

Iceland Fire & Ice



Iceland Travel

8 Days March 15-22, 2019
From \$4182*

- The UNESCO site of the continental rift at Thingvellir National Park • Cave farmhouse
- Geothermal bakery • Gullfoss Waterfall • Strokkur hot spring geyser • Diverse nature of the South Coast: volcanoes, glaciers and waterfalls • Icelandic horses • Reynisfjara black sand beach • Europe's largest glacier & iceberg glacial lagoon • See the impact of volcanic eruptions near Eyjafjallajökull • Northern lights hunt in optimal rural locations • Blue Lagoon • Reykjavik



ICEBERGS, HOT SPRINGS and volcanoes dominate Iceland's beautiful yet rugged landscape. On our guided coach tour, experience the hidden powers of the island including dramatic vistas of the notorious Eyjafjallajökull volcano and the breathtaking Glacial Lagoon.

You have a chance to see the Northern Lights while in the countryside & on an optional boat ride

With rural stays perfectly situated to watch for the magical Northern Lights in the night sky. Iceland is one of the best places in the world to experience this majestic phenomenon.

Iceland's smallest glacier, Eyjafjallajökull





South Iceland's Kirkjubaejarklaustur: population 160 & countless waterfalls



Day 2 Saturday: Flight Arrival-Reykjavik

Your private coach and a professional local guide will be awaiting your arrival at the Reykjavik airport. We start the day by having breakfast before driving into the capital city.

Reykjavik is affectionately called the Biggest Little City in the World. We take a sightseeing tour where you will explore Reykjavik's top attractions and hear interesting facts and stories that relate to history and culture in Iceland. The tour travels the greater Reykjavik area including surrounding municipalities which

Itinerary

Day 1 Friday: Central Illinois-Chicago-Flight

WILL's John Steinbacher welcomes you aboard our private motor coach to Chicago O'Hare where sky-caps help with our luggage from the coach. We board our late afternoon flight bound for Iceland.

You can opt to ride a pony-sized Icelandic Horse

Jokulsarlon Glacial Lagoon





provides an excellent opportunity to discover various things to see or do in Reykjavik during your stay. Enjoy spectacular views from the observation platforms at Perlan, the fascinating landmark structure built upon the city's hot water tanks. You will see Reykjavik's sea front to the old Hofdi house where the all-important summit between former U.S. President Ronald Reagan and former U.S.S.R. Secretary General Mikhail Gorbachev took place in 1986. You will then proceed to visit Hallgrímskirkja church whose design was inspired by basalt lava columns, a common volcanic rock formation in Icelandic nature.

Last but not least you will explore the old town on foot seeing the Icelandic parliament Althingi and Reykjavik's town hall. Spend the rest of the day at leisure. We overnight at the Hotel Alda. Tonight we have an optional Northern Lights harbor cruise, weather permitting. (B)

University of Iceland (Háskóli Íslands)



Day 3 Sunday: Reykjavik-Golden-Circle-Fludir

Enjoy breakfast at your hotel each morning. Sunday begins with a visit to the new Northern Lights Centre in Reykjavik for an exciting and informative presentation on the Northern Lights. Then, we're off to Thingvellir National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage site on the shores of Iceland's largest lake. This is where the world's oldest parliament met for centuries. Then, we drive to Laugarvatn Fontana to experience a geothermal bakery. We will sample the delicious bread served hot from the ground and slathered with fresh Icelandic butter. We'll continue through farmland areas to the geothermal fields of Geysir with its bubbling mud pools and the high-spouting Strokkur hot spring. At our last stop of the day we will visit the dramatic two-tiered Gullfoss waterfall.

A group dinner is included this evening. We will stay in the Fludir area at Icelandair Hotel Fludir. Included at this countryside hotel: a Northern Lights hunt kit including a flashlight, blanket & hot drink—to venture out in search of the Northern Lights. (B, D)

Day 4 Monday: Fludir-South Coast-Kirkjubaejarklaustur

Our drive will cruise along the south shore, an area of Iceland that is quite beautiful to view in

Charitable Donation

This trip is designed as a fund-raiser for *WILL*, your favorite public television and radio station. The more people who travel with *WILL*, the more funding the station receives. A non-refundable donation of at least \$200/person is included in your trip cost. After the trip, you will receive a charitable donation receipt to use as a tax deduction. *WILL* thanks you for your support!

Puffin





Continental rift at Thingvellir



Your tour host

John Steinbacher is Illinois Public Media's membership director.

Weather

The temperature range is likely to be between 31-39°. Being so far north, we will have about 13 hours of daylight at this time of year.

the winter. This is one of the main farm regions of the country, and the road will pass by typical farms, often with Icelandic horses (a small, almost pony-sized native breed) in the fields. We'll stop at the spectacular waterfalls Seljalandsfoss and Skogafoss. Then we head onward passing by Myrdalsjokull Glacier to visit Reynisfjara Beach for a walk on the black sands, admiring the extraordinary rock formations and thundering waves of the Atlantic Ocean. Dinner and overnight stay in Kirkjubaejarklaustur area at Icelandair Hotel Klaustur. (B, D)

Day 5 Tuesday: Jokulsarlon Glacier Lagoon-Kirkjubaejarklaustur

Today we enter Vatnajokull National Park, named after Europe's largest glacier. This

national park is also the largest in Europe. The park's Skaftafell region is a site of outstanding natural beauty, dominated by Vatnajokull glacier. Our group continues to Jokulsarlon Glacial Lagoon to enjoy breathtaking views of floating icebergs.

