

Iceland's Magical Northern Lights

Time Zone

Iceland is 5 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time. In Iceland, days are much shorter in winter – allowing for more opportunities to experience the northern lights. Keep in mind that as they are a natural phenomenon, sightings cannot be guaranteed.

Elevation

The highest elevation encountered on this tour is 600 feet in the Skogar Region.

Helpful Hints

As an added measure of confidence while traveling internationally, visit www.travel.state.gov. The U.S. State Department offers a “Smart Travelers Enrollment Program” (STEP), which you may individually choose to enroll in. This allows the U.S. to better assist with lost passports or in the event of any emergency abroad.

ADA

The Americans with Disabilities Act does not apply outside of the United States. We will make reasonable efforts to accommodate the special needs of our guests. However, if you require individual assistance you must be accompanied by a companion who is capable of, and totally responsible for, providing the necessary assistance. Neither our personnel nor the personnel of our destination partners may physically lift or assist clients onto transportation vehicles at any time while on tour. We regret that we cannot provide individual assistance to a guest who has special mobility or other like needs.

Luggage

Remember the 3-1-1 rule: Each airline passenger is allowed to bring 1 quart-sized bag containing no more than 3.4 ounces (100 milliliters) of any liquids, gels, and aerosols in their carry-on bag. Any liquids, including water bottles, that don't fit in the one quart-sized bag or are larger than 3 ounces will be discarded by security. Common items that must comply with this rule include toothpaste, shampoo, conditioner, and lotion. For a complete list of what is allowed and not allowed to bring on a plane, visit www.tsa.gov.

Luggage

Your day of departure is almost here, and it's time to think about what to pack. We have a few guidelines to help you. But before you pack anything, you must check with your airline for any luggage fees or restrictions. These can vary widely depending on your carrier and destination. Let's begin. The first thing to consider is how many bags to bring. We recommend one large bag that will be checked on the plane and onto the touring bus and one carry-on bag. It's very important you keep this in mind. We have limited space on our buses, so limiting the bags ensures there's room for everyone's luggage. Your larger bag can't be more than 62in/157cm in length, height and width and cannot weigh more than 50lb/23kg. Your carry-on cannot be bigger than 17 x 12 x 10 inches (43 x 30 x 25 centimeters) so it will fit under the seat or in the overhead racks on the buses. Your carry-on should be a size that you can carry comfortably. You will use this bag to hold your personal items during sightseeing trips. Please note that if you bring more than one checked bag and one carry-on, we cannot guarantee there will be room for them on the bus. You'll need to store or ship any additional luggage at your own expense. If there is room for your additional luggage, we will charge a fee of 4 USD per bag per hotel. It's also very important that all your bags be labeled clearly. In your packet you will find a luggage tag. Please attach it to the bag you plan to check. The name on this tag should match the information on your reservation exactly, so the Tour Manager and all baggage handlers can properly identify the bag as yours. This will ensure the bag is delivered to you quickly and efficiently. Finally, we recommend you purchase travel insurance to ensure peace of mind while you're on tour. We cannot assume liability or accept claims for loss or damage to luggage and personal effects due to breakage, theft or normal wear and tear that results from hotel, airline and group carrier handling. But we offer comprehensive “No Worries Travel Protection” for your convenience. With insurance, you'll be able to focus on creating wonderful memories, not worrying about your luggage.

Arrival Day Suggestions

Your first day in Iceland will be a busy one! Start to prepare by resting as much as you can during your flight, wearing comfortable clothing and keeping hydrated. Your hotel room will be available for immediate check-in as soon as you arrive into Reykjavik. Make yourself comfortable and settle in to rest or enjoy breakfast. After, you will have time for lunch on your own before joining a local guide for a walking city tour. Tonight, join your fellow travelers at a local restaurant for a wonderful welcome dinner and then take a late night cruise to hunt for the elusive northern lights! We will return to the hotel later in the evening – longing for sleep – but the sights will be well worth it!

