

EXPLORE!

TRIP NOTES



Land of Ice and Fire (IC 2017)



TRIPDURATION
10
DAYS



Tour Style: Classic
Tour Pace: Moderate

Tour Type: Small Groups
Accommodation Grade: Simple

Trip Code: IC

Trip Highlights - Land of Ice and Fire

- ✓ Our 10 day itinerary explores the main sites and those that are lesser visited, but equally impressive - there's no better introduction to this fascinating country
- ✓ Reykjavik - Discover this vibrant and contrasting city that is the world's most northerly capital
- ✓ Golden Circle - Travel around Iceland's famous loop to see the remarkable natural wonders of Thingvellir, Geysir and Gullfoss
- ✓ Skaftafell National Park - Explore remote and spectacular scenery on foot, with the opportunity to enjoy a glacier trek
- ✓ Jokulsarlon Lagoon - Drift between impressive blue-veined icebergs on a boat trip
- ✓ Lake Myvatn - Explore this diverse and fertile volcanic landscape, which is a haven for birdlife

Trip Essentials

Accommodation: 7 nights Simple Hotel
2 nights Simple Guesthouse

Included Meals: 9 breakfasts, 0 lunches, 5 dinners

Start Point: Join trip: Reykjavik
End Point: Trip ends: Reykjavik

Transport: Bus, Boat, Public Bus

Countries: Iceland

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Land Of Ice & Fire

Iceland is a land of elves and Viking mythology and it's packed with weird and wonderful places that capture your imagination and leave you wanting to return over and over again. On this comprehensive best of Iceland round trip we'll explore the main sites as well as the lesser visited, but equally impressive attractions. There's no better introduction to this fascinating country's spectacular and diverse landscapes as we discover raging waterfalls, remote villages, black sand beaches and glistening glaciers. We walk in the wild Skaftafell region, drift between icebergs on Jokulsarlon Lagoon and take in the unique volcanic landscape of Lake Myvatn. We also visit the capital of Reykjavik and explore the famous 'Golden Circle.' Iceland is a truly unique destination and unlike anywhere else in Europe. This is the best place to see such amazing coastal and volcanic scenery without needing to take a long haul flight or drive over long distances; you'll see a huge amount all within close proximity to each other.

Why Book this trip

Iceland is a destination where you can still get up close to its many and varied natural attractions. You can touch the point where tectonic plates meet, feel the spray of roaring waterfalls against your face and stare in awe as icebergs float pass you. The people are friendly and have a wonderful sense of humour. They'll tell you tales of elves and Norse gods, which have helped to shape this magical island.

Wildlife

The waters around Iceland cover the cold Arctic Sea to the north and the warmer North Atlantic Ocean to the south. The mixing of the two currents combined with relatively shallow water and long daylight hours during the summer make for great feeding areas for whales, dolphins and an array of birdlife.

During the summer months, the harbour and surrounding areas around Reykjavik are teeming with wildlife, including a variety of birds, whales and dolphins. On our optional whale watching trip, there is the possibility of seeing harbour porpoises, white beaked dolphin, humpback whale, fin whale and minke whale. The majestic blue whale is also a visitor to the Icelandic waters during the long summer months. It is possible to see puffins between May and mid-August. They return to the same site to breed year after year, laying their eggs in late April to early May, then feeding the fledgling for a month or two. After this, the parents then abandon the nest and their young, leaving them to fend for themselves. The puffin colonies in Reykjavik are easily reached by boat. There are a variety of other birdlife that we could see, including cormorants, arctic terns, eider ducks and black guillemots.

Suitability

We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

Accommodation Grade: Simple

No-frills accommodation which includes berths on sleeper trains, rooms in village houses, boat cabins, campsites, huts and simple family-run lodges, guesthouses and hotels. Sleeping arrangements are simple and amenities are adequate, sometimes with en suite facilities and occasionally communal.

Tour Style: Classic

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

Tour Pace: Moderate

These moderately paced tours provide some busy days with plenty of experiences to enjoy, as well as time to relax along the way.



Your trip itinerary

Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

Your Tour Leader

An Explore Leader is an integral part of any Explore trip and your trip will be led by one of our experienced Explore Leaders who have been handpicked and expertly trained. We believe that our Explore Leaders are the key to the success of our trips; they are passionate travellers who are bursting with first-hand local knowledge which they love to share. Your Explore Leader will also take care of all the planning and organisation throughout your journey. Their passionate approach will make this trip fun and inspiring, bringing the destination to life whether you're travelling alone or with others.

