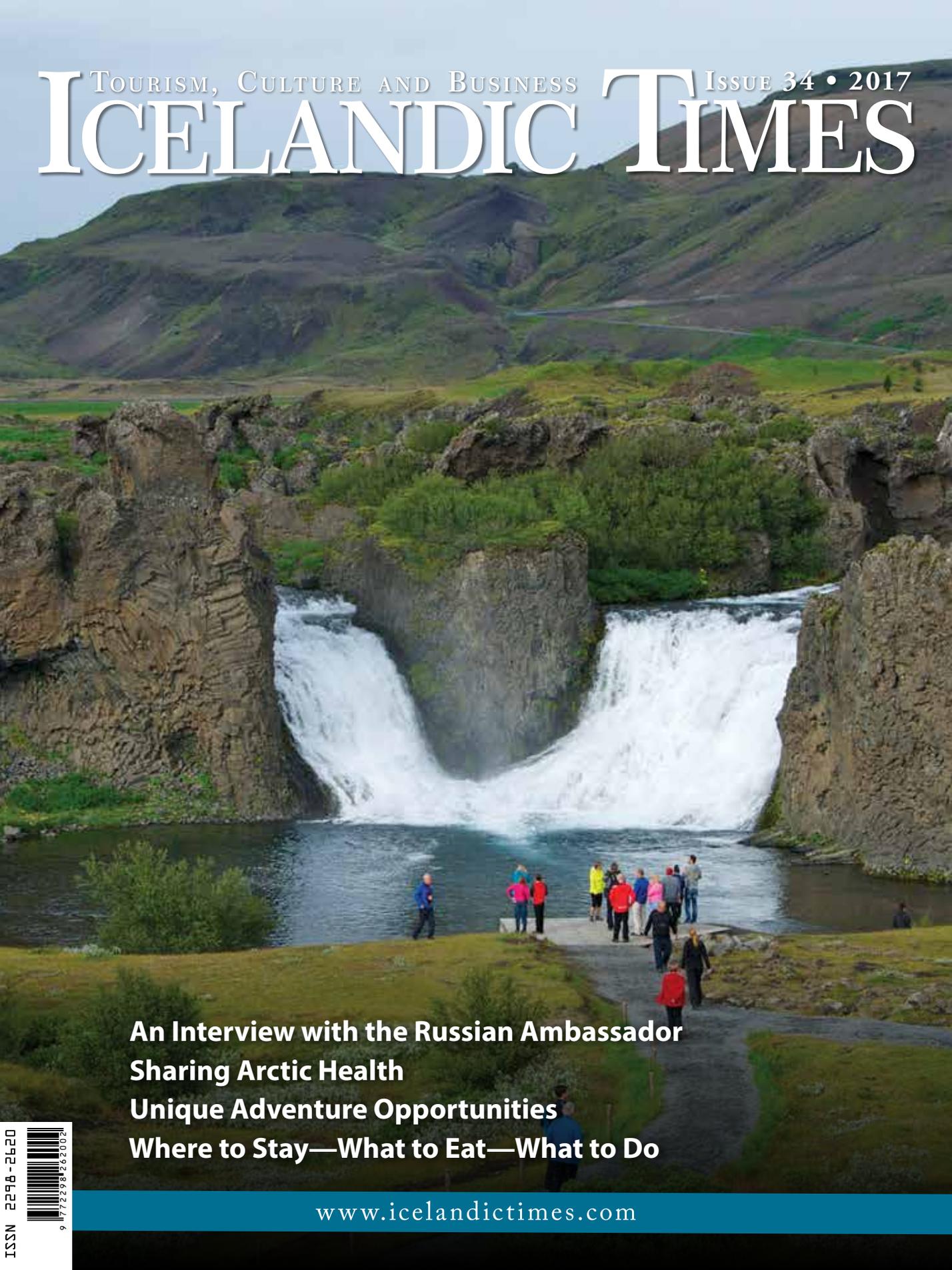


TOURISM, CULTURE AND BUSINESS

# ICELANDIC TIMES

ISSUE 34 • 2017



**An Interview with the Russian Ambassador  
Sharing Arctic Health  
Unique Adventure Opportunities  
Where to Stay—What to Eat—What to Do**

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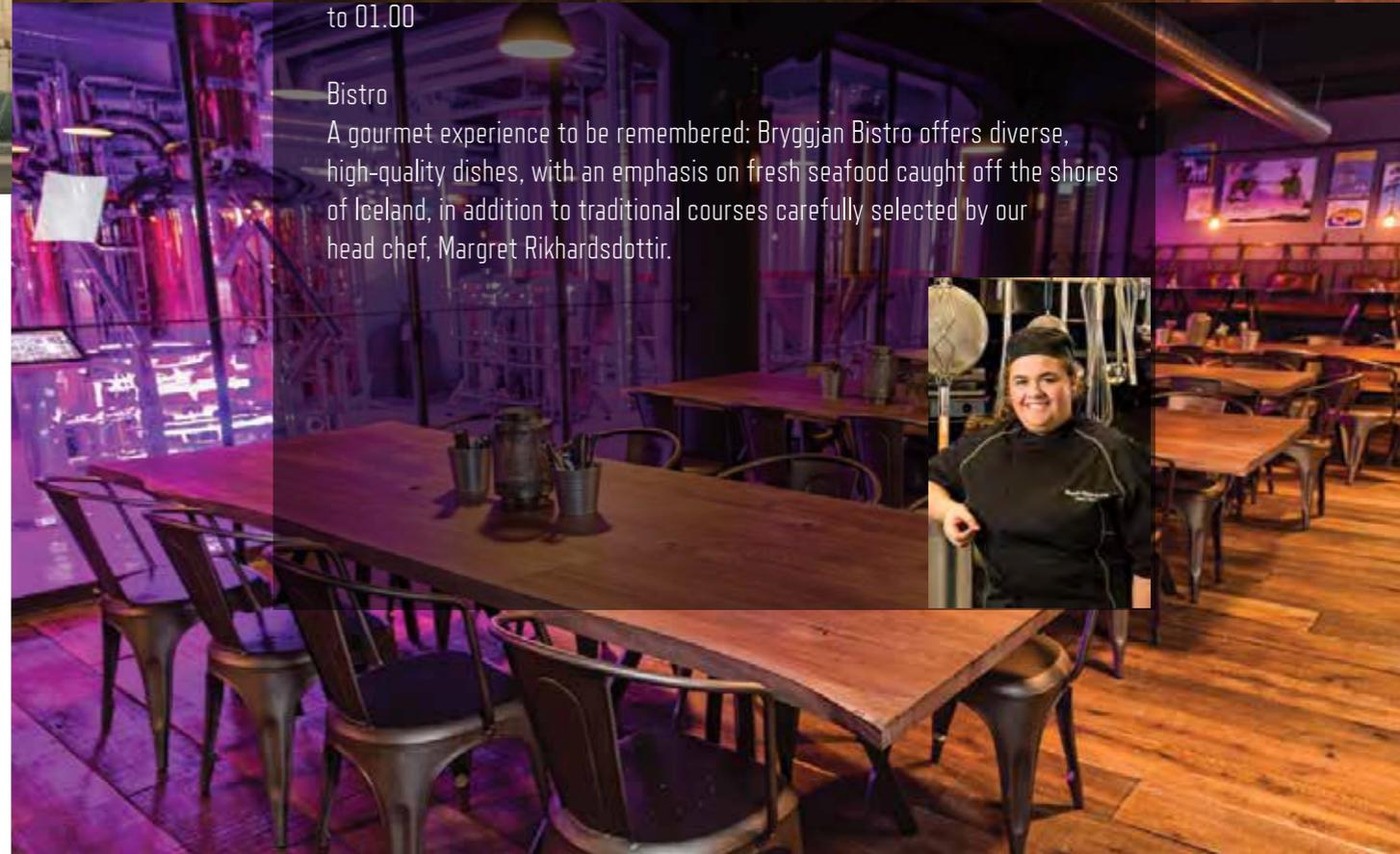
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A gourmet experience to be remembered: Bryggjan Bistro offers diverse, high-quality dishes, with an emphasis on fresh seafood caught off the shores of Iceland, in addition to traditional courses carefully selected by our head chef, Margret Rikhardsdottir.



Iceland stands in the middle of the Atlantic, a small nation positioned between two different cultures, political systems and world powers.

When the country hosted the famous meeting of the Presidents of the USA and former USSR, the island that was known as 'Europe's Best Kept Secret' was thrust into the limelight.

From that point, Iceland began to play more major roles, to become the 'go to' place for tourists and adventurers—to become known for its volcanic eruptions and its economic crash.

On every front, Iceland was suddenly thrust into the public eye and, as word spread about the people, the nature, the amazing sights and experiences that greeted visitors, it has undergone an amazing transformation.

It has gained the confidence to take its place on the world stage, bringing to the table fresh ideas, perspectives and an entrepreneurial vision to take risks and try things no one else has dared.

Given the challenges the world faces, it is at this time that Iceland is stepping up to the plate to provide forums for

discussion, a land of health alternatives, possibilities of tranquil peace and a humbling perspective of life with its dramatic landscapes that just might enable cooler heads to prevail.

This issue offers a range of topics and views from the North.

Einar Th. Thorsteinsson  
Managing Editor and Publisher



Take part in a great adventure.

# Inside<sub>the</sub>Volcano

Descend 120 metres into a volcano and explore an underground world.

