

ICELAND GOLDEN CIRCLES 8 days

Itinerary:



Day 1 : Arrive Reykjavík

Upon arrival transfer from Keflavik airport to the hotel in Reykjavík.

Lodging: Natura Hotel

Day 2 : Reykjavík - Akureyri (B)

After breakfast travel west passing the town of Borgarnes and climb the Grábrók volcano crater. In the afternoon visit a natural history and seal museum in a small fishing village in Northwest Iceland and stroll around the local harbour. Further north stop at the turf church of Víðimýri which has been extensively restored to its original form and is widely considered one of the purest and most beautiful examples of traditional Icelandic architecture. Continue along scenic fjord landscape and over several mountain passes until you reach Akureyri, the capital of North Iceland.

Meals: Breakfast **Lodging:** Akureyri Hotel

Day 3 : Akureyri - Mývatn (B)

In the morning explore Akureyri, a charming town of 17000 inhabitants. Visit the botanical garden and enjoy the panoramic view over Eyjafjörður fjord. In the afternoon travel to an important spot in Iceland's history, Goðafoss, the waterfalls of the Gods. Continue to Lake Mývatn which is known for its geological wonders and active bird life during summer. Stop at the bizarre lava formations at Kálfaströnd followed by a walk around the many pseudo craters and end an exciting day with a relaxing soak at Mývatn Nature Bath which contains a unique blend of minerals, silicates and geothermal micro-organisms. The warm soothing waters benefit both skin and spirit alike.

Meals: Breakfast **Lodging:** Sel Hotel

Day 4 : Mývatn - Egilsstaðir (B)

Enjoy breakfast before you hike in a lava labyrinth at Dimmuborgir "the dark castles", hoping to get a glimpse of the trolls who are said to live there. Later visit the hot spring area of Námaskarð with bubbling mud pools and steaming solfataras. Head through the uninhabited highlands and moonlike surrounding to East Iceland. With some luck you might spot an Arctic fox or see a reindeer.

Meals: Breakfast **Lodging:** Hérað Hotel

Day 5 : Egilsstaðir - Kirkjubæjarklaustur (B)

It's a day to admire the dramatic fjord landscape and its tiny fishing villages at the end of twisty roads in the East Fjords and on route visit an interesting stone and mineral collection. In the afternoon see Vatnajökull, Europe's biggest glacier that is visible all over Southeast Iceland.

Past the town of Höfn, stop at Jökulsárlón, a glacial lagoon filled with floating icebergs, and explore the extraordinary site and might see seals swimming in arctic waters. You can walk on the black sandy beach where large icebergs get stranded. Travel along the southern part of the glacier Vatnajökull and spend time at Europe's largest national park, which has Iceland's highest mountains, an alpine environment, and Europe's largest glacier.

Meals: Breakfast **Lodging:** Icelandair Kirkjubæjarklaustur Hotel

Day 6 : Kirkjubæjarklaustur - Flúðir (B)

A beautiful drive with many natural wonders awaits today as you head across the Eldhraun lava field and cross the sandy desert of the south coast, overlooked by mountainous cliffs, glaciers and waterfalls. Stroll along the black lava beach of Reynisfjara near Vík. In the small village of Skógar discover the Skógafoss waterfall. It is 60 meters high and one of the most impressive waterfalls in the country. Further west stop at the Eyjafjallajökull Information Center and learn about living next to a glacier and an active volcano. Continue to the high but narrow Seljalandsfoss waterfall which plunges over the mountain. There is an interesting trail that goes behind the fall too.

Meals: Breakfast **Lodging:** Icelandair Flúðir Hotel

Day 7 : Flúðir - Reykjavík (B)

Explore classics today as you travel the route of the Golden Circle sights. Start the day at Friðheimar, where you learn about the Icelandic horse, its special qualities and history and visit a geothermal greenhouse. Later on see steam from the Geysir geothermal fields as you arrive. There is a variety of hot springs and bubbling pools. The original geyser is now dormant but has been replaced by Strokkur "the Churn" which erupts at 5-10 minute intervals. Continue to Gullfoss, "the golden falls", which is a double waterfall that tumbles 34 meters into the Hvítá river and attracts travelers in summer and winter. Travel inland to Thingvellir National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage site. As you return to Reykjavík enjoy a city tour to see the highlights of the world's northernmost capital.

Meals: Breakfast **Lodging:** Natura Hotel

Day 8 : Reykjavík Departure (B)

After breakfast transfer to the airport for your international return flight.

Meals: Breakfast