Name Badges

Included in your tour documents bundle is your personalized name tag. We ask that you put this on before your first gathered event and wear it throughout your tour. This helps your fellow travelers get to know you and for your Tour Manager to better identify you in large groups.

Tour Package - Land Only

If you chose to purchase a land-only tour package, you have opted to purchase your own airline tickets to and from home and, if applicable to your tour package, flights from city to city (inter-flights). In this case, we ask that you keep a few important factors in mind when booking your round-trip flights: 1) Please make sure your round-trip flights work with your tour itinerary. There may be scheduled activities on these days. 2) You must provide us with your flight schedules for the entire tour upon final payment. This ensures that we can arrange any other services you may have purchased from us, including hotel transfers, and that your Tour Manager will know when to expect your arrival. This also allows us to maintain contact with you in case of an emergency.

Local Cuisine

You're in for a treat as you savor the unique flavors of Iceland during your journey! A wide variety of fresh local seafood and lamb are staples of the Icelandic diet. All restaurants feature something from the sea and lamb prominently on their menus, as well as a wide array of dairy products. Popular foods in Iceland include skyr (a type of yogurt and a popular dessert item served with berries), hangikjöt (smoked lamb), kleinur (similar to a donut), laufabrauð (a crepe-like dessert) and bollur (cream-puff dessert). Hot dogs (known locally as pylsur) are hugely popular in Iceland, and this is the country's favorite fast food. You'll find hot dog stands all across Reykjavik, and many restaurants serve them too. Many of the flavors of Iceland's traditional country foods are determined by the preservation method used — pickling in fermented whey or brine, drying or smoking. While in Reykjavik, breakfast will consist of a more traditional "American style" buffet and while in Vik, breakfast will reflect a more traditional Icelandic fare — with a fresh assortment of breads, homemade jams, hardboiled eggs, tomatoes, cucumbers, cheeses, an assortment of sliced meats (such as salami and ham), a variety of pickled herring, cereals, fruit, yogurt, Icelandic skyr, hot oatmeal with all the fixings, and a waffle station. Due to the remote location not all items will be available every day. In Reykjavik, dinners will be at local restaurants and will offer more modern Icelandic dining experience. In Vik, dinner will feature an Icelandic buffet, representing traditional country style dining. Dinner will be held at the hotel to ensure we have plenty of time for our nightly search for the northern lights. Offerings will be of a more simplistic nature and may be limited.

Included Features

Thank you for choosing to travel with us and allowing us to guide you along this adventure! From the moment you step out your door, we strive to provide a comprehensive, stress-free, and unforgettable travel experience. To that end, the following features are included with your tour: motor coach transportation, accommodations, hotel luggage handling (porterage), select meals, admission to attractions as outlined in your itinerary, and gratuities for bellmen, door attendants and wait staff.

Tour Survey

We Want to Hear From You – Post-Tour Survey! • A few days after you return home, you'll receive an email from us with a survey asking you about your experience. Your feedback is important to us and we use it to continually refine our tours to bring you more of what you want when you travel. • Be on the lookout for our email when you get home. • We look forward to seeing you on tour soon! Download the Collette Compass Mobile App • Stay connected and make the most of your travel experience without using data or Wi-Fi. Stay Informed • Review your itinerary • Check your flight schedule Make the most of your free time • Check out local restaurants & attractions Find Your Way • Navigate local streets with turn-by-turn directions