DAY 1 Join trip in Reykjavik

On this trip our transfers from Keflavik airport to our hotel in Reykjavik will be on the very efficient and easy to use public FlyBus and you'll collect your voucher for this from a representative at the Flybus Desk in the airport. On the drive from the airport to the hotel, which takes around 45 minutes, you'll get your first glimpse of the blackened and rocky volcanic scenery found on this part of the island. After checking-in to our conveniently-located hotel in the city, you may have time to explore a little of the world's most northerly capital. Bustling with cosmopolitan energy and surrounded by pure, unpolluted nature, Reykjavik is a city of striking contrasts. Small colourful corrugated iron houses nestle next to futuristic glass buildings; state-of-the-art facilities lie beside rugged volcanic terrain and international influences mingle with Icelandic national traditions. All this creates a unique culture where old embraces new. On this holiday you'll be accompanied by an Explore Leader from days 2 to 9, so this evening you are free to settle in and enjoy the diverse dining and, maybe even the nightlife, of this charming city.

Overnight: **Simple Hotel**
Single Room Available



Included Meals: None

DAY 2 Golden Circle tour of Geysir, Gullfoss and Thingvellir

This morning after meeting your Explore Leader and the rest of the group, we take a tour of Iceland's 'Golden Circle', which includes many of the natural wonders which make the country so famous. Thingvellir is a rare site of both historical and geological importance. Meaning 'Parliament Plains', this was the location of Iceland's first National Assembly from 930AD until 1798 and, as such, is hugely significant in the country's cultural heritage. What's more, the impressive landscape sits on a unique spot where the Mid-Atlantic Ridge can be seen on dry land before disappearing to the ocean floor where it spends most of its existence. This provides the quirky opportunity to place one foot on the North American tectonic plate and one foot on the Eurasian plate. We move on to Gullfoss, known as the 'Golden Waterfall' due to the way it cascades into a deep gorge with tremendous force. Regarded by many as one of the most beautiful falls in the world, its spray forms colourful rainbows in the sun. Geysir is our next stop, with the claim to fame that, as the first spouting spring known to Europeans, it gave all such springs their name. However, it is the Strokkur, meaning 'The Butter Churn', which is the main allure these days, due to its impressive 100 feet eruptions every few minutes. Continuing our journey, we stop to visit Seljalandsfoss, where it is possible to walk behind the waterfall for a different perspective. Our hotel for the night is set in the small town of Skogar, which sits on the edge of Eyjafjallajokull Glacier.

Overnight: **Simple Hotel**
Single Room Available



Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 3 Visit Skogar Museum, Skogafoss and Fjadrargljufur Canyon

Skogar is located on the edge of Eyjafjallajokull Glacier where the volcano, made infamous in 2010 for being the source of the volcanic ash cloud that caused global flight chaos, is located. Whilst here we will visit its famous folk museum, which is home to reconstructed traditional houses and historic buildings. We will also take in Skogafoss Waterfall, springing from a height of 60 metres at the top of an eroded cliff. Our drive into the beautiful Skaftafell region takes us via the picturesque village of Vik. Here, we'll stroll along the black basalt sand beach, looking out for sea birds, such as puffins and arctic terns. Later, we traverse the 'Black Desert' - part of the world's greatest lava field created in 1783-4, before enjoying a walk along the spectacular gorge of Fjadrargljufur Canyon. After crossing the great sandy plain of Skeidararsandur, we arrive at our accommodation near Kirkjubaejarklaustur. Staying here for the next two nights provides us with a great base from which to explore the spectacular Skaftafell National Park.

Overnight: **Simple Hotel**
Single Room Available



Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner



DAY 4 Explore the Skaftafell region on foot

Today is spent walking and enjoying the space and silence of the remote Skaftafell region, where a tapestry of flower-filled meadows contrasts with stark glacial landscapes. Your Explore Leader will be able to recommend walks according to the interests and abilities of the group. One highlight which we will enjoy together is Svartifoss. Translated as the 'Black Fall', this beautiful mountain stream flows over a natural wall of basalt stone pillars. For an additional cost which is payable locally, there is the chance to enjoy a glacial walk using crampons. An easy two-hour option takes you to the Svínafellsjökull Glacier tongue, where you will meander through a wonderland of glacial ice sculptures, ridges and deep crevasses. Alternatively, a moderately-paced four-hour trek climbs up into the glacier valley between the summits of Hvannadalshnukur and Hrutsfjall. Both of these walks are accompanied by an experienced guide who will provide guidance on the use of crampons and ice axes.

