Sagas from the 13th and 14th centuries. Archaeological digging in the area during the last six years has shown that it was a trading post up to the 16th century, possibly until trading started in Akureyri.

Source: www.gasir.is



To a soft duvet or in a sleeping bag. A variety of accommodation options.  
Filling the air with music. **Concerts on Sundays.**  
Tread lightly. **Beautiful hiking trails** through woods and heath.  
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Please your taste buds. **Restaurant Undir Byrðunni.**  
Spirit of the centuries, feeding the soul. **Historic place – archaeological relics.**  
Horses, fish, and tourism – our speciality. **Hólar University College.**  
For the eyes and soul – daily services. **Hólar Cathedral.**  
And so much more... **Hólar in Hjaltadalur.**

**Hólar Tourism Services, tel. 455 6333**  
**Hólar Cathedral**



Photos: Akureyri

# Akureyri

– a town of culture  
and education







Akureyri is situated in north-east Iceland, in one of the longest fjords in the country and is surrounded by mountains reaching 1000-1500 m. The Arctic Circle is only 60 km north of Akureyri but still the climate is mild, with summer temperatures up to 25°C and winter temperatures in average around 0°C.

Akureyri is the second largest urban area after the capital area of Reykjavík, with a population of about 18.000. Akureyri is the centre of trade and services in northern Iceland. It is also a town of culture and education, building on a firm foundation.

The town offers a wide range of activities and interesting places e.g. notable museums, the world's most northerly botanic garden, one of Iceland's most popular swimming facilities, 18-hole golf course, good hiking trails and free city bus. Our guests can choose between varied accommodation and excellent range of restaurants, some of which specialise in local food.

The town is also a good base for visiting many of Iceland's most beautiful natural wonders as waterfalls, volcanic areas and canyons as well as exciting activities as river rafting, hiking, fishing, whale watching and horse riding.

The islands Hrísey and Grimsey are now a part of the municipality of Akureyri. Both islands are ideal for bird watching. The atmosphere is calm and relaxing and a visit can be an unforgettable experience.



### Grimsey island – on the Arctic Circle

Grimsey island is on the Arctic Circle, far away in the north. It is the home of one hundred people – and one million seabirds. Courageous fishermen live there with their families. The island stands alone far out on the horizon, a blue cliff, surrounded by the wide Arctic Ocean. In Grimsey you will find one of the largest colonies of puffins in Iceland.

### The peaceful Hrísey island

Hrísey is a peaceful island in the middle of Eyjafjörður, it is the second largest island in Iceland. The island is a well known paradise for bird watchers and the most abundant of all birds on the island is the ptarmigan. About 40 species of bird nest on the island.

[www.akureyri.is](http://www.akureyri.is)



Hólstaður is a popular place to visit.

Photo: www.holar.is

"Hólar is a popular destination thanks to its many attractions, notably the beautiful nature and its important role in Iceland's history", says Ingibjörg Sigurðardóttir, chairman of the Hólar Tourism Services. "Hólar is surrounded by scenic mountains and stands on the edge of Hólaskógur forest. Apart from the nature we also have the Hóladómkirkja (Hólar Cathedral), Auðunarstofa (Auðun's house), a restaurant, swimming pool, and Nýibær, a traditional Icelandic turf house. The latest

## Visit Hólar and the new Icelandic Horse Centre

addition is the Icelandic Horse Centre, with an exhibition that displays the close collaboration between the Icelandic nation and its pony throughout the centuries."

"The exhibition is a lovely addition to what we have here at Hólar and has caused quite a lot of attention since its opening last summer. Even people who aren't that fond of horseback riding or interested in horses as such can enjoy it, as it gives a good insight into the living conditions in centuries past", says Ingibjörg. The exhibition is set in an old stable, which adds an air of authenticity. Also a part of the exhibition is Theódórsstofa, in memory of Theódór Arnbjörnsson, horse breeding expert, and a saddle workshop.

### Bishops and hikes

During the summer you can visit an exhibition at Hólar College showcasing the thirty-six bishops that sat in the Hólar Cathedral – twenty-three Catholics and thirteen Lutherans.

"We have the Hólahátíð festival in August, which is one of the summer highlights here, as well as several other cultural events in the church. You can also visit the old turf house, take a good hike in the Hólaskógur forest, and have a bite in

the local restaurant, Undir Byrðunni. The restaurant focuses on locally sourced foods and offers a variety of dishes, foal meat being one of its specialities.

One of the more unique dishes is the angelica soup, made from angelica grown in an old garden that used to belong to the bishopric. Also we have a variety of accommodation options: from apartments and cottages to the camping area at Hólaskógur forest."

[www.holar.is](http://www.holar.is)



## Welcome to Dalvík

### A Natural Paradise in Tröllaskagi (The Trollpeninsula)

For those wanting to experience nature first hand, Dalvík is a great place. Whale watching, bird watching from sea and land, angling and sea angling, golfing, horseback riding and a good swimming pool is just an example of what Dalvík can offer tourists. Several hiking trails are available, both for experienced hikers and those who prefer more relaxed routes. Mountain guides offer shorter and longer hikes.

One can also experience Icelandic culture through Hvoll Folk Museum, Birdland's Exhibition and Berg Cultural House. Berg is also an information centre.

The restaurants By the Sea and Gregor's Pub feed hungry travellers and the Coffee house in Berg cultural house takes care of the sweeter things. The Great Fish Day, 9.-12th of August, is a famous fish festival where on the 11th of August fish dishes can be tasted for free.

There are several options in accommodation such as a hotel, cabins and guest-houses.

**For further information visit**

[www.dalvikurbyggd.is/EN/information-in-English](http://www.dalvikurbyggd.is/EN/information-in-English)







# 2012

**Blues Festival in Ólafsfjörður**  
26.-30. June

**Folk Music Festival in  
Siglufjörður**  
4.-8. July

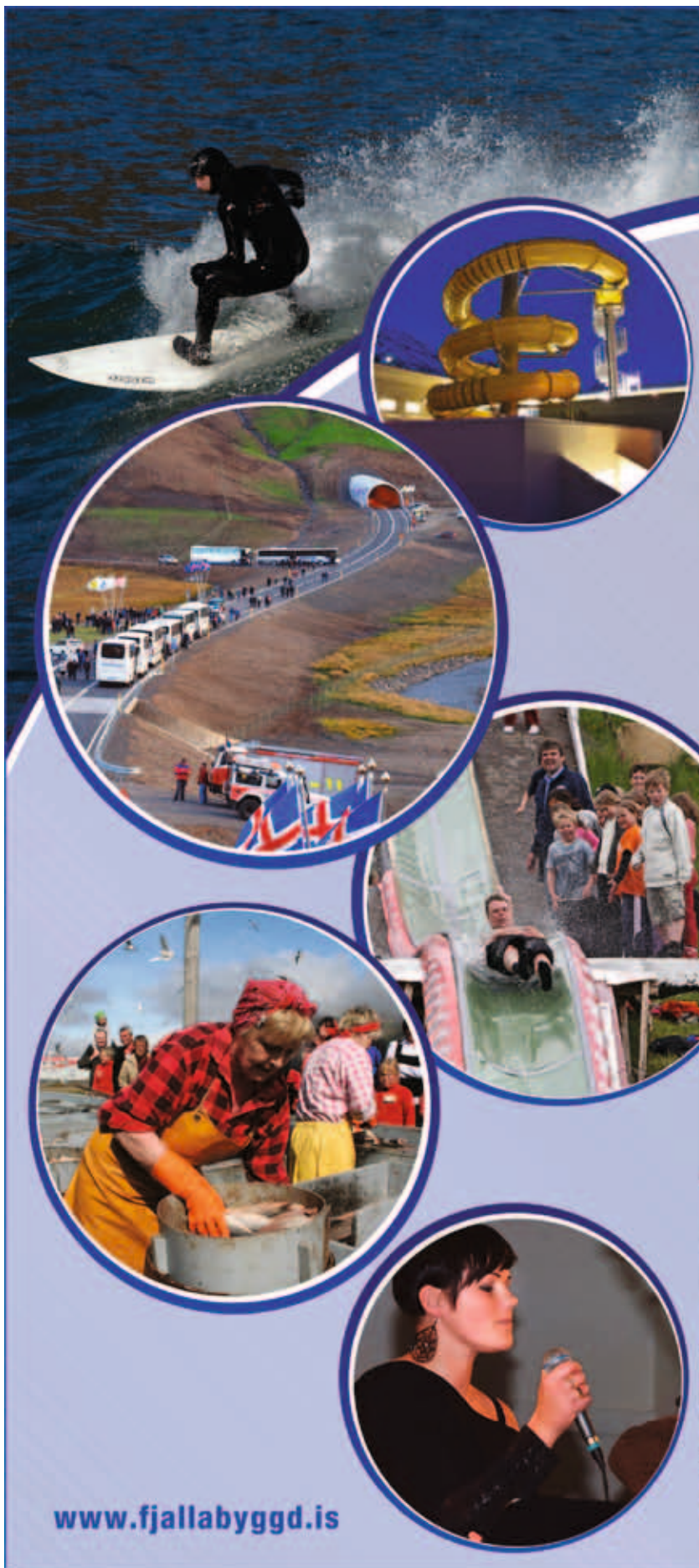
**Nikulásarmót in Ólafsfjörður**  
(Soccer tournament for  
younger children)  
13.-15. July

**Reitir in Siglufjörður**  
(International Collaborative  
of creative people)  
20.-31. July

**Herring Adventure  
in Siglufjörður**  
2.-6. August

**Berry Days in Ólafsfjörður**  
17.-19. August

[www.fjallabyggd.is](http://www.fjallabyggd.is)



# Diverse options in the Dalvík community

"The Great Fish Day is at the peak of tourist season this summer. It will be celebrated on August 11th with great events during the previous days, such as the famous Fish Soup Night and the Fish Day run. As usual, the final act will be the fireworks at the harbour, which is always quite unique," says Margrét Víkingsdóttir, public relations manager for the Dalvík community.

Berg cultural house is the centre for cultural activities in Dalvík, with concerts, exhibitions and more. It also hosts information centre, library and a great Café with local, homemade, baked goods. Berg is open every day, all year around. The classical



The sea of people and the fish are the main attractions on the Great Fish Day.

## HAFKALK

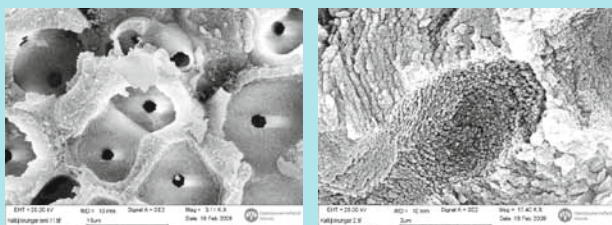
**Hafkalk** is natural, multimineral ingredient sourced from the clear waters of Arnarfjörður on the north west coast of Iceland. It improves bone and joint health.



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Nothing is added and clear vegetarian capsules are used.

**Hafkalk** offers a range of minerals from a single natural source. This makes it highly bioavailable and the human body easily absorbs the nutrients. These minerals work together and the overall health benefits are enhanced.



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Polar bear on display at the Heritage Museum Hvoll in Dalvík.

music festival Bergmál will be held during the week before the Great Fish Day, in addition to other concerts. "Among various recreational possibilities for tourists, one can mention the Hvoll Heritage Museum, the swimming pool and the horse rental at Hringsholt, which offers short and long riding tours around Svarfaðardalur," says Margrét. "We also have whale watching and sea angling companies operating in Dalvík and Hauganes, a golf course, and a laser tag venue. Last but not least, Sæfari Ferry sails between Dalvík and Grímsey. Visitors can also have experienced guides take them on hiking tours into the mountains of Troll peninsula. It is worth mentioning that there has been quite an increase in accommodation in the area, both in hotels and smaller lodging."



# Grimsey – Visit the Locals and the Hidden Folk

Grimsey is a small fishermen's island in the north of Iceland, home to around one hundred residents. It welcomes more and more tourists each year, both Icelandic and from abroad. You can visit the charming island by ferry from Dalvík or by airplane from Akureyri.

The island is above the Arctic Circle, and aside from its lovely nature you can also get



Grimsey is above the Arctic Circle.



## Art Without Discrimination at the Safnasafnið Museum

Safnasafnið is one of Iceland's most important art museums and the only one collecting folk and outsider art. At present it stores approximately 4100 works. The museum has an extensive exhibition area, a library and research facilities, as well as accommodation for tourists, visiting artists and scholars.

The museum presents its collection of folk and outsider art together with progressive modern art without discrimination - quality and sincerity being the only guidelines. In this way the museum has earned for itself a rather special place on the Icelandic art scene.

Every year 12-15 new exhibitions are on display in the museum, and along with paintings, drawings and sculptures, the collection also encompasses embroidery, models, souvenirs, books, dolls, toys and tools, thus presenting an interesting view on the various outlets for creativity and what inspires it.

[www.safnasafnid.is](http://www.safnasafnid.is)

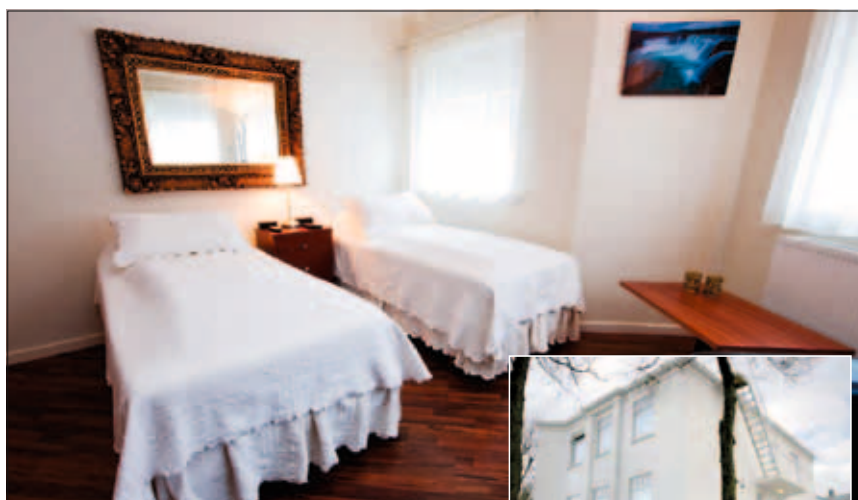
a variety of services from friendly locals: there are two guesthouses, a restaurant, a souvenir shop selling local handcrafts, and also a grocery store. The Grimsey locals also have a lovely indoor swimming pool.

The name of the island is literally Grímur's island - named after the farmer, Grímur, who lived in Grenivík and is believed to be the first human to visit the island in the twelfth century. His brother, Kolbeinn, was also lucky enough to have a namesake island: Kolbeinsey.

Interesting sites include the local church, built in 1867 and enlarged in 1932. The church's altarpiece was made by Arngrímur Gíslason in 1878, a copy of a work by Leonardo da Vinci.

Although the island only has about a hundred human inhabitants, it is said to also be home to a large number of hidden folk, or elves. Their church, Nónbrik, is in a large rock by the shoreline.

[www.grimsey.is](http://www.grimsey.is)



## Most welcome!

Hrafninn Guesthouse is situated in a beautiful house in downtown Akureyri. All rooms have private bathrooms, comfortable beds, 21" television and free wireless internet connection.



Guesthouse Hrafninn \ Brekkugata 4 \ 600 Akureyri \ Tel. +354 661 9050 \ [info@hrafninn.is](mailto:info@hrafninn.is)  
[www.hrafninn.is](http://www.hrafninn.is)

# Whale Watching – a Growing Industry



The best time to go whale watching is from June - August.



11 whale species can frequently be seen in Icelandic waters.

Photos: www.northiceland.is

Professional whale watching was established in Iceland in 1995 and is now one of the major tourist attractions in the country. In accordance to the distribution of the whales, all whale watching operators are located either in the west or north of the island.

