

GRAND TOUR OF ICELAND

2019

12 DAYS
REYKJAVIK – REYKJAVIK FROM **\$9,395*** PP
TRAVEL: 27 JUN, 17 JUL & 1 AUG 2019

RESERVE YOUR PLACE TODAY!

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SPACES ON THESE EXTRAORDINARY TOURS ARE STRICTLY LIMITED

GRAND TOUR OF ICELAND

2019



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Bentours 12-day 'Grand Tour of Iceland' encompasses everything this unique country has to offer - spectacular sites of nature, local culture and delicious cuisine. Experience Iceland in the summer months with its wild terrain and Nordic sophistication.

DAY 1 REYKJAVIK

Arrival seat in coach transfer from airport to hotel. Rest of the day at leisure and in the evening group welcome dinner. **D**

Hotel: Fosshótel Reykjavík or similar

DAY 2 REYKJAVIK – BORGARNES

We see classic highlights today. We explore Gullfoss, the beautiful double "Golden Falls" and we walk through the active geothermal area of Geysir, where Strokkur "the churn" spouts up to 25 metres (70 feet) every five to ten minutes. The next stop is the ancient Viking Parliament area and UNESCO world heritage site of Þingvellir National Park. The Þingvellir plain is situated on a tectonic-plate boundary where North America and Europe are slowly tearing away from each other. As a result, the plain is scarred by dramatic fissures, ponds, and rivers, including the great rift Almannagjá. We continue our journey along the scenic Hvalfjörður fjord. Overnight in Borgarnes, West Iceland. **BD**

Hotel: Icelandair Hotel Hamar or similar

DAY 3 BORGARNES – PATREKSFJÖRDUR

Today, we explore the Snæfellsnes Peninsula, which juts out from Iceland's West Coast like a long arm with a clenched fist at its tip, and which is in many ways a microcosm of the whole island. A rugged mountain chain runs its length, capped by the 1,446-meter Snæfellsjökull glacier, a mystical cone-shaped stratovolcano. We travel around the Snæfellsnes Peninsula, through lava fields, and along the ocean with many classic Icelandic photo opportunities. We see the most popular sites at the Snæfellsnes National Park where volcanic craters, lava flows, an ice cap, glaciated peaks, fjords, sandy beaches, and high cliffs shape its landscapes. We follow the adventure of Jules Verne's classic science-fiction novel about "The Journey to the Center of the Earth". Do not miss your chance to go on your own trip to the interior of the earth under the glacier Snæfellsjökull! This lava cave tour takes you 35 metres underground and about 200 metres into the lava tube called Vatnshellir. During the trip, you reach two different sections of the cave by a long and narrow spiral staircase. The upper section has great features and unique formations of lava statues carved on the sides of the lava tube. In the lower part of the lava cave, you experience

total quietness and even total darkness when your guide switches off the light. The duration of the lava cave tour is approximately one hour. In the afternoon, we catch the car ferry Baldur from Stykkishólmur to Brjánsækur in the West Fjords. On the 2.5-hour journey over Breiðafjörður Bay, we pass the island of Flatey, which is inhabited only during the summertime. If the weather is nice, you enjoy a magnificent view of the bay's countless islands as well as the glacier Snæfellsjökull. **BD**

Hotel: Fosshotel Westfjords or similar

DAY 4 PATREKSFJÖRDUR

We follow the coastline and stop at the folk and transport museum in Hnjótur. We continue through a very remote and sparsely populated region to the bird cliffs of Látrabjarg, the largest seabird cliff and the westernmost point of Iceland and Europe where you can see puffins from mid-May till mid-August. We take a walk in the wilderness to the top of the highest bird cliff in Iceland. Látrabjarg is known in the world for its density of Nordic birds. Puffins, razorbills, guillemots, fulmars, cormorants, kittiwakes and other cliff birds flock either in hundreds, thousands and even in millions. Látrabjarg is a place where you can get very close to the seabirds, and even if you're not into birdwatching, you are entertained by the comic puffins and mesmerized by the sheer number of birds. If weather and road conditions allow we travel to Rauðisandur beach with endless red sand. Well, not endless but 10 km is a lot. The magnificent hues of the sand differ with daylight, tights, and weather. This pure sand beach is home to countless of seabirds and seals and is an oasis of unique tranquility. Forget everything, except maybe getting the perfect shot of the ever-changing hues of yellow, orange and red. **BD**

