










HIGHLANDS AND HIGHLIGHTS OF ICELAND

Highlands and Highlights of Iceland

How would you like to go whale-watching, explore lava fields and discover enormous waterfalls? Bathe in nature baths and warm rivers, go hiking in the famous multi-coloured mountains of Landmannalaugar and discover Reykjaviks iconic landmarks and museums - this trip has it all! From the famous Golden Circle tour to the hidden lunar landscapes of Askja this trip showcases the full flavours of Iceland.

This trip is ideal for those who want to discover the real Iceland and visit remarkable features that are only accessible to those in the know with all-terrain vehicles. This adventure will take you to Iceland's must-see attractions and deeper into the wilderness from the comforts of traditional Icelandic accommodation and private 4x4 vehicles.

 Region	Northern Iceland Reykjavík & Reykjanes The Highlands
 Activity	Hiking Summer Whale Watching
 Duration	8 days
 Group	5 to 15 people
 Code	EISLAT1VA
 Price	From €2,490
 Level	2/5
 Comfort	4/5
 Language(s)	English

ITINERARY

📍 Day 1 Reykjavik



Welcome to Iceland! We will greet you at the airport and escort you to your accommodation in the capital city. Enjoy an evening to explore Reykjavik at leisure - why not join a walking tour of the capital city? Or perhaps you'd like to visit a museum or eat at a local restaurant? We have lots of recommendations for your first evening in Iceland.

Accommodation: Guesthouse or youth hostel

Transport: Bus, 35 miles

Optional Activities: free walking tour of the capital city, traditional meal in local restaurant & museum visit

📍 Day 2 The Golden Circle – Landmannalaugar



Today we will explore Iceland's famous Golden Circle, first stop Þingvellir UNESCO World Heritage Site. This Mid-Atlantic fault and meeting place of the world's oldest Parliament is sure to impress. We will visit the exciting geothermal area of Geysir and observe the extraordinary Strokkur Geyser as it shoots a column of boiling water up into the air. Plus we will marvel at Gullfoss waterfall ('Golden Waterfall'), a gigantic two-tiered waterfall with remarkable basalt columns. After a day of exploring we will take the scenic road trip to our accommodation by the multi-coloured mountains of Landmannalaugar.

Activities: 2 – 3 hour walking/sight-seeing

Accommodation: Refuge

Transport: Private vehicle, 150 miles

📍 Day 3 Hiking in Landmannalaugar



A day in the heart of the stunning Fjallabak Nature Reserve: a unique chance to explore this colourful geothermal area with the aid of our local expertise and insider knowledge. Today we will climb Brennisteinsalda, a visibly active volcano and the most colourful mountain in Iceland. We will explore Graenagil gorge and the vast Laugahraun lava fields; uncover the fascinating geology behind the Stórihver hot springs and Sudurnamur peaks. A truly exciting day hiking among features found nowhere else in the world and discovering the interesting history and geology behind them. After the hike we dip our feet and relax or play and swim in a warm river near to our accommodation.

Activities: 6 hours of walking

Accommodation: Refuge

📍 Day 4 Into the desert



This morning we can enjoy a last short hike to say goodbye to the stunning Landmannalaugar region before we head into the desert of Sprengisandur. We will drive along the Sprengisandur track which follows the ancient pass through the highland desert. A mythical area of grey stone and black sand as far as the eye can see... We will pass between two enormous glaciers Vatnajökull and Hofsjökull and head to Laugafell, a small mountain in a geothermal area where our refuge for the night is.

Transport: Private vehicle, 75miles

Accommodation: Refuge

📍 Day 5 **The lunar landscapes of Askja**



Askja is one of Iceland's most isolated and spectacular landscapes. Depending on the conditions we will take the famous 910 track, the North trail through huge lava fields or the Southern route close to Vatnajökull Glacier to get there. Askja is a truly remote destination so 'out of this world' that it is where the first people to walk on the moon trained, benefitting from its 'lunar' conditions. Today we will explore this area on foot and discover the largest caldera in Iceland. This remarkable feature last erupted in 1961 and left behind an impressive lava field, 5 characteristic craters and a beautiful small island in the middle of the lake.

Activities: 4-5 hours of walking

Transport: Private vehicle, 170 miles

Accommodation: Refuge

📍 Day 6 **Mývatn**



Today we head to Lake Myvatn, located in one of the most active volcanic areas of the country this fascinating lake is home to more species of bird than any other lake in the world. You will discover more about this beautiful region with a guided walk this afternoon. This evening we will relax in the warm waters of the blue lagoon of the north, the stunning Myvatn Nature Baths.