The best time to go whale watching is from June - August, but trips are offered from April - October, depending on the location of the companies. Whale watching is available from Reykjavik year round.

With the industry steadily growing, The

Icelandic Whale Watching Association „Icewhale“ saw the need to regulate the behaviour on sea and established whale watching guidelines, to minimize the impact on the animals. However, to comply to this guideline is still voluntary for the operators because it has no legal force.

11 whale species can frequently be seen in Icelandic waters. Many of them belong to a group known as great whales with respects to their body size. The smallest of the great whales is the minke whale, which is also

considered to be the most abundant species, not only in Iceland but worldwide.

Several of these species are migratory. They travel south and spend the winter months in warmer waters to give birth, but will return to the North Atlantic to feed during the summertime.

Source: www.whalemuseum.is

## Welcome to Hrisey!

### The House of Shark Jörundur



In the oldest house on the Island a museum has been set up where you can learn about the history of shark fishing in Iceland.

It also houses the Tourist information which is open 1pm to 5 pm from the start of June until the end of August.

**Further information: E-mail: [hrisey@hrisey.net](mailto:hrisey@hrisey.net)**

**Tel. +354 695 0077 - [www.hrisey.net](http://www.hrisey.net)**



Photo: www.northiceland.is

### Nonni's House Museum

Nonni's house was the childhood home of the writer and Jesuit priest Jón Sveinsson, „Nonni“, who wrote books for children. Nonni's house is among Akureyri's oldest houses, built in 1850. Today it is a memorial museum where many items connected with Nonni and the Nonni books, in such diverse languages as Japanese and Esperanto are kept. Books by Jón Sveinsson in several languages are sold in the museum.

**Location:** In Akureyri. Roadnumber 1.

Source: www.northiceland.is





[www.visitakureyri.is](http://www.visitakureyri.is)



THE TOWN OF  
**Akureyri**  
[www.akureyri.is](http://www.akureyri.is)



Hof Cultural and Conference Center | 600 Akureyri | ☎ 450 1050 | [info@visitakureyri.is](mailto:info@visitakureyri.is)

# Fjallabyggð

## – The Museums, the Herring and the Festivals

The municipality of Fjallabyggð is in fact two towns in the north of Iceland: Ólafsfjörður and Siglufjörður. The towns are connected by a new tunnel.

Tourists can find many things for amusement in both places. A bird museum in Ólafsfjörður showcases must of the bird species found in Iceland. In addition, plants and eggs are on display as well as some other stuffed animals. A polar bear for example, rare fish species from the lake of Ólafsfjörður, a fox, a billy goat and crabs.

### The Herring and the museums

Siglufjörður was a vibrant place early last century when boats fishing for herring filled the harbour and the town was full of workers. The town was teeming with life. Although the herring is long gone these glory days are still evident wherever you look.

Today you can get a taste of the herring adventure by visiting the Herring Era museum in Siglufjörður. The museum consists of three houses and it is the largest maritime museum in Iceland and was awarded the Icelandic museum award in 2000 and the European museum award, or the Michletti awards in 2004.

Another museum in Siglufjörður is the Folk Music Centre where you can hear old folk songs and look at old instruments. Yet another museum opened its doors in the town in 2010, the Icelandic Poem Centre where Icelandic poetry is in the spotlight and many rare poetry books are on display.

### The Music and the Nature

This summer, many festivals will be held in Fjallabyggð. For example, A festival at the Herring Era Museum in Siglufjörður and a

blues festival, The Blue North Music Festival, starts at the end of June in Ólafsfjörður. During the first weekend of July, a folk music festival will be held in Siglufjörður and on the first weekend of August the Herring Adventure Festival takes place. This weekend is the most popular holiday weekend in Iceland and the town will be brimming with activities. Later in August the town of Ólafsfjörður will house a festival of classical music.

Many exciting hiking trails are around the municipality and most visitors should find something that fits their ability and fitness. Some of the trails are ancient paths used by traveling Icelanders for centuries.

[www.fjallabyggd.is](http://www.fjallabyggd.is)



This summer, many festivals will be held in Fjallabyggð.



# Hof – The Northern Temple of Culture

Following the grand opening of Hof Cultural and Conference Centre in Akureyri last autumn, the building has come alive with artistic energy and activities. During the summer months, operations in the house will change somewhat, although several performances are scheduled on the stage, such as the musical Hair. Performances by several young musicians will also bring life to the house throughout the summer months, both indoors and out.

Apart from its cultural activities, Hof is home to the local Tourist Information Centre, the design boutique Hrírn, and the restaurant 1862 Nordic Bistro. During the summer there will also be guided tours through the beautiful new building. Further information can be found at the tourist centre.

[www.menningarhus.is](http://www.menningarhus.is)



Hof – Cultural and Conference Centre.

Photo: Jóhann Ólafur Halldórsson.

## Lake Myvatn

Mývatn is the 4th largest lake in Iceland, 37 km<sup>2</sup> in area. Its shores are indented with many coves and inlets and its surface is dotted with around 50 small islets and skerries. Midges (Chironomidae) are abundant and the ubiquitous swarms of these tiny flies give the Lake its name.

The lake itself is very shallow, and the rays of the sun reach the lake bed over its entire surface. The ecology of the lake area is extremely diverse and interesting; one important characteristic of Mývatn, being the prolific growth and abundance of freshwater seaweed. On the bed of the lake are great quantities of diatoms, while, nearer the surface, Mývatn's famous arctic char weave their way between aquatic plants and little islets topped with fertile vegetation.

On and around the lake there is a teeming and varied birdlife, and Mývatn is the habitat of many kinds of lake and marsh birds. However, much of Mývatn's fame is due to the fact that, during summer, there are more different species of duck gathered on and around the lake than anywhere else in the world. Mývatn is a legally protected conservation area and appears on the register of internationally important wetlands, along with the Laxá river which flows out of the lake.

**Location:** Mývatn Area. Roadnumber 1.

Source: [www.northiceland.is](http://www.northiceland.is)



Mývatn is a legally protected conservation area and appears on the register of internationally important wetlands.

Photo: [www.northiceland.is](http://www.northiceland.is)

## Spend a night by the Arctic Circle

Visit beautiful Grímsey island and spend the night by the Arctic Circle.



**Básar Guesthouse**  
offer excellent  
accommodation.

*The people of Grímsey welcome you!*

[www.gistiheimilidbasar.is](http://www.gistiheimilidbasar.is)

# Varma: Where the Icelandic wool rules



The quality of the Icelandic wool is renowned the world over. Varma is one of the local companies that produce woolen goods that can be bought in numerous stores around Iceland; tourist and speciality shops as well as some supermarkets. Varma puts its emphasis on the Icelandic wool in its products. The brand, Varma - the warmth of Iceland, refers to the qualities of the wool that keep those who wear woolen clothes warm.

Varma produces an extensive range of goods; socks, hats, mittens, hairbands and shawls to name a few items. Garments, such as capes, sweaters and coats, knitted from Icelandic wool, feature patterns from various local designers. The production of woolen blankets is currently in the pipelines. While Varma puts its emphasis on Icelandic wool the company also produces goods from imported wool; socks from Angora wool to name just one product.



## VARMA

*The Warmth of Iceland*

### Wallets and cushions from mocha leather

„For years Varma has produced goods from mocha leather. We recently hired industrial designer Sigríður Heimisdóttir to reinvent and re-design our line of products and update them to meet current fashion trends. She also added to our range of products and designed some entirely new items for us,” says Birgitta Ásgrímsdóttir, Varma’s manager of sales and marketing. „Since around 80% of Iceland’s mocha leather is exported we decided to step in and produce something from this material.

The result is an elegant line of mocha leather products; hats, mittens, collars, purses and wallets as well as a small line of household products that includes stools, cushions and guestbooks.”

### Characteristics of the Icelandic wool

Brought by the settlers the Icelandic sheep have accompanied the locals through thick and thin for more than a thousand years and survived eruptions, glacial floodbursts, howling winds and epidemics. Such is their impact that children are still filled with joy when the newborn lambs are greeted by the

rays of the Icelandic summer sun.

The wool from the Icelandic sheep is two-layered, „tog” and „þel”. „The hairs of the outer layer (tog) are long, glossy and water-repellent while the inner layer (þel) is made up of soft, fine and highly insulating hair. These are the two characteristics that make the Icelandic wool such a wonderful and strong material. The wool keeps the sheep warm and thus also those that wear woolen clothes.”



A hiker with a backpack stands on a mossy mountain ridge, looking out over a vast glacier and mountainous landscape. The scene is captured in a wide-angle shot, emphasizing the scale of the wilderness.

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Travel Association





Skælingar offers you a unique view of nature.

Photo: Vala Friðriksdóttir



A refreshing dip in Strútslaug after your hike?

Photo: Gunnar S. Guðmundsson.



Útivist has several huts around Iceland: Strútsskáli hut and the surrounding campsite

Photo: Gunnar S. Guðmundsson



# Amazing hikes with Útivist

## Some of Útivist's most popular treks are:

Útivist is one of Iceland's largest travel association, whose goal is to encourage travel within the country in a healthy and enjoyable way. Everyone is welcome to join the association, which offer a wide variety of trips and have been a leader in marking trails and building mountain huts as well as promoting nature conservation.

Útivist offers weekend trips, summer vacation tours and day trips, with buses departing from the Central Bus Terminal in Reykjavik. For day trips, tickets should be purchased at the terminal before departure. Other trips should be booked in advance at the Útivist offices.

Specific information about organized tours is available by calling the association office at (+354) 562-1000, or by faxing (+354) 562-1001. Information can also be obtained from the Útivist website, [www.utivist.is](http://www.utivist.is), or via e-mail: [utivist@utivist.is](mailto:utivist@utivist.is).

### Básar

Básar in Goðaland is an outdoor paradise in the area known as Þórsmörk. At Básar, Útivist operates a campsite and two large cabins which can accommodate a total of 90 people. These cabins are available throughout the year, if there is space, for use by individuals or groups over shorter or longer periods. Those planning to use the cabins must make advance reservations through the Útivist office.

### Fimmvörðuháls

Fimmvörðuháls is an 1,100-m-high mountain pass between the glaciers of Eyjafjallajökull and Mýrdalsjökull, with a popular trail leading from Skógar to Básar. Útivist offers organized trips over Fimmvörðuháls every weekend in summer.

### Sveinstindur - Skælingar

Ride a coach from Reykjavik to Sveinstindur for a one-night stay in the Útivist hut. Hike on the slopes of Sveinstindur with a view over the inland lake of Langisjór and the Fögrufjöll mountains. Stay at the Útivist hut, then hike on to Gjátindur and into Eldgjá canyon, on the way to Lambaskarðshólar. Return by coach via Fjallabak. Gear is shuttled between night stops.

### Strútsstígur

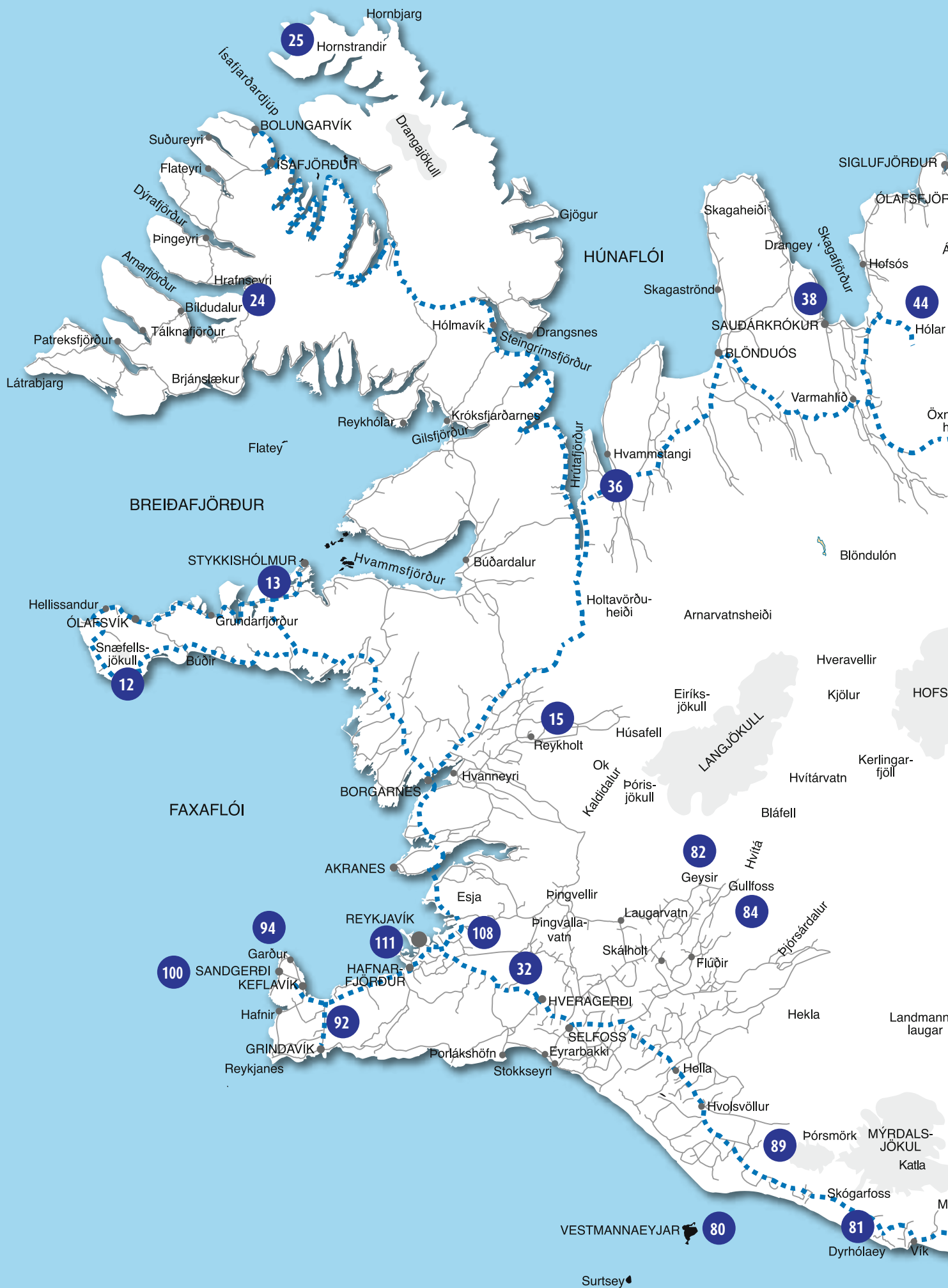
Strútsstígur is a new route from Fjallabak, between Lambaskarðshólar/Eldgjá and Hvanngil. This route is a continuation of the popular Sveinstindur - Skælingar route. Gear is shuttled between night stops.

### Laugavegurinn

One of Útivist's best-known routes is "Laugavegurinn". This is a five-day trip from the hot-spring area of Landmannalaugar to Básar at Þórsmörk. If desired, you can extend your stay at Básar after the initial four days. Overnight accommodation is in tents or huts along the way. Gear is shuttled between night stops.

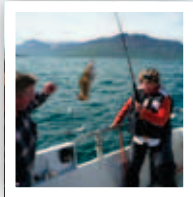
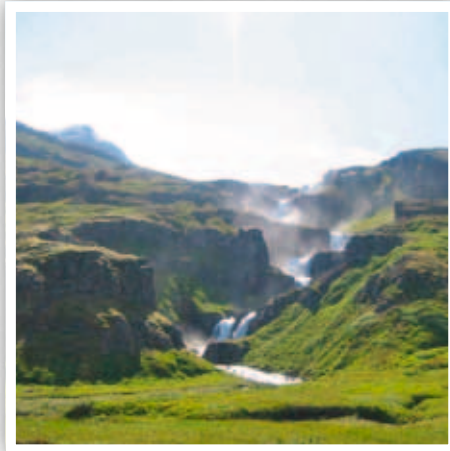
### Skaftá Theme Area

Útivist and the district of Skaftárhreppur have made a co-operative agreement on tourism in Skaftárhreppur. This involves a huge area, from the glaciers of Mýrdalsjökull and Torfajökull in the west to Skeiðarárjökull glacier in the east. Among the many attractions of the area are spectacular geological features including: Lakagígar, Núpsstaðarskógur, Eldgjá, Landbrot, Langisjór, Fögrufjöll, Skælingar, Álftaversgígar, and vast shorelines.

