



ICELAND

Island of Fire & Ice



ICELAND—ISLAND OF FIRE & ICE

July 31-August 9, 2018 ✨ 10 Days ✨ \$6175**

DAY 1 – July 31: Arrive Reykjavík (D)

Reykjavík Nordic Capital Walk – 8 km, rated 1B

A representative of Walking Adventures will meet you as you exit customs at Keflavík International Airport and transport you to our hotel near the center of Reykjavík where WAI guides will orient you to the hotel and surrounding area. Because flights arrive in Iceland in the early morning, our first group activity is a Welcome Orientation at the hotel at 11 am. Following a break for lunch, we meet our local guide for this Adventure and enjoy a walking tour through old Reykjavík, the planet's northernmost capital. After a thought-provoking look at a culture that has endured a multitude of challenges in its 1200-year history, we'll enjoy this evening's welcome dinner together.

DAY 2 – August 1: Activities from Reykjavík (B)

Pingvellir Parliaments and Plates Walk – 6 km, rated 1D

Gullfoss Canyon Walk – 2.5 km, rated 1C

The renowned Golden Circle Tour brings us to our walk of the day at Pingvellir, Iceland's oldest national park. We start at the Lögberg, medieval meeting point of the Alþingi, the Icelandic Viking parliament established in A.D. 930. We continue from North America to Europe as we cross the easily identifiable rift zone marking the tumultuous meeting of these two tectonic plates. Next on our route are stops at Geysir, the cluster of geysers that gave their name to this geological phenomenon, and Gullfoss, which offers an easy hike up the canyon to what is arguably the most spectacular waterfall in the country!

"Iceland is such a unique place to experience. So glad I did it with WAI!"

Carol W. ✧ Medford, OR

"Once again WAI's itinerary and leadership exceeded my expectations."

Lee M. ✧ Minneapolis, MN

"This was my 1st experience with WAI and I enjoyed it. Nice variety. Guides all on top of details. Fellow walkers were nice people & considerate of others."

Donna C. ✧ Leland, NC

"Amazing walks & sites. So glad I came! Thank you Tim, Jeannette & WAI staff!"

DeAnne B. ✧ Maryland Heights, MO

"For me it's all about the walks. I loved getting off the main tourist route and walking the more remote trails."

Cindy S. ✧ St Louis, MO

 **Walking Adventures**
INTERNATIONAL



DAY 3 – August 2: Reykjavík – Lake Mývatn (BD)

We depart by plane early this morning for the northern reaches of Iceland and the pleasant little town of Akureyri, on the shores of the Eyja Fjörð. Leaving Akureyri, we stop to admire the pulsating drama of Goðafoss (Waterfall of the Gods), one of many impressive falls that contribute to the fantasyland feeling of idyllic Iceland. Upon arrival in the whale watching port Húsavík, there will be free time for lunch, followed by a menu of three optional activities to choose from:

Whale Watching with Salka Whale Cruises: *Though whale activity can never be guaranteed, odds are good that we'll encounter humpbacks, minke whales, and dolphins. This is a weather dependent activity and the company we use gives passengers the opportunity to cancel at the last minute if you prefer not to brave the elements. Cruises never sail under dangerous conditions. ~Estimated price: \$115*

Horseback riding from Lava Horse Farm: *Iceland is renowned for its amazing little horses. Relatives of the medieval Norwegian horses that can still be found in the fjord country of Norway, these beautiful animals are reputed to be unusually easy to ride, have an abnormal fifth gait compared to the usual three or four gaits other breeds have, and are carefully bred and protected from off-island diseases and genes; and once shipped off the island, are never allowed to return. The Húsavík region is a wonderful area to explore on horseback! ~Estimated price: \$95*

Free time in Húsavík: *Take a few hours off and enjoy the unique north Atlantic ambience of this delightful little town. Diversions include the picturesque wooden church, The Húsavík Whale Museum, The Exploration Museum, dedicated to the history of human exploration with interesting exhibits on Apollo astronaut training that took place nearby in 1965, and a picturesque port area.*

We spend the next two nights enjoying the remote serenity of Lake Mývatn!