“ One of twenty places in the world you must see before you die.

- CNN

“ I have never been anywhere underground that matches the grandeur and impact of this place.

- The Sunday Times

“ Standing inside a volcano is a strangely emotional experience.

- The Guardian

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### Icelandic language

Icelandic is one of the European root languages, like Latin. There is no 'c' or 'z' in modern Icelandic, except in foreign words. However, it still contains some letters not found in most other languages. This basic list provides a general idea of their sounds, using familiar words rather than phonetics.

Character	Pronunciation
á	Like 'ow' in 'cow'
æ	Like the personal pronoun 'I'
ð	Like 'th' in 'that'
þ	Like 'th' in 'thing'

### How to make use of QR codes



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*Anton Vasiliev, Ambassador of Russia to Iceland:*  
**“RUSSIANS ARE DILIGENTLY  
 WORKING ON THE  
 ARCTIC ISSUES”**

“I’m happy to be in Iceland and like the Icelandic people. Certainly, there are temporarily problems in relations between Iceland and Russia. I hope, however, that reason will prevail and that we shall succeed in finding solutions to these issues,” says Anton Vasiliev, Russia’s Ambassador to Iceland, when we met him in the ambassador residence in Túngata in Reykjavík. Vasiliev has served as ambassador to the country since April 2014. He knew a lot about Iceland before becoming ambassador. In 2008 Vasiliev had been appointed Ambassador of Russia for Arctic Affairs. “Thus, I also represented Russia in the Arctic Council and the Barents Euro-Arctic Council. I frequently came to Iceland on official business, got to know and like the country and nation.”

**Worked in turbulent times**

Anton Vasiliev has a relaxed and friendly demeanour. After a short chat with this just over sixty year-old representative of Russia in Iceland there’s no doubt that here is a highly qualified and experienced man. The Russian authorities have clearly made a careful choice when appointing Vasiliev as Ambassador to Iceland. His resumé is impressive. “I was born in Moscow”, said Vasiliev, adding that he studied at Moscow State Institute of International Relations, specialising in International Economics, graduating in 1976, aged 22. “I also learned Chinese, French and English. Then I went to China, where I worked in the Soviet trade mission in Beijing. This was at the end of the period of the so-called Cultural Revolution in China. I

returned home to Russia and completed my Ph.D. in Economics in 1983, focusing on the Chinese economy. I then returned to China and began a seven-year period as a diplomat of the Soviet Embassy.”

The Russian Ambassador has lived in tumultuous times. He was born only a year after the death of Joseph Stalin in 1953 and lived to adulthood in the Soviet Communist society that most people believed was there to stay. All that would eventually change. “When I came back to Russia after seven years in China, the Soviet Union no longer existed. I returned again to China as the Deputy Head of Mission of the Russian Embassy. My job in China at first was mainly to monitor the Chinese economy. I travelled all over this magnificent country and learned a lot. China is one of the most



*Dr. Anton Vasiliev ambassador of Russia in Iceland at his office in the ambassador residency in Reykjavik, Iceland.*

interesting civilizations. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to get to know this country. There I witnessed a dramatic change in Chinese society in the wake of the economic reforms that were established in 1979 and marked the end of the Cultural Revolution.”

**Disarmament and the Arctic region**

Vasiliev said he lived 13 years in China altogether and enjoyed that time very much. “The stay there was an instructive and unique experience.” He moved back to Russia in 1996, where he was assigned a new and radically different task from

that which he had in China and carried with it a great responsibility. “In following decade I worked for the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in the UN on arms control and disarmament. I was head of the Russian delegation in Geneva, Switzerland, in the implementation commission of the START Treaty. The former Soviet Union agreed with the United States to reduce strategic nuclear weapons capabilities at the end of the Cold War in 1991. This was a very challenging but also rewarding work.” In 2002 – 2007 he embarked on the multilateral arms control diplomacy, representing Russia at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

Once again Vasiliev radically changed course in his work when he undertook new project. It happened in 2008, when



*In Monaco, November 2008, at the international Arctic Conference with H.E. Albert II, Prince of Monaco, and Russian colleagues*



*15 May, 2013 Arctic Council ministerial meeting, Kiruna, Sweden*

he was appointed Ambassador of Russia on Arctic Affairs. “My experience of dealing with major international partners and multilateral negotiations, both from the years in China and in arms control, proved extremely helpful to me in this area. I really enjoy working on Arctic issues. The natural environment and the people living in this region fascinate me. The conditions are exceptional. It’s a vast area and in many ways the environment is harsh. This calls for cooperation and assistance between nations. People have got to work together. Collaboration among nations within the Arctic Council has already yielded results. Nations have agreed to joint legal obligations relating to the Arctic such as for search and rescue cooperation and in the field of marine pollution. The arctic environment is extremely important.”

**A Commendation of Icelanders**

In connection with his work as Ambassador of Russia on Arctic Affairs, Vasiliev regularly visited Iceland. “I was in the country during the economic collapse in the autumn of 2008 and witnessed the protests here in the city centre as a result.”

As a Doctor of Economics, it was an unforgettable experience for him to see the nation’s financial system collapse. He looked not only at this through the eyes of a diplomat, but also through the eyes of a professional. It fuelled his interest in Icelandic society. Today he praises the Icelandic nation for how it addressed the huge difficulties involved in the crash. “Through my work as an ambassador, I have watched closely and can testify today the vivid success Iceland has achieved economically. This has been

accomplished in spite of numerous obstacles.”

Vasiliev said he was delighted to be appointed Ambassador to Iceland. He took up his post in April 2014 and has lived in this country ever since. This enabled him to get to know Iceland better and, at the same time made it possible to continue to monitor and work on issues related to the Arctic. “Between the environmental challenges we face due to global warming and the opportunities it offers for use of the Arctic’s resources and space, lies a contradiction. There are obvious commercial benefits, such as opening of maritime transport routes that were closed because of sea ice. Also, we can mention here an easier access to resources such as oil, gas and metals. Arctic nations must responsibly explore and extract resources while, at the same time, taking into account the need to protect the highly sensitive ecosystem of the area. The damage can easily become almost irreparable if we are not careful in all our policies and conservation.” This suggests to Anton Vasiliev the obvious example of Iceland. “Icelanders are familiar with the nature of the damage caused by wind erosion on areas of vegetation, as well as by human intrusion.”

**Important factors in Arctic Affairs**

This leading Russian expert on the Arctic region also highlights the human factor. He said that the rights of the indigenous peoples of the High North need to be guaranteed and their way of life protected. “This is a tricky tightrope walk that takes into account many factors. Into this are woven many challenges and problems due to changes in environment and technology. There is no doubt that global warming



*In Suzhou, China, June 2013*

is taking place with the changes in the climate system. We’ve become aware of this now. Never since records began, for example, has as much rain fallen in one day in Moscow as was the case this November. The equivalent of an entire month’s average rainfall fell in one day. Here in Iceland, this winter has so far been very mild. At the same time, we’ve heard news of snowfalls in the Saudi Arabian desert.”

Vasiliev said that the Arctic Council has undertaken an important pioneering study of global warming and other environmental changes in the Arctic – Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA). He says that it is evident that it’s due to manmade causes. “Russia recognizes this and, among other things, became a member of the Paris Accord on Climate Control signed in 2016.



*Aboard Norwegian Research Ship “Lance” with Ambassador Jon Egill Egilsson, Svalbard, August 2008*



*In Anadyr, Chukotka, Russia, August 2009*



*With the Arctic Council Ambassadors aboard the Russian nuclear icebreaker “Yamal”, the Northern Sea Route, August 2011*



*Tiksi, Republic Saha (Yakutiya), Russia, August 2011*



*At the international oceans’ conference in Singapore, February 2012*



*Farewell meeting with the Arctic Council Senior Arctic Officials, Whitehorse, Canada, March 2014*



*Arrival at the North Pole, April 2013*

Therefore, we are committed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in accordance with certain criteria."

The Ambassador also mentioned that security is an important factor that has to be taken into account in the light of these changing circumstances. "Russia has about a ten thousand kilometre-long border along the Arctic Ocean coastline. Previously, the sea ice and difficult climatic conditions in this area provided a natural border protection. Now, as it warms and the ice retreats, the coastal areas became vulnerable to unwanted elements such as terrorism, drug trafficking, and organized crime. We, in Russia, now need to look for new ways to protect ourselves and our borders in the north. Therefore, we are now systematically working to restore and build up military capability and surveillance in the North. This is just one manifestation of how we must now deal with the new challenges in the light of changing circumstances".

#### Russians are working diligently

Vasiliev said that nothing in Russian activities in the Arctic region should be surprising. "Since 2008, Russia has followed the strategy formulated by the Security Council and signed by the President relating to Arctic affairs. It includes, among other things, the development of the infrastructure associated with the maritime route north of Russia between the Atlantic and Pacific - the Northern Sea Route. We see it has a great future because it shortens the sailing distance between Western Europe and East Asia by 40 percent. This means great savings. Countries such as China, South Korea, Japan and Singapore are showing keen interest in it. We are not sitting idle. We have adopted a comprehensive plan that aims at managing traffic on this route and ensuring its safety. Search and rescue centres are under construction at regular intervals along the coast, from the port of Murmansk in the west to Anadyr in the east. Russia is also putting up satellites to monitor the safety of the shipping route north of Russia, provide better weather information and more secure communications. It is also mapping the seabed in these areas, training captains and others who will sail there and work, and so on."