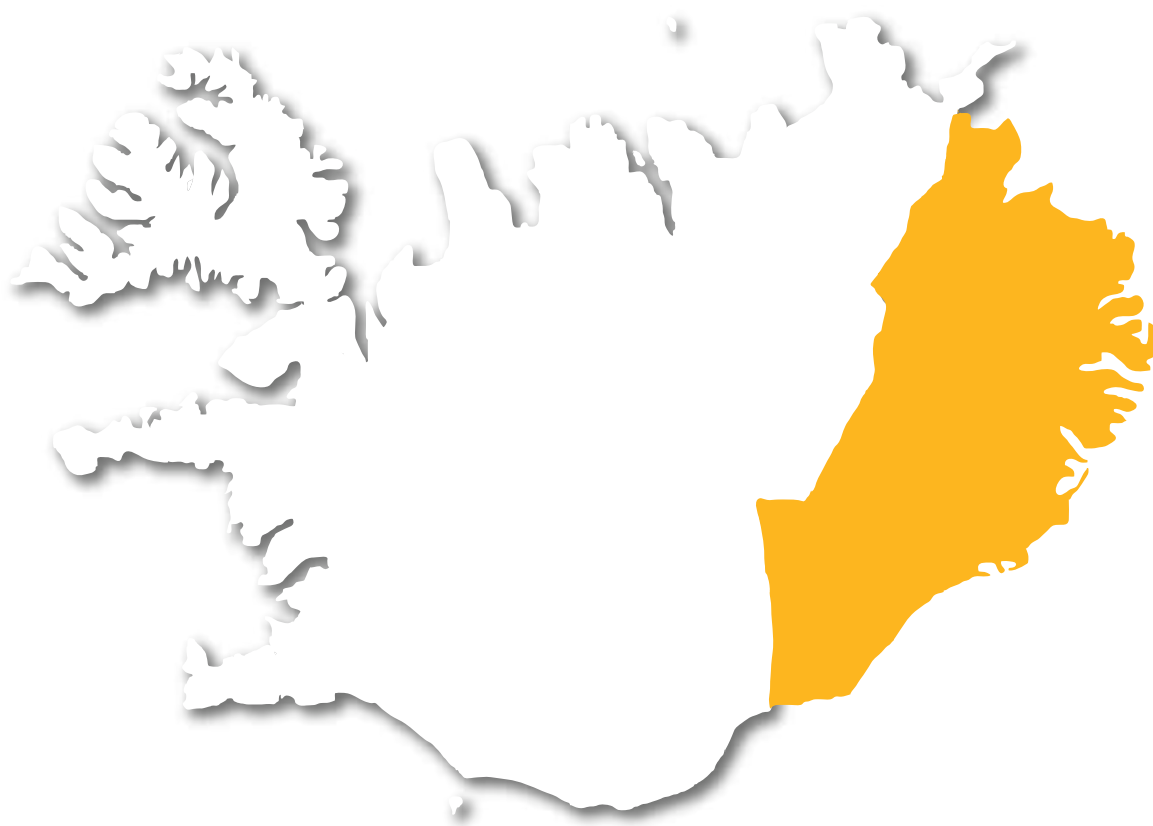












# The East of Iceland

The east of Iceland – a magical region of natural phenomena. Glaciers, forests, bird cliffs, vast expanses, deserts, majestic mountains and narrow fjords. Waterfalls, rivers and the sea. The east of Iceland is a gem of natural wonders and history. It is a region rich in relics from times long past, vestiges of work methods, culture and life's eternal struggle. It is home to around 16,000 people, who enjoy the relatively still weather of the fjords that makes the water an ideal reflector of the surrounding mountain landscapes.

Villages of varying sizes dot the fjords. Loðmundarfjörður Fjord is ideal for travelers interested in walking peacefully where no one lives.

Fog is common in the stillness of east Iceland's fjords, and the name "east Iceland fog" has become part of the weather terminology.

## Useful links

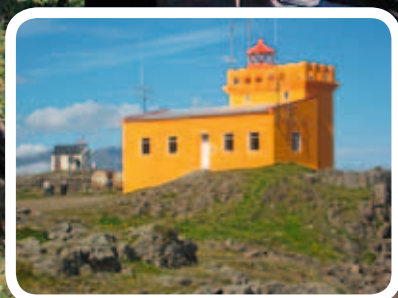
Official travel guide for the area

[www.east.is](http://www.east.is)

Vatnajökull National Park

[www.vatnajokulsthjodgardur.is](http://www.vatnajokulsthjodgardur.is)

# Fjarðabyggð



Photos: [www.east.is](http://www.east.is)

Fjarðabyggð extends from Mjóifjörður in the north to Stöðvarfjörður in the south, and has the largest population of all municipalities in East Iceland. The landscape is magnificent, with coves along the coastline and vast mountainous regions. Fishing and fish processing are the bulk industries in Fjarðabyggð with three of the largest fishing companies in Iceland located there. Diverse forms of trade thrive in the region, as do hotels, guest houses and restaurants. The area has vigorous cultural and community activity and energetic sports and youth programmes. In Fjarðabyggð the lay of the land underwent a dramatic change recently when an aluminium smelter was built in the area. Jobs options have expanded, the population has been growing and new businesses have opened up in the region. Population 4.637.

[www.fjardabyggd.is](http://www.fjardabyggd.is)



# – you're in a good place!



## Randulff's sea house

Randulff's sjóhús (sea-house) is a beautifully preserved shore-building towards the eastern end of Eskifjörður. The Randulff's restaurant offers traditional local food and is open from 17-21 daily. Randulff's also offers boats for hire. Today this fine old house preserves both many artifacts and a lingering atmosphere from the days when the establishment of a herring fishery led to the first real growth of the fjord towns of East Iceland in the late 19th and early 20th century.

Built by Norwegian Peter Randulff in 1890, it provided a station for landing and processing herring caught within the fjord through to 1930 when there were no longer sufficient herring coming into the fjord to sustain the fishery. When herring finally returned to the seas off East Iceland in the late 1950s the fishery involved large ships fishing further off-shore and landing their catches at ports like Siglufjörður, Húsavík and Vopnafjörður in the north. As a result, for the next 75 years this sturdy old sea-house remained closed.



## The French hospital – restored to its former glory

The french Hospital – until recently outlawed in Hafnarnes across the fjord from the village – has recently been moved back again to Fáskrúðsfjörður where it was originally erected in 1905 by the french authorities for the purposes of rendering health services unto french fishermen in the banks off the eastern coast. A look at this distinguished old building is worth while and its interesting to follow up on its resurrection from ruins, back to its former splendour. The enterprise is a joint venture by french and icelandic parties with the idea of restauring a „cultural cluster“ of old houses in the village of Fáskrúðsfjörður, consisting of the hospital, the doctor's residence, the french chapel and the hospital morgue.



## A wonderful collection of rare rocks

In the small fjord of Stöðvarfjörður you'll find a wonderful collection of rare rocks and minerals most of which derive from Stöðvarfjörður and its closest vicinity. This stunning selection can mostly be attributed to the efforts of local enthusiast and collector Petra Sveinsdóttir who has gathered the stone gems of icelandic nature since the year 1946. Her wonderworld of stones is now reputedly the world's largest private collection of rocks.

## East Iceland – a lot to do!



Photo: www.east.is

For families with children, East Iceland can be a wonderful place to visit. In this corner of Iceland you can enjoy everything from beautiful easy hikes, animals and birds, kayaksailing, horse riding and mountainbike tours. The Icelandic swimmingpools are also very good and there is one in almost every town.

East Iceland offers some of the Iceland's best hiking trails. Guided tours are available both with one of many hiking clubs in East Iceland and with our experienced tour -operators. Longer trails include the magnificent hut-to-hut Snæfell - Lönsöræfi, edge of Vatnajökul National Park trail and Víknaslóðir coastal trail. Hikingmaps are

available at tourist information centers and the hiking-club webs.

Always remember to check the weather and inform about where you are going and how long you will hike, either on an informationcenter or at farm/ town nearest to you.

Source: www.east.is

## Gerpir – the easternmost cape in Iceland

Gerpir is the easternmost cape in Iceland, running steep into the sea from a height of 661 metres. Estimated to be around twelve million years old, the rock is considered to be among the oldest formations in Iceland. The area around Gerpir is a hiker's dream: you can find a hiking map of the area, published by the Fjarðamenn Travel Association, in information centres and stores around Fjarðabyggð. A visit to Gerpir is well worth it!



We recommend a visit to Gerpir for all lovers of nature.

Photo: www.fjardabyggd.is





# ***Fjarðabyggð is great in the summer.***

Hike up the mountains in lovely summer weather.  
Live the high life, without breaking the bank.  
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FJARÐABYGGÐ

[fjardabyggd.is](http://fjardabyggd.is)

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**Norðfjörður**

**Eskifjörður**

**Reyðarfjörður**

**Fáskrúðsfjörður**

**Stöðvarfjörður**

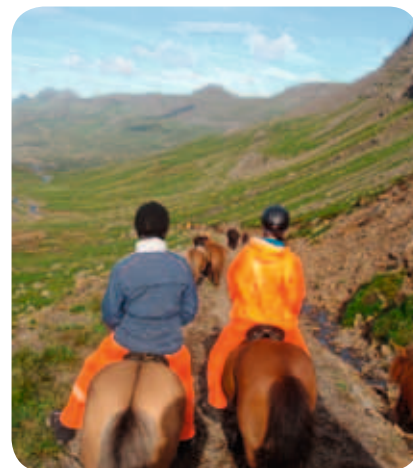


## Horseback riding between the mountains in the East



A group of riders from Skorrahestar on the beach of Vaðlavík in east of Iceland.

Photos: Skorrahestar



Skorrahestar offer riding tours along the fascinating rugged shoreline as well as through unpopulated lush valleys, across ridges and rivers, along beaches and mythical mountain terrains of the east of Iceland.

"First class, reliable horses, fascinating landscape with view over fjords and the

ocean, small groups, relaxed atmosphere and good guides are the main characteristics of our riding tours," says "Doddi" Júlíusson, who runs Skorrahestar with his wife "Thea" Alfreðsdóttir.

Skorrahestar offer customized tours according to their guests requests in the

Northfjord- and/or Gerpír area where everything from one day to weeklong tours can be realized.

Tel. +3544771736

[www.123.is/skorrahestar](http://www.123.is/skorrahestar)

e-mail: [skorra@simnet.is](mailto:skorra@simnet.is)

## Hafragilsfoss – An Awesome Waterfall

The glacial river Jökulsá á Fjöllum is the second longest river in Iceland. It flows for more than 200 km from its source and down to the delta in Öxarfjörður fjord. The river emerges from the glaciers Dyngujökull and Brúarjökull but from the second glacier the rivers Kreppa and Kverká also stem. On its long way to sea the river flows through dark and rough wasteland, sands and lava fields. „The Icelandic landscape is often unusual but probably never more so than in these parts," says on the website Náttúrukortid. When the river reaches the Jökulsá River Canyons, the watercourse crashes off several impressive waterfalls; Selfoss, Dettifoss and the awesome Hafragilsfoss, pictured.



Hafragilsfoss (27m) is one of the three waterfalls of river Jökulsá á Fjöllum.

Photo: Sigurður B. Sævarsson



## Information Centers in East Iceland

### Rent in Iceland

Web service

Tel: +354 774-6161

info@rentinreykjavik.com

### Breiðdalsvík

Kaupfjallagjóð, Sólvöllum 25

Town 760, Breiðdalsvík

Tel: +354 475-6670

ferdamal@breiddalur.is

www.breiddalur.is

### Seyðisfjörður

Ferjuleira 1

Town 710, Seyðisfjörður

Tel: +354 472-1551

ferdamenning@sfk.is

www.visitseydisfjordur.com

### East Iceland Regional Information Centre

Miðvangi 1-3

Town 700, Egilsstaðir

Tel: +354 471-2320

east@east.is

www.east.is

### Neskaupstaður

Nesbæ, Egilsbraut 5

Town 740, Neskaupstað

Tel: +354 4771115

nesbaer@simnet.is

### Vopnafjörður

Kaupvangi, Hafnarbyggð 4a

Town 690, Vopnafjörður

Tel: +354 473-1154

### Stöðvarfjörður

Brekunni, Fjarðarbraut 44

Town 755, Stöðvarfjörður

Tel: +354 4758939

### Djúpivogur

Langabúð

Town 765, Djúpavogur

Tel: +354 4788228

helgarun@djupivogur.is

### Snæfellsstofa (District Information Office)

Skriðuklaustur

Town 701, Egilsstaðir

Tel: +354 4700840

snæfellsstofa@vjp.is

www.vjp.is

## Travel Agents to East Iceland

www.airiceland.is

www.smyril-line.com

www.askjareisen.de

www.islanderlebnis.de

www.islandprotravel.ch

www.islandtours.fr

www.english.sba.is

www.austfjardaleid.is

www.sterna.is

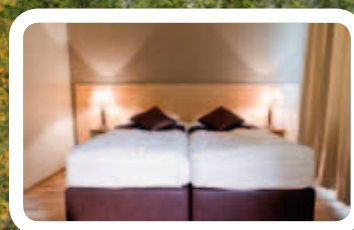
www.farmholidays.is

www.topas.dk

www.kontiki.ch

www.discover-the-world.co.uk

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## Skriðuklaustur – The poet's estate



Photo: www.east.is

### Skriðuklaustur – Centre of Culture and History.

Skriðuklaustur has a firm place in Icelandic history: a former manor, it also served as an Augustine monastery from 1493 to 1552. After the ruins of the monastery were found, an archaeological dig revealed that it was both a site of healing and writing books. During the summer travelers can go on guided tours through the area.

One of Iceland's most renowned writers, Gunnar Gunnarsson (1889-1975), built a large and glamorous estate at Skriðuklaustur in 1939. When he moved to the capital in 1948, he donated the house to the Icelandic state. For a long time it was an experimental centre for agriculture, but in 2000 the Gunnar Gunnarsson Institution settled in the house.

Skriðuklaustur is now a cultural and historical centre, with several exhibitions each summer and guided tours through the poet's house.

[www.skriduklaustur.is](http://www.skriduklaustur.is)

## The Kárahnjúkar Power Plant

The biggest Power Plant in Iceland is the Kárahnjúkar Hydropower Plant, 690 MW, and its power-generating capacity is 4,600 GWh/year. The main storage reservoir is Háslón, on the River Jökulsá á Dal, alongside the Kárahnjúkar peaks. The water passes through a headrace tunnel to the Fljótsdalur powerhouse at Valthjofsstadarfjall and then through further tailrace tunnels and canals to the River Jökulsá í Fljótsdal. Kárahnjúkar HPP has substantial underground structures with tunnels totalling over 70 km in length.

To get to Kárahnjúkar from Fljótsdalur valley, drive along road nr. 910, which leads directly to the former construction site at the Kárahnjúkar mountains. When you have driven over the Kárahnjúkar dam you will reach a parking place. From there tourists can walk to the edge of the dam and enjoy the view of the lake and the canyon.

For travellers interested in learning about Kárahnjúkar Hydropower Project or about tourist activities in the highlands north of



### The work of art Hringiða by Jónína Guðnadóttir.

Photo: Atli Rúnar Halldórsson

Vatnajökull glacier, it is helpful to stop at Végarður in Fljótsdalur valley, where Landsvirkjun has a Visitor Center to satisfy the traveller's thirst for knowledge. Here you can

for instance learn about construction in the area, see how Kárahnjúkar Power Plant was built, and examine a 3D model of the region.