Hotel: Fosshotel Westfjords or similar

DAY 5 PATREKSFJÖRDUR – BREIÐAFJÖRDUR

We travel over mountains and along the shore of scenic fjords until we reach the majestic fjord Arnarfjörður, surrounded by high mountains. At the bottom of the fjord, we come across the unique waterfall Dynjandi with its seven levels of plunging water, declared the country's most beautiful waterfall by the people of Iceland. We continue over a mountain pass. The trip continues along the southern shores of the West Fjords which is a route less travelled and is characterised by sheer cliffs, deep cut bays and narrow stretches of coastal lowland. We overnight at the remote Vogur Country Lodge in West Iceland. This overnight location is a truly peaceful and beautiful place close to Breiðafjörður Bay, giving you the feeling of being all alone in Iceland. **BD**

Hotel: Vogur Country Lodge or similar

DAY 6 BREIÐAFJÖRDUR BAY – AKUREYRI

In the morning we travel mostly off-the-beaten-path, see abandoned farms, beautiful little country churches, and Icelandic horses. At Haukadalur, there's a rather authentic replica of the homestead of Erik the Red, the famous explorer who founded the Icelandic colony in Greenland. His son Leif-the-Lucky, born in Haukadalur, Iceland, was the first European to set foot in North America. Now the excavated and reconstructed farm in Haukadalur is a living Viking museum, a fun, informative and a photogenic place. The landscape is dominated by mountains, lakes, valleys, sea and wide-open spaces. We head north and stop at a local farm for lunch and a horse show where we learn about the unique qualities of Iceland's special breed. Afterward, we travel through the fertile farmlands and fjord landscapes of Northwest Iceland before we reach the charming town of Akureyri, Iceland's second-largest city. **BD**

Hotel: KEA Hotel or similar

DAY 7 AKUREYRI

During a 6-hour excursion, we see spectacular fjord landscapes while traveling to Siglufjörður, Iceland's northernmost town and known as the herring capital of the North Atlantic. Siglufjörður is located on the mountainous Tröllaskagi Peninsula. On the way, we pass small fishing villages and stop at a deserted valley that even most Icelanders have not seen. Included is a visit to the Herring Museum and also beer tasting at Kaldi, a local micro-brewery. The rest of the day is free at leisure. Maybe you like to go shopping, visit a geothermal swimming pool, stroll through the local botanical garden or try an optional whale watching or horseback riding tour at 17:00. **BD**

Hotel: KEA Hotel or similar

DAY 8 AKUREYRI – LAKE MÝVATN

We explore Goðafoss, the waterfall of the Gods, and continue to Lake Mývatn, known for its abundant bird life and amazing volcanic lava landscapes. We visit pseudo craters, walk in the mysterious lava field Dimmuborgir, see the tephra cone Hverfjall, explore the hot springs, fumaroles and bubbling mud pools of Námaskarð, and travel to the explosion crater lake Viti in the Krafla geothermal fields. In the afternoon relax and soak at the Mývatn Nature Baths. **BD**

Hotel: Fosshotel Mývatn or similar

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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 9 LAKE MÝVATN - FÁKSRÚÐSFJÖRÐUR

We travel to Dettifoss, Europe's most powerful waterfall in the northern part of Vatnajökull National Park. The round-trip walk takes about 40-60 minutes. We continue east through the bare and sometimes deserted landscape with mountains all around. Along the way, we stop at Möðrudalur, the all-year residence at the highest altitude in Iceland, 469m above sea level. In the summertime, they run a service centre there which is a perfect place to enjoy the view of Herðubreið, the queen of the Icelandic mountains. We visit the church at the farm, built by hand in 1949 by the former farmer in the memory of his late wife. From there we head through the uninhabited highlands to East Iceland, past Egilsstaðir and Lake Lökurinn we head to the small fishing village of Fákrsúðsfjörður where we spend the night. **BD**

