



## The Land of Northern Lights

**5 days / 4 nights**

A short winter trip to Reykjavik and the Icelandic countryside with an optional glacier hike - 5 days / 4 nights. This is a budget holiday offering great value for money! During the day we explore Southwest Iceland, known for its natural wonders and cultural sights. Spend two nights in Iceland's capital and two nights in South Iceland, an ideal location for the search for the Northern Lights.

During the day we explore Southwest Iceland, known for its natural wonders and cultural sights. See glittering glaciers, snow-clad mountains, giant lava fields, steaming hot springs and beautiful waterfalls. Bathe in the mineral rich geothermal waters of the Blue Lagoon, walk on a black lava beach, visit Icelandic horses on their farm, photography idyllic turf houses and travel close to the famous Eyjafjallajökull volcano. This short getaway to Iceland offers insight into Iceland's nature and cultural life, with two nights in Iceland's capital and two nights in South Iceland, an ideal location for the search for the Northern Lights. Also called Aurora Borealis, they are visible in the northern sky from September through April when the sky is clear and free of clouds. During this tour it is possible to book an optional glacier hike.

### Prices: September 2018 - April 2019

#### **Budget Category (Hotel Cabin in Reykjavík + Arhus Cottages in Hella)**

860 EUR Price per person in a twin and triple room

1.020 EUR Price per person in a single room

#### **Upgrade version (Center Hotel Plaza in Reykjavik + Stracta Hotel in Hella)**

1.090 EUR Price per person in a twin and triple room

1.560 EUR Price per person in a single room

### Prices: September 2019 – April 2020

#### **Budget Category (Hotel Cabin in Reykjavík + Arhus Cottages in Hella)**

745 EUR Price per person in a twin and triple room

875 EUR Price per person in a single room

#### **Upgrade version (Center Hotel Plaza in Reykjavik + Stracta Hotel in Hella)**

955 EUR Price per person in a twin and triple room

1.350 EUR Price per person in a single room



## Price for the Christmas departure 23 to 27 December 2019

### Hotel Cabin in Reykjavík + Árhús Cottages, Hella

1.165 EUR Price per person in a twin and triple room

1.310 EUR Price per person in a single room

## Price for the New Year's departure 29 Dec 2019 to 02 Jan 2020:

### Hotel Cabin in Reykjavík + Árhús Cottages, Hella

1.210 EUR Price per person in a twin and triple room

1.370 EUR Price per person in a single room

Note that most double rooms in Iceland are actually twin bedded rooms

**CHILDREN DISCOUNT:** 25 % discount for children 8-11 years of age if sharing room with parents. Tour is not recommended for children younger than 8 years of age. Triple rooms are actually double rooms with extra bed and ideal for 2 adults and 1 child.

### Included:

- Arrival & departure airport transfer by FLYBUS Plus shuttle (no guide)
- Fully escorted 3-day bus tour with an English-speaking guide
- 4-nights budget accommodation, in rooms with private shower/wc (see information below) or hotel upgrade option
- Daily breakfast
- Entrance with towel at Blue Lagoon
- Entrance fee to Skógar folk museum and turf houses
- Visit to Icelandic horse stables & geothermal greenhouse
- Northern Lights program during 2 evenings with a combination of lectures, presentations, film and guided searches for the Northern Lights and midnight refreshments
- Use of winter & Northern Lights explorer equipment: simple non-slip snow & ice grippers spikes for shoes and a flash light that is helpful when walking in the dark and operating your photo camera at night

**DEPARTURES:** From October to April

**TOUR START:** Arrival in Iceland on Tuesdays or Thursdays and guided bus tour start on Wednesdays or Fridays at 09:00.

**END OF TOUR:** The guided tour ends on Fridays or Sundays around 17:00 for a last overnight in Reykjavík. Departure from Iceland is on Saturdays or Mondays.

**LANGUAGES:** English only

**ACCOMMODATION:** For this program we use budget accommodation in order to offer an attractive package price. You get great value for money. The first and last nights are at Hotel Cabin, in Reykjavík, offering rooms (10m<sup>2</sup>) with shower/wc, a restaurant and a bar. The 2nd & 3rd nights are at Árhús Cottages in Hella, South Iceland, where 23 simple cottages with shower/wc are located in a large garden right



on the river banks in the village of Hella. Árhús Cottages are popular with outdoor active guests and families travelling with children. All cottages are equipped with a small kitchenette and free Wi-Fi. There is a restaurant on premises, and a public swimming pool and supermarket are in walking distance.

The tours can be booked with a hotel upgrade option. In Reykjavik overnight will be at Centerhotel Plaza in downtown Reykjavík. In Hella overnight will be in 24m<sup>2</sup> studio rooms with kitchenette at Stracta Hotel, which offers a restaurant, hot tubs and sauna on its premises. It is a 10 minute walk (750 m) from Stracta Hotel to Árhús Cottages in Hella where the guide gives the Northern Lights lectures and presentations. The Northern Lights movie is also shown at Stracta Hotel.

**NOTE REGARDING DINNERS:** In Reykjavik, the dinner is on your own. There are many restaurants for both fast food and a fine a la carte dining in Iceland's capital. The Árhús Cottages and Stracta Hotel in South Iceland offer a limited a la carte menu with a selection of fish, meat and vegetarian as main course. Lunch stops are made at small country restaurants or petrol station diners.

**NATURE FEES:** There is a possibility that some of the nature attractions around Iceland might charge an entrance fee during the trip. These entrance fees are not included in the tour price and need to be paid by all tour members additionally on the spot, when entering any of these nature sites. Locations, amount of entrance fee, form of payment and other details are not known at the present time and are subject to change.