Source: [www.landsvirkjun.com](http://www.landsvirkjun.com)



# Borgarfjörður eystri

## Capital of Elves, Puffins and Hiking



Wilderness fun.

Pictures: EMagnusson



AlfaCafé - café and restaurant.

The village of Bakkagerði, in Borgarfjörður eystri, is a picturesque seaside village which is home to around 130 people. While most people live off fishing and agriculture, tourism is becoming increasingly important. The locals are also artistic by nature; the church has an altarpiece painted by Jóhannes Sveinsson Kjarval. Next to the village is the rocky outcrop Álfaborgin, or the Elves' Castle, where the queen of the elves is said to live. A path leads to the top and there is a panoramic viewing disc to help hikers orientate themselves and identify the surrounding mountains. There is a range of accommodation in the village and activities to suit the whole family.

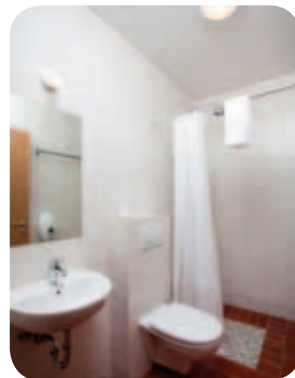
The area between Borgarfjörður in the north and Seyðisfjörður in the south is one of outstanding natural beauty. There is a network of well-marked hiking routes to suit all levels of fitness, from shorter routes for the whole family to longer routes for serious hikers.

Access to the area is straightforward and the local authorities have developed a wide range of services including campsites, different types of accommodation, refreshments, museums, guiding services, travel planning and transportation.

There is a scheduled bus service between Egilsstaðir and Borgarfjörður eystri on week days.



Great wilderness mountain Huts.



Good quality in Alfheimar Guesthouse.



Open view of Breiðuvík bay.



# The Heartland of Hiking

Info:

Borgarfjörður Tourism Committee's website:  
[www.borgarfjordureystri.is](http://www.borgarfjordureystri.is)

Birdwatching in Borgarfjörður:  
[www.puffins.is](http://www.puffins.is)

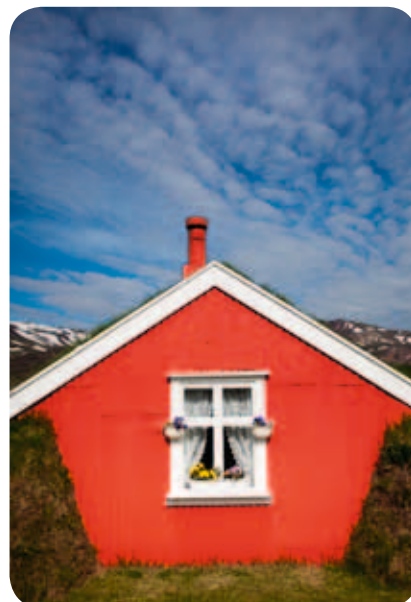
Please contact [info@elftours.is](mailto:info@elftours.is)  
for further information

Walking in nature is our secret longing and is truly the icing on the cake for city dwellers on the move. In the Borgarfjörður region you'll discover "A Hiker's Paradise" including 140 km. of marked trails, each ranging from 1 to 26 km, all of whom have been made accessible through a quality map.

In a short stay in Borgarfjörður you can leave your car and roam whole in nature. Álfheimar guesthouse offers customized tours for groups, individuals and families as well as extended hiking that covers some of the main attractions of North-east Iceland. Álfheimar aims at offering high quality service in the field of hiking through local guides that know every nook and cranny in the region and -of course- the services at hand.







### Capital of Puffins

In Borgarfjörður eystri there is a blue flag harbour near Hafnarhólmi which is linked to a small islet with bustling birdlife, especially puffins. A convenient observation platform is located just beside the islet, allowing you to observe the “the priest” at close range.

### Capital of Elves

Borgarfjörður Eystri is home to an extensive population of elves – judging by the 172 local folk tales involving elves. Elves are often referred to as the “hidden people” because of the difficulties involved in spotting them. Nowadays you might find Icelanders who distinguish between hidden people and elves, but in 19th. century folklore these two are synonymous.

### Get close to the birds

Hafnarhólmi island, nearby Borgarfjörður eystri harbour, is an excellent place to go birdwatching. You can get very close views of species such as Puffin, Fulmar, Kittiwake and Common Eider. In recent years the local authorities and the landowners have worked hard to develop birdwatching and recreational facilities for visitors.



## Hotel Hallormsstaður – Focus on the Cuisine

The hotel is surrounded by tall trees, actually in the middle of Hallormsstaðaskógur forest. The forest is about 30 minutes from the town of Egilsstaðir. The hotel offers views over Lagarfljót river where a monster called Lagarfljótsormur is said to be lurking.

The hotel, newly refurbished, accommodates more than a hundred guests in stylish and big rooms. For relaxation, two saunas and a hot pot are available and this summer a new outside area with an hot pot will open. A new meeting hall added last fall has been used by various groups for meetings and conferences.

The hotel is open all year so visitors can

enjoy the enchantments of the forest in the heat of summer or the cold Icelandic winter. An added bonus of a winter stay are the spectacular Northern lights.

### Two Restaurants

The hotel boasts two restaurants. "Laufskálinn" is known for a grand buffet of 30 – 40 courses, open every day from the beginning of June to the end of August. The other one, Café Bistro, offers a mouth watering menu and is open from the beginning of May and to the end of September. The guests of the Café Bistro enjoy great views over the Lagarfljót river

and the Fljótsdalur valley, as the restaurant is on the second floor of the hotel.

### Innovative culinary trends

"We put a lot of effort into the cuisine," says Sigrún Jóhanna Þráinsdóttir, restaurant manager and head of marketing at the hotel. "The summer buffet and the Christmas buffet have been very popular with people coming again and again. We offer many innovative culinary trends and often courses that are not available on other Icelandic menus.

[www.hotel701.is](http://www.hotel701.is)

## A Farm on the Heath

The heath farm Sænautasel was built on the Jökuldalsheiði heath in 1843. By 1861 there were sixteen such farms on the heath, most of which were destroyed in a volcanic eruption from Katla in 1875. Sænautasel, however, was inhabited until 1943, and was renovated in 1992 by the parish and is now open as a museum during the summer months.

At Sænautasel visitors can learn about the people who lived on the heath and how they survived. You can also sit down and enjoy some traditional Icelandic refreshments: we recommend the hot chocolate and the lummur, similar to small pancakes.

If you are traveling by car or bicycle simply follow Highway 1 and turn into a road marked Möðrudalá. After about 22 kilometres you should find the heath farm.



Sænautasel was inhabited until 1943.

Photo: [www.east.is](http://www.east.is)



# Seyðisfjörður

– Picturesque town in a splendid natural setting



Seyðisfjörður is a long, calm, deep fjord of twists and turns 17 kilometres from its mouth to the head of the fjord, where the town of the same name shelters beneath Mt. Strandartindur and Mt. Bjólfur. In the valley above the town, the river Fjarðará cascades from the edge of the heath above in innumerable beautiful waterfalls, down to Lón (the lagoon) at the head of the fjord. A road leads up from the fjord, along by the river, to the Hérað district, 26 km away across Fjarðarheiði heath.

## Houses of Seyðisfjörður

Seyðisfjörður is regarded by many as one of Iceland's most picturesque towns, not only due to its impressive environment, but also because nowhere in Iceland has a community of old wooden buildings been preserved so well as here. Today about 800 people live in Seyðisfjörður. The local economy has long been based on the fisheries, while light industry also flourishes. Tourism is playing a

growing role, as the picturesque town in its spectacular surroundings attracts more and more visitors.

The community, like so many others in Iceland, owes its origins to foreign merchants, mainly Danes, who started trading in the fjord in the mid-19th century. But the crucial factor in the evolution of the village was the establishment of the Icelandic herring fishery by Norwegians in 1870-1900. The Norwegians built up a number of herring-fishing facilities, and in a matter of years the little community grew into a boom town.

## Museums and festivals

Tourism in Seyðisfjörður has developed with a focus on history, arts and culture. Skaffell – Center for Visual art, is dedicated to

nurturing and exhibiting visual art, the main emphasis being on contemporary art. An arts festival, Á seyði, begins each June. The programme includes a wide variety of arts events. The Technical Museum for Eastern Iceland at Hafnargata 44 exhibits the country's first telegraph station.

The car/passenger ferry Norröna, which plies between continental Europe and Iceland every summer, docks at Seyðisfjörður every Thursday. Seyðisfjörður has been a cosmopolitan community from its foundation, and the ferry service has contributed to ensuring that it remains so.

# Vatnajökull National Park

## – interplay of ice and fire



The Vatnajökull area is as varied as it is beautiful.

Photos: [www.vatnajokulsthjodgardur.is](http://www.vatnajokulsthjodgardur.is)

Vatnajökull National Park is Iceland's newest protected area, established in 2008. With a total area of roughly 13,200 km<sup>2</sup> it is by far the largest national park in Iceland as well as in Western Europe. Key features of the park are the ice cap of the Vatnajökull Glacier (8,200 km<sup>2</sup>) and several highly active volcanic systems within and outside the ice cap. The interplay of ice and fire is the single most important force in shaping the nature of the park. As a result, one can find in one place an unparalleled range of volcanic-, geothermal- and other landscape features.

At the northern boundary of the ice cap, outlet glaciers extend onto a plateau covered by vast lava fields. Above the plateau, rises Askja, a world known central volcano. A powerful explosive eruption there in 1875 caused the formation of a major caldera which now contains a tranquil mountain lake. The Jökulsá river canyon, which pierces the

northern plateau, is the country's largest canyon, about 25 km long and up to 120 m deep. The upper (southern) end of the canyon is marked by the magnificent waterfall, Dettifoss.

Kverkfjöll mountains are a prominent feature of the northeast part of the park, a majestic central volcano with two calderas. From the Vesturöræfi highlands, home of reindeers and pink footed geese, rises the colourful Snæfell, another central volcano and the country's highest mountain outside the boundaries of the Vatnajökull Glacier.

To the south, Öræfajökull towers over the rest of the Vatnajökull ice cap. This is yet another central volcano with a glacier-filled caldera and many steep outlet glaciers forming a magnificent alpine landscape and Iceland's highest mountain peak at 2101 m. An explosive eruption in 1362 devastated settlements below the volcano. Today, this

area, including the former Skaftafell farm, features beautiful woodlands, luxuriant heaths, old turf farmhouses and a very popular hiking area.

The western part of Vatnajökull National Park is characterised by vast sand- and pumice deserts, long volcanic fissures, and unique brown rock (hyaloclastite) mountain ridges formed by sub-glacial fissure eruptions during the last glaciation. The Eldgjá fissure erupted in 934, producing the largest lava flow known to have flown on Earth in historic times (700 km<sup>2</sup>). Another huge lava field (565 km<sup>2</sup>) was produced by the Lakagígar eruption 1783–1784. This eruption was a devastating national catastrophe, which killed 22% of the population of Iceland and some 70% of the livestock.

[www.vatnajokulsthjodgardur.is](http://www.vatnajokulsthjodgardur.is)





Outline map of Vatnajökull National Park. The park is divided into four regions.





Photo: Álafoss

## Álafosskvos – Best kept secret in the Capital Area

Just a ten-minute ride from the centre of Reykjavík lies Álafosskvos, an area whose history of producing woollen garments dates back to the 19th century.

A major wool industry developed there in 1896 when the Álafoss factory was founded. Today, the old buildings have new roles: artists and artisans have transformed them

into workshops and galleries, the old swimming pool is a first-class recording studio, and last but not least, the Álafoss store itself – based in the old wool factory – sells everything related to wool...and a whole lot more.

“We encourage people to stop by and enjoy the unique combination of nature and innovation the area has to offer. People are often surprised

when they visit us – we like to think of Álafosskvos as the best kept secret in the Capital Area”, says Guðmundur Arnar Jónsson, who runs Álafoss along with his wife, Gerða Gunnarsdóttir.

### Wool on the rise

“There is an incredible amount of interest in

knitting and knitwear among Icelanders and foreign visitors alike. You can tell that Icelanders are more relaxed after the financial crash; they have been getting back to basics, and our roots are in wool”, says Guðmundur. “Due to the increased popularity of wool, we have seen an incredible growth in design and production of knitted garments, often more modern variations of the traditional designs.”

Álafoss sells products from a number of Icelandic designers as well as craftspeople. “We try to be a little bit different here, and are always looking for something new to add to our selection of products. We also run an arts gallery here, which has featured exhibitions by many prominent artists. A stop in Álafosskvos is well worth your while.”

[www.alafoss.is](http://www.alafoss.is)

## Adventure tourism on the rise



Photo: Arctic Adventures

Racing down Icelandic glacial rivers on a raft has been a favourite sport among adventure seekers for several years now, most often along with Arctic Rafting, a pioneer in river rafting in Iceland.

Arctic Adventures, along with their sister companies Arctic Rafting and Glacier Guides, specialize in adventure tourism, offering a multitude of exciting trips and tours around the country. “We focus on day trips for travellers, whether they are interested in sea kayaking, river rafting, snowmobiling, hiking

or pretty much anything else”, says Sólveig Pétursdóttir, marketing project manager. “Through our own operations and our collaborators we offer tours in all parts of the country.”

With more than 30 years in the business, Arctic Adventures has never been afraid of exploring new and exciting possibilities. “We started with river rafting in 1983, but in 2005 we realized that there was a great demand for exciting trips for tourists, who were coming in ever-increasing numbers, and that there was a great opportunity for growth in this area. We started by adding hikes on glaciers, offering a snorkelling adventure in Silfra and more. We were not afraid to try new things! Our main concern is that we enjoy what we are doing; if the tour guides love what they are doing, chances are our clients will, too. Following our expansion we changed the name from Arctic Rafting to Arctic Adventures, which covers more bases in adventure tourism and has now become a sort of a holding company for our operations

today”, says Sólveig and adds that although some of their exciting tours may seem dangerous, there is a great emphasis on safety and safety precautions. “All our tour guides are heavily trained and experienced, and we provide all necessary safety equipment.”

### Popular tours sell out fast

Sólveig says that with each year they welcome more and more travellers, as there seems to be an ever-increasing interest in Iceland. “This also affects our services, as the more popular trips tend to sell out. People expect to be able to walk into our head office on Laugavegur 11 and be able to book whatever they like, but unfortunately they tend to sell out, so we strongly recommend that people book well in advance. If you’re already here, there is no need to panic as we always have a number of other options, but the most popular trips do tend to sell out!”

[www.adventures.is](http://www.adventures.is)



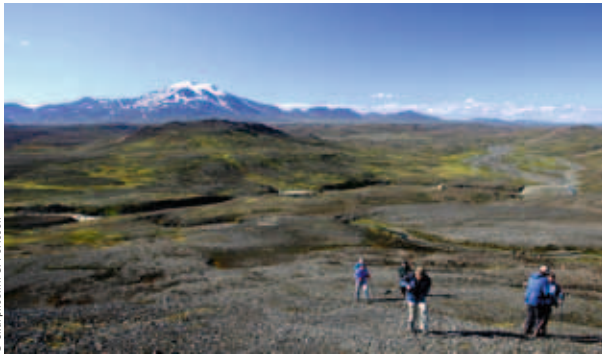
# VATNAJÖKULSPJÓÐGARÐUR

## NATIONAL PARK

# WELCOME

Vatnajökulspjóðgarður is one of Europe's largest national parks. You are invited to see Iceland's highest mountain along with volcanoes, waterfalls, lava fields, sand deserts, and glaciers. Green oases, rich flora and birdlife.

▼ Hiking Geldingafell, Snæfell in the distance



© Steinarinn G. Þorisson

Morsárdalur ▼



© Guðmundur Ógmundsson



© Regina Hreinsdóttir



© Einar Ragnar Sigurðsson

▲ Langisjór

Askja and Lake Öskjuvatn ▲

Visit our website [www.vjp.is](http://www.vjp.is) to find more information on Vatnajökull National Park.