The Russians are also constructing three new most advanced nuclear powered ice-breakers in the world. "These ships will be so powerful that they can break through all types of ice regardless of its thickness. We are also constructing new diesel-powered icebreakers. They are very sophisticated and are specifically designed to be capable of operation in shallow coastal waters. We are building a new large port Sabetta in Yamal region for exporting liquefied natural gas by ship. We see great potential in using this route for export of oil and gas to the market from the northern regions of Russia. There are enormous resources in the ground in Siberia, of both gas, oil and metals such as gold, copper and nickel."

#### Expected economic growth in Russia

At the end of our talk with Anton Vasiliev, we touch on relations between Iceland and Russia. The Soviet Union was one of the first to recognize Iceland as an independent nation. It happened in 1943 when the first envoy from there received permanent residence in this country. The bilateral relationship has always been good in both cultural and business areas.

In recent months, however, a shadow has become evident over trade due to Iceland's participation in the Western nations' sanctions against Russia because of events in Ukraine and Crimea. "Iceland joined sanctions some western nations placed on Russia. We responded with countermeasures. The solution to this issue is in your hands. Of course, we should remove all these absurd barriers to trade. But the Russians can live without these foodstuff products that we no longer import from Western countries."

Vasiliev adds that, in some ways, Russia has even benefitted from sanctions. "This has stimulated innovation in the technology sector and in creative industries in Russia. Our agriculture and domestic food production is flourishing. Russia, however, has certainly endured a recession in its economy. There are various explanations for this besides sanctions, such as a fall in oil prices on the world market. Currently this year there will be a GNP decline between 0.6 and 0.7 percent, but the bottom has already been reached. This year we expect more than a one percent growth. This is happening despite sanctions."

#### Too bad for Iceland

Doctor of economics, Anton Vasiliev, says experience has shown that sanctions harm many of the countries initiating or taking part in them more than Russia itself. "Iceland is probably leading the pack. Marine products made up the bulk of imports of goods from Iceland to Russia and, generally, trade between the two states. Icelandic fish was highly regarded by Russian consumers. You had there a good market with bright future. The public in Russia witnesses that Icelandic fish has disappeared from the stores. I can feel it myself. When I'm home in Moscow I can no longer get the Icelandic fish I really like."

The Ambassador of Russia to Iceland believes that his nation has rarely enjoyed fairness in disputes with states in the West. "Let's look at the reasons given for the sanctions. Russia can refute all of them. First, the Crimea was not incorporated by force into Russia. It was the free will of the Crimean inhabitants, confirmed in a free referendum to join Russia. The entire process was fully consistent with international law. The Kosovo case was much less legitimate. Second, Russia did not shoot down the Malaysian passenger jet, MH17, over Ukraine in the summer of 2014. We have presented abundant proof to this, but it is disregarded. Thirdly, the Russian troops or arms have never been brought to eastern Ukraine. There is not one single piece of evidence to show that the accusations against Russia have a basis in fact. If there were any dependable evidence it would have emerged instantly because the surveillance systems are so advanced today, such as satellites, drones, Open Skies Treaty inspections etc., etc.. All these reasons are allegations and deception. Russia is not a threat to anyone (if you prefer to stay in a real world, of course, not in a world of make-believe built by information wars). This boycott is ludicrous and counterproductive and clearly serves other goals than were announced. But Russia is always open for fair and equal cooperation with anyone who really want it. I believe in further development of friendly relations and cooperation between Russia and Iceland in many areas, and will do my best in this regard," says Anton Vasiliev in closing.

-MAGNUS THOR HAFSTEINSSON



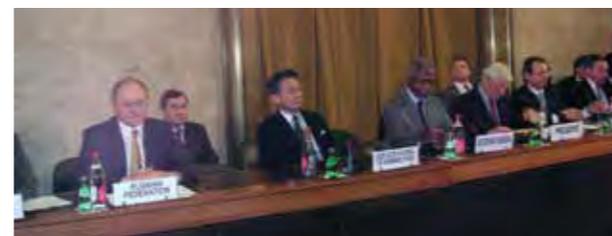
With Jonas Allansson, the Iceland Senior Arctic Official, Camp Barneo, the North Pole area, April 2013



With fellow ambassadors, Russian National Day reception on board of "Kruzenstern", port of Reykjavik, 10 June 2015



As Chair of the Barents-Euroarctic Council senior officials, Moscow, April 2008



With the UN Secretary General Kofi Anan at the Conference on Disarmament, Geneva, Switzerland, June 2006



All Arctic Council Ambassadors at the exact point of the North Pole, 10 April 2013



With colleagues and compatriots, Russian National Day Reception on board of "Kruzenstern", port of Reykjavik, 10 June 2015



Making a statement at the UN General Assembly, October 2006



Dr. Anton Vasiliev ambassador of Russia in Iceland speaking with Icelandic Times Journalist Magnus Thor Hafsteinsson at the ambassador residency in Reykjavik, Iceland.

CHEERS! FOR PURE  
ICELANDIC SPIRITS – AND BEER



# Keflavik

*Bringing Icelandic Treasures Home*

# DUTY FREE

As tourism to Iceland continues to grow, it has fuelled demand for quality Icelandic products. Happily for travellers, Duty Free Iceland provides a great shop window on almost everything Icelandic from sweet treats to unique spirits to natural skincare products. Duty Free Iceland is tax- and duty-free and conveniently open day and night.

Shopping is available to arriving and departing passengers regardless of origin and destination, and it carries all the common international brands and products, plus a growing range of unique Icelandic products.

### Unique Icelandic spirits

There is always a great selection of Icelandic duty-free wines and spirits

in store, featuring local favourites like Brennivín, a clear, unsweetened schnapps that is considered to be Iceland's signature distilled beverage.

Icelandic Mountain Vodka is a year-old product that started its adventure in the Duty Free shop in Keflavik. The gluten free brand, which is made with pure Icelandic water, has grown over the past few months and can now

be found in eight different countries and has received fantastic reviews in the media. Supercall and The Spirit Business named the vodka both 'Top trends to look for in 2017' and 'One of the best newcomers in vodka 2016'. The Icelandic Mountain Vodka is distilled seven times so it feels extra smooth while still standing strong at a 40% alcohol level.

Vor premium gin from Eimverk distillery is made with organic barley and is bursting with the flavours of the Icelandic countryside. Also from the Eimverk Distillery is Flóki, a handcrafted single malt. Its special taste comes from barley grown organically in volcanic soil at the Arctic Circle. Reykjavik Distillery incorporates local Icelandic

ingredients into spirits perfectly. Their rhubarb and juniper berry liqueurs capture the freshness and purity of Icelandic nature and offer a new way to enjoy a distinct and much-loved flavour in a cocktail or on its own. The award winning Reyka and Katla vodkas are available as well as the tasty Birkir schnapps and Bjork liqueur, which are smooth and uniquely





Icelandic. For those interested in shots, Tópas and Opal Vodka shots are not to be missed. And don't forget about the beer—Duty Free carries brands such as Viking, Boli and the award-winning Egils Gull. Duty Free Iceland also carries a large selection of other beers, which have also earned many international awards. A wide range of flavours is on offer, from numerous smaller breweries, as well as larger companies.

**Sweet Iceland**

Confectionery is a big thing in Iceland, and when it comes to chocolate, the Icelandic brand Noi Sirius is one to look for. The company, established in 1920, is the largest confectionery

manufacturer in Iceland. It produces a tasty line of chocolates encompassing semi-sweet, bitter and milk chocolate in a variety of shapes and sizes, including the company's well-known chocolate gift boxes.

Omnom is another local chocolate maker that is quite special. The company sources premium organic beans from a range of cocoa fields around the world and tailors its chocolate-making process to ensure that each variety of chocolate achieves its full potential. The only additions to the mix are raw cane sugar and, in the milk chocolate range, creamy Icelandic milk. Its design conscious packaging makes this the ideal gift to bring home.

Another name to check out is Hafliði Ragnarsson, one of the world's top 100 chocolatiers and something of a purist in terms of the mighty cocoa bean. He works his magic to combine classic blends with more exotic flavours of pistachio, passion fruit, star anise and even Earl Grey tea.

Freyja and Stefan B Chocolatier are among other popular brands that offer sweets and liquorice that would guarantee you a warm reception back home, if only you could resist temptation during your flight!

**Quality Skincare Products**

Icelandic herbal oils and cosmetics sit next to international brands, offering health-giving benefits from the

country's mountains, pristine valleys and hot springs. A recent scientific breakthrough in Iceland, based on 10 years of biotechnology research, has resulted in a new concept that is marketed here as BIOEFFECT® skin care (serum and day cream). It nourishes and replenishes skin cells, bringing a youthful glow to even the most stressed or sensitive skin, without harmful chemical compounds.

The scientists at Bioeffect won a Nobel Prize for their work, and their company offers a range of revolutionary biotech skin care products, including the recently introduced EFG Day Serum which rejuvenates the skin and minimizes the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles.

A number of other companies use local Icelandic ingredients as well.

Sóley Organic, for example, uses hand-picked wild Icelandic herbs in their environmentally-friendly and preservative-free products.

Taramar uses Icelandic seaweed and organic herbs in its pure, safe skincare products.

Villimey specialises in biological salves and ointments made of Icelandic herbs in products such as anti-aging facial oils, lip balms and muscle and joint creams.