Common Words & Phrases

Common Greetings in Icelandic • Hello/ Good Morning = (halló/ góðan dag) • Good Afternoon = (gott kvöld) • Good Night/Evening = (góða nótt) • Goodbye = (kveðja) • Do you speak English? = (talar þú Ensku) • I don't understand = (Ég skil ekki) • I do not speak Icelandic = (Ég tala ekki íslensku) • Nice to meet you = (Gaman að hitta þig) • How are you? = (hvemig ert þú?) • Good = (góður) Bad = (slæmt) • So so = (svo svo) • Response = (svar) Polite Expressions • Yes = (já) No = (Nei) • I don't know = (Ég veit ekki) • Excuse me = (Afsakið mig) • Please = (vinsamlegast) • Thank you very much = (þakka þú mjög mikill) • You're welcome = (þú ert velkominn) • No Problem = (ekkert vandamál) • I'm Sorry = (Fyrirgefðu) Shopping • Do you accept credit cards? = (Samþykkir þú kreditkort?) • How much does this cost? = (Hvað kostar þetta mikið?) • I'm just looking, thank you. = (Ég er bara að skoða þakka þér fyrir?) • The bill, please = (Reikninginn takk) • Open = (opna) Closed = (lokað) Getting Directions • Where is... = (hvar er ...) • the restroom? = (salemi) • the Post Office = (á pósthús) • the Police Station = (lögreglustöðina) • the bank = (bankinn) • the hospital = (á sjúkrahús) • the pharmacy = (apótekið) • the hotel... = (hótel) • Straight ahead = (beint áfram) • Up = (up) Down = (niður) • Far = (langt) Nearby = (Nálægt) Dining • Breakfast = (morgunmatur) • Lunch = (hádegismatur) • Dinner = (kvöldmat) • Please bring the check/bill = (Vinsamlegast færið mér reikninginn) • Bread = (brauð) • Butter = (smjör) • Salt = (salt) • Pepper = (pipar) • Beverage = (drykkur) • Coffee = (kaffi) • Tea = (te) • Wine = (vín) • Beer = (björ) • Water = (vatn) • Juice = (saft) Signs • Pharmacy = (apótekið) • Bank = (bankinn) • Market = (markaði) In Case of Emergency • Help! = (Hjálp!) • Stop! = (Hættu!) • Call an Ambulance = (Hringja á sjúkrahúsi) • Call the Police! = (Hringja á lögregluna!) Numbers • 1 = (einn) • 2 = (tveir) • 3 = (tveir) (þrír) • 4 = (fjórir) • 5 = (fimm) • 6 = (sex) • 7 = (sjö) • 8 = (átta) • 9 = (níu) • 10 = (tíu)

Currency

Your personal bank card may work at local ATM machines in the destination you are traveling to and would dispense local currency. Please contact your bank to determine if this option is available, that your PIN number will be accepted, to inform them that you are traveling and to determine if any charges apply for each transaction. You may exchange your money at airports, banks, exchange bureaus, and at most hotels. In most cases, a commission charge will be assessed to exchange your money. At the hotel or in the city usually offer a better currency exchange rate than airports. We recommend carrying only a few major credit cards. Credit card purchases often provide an extra guarantee on your purchase (check with your specific credit card company for details and fees). It is advisable to contact any credit card company you intend utilizing while on tour before you depart to notify them where you will be traveling, to avoid any rejection of services. The currency of Iceland is the Icelandic Krona. It may be difficult to exchange cash in denominations higher than 50 USD. If optional tours are made available to purchase, please note that credit cards must have an expiration date of more than 30 days from the start of the tour.

Gratuities

Tipping is a great way to show your appreciation for the people who help keep your tour running smoothly. But it can be confusing who to tip, when to tip, and how much. For baggage handling and waitstaff gratuities for included meals, the tips are handled by us. For hotel housekeeping staff, local sightseeing guides, transfer drivers, motor coach drivers, and Tour Managers, gratuities are not included in the price of your tour. Here are a few of our suggestions: Tour Manager: To express appreciation for your Tour Manager's delivery of excellent service, 5-8 US Dollars (or equivalent in local currency) per person for each travel day is customary. (When to tip: at the end of your tour.) Local Guide: For the insights, knowledge, and stories they share with you, 2-3 US Dollars (or equivalent in local currency) per person is recommended. (When to tip: at the end of your day or time with your guide.) Motor Coach Driver: To express your appreciation for a job well done, 3-5 US Dollars (or equivalent in local currency) per person for each travel day is customary. (When to tip: at the end of your tour or time with your driver.)