# Friends of Vatnajökull

The Friends of Vatnajökull Association is a nonprofit organization that was founded on the 21th of June 2009 as a funding body for Vatnajökull National Park - Europe's largest national park. The role of the association is to raise funds to support research, promotional and educational activities to ensure that as many people as possible can enjoy the natural phenomenon and the unique natural history that the National Park has to offer.

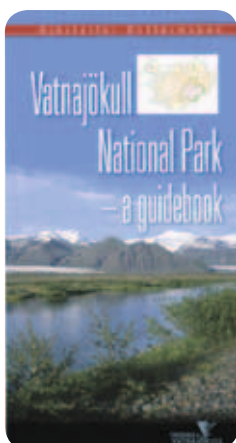
The Friends Association aims to attract as many members as possible and to be a financially independent association focused mainly on supporting projects that contribute in the fields of research, promotion and education.



Photographer Ragnar Th Sigurðsson's exhibition on the banks of Jökulsárlón glacial lagoon was sponsored by a non-profit association, Friends of Vatnajökull glacier.

Photo: Ragnar Th.





Kristbjörg Hjaltadóttir  
chief executive officer  
of the Friends of  
Vatnajökull.

### Vatnajökull National Park – a guidebook

Friends of Vatnajökull are publishers of the book “Vatnajökull National Park – a guidebook”. It is published in three languages, Icelandic, English and German. The author, Hjörleifur Guttormsson, is the leading expert on the origin of the Park and the region in which it is situated “To get the most out of Vatnajökull National Park, you need first-rate guidance from the person who knows it best,” say’s Kristbjörg Hjaltadóttir chief executive officer of the Friends of

Vatnajökull. Vatnajökull National Park – a guidebook is the only guide to the park that has ever published, The book is handy in format, it contains a large number of maps and photographs and a wealth of information that will help you to use your time in the park to the full. The guidebook is invaluable for planning a trip to the park and as a companion during your travel. It introduces and explains the geology and history of the park and also its flora and fauna. It contains a list of tourist services, guidelines for safe travelling, a full index of place-names and

tips on things to do and places of particular interest. “You will not be disappointed if you use Vatnajökull National Park – a guidebook when you visit the Park,” say’s Kristbjörg.

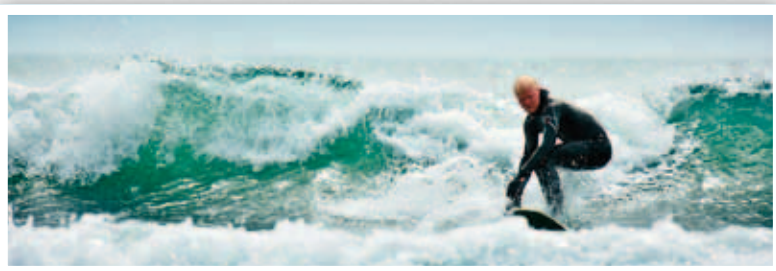
### Be a Friend - donate today!

Help the Friends of Vatnajökull non-profit organization to build up Europe’s largest national park - a rare natural treasure. Your donation supports research, education and the promotion of the Park.

friend











# The South of Iceland

The south of Iceland is a nature traveller's daydream, a sampling of all that is Icelandic, including some of the country's most treasured natural attractions. Many are not far from the capital while others are more adventurously located, requiring 4-wheel-drive vehicles and a map of the southern highlands. Or hiking boots.

In between are tantalizing byways just waiting to be explored, nuggets of natural beauty, fanciful sights and sprawling views that inspire and engage the imagination.

An area renowned for its hospitality, you can delight in fresh food from this famous agricultural region, local folk museums and galleries displaying 1100 years of living, and a variety of fun and leisure activities.

## Useful links

Official travel guide for the area	<a href="http://www.south.is">www.south.is</a>
Tourist information	<a href="http://www.southiceland.is">www.southiceland.is</a>
Þingvellir national park	<a href="http://www.thingvellir.is">www.thingvellir.is</a>
Þórsmörk area	<a href="http://www.thorsmork.is">www.thorsmork.is</a>
Visit the volcano	<a href="http://www.eyjafjoll.is">www.eyjafjoll.is</a>
Geysir	<a href="http://www.geysircenter.is">www.geysircenter.is</a>
Landmannalaugar highland	<a href="http://www.landmannalaugar.info">www.landmannalaugar.info</a>

# Natural Wonders of The Westman Islands



The main island of Heimaey experienced an eruption in 1973.

Westman Islands, or Vestmannaeyjar in Icelandic, is one of the best kept secrets in Iceland and you haven't seen Iceland until you have visited the islands. Westman Islands is one of the wonders of nature, surrounded by mountains, islands, volcanoes and seabirds. Westman Islands also has one of the most beautiful and extraordinary 18 hole golf course in the world.

The Westman Islands are a group of 15-18 islands, depending on how they are classed, and about 30 skerries and rock pillars, located off the mainland's south coast. The islands were formed by submarine volcanic eruptions along a 30km long fissure lying southwest to northeast. The largest island is Heimaey, 13.4 km<sup>2</sup>, the only one with inhabitants. Most of the islands have steep

sea cliffs, and are well vegetated. Bird hunting and egg collecting are traditional to the islander culture.

A Norse timber church, a gift from the Norwegians to commemorate 1000 years of Christianity was in Iceland, was consecrated on Heimaey. The only church of its type in Iceland, it has been situated at the Skans area where a stone wall, built after the Turkish invasion in 1627 occurred, has been rebuilt.

Source: [www.visitwestmanislands.com](http://www.visitwestmanislands.com)



## Golf in Westman Islands

Playing golf in Iceland is an adventure you'll remember for a lifetime. Playing golf at midnight in the middle of a lava field sounds strange to be true, but not in Iceland. Midnight golf is available in summer due to Iceland's northerly location, and one-tenth of Iceland's surface is adorned with lava. Sweeping mountains and majestic ocean views characterise Icelandic golf courses, which follow the contours of the naturally dramatic landscape, a popular trend in golf course design today.

The Vestmannaeyjar golf course is located on one of the Westman Islands which are group of islands of the south coast of Iceland. The golf course, set in an old volcano, is a wonderful test of golf. Teeing off against a backdrop of volcanic walls; changing wind directions on the same hole and playing across and over the sea are all features of golf in Vestmannaeyjar. The course has a reputation for having the best greens in the country.

Source: [www.golficeland.org](http://www.golficeland.org)



## Welcome to Vestmannaeyjar



Fly from Reykjavík Airport – 20 min.

Ferry from Landeyjahöfn – 30 min.



**Vestmannaeyjar tourist information**  
Tel. +354 488-2555  
[www.vestmannaeyjar.is](http://www.vestmannaeyjar.is)  
[tourinfo@vestmannaeyjar.is](mailto:tourinfo@vestmannaeyjar.is)



# Dyrhólaey



Off Dyrhólaey there are rock pillars, that are unique natural formations.

Photo: [www.south.is](http://www.south.is)

Dyrhólaey is a promontory reaching out into the ocean on the south coast of Iceland. It is the southernmost part of the country, about 120 m high. Off Dyrhólaey there are rock pillars, that are unique natural formations. There, a very rich birdlife can be enjoyed, among other species you can see Fulmar, Guillemot, Razorbill, Gannet, Puffin and

various types of seagulls. Dyrhólaey is thought to have been created during an interglacial period late in the Ice Age by a submarine volcanic eruption. The western part of it is named Háey, or High Island, and is made of tuff and the eastern part of it is often named Lágey, Low Island, and that part is made of dolerite. In former days many

boats were operated from Dyrhólaey, and most of the local farmers went fishing in order to help with the housekeeping. During recent years, farmers have developed a remarkable nesting site for eider ducks in the promontory for the gathering of down.

Source: [www.dyrholaey.com](http://www.dyrholaey.com)

## Leisure



## Activities



## For the family



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[www.hvolsvollur.is](http://www.hvolsvollur.is) [www.eyjafjoll.is](http://www.eyjafjoll.is)

# The Great Geysir



Eruptions at Geysir can hurl boiling water up to 70 metres in the air.

Geysir, sometimes known as The Great Geysir, was the first geyser described in a printed source and the first known to modern Europeans. Hence, the English word geyser (a spouting hot spring) derives from Geysir.

Geysir lies in the Haukadalur valley on the slopes of Laugarfjall hill, which is also the home to Strokkur geyser about 50 metres south.

Eruptions at Geysir can hurl boiling water

up to 70 metres in the air. However, eruptions are infrequent, and have in the past stopped altogether for years at a time.

The nearby geyser Strokkur erupts much more frequently than Geysir, erupting to heights of up to 30 metres every few minutes. Strokkur's activity has also been affected by earthquakes, although to a lesser extent than the great Geysir. Due to its eruption frequency, online photos and videos of Strokkur are regularly mislabeled as depicting Geysir. There are around thirty much smaller geysers and hot pools in the area, including one called Litli Geysir ('Little Geysir').

**Location:** 20 min. from Laugarvatn village and 1,5 hours from Reykjavik. Roadnumber 36.

Info:  
You can see Elvis the goat dancing here:  
[youtube.com/vatnsholt](https://www.youtube.com/vatnsholt)  
Homepage of Vatnsholt:  
[stayinginiceland.is](http://stayinginiceland.is)

## Vatnsholt in Flói – A Dancing Billy Called Elvis

Several houses painted yellow in a green pasture. The view is like the most beautiful painting: The Westman Islands, glaciers and volcanos: Eyjafjallajökull volcano, Tindafjallajökull glacier, Hekla mountain and the Highlands.

This is the farm of Vatnsholt where a young couple are in charge; Jóhann Helgi Hlöðversson and Margrét Ormsdóttir. "We moved from Reykjavík in 2005 and realized an old dream. We bought an old farmstead. The buildings were run down and we renovated them all, the main house, the barn and the cowshed. After the economic crisis in 2008 we decided to turn to tourism. We opened for business in 2010, at the same time that Eyjafjallajökull volcano started erupting. So, not a good start, but in Iceland we have a saying: "Fall er fararheill" which roughly means that if you fall at the start of your journey, the rest of it will be good," says Jóhann.

At Vatnsholt, 28 rooms are on offer in



three houses and in three cottages. The cowshed and the barn were turned into a restaurant that seats 225 guests. A breakfast buffet is served in the old cowshed and in the evening it is A la Carte.

Vatnsholt was nominated by "Icelandic Farm Holidays" as an outstanding service provider and gets great reviews at sites such as Trip Adviser.

### Four-Legged Friends

The guests at Vatnsholt can look at the animals of the farm who know several tricks. "I have a degree in agriculture-science," Jóhann says. "I've always liked animals. We



got goats last year and I have thought them a few tricks. One of the billies is called Elvis and he knows how to sit down on a box and shake your hand. He also knows how to dance. We also had a fox here. We raised him and he was really just one of our dogs. Now we have a pig that plays with the dogs, so there is always a lot of fun here."

The stable is in the west-end of the hall that houses the restaurant and in the future the idea is to change it into a reception, a bar and a small shop selling produce straight from the farm.

Bikes are also available for rent for visitors to explore the many sights close by.



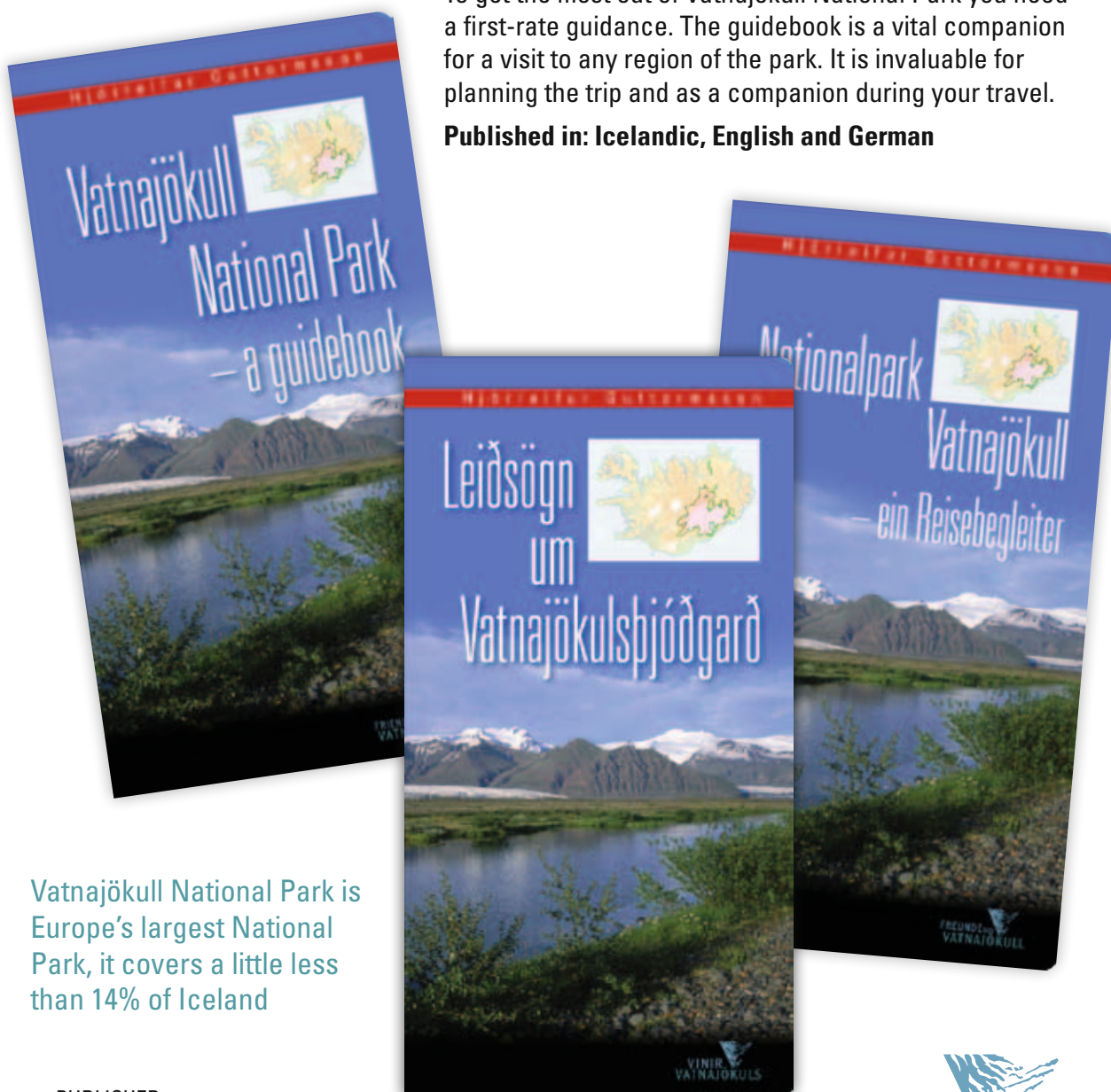
# Vatnajökull National Park – a guidebook

The only guide to the park that has ever been published

## Don't waste valuable holiday time!

To get the most out of Vatnajökull National Park you need a first-rate guidance. The guidebook is a vital companion for a visit to any region of the park. It is invaluable for planning the trip and as a companion during your travel.

**Published in: Icelandic, English and German**



Vatnajökull National Park is Europe's largest National Park, it covers a little less than 14% of Iceland

### PUBLISHER:

Vinir Vatnajökuls - Friends of Vatnajökull  
[www.friendsofVatnajokull.is](http://www.friendsofVatnajokull.is)

VINIR  
VATNAJÖKULS

## Gullfoss waterfall

Gullfoss is actually two separate waterfalls, the upper one has a drop of 11 metres and the lower one 21 metres. The rock of the river bed was formed during an interglacial period.