Overnight: **Simple Hotel**
Single Room Available



Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 5 Get close-up to icebergs by boat on Jokulsarlon Lagoon

En route to our night stop near Egilsstaðir, we break our drive at Jokulsarlon Lagoon. Here, we will enjoy a breathtaking boat ride, drifting between spectacular blue-veined icebergs. The ice is breaking off from the Breidamerkurjökull Glacier and the icebergs then slowly float their way through the lagoon and out to sea under a bridge for the main number one road. You can see the bergs drifting out into the ocean whilst others sit lazily on the black beaches waiting for the current to sweep them out. On one of the bridge's pillars there is painting, supposedly by Banksy, of a headless polar bear pushing a shopping trolley. The lagoon is quite narrow, but the waters are up to 250 meters deep, which makes it the deepest lake found in Iceland. The sandy plains that surround us are the northern hemisphere's principal nesting ground for the great skua and it's possible to spot them. Continuing our journey, we travel through an impressively-engineered 1.3 kilometre-long Almannaskard Pass tunnel under the mountain, before reaching Egilsstaðir on Iceland's north eastern fjordic coastline. We stay overnight near this town.

Overnight: **Simple Hotel**
Single Room Available



Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 6 Experience the might of Dettifoss and magical Lake Myvatn

This morning, we travel through desolate, lunar landscapes up into the northern reaches of this rugged island. It may come as no surprise that Neil Armstrong trained close to this area prior to his moon landing. Our next stop is Dettifoss - Europe's most powerful waterfall, which roars down the huge gorge of the Jokulsa-a-Fjollum River. The massive amount of water that plummets over these falls is astonishing to see and looks like nowhere else on earth and as such it was used as the filming location for the opening scenes of Ridley Scott's 'Prometheus' in 2012. Our next stop is Lake Myvatn. There are few places in the world where such a diversity of volcanic sites can be found in such a small area. Formed 3800 years ago when a lava flow blocked the valley, the lake is one of the most fertile spots in the world. During our time here we will see the boiling mud pools or 'solfataras' at Namaskard, where the earth's crust seems to ripple and bubble, and the ground is a blend of amazing colours caused by these hot sulfuric mud and steam springs. Walking up to the rim of Hverfjall Crater, we descend through the 'Lava Park', where natural sculptures have been formed over the decades. The lake itself is a veritable paradise for birdwatchers, attracting up to 150,000 birds in the summer months, across 15 species. After spending most of the day here we drive on to Iceland's second city of Akureyri, where we'll stay for the next two nights. Standing on the shores of the country's longest fjord, its location couldn't be better, and there are many good bars and restaurants for you to choose from this evening.

Overnight: **Simple Guesthouse**
Single Room Available



Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 7 Free day in the capital of the north, Akureyri

This small and extremely picturesque city is famous for its botanical garden, and its galleries and Lutheran Cathedral are also well worth visiting. The gardens were founded in 1912 and contain nearly every native plant found in Iceland, as well as thousands of foreign floras too. Today is free for you to explore this laid back city or you may choose to join a gourmet tasting tour where you can discover the best of the local North Icelandic products. Alternatively if you'd like to see more of the surrounding countryside then you can join an excursion to authentic fishing villages and black sand beaches. This evening there's also the option to venture out to sea on a whale watching excursion.

Overnight: **Simple Guesthouse**
Single Room Available



Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 8 See Godafoss Waterfall and visit the Glaumbaer Museum

Today's journey into the Hunavatnssysla region includes a stop at Godafoss - one of the country's most spectacular waterfalls. The waters at these horseshoe shaped falls are so blue that it looks as though they've been dyed, but it's 100% natural and stunningly beautiful. Continuing westwards in the afternoon, we stop at one of the best-preserved traditional Icelandic turf roofed farmhouses, now converted into the Glaumbaer Museum. The exhibits here focus on what rural life was like in Iceland in the 18-19th centuries. As well as the main farmhouse there are two examples of the first timber houses that were built in the region. Tonight we'll stay near either Borgarnes or Hvammstangi.