DAY 4 – August 3: Activities from Lake Mývatn (B)

Ásbyrgi Canyon Walk – 5 km, rated 1A

Hljóðaklettur Walk – 1.8 km, rated 2A

Dettifoss Walk – 2.6 km, rated 2B

This morning we depart for Vatnajökull National Park and Dettifoss, considered the most powerful waterfall in Europe. We explore this diverse geological smorgasbord on a series of three walks: Ásbyrgi, a horseshoe canyon with a lovely pond at the end; Hljóðaklettur, with its astounding array of honeycomb basalt formations; and Dettifoss, where we get two breathtaking waterfalls for the price of one—Dettifoss and its upstream little sister, Selfoss! We return to the hotel to enjoy its unique setting in the Lake Mývatn area.

DAY 5 – August 4: Lake Mývatn – Breiðdalsvík (BD)

Dimmuborgir Black Lava Castles Walk – 10 km, rated 2D

Lake Mývatn is a geological wonderland brimming with geothermal and volcanic surprises. From our hotel amongst an emerald moonscape of “pseudo-craters,” we depart by bus for a walk at nearby Dimmuborgir. The route traverses a convoluted labyrinth of “black castles”—oddly shaped pillars and crags created 2000 years ago (give or take a day) by trapped lava flows. After stopping at the hot mud pots of Námafjall, this afternoon's drive takes us across the island's interior, a mesmerizing volcanic wasteland, to East Iceland and our hotel in Breiðdalsvík on the shore of a picturesque fjord.





DAY 6 – August 5: Breiðdalsvík – Smyrlabjörg (BD)

We continue south along Iceland's east coast today, enjoying more sweeping vistas as our coach navigates along fingers of the sea that push deep into the East Iceland coast. Spectacular seaside scenery combines with a short walk to a lovely waterfall and a fun stop for lunch in a tiny fishing village on one of our more relaxing days. Consider joining us this evening for an exciting after-dinner option!

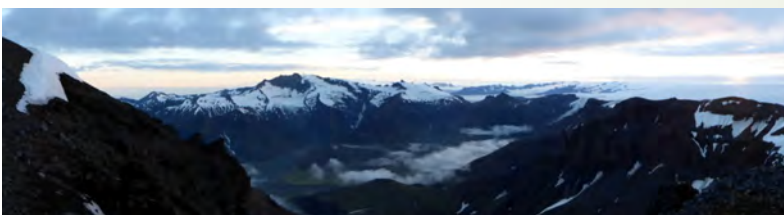
Optional Vatnajökull Glacier Expedition: The Vatnajökull icecap is the largest in Europe (and the 3rd largest on the planet), covers 8% of Iceland, and is over 1300 feet thick on average. Our evening excursion onto this massive mountain of ice starts from our hotel in Smyrlabjörg. Experienced guides drive us up a winding mountain road to the glacier in four-wheel drive jeeps. After a short break, we continue across the glacier for breathtaking views of deep ice-sculpted valleys, barren peaks of East Iceland's mountains and, of course, the enormous sheet of ice that is Vatnajökull itself. ~Estimated price: \$290

DAY 7 – August 6: Smyrlabjörg – Vík (BD)

Skaftafell Svartifoss Walk – 4 km, rated 2B

Fjaðrárgljúfur Canyon Walk – 3 km, rated 2B

First stop today is at Jökulsárlón Lagoon, a 600-foot deep river lagoon crowded with icebergs calved from the glacier Breiðamerkurjökull. A short cruise in amphibious vehicles takes us amongst these floating crystal pyramids. In Skaftafell National Park, today's trail explores a forested hillside resisting the force of two gargantuan glaciers flowing down from the massive Vatnajökull ice field. The route passes lovely Svartifoss (black waterfall) and visits a lonely group of deserted 19th century farm buildings. Following a short coach ride, part two of the walk explores Fjaðrárgljúfur Canyon, a stunningly stark gorge with a remote lagoon fed by a glacial waterfall.