Water flows over Gullfoss at an average rate of 109 cubic metres per second. The heaviest floods have recorded a flow of 2000 cubic metres per second. During the summer the flow is 130 cubic metres per second. In the past, people have been eager to exploit the power potential of Gullfoss and many plans for hydroelectric developments on the river Hvítá were proposed, but never realized.

**Location:** 30 min from Laugarvatn and over 1,5 hours from Reykjavik. Roadnumber 36.

Source: [www.south.is](http://www.south.is)



Water flows over Gullfoss at an average rate of 109 cubic metres per second.

Photo: Sigurður B. Sævarsson



## Hornafjörður, home to the Lobster Festival

Hornafjörður is a blooming community in the realm of the greatest glacier in Europe, Vatnajökull. It is a geographically large municipality, covering 260 kilometers of the south-eastern shoreline, but the population is just over 2000 inhabitants. The southern part of Vatnajökull National Park is located in the community and the scenery from the town of Höfn and the countryside is breathtaking. .

Fishing is the largest industry in Hornafjörður municipality, but it is also an agricultural area. The growth of Höfn in the 20th century, from a small village to today's town, is caused by the diverse and strong fishing industry. The name, Höfn, actually means harbour. The catch includes the high-value Norway lobster (*Nephrops norvegicus*), but a good part of the Icelandic lobster catch is landed and processed in Höfn. The lobster plays an important role in the towns' image, where the annual „Lobster festival“ is celebrated each summer.

Tourism is a growing industry in Hornafjörður municipality. It offers diverse accommodation, restaurants and shopping. Hornafjörður is a great base for discovering Vatnajökull National Park, and also offers activities for the whole family. A few to mention are a 9 hole golf course in beautiful surroundings, a swimming pool, hiking trails, museums and a glacier exhibition.

Source: [www.hornafjordur.is](http://www.hornafjordur.is)

## Fosstún Hotel



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# Jökulsarlon Glacier lagoon

The main lagoon measures about 7 square miles (20 km<sup>2</sup>) and until 1932 was covered in thick glacial ice. Then the glacier started to retreat, and nowadays more than 300 feet (100 m) of ice breaks away each year to reshape the lagoon and fill it with spectacular icebergs.

The lagoon is open to the sea and so contains a mixture of salt and freshwater, giving it a unique blue-green color. There are hundreds of seals here in the winter and the lagoon supports many species of fish including krill, herring, trout and, occasionally, salmon.

**Location:** About 65 km. from Skaftafell and 80 km. from Höfn. Roadnumber 1.

Source: [www.south.is](http://www.south.is)



Photo: [www.south.is](http://www.south.is)

# The Treasure Chest on the Mountain

When you look to the Laugardalsfjöll mountains from Grímsnes, the Treasure Chest, a rock on top of the Miðdalsfjall mountain is clearly visible. A jeep trail goes from Miðdalur valley up the mountain and you drive past the Treasure Chest on your way to the Rótarsandur sands until you reach Hlöðufell. Many tales have been told about the Treasure Chest. According to one, a real treasure is hidden in the rock. If two brothers would live in the Miðdalur valley, walk backwards up the mountain without ever looking back and never differ on the best route to choose, they will find the gold. This has never been tried and who knows, maybe it works!



The Treasure Chest is nearby Lake Laugarvatn.

Photo: Sigurður B. Sævarsson



Visit South Iceland  
[www.south.is](http://www.south.is)

Tel. +354 483 5555 - [info@south.is](mailto:info@south.is)



Photos: www.south.is

# Nature highlights in South Iceland

## Herdísarvík

The Herdísarvík bay is located west of Selvogur and Þorlákshöfn at the coast. Herdísarvík was once a large farm where a large number of fishermen lived. It is now deserted. The poet Einar Benediktsson (1864-1940) lived there during the last years of his life.



## Stöng and The Saga-Age Farm

Sites of about 40 buildings have been unearthed in the Þjórsárdalur valley and the best preserved and most remarkable is the farmhouse at Stöng excavated in 1939. The replica farmhouse stands at the mouth of the valley, together with a replica of an early church. Open to the public all summer.

by Skógar. Before cascading off the cliffs as Skógafoss, the river flows through the Skógargil gorge, which boasts more than twenty more waterfalls, each with its own charm.

## Mýrdalsjökull

Mýrdalsjökull's peak reaches 1493 metres and Katla Volcano inside the glacier erupts on average every 40-60 years. Sixteen eruptions have been recorded since the settlement of Iceland over 1100 years ago, the last one in 1918.

## Dyrhólaey

Sheer headland rising 120 metres out of the sea with a huge natural arch near Vík í Mýrdal. Reynisdrangur sea stacks, Eldhraun lava fields and Mýrdalssandur sands are also magnificent sights.. An amazing area of strength and beauty.

## Skaftafell

Öræfi was Iceland's most isolated district before the bridges to the west of it were completed in the early seventies. The natural



**Visit South Iceland**

[www.south.is](http://www.south.is)

## Geysir

Geysir has lent its name to the English language in order to christen the phenomenon of the periodically spouting hot springs. You can walk around the Geysir area, a geothermal field where hot springs are in abundance, geysers explode and pools of mud bubble.

## Hekla volcano

One of the most famous volcanoes in the world, Hekla is believed to have erupted at least twenty times since the settlement of Iceland, and five times in the 20th century. The last eruption was in February 2000.

## Skógafoss

One of Iceland's most splendid waterfalls, Skógafoss tumbles 60 metres from the cliffs

contrasts are breathtaking: black sands below white glaciers, desolate wastes and green vegetation. Such a green oasis welcomes you at Skaftafell, just beside the broad desert of the Skeiðarársandur sands and the raging Skeiðará river.

## Black sand beaches and bars

The glacier grinds off the bedrock below it, which generally consists of dark-grey basalt. Glacial rivers carry much of this material to the sea, where the waves, but also currents and winds to a lesser extent, spread it and pile it up in complicated, scenic ways. Such basalt particles have formed a unique beach on the shore of Hornafjörður, with more dark sand stretching far to the west.

[www.south.is](http://www.south.is)



# Hjálparfoss Waterfall

Hjálparfoss is one of several waterfalls in the south of Iceland situated in the lava fields north of the stratovolcano Hekla near the point where the rivers Fossá and Þjórsá join. Hjálparfoss is located about 30 kilometres (19 mi) east of the village Flúðir and can be reached by a gravel road off Route 32 that winds through the Vikrar lava fields. About 5 kilometres (3.1 mi) south of Hjálparfoss lies Þjófafoss; further east are Háifoss on the Fossá and Tangafoss on the Þjórsá.

Just downstream from Hjálparfoss is Iceland's second-largest hydroelectric power station, Búrfellsstöð, well worth the visit.



## Vatnsholt Travel Services

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[www.stayiniceland.is](http://www.stayiniceland.is) - [info@stayiniceland.is](mailto:info@stayiniceland.is) - Tel. +354 899 7748 - [youtube.com vatnsholt](https://www.youtube.com/vatnsholt)





## Rangárþing eystra is the heart of the adventurous South-Iceland

The south of Iceland is sprinkled with adventurous places steeped in history. The area's diversity and natural beauty is breathtaking. Many vividly recall the the Eyjafjallajökull eruption two years ago where Mother nature took charge of proceedings, disrupting airline traffic the world over. Now that the eruption has ceased and the thundering noise has been silenced, many tourists are eager to visit the area where the



glowing lava poured out of the crater. The Þorvaldseyri visitor centre is an ideal place to stop and relive the volcanic experience. Don't forget to have a look at the old thermal pool, Seljavallalaug, which was filled to the brim with volcanic ashes during the eruption.

### Adventurous landscape

Þórsmörk lies just north of Eyjafjallajökul and west of Mýrdalsjökull. Its name derives from Þór, the Nordic god. For generations, Þórsmörk has been a coveted natural spot of beauty. It's stark contrasts are laden with an aura of mystical adventure. Beautiful mountains, giant rocks, glaciers and powerful

glacial rivers surround Þórsmörk. A true oasis of grassy braes and clear brooks, Þórsmörk benefits from its harsh surroundings. Sheltered from the winds, the temperature in Þórsmörk is more often than not higher than anywhere else in the South. Outdoor enthusiasts also love Þórsmörk for the variety of hiking trails available. The Laugavegur trail is a very popular walk that takes you from Þórsmörk to Landmannalaugar, another oasis, in a few days.

### The treasure behind the waterfall

Then there's Skógar, the place where the stunning Skógafoss waterfall has sent billions

of tonnes of water plummeting 200 feet down from the cliff during the centuries. The sheer power of the waterfall and the clarity of the water has mesmerised visitors for generations. According to folk tales, Prasi, the area's first settler hid his treasure in a cave behind the waterfall. The Skógar Museum is an interesting place to visit as there are several renovated old houses that give a good insight into the daily life of Icelanders of past centuries. At Skógar there's also a church.

### From coastline to snowy capped mountains

The South is strewn with diverse leisure opportunities all the way from the coastline up to the snowy capped mountains, with or without experienced tour-guides. Rangárþing eystra offers you a great diversity of opportunities; glacier tours, skidoo-rides, bird-watching, horse-riding, climbing and ice-climbing, golf, museums and exhibitions.





## Puffins in Iceland

Iceland is home to one of the world's largest colonies of puffins. Over half of the world population of the Atlantic Puffin breeds in Iceland. It is estimated that around 3 million pairs breed in Iceland each year – that's 6 million puffins but only 70% of the total are breeding birds. So the total population of puffins in Iceland is between 8 and 10 million birds.

Puffins are both beautiful and fun to look at. They exhibit amusing antics and maneuvers both in air and on land. Perhaps it is this combination of strange colourful look and behavior that make them so cute and cuddly.

There are a number of places in Iceland where you can visit the Atlantic Puffin. Látrabjarg is one of the largest bird cliffs in Iceland. Located in the west of Iceland it is also the westernmost point in Europe. Other Puffin areas are The Westman Islands, Breiðafjörður and Lundy (Puffin Island) just outside Reykjavik. Lundy is not nearly as big a puffin colony as the others but around 30.000 puffins inhabit this small island which is just 3 minutes sailing from Reykjavik.



## Seljalandsfoss – The waterfall you can walk behind

Seljalandsfoss is one of the most famous waterfalls of Iceland. It is very picturesque and therefore its photo can be found in many books and calendars. Seljalandsfoss is situated between Selfoss and Skógafoss waterfall at the road crossing of Route 1 (the Ring Road) with the trail leading into Þórsmörk.

This waterfall of the river Seljalandsá drops 60 metres (200 ft) over the cliffs of the former coastline. It is possible to go behind the waterfall. Access to the waterfall is very good. There is plenty of car parking, and footpaths in the surrounding area. Nearby is a good campsite at Hamragarðar.



**DAILY DEPARTURES  
FROM 15TH OF JUNE  
TO 20TH OF JULY**

## ÞÓRSMÖRK & LANDMANNALAUGAR

A visit to the attractive areas of Landmannalaugar and Þórsmörk - Goðaland (Langidalur & Básar) is ideal for one day or an extended stay. Departure from the Tourist info Centre - Aðalstræti 2 at 07:30, the Campsite Laugardalur (Youth Hostel) at 07:45 & Mörkin 6 at 08:00.

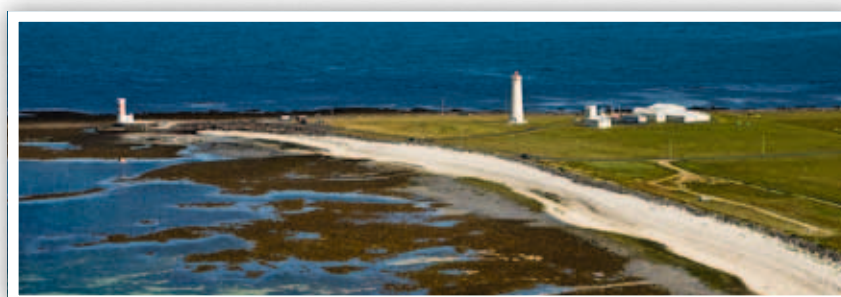
## REYKJANES NATURE RESERVE AND THE BLUE LAGOON

A new guided tour (smart guide in English) exploring the mountains, lava fields and coast at Reykjanes with its great contrasts, both in nature and history. Stop at the Blue lagoon for a relaxing bath. Departure from the Tourist info Centre - Aðalstræti 2 at 09:00 and from the Campsite at 09:10.

### BOOKINGS & INFORMATION:

**Tours and transport:**  
**Tel: + 354 587 6000**  
**e-mail: [info@trex.is](mailto:info@trex.is)**  
**Fb/Trex - Travel Experiences**  
**[www.trex.is](http://www.trex.is)**









# The Reykjanes Peninsula

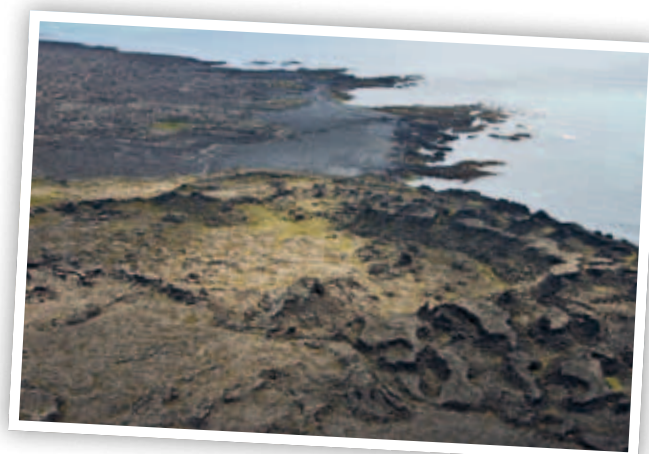
Reykjanes Peninsula is most often the beginning of a traveller's Iceland adventure. As the Reykjanes coastline draws closer and the plane prepares to land at Keflavik Airport, the wrinkled lava, naked hills and mountains, yawning craters, spirals of geothermal steam and virtually treeless environment are probably an exciting contrast to memories of home.

Iceland is a nature paradise, and Reykjanes is a cross section of all that is Iceland. It is the first step into a wonderland, a region that beckons to be explored and enjoyed, that has its own geological drama, its own personality.

Reykjanes is your corridor into and out of Iceland, a place you must experience, a place where there is so much to experience.

## Useful links

Tourist site for the area	<a href="http://www.reykjanes.is">www.reykjanes.is</a>
Grindavik tourist site	<a href="http://www.visitgrindavik.is">www.visitgrindavik.is</a>
Viking World	<a href="http://www.vikingworld.is">www.vikingworld.is</a>
Blue Lagoon	<a href="http://www.bluelagoon.com">www.bluelagoon.com</a>



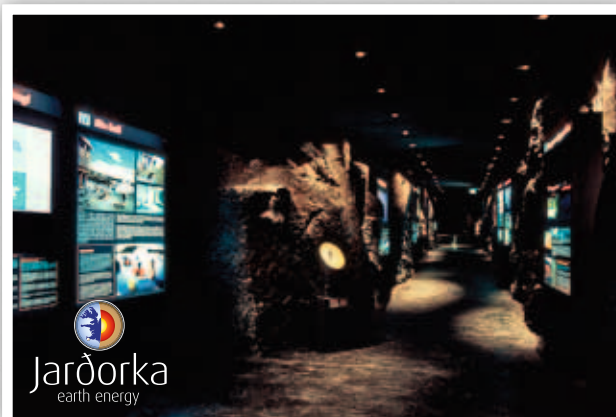
# Many Opportunities for Outdoor Activity in Grindavík







A renowned and entertaining exhibition that thoughtfully pictures the production of clipfish (dried and salted cod) in Iceland.



An enlightening and elaborate exhibition that vividly captures volcanic eruptions, geothermal energy and the earth's powers.



Grindavík's brand new and specially designed campsite has been a hit with travellers. A new 200 square metre facility centre – accompanied by an even bigger wooden-floored resting area – provides campers with all the necessary facilities.