Activities: 3-4 hours of walking & sightseeing, visit to Mývatn Nature Baths

Transport: Private vehicle, 190 miles

Accommodation: Guesthouse

📍 Day 7 **Whale Watching**



This morning we head north to Húsavík, a charming Icelandic fishing village famous for its whale watching opportunities! We will go on a whale watching boat trip in a beautiful bay surrounded by glacier topped mountains where humpback, minke and blue whales frequent. This afternoon we will fly from Akureyri to Reykjavik but not without visiting the iconic 'waterfall of Gods' Goðafoss on the way. This evening is a final chance to explore Reykjavik at leisure. We have lots of recommendations for your final night in Iceland. Perhaps you would like to visit some of the capital cities iconic landmarks and museums or spend your final night reminiscing about all of your adventures over a meal of local food in an authentic

Icelandic restaurant...

Activities: 3-4 hours of walking around the sites & a whale watching boat trip

Transport: Private vehicle, 90 miles and a 1 hour flight

Accommodation: Guesthouse or Youth Hostel

Optional Activities: traditional meal in local restaurant & museum visit

📍 Day 8 **Fly home**



Morning transfer to the airport

Please note that this itinerary, including walking distances and times, is indicative. Our guides aim to provide the adventure that is best suited to the weather, your interests and the demands of the group. Please be aware that in order to achieve this, changes may be made to the programme.

Other trips you may like



The Full Icelandic Adventure: This trip is designed for those who want to really travel iceland, for those who want to explore highlights in every region... from the black sand beaches of the South Coast to the floating icebergs of Jökulsarlon Glacial Lagoon; from Mývatns volcanic features to the stunning coastal fjords...

DATES & PRICES

International departures:

No departure for now

Trip code: EISLAT1VA

Included

- All in country transfers including a flight from Akureyri to Reykjavik
- This flight includes hold luggage and all air taxes
- Accommodation
- Full board (except meals in Reykjavik)
- Full supervision by a qualified expert guide
- Two evenings in Reykjavik with free walking tour of capital city
- The full Golden Circle Tour
- Multiple guided hikes with our professional guide (including hikes in the following areas: Landamannalaugar, Askja & Mývatn)
- A whale watching boat trip
- Entrance to Mývatn Nature Baths
- Private vehicles for duration of trip

Not included

- Registration fee: €18 (free for under 12s)
- International flights
- Meals in Reykjavik (2 evening meals and one breakfast)

Additional Options

Please let us know if you would like to reserve any of the following optional activities:

- Icelandic meal in traditional restaurant: From €20

Museums in Reykjavik

There are lots of museums in Reykjavik, our personal favourites are:

- The National Museum of Iceland: €16 (free for under 18s)
- Aurora Reykjavik Northern Lights Centre: from €10
- Reykjavik City Museum and Settlement Exhibition: from €15 (free for under 17s)

Please let us know if you would like to plan museum visits to these museums or any others in Reykjavik ahead of time. Reservation in advance is not necessary.

Notes

Comfort - 4/5 Comfortable

Well-equipped accommodation options like basic hotels or charming guesthouses are rated 4/5 for comfort. Please note that depending on the destination this does not necessarily guarantee private bathroom and kitchen facilities. Any 'special' accommodation options like our especially built wooden sailing boat in Greenland are rated 4/5 for comfort.

Difficulty - 2/5 Moderate

In general no previous experience in the specific activity is required but you should be in good physical shape and prepared to participate in 4-6 hours of activity per day. You should have a sense of adventure and a positive attitude.

Please note that our difficulty ratings may vary depending on the weather.

Terms and conditions

Booking conditions

Booking a trip with Altai Iceland implies acceptance of the terms and conditions of sale. Each customer is required to complete a registration form and, subject to availability at the time of registration, travellers are expected to pay a deposit of 30% of the total

price to complete their booking. Payments can be made online or by bank transfer. You will receive an e-mail with your booking confirmation.

Invoice procedure

Once your booking is confirmed you will receive an invoice by e-mail. The full balance of the trip must be received at least 35 days before your departure date. We reserve the right to cancel your booking, free of charge, if this deadline is not respected.

Cancellation policy

If for any reason you have to cancel your trip, we require written confirmation of your decision. The money you have paid will then be refunded according to the following deductions:

- Cancellation received more than 30 days prior to the departure date: a sum of €50 per person will be retained
- Cancellation received 30 to 21 days before the departure date: your deposit, 30% of the total trip price will be retained
- Cancellation received 20 to 14 days before the departure date: 50% of the total trip price will be retained
- Cancellation received 13 to 7 days before the departure date: 75% of the total trip price will be retained
- Cancellation received less than 7 days before the departure date: 100% of the total trip price will be retained

Special cases:

Please note that, regardless of the date of cancellation or modification if you have agreed to pay for services such as hotel reservations, flights or additional activities, these services are usually non-refundable so additional fees may apply.

Fixed airfares: if your airline ticket was issued in advance, often done to avoid significant surcharges, you will be charged 100% of any non-refundable fees if you wish to change or cancel your flight plan.