Return to the hotel for dinner and overnight at Icelandair Hotel Klaustur. (B, D)

Day 6 Wednesday: Kirkjubaejarklaustur-Volcanic Areas-Hveragerdi-Blue Lagoon-Reykjavik

We will explore the region near the towering strato-volcano Eyjafjallajokull, one of the world's most famous volcanoes. At the Volcano Visitor Centre at Thorvaldseyri Farm, located beneath Eyjafjallajokull Volcano,



Icelandic sheep's wool for nice sweaters

you will see photos and documentary footage of the 2010 eruption and its impact on the countryside, the country itself and the whole world.

Head towards the village of Hveragerdi, which is one of the few sites in the world located directly on top of a geothermal area. Hveragerdi is often called "the flower village" because of its many greenhouses heated by hot water from nearby springs. The tour then continues to Strandarkirkja, a church that is widely believed to have special powers to aid success or provide good luck. Follow along the coastline with its breathtaking sea waves and through a deserted

Blue Lagoon





Hveragardi, the charming "flower village" called the gateway to the South

community that once was a flourishing center for the region.

Conclude your tour today in the Reykjanes peninsula. Relax and enjoy an (optional) dip in the famous Blue Lagoon, a natural wonder featuring pleasantly warm, mineral rich water and striking black lava formations.

Two-night stay in Reykjavik at Hotel Alda. Dinner is on your own. (B)

Day 7 Thursday: Free day in Reykjavik

Spend your last day in Iceland exploring the capital city on your own. Your tour manager can help you arrange an optional tour, like a horseback ride (optional tours often require prior booking). We are treated to a delicious farewell dinner at a local restaurant in Reykjavik. (B, FD)

Traditional grass-roofed houses



Strokkur Geyser

Day 8 Friday: Reykjavik-Flight-Chicago-Central Illinois

Saying farewell we are taken by private motor coach to the airport to board our same-day flight back to Chicago. On arrival our motor coach will be waiting to return us to Central Illinois with awe-inspiring memories of the land of fire and ice. (B)

Included meals are noted each day with the initials for Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner.

What's Included: • Round trip motor coach transportation from Central Illinois • Round trip flights • Round trip transportation from airport to hotel • Touring by luxury air-conditioned coach, tour director, baggage handling (where available), sightseeing & admissions • 11 Meals: 7 Breakfasts 4 Dinners • \$86 current total taxes & fees, subject to change • A donation to WILL, as a fundraiser • Hotel accommodations • Led by John Steinbacher

Accommodations: (6) total number of nights
 Reykjavik (1) Hotel Alda
 Fludir (1) Icelandair hotel Fludir
 Kirkjubaejarklaustur (2) Icelandair hotel Klaustur
 Reykjavik (2) Hotel Alda

What's Not Included: • Airline baggage fees if any • Optional tours and meals not noted in itinerary • Tax/fuel surcharges in effect if any • Tips to tour manager, driver and local guides • Travel insurance

*All prices are per person, based on occupancy, double: \$4182, single: \$4783, call for third person price (subject to room configuration and current prices). • Document required for

Physical Requirements

Travel in Iceland requires more walking, steps and inclines that could be difficult or impossible for those with physical limitations. You need to decide whether you can accept that this may make you miss parts of the tour or stay at the hotel and be on your own. Each of our hotels has elevators or is on one level. Please note that this tour consists of daily outdoor walks in areas of outstanding beauty; no hikes or strenuous activity are planned. Please also note: baggage handling service is not often available at Iceland's small hotels. Guests will transport their own luggage at times.

Jökulsárlón glacial lake





Gullfoss, a double waterfall

US Citizens is passport valid through June 22, 2019; no visa or shots at this time. Other citizens should consult their consulate. • Insurance coverage is Deluxe Group Plan from Travel Guard at a cost of 7.2% to cover cancellation charges, for coverage details see www.tourgroupplanners.com/insurance.html. Other terms at www.tourgroupplanners.com/terms.html incorporated by reference. For insurance to be valid, you must be physically able to travel the day you sign up for the trip and pay your deposit. • Details are subject to change. Acct#190315r 05/25/18 19:01

Nesjavellir geothermal power plant



Join us from • Champaign • Chicago O'Hare • Decatur • Springfield or call for a quote from other cities. Tour Coordinator is Judy McElfresh, email: Judy@TourGroupPlanners.com; call **217-422-5002** to charge your credit card for the **\$1300** per person deposit including insurance. Final payment will be due December 15, 2018. Or mail check (payable to **Rio Grande Travel**) to **Tour Group Planners**, 363 S Main St Suite 307, Decatur IL 62523



Iceland Arctic Fox





Optional Tours for Day 7

Optional day trip, The Wonders of Snæfellsnes



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- 1. The Wonders of Snæfellsnes** \$196, 13 hrs. Guided coach tour.
- 2. Lava Horseback Riding Tour** \$136, 4 hrs (1.5-2 hrs riding). Coach transfer to riding area, guided riding tour and riding gear.
- 3. Whale Watching** \$114, 5 hrs. Guided boat tour, overalls and access to Whale Exhibition.
- 4. Northern Lights Boat Tour** \$114, 2-2.5 hrs with overalls and warm drinks on board.
- 5. Take a Walk on the Ice Side** \$268, 10 hrs. Coach transfer 3-3.5 hrs guided glacier hike, gear & safety equipment.
- 6. Into the Glacier-Ice Cave Tour** \$309, 9-10 hrs. Guided coach tour, monster glacier truck tour to Ice Cave Iceland and entrance to the Ice Cave.

Reykjavik, a small Scandinavian city