Overnight: **Simple Hotel**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 9 Return to Reykjavik; chance to visit the Blue Lagoon

Driving back to Reykjavik, we will have a brief tour of the city by bus. Although established by the Norse chieftain Ingolfur Amarnson around the year 874 AD, real development only started at the end of the 18th century and the city is still relatively small. This afternoon has been left free for you to spend as you wish. You may choose to continue to explore the city centre on foot, visiting its art galleries and museums or soaking up the atmosphere in one of its many cafes. Alternatively, there's the chance to go on a whale watching trip or take a recuperative dip in the Blue Lagoon. Accidentally formed in the 1970's by a nearby geothermal power plant, the lagoon's health-giving properties and steaming turquoise waters now attract visitors from around the world.

Overnight: **Simple Hotel**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY 10 Trip ends in Reykjavik

Our trip ends after breakfast this morning. The transfer back to Keflavik airport will be on the public FlyBus and your Explore Leader will provide you with the details of your pick up time and with your voucher for this service.

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

Included Activities

There's no getting away from the fact that Iceland is an expensive destination, eating out can be pricey and the standard of accommodation you can get for your money is probably lower than you'd expect in most other European destinations. But having said this Iceland is one of our favourite places, as it is just so unique and there are so many incredible natural wonders to see, that you come home with amazing memories they tend to eclipse the cost of having gone there in the first place, but it's important to know what to expect and to budget accordingly. Please do take note of the accommodation rating, food and drink sections of our trip notes.

Accommodation and Meals

Accommodation Notes

On this tour we use simple accommodation. The majority of hotels in Iceland are decorated in a plain style and many weren't originally built as hotels, but were instead converted from things such as old schools. Rooms can be small and the facilities can be basic. Most accommodation won't have hairdryers or teas and coffee making facilities in the room and some may not have a television, but the scenery outside is so stunning that after a busy day exploring you're unlikely to miss having one.

In Reykjavik on your first and last nights of the trip you will have rooms with private facilities. On all other nights of your stay in Iceland your accommodation will most likely have shared facilities.

Due to the recent considerable rise in tourism in Iceland, hotels are experiencing very high demand for rooms and there have been some occurrences of overbookings, which are often notified to us at a late stage. For this reason, we would like to emphasise that hotel accommodation is subject to change, which may result in the need to alter your night stops with little or no notice. Explore are working closely with our team on the ground to minimise changes to accommodation, although in the case of unavoidable hotel changes, we will endeavour to always provide accommodation of the same or a higher standard.

Food & Drink

Included meals: 9 breakfasts, 0 lunches, 5 dinners included in the price of this trip. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

Budgeting for your Trip

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the trip price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

Food

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Iceland

Lunch £: 10.00 - 12.00

Dinner £: 18.00 - 24.00

Drink

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

Iceland

Bottle of Beer £: 4.00 - 6.00

Water £: 2.00

Other Sightseeing & Activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Optional Excursions

Glacier walking on Svinafellsjökull Glacier Tongue in Skaftafell National Park, easy level (2 hours) 10,900 ISK, or Glacier Hike on Crampons on Svínafellsjökull, part of the great Vatnajökull Glacier in Skaftafell National Park, moderate level (4 hours) 15,900 ISK
Lake Myvatn Natural baths 4,000 ISK

Reykjavik Blue Lagoon with transfer 9800 ISK; Horse riding 14,500 ISK including pick-up transfer; Whale watching from Reykjavik harbour 9,900 ISK without a pick-up transfer service or an extra 2,000 ISK to have transfers arranged.

Tipping - Tour Leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Tipping - Local Crew

Tipping is not a recognised part of life in Iceland for meals etc, though if you do wish to tip your local representative (entirely at your discretion) it will no doubt be appreciated.

Foreign Exchange

Iceland

ATM Availability: Cash can be drawn on credit cards from ATM's in Reykjavik and at the airport.

Credit Card Acceptance: Most shops and restaurants take credit cards.

Travellers Cheques: Can be exchanged at banks and post offices.

Local Currency: Icelandic Krona (ISK).

Recommended Currency for Exchange: Both GBP and USD are readily exchanged at banks and post offices.

Where to Exchange: Both GBP and USD are readily exchanged at banks and post offices

Joining your Trip

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found on our website at www.explore.co.uk, in the tour specific dates and prices section.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer. For more information please refer to <https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers>.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer please refer to <https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers>.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Important Information

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

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The Adventure Travel Experts

CAMPBELL IRVINE
DIRECT TRAVEL INSURANCE



Travel Insurance is essential. If you have not already arranged cover, please contact our recommended Travel Insurance providers www.campbellirvinedirect.com/Explore who offer Travel Insurance specifically designed to cover travel with Explore or call **Campbell Irvine Direct** on Tel: 020 7938 1734

Explore Worldwide is an Introducer Appointed Representative of Campbell Irvine Ltd who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Travel Aware

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link at www.explore.co.uk/travel-safety

We strongly advise that you register with the FCO to receive updates to the travel advice for your chosen destination. A hard copy of the current FCO Travel Advice for your chosen destination is available by contacting cr@explore.co.uk or 01252 379438.

