

ICELAND AURORA EXPLORER

2019/20

SMALL GROUP ESCORTED TOURS

15 DAYS
ICELAND FROM **\$9995***pp

TRAVEL: SELECT 1 OF 8 DEPARTURES OCT'19 - MAR'20

30 NOV 2019, 19 JAN, 15 FEB, 16 MAR, 27 MAR 2020 **\$9995pp**

02 OCT, 15 OCT 2019 **\$10395pp** 28 DEC 2019 **\$10995pp**

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SPACES ON THESE EXTRAORDINARY TOURS ARE STRICTLY LIMITED

ICELAND AURORA EXPLORER

2019/20

This incredible 15 day journey captures the very best that Iceland has to offer in the spectacular winter months. Experiencing the Northern Lights with dramatic Icelandic scenery in the backdrop will leave you awestruck and appreciative of your natural surroundings.

DAY 1 ARRIVAL - REYKJAVIK

Welcome to Iceland! Upon arrival you have a seat in a coach transfer from Keflavik Airport to your hotel. In the evening you will have a Welcome dinner at the Concert Hall Harpa. **D**

Hotel: Fosshótel Reykjavík

DAY 2 REYKJAVIK

On this four hours tour we explore the world's most northern capital. A good start to your Iceland experience. This is a detailed and comprehensive introduction to Reykjavik's past and present. During this tour Reykjavik's main attractions are highlighted on foot and by bus. The main landmarks, such as The Pearl, Hallgrímskirkja church, the harbor and the famous 101 Reykjavik neighborhood are visited. We'll end the tour with a visit to the Northern Lights Museum.

The afternoon is at your leisure to explore the city on your own. It's possible to join an optional whale watching tour in the afternoon for those who wish (weather permitting).

After having dinner at the hotel in the evening we will head out to search for the Northern Lights. The Northern Lights, also known as Aurora Borealis, are caused by the interaction of particles from the sun with the upper atmosphere near the North Pole. We drive away from the city lights to areas where there is no light pollution to search for the northern lights. This is a natural phenomenon which can of course not be guaranteed. The locations visited during the Northern Lights tour vary from day to day depending on weather conditions. **BD**

Hotel: Fosshótel Reykjavík

DAY 3 BORGARNES - DEILDATUNGHVER - HRAUNFOSSAR - REYKAHOLT - INTO THE GLACIER

Today we drive north from Reykjavik heading to the peaceful farming district and valley of Borgarfjörður, the setting of Egil's Saga, framed by mountains and glaciers that are backdrops to many of the best salmon rivers in Iceland. We make a short stop in the town Borgarnes before visiting Deildartunguhver, one of the world's biggest hot springs. We continue to historic Reykholt, where Snorri Sturluson once lived, a brilliant 13th-century writer/scholar. Next stop is a multitude of natural springs under a birch covered lava field, which creates a waterfall of hundreds of meters wide, the

magnificent Hraunfossar (Lava Falls), seemingly appearing out of nowhere across the bank. A few minutes' walk up the river is the Barnafoss (Children's Fall), which has carved out strange figures from the rock.

After having lunch, we begin a tour into the Langjökull Glacier and experience the inside through a manmade ice tunnel. After the tour we head back to the hotel, enjoy a dinner and relax in the outdoors hot bathtubs hopefully seeing the Northern Lights. **BD**

Hotel: Icelandair Hotel Hamar

DAY 4 BJARNAHÖFN SHARK FARM - STYKKISHÓLMUR - VIKING SUSHI TOUR - LAUGARBAKKI

We start the day at Bjarnarhöfn, a shark fishing farm where you learn about the shark fishing industry, see how shark meat is prepared and also have an opportunity to sample it. We continue to Stykkishólmur, a charming fishing town offering amazing views over Breiðafjörður fjord with thousands of small islands. In Stykkishólmur we join a boat tour in Breidafjordur Bay, taste the Viking sushi and learn about sea and bird-life.