Tim & Jeannette Friesen

WAI GUIDES ~

Tim spends the school year as a high school music teacher in Molalla, Oregon, and is occasionally known to burst into song on tour in places other than the shower! Jeannette works part time in the office helping travelers over the phone and generally keeping the rest of us organized! Tim and Jeannette currently lead summer-time walking adventures, mostly in Europe, and are looking forward to the time when they can leave their day jobs behind and hit the trail on a year-round basis.

DAY 8 – August 7: Activities from Vík (BD)

Remundargil Canyon Walk – 6.5 km, rated 2B

Hjörleifshöfði Headlands Walk – 4.5 km, rated 4B

This morning's walk requires a change in vehicles as we motor inland on a winding gravel road. As much as any, this area demonstrates that "green" is a very Icelandic color. Mosses and grasses assume a wide spectrum of shades of green and gray, and almost glow when the light is right. After lunch in Vík, a challenge hike takes us up steep slopes of a headland offering spectacular 360-degree views of sea, sand, glaciers, and the green hills of south Iceland. At the top, we discover a Viking grave—Hjörleifur Hróðmarsson, foster brother of the founder of Iceland, Ingólfr Arnarson. This could be the best hike of the Adventure!

DAY 9 – August 8: Vík – Selfoss area (BD)

Views from our hotel beckon us to explore with a morning stroll out to Dyrhólaey Rock, southernmost point in Iceland, which offers one of our best chances to see puffins. We continue to the homey Skógar Folk Museum for a memorable review of a wide collection of rural Icelandic memorabilia. Another spectacular waterfall visit to Skógafoss concludes another day exploring the delightful coast of south-east Iceland. Later tonight, we'll enjoy a special Farewell Dinner as we reminisce about our adventures together.

DAY 10 – August 9: Depart from Reykjavík (B)

Our final morning in Iceland takes us across the Reykjanes (smoky) Peninsula. Viking settlers used this name to describe venting geothermal steam they mistook for smoke. Amidst the rugged moonscape, we stop to admire dramatic seaside vistas at Reykjanesviti Lighthouse, Iceland's oldest. The aptly-named Bridge Between the Continents, a simple footbridge, gives us one more chance to straddle the tectonic plates of Eurasia and North America. Following lunch, a short drive brings us to the airport, and flights back to North America. We leave enriched by the history, culture, and scenery of unforgettable Iceland! ❄



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**The impending increase in Iceland's VAT tax to 24% in mid-2018 may raise the price of the Iceland tour by a surcharge of as much as \$450.

What's Included:

- ◆ Airport to hotel group transfers on first and last day
- ◆ Flight between Reykjavík and Akureyri
- ◆ All land travel as outlined
- ◆ Tourist-class or better hotel accommodations
- ◆ 16 meals: All breakfasts and 7 dinners as denoted (BD)
- ◆ 11 walks as listed (6 IVV walk stamps)
- ◆ Fees for IVV walking credit (sanctioning applied for)
- ◆ All tipping for local guides and coach drivers
- ◆ Cultural and historical expertise of our national guide throughout
- ◆ WAI guide service throughout (2 guides)
- ◆ A limited number of single rooms are available for a supplement of \$1225

Visits to:

- ◆ Þingvellir National Park
- ◆ Geysir geothermal area
- ◆ Gullfoss waterfall
- ◆ Goðafoss waterfall
- ◆ Vatnajökull National Park and Dettifoss waterfall
- ◆ Námafjall geothermal area
- ◆ Jökulsárlón Lagoon iceberg cruise
- ◆ Skaftafell National Park
- ◆ Fjaðrárgljúfur Canyon
- ◆ Skógar Folk Museum
- ◆ Skógafoss waterfall
- ◆ Reykjanes Peninsula tour
- ◆ Plus more fun stops and amazing sights than we can list!

Optional Excursions

- ◆ Húsavík whale-watching cruise (Day 3)
- ◆ Húsavík horseback riding experience (Day 3)
- ◆ Vatnajökull Glacier Expedition (Day 6)

WAI is a registered seller of travel in Washington (601 677 299) and California (2039567-40). Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the state of California.



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