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Visa Information

Iceland: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens.

Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

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If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on **0208 5431846**.

Vaccinations & Protection

Iceland

Nothing compulsory; tetanus recommended. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider.

Preparing for your Trip

Climate

Iceland

Iceland has a cool and temperate climate and, despite its location just south of the Arctic Circle, its northerly latitude is counteracted by the warm waters of the North Atlantic Drift which encircles the island. Temperatures in winter can fluctuate between about 10°C and -10°C and precipitation in the form of rain, sleet or snow is to be expected at any time. Days will be short, with daylight often only guaranteed between about 11 am and 4 pm in December. The best time for seeing the Aurora Borealis is October to March. Summer is generally cool with average temperatures for June and July around 12 - 15 degree centigrade in Reykjavik, although is known to be warmer in other parts of the country. In June and July you can enjoy continuous daylight and see the Midnight Sun, whilst late spring and early autumn offer long twilights.

Clothing

In Iceland weather conditions can change rapidly - sunshine, drizzle, rain and snow may all occur in the same day. You'll need warmer clothing for outdoor activities and cooler evenings, so pack layers. A good quality wind and waterproof jacket and trousers are essential. We also recommend that you bring a swimming costume plus a towel with you as there will be plenty of chances to swim on the tour. If you are planning to join a whale watching excursion then we recommend wrapping up warmly as it can be very chilly out at sea, so take a woolly hat, scarf, jumper and gloves with you.

Equipment

We recommend you bring a small torch and medical kit. The sun can be very strong in the summer months, so take a sun hat, sunscreen and sun glasses. Iceland is one of the most photogenic places on the planet and there are lots of different birds to admire, so we'd suggest taking binoculars and a camera with a spare memory card and battery. Lake Myvatn means lake midge and in the warmer months you'll find many insects here (hence the fact the birds like it so much), so please consider taking a mosquito net hat and insect repellent with you for our walks in this area.

Footwear

We recommend taking walking boots with a sturdy tread and also trainers. Soft indoor shoes are recommended as it is normal in Iceland to have special house shoes. For swimming you may also find a pair of flip flops useful.

Luggage: On Tour

One main piece of baggage, a soft grip bag is ideal (not a framed rucksack) and a small daypack.

Luggage allowance on trip: 20kg

General Information

Country details

Iceland

Population: 318,452

Size of Country: 103,001 sq km

Major Language: Icelandic

Religion: National Church of Iceland

Electric Supply & Plugs

Iceland

2 Pin Round

Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years' experience, we are passionate about what we do.
- Pioneering small group adventures, self-guided, private journeys & tailor-made holidays.
- Award winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one of the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, or any number of unusual forms of transport. Often you will stay in family run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to – and make some new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your appetite.

Cool Earth

Explore are proud to support Cool Earth in their effort to reduce global carbon dioxide levels through the prevention of deforestation in the South America rainforest. Cool Earth focus on areas in immediate danger of deforestation, supporting local communities to be forest guardians. To date 350,000 acres of rainforest has been protected. Saving rainforest also protects rare animals and plants, allows local forest communities to maintain their way of life, and protects a major source of oxygen and fresh water. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year.

Earth Matters

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: Toilet Twinning (helping to flush away poverty), Lone Buffalo Foundation (a community project based in Laos providing creative skills for young people) and have recently supported women's cooperatives in Borneo and Morocco. We are a member of Tourism Concern's Ethical Tour Operator Group (www.tourismconcern.org.uk) and support their campaign for fair and ethical tourism. We also care passionately about the world's wildlife and actively support and promote the Born Free Organisation and Mahouts Elephant Foundation.

Booking Your Holiday

Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.

The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is 'Available' or 'Guaranteed' we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

For Self-Guided holidays and Private Journeys simply choose your date of travel and let us know so we can confirm all ground services.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% non-refundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking

100% No Surcharge Guarantee

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2016 and 31st December 2017.

Trip Itinerary Versions

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes.

Please note: 2017 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2017. 2018/19 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2018.

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