Recently, the town of Grindavík has put an emphasis on bicycle trails and footpaths in the town and surrounding area. For instance, a paved path has been constructed leading from the town and to the Blue Lagoon. "More and more tourists visit Grindavík each year to go surfing for instance, and the mountain Festarfjall is a popular spot for parasailing. We have nice cafés, Kvikan, or "Magma – a House of Culture and Natural Resources" and varied tourist related services like ATV Adventures, and Volcano Tours," says Þorsteinn Gunnarsson the PR officer in the town of Grindavík.

Magma – a House of Culture and Natural Resources opened a year ago in the building that used to house the just the Saltfish museum. Now, in addition to that famed exhibition on the lower floor, on the upper floor a fun and interesting exhibition on geological history and geothermal energy has opened. Also, the centre will serve as a

cultural house for the town with various happenings. The centre is open every day from 10:00 to 17:00.

Grindavík offers many attractions. Just outside of town is a 18 hole golf course that has gotten rave reviews and the town's swimming pool is a haven for the whole family, with a 25m long outdoor pool, a water slide, hot pots and a steam bath.

A new and specially designed campsite has opened with all necessary amenities. Þorsteinn says that a survey done last year showed pleasant results. "The guests found the campsite excellent and that they would recommend it to others without hesitation. Based on those great reviews and the effort that has gone into making the town more attractive to tourists, we here in Grindavík are optimistic and certain we are in for a great tourism summer," says Þorsteinn Gunnarsson.



Þorsteinn Gunnarsson, the town's public relations officer says the people in Grindavík are optimistic for a good summer of tourism.

## Keilir mountain

Keilir is a beautiful, pyramid-shaped mountain clearly visible from Reykjavik on a clear day. It is not very high, a mere 379 m above sea-level. From a certain point of view on the road between Keflavik and Reykjavik.

Keilir was created during subglacial eruptions during the ice age. It's shape makes it distinctive and according to geologists, it probably is a crater plug. In spite of its steep slopes, it is not too difficult to climb, and the view from its top on a fine day is to be remembered.

Keilir is the most distinctive landmark of Reykjanes and a symbol of the Reykjanes peninsula. On top of the mountain is a concrete table with a view direction map on a metal plate.

Source: [www.visitreykjanes.is](http://www.visitreykjanes.is)



Keilir is a symbol of the Reykjanes peninsula.

Photo: [www.reykjanes.is](http://www.reykjanes.is)

## The Lighthouse on Garðskagi



The new lighthouse on Gardskagi is the highest in Iceland.

Photo: [www.reykjanes.is](http://www.reykjanes.is)

On Garðskagi you can find two lighthouses, the older one and also the smaller of the two was once regarded as one of the best lighthouses in Iceland because it stood low and therefore mist was not a problem. Although there was risk of the lighthouse being damaged because of surf and it was sometimes not visible because of seastorm.

A new lighthouse was built on Garðskagi in 1944. At 28 metres it is the highest lighthouse in Iceland and was in second place in a survey which Rögnvaldur Guðmundsson supervised concerning the favorite lighthouses of the Icelandic people. Engineer Axel Sveinsson designed the lighthouse but the lighthouse is a radar transponder and

used for weather surveillance. The operation of the lighthouse is under the supervision of the Icelandic Maritime Administration.

**Location:** Garðskagi. Open: Information at the Municipal Museum at Garður

Source: [www.visitreykjanes.is](http://www.visitreykjanes.is)





House of Culture and Natural Resources

Hafnargata 12a – Tel.: 420 1190 – kvikan@grindavik.is  
www.kvikan.com – Open daily from 10 am to 5 pm



Kvíkan offers two entirely different exhibitions that highlight the natural resources that underpin the Grindavík community and capture the town's characteristics.

Tourist info centre.

Entertaining children's educational material.

## Grindavík Campsite

Grindavík's brand new and specially designed campsite has been a hit with travellers. A new 200 square metre facility centre – accompanied by an even bigger wooden-floored resting area – provides campers with all the necessary facilities.

Grindavík and its vicinity offers great natural diversity. Check it out for yourself!



Austurvegur 26  
Tel.: 420 1100  
grindavik@grindavik.is  
www.visitgrindavik.is



Jarðorka  
earth energy



An enlightening and elaborate exhibition that vividly captures volcanic eruptions, geothermal energy and the earth's powers.



A renowned and entertaining exhibition that thoughtfully pictures the production of clipfish (dried and salted cod) in Iceland.

## Grindavík Swimming Pool



Every major town in Iceland has its own geothermally heated swimming pool. Grindavík offers a 25 metre pool and two hot tubs as well as a water-slide and a shallow children's pool.



GRINDAVÍKURBÆR  
[www.grindavik.is](http://www.grindavik.is)

# A Bridge Between Two Continents



The bridge was built as a symbol for the connection between Europe and North America.

Photo: [www.reykjanes.is](http://www.reykjanes.is)

The lava-scarred Reykjanes peninsula lies on one of the world's major plate boundaries, the Mid Atlantic Ridge. According to the continental drift theory the Eurasian and North American tectonic plates are continuously drifting apart with great forces under the gaping rifts. As the plates diverge, linear fractures, known as fissures form due to stresses created by the tension that builds

up as the plates move away from each other.

The Bridge between two continents at Sandvík is a small footbridge over a major fissure which provides clear evidence of the presence of a diverging plate margin. The bridge was built as a symbol for the connection between Europe and North America. One can cross the continental divide on Leif the Lucky's Bridge and take home a

personalised certificate at Reykjanes Information Center as a confirmation and a reminder of this spectacular experience.

**Location:** About 7 km south of Hafnir by road 425

Source: [www.visitreykjanes.is](http://www.visitreykjanes.is)

## Diverse Birdlife on Reykjanes



Photo: [www.reykjanes.is](http://www.reykjanes.is)

On the Krýsuvíkurborg and Hafnaberg cliffs, thousands of seabirds nest each summer. Krýsuvíkurborg is 50 metres high, and about

57,000 pairs of seabirds nest on these cliffs. The highest point of Hafnaberg is 43 metres, and its estimated population of seabirds is

6,000 pairs. Fourteen kilometres southwest of the peninsula is Eldey island, home to one of the largest gannet colonies in the world. The gannet is the largest seabird in the north Atlantic ocean, and about 16,000 pairs nest each year on the island, which is only 0.3 km<sup>2</sup> in area, and up to 77 metres high.

The arctic tern is among the most common birds in the peninsula, mostly found in colonies on the tip of Reykjanes, east of Grindavík and between Garður and Sandgerði. Whimbrels which breed in the Suðurnes area spend the winter in Africa, and arctic terns migrate to the Antarctic. The golden plover, oystercatcher and snipe are migratory birds which are common in the area, while the purple sandpiper is one of the few Icelandic waders which does not migrate.

Source: [www.visitreykjanes.is](http://www.visitreykjanes.is)



## ONE OF THE 25 WONDERS OF THE WORLD

National Geographic



At **Blue Lagoon** guests enjoy relaxing in warm geothermal seawater, known for its positive effects on the skin. A visit to the Blue Lagoon promotes harmony between body and spirit, and enables you to soak away the stress of modern life. In addition to bathing in the wide open lagoon, guests have access to the silica mud mask, a sauna, a steam bath and a waterfall for an energizing massage.

**Blue Lagoon spa treatments** and massages take place in the lagoon, in the open air, and allow you to enjoy the natural elements and extraordinary environment.

The Blue Lagoon cocktail, algae mask and volcano scrub can be purchased at **Lagoon Bar**, located in the actual lagoon.

**The Exclusive Lounge** is an option for guests looking for more privacy. This novelty features private changing rooms, a modern-design lounge with a fireplace and a reserved indoor lagoon.

**Blue Café** offers light refreshments and is an ideal place to lounge and wait for bathing guests.

**Lava Restaurant** at Blue Lagoon overlooks the lagoon and is built into the cliff, featuring a natural lava wall, adding to its uniqueness. The meals are delicious, inventive and the menu ranges from light dishes to gourmet meals. Lunch buffet is available every day during the summer months.

**Blue Lagoon skin care**, Icelandic design and souvenirs is sold at the Blue Lagoon shop. Tax free available.

[www.bluelagoon.com](http://www.bluelagoon.com)

# Blue Lagoon Spa

## – One of the 25 Wonders of the world



Enjoying a blue cocktail in the lagoon.



The Blue Lagoon is among the wonders of the world according to National Geographic. It is included in a list of 25 locations around the globe in the magazine's special edition on wonders of the world.

In its description of Blue Lagoon National Geographic says „the steaming turquoise pools of Iceland's Blue Lagoon, trapped in volcanic rock represent an otherworldly vision.“ National Geographic says that Blue Lagoon is a geothermal gift of nature. The rain forest is Borneo, Great Rift Valley in East

Africa and Cave of Crystals in Mexico are among the 25 amazing places on the National Geographic list.

Blue Lagoon is a unique geothermal spa. Guests enjoy bathing and relaxing in the Blue Lagoon's geothermal seawater, known for its healing effects and active ingredients: minerals, silica and algae. Visitors actually bathe between two continents, as the Eurasian and North American tectonic plates meet at the Blue Lagoon. The lagoon holds five million litres of pure geothermal

seawater, all of which is renewed every forty hours. Guests can easily access the white silica mud used for skin treatment conveniently placed in boxes at the edges of the lagoon.

Spa experience and treatments at the Blue Lagoon bring perfect harmony by means of the local elements, geothermal seawater, fresh air, natural surroundings, healing effects and unique active ingredients. The Blue Lagoon has developed a range of spa treatments that take place within the lagoon







Architecture in the lava: The Blue lagoon facilities harmonize well with the surrounding nature.

Photo: Lárus Karl Ingason - www.northphotos.net

as the client floats on a mattress in the open air.

- The signature in-water treatments are:
- Energizing and Nourishing Algae Treatment
- Energizing and Firming Silica Treatment
- Silica and Salt Glow
- Relaxing in-water massage

The Blue Lagoon was recently on CNN's list of the ten most exotic spas in the world.



### Discover Blue Lagoon

A guided tour, Discover the Wonders of the Blue Lagoon, is offered several times daily. The tour offers a look behind the scenes with emphasis on Blue Lagoon's history, geology and science.

### Dining – Emphasis on fresh seafood

The Blue Lagoon offers a relaxing dining experience. The restaurant area overlooks the lagoon and its surreal natural environment. Viktor Örn Andrússon is Head Chef at Blue Lagoon's Lava Restaurant. He is a member of the Icelandic culinary team and has gained broad experience in Iceland and abroad. The menu at Lava reflects his emphasis on using fresh Icelandic ingredients in preparing a menu with an international flair. Seafood is a prominent feature. Viktor describes the menu as Icelandic with diverse flair and texture. "The menu features sushi, vegetarian dishes, Icelandic lamb, and the catch of day delivered fresh from the dock", Viktor says. A lunch buffet is available daily from 1 June through 31 August.

### Daily fresh traceable fish

"The Blue Lagoon is located in Grindavík, Iceland's premier fishing village, and this ensures us access to the freshest available fish every day", says Viktor. "We find that

our guests are increasingly aware of the freshness of Icelandic seafood. Our fish is from Stakkavík here in Grindavík, and the fish we receive is traceable, which means that we know which boat caught it, at what time and when it was brought to shore."

Combining emerging international trends with Icelandic ingredients is key at the Blue Lagoon, where the emphasis is to always provide guests with the best available food and a truly unique dining experience.

[www.bluelagoon.com](http://www.bluelagoon.com)

# Nature Centre Sandgerði



Photo: www.reykjanes.is

The Nature Centre was established in 1995. At the centre, visitors can look at various kind of organisms from the Icelandic nature and living animals in seawater tanks. Small sea creatures from the bottom of the sea or the nearby pond can be observed through binocular microscopes. The museum is an ideal place for curious tourists and parents with children thirsting for knowledge.

The staff of the Nature Centre organize field work for students in elementary schools. Among the most popular are going to the shore or the pond and gather samples of living creatures and plants, bring them into

the centre where they can study them by the help of teachers, staff and the great variety of books on the subject found there. The history of the community Sandgerði is accessible in written material at the centre and staff members will give guided tours through the village upon request.

At the centre, there are also facilities and accommodation for scientists doing research in connection with the BIOICE project, located in the same building. Now, the Nature Centre is housing an exhibition about the research and life of the famous French explorer and marine biologist Jean-Baptiste Charcot. He

and his crew perished in his ship the Pourquoi Pas in a great seastorm on the coast of Iceland in 1936.

**Location:** 245, Sandgerði

Source: www.visitreykjanes.is



Photo: www.reykjanes.is

## Viking World Iceland



Photo: Lárus Karl Ingason - www.northphotos.net

Vikingaheimar is the home of the Viking Ship Íslendingur (the Iclander). Built in 1996, Iclander is an exact replica of the famous Gokstad ship, a remarkable archaeological find of an almost completely intact Viking ship, excavated in Norway in 1882. The sail is 130 square meters and the mast is 18 meters in length. Made from pine and oak, scholars believe this was the most common type of ship in use during the Viking Age.

Vikingaheimar is also a home to the exhibition The North Atlantic Viking Saga, originally shown at the Smithsonian

Institution during the summer of 2000. This exhibition, like the sailing of Iclander, celebrated the millennium anniversary of the Viking discovery of North America, shedding light on the latest scholarly research into the Norse settlement and explorations of unknown lands.

These two fine projects, both celebrating Iceland's central role in the discovery of North America 1000 years ago by the Norse Vikings, have now found a permanent home in Vikinga Aldan (Viking Wave), the central building on the Vikingaheimar grounds. A spectacular modern building, it also offers beautiful views of the surrounding bay, Faxaflói.

**Location:** 260, Reykjanesbær

Source: www.visitreykjanes.is

## Gunnuhver

Iceland's largest mud pool at present prominent, highest up in the Gunnuhver group, close to Reykjanes lighthouse, are collectively named Gunnuhver after a female ghost that was laid there. She had caused great disturbance until a priest set a trap for her and she fell into the spring. This happened about 400 years ago. It is 20 meters wide across a rim of mud, boiling vigorously.

Gunnuhver is the heart in a future geopark where the North Atlantic ridge is rising from the ocean, you find 100 different craters and lava, bird cliffs, high geothermal area, sand beach, The Bridge Between Continents, powerplant, lighthouses and exhibitions amongst other things.

**Location:** East of Reykjaneslighthouse

Source: www.visitreykjanes.is



# Hafkalk – Nature's supplement from lime algae

The ocean is full of secrets. Among those are minerals and traces of various supplements essential for the health of humans and found in algae. Hafkalk produces a supplement from lime algae, Calcified Seaweed, which is classified as red algae. Once cleaned and boiled, the algae is dried at high temperatures and finally ground into fine grained powder, before the supplement is put into capsules which are also produced from natural extracts.

„Our supplement has proved extremely popular,” says Jörundur Garðarsson, managing director of Hafkalk. He adds: „Mainly because it apparently reduces arthralgia.” He tells us the story of an elderly lady that could no longer knit because of pain in her fingers. Once she started taking Hafkalk the pain disappeared and she could resume her favourite pastime.



Garðarsson says he has been contacted by many users eager to share their positive experience. Not only have they waved goodbye to arthralgia but one customer also maintained that the bones in his broken shoulder had healed faster than anticipated due to his use of Hafkalk.

„People have realized that Hafkalk rids

them of restless feet syndrome while magnesium in the product is linked to the apparent prevention of feet cramp. The calcium content in the product prevents osteoporosis which is common among the elderly, especially among women. Due to the nature of the minerals the human body easily absorbs them,” says Garðarsson.

He also mentions that many users point out that the lime algae strengthen their nails and hair. All these wonderful features of the product were the reason for its popularity Garðarsson enthused. Hafkalk is now widely distributed and sold in pharmacies and health stores around Iceland while also being offered at the Duty Free store at Keflavik international airport.