Smoking Restrictions

Our tours are non-smoking throughout. If you require a smoking room, please let your Client Care agent know when you book your tour. Please note we cannot guarantee your request as in general, Iceland hotels do not offer smoking rooms. Please be mindful of other locations where smoking is not allowed. These include the motor coach, at dining venues, and any other restricted areas on tour. Guests are responsible for any fines they incur for failing to comply with smoking regulations.

Shopping

One of the best parts of traveling is coming back home with souvenirs that really reflect the place you've just been. Bath and beauty products exclusive to Iceland can be found at the Blue Lagoon Shop. Many shops sell local souvenirs as well as high quality clothing specifically designed for colder climates, including Icelandic wool sweaters, hats, scarves and other goods. Most retail shops are open from 10 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, and in the morning on Saturday. Most stores are not open on Sundays or Saturday afternoons. Most stores are closed on holidays as well.

Meals

The food people eat is a window into their history, traditions, and values, and sharing food brings people together. One of the many wonderful aspects of travel is to experience as much of the regional cuisine as possible. Your tour includes many meals as outlined on your itinerary. Our team has carefully chosen restaurants that feature local ingredients and offer regional flavors. For meals that are not included in your itinerary, your Tour Manager will be happy to recommend eateries and local businesses that best fit your taste and needs. The average price for meals in this region ranges from 10 to 20 US Dollars for breakfast, 10 to 30 US Dollars for lunch and 20 to 50 US Dollars for dinner. The water is safe to drink. Be sure to drink plenty of water throughout each day of your tour to stay hydrated. Please let your Tour Manager know of any food allergies or dietary needs you may have at the beginning or your tour.

Tour Manager

Peace of mind for our guests is our number one priority. When you're on tour with us, your only thoughts should be to immerse yourself in creating lifelong memories. Your Tour Manager is a destination expert on the people, places, history, and culture and ensures that you will have the best experience with us. Please utilize your Tour Manager's expertise for any concerns or questions you may have while on tour.

Transportation

Your comfort is important to us. With that in mind, we charter coaches that are temperature controlled and have toilet facilities on board. However, coaches which may not be lavatory equipped may be used on this program. In this case, stops are made during travel periods. Due to the remoteness of the sites we visit, the travel time between restrooms may be up to 2 hours. Change your seat, change your view! At least once a day, the Tour Manager will ask all guests to change seats. This ensures that every guest has an opportunity to enjoy a variety of views as they travel and a chance to get to know each other better. In fairness to all, there will be no exceptions to this policy.

Clothing & Packing Tips

You may opt to pack wash cloths as they are not readily available in international hotels.

Accommodations

At the time of booking, you will be asked what type of room you would like. A double room has either one large bed or two smaller ones. Double rooms are perfect for couples or if you're travelling with a companion and wish to share a room. There are plenty of double rooms available on our tours. A single or solo room has only one bed and may be smaller in size. These rooms are first come, first-served, as most properties have only a certain amount of these available. A triple room usually consists of a standard double room with two beds. A cot or fold-up bed may be added, but it depends on the room size and local fire codes. Triples are first come, first-served, as they are also very limited. If you booked a triple and only a double and single room is available at a hotel, appropriate charges for the single and double accommodations will be assessed. We will forward your request to the hotel and do our best to accommodate your needs; however, please know that we cannot make any guarantees. On every tour, we look to provide the highest quality accommodations in the best location. If you're visiting a city, we want you in the heart of it. In Iceland, the hotel rooms may not be as large as standard hotel rooms in North America, designed with simplicity, minimalism, and functionality. Here are a few details to keep in mind: Check-in times are set by individual hotels and can vary, but most hotels offer afternoon check-ins. On this program, you will be able to make yourself comfortable in the hotel upon arrival, as your rooms will be ready for check-in, and depending on your arrival time breakfast will be available as well. If you are arriving before the tour starts, depending on your arrival time, you may have to wait before you can get into your room. Some hotels may be willing to store your luggage in a secure location until your room is ready. In these instances, the hotel will not be responsible for lost or stolen items and there may be a charge for this service. Please observe check out times at all properties. Hotels designate these as well. Some hotels require a credit card imprint or your passport information upon check in in order to activate telephones in the rooms and for potential incidental charges. Most hotels charge an access fee for using phones in hotel rooms. Please check with the front desk personnel at each hotel for specific policies. You will be responsible for all incidental fees occurred during your stay, and these must be paid at time of check out. Hotel membership programs are not applicable.