Hotel: Fosshotel Eastfjords or similar

DAY 10 FÁKSRÚÐSFJÖRÐUR - SKAFTAFELL

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 en route we visit Petra's fascinating rock collection. A naturalist and a collector are two terms that have been used to describe Petra since she was a little girl. From the day she opened her eyes for the first time she perceived her surrounding differently from most of her compatriots, and it is almost as her parents knew when they named her. The word "Petra" simply means "stone" in Greek. Petra collected for nearly 80 years this unique treasure of rocks, crystals, zeolites, quartz and more, all from the nearby area in the Eastfjords. The rocks and stones are beautifully laid out in her home and garden. Her descendants proudly take good care of this unique exhibition. In the afternoon we see Vatnajökull, Europe's biggest glacier that is visible all over Southeast Iceland. Past the town of Höfn, we stop for a boat ride amongst the floating icebergs on the magnificent Jökulsárlón glacial lagoon, considered one of the highlights on tour around Iceland. We spend the night near Skaftafell in the southern part of Vatnajökull National Park. **BD**

Hotel: Fosshotel Glacier Lagoon or similar

DAY 11 SKAFTAFELL - REYKJAVIK

Today we visit Vatnajökull National Park which covers about 14 % of Iceland, making it Europe's 2nd largest national park in terms of area after Yugyd Va in Russia. We explore the region of Skaftafell that is nestled below Iceland's highest mountain and the second biggest stratovolcano in Europe, the 2,110-meter high Hvannadalshnjúkur. We walk close to one of the many glacial tongues in the area – a Kodak moment. We cross a sandy desert and drive along the south coast, always between the sea, rugged mountains, glaciers, and waterfalls. We stroll along the black lava beach and bird cliffs near the village of Vík. We stop at the Skógafoss waterfall, another must-see location in South Iceland. The crashing water creates a mist that results in frequent and magical rainbows, just adding some more memorable experiences to the sheer beauty of this stunning scenery and place. Afterward, we reach Seljalandsfoss waterfall where you can follow a slick and wet trail and walk right behind the falls. Come prepared and bring a raincoat and good boots as you will get wet. Then we visit the Lava Center in Hvolsvöllur, where we watch a documentary film about volcanic eruptions in the past years in Iceland. Farewell dinner at a local restaurant in Reykjavík and we will spend the last night of the Grand Tour in Iceland's capital. **BD**

Hotel: Fosshotel Baron or similar

DAY 12 DEPART REYKJAVIK

After breakfast today departure seat in coach transfer from hotel to airport. **B**



HIGHLIGHTS & INCLUSIONS:

- Visit the world's most northern capital – Reykjavik
- Travel through Iceland's famous Golden Circle
- Experience the UNESCO world heritage site of Þingvellir National Park
- Explore the amazing Snæfellsnes Peninsula and Glaciar
- See the bird cliffs of Látrabjarg – including Puffins, razorbills, guillemots and fulmars
- Explore Goðafoss, the waterfall of the Gods
- Experience Lake Mývatn, known for its abundant bird life and amazing volcanic lava landscapes
- Enjoy a boat ride amongst the floating icebergs on the magnificent Jökulsárlón glacial lagoon
- See spectacular sites everyday!
- Transfer Keflavik Airport-Reykjavik
- Accommodation for 11 nights
- 10 dinners, daily breakfast
- All sightseeing and entrance fees included
- Coach and driver for 10 days as per program outside of Reykjavik
- English speaking guide for 10 days as per program
- Free WIFI on bus

EXCLUSIONS:

- Any services not specifically mentioned in the inclusions or itinerary
- Tips and gratuities
- Optional excursions
- Meals & beverages not mentioned in the itinerary and inclusions
- Items of a personal nature (laundry, mini bar, room extras, travel insurance)
- International flights