[www.hafkalk.is](http://www.hafkalk.is)

## Who needs oil when you have rain?

Visit our interactive exhibition on renewable energy at Búrfell Power Station.



**Landsvirkjun**

Landsvirkjun is one of Europe's leading renewable energy companies

Free admission from 10 am – 6 pm every day from the 1st of June to the 30th of August.  
Route information at [www.landsvirkjun.com/visitors](http://www.landsvirkjun.com/visitors)



# DAY TOURS

SMALL GROUPS  
**PERSONAL**  
TOUR GUIDES

## FROM AKUREYRI & LAKE MÝVATN



Mt. Herðubreifið



Askja



Whale Watching







WE ARE  
ALL YEAR  
NORTH ICELAND  
TOUR OPERATOR



Waterfall Goðafoss



Lake Mývatn Nature Baths



Cave Lofthellir



[www.sagatravel.is](http://www.sagatravel.is)



# DAY TOURS

SMALL GROUPS  
PERSONAL  
TOUR GUIDES

FROM AKUREYRI  
& LAKE MÝVATN



WE ARE  
ALL YEAR  
NORTH ICELAND  
TOUR OPERATOR

**SAGA**  
TRAVEL

## Local Food and Gourmet

All the producers we visit are small family firms and by some the knowledge has travelled from generation to generation and they will offer us to taste for example blue mussel, beer, cod, beef, lamb and ice-cream.



## Farmers Passion

Not only will this tour present to you the Akureyri countryside, but by taking you to the local neighbourhood, to the farms and farmers you will learn to know the Icelandic way of living.



[www.sagatravel.is](http://www.sagatravel.is)





Kristján M. Baldursson, managing director of TREX Travel.

Photo: Trex.

## TREX, a coach rental with continuous service for 35 years

„The main focus of our business is to service groups of foreign as well as domestic tourists. Trex has access to a big and versatile fleet of coaches in Iceland. We operate close to 90 coaches in summer operation and 50 coaches in winter operation, equipped with comfort in mind and we are able to service big as well as small groups. We can also provide coaches especially equipped for driving in the highlands,” says Kristján M. Baldursson, the managing director of TREX Travel.

According to Kristján one of the most popular tours among foreign tourist groups in the summer are the trips around and across Iceland.

From 15/6 to 20/8 TREX offers daily excursions by bus to Landmannalaugar and Þórsmörk where you can depart at your own convenience and return whenever you like. These tours make it possible for tourists that do not have jeeps for their disposals to access natural treasures in the Icelandic highland. From Reykjavík departures are at the Tourist Information center at 07:30, Campsite in Laugardalur at 07:45 and the Touring Club's office Mörkinni 6 at 08:00. Camping facilities and sleeping bag accommodation in mountain cabins are available in Landmannalaugar and

Þórsmörk. „Whether you make it a one day visit or an extended stay these attractive areas are an ideal base for a variety of rewarding daylong or shorter hikes,” says Kristján. Trex also offers a 5 day guided Laugavegur trekking tour and a 3 day Kjölur-Kerlingarfjöll hiking in July and August.

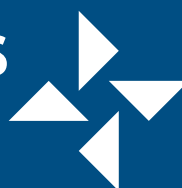
„Worth mentioning is also a new 7 hours Reykjanes and Blue Lagoon guided tour (Smart guide in English), exploring the mountains and vast lava fields of the Reykjanes peninsula with its great contrasts, both in nature and history. Among attractions is the scenic newly rebuilt coastal route between the fishing villages

Þorlákshöfn and Grindavík including the power plant Hellisheiðarvirkjun, the mysterious Strandarkirkja and Krýsuvík geothermal area. The last stop (1,5 hours) is at the Blue Lagoon. Departure is at 09:00 from the Reykjavík Information center and 09:10 from the Campsite in Laugardalur. All tours need to be booked in advance.

For further information on TREX visit website: [www.trex.is](http://www.trex.is). Information are also found at facebook: Trex - Travel Experiences.

[www.trex.is](http://www.trex.is)

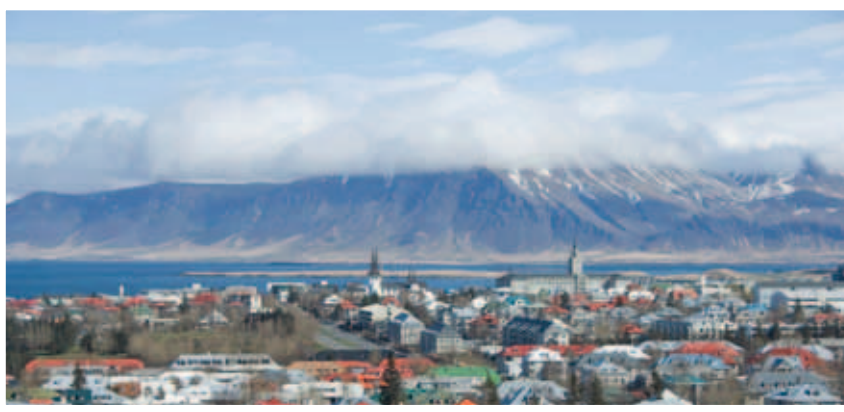
### Veðurstofa Íslands



[www.vedur.is](http://www.vedur.is)

Weather forecast  
in English:

**902 06 00**







# The Capital Area

The Reykjavik capital area must be on the list of anyone looking for fun and adventure in a world of spa wellness. It has most of the advantages of big-city life and virtually none of the disadvantages.

The capital area is characterized by huge quantities of diverse, cultural energy; an excellent variety of leisure and entertainment possibilities; world-famous nightlife; thermal baths, pools and spas; clean air and water; plenty of restaurants serving creative dishes made from natural, Icelandic ingredients; and friendly, style-conscious residents – most of whom speak English.

Comprised of seven municipalities – Reykjavik, Hafnarfjörður, Kópavogur, Garðabær, Mosfellsbær, Seltjarnarnes and Álftanes – the capital area is the hub of the Icelandic nation. It is where about two-thirds of the country's population of 310,000 live and work, and it exists in close harmony with pristine nature and renewable energy resources.

## Useful links

Capital area tourist site	<a href="http://www.visitreykjavik.is">www.visitreykjavik.is</a>
Public buses	<a href="http://www.bus.is">www.bus.is</a>
Harpa Concert Hall	<a href="http://www.harpa.is">www.harpa.is</a>
National Museum of Iceland	<a href="http://www.natmus.is">www.natmus.is</a>
Reykjavik City Museum	<a href="http://www.minjasafnreykjavikur.is">www.minjasafnreykjavikur.is</a>
National Gallery of Iceland	<a href="http://www.listasafn.is">www.listasafn.is</a>
Kópavogur Art Museum	<a href="http://www.gerdarsafn.is">www.gerdarsafn.is</a>
Reykjavik Art Museum	<a href="http://www.artmuseum.is">www.artmuseum.is</a>
Hafnarfjörður Institute of Culture and Fine Art	<a href="http://www.hafnarborg.is">www.hafnarborg.is</a>
Icelandic National Theatre	<a href="http://www.leikhusid.is">www.leikhusid.is</a>
Iceland Symphony Orchestra	<a href="http://www.sinfonia.is">www.sinfonia.is</a>
Iceland Dance Company	<a href="http://www.id.is">www.id.is</a>
Airwaves Festival	<a href="http://www.airwaves.is">www.airwaves.is</a>
Reykjavik Arts Festival	<a href="http://www.listahatid.is">www.listahatid.is</a>

# Reykjavík Art Museum

Founded in 1973, the Reykjavík Art Museum is the largest visual art institution in Iceland. Its mission to present contemporary art in its many manifestations is carried out through diverse programs at the museum's three venues: Hafnarhus, Kjarvalsstaðir, and Ásmundarsafn. Architecture has been a part of the museum programs since 1993.

The museum is situated at three different locations in the city: the Kjarvalsstaðir exhibition hall at Miklatún, Hafnarhus, located in downtown Reykjavík and the Ásmundur Sveinsson Sculpture Museum and Park at Sigtún.

The Reykjavík Art Museum has three collections of works by individual artists: Ásmundur Sveinsson, Jóhannes S. Kjarval and Erró. The Museum is also in charge of the General art collection of the city of Reykjavík as well as most of the outdoor sculptures.

**Further information:** [www.artmuseum.is](http://www.artmuseum.is)



Photo: Sigurður B. Sævarsson

## A visit to Iceland's Nobel Laureate



Gljúfrasteinn is an exceptionally beautiful house, inside and out, reflecting Halldór and Auður Laxness's excellent taste in art and design.

Just a 15-minute drive from the centre of Reykjavík is Gljúfrasteinn, the home and workplace of Halldór Laxness (winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1955) and his family for more than half a century. It has now been opened to the public as a museum, unchanged from when Laxness lived there. "We have tried to keep the atmosphere of the house intact – a visit to Gljúfrasteinn is a visit to Halldór's house as it was during his lifetime", explains Guðný Dóra Gestsdóttir, manager of Gljúfrasteinn. The house was purchased by the state in 2002 from Laxness's widow, Auður Laxness.

"We offer tours around the museum with audio guides where people can hear both Halldór and Auður Laxness speaking", says Guðný, adding that the guides are available in several languages: French, English, German, Swedish, and Danish. "We also offer our visitors an interesting multimedia exhibition about the writer's life and works in his former garage, which is now the reception area for the museum."

### Musical Moments at Gljúfrasteinn

Gljúfrasteinn was a highly cultured home, with beautiful paintings from some of Iceland's most renowned artists, such as Jóhannes Kjarval, Nína Tryggvadóttir, and Svavar Guðnason. In the forties Halldór and Auður hosted concerts in their living room where world-renowned artists performed. "We would like to hang on to this connection to the music world, and every Sunday during the summer at 16:00 we have concerts here, featuring some of the country's best musicians. It's a lovely addition to the museum, and a part in keeping the museum lively", says Guðný.

Not everyone visits Gljúfrasteinn for the museum itself, Guðný explains: "During the summer months we get a lot of hikers as there are many wonderful trails here in the valley. We encourage our guests to go walking about and explore the area. Halldór himself was a great lover of nature and took long walks in the area. People can also relax in the garden by the house, which is also quite beautiful, and simply enjoy the warm, green summer."



# The Presidential Residence Bessastaðir

The history of Bessastaðir has been closely associated with the history of Iceland since the times of the settlement in the 9th century AD. Archeological excavations have shown that the first inhabitants of Bessastaðir settled there before AD 1000, and ever since the site has been inhabited. In the 13th century the great writer Snorri Sturluson had one of his farms there. After Snorri's death, the king of Norway confiscated the property, and during the remainder of the middle ages it was used by top representatives of the foreign rulers of Iceland. In the 17th century Bessastaðir was the residence of the most powerful representative of the Danish monarch in Iceland.

The main building at Bessastaðir was built in 1761-1766. In 1805 the only secondary school in Iceland moved there. It was attended among others by the 'Fjölnismenn' and other students who later became leaders of the campaign for national independence. The school moved to Reykjavík in 1846. In 1867 the farm was purchased by the poet and statesman Grímur Thomsen, who lived there



The residence for the President of Iceland.

Photo: Lárus Karl Ingason - www.northphotos.net

for almost two decades. Among later owners were editor and parliamentarian Skúli Thoroddsen, and his wife, Theodóra Thoroddsen, who was well known for her literary works. In 1940 Sigurður Jónasson

bought Bessastaðir and donated it to the state in 1941 as a residence for the Regent and later the President of Iceland.

Source: www.forseti.is



**Gljúfrasteinn**  
LAXNESS MUSEUM  
*Laxness*

**Gljúfrasteinn is the former home of writer Halldór Laxness – Nobel Prize for Literature 1955**

- Audio guide in English, German, Swedish, Danish and Icelandic. Illustrated guide in French.
- Multimedia presentation
- Souvenir Shop
- Walking paths in the vicinity

#### Opening hours

Summer: Every day 9.00 – 17.00

Winter: Tuesday – Sunday 10.00 – 17.00

**20 min from Reykjavík city centre**

**On the way to Thingvellir National Park**

## Höfði House

Höfði House, built in 1909, might be one of the most beautiful buildings in all of Reykjavik. It is best known as the location for the 1986 summit meeting of presidents Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbatsjov, a historical event that many say effectively marked the end of the Cold War. Among other renowned guests of Höfði House are various celebrities and heads of state (amongst them the Queen of England), Winston Churchill and Marlene Dietrich.

Höfði is owned by the City of Reykjavik and is currently used for official receptions and meetings of the municipality. Höfði House is unfortunately not open to the public, although visitors are welcome to explore the house from the outside. The house is located at Borgartún and a visit to the house can be combined with a pleasant stroll along the waterfront.

Source: [www.visitreykjavik.is](http://www.visitreykjavik.is)



Höfði House, built in 1909, is best known as the location for the 1986 summit meeting of presidents Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbatsjov.

Photo: Lárus Karl Ingason - [www.northphotos.net](http://www.northphotos.net)

## Viðey Island and the Imagine Peace Tower



Viðey is the location of Yoko Ono's Imagine Peace Tower.

Photo: Lárus Karl Ingason - [www.northphotos.net](http://www.northphotos.net)

Offshore Viðey Island is a unique site only a few minutes away from the city by boat.

The island is of historical importance. It was the site of an Augustine monastery from 1225 to 1539. The Videyjarstofa house, where there is now a restaurant, was built in 1755 and is the first construction made of stone and cement in the country. The church was

consecrated in 1774 and is the second oldest one still standing. The island became the seat of the first Icelandic treasurer and later the first Icelandic sub-governor, Skúli Magnússon.

The island has extensive paths for walking and cycling (there are bicycles you can borrow), impressive birdlife, a playground and toys, a café and a restaurant.

Viðey is the location of Yoko Ono's Imagine Peace Tower, a work of art in the form of a wishing well from which a very strong and tall tower of light emerges at certain times of year.

Source: [www.visitreykjavik.is](http://www.visitreykjavik.is)



# Harpa – Reykjavik Concert and Conference Centre



Photo: Lárus Karl Ingason - www.northphotos.net

Harpa opened its doors on May 4th and celebrated its final opening ceremony in August 2011 when the building was formally inaugurated. Harpa provides outstanding facilities in the centre of Reykjavik, Iceland. The building is the ideal venue for various concerts and musical events, international conferences, conventions with accompanying trade shows, as well as meetings.

Harpa's facade is designed by artist Olafur

Eliasson, Henning Larsen Architects and Batterið Architects. The design is based on a geometric principle, realized in two and three dimensions. Reminiscent of the crystallised basalt columns commonly found in Iceland, the southern facades create kaleidoscopic reflections of the city and the striking surrounding landscape.

Harpa provides outstanding facilities for all types of music both classical, contemporary,

opera, jazz, pop and rock. The halls have outstanding acoustics, well suited for a grand scale of music. The halls vary in size ranging from 200 seats to 1800 and all facilities are equipped to the highest standard. The main hall, Eldborg has great acoustics for various concerts and is the hall where the Iceland Symphony and the Icelandic Opera host their concerts and stage operas.

Source: [www.visitreykjavik.is](http://www.visitreykjavik.is)

## Geothermal Beach Reykjavik

In Iceland the sea is normally far too cold to tempt swimmers, but at Nauthólsvík bay in Reykjavik, a thermal beach has been created, where natural hot water flows out into the sea, and you can frolic in the waves as if you were in the Mediterranean!

A beach of golden sand has been created and a „pool“ has been enclosed nearby, where the water temperature is about 20°C. Refreshments and various services are available at the beach.

Nauthólsvík beach is open daily 10:00 to 20:00 from 16th May until 31st August. Free entrance to changing rooms, showers and 'hot pot' (hot tub). Refreshments available on site.

For more information visit the website [www.nautholsvik.is](http://www.nautholsvik.is)

Source: [www.visitreykjavik.is](http://www.visitreykjavik.is)



Photo: Lárus Karl Ingason - www.northphotos.net

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