**NORTHERN LIGHTS:** This program includes during 2 evenings a combination of presentations, lectures, film and guided Northern Lights searches in the garden of Árhús Cottage in Hella, South Iceland, about 10 minute walk from Stracta Hotel. Árhús Cottages and Stracta Hotel in South Iceland offer a Northern Lights wake up call for guests that register for that special service at the reception. The tour is dependent on weather and therefore sightings are not guaranteed. The Northern Lights are in the northern hemisphere from September through April but are only visible when the sky is clear and free of clouds. Like many of natural wonders, the Northern Lights are ephemeral – they may be visible, they may appear for a bit and then be gone (it is not a TV show that you can just turn on and off). But it is worth the patience which is much required. Because they are a winter event, you need to be prepared to wait outside while looking for them. It is best to dress very warmly, in layers, with good footwear, gloves, hats and whatever else will make you comfortable while you await patiently this truly outstanding event. For the best photos we recommend using a tripod.

**CHANGE OF PROGRAM:** Itineraries may be subject to change at short notice during severe weather conditions and certain outdoor activities/day trips may be cancelled during the winter season in Iceland. In these rare cases, where situations of force majeure apply, excursions/activities cannot be refunded but the local guides will try their best to find reasonable alternatives where and whenever possible.



## Itinerary



### **Day 1, TUE or THU: WELCOME TO ICELAND (50 km/31 mls)**

Land of Northern Light 2013-14.jpgThe Flybus shuttle brings travelers from Keflavík International Airport to Hotel Cabin and Centerhotel Plaza in Reykjavík where you spend one night. We provide you with ideas how to explore Iceland's capital on your own.

### **Day 2, WED or FRI: REYKJAVIK CITY TOUR, THE BLUE LAGOON & REYKJANES PENINSULA (220 km/137 mls)**

At 09:00 meet your tour guide who shows the group the highlights of Iceland's exciting capital. Then head out to the Reykjanes Peninsula with its hot springs, mountains, bird cliffs, light houses and fishing villages. At the end of the day, we get to soak off our travels in the warm mineral rich waters of the famous Blue Lagoon. We stay for two nights in simple cottages in South Iceland. There is an option to upgrade to studio rooms at the Stracta Hotel in Hella. In the evening, we hear about the Northern Lights from our tour guide at Árhús Cottages. Naturally, once darkness falls, you are out in the garden waiting for the Northern Lights.

### **Day 3, THU or SAT: SOUTH ICELAND WITH OPTIONAL GLACIER HIKE (200 km/124 mls)**

Today we head along the south coast and reach the area near the active volcano that is beneath the Eyjafjallajökull glacier. We stop at the high but narrow Seljalandsfoss waterfall, which plunges from the mountain. Next we visit Skógar folk museums, which contains an outstanding collection of farm and domestic artifacts from Iceland's past and several turf-built houses. Nearby is one of the most impressive waterfalls in the country; the 60 meter high Skógafoss waterfall.

In the afternoon we offer an optional glacier walk. The Sólheimajökull glacier tongue extends from the great Mýrdalsjökull glacier, down to the sandy plains of the Icelandic south coast. The spectacular surroundings are marked by rugged and majestic rock formations thoroughly shaped by the glacier. On this



fun, safe and easy to moderate glacier walk you get to explore the wonderland of ice sculptures, water cauldrons, ridges and deep crevasses on the breath-taking Sólheimajökull glacier. While enjoying all the features of the glacier and its spectacular surroundings, you will learn more about the behavior of glaciers and their impact on nature. No technical requirements are needed for the tour as an experienced glacier guide will teach you how to use basic glacier equipment, such as crampons and an ice axe which are provided for glacier walk tours. The unique experience of a glacier walk on one of the many retreating glaciers of the world is sure to leave lasting memories. Duration of this activity is about 3 hours in total, about 90 minutes on the ice and about 30-40 min walk (one-way) from the parking lot to the glacier edge itself. Minimum age for the glacier hike is 10 years. You need to bring warm clothing, rain gear and hiking boots. The glacier hike can only be booked with the guide on day 2. The special price for the Land of Northern Lights group members is ISK 12.000 (about EUR 100 per person) instead of ISK 14.900 official rate; prices are subject to change. Payment is due with the glacier hike company on day 3 in Icelandic Krona - cash only!

If you booked the trip without the glacier hike, then the tour continues further south where you can stroll on the black lava beach to see the amazing bird cliffs at Reynisfjara near Vík. In the evening there is another presentation about the Northern Lights. If the night is clear, you might see the Northern Lights swirling in a wild and carefree dance across the heavens in dramatic shapes, colours, patterns and sizes. The grounds of Árhús Cottages and the Stracta Hotel in Hella are very large and dark and offer you a good location for Northern Lights search if the weather conditions are right. It requires patience, warm clothing and the excitement of "maybe there could be Northern Lights".

#### **Day 4, FRI or SUN: HORSES & GOLDEN CIRCLE (210 km/130 mls)**

Geysir hot springs.jpgIn the morning you learn about the Icelandic horse, its special qualities and history and visit a geothermal greenhouse. Travel the Golden Circle route. See steam rising from the Geysir geothermal fields as you 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. Continue on to Gullfoss, a double waterfall that tumbles 34 meters into the Hvítá River and attracts tourists and travellers in summer and winter. Head inland to Þingvellir National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, before returning to Reykjavík for your last night, either at Hotel Cabin or Centerhotel Plaza. An optional Northern Lights evening cruise can be booked while in destination, if the weather conditions are ideal.

#### **Day 5, SAT or MON: DEPARTURE HOME (50 km/31 mls)**

Individual transfer by Flybus airport shuttle from your guesthouse/hotel accommodation in Reykjavík to Keflavík Airport.