After the boat tour and some free time in Stykkishólmur we continue to the hotel for this evening. Before dinner the local guide will have a short lecture about the Northern Lights. After dinner the you have the chance to enjoy the Northern Lights from the outdoors hot bathtubs if you are lucky. **BD**

Hotel: Hotel Laugarbakki

DAY 5 LAUGARBAKKI - VÍÐIMÝRI CHURCH - SAUÐARKRÓKUR TANNERY - HOFÓS - SIGLUFJÖRÐUR

We continue our drive to the north east, to Skagafjörður, known as the "valley of horses". The first stop is Viðimýri turf church. On we go through the fjord and along the coastline until we reach the small town Sauðarkrókur where we have a guided tour through their world-famous tannery. We continue and reach Hofós, a small community along the cliffs, with a fantastic view over the fjord and the sea. We'll go to the local swimming pool to enjoy the magnificent view while bathing in the hot water. Afterwards the road takes us along a steep coastal road to the colourful fishing town of Siglufjörður. After dinner at the hotel we'll go out by foot to search for the Northern Lights. **BD**

Hotel: Hótel Sigló

DAY 6 KALDI BREWERY - AKUREYRI - GOÐAFOSS WATERFALL - MÝVATN

In the morning we visit the local beer brewery Kaldi before heading to Akureyri where you have some time to explore Akureyri, a charming town of,

17,000 inhabitants on your own. Worth a visit are the botanical garden, the modern church and you can enjoy the panoramic view over Eyjafjörður fjord. After lunch we travel east from Akureyri to Goðafoss, the waterfalls of the gods. We continue to the hotel for this evening located right by Lake Mývatn which is known for its geological wonders and active bird life during summer. **BD**

Hotel: Icelandair Hotel Mývatn

DAY 7 MÝVATN - DIMMUBORGIR - NÁMASKARÐ - MÝVATN NATUR BATHS

In the morning we visit pseudo craters, walk in the lava field Dimmuborgir, see the hot springs and bubbling mud pools of Námaskarð. In the afternoon we soak at Mývatn Nature Baths that contains a unique blend of minerals, silicates and geothermal micro-organisms. The warm soothing waters benefit both skin and spirit alike. We head back to the hotel for dinner and after dinner we search for the Northern Lights by foot. **BD**

Hotel: Icelandair Hotel Mývatn

DAY 8 MÝVATN - EGILSSTAÐIR

Leaving beautiful North Iceland, we head through the uninhabited highlands and moonlike surrounding to Egilsstaðir, the biggest town in the east of Iceland with a population of 2,200. With some luck we might spot an arctic fox or see reindeer on the way. You'll have the afternoon free to explore Egilsstaðir or relax in the outdoors swimming pool before meeting in the hotel for dinner and watching a movie about the Northern Lights. **BD**

Hotel: Icelandair Hotel Hérað

DAY 9 EGILSSTAÐIR - PETRA'S STONE COLLECTION - HÖFN - JÖKULSARLÓN - ÖRÆFI

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. Opportunities for photos tops and short walks are plenty. We'll stop in Stodvaafjordur Bay to visit Petra's remarkable stone collection. We'll see Vatnajökull - Europe's biggest glacier that is visible all over Southeast Iceland. We stop at the town of Höfn and afterwards continue to Jökulsárlón, a glacial lagoon filled with floating icebergs. We explore the extraordinary site and might even see seals swimming in the arctic waters. You can also walk on the black sandy beach where large icebergs get stranded. After this icy experience we'll head to the hotel for the evening and enjoy a dinner and then saunas are available for those wanting to warm up. **BD**

Hotel: Fosshótel Glacier Lagoon

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B: Breakfast **L:** Lunch **D:** Dinner • *Terms and conditions apply. Prices are per person, twin share and subject to availability. See Bentours.com for more information.

DAY 10 ÖRÆFI - KIRKJUBÆRKLAUSTUR - REYNISFJARA - VÍK

We travel west through the village of Kirkjubærklaustur, cross the sandy desert of the south coast to the coastal town of Vík. In Vík we get to stroll along the black sand beach and admire the Reynisdrangar, high basalt columns in the sea.

