

# GLACIERS, VOLCANOES & TROLLS

## *Glaciers, Volcanoes & Trolls*

This action-packed trip showcases the highlights of southern Iceland and includes a camping adventure on a remote volcanic island! Let's go hiking, horse riding and glacier walking... observe puffins, seals and Icelandic sheep... swim in warm rivers, nature baths and hot springs... Discover waterfalls, volcanoes and icebergs: formations far more impressive in real life than in school textbooks we promise!

Fill your camera with pictures of dramatic landscapes found no-where else in the world - scenery so impressive that it has featured in numerous films and TV shows including Game of Thrones, Star Wars Rogue One and Star Trek Into Darkness! From black sand beaches and hot water springs to multi-coloured mountains and lava fields, the south of Iceland really is extraordinary. This 8 day adventure is the trip of a life time in a truly out of this world location.

 <b>Region</b>	Reykjavík & Reykjanes South Iceland The Highlands
 <b>Activity</b>	Puffins Summer
 <b>Duration</b>	8 days
 <b>Group</b>	5 to 12 people
 <b>Code</b>	EISFAMVA
 <b>Price</b>	From €2,250
 <b>Level</b>	1/5
 <b>Comfort</b>	3/5
 <b>Language(s)</b>	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 Golden Circle



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 hot rivers, geysers, mud pools and waterfalls we will take you to a secret natural spring where we can taste the fresh water.

*2 – 3 hours of walking/sight-seeing*

*Accommodation: Refuge*

*Transport: Private vehicle, 150 miles*

### 📍 Day 3 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 fully explore this magical area with a journey of discovery tailored to you, the weather and your interests. Your personalized nature walk may take us to the Red crater of Ljótípollur, the peaks of Suðurnámur, Bláhnúkur summit, Brennisteinsalda and the lava fields of Laugahraun... Perhaps we can also cook something with the help of natural geothermal heat! After the hike we can visit a hot water river and dip our feet or splash about in the warm waters.

*2 – 4 hours of walking*

*Accommodation: Refuge*

*Transport: Private vehicle, 30 miles*

### 📍 Day 4 Eldgjá & Jökulsárlón



Today we will visit the largest volcanic canyon in the world, Eldgjá and follow a beautiful mountain trail past Ófærufoss waterfall ('the impassable waterfall'). We love discussing the intriguing history and geology of this area as we travel together through the canyon like a true Icelandic Explorers, crossing rivers and lava fields. After an adventurous day in this impressive area we will take a moment to marvel at the deepest lake in Iceland, Jökulsárlón ('glacial river lagoon') and its many floating Icebergs. Here lumps of ice from the glacier drift towards the sea making eerie noises as they go. If we are lucky we might spot seals playing and hunting along the icebergs – a truly magical place!

1 1/2 hours of walking

Accommodation: Guesthouse

Transport: Private vehicle, 155 miles

#### 📍 Day 5 **Hiking & glacier walking in Vatnajökull National Park**



Today we will visit Skaftafell in Vatnajökull National Park and embark on a short hike together to discover this area with its impressive geology, surprising wildlife and interesting history. We will explore salt-peat houses and observe Svartifoss waterfall ('Black Falls'), famous for its tall black basalt columns. This afternoon we are in for a real adventure - we will go glacier walking on part of Vatnajökull glacier, the largest glacier in Iceland!

Tonight you have the opportunity to learn to cook a traditional Icelandic dish - anyone can join this optional cooking class and it is a chance for any children on the trip to become Icelandic chefs for the evening whilst their

parents relax.

2-4 hours of walking & glacier walking

Accommodation: Guesthouse

Transport: Private vehicle, 45-75 miles

#### 📍 Day 6 **Vík & Vestmannaeyjar (the Westman Islands)**



Tonight you are in for a real adventure – a night camping on a remote volcanic Island! On the way we will visit Vík and the iconic black sand beaches of Reynisfjara. This area is so impressive that it has featured in many films and TV shows including Star Wars Rogue One, Star Trek Into Darkness and Game of Thrones! Here we will look for puffins – the clowns of the sea - and explore Dyrhólaey with its impressive volcanic arch. Featuring black sands, impressive basalt columns and a huge cave, this dramatic location may warrant a photography/drawing competition! After a thorough discovery, we will board the ferry to Vestmannaeyjar (the volcanic Westman Islands) and set up camp for the night on the island of Heimaey.

This small island has a remarkable history and is known as the 'Modern Nordic Pompeii' following a volcanic eruption in January 1973 from its resident volcano Eldfell. Enjoy an afternoon at leisure to explore the area, perhaps you want to relax in the pool and hot outdoor baths or perhaps you fancy a ride on a famous Icelandic pony – there are lots of things to do in this extraordinary place!