The Purity Herbs brand produces natural skin care products including joint relief oils and volcanic body scrubs.

**No discrimination**

The shops are both duty free and tax free for all passengers regardless of what passport you may hold or which country you are flying to or from. The shops are open day and night, which is a nice touch from the Vikings!

Whether you're starting your holiday, stopping over, or concluding your trip, Duty Free Iceland will give you lasting warm memories of the Land of Fire and Ice.

-JG



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 +354 425 0410  
 dutyfree@dutyfree.is  
 www.dutyfree.is





# REYKJAVÍK CITY MUSEUM

Multiple exhibits focus on historical and cultural aspects of the capital city

**R**eykjavík City Museum gives travellers the opportunity to experience the history of Reykjavík in a fun and engaging way. The museum, which comprises five separate sites, aims to preserve Reykjavík's cultural heritage, dating back to the days of the Settlement in the late 9<sup>th</sup> century. Four of the museums are within convenient walking distance of the centre of downtown Reykjavík, while the Árbær Open Air Museum is only a 15-minute drive from the city centre and the ferry to Viðey Island leaves regularly from the Old Harbour in downtown Reykjavík. —JG

## The Settlement Exhibition & Settlement Sagas

The Settlement Exhibition is authentic as it gets as it was built around the actual ruins of a Viking Age longhouse that has been preserved. The exhibition gives guests a look into the life of the first people who called the Reykjavík area their home and the ways in which they adapted to their new life. Meanwhile, the second part of the museum is focused on the Settlement Sagas, and history and literary buffs will not want to miss this. The Settlement Sagas comprise some of the nation's most renowned documents, many of them written in the 12<sup>th</sup> century but relating events that go back to late 9<sup>th</sup> century. This is one of only three places in Iceland where you can see ancient Icelandic manuscripts. The exhibition is suitable for all ages and includes an activity centre for children.



## Árbær Open Air Museum

The Árbær Open Air Museum is a treasure. The museum, which was founded in 1957, gives visitors a visual sense of Reykjavík's past. The site comprises a village-like collection of more than 20 houses, each of which is a separate exhibition. Visitors learn how Reykjavík developed from a few isolated farms into the capital city of Iceland that today is home to more than 120,000 people. During the summer months, staff members are clad in period costumes that are quite charming and fun. The museum is suitable for all ages and includes a playground and a toy exhibition where children can play freely.



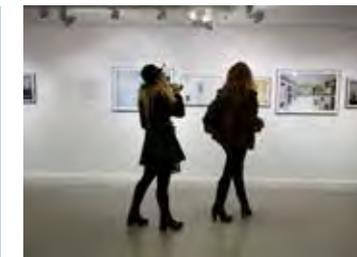
## Reykjavík Maritime Museum

Fishing has been the backbone of Iceland since the days of the Settlement. Fish nourish Iceland's inhabitants and are an important export industry. The Reykjavík Maritime Museum, which is located by the old harbour, focuses on exhibitions that show the importance of fish to the nation. Today, Icelanders fish on modern trawlers, but in the old days, fishermen regularly put their lives at risk on primitive boats in order to feed their families. The museum shows the equipment fishermen have used through the ages. However, one of the main attractions at the museum is Óðinn, the Coast Guard ship which took part in all three cod wars with Britain. Guided tours are offered daily at 13:00, 14:00, and 15:00.



## Viðey Island

Viðey is a little gem of an island just off the coast of Reykjavík and is accessible by ferry. The island, which is about 1.7 square kilometres (0.7 square miles) in size, hosts unspoiled nature with large stretches of grassy plains and a rich birdlife, the John Lennon Peace Tower—an installation created by Yoko Ono, as well as art by world renowned artist Richard Serra. Viðey is a favourite among birdwatchers as the island is a nesting ground for more than 30 bird species. In the summer, there are daily ferry rides from the old harbour, from Ægisgarður pier by the Harpa concert hall, and Skarfabakki harbour. For the ferry schedule, please visit [www.veyey.com](http://www.veyey.com).



## Reykjavík Museum of Photography

Reykjavík is home to some great photographers, past and present. The Reykjavík Museum of Photography has an impressive collection, now comprising about six million photographs. The oldest photos date from around 1860, giving a glimpse of city life decades ago. The museum preserves photographs from professional, as well as amateur photographers, from industrial and commercial photographers, to portrait and press photographers. Reykjavík is a vibrant city with a rich history and contemporary culture. Check out the free exhibitions.



## Family Friendly Fun

Reykjavík City Museum is family friendly and all museum sites have something that caters to children. For example, the "Come and play" exhibition at Árbær Open Air Museum has a playground, furnished rooms with everything in child sizes as well as lots of toys to play with. The Settlement Exhibition has a special family corner where kids and parents can have a fun time together. The Reykjavík Maritime Museum offers a fun treasure hunt for kids during their visit to the museum.



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[www.reykjavikcitymuseum.is](http://www.reykjavikcitymuseum.is)



# THE ICELANDIC SECRET TO A HEALTHY LIFE

*SagaMedica focuses on natural solutions for health*

SagaMedica provides quality natural products from Icelandic medicinal herbs, with a special emphasis on angelica, which grows wild in Iceland. Some research claims that Icelandic herbs are more potent than others due to the short growing season in the summer months under the midnight sun. Today, scientific evidence backs up this claim. Research has proven that the Angelica archangelica plant is, in fact, an effective way to treat health problems such as cold symptoms, an overactive bladder, and frequent urination.



## Impressive history

Angelica has a long history in Iceland. The plant was considered an asset to the Vikings who first settled in Iceland, as they knew its value full well. The root, stem, seeds and leaves were all used, both as food and medicine. This is documented in an Icelandic medical book over 150 years old.

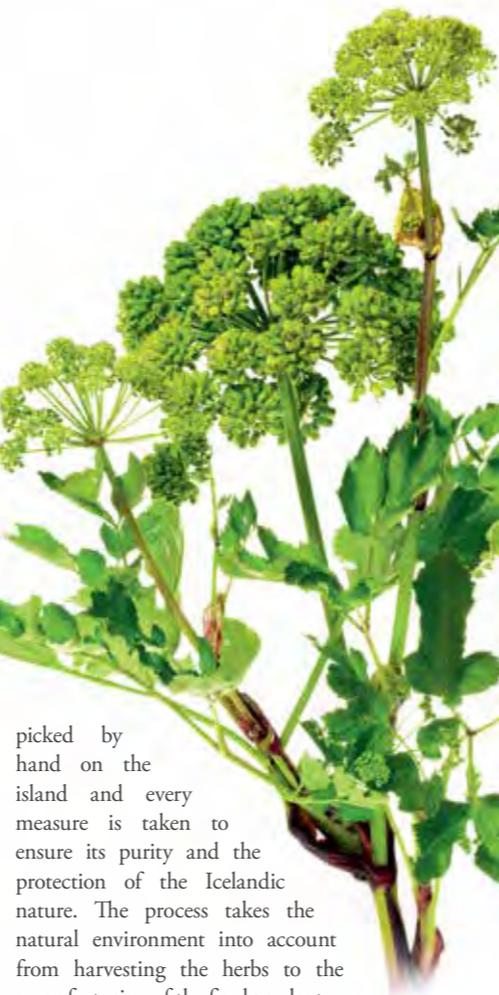
SagaMedica has been selling natural dietary supplements made from Angelica since the company was founded by academics from the University of Iceland in the year 2000. Dr. Sigmundur Guðbjarnason, a former dean of the university, was a pioneer in



research into Icelandic medicinal herbs and their health benefits. He laid the foundation for SagaMedica, which has grown steadily through the years, and now offers a range of products that improve the lives of consumers. SagaMedica combines 1100 years of history and scientific research with the pristine Icelandic nature to create innovative health products.

## Harvested on Hrísey

Angelica grows wild on the island Hrísey, which is situated in the northern Eyjafjörður fjord. The soil is fertile and pure and the air is clean. In fact, Hrísey was awarded an organic certification due to its clean, positive environment. The herb is



