

The Best of Iceland

An innovative
independent escorted tour
With choices for
independent travelers

14 days, North and South
Or 7 days Best of North Iceland
Or 7 days Best of South Iceland
Choice of accommodations
Free time or optional guided sight-seeing



2016

There is something new under the midnight sun!! The exciting coach program combines the security of an escorted tour with the flexibility of independent touring. In 14 days (7 in the north, 7 in the south) you'll experience some of the most fascinating parts of Iceland. Your guide will take you through many places you might not get to on your own -- and there are several days with optional tours, which you can join or do something (hike, ride, explore) on your own. Or just lounge the day away in a hot swimming pool -- it's up to you. Lots of options -- but no wrong choices!



The Best of Iceland lives up to its name!

Anyone with a sense of adventure and in reasonable health can enjoy this tour!

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What's so special about the Best of Iceland? It's a whole new idea, actually, combining comfortable touring, good guiding and flexibility. The Complete Best of Iceland is 14 days, including a pre and post night in Reykjavik, then 6 nights in North Iceland and 5 in the south. Not only do you cover a lot of territory with your guide, but you can also choose to take (or not) some optional half and full day tours along the way. You also have the choice to do stuff on your own - hiking, riding or organized tours, or lounging, swimming and relaxing. Great concept --and for the time-impaired, you can have the 7 day version - the Best of North Iceland or the Best of South Iceland!

The Daily Itinerary:

Saturday, Day 0:

leave N America on an Icelandair flight

Sunday; Day 1:

Welcome to Iceland

Early arrival in Iceland. You'll take the flybus to your hotel in Reykjavik, and have the day to explore. Lots of great places to eat, enjoy, relax.

Monday Day 2:

West Iceland to Akureyri

You'll set out after breakfast and head to West Iceland, to explore Hraunfossar waterfalls, Europe's most powerful hot spring and climb the extinct volcano Grábrók. Then it's further north a stop an excellent little museum – the Glaumbær Turf Farmstead, and then traveling along fjords and over mountains to Akureyri, where you'll be based for the next 5 nights.

Tuesday Day 3:

Akureyri and Hrisey Island option

Get to know the capital of North Iceland a bit with a city walk in the morning, and a visit to it's excellent botanical garden. The rest of the day is free for hiking or other day tours around the town

Tour option: an afternoon excursion by bus & ferry to Hrisey Island. This is Iceland's second largest island, known for it's bird life – you may see ptarmigan, arctic terns and eider ducks. 4-5 hours \$80 per person

Wednesday, Day 4:

Lake Myvatn

You'll have a full day guided excursion to historic Goðafoss waterfall and Lake Mývatn, known for its rich bird life and extraordinary volcanic lava landscapes.

Thursday Day 5:

Free day or Siglufjordur tour

Explore Akureyri on your own, go hiking or on a riding tour which can be booked locally, or join an optional day excursion to Siglufjörður.

Tour option: It's a very pretty drive along fjords and through tunnels to Iceland's most northern town, Siglufjörður. It's in quite a dramatic setting, and has been known over the years as Iceland's herring capital 8 hours \$130 per person .

Friday, Day 6:

Husavik, Asbyrgi and Dettifoss

North along Eyjafjörður then east to Húsavík, a pretty little town which is the whale watching capital of Iceland .

You can join a whale watching cruise or visit some of the town's many museums. In the afternoon you'll travel to Jökulsárgljúfur National Park, and visit the horseshoe shaped canyon of Ásbyrgi and then go on to Dettifoss, Europe's most powerful waterfall.

Tour option: take a 2-hour whale-watching cruise with North Sailing (weather permitting) \$ 80 per person.

Saturday, Day 7:

The Kjölur Highland Road.

Drive through history via the Kjölur Route. This ancient interior track has taken travelers from north to south, and south to north, between the glaciers Langjökull and Hofsjökull for centuries. It's much more comfortable in today's modern coaches, but the vast desert landscape remains unchanged. You'll have a chance to soak in the hot springs of Hveravellir, as have other outlaws in Iceland's past. You'll be in the south for the next 6 nights.



These tours (as is common with adventure touring everywhere) are subject to the guides assessment of conditions – if conditions aren't suited for a particular activity the itinerary may be rearranged, as traveler safety always comes first. Optional tour prices are subject to change.

Sunday, Day 8:

PJÓRSÁRDALUR

You'll head a bit inland today, through lava-shaped landscape near the famous volcano Hekla. Traveling past farms and hills, you'll go to Hjalparfoss waterfall, and the Viking farm ruins of Stöng and hike through a lush rift zone to the waterfall Gjáin that appears like an oasis in this moon landscape.

Monday Day 9:

South Shore

Lots to take in — visit the glaciers, waterfalls, bird cliffs and lava beaches of South Iceland. You will have free time for an optional glacier walk or visit Skogar together with the guide.

Tour option: Glacial trek: if you've ever wanted to really experience a glacier, well, today's the day. There's an option for a 3 hour trek across the glacier Solheimajokul, with good guides, and all necessary equipment. Don't miss this! \$65

Tuesday, Day 10:

Westman Islands

Head offshore with a ferry trip to the volcanic Westman Islands. Here you can explore the village of Heimaey by foot, see lava from recent eruptions, perhaps see some of the millions of puffins that spend the summer here.