Tour Survey

We Want to Hear From You – Post-Tour Survey! • A few days after you return home, you'll receive an email from us with a survey asking you about your experience. Your feedback is important to us and we use it to continually refine our tours to bring you more of what you want when you travel. • Be on the lookout for our email when you get home. • We look forward to seeing you on tour soon!

Electricity

When traveling to another country, you may need an adaptor and/or electric converter to plug your electrical devices and appliances into the local power grid. An adaptor changes the plug so it fits into the outlet. A converter changes the voltage coming out of the outlet. To determine what you need, first verify if the plugs on your devices fit the outlet of your destination. In Europe, the plug type is C, which has two round pins. If your plugs do not match this description, you will need an adaptor. Next, verify the voltage of each device you intend to bring. You can find this information on the cord, plug, or on the device itself. Many devices are dual-voltage. For those, you do not need a converter. If your device is not dual-voltage and it differs from the voltage of your destination, you will need a voltage converter. In Europe, the voltage is 220v-230v. If necessary, make sure to get a converter that converts to this voltage. If you plan to bring a sleep apnea machine, please remember to bring an extension cord along with the adaptor and voltage converter as not all hotels have sockets next to the bed.

Clothing & Packing Tips

As you prepare to explore Iceland and search for the northern lights, we have recommendations for you on what to pack. Dress on tour is casual, so slacks, khakis, and comfortable tops are all appropriate. However, you will want to bring clothing that helps you stay warm and dry as you brave the cold to look for the northern lights. We recommend layers, so you can add or remove items as the temperature changes. Your first layer should be silk-weight long underwear, turtlenecks, jerseys and camisoles. Besides keeping you warm, these items will wick away moisture, which keeps you dry. For your second layer, a shirt made of polyester is recommended. Your third layer should be a wool sweater or fleece jacket. A heavy winter coat would be the final layer. A pair of fleece pants and GORE TEX® pants are also nice to have. Worn together, they will keep you warm and toasty. To keep your hands warm, pack mittens or gloves; both leather and synthetic fabrics are fine. We also suggest that you bring a pair of silk (or similar) glove liners to wear underneath your mittens or gloves. This will allow you to move your fingers freely when, for example, you wish to adjust camera controls. In addition, we recommend bringing multiple pairs of tall wool socks. For extra warmth, you could bring some liner socks as well. These come in silk, wool, and synthetic fabrics. They are great for keeping your feet warm and dry. You'll also want a hat, scarf, or even a balaclava - anything that keeps you warm and comfortable. Speaking of comfort, rubber-soled walking shoes are recommended as many of the places we visit are not flat surfaces. We also suggest a pair of hiking boots. Keep in mind if you decide to get new shoes for your tour, wear them a few times before you leave to break them in. Your feet will thank you. Finally, we recommend bringing a pair of inexpensive crampons, which are strapped onto the outside of your boots or shoes. They provide more stability when walking on icy surfaces. You can purchase crampons at most outdoor stores or through online retailers. Don't forget your bathing suit! You'll want one for you visit to the Blue Lagoon. For your toiletries, pack anything that could leak in plastic bags or a waterproof case. And you might want to bring a washcloth or two. Not all hotels provide them. If you take prescription medication, make sure to bring enough for your entire tour plus a few additional days in the original prescription containers. Medication should be packed in your carry-on bag, never your checked luggage; this is in case your luggage gets delayed. You don't want to be without your medication. You could also bring extra medication in a separate bag in case any gets lost. In general, we recommend you don't pack anything of value in your checked bag. You'll want to take pictures of everything, so make sure to bring a camera as well as extra memory cards and batteries for your entire trip. If you decide to bring a video camera, don't forget