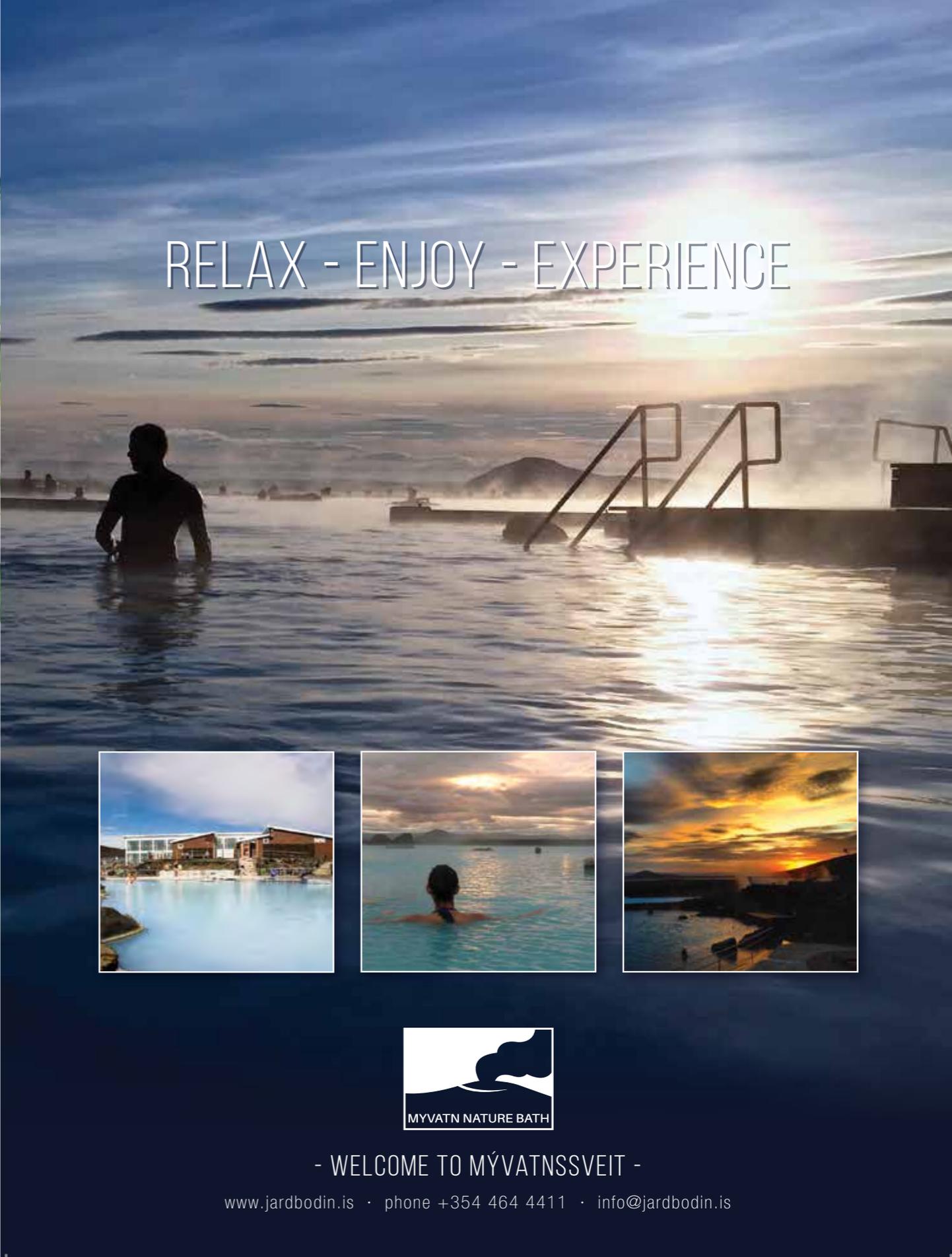
picked by hand on the island and every measure is taken to ensure its purity and the protection of the Icelandic nature. The process takes the natural environment into account from harvesting the herbs to the manufacturing of the final products.

## The voice of Iceland

Voxis is a popular SagaMedica product that is produced from the leaves of Angelica. The throat lozenges, which are available in shops in Iceland and in the Duty Free area in Keflavik International Airport, contain antiviral phytochemicals which can help to prevent cold or flu infections. Voxis has been shown to relieve irritating coughs and has a soothing effect on sore throats. The lozenges contain menthol and eucalyptus and have a pleasant, refreshing taste.

SagaMedica's products are available for purchase in Iceland's grocery stores, pharmacies and on the company's website [www.sagamedica.com](http://www.sagamedica.com). -JG

**SagaMedica**  
 Krókhálsi 5d-110 Reykjavík  
 +354 414 3070  
[info@sagamedica.com](mailto:info@sagamedica.com)  
[www.sagamedica.com](http://www.sagamedica.com)



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# THE ICELANDIC PHALLOLOGICAL MUSEUM

*From the penises of elves to whales*

The Icelandic Phallogological Museum in Reykjavík is, without a doubt, one of a kind. It holds a collection of phallic specimens that belong to various types of mammals. Here in the museum you can see examples of more than 220 penises and penile parts that belong to all the land and sea mammals found in Iceland. It even has on display the penis of an old Icelandic gentleman who died in 2011 at the ripe old age of 95. Furthermore, the museum has between 40–50 specimens from foreign mammals including a giraffe and an elephant.

“The purpose of the museum is showing these specimens,” says the curator, Hjörtur Sigurðsson, “but it’s also a scientific museum. Many professionals, such as biologists and doctors visit the museum to study. The purpose is also to educate and amuse people and, of course, to lift the taboo that has shrouded this subject for so long. It’s just a part of the anatomy; people should be able to discuss these things.”



Hjörtur says that what gets the most attention are the big things, like the penis of a sperm whale that is 1.7 metres long and weighs somewhere between 70–80 kilos. Strangely, the human penis gets a lot of attention too!

For the foreigners, the folklore section is popular. “They find it very funny that we can display penises from elves, trolls

and the Hidden People.” Regarding the Hidden People: some claim they can see the hidden man’s penis; especially the women. *-SJ*

**The Icelandic Phallogological Museum**  
 Laugavegur 116 - 105 Reykjavík  
 +354 561 6663  
 phallus@phallus.is  
 www.phallus.is

# A TASTE OF NEPAL

*Nepalese Kitchen has delicious food, a warm atmosphere and friendly service.*

Nepalese Kitchen is a cosy restaurant on Reykjavík’s Laugavegur that is truly a feast for the senses. Upon walking inside, guests are greeted by the aroma of delicious spices as well as a welcome from its friendly owner, Deepak Panday. Deepak, who was born in Nepal, has been living in Iceland for about 10 years, and takes great care in creating a warm atmosphere, first class service, a diverse menu and absolutely delicious food. “I have been a chef for 34 years and I enjoy serving quality food and authentic spices for Icelanders and tourists,” says Deepak. This passion for food started when he was a child and led him to work as a chef in many countries including England, India, Nepal, France and the United States, before settling in Iceland.

### Inventive Dishes

The dishes, prepared by Deepak and his wife, are perfectly spiced, while the chefs are eager to cater for any dietary restrictions. “We have guests that have a gluten allergy, or a number of other food sensitivities and we are happy to prepare food just how they like it,” says Deepak. “All our dishes are made from scratch for each individual guest.” The menu is so diverse, it could be difficult to choose just one dish! Diners will find chicken, lamb, seafood, and vegetarian choices with sauces ranging from delicate to hearty.

### Special Spices

The key to Nepalese food is the spice used. Deepak is very concerned about the spices; not just how they taste but also how they impact the body and soul. “We have spices that can be helpful to diabetics, people that are stressed, and those with some food sensitivities,” says Deepak. Every summer, he travels to India to hand-select the herbs and spices used in the restaurant. “I want to see the plants for myself, to see that they are the best quality,” he says.

### Beautiful Space

The restaurant is tastefully decorated with a nod to Nepali culture in the art, linens and even music. It’s clear that the restaurant is a



labour of love and Deepak’s passion for quality food shines through. “It is so important to cook good food for people; it gives them so much. People feel loved when they get good food,” says Deepak. One of his favorite dishes on the menu is a Nepali curry. “The spice mixture is unique and it comes directly from my mother.” Plan to stop by Nepalese Kitchen

during your next stop to Reykjavík for tasty food, a wide selection of beer and wine, and warm service. *-JG*

**Nepalese Kitchen**  
 Laugavegur 60A 1 - 101 Reykjavík  
 +354 517 7795  
 info@nepalesekitchen.is  
 www.nepalesekitchen.is

# THE FINE ART OF KNIFEMAKING

*Bringing an Ancient Viking Tradition Into the Present since 1990*

In the town of Mosfellsbær, just a 15 minutes' drive from Reykjavík, master craftsman Páll Kristjánsson (or Palli) and his co-creator Soffía Sigurðardóttir are hard at work in their rustic atelier, where they create an array of handsome knives for collectors, chefs, and all those who appreciate the workmanship that goes into a finely crafted tool.

## Icelandic Artisans at Work

Damascus steel, well known for its durability and razor sharp blades, as well as stainless steel from Denmark, Germany and Sweden are choice materials favoured by Palli and Soffía. Many of the blades are Viking Age replicas decorated with finely etched designs that are then expertly paired with a handle carved by Palli. Traditional Icelandic materials are all used to create beautifully carved handles—birch, rowan, horse's hooves, reindeer antler, goat and sheep horn and even fossilised wood. Palli's knives can be found distributed throughout the world in 85 countries and as collector's items. They sometimes enjoy fierce bidding between collectors on the Internet.

## The Woman's Touch

For her part, Soffía, who has worked under Palli's tutelage for several years, has created a line of beautiful professional kitchen knives and her own collection of steak knives and forks which are gaining in popularity. Blades for these knives come in various shapes and materials (Japanese, Damascus steel or high carbon steel) and the finely balanced handles make them a joy to use in the kitchen. Chefs, cooking schools and cooking enthusiasts tend to love to show off these one-of-a-kind handmade kitchen tools that have become something of a sought after souvenir from Iceland.

## Custom-made

Should you have your own design ideas or materials that you would like to use, Palli

and Soffía are happy to work with you to produce a custom knife made to your specifications. More information can be found at their websites listed below where you can browse their collections and even special order online.

## Walk-ins Welcome

Palli and Soffía's workshop can be found at Álafossvegur 29, 270 Mosfellsbær. Opening hours are 9–6, Monday through Friday, from 9–4 on Saturdays or if you are in the neighbourhood outside of those hours, you are always welcome to pop in for a chat.