Fixed in-country costs: early charges for firm bookings will be charged if you cancel or modify your trip. Insurance costs: if you have taken out comprehensive or cancellation insurance, the cost of insurance is due and cannot be refunded.

Please note that fees apply according to the date we receive your cancellation or modification request in writing.

If we have to cancel a departure due to an insufficient number of participants, you will be informed no later than 21 days before departure and a full refund will be issued, you will not be entitled to further compensation. We reserve the rights to cancel departures due to exceptional circumstances which may impact the safety of participants. Such circumstances include those amounting to 'force majeure' in which case participants will receive a full refund but they will not be entitled to any compensation.

Changes to travel contract

If you wish to make a change to your booking please contact Altaï Iceland in writing; you will be expected to pay any fee which might arise from this change. In the event of unforeseen external events, Altaï Iceland may change some aspects of the travel contract. If any changes are necessary you will be informed as quickly as possible.

Pricing

The prices on our website are updated regularly and all of the prices we advertise are accurate when published. We reserve the rights to make changes to any of these prices. Before you make a booking we will give you the up-to-date price of your chosen holiday including any supplements, upgrades or additional activities you may have requested. If the number of travellers is fewer than the indicated number of participants on the website, a small group surcharge may be applied. For all of our trips we include details of services, prices and what is/is not included but please be aware that changes to the prices may be necessary in accordance with exchange rates or price changes of various components of the journey.

Contract transfer

If you are unable to travel for any reason, you can transfer your booking to another person in which case our modification conditions apply. Both the transferor and transferee will be jointly and severally liable for payment of the total holiday price and other associated expenses. Some airline carriers treat name changes as cancellations and you may be required to pay for the cost of a new ticket.

Insurance

We strongly recommend that you take out personal travel insurance for your trip with Altaï Iceland as soon as your booking is confirmed. We advise you to purchase a travel insurance policy which covers flight cancellations, luggage loss and emergency health care. Please look carefully at which activities are covered by your insurer and do not forget to bring all necessary documents and information with you (name of the company, name of the contract, insurance policy number, telephone number...)

PRACTICAL INFO

Staff

You will be welcomed at the airport by a representative from our friendly team and accompanied for the duration of your holiday. Armed with an abundance of experience and a wealth of knowledge our professional Icelandic team know the country inside out. All activities are lead by our qualified guides who are all English speaking outdoor practitioners with a passion for everything Icelandic.

Food

This trip includes full board - we are proud of the varied, fresh and frankly delicious food we provide. Meals are based on a selection of local products and you will have the opportunity to try Icelandic delicacies such as skyr, smoked salmon and leg of lamb.

Each day will start with a hearty breakfast accompanied by plenty of tea and coffee. Then you will prepare your own picnic lunch for the day from a buffet style array of options - everyday there will definitely be sandwiches, fruit and cakes among the other options. Each evening meal will include meat, fish and vegetables - we offer fresh fruit and vegetables everyday.

Your help in the kitchen is expected and much appreciated, particularly in the evenings. We like when the whole group work as a team to cook dinner, it creates a pleasant atmosphere as we reflect on the days adventures together.

Please let us know about any dietary requirements when you book the trip and we will work with you to cater for your needs.

Alcohol is very expensive in Iceland and you can only buy beer which is stronger than 2.25% alcohol in state run liquor stores. If you want to enjoy an evening drink after your days adventures, we recommend buying Duty Free alcohol in the airport. The tap water in Iceland is of very high quality and it is delicious.

Accommodation

During this trip you will get to stay in a variety of Icelands traditional sleeping bag accommodations.

Your first and last nights will be spent in a guesthouse / hostel close to Reykjavik city centre. You will also stay in Icelandic refuges and guesthouses in more remote areas, all have shared bathroom and kitchen facilities, hot showers and heating. Please bring a sleeping bag.

Transportation

For this trip we will travel in style in our privatised classic 4x4 vehicles. Some of Icelands 'roads' are more like 'tracks' and fjord crossings are not uncommon - these vehicles are perfectly adapted to Icelands terrain!



Budget & exchange

The currency in Iceland is Icelandic Krona (ISK). Please budget for:

- Meals in Reykjavik (2500-5600ISK)
- Showers in campsites (around 500-600ISK per shower)
- Drinks & personal expenses

Tips

Although the custom is not widespread here, if you are satisfied with the services of your guide, tipping is always appreciated - it is not obligatory and should be left to the discretion of each individual.