2 hours of walking

Accommodation: Camping

Transport: Private vehicle, 135 miles & 30 minute Ferry Crossing

Optional Activities: Horse riding, equipment included

#### 📍 Day 7 **Vestmannaeyjar - Reykjavik**



This morning you have the chance to visit the Saeheimar Natural History Museum & Aquarium, a very special place. Here we will learn all about this remote settlement with its astonishing history, remarkable community and special wildlife. On top of this, the museum also acts as a Puffin sanctuary! When young seabirds get disorientated by the modern city lights, local children collect them and bring them here to be looked after until they are strong enough to be released. This morning we have the unique opportunity to get up close with these puffins before a final adventure on the Island. This afternoon, depending on the conditions, we will embark on a scenic hike across the volcanic cones created by the 1973 eruption or try a puffin

hunting technique still used by locals today - an exciting procedure which involves ropes and cliffs. Then it will be time to head back to the mainland for a free evening in Reykjavik. We have lots of recommendations for your final evening in Iceland. Why not participate in walking tour? Or perhaps you'd like to visit a museum or spend your final night eating local food in an authentic Icelandic restaurant...

*1 hour of walking*

*Accommodation: Guesthouse of Youth Hostel*

*Transport: Private vehicle, 85 miles & 30 minute Ferry Crossing*

*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***



Southern Icelandic Adventure: A truly special eco-friendly 8 day camping and hiking adventure in Southern Iceland. Join us on an adventure to intimately explore this magical location and all of its highlights without destroying this incredible environment...

## DATES & PRICES

### ***International departures:***

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*No departure for now*

**Trip code: EISFAMVA**

### ***Included***

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- All in country transfers
- Accommodation
- Full board (except meals in Reykjavik)
- Full supervision by a qualified expert guide
- Two evenings in Reykjavik with walking tour of capital city
- The full Golden Circle Tour
- Multiple guided hikes with our professional guide (including hikes in the following areas: Landamannalaugar, Eldgjá, Skaftafell, Vik & Heimaey)
- Glacier Walking on part of the largest glacier in Iceland
- Entrance to Saeheimar Natural History Museum & Aquarium
- Boat trips to and from the Westman Islands
- Puffin watching
- A night camping on a remote volcanic island
- Swimming/bathing in hot springs and rivers

### ***Not included***

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

### ***Additional Activities***

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

- Icelandic pony riding: from €60
- 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***

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#### ***Explanantion of difficulty level:***

##### **LEVEL 1 Very easy**

Pace: Quiet

Daily Walking Time: 1 to 4 hours

Daily Elevation: 300 m

Preparation: No specific training required

Experience Accessible to anyone in good physical health You like to discover by taking your time. You alternate visits and short walks half-day on easy terrain without significant elevation. You prefer simple but comfortable accommodation without being luxurious.

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



## ***Terms and conditions***

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### ***Inscription***

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.

### ***Facturation***

Once your booking is confirmed you will receive an invoice by e-mail. The full balance of the trip must be received at least 30 days before your departure date. We reserve the right to cancel your booking, free of charge, if this deadline is not respected.

### ***Annulation***

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 fares: 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.

### ***Modification du contrat***

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

### ***Prix et révision des prix***

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.

### ***Cession du contrat***

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.

## 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 even when camping. 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. The tap water in Iceland is of very high quality and it is delicious.

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.

### **Accommodation**

During this trip you will get to stay in a variety of Iceland's traditional sleeping bag accommodations and spend a night camping on a remote volcanic island.

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.

Normally we provide one state of the art 3 man tent per 2 people for maximum comfort and warmth. We also provide a large equipped mess tent with tables and stools. Please bring a sleeping bag.

### **Transportation**

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

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

## ***Supplied equipment***

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- 3 man dome tents (1 per 2 people for maximum space and comfort)
- Self-inflating sleeping mat
- A fully equipped mess tent with table, stools

## ***Vital equipment***

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- A warm sleeping bag
- Walking boots
- 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***

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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***

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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
- An inflatable pillow



- Insect repellent
- Head torch & spare batteries (although it is nearly always light in the summer months)

## **Luggage**

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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**

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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**

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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/](http://www.utl.is/index.php/en/)

## **Visa**

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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](http://www.utl.is/index.php/en/visas)

## **Mandatory vaccines**

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There are no specific health risks

## **Weather**

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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**

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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**

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

## **Topography**

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Area: 39,768.5 m<sup>2</sup>

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***

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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.