Though a visit to their workshop would be well worth your time, you can also find their products available in Brynja hardware store on Laugavegur 29 in the centre of Reykjavík. *-EMV*



Álafossvegur 29 · 270 Mosfellsbær  
+354 899 6903  
palli@knifemaker.is  
soffia@knifemaker.is  
www.knifemaker.is  
www.kitchenknives.is




## THE JOYFUL WONDERLAND

*The Little Christmas Shop that is festive all year round*

Anne Helen, owner of 'The Little Christmas Shop' on Laugavegur, Reykjavík's main shopping street, is what you might call a 'one woman wonder'. Ten years ago, she decided it was time for a change and turned to doing what she does better than most of us; making the world a prettier place, one Christmas ball at a time.

## In the Land of Eternal Christmas

Anne Helen, a genuine aesthete, says she has always had somewhat of a Christmas obsession and an intense passion for things of beauty. She never goes for anything average but hunts for things of quality that truly stand out. Though she imports merchandise from all over Europe, her ambition is to specialise in Icelandic handiwork and ornaments. She already has an extensive



range, most made exclusively for her by a number of craftsmen, each having a distinctive approach and working in materials such as wool, glass and clay. In



addition to customary Christmas ornaments, she includes local folklore figures, like the thirteen Yule Lads and the Christmas Cat.

Anne Helen loves it to tell customers about Icelandic Christmas traditions. Visitors often stop by simply because they've heard of her hospitality and the shop's friendly atmosphere. They rarely leave empty handed. After all, placing an Icelandic Yule Lad on your Christmas tree every year is a great way to remember your visit to Iceland. *-HP*



**Little Jólábúðin**  
Laugavegi 8 · Reykjavík  
+354 552 2412  
facebook  
lindsay@simmet.is



## LEATHER DESIGNER

*Ladies handbags, earrings and necklaces*

Quality Icelandic design and leather handcraft is much sought after. "My first leather design was a handbag painted with colourful artwork and patterns," says Guðrún Stefánsdóttir, a successful independent architect who found a second career in creative leather designs.

Guðrún designs leather handbags and now she's added necklaces and earrings to her Ark Art accessory collection. "I wanted to use the leather cut-offs for something useful, when I came up with the idea to use them to make jewellery—earrings and necklaces."

Guðrún's Ark Art leather jewellery is recognisable by her use of thin leather rings or squares and use of colours. It is a sophisticated yet simple design, skilfully using geometric shapes and colours. Guðrún graduated from the Royal School of Architecture in Denmark in 1986. After working at an architect's office,

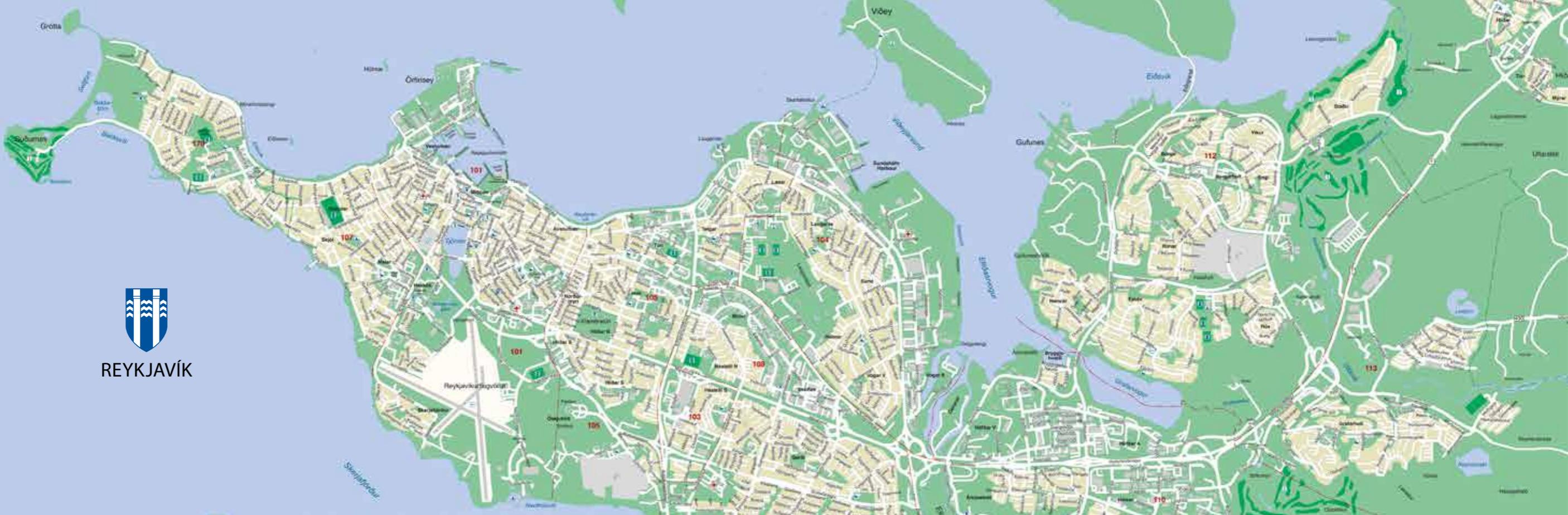
she started her own business. "I've worked on some amazing projects, ranging from large buildings to single family homes. My favourite projects are those where I design everything from A-Z for private homes. Those projects would typically involve the house and interior design, the landscaping around the house and the furniture inside." Her services are available upon request.

The Ark Art collection is available at the National Art Gallery, Snorrastofa in Reykholt, at Rammagerðin at the Keflavík International Airport, and directly from Guðrún. More information can be found on Facebook: Arkart-leatherdesign. *-NHH*



**Arkart**  
Síðumúli 1 · 105 Reykjavík  
+354 551 5533  
arkgunna@simmet.is  
www.facebook.com/pages/Arkart-leather-design/



REYKJAVÍK



THE ÁSGRÍMUR JÓNSSON COLLECTION honours one of the pioneers of Icelandic art and the first Icelander to take up painting professionally. On his death in 1958, he bequeathed all his works and his studio home to the Icelandic nation.

**Bergstaðastræti 74, Reykjavík**  
515-9625 • [www.listasafn.is](http://www.listasafn.is)  
Open Sat-Sun 14-17 (winter)



ÁRBÆR OPEN AIR MUSEUM is a unique museum was founded in 1957 in order to give visitors a tangible sense of Reykjavík's past. It comprises a village-like collection of over twenty 'homes', each a very interesting exhibition in itself.

**Kistuhylur, Reykjavík**  
411-6304 • [www.borgarsogusafn.is](http://www.borgarsogusafn.is)  
Guided tours daily, 13-14



THE SETTLEMENT EXHIBITION allows visitors to experience Viking-Age Reykjavík. Multimedia techniques bring Reykjavík's past to life, providing visitors with insights into how people lived in the Viking Age, and what the environment looked like to the settlers.

**Aðalstræti 16, Reykjavík**  
411-6370 • [www.borgarsogusafn.is](http://www.borgarsogusafn.is)  
Open daily 09-20



REYKJAVÍK MARITIME MUSEUM is a great example of how it is impossible to truly understand Iceland without understanding its fishing history. The museum's main exhibitions illustrate the development from rowing boats to modern trawlers and the construction of Reykjavik harbour.

**Grandagarður 8, Reykjavík**  
411-6340 • [www.borgarsogusafn.is](http://www.borgarsogusafn.is)  
Open daily 10-17



ICELANDIC FISH & CHIPS is not your run of the mill fish and chip shop! Not only does the restaurant use the freshest fish and ingredients, they serve their fish with delicious skyr-based sauces. This fast-food upgrade is much more nutritious than you'd think!

**Tryggvagata 11, Reykjavík**  
511-1118 • [www.fishandchips.is](http://www.fishandchips.is)  
Open daily 11:30-21



KITCHEN AND WINE is situated inside the stylish 101 hotel downtown. Kitchen and Wine is a luxurious bistro with a relaxed atmosphere. The cuisine is seasonal and focuses on simplicity and finesse. The cocktails are also excellent!

**Hverfisgata 10, Reykjavík**  
580-0103 • [www.kitchenandwine.is](http://www.kitchenandwine.is)  
Open Mon-Fri 11:30-24



KOPAR is by the old harbour in Reykjavík, emphasizing on adventure and experience in a brasserie setting. Their menu is composed of various locally sourced ingredients from sea and land and aims to give you a taste of Iceland in a single evening.

**Geirsgata 3, Reykjavík**  
519-5050 • [www.marrestaurant.is](http://www.marrestaurant.is)  
Open Mon-Fri 11:30-14/18-22:30  
Sat 12-14:30, 18-23:30 Sun 18-23:30



MAR is a seafood restaurant by Reykjavík's old harbour. The menu is inspired by South-American and southern-European cuisine and delivers fresh and uplifting dining experience, unique to the harbour area. MAR is an interesting choice for individuals and groups alike.

**Geirsgata 9, Reykjavík**  
512-1525 • [www.marrestaurant.is](http://www.marrestaurant.is)  
Open daily 11:30-23



SEABARON known for "the world's greatest lobster soup" has really become a legend. Originally just one man and his grill, today the Seabaron is widely known for amazing food, all from fermented fish to "Moby Dick on a stick!" Make sure to visit, but look out for the ghost in the corner seat.

**Geirsgata 4a, Reykjavík**  
553-1500 • [www.saegreifinn.is](http://www.saegreifinn.is)  
Open daily 11:30 - 22



KAFFI GARÐURINN is a small cafe offering diverse menu of tasty vegetarian and vegan dishes. The soups are amazing, both glutenfree and vegan, but there is a variety of dishes, such as spinach lasagna, ground nut stew... and make sure to save room for desert!