an extra battery for it plus a charger. Be sure to pack chargers and cords for all your electronic equipment. It's also a good idea to bring a travel alarm clock, a travel sewing kit, a portable scale to weigh luggage, and some hand sanitizer for when soap and water aren't readily available. If you are travelling with a companion, we suggest dividing the contents of your suitcase with them, that way if one bag is delayed, some of your belongings are still available to you both. If that is not an option for you, you could put a change of clothing in your carry-on if there's room. That will give you something to wear if your checked luggage is delayed. Last but certainly not least, leave room! You'll need it to fit all the souvenirs you want to bring home.

Local Guides

In order to enhance your experience on tour, three local guides will accompany the group in specific locations. These guides come from the region and have a deep understanding of the people and culture. They are joining the tour to share their knowledge with you. Please refer to your Tour Manager for the cities these guides will join your tour and refer to the gratuities section for tipping recommendations.

Transfers

We offer full-service transfers from start to finish. So, when you arrive at the airport of your destination, arrangements will have been made to transfer you to your first hotel on the tour. If you purchased our air-inclusive tour package, you will enjoy this service free of charge. If you purchased your air ticket on your own (our land-only tour package), you may purchase a round-trip transfer for a fee. Meeting locations and times will be set up to accommodate your transfer arrival and departure schedules, which will be provided to you in your documents packet. If you decide to arrange your own transportation to the hotel, please make sure to check in with your Tour Manager once you arrive.

Tour Package - Air & Land Incl

If you have chosen our air-inclusive tour package, you have opted that we take care of all your air travels from your home to the destination and back. This also includes any inter-flights from city to city within the tour package if applicable. We ask that you keep the following in mind: 1) In order to comply with Homeland Security's "Secure Flight" mandate, you must provide full name (including middle name or middle initial, if applicable), as it appears on your valid, non-expired, government issued photo ID that you will show at the airport. The name on your airline ticket must be an exact match to this ID, or you may be prevented from boarding the aircraft. 2) If you are a member of a participating frequent flyer program, make sure to provide the number when you book your trip and retain the copy of your ticket and boarding pass so you will receive proper credit for your mileage. Please note that some air tickets are not eligible for mileage accrual. 3) Whenever possible, we will add charges for air departure taxes to your invoice. Some international arrival and departure fees are not included in your air ticket and must be paid by you during the tour in the local currency.

Helpful Hints

Here is a list of entities we recommend you contact before you depart on your tour: 1.) Your cell phone/mobile carrier if you are planning on using your device. You will want to confirm you will have access in the area(s) you will visit and inquire about any charges you may incur. 2.) Your credit card company for any card(s) you plan to use. Make sure the card company knows when and where you will be traveling to avoid any charges being declined. 3.) Your bank, so you can use your ATM/debit card worry-free. If you are travelling to another country, your bank will be able to tell you if your card will work at the ATM machines to dispense local currency, including if your PIN will be accepted. Also, indicate if you plan to use your debit card as a credit card if your card has that option. Your bank will advise you of any charges for each transaction as well. Leave a copy of your itinerary, hotel list (included in your tour documents bundle) and a contact number with a designated person in case an emergency comes up while you're away and someone needs to reach you. We recommend you leave a copy of your passport at home in a secure location and bring an additional copy with you as a precaution. During your flight, make sure to stand up and walk around as much as possible, and drink plenty of water. These simple suggestions will help you stay comfortable, particularly during long flights.

Luggage

Guests flying to the United States from all international destinations will require extra screening when carrying powdered products weighing 12 oz./ 350 ml or more in carry-on luggage for security reasons. This added security measure will apply to all powders, with the exception of baby formula and medications. For your convenience, please consider packing any non-essential powders in your checked bag. Items that cannot be verified by a TSA officer risk being confiscated. Please visit www.tsa.gov for more information.