Wednesday, Day 11:

Free day or Vatnajokull National Park option

There are hiking and riding options nearby and other tours as well or you can join your guide for a trip to the southern part of Vatnajokull National Park.

Tour Option: Travel through Southern Iceland, across the glacial sands and outwash plain to Vatnajokull glacier. This is Europe's largest glacier, and there are lots of interesting activities. You can hike to where to the basalt Svartifoss waterfall, travel alongside Iceland's highest mountains and to Jökulsárlón glacier lagoon with its floating icebergs. 12 hours \$190. Add about \$35 for boat ride.

Important: Good hiking boots, warm outdoor clothing, waterproof jacket and pants, hat, gloves and a towel are needed for this trip - we'll provide a gear list. All necessary specialized equipment for activities is provided..



Thursday, Day 12:

Golden Circle

Heading west, you'll take in the trio of wonders known as the Golden Circle – the original boiling water spout, Geysir, the double falls of Gullfoss and the historical and geological sights of Thingvellir National Park.

Friday, Day 13:

Reykjanes, Blue Lagoon, Reykjavik

Lots to take in on this last day as you travel from South Iceland back to the capital. There' hot springs, impressive bird cliffs, a walk across the bridge between two continents, and lighthouses. There's also an optional visit to the world famous Blue Lagoon and a city tour of Reykjavik.

Tour option: Blue Lagoon – Iceland's iconic hot water spot, it's a natural combo of hot mineral water and cold sea water . All natural if a bit tamed with comfy changing rooms, massages, and a nice café and great restaurant. \$60 for adults.

Saturday Day 14:

Time to say good bye ...

You'll have the morning to sleep, shop, swim, explore and then head back to Keflavik Airport for your flight home. It's hard to imagine that many others on your plane will have been able to see and experience as much as your Best of Iceland!

More or Less

In addition to the guided options offered on days 3, 5 and 10, there are a nice array of short options that will be available for group members as they pass by. These are less involved than the guided options, but will add a lot to your enjoyment of the tour. We list a few options on the days they are available. Prices are approximate – but you'll be able to pay on the spot.

Nature fees: There may be a new Nature Fee imposed by Iceland's government to support its many natural wonders. The fee will probably not be large but it will be an additional cost for travelers. Will know if/when details are settled!

Best of Iceland Prices and Dates 2016

The Best of Iceland is available as a 14 day 13 night complete package with both North and South Iceland. It's also available as an 8 day /7 night Best of North Iceland or 8 day/7 night Best of South Iceland. Either option is good - but of course the Complete package is the Best of the Best!

Price listed for single and per person double occupancy (pp/do) **Ask about budget rooms with shared facilities**
Complete Best of Iceland - North and South

All hotels are comfortable bases for your stay. With private bath, TV, phone, wifi, hairdryer and plenty of extras. Also, swimming pool and hot tub nearby. *Excellent restaurants, good service and all the comfort you need.*

The northern hotel is in Akureyri, the southern one in Hella

3 Star option *Hotel Edda, in north Hotel Hella South* **4 Star Option** *Hotel Kea north, Hotel Ranga, South*

Price per person

2 \$4418 pp/do

Price per person

2 \$5747 pp/do

Best of Iceland Tour (the full tour) runs 5 times in the summer of 2016

These dates include travel days as part of the tour dates. We can arrange for an earlier arrival or later departure and help you choose other activities or tours to round out your visit to Iceland.

Best of Iceland Complete, North and South: 14 days, 13 nights

Lv US

Return home

Sat June 11

Sat 25 June

Lv US

Return home

Sat July 23

Sat 6 Aug

Fine Print: Price includes international airfare from the US east coast*, airport transfers and any pre and post tour accommodations needed. The complete tour includes 13 nights in double rooms with breakfast in a choice of hotels, lots of guided touring, as well as some optional tours, some which can be pre booked while others are bookable during the tour. The Best of North and Best of South Iceland are the same as the Complete, except they include 7 nights in double rooms.

***Flights: Price includes** round trip airfare, including fuel surcharge and US departure taxes to Iceland, from Icelandair's east coast gateways - Boston, New York, Newark and Washington Dulles International. We can also book flights from Icelandair's other gateways: Minneapolis, Denver, Seattle, Portland, Anchorage, Toronto, Edmonton, and Halifax, which may add to the price. Not all gateways have daily departures but we can arrange additional nights' accommodations before or after your tour.

***Not included** are Travel Insurance, lunch - a stop will be made to purchase this every day. Dinners: not included but both towns offer an array of a la carte options, optional tours as mentioned in the itinerary

Finest print. Please note that our tour prices are subject to revision until you book your tour by making a deposit.

Our contract rates for air aren't always available as we get close to travel dates. While we make every effort to keep prices on our webpages and their PDFs up to the minute, things can change quickly. We welcome phone calls or email about prices and any other details.



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