**Hafnarstræti 1-3, Reykjavík**  
561-1313 • [www.uno.is](http://www.uno.is)  
Open daily 11:30-11:30



JOE & THE JUICE is a coffee-shop/juice bar with great espresso drinks, freshly pressed smoothies and juices, and a variety of sandwiches. Check out the energy shots or get a double shot of coffee without extra charge! Operating from Kef Airport, Laugavegur and other places.

**Laugavegur 10, Reykjavík**  
431-4058 • [www.joeandthejuice.is](http://www.joeandthejuice.is)  
Open daily 08-21



LE BISTRO takes its cues from the long-established tradition of Paris bistros, serving hearty home-style dishes of casseroles; lamb ragout, boeuf bourguignon and coq au vin. Also there are Fondue and Raclette Feasts, and mouth watering deserts. Breakfast, brunch, lunch or dinner...!

**Laugavegur 12, Reykjavík**  
551-5979 • [www.lebistro.is](http://www.lebistro.is)  
Open daily 09-23



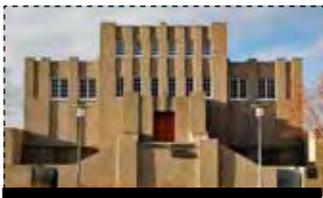
VIDEY ISLAND Unspoiled nature reigns on the island of VIDEY, which has a unique place in Icelandic history. Bird-life abounds on the island, while outstanding works of modern art also make their mark. Make sure to visit Víðeyjarstofa Cafe, for coffee and don't forget to check out the Peace Tower!

**Víðey Reykjavík (ferry at the harbor)**  
511-1904 • [www.borgarsogusafn.is](http://www.borgarsogusafn.is)  
Wintertime opening Sat, Sun



MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY aims to shape a unique vision and to be leading in its field. The museum's exhibitions focus on Icelandic photography, works from Collection and works of foreign photographers. Admission FREE.

**Tryggvagata 15, Reykjavík**  
411-6390 • [www.borgarsogusafn.is](http://www.borgarsogusafn.is)  
Open Mon-Thu 12-19, Fri 12-18,  
Sat - Sun 13-17



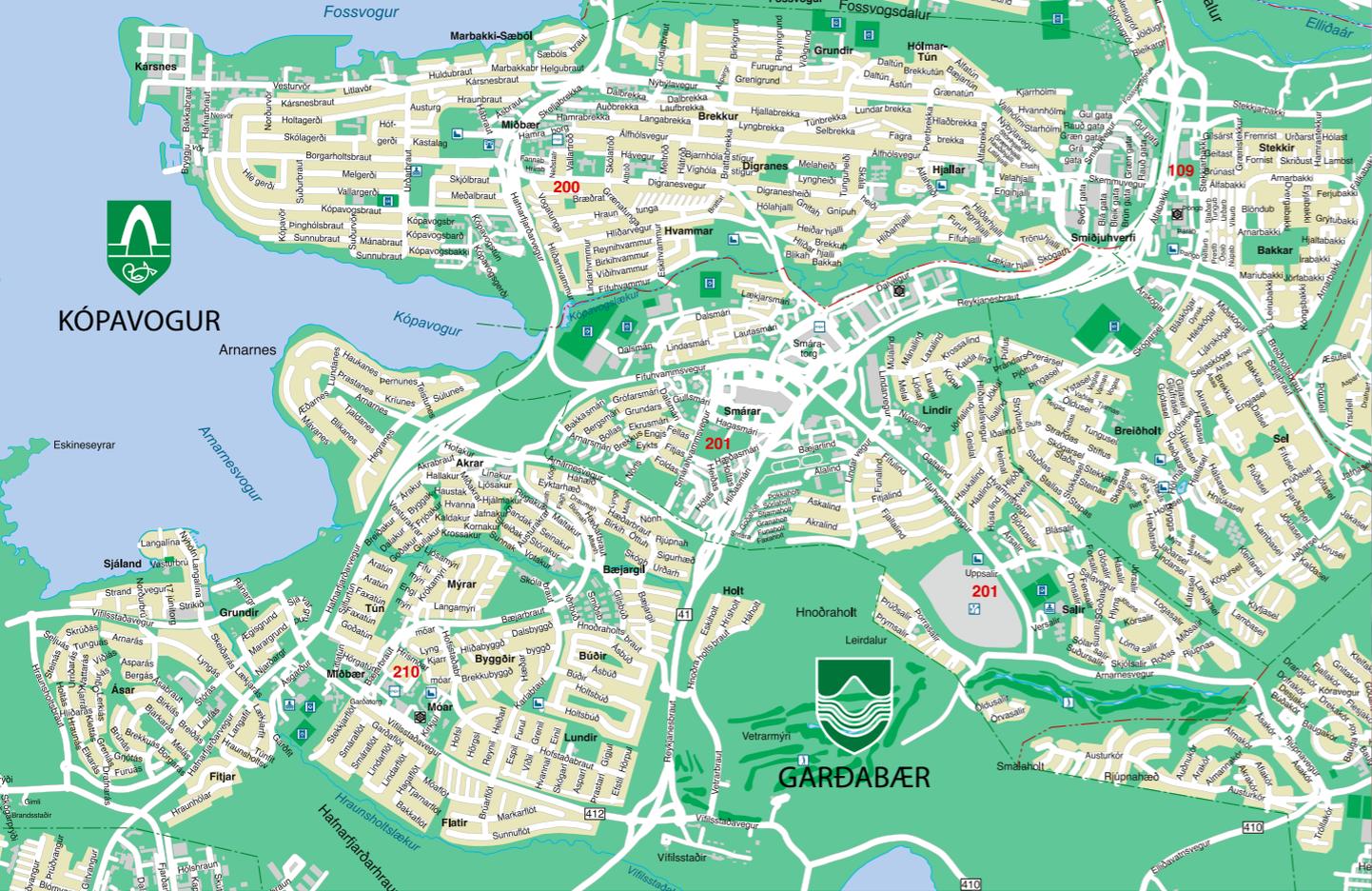
THE EINAR JÓNSSON MUSEUM is a museum with indoor and outdoor exhibitions dedicated to the work of Einar Jónsson, Iceland's first modern sculptor (1874-1954). The museum was built in the early 1900's when Einar Jónsson offered all of his works as a gift to the Icelandic nation.

**Hallgrímstorg 3, Reykjavík**  
551-3797 • [www.lej.is](http://www.lej.is)  
Open Tue-Sun 10-17



REYKJAVÍK CITY LIBRARY is great to access to Wi-Fi or meet the Reykjavík locals. Have a seat and dip into the latest magazine or relax while checking out their great selection of books. Entry is FREE and the museum of photography one floor up!

**Tryggvagata 15, Reykjavík**  
411-6100 • [www.borgarbokasafn.is](http://www.borgarbokasafn.is)  
Open Mon-Thu 10-19, Fri 11-18,  
Sat - Sun 13-17



KÓPAVOGUR

GARÐABÆR



**SUNDLAUG KÓPAVOGS** is one of the largest aquatic centres in Iceland with a 50m outdoor pool, two indoor pools, seven amazing hot tubs, a steam bath and three water slides, fun for all ages. Nice local atmosphere welcomes visitors.

**Borgarhofsbraut 17, Kópavogur**  
570 0470 • [www.sundlaug.is](http://www.sundlaug.is)  
Open Mon-Fri 06:30-22,  
Sat, Sun 08-18



**SALALAUG** has an energetic vibe, waterslides, hydro massage hot tub as well as the usual ones, pools both indoor and out as well as a great gym in the same building. Small snacks are available and overall this is a great place to be!

**Versalir 3, Kópavogur**  
570 0480 • [www.sundlaug.is](http://www.sundlaug.is)  
Open Mon-Fri 06:30-22,  
Sat, Sun 08-18



**MUSEUM OF DESIGN AND APPLIED ART** collects, studies and presents Icelandic design and crafts from 1900 to the present day and holds regular exhibitions from the museum's own collection of Icelandic as well as international design throughout the year.

**Garðatorg 1, Garðabær**  
512 1525 • [www.honnunarsafn.is](http://www.honnunarsafn.is)  
Open Tue-Sun 12-17



**HOFSTSTAÐIR HISTORIC PARK** where viking longhouse gives an impression of Hofsstaðir at the time of the Settlement. Turfwalls show the outer limits of the longhouse during its final phase, and remains of a large enclosure have been left untouched. Admission FREE

**Kirkjulundur, Garðabær**  
525 8500 • [www.gardabaer.is](http://www.gardabaer.is)  
Open daily 24/7 – call for info



**NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM OF KÓPAVOGUR** holds two main exhibition themes; Icelandic fauna with emphasis on birds and molluscs, and the other on the geology of Iceland. On display are also mammals, fish, live animals and more. Admission FREE

**Hamraborg 6a, Kópavogur**  
441 7200 • [www.natkop.is](http://www.natkop.is)  
Open Mon-Thu 09-18, Fri, Sat 11-17



**GERÐARSAFN** is dedicated to the sculptor Gerður Helgadóttir; the only museum in Iceland dedicated to a woman. The museum holds more than 1400 works by Gerður, as well as the works of the most celebrated Icelandic artists of the 20th and 21st century.