Vital equipment

- Sleeping bag (comfortable at 0°C for maximum warmth)
- Walking boots
- Shoes to wear in our accommodation in the evenings
- Waterproof jacket (with a hood)
- Waterproof trousers
- A warm jumper or two
- Suitable underwear, t-shirts and walking trousers
- Thermals - top & long johns
- A swimsuit
- Warm gloves and hat (even in the summer - evenings can be chilly)
- Sunhat and sun cream
- Sunglasses (UV 400)
- Any personal medication
- Towel & toiletries
- A water bottle
- A small rucksack to use as a day bag
- Warm pyjamas

Material

We prefer that you do not wear cotton clothing, including underwear, when participating in activities. When cotton gets wet from water or sweat it ceases to insulate and it does not dry fast. The best materials for outdoor activities are fast drying materials like polyester or materials which are warm when wet like wool. The most powerful materials against the wind and rain are 'breathable' materials like Gore-Tex or Nikwax.

Our advice for keeping warm:

Winter in Iceland can be very cold, please think carefully about what clothes you bring, although we will provide warm outer layers, the layers you wear next to your skin make the biggest difference.

We recommend: No cotton. Bring dry spares of everything, even underwear and gloves

Wear multiple layers including:

1. warm breathable base layer
2. second thermal layer
3. Wind and waterproof protective out layer

Helpful equipment

You may also consider packing

- Your camera
- Binoculars
- A notepad and pencil
- A thermos flask
- Plastic bags for wet/dirty clothing
- A comfortable evening outfit
- Walking poles
- Inflatable pillow
- Insect repellent
- Clothes to wear in the evenings
- Wetwipes and toilet roll
- Head torch & spare batteries (although it is nearly always light in the summer months)

Luggage

Please bring a small rucksack to use as a day bag. You can bring this as hand luggage on the aeroplane. You will carry your lunch,

water, spare layers and any personal medication with you each day in this bag. You will also need a larger bag to store your other clothes and belongings in, please ensure that this is a soft bag like a rucksack or holdall rather than a hard cased suitcase because it is more practical to transport. We recommend packing all of your clothes in plastic bags so that they stay dry in the event of wet weather.

Medicine

Your companion has a first-aid kit during the tour. However, we recommend that you bring your medications:

- Personal medication
- Anti pain medication Paracetamol
- Diarrhoea drugs
- Intestinal dressing
- Sun screen with strong protection for the lips and the skin
- Eye drops for the eyes
- Moisturizing cream for the treatment of superficial burns (blisters and sunburns)
- An adhesive elastic band
- a box of adhesive plasters and disinfectant compresses
- Double skin for blisters

Passport

Most travellers require a passport that is valid for at least three months after the return date. It is your responsibility to confirm your specific passport requirements and please be aware that proof of onwards travel may be required. You can check your requirements by clicking the following link provided by the Icelandic government: www.utl.is/index.php/en/

Visa

EU citizen do not need a visa as Iceland is part of the Schengen cooperation.

Travellers of other nationalities please check the following link of the Icelandic government to check: www.utl.is/index.php/en/visas

Mandatory vaccines

There are no specific health risks

Weather

Contrary to the name 'Ice-land' the weather in Iceland is relatively mild considering its location. In summer the average temperature is 10-13°C (50-55 °F) but warm summer days can reach 20-25°C

From June to September it is nearly always light with the return of night and the first Northern Lights appearances towards the end of August.

Electricity

Iceland uses Northern European electrical standards (50Hz/220 volts) and the standard Europlug socket with two round prongs.

Please be aware that some of our more remote campsites and refuges charge for electricity use.

Local time

Iceland uses Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) like the United Kingdom but does not observe daylight-saving time in the summer.

Topography

Area: 39,768.5 m²

Population: 334,252 inhabitants (2016)

Capital: Reykjavik

Languages: Icelandic

Regime: Parliamentary Republic

Iceland is 20 million years old and is a volcanic island with around one eruption every 5 years. 11% of the island is covered with ice, 1% of the land is cultivated, 20% is grassland, 2% is lake, 40% is sand and the rest is desert.

Sustainable tourism

As adventure and wilderness travel experts who run trips to some of the most remote parts of the world, we take responsible tourism very seriously. We respect the 'Leave No Trace' outdoor ethical code and try to explore this beautiful location whilst causing minimal environmental damage.

The Leave No Trace policy can be summarized in 7 simple steps which we hope you will follow during our trip...

1. Be prepared
2. Stick to trails and camp overnight right
3. Stash your trash and pick up waste
4. Leave it as you find it
5. Be careful with fire
6. Respect wildlife
7. Be considerate of other visitors

Over the years we have built up good relations with our local suppliers and we are keen to support local businesses as much as possible. We are a small company and we pay our local partners and suppliers directly insuring fair rates.

Our small group sizes not only provide a more intimate adventure but also cause less impact on the environment and local communities.

We expect all who travel with us to support and uphold our Sustainable Tourism philosophies.

If you have any questions regarding how to be a responsible traveller or concerning any other subject, please do not hesitate to contact us.