We'll overnights in Vík and after the dinner we'll head out for another Northern Lights Hunt. **BD**

Overnight: Icelandair Hotel Vík

DAY 11 SKÓGAFOSS - SELJALANDSFOSS - LAVA CENTRE - HVERAGERÐI

We continue west, slowly closing the circle around Iceland. We'll stop in the small village of Skógar to see the Skógafoss waterfall which is 60 meters high and is one of the most impressive waterfalls in the country. Further west we pass Eyjafjallajökull the infamous volcano and glacier. We continue to the high but narrow Seljalandsfoss waterfall which plunges down from the mountain. There is an interesting trail that goes behind the fall - if you are prepared to get wet! After the waterfalls we'll stop in the town Hvolsvöllur to visit the Lava Centre, an exhibition and movie about the volcanoes in Iceland. We'll arrive in the hotel in Hveragerði in the late afternoon. **BD**

Hotel: Hotel Örk

DAY 12 HVERAGERÐI - FRIÐHEIMAR FARM - GULLFOSS WATERFALL - GEYSIR - PINGVELLIR - HVERAGERÐI

From Hveragerði the journey takes us on to explore the classics and we travel the route of the Golden Circle sights. We'll start by visiting a tomato and horse farm where we get to see how Icelanders can produce vegetables using the geothermal heat, and we'll get to meet Icelandic horses. We 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. Driving onwards we see steam from the Geysir geothermal fields as we 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. After Geysir we visit Þingvellir National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage site, before we head back to the hotel in Hveragerði. **BD**

Hotel: Hotel Örk

DAY 13 HVERAGERÐI - REYKJANES PENINSULA - BLUE LAGOON - VIKING DINNER

The Reykjanes peninsula offers diverse geological features, several light houses, hot springs, mountains and bird cliffs. Today we'll visit the geothermal areas Krysuvik and Gunnuhver, walk over the bridge between continents, visit the fishing town Grindavík and last but not least have a relaxing bath in the Blue Lagoon. On the way back, heading towards Reykjavík we'll stop in Hafnarfjörður where we'll enjoy a true viking dinner before returning to the hotel in Reykjavík where our tour began 12 days ago. **BD**

Hotel: Fosshótel Reykjavík

DAY 14 FREE DAY IN REYKJAVÍK - FAREWELL DINNER

Today you'll have time to explore Reykjavík on your own and maybe do some shopping. We end the evening with a farewell dinner at Perlan Restaurant which offers a beautiful view over the capital on your last night in Iceland. After dinner we'll end the trip with a Northern Lights hunt by bus. **BD**

Overnight: Fosshótel Reykjavík

DAY 15 DEPARTURE DAY

Seat in coach transfer from your hotel to Keflavík Airport. **B**



HIGHLIGHTS & INCLUSIONS:

- Return Airport transfer
- Accommodation for 14 nights
- Daily breakfast
- 14x 3-course dinner menu including coffee/tea - 1 x Viking dinner
- Reykjavík city tour with English speaking guide
- Entrance to Aurora Reykjavík museum
- Private coach and driver for 11 days as per program outside of Reykjavík, day 3-13
- English speaking guide
- 6x Northern Lights spotting, walks, lectures and talks according to weather during the tour
- Into the glacier with activity guide
- Visit to Bjarnarhöfn shark museum includes Brennivín tasting
- Viking sushi boat tour including soup on board
- Visit to Víðímýri turf church
- Visit to Tannery in Sauðárkrúkur
- Entrance to Hofsós swimming pool
- Visit to Kaldi brewery
- Entrance and rental towel at Mývatn Nature Baths
- Entrance to Petras Stone collection
- Entrance to LAVA museum
- Visit to Friðheimar horse farm and geothermal greenhouse
- Geothermal food tasting
- Bridge between continents certificate
- Comfort entrance at Blue Lagoon
- Buses include: free WIFI & simple non-slip snow & ice grippers spikes for shoes during departures

EXCLUSIONS:

- Meals and drinks not mentioned in itinerary
- Any tours, activities or extras not mentioned
- Guide during arrival and departure transfers
- Extra fee for an early breakfast or a "grab & go" packed breakfast
- Other unexpected costs for nature sights
- Travel insurance
- International flights
- Visas, for entering Iceland
- Item of a personal nature, tipping, laundry, while traveling.