**Hamraborg 4, Kópavogur**  
441 7600 • [www.gerdarsafn.is](http://www.gerdarsafn.is)  
Open Tue-Sun 11-17



**HAFNARBORG** is a public art museum located in Hafnarfjörður, showing a collection of Icelandic art and regular exhibitions presenting leading both Icelandic and international artists. Collection exhibitions are a regular part of the program. Around exhibitions are workshops and guided tours.

**Strandgata 34, Hafnarfjörður**  
585 5790 • [www.hafnarborg.is](http://www.hafnarborg.is)  
Open Wed-Mon 12-17



**HAFNARFJÖRÐUR MUSEUM** is a museum of cultural artifacts and photographs of Hafnarfjörður town and the surrounding region. Six houses that bring to life, the history and culture of the area with nine exhibitions. Admission FREE.

**Strandgata 4, Hafnarfjörður**  
585 5780  
[www.museum.hafnarfjordur.is](http://www.museum.hafnarfjordur.is)  
Open weekends 11-17 (winter)



# JOURNEY TO THE INSIDE OF A GLACIER

*Experience a Glacier from the Inside with Into the Glacier*

Exploring the surface of a glacier is thrilling, but actually getting inside one is a once in a lifetime experience. The staff behind Into the Glacier offer travellers that rare opportunity. Situated in the western part of Langjökull, the second largest ice cap in Iceland, and 1,260 metres above sea level, the ice cave stretches 40 metres deep underground, giving visitors the chance to see ice that's been forming over centuries. The ice cave stretches more than 550 metres into the glacier.

### Trip to the Top

The classic guided tour begins in Húsafell, which is 130km from Reykjavik, when guests board one of the most unique vehicles ever made, a customised super truck. This truck, which seats up to 35 passengers, was acquired from NATO, who originally used as a cruise missile launcher. The 20km trip up to the glacier is an experience in itself in good weather or bad. Clear days offer exquisite views of the vast icy desert, while poor weather conditions reveal the power and unpredictability of Icelandic weather.

### Enter the Glacier

Once inside, travellers, with crampons attached to their feet, get to experience



something very few have seen. Lit by LED lights, guests begin to explore the tunnel, with a knowledgeable guide leading small groups, sharing many interesting facts about Iceland's glaciers. Travellers are treated to views of gaping crevices as they look above. Additionally, there is a special area in the cave, which developers named 'the chapel', with LED-lit blocks of ice

supporting wooden beams, which serves as a venue for weddings, marriage proposals and concerts.

Into the Glacier offers daily departures from Húsafell at 12:30pm and the tour lasts about four hours during the winter. Day tours from Reykjavik to the ice cave are available as well. For those that would like to treat themselves to a meal, you can buy a scrumptious lunch at Hotel Húsafell before you head out on your excursion. So be sure to put Into the Glacier on your list of 'must do's in Iceland! -JG

**Into the Glacier**  
 Viðarhöfði 1 • 110 Reykjavík  
 +354 578-2550  
 info@intotheglacier.is  
 www.intotheglacier.is

[www.icelandictimes.com](http://www.icelandictimes.com)

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## CATCH THE NORTHERN LIGHTS ALL YEAR AROUND

*Aurora Reykjavik's Northern Lights Center lets you see the Lights all year*

There is perhaps nothing more magical and unforgettable than witnessing the beauty of a Northern Lights display in one's lifetime. It's the dream of many who come to Iceland, but alas, those unpredictable, frenetic lights tend to have a mind of their own and don't always show up on cue—and certainly not in the summer months. So it is with great joy that we welcome one of Iceland's most recent additions—Aurora Reykjavik's Northern Lights Center, where the Northern Lights are always on display.

### A Unique Experience

The centre is the unique creation of four enterprising young Icelanders who recognised the need for just such a place—a kind of one-stop-shop for all things Northern Lights. Located on the far side of Reykjavik's Old Harbour, the centre serves both educational and inspirational purposes. Here you can read up on the auroras through stories and legends from around the world,

learn something about the science behind this amazing phenomenon and gaze at spectacular Northern Lights photography from top Icelandic photographers. There is even a specially equipped 'photo booth' where you can learn how to adjust your camera's settings should you want to try your hand at capturing an auroral display yourself.

### Soothing Sights and Sounds

However, Aurora Reykjavik's real pull and ace up its sleeve is its fantastic HD time-lapse film of recent auroral activity. Projected onto a 7 metre-wide screen, you can sit back and enjoy this 13 minute film that features a dazzling display of auroral activity, accompanied by relaxing music. Therapeutic and restful are two words that come to mind to describe this zen-like experience.

### Hot coffee and choice gifts

Before leaving, be sure to grab a free cup of coffee in the Northern Lights Center



gift shop and check out the impressive display of clothing, glassware, paintings and woollen knitwear by some of Iceland's most creative designers. The theme? You guessed it. *-EMV*

### Setting the record straight

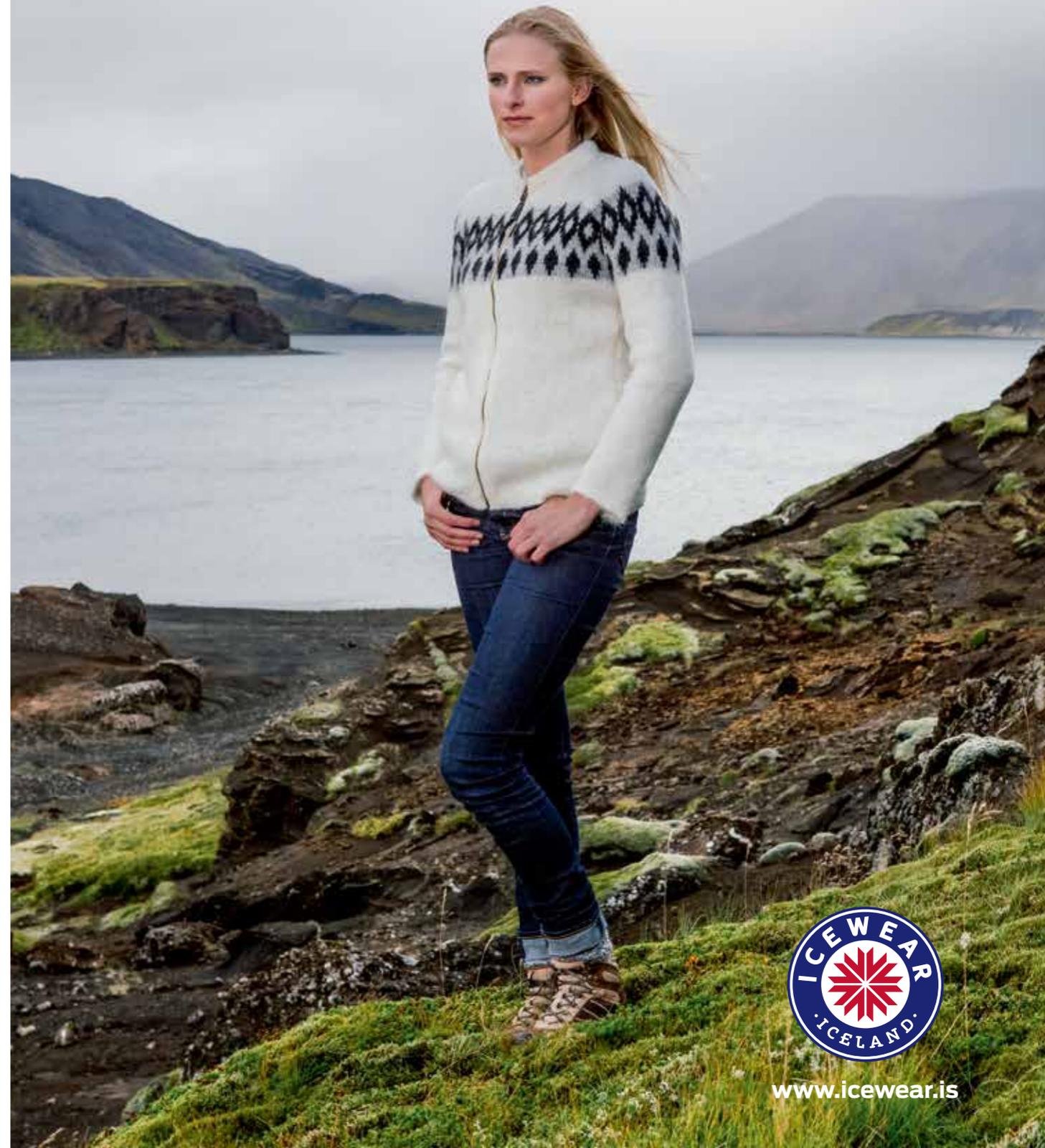
While in Iceland, you might be told that the outside air temperature needs to be around 0°C or below in order to see the Northern Lights. The oft quoted but erroneous assumption is that the Northern Lights only appear at these temperatures. We would just like to set the record straight that while it is true that the Northern Lights do happen to be visible more often when the air is cold and the sky is clear, their appearance has nothing to do with actual temperature of the air.



**Aurora Reykjavik**  
Grandagarður 2 • 101 Reykjavik  
+354 780 4500  
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www.aurorareykjavik.is



**BE WARM BE WELL**



# ANCESTORS' KNOWLEDGE

Healthy Food Direct from the Earth



In the old days, people still had knowledge about nature's richness. They used what Mother Earth provided them: picked leaves and herbs, or searched the shores for the ocean's supplies, