

Aquatic World's Group Trip to ICELAND: THE LAND OF FIRE & ICE Sept 15th – 24th, 2017

Day 1 - Friday – September 15 - Departure

Depart US on an overnight flight to Iceland with your trip leaders Tim and Sharon Corcoran.

Day 2 - Saturday – September 16 – Welcome to Iceland

Welcome to Iceland, the land of “fire and ice”. Iceland is full of concealed treasures, including massive glaciers, natural hot springs, canyons, lush green meadows and a variety of Icelandic nature.

Upon arrival and clearing Immigration and Customs, your host and guide “Einar” will be waiting for you.

Your introduction to Iceland begins with breakfast at the Viking Museum.

Then it is off to the Blue Lagoon where you will enjoy pleasantly warm, mineral-rich water. The lagoon is a natural geothermal pool in the middle of a large and dramatic lava field. Float, relax and take in the dramatic landscape that surrounds you as you sip a special Blue Lagoon drink. An optional “in the water massage” will be offered.

After your Blue Lagoon experience, set out for Selfoss, your home for the next five nights. Have your cameras handy for the magnificent sites you’ll see while driving along the coast, including waterfalls, a sudden burst of a nearby geyser, glaciers, impressive mountains and possibly a herd of Icelandic Horses lounging along the road.

After lunch enjoy sometime on your own. Meet again for dinner in the hotel restaurant.

ACCOMMODATIONS: SELFOSS HOTEL (B)reakfast, (L)unch, (D)inner

Day 3 - Sunday – September 17 – Selfoss/South Coast/Selfoss

Leave Selfoss this morning to see a black volcanic sand beach. The view to the north is of the magnificent glacier Mýrdalsjökull, to the east, the black lava columns of the Reynisdrangar come out of the sea, and to the west you can see the coastline leading back to Selfoss. In front of the peninsula, there is a gigantic black arch of lava standing in the sea, which gave the peninsula its name (meaning: the hill-island with the door-hole). As you walk along the beach keep a look out for the Westman Islands which will be visible from the beach.

Explore the country's kaleidoscope of dramatic waterfalls, glaciers, and impressive mountains. See the amazing Seljalandsfoss Waterfall, Skogafoss Waterfall situated on the Skógá River. Visit Gigjökull a glacier fall from Eyjafjallajökull. The melted ice from the eruption at Eyjafjallajökull came bursting down and created a destructive flood on its way to sea. April 2010 Eyjafjallajökull erupted and created a major shutdown of European air traffic. The super jeep takes you through areas that were badly hit by ash fall in the beginning of the eruption. See an informative movie on how the local and tourists survived the days during the eruption and after.

For those adventurous get ready for an awe-inspiring *optional* Glacier Experience! Arrive at Langjökul (or Langjökull area), Iceland's second largest glacier. You are about to experience an exhilarating one-hour tour across the endless white snowfields. Those not taking the optional snow mobile excursion, you will have a chance to experience the glacier as your jeep takes you to the top of the glacier and you have a walk or glide along the ice.

Return to the hotel for dinner and overnight.

ACCOMMODATIONS: SELFOSS HOTEL (B, L, D)

Day 4 - Monday – September 18 – Landmannalaugar

Today, venture out into the interior of Iceland to the famous Landmannalaugar Desert, a magnificent area surrounded by colorful rhyolite mountains. Landmannalaugar's brilliant red mountains were formed by centuries of volcanic activity in the area. The picturesque natural landscape is simply breathtaking.

BBQ lunch will be arranged for you as you take in the magic of this amazing site.

While there enjoy a relaxing bath in a natural warm pool that was created when many hot and cold springs in the area combined. If you aren't in the mood for a swim you may want to simply take a leisurely hike in the surrounding rhyolite mountain paths. If you are swimming you will need to bring a bathing suit and towel.

After this exciting day, you will return to Selfoss for dinner and overnight.

ACCOMMODATIONS: SELFOSS HOTEL (B, L, D)

Day 5/6 – Tuesday/Wednesday – September 19/20 – Beauty of Iceland

The next two days are spent exploring mountain trails, waterfalls, volcanoes and more.

Optional Westman Island excursion will be offered.

Be ready for a call late on one of these evenings – you will may an opportunity to chase the Northern Lights.

ACCOMMODATIONS: SELFOSS HOTEL (B, L, D).

Day 7 – Thursday – September 21 – Selfoss/Reykjavik

Say goodbye to Selfoss this morning and begin your journey to Reykjavik.

Visit the Friedheimar Farm and see how the family has developed an inside agricultural greenhouse to grow tomatoes all year long. A brief introduction will provide an insight into the history of Icelandic horticulture.

“Meet the Icelandic Horse” and enjoy a special presentation exhibiting how the horses of Iceland “tolt.” Besides the traditional walk, trot, and canter, the Icelandic Horse performs two extra gaits – the tolt and the flying pace. The tolt is an extremely smooth, four-beat gait, much like the running walk or rack that allows the rider a virtually bounce-free ride at speeds up to 20mph. The tolt is a natural gait, no artificial aids are needed and you often see foals tolt in the pasture.

Stop at Gullfoss (waterfall) to see the beautiful flow of the falls.

Continue to Geysir. Have your cameras and videos readily available so you can capture the eruption of the Geysir which occurs every 3 – 5 minutes.

The final visit before departing to Reykjavik is to Thingvellir National Park where the Viking Parliament met under the open sky 1,000 years ago. It is here that the North American and the European continental shelves meet. The area is a huge landscape of twisted, breath-taking lava formations.

Dinner will be at a local restaurant.

ACCOMMODATIONS: RADISSON BLU SAGA HOTEL (B, L, D)

Day 8 - Friday – September 22 – Reykjavik

Einar will take you on a half-day tour of the city, including the beautiful Harpa Concert Hall. The main designers of the Harpa concert hall and conference center are Danish architectural firm Henning Larsen Architects and Icelandic architectural firm Batteríið Architects.

Visit Hallgrímskirkja Church. For those interested you may climb to the top of the bell tower. Get out your camera to capture incredible views over the red rooftops of the city and Faxaflói Bay beyond.

The tour will end in the quaint city where you can explore the shops, cafes and restaurants. Dinner is on your own this evening, so you may want to stay in the city and experience one of the local restaurants. Ask Einar for his recommendation to the best restaurants and shops.

ACCOMMODATIONS: RADISSON BLU SAGA HOTEL (B)

Day 9 – Saturday – September 23 - Reykjavik

Your final day in Iceland is at your leisure for personal exploration. There are some optional tours you may be interested in joining, including a helicopter excursion that will give you an aerial view of the island as well as an up close look at the volcanos and glaciers. If you would like to have more of a body and mind experience, visit the Blue Lagoon Spa located in the city (not the same as you visited on the day of arrival) for a massage and a dip in the mineral rich pool. Or, you may choose to join an Icelandic horseback riding excursion.

This evening, you will journey to the 8th floor of the hotel for a magnificent Farewell Dinner at the Grillið Restaurant. The panoramas of Reykjavik at night are beautiful, so do not forget your camera. The restaurant's award-winning chefs craft unforgettable gourmet dinners with fresh, local ingredients.

ACCOMMODATIONS: RADISSON BLU SAGA HOTEL (B, D)

Day 10 - Sunday – September 24 – Departure

Say farewell to Iceland this morning as you drive back to the Keflavik International Airport for your return flight home to your family and friends who await you!

Arrive home with your hearts and minds filled with many happy memories of Iceland! **(B)**

Please Note: Itinerary sequence is subject to change without prior notice.

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- Transportation by Super Jeep for 6 days
- Transfer to airport by motor coach
- 5 nights' accommodation in Selfoss at the Selfoss Hotel Hella or similar
- 3 nights' accommodation in Reykjavik at the Radisson Blu Saga Hotel or similar
- All transfers and sightseeing by Super Jeep or motor coach
- Daily sightseeing including visits of the South Coast, Eyjafjallajökull Volcano Movie, Landmannalaugar Desert, Volcano Heckler, Thorsmork Valley, Fridheimar Farm, Golden Circle, walking tour of Reykjavik and more
- Entrance to the Blue Lagoon "Premium Package"
- 9 breakfasts, 6 lunches and 7 dinners
- Hotel taxes, service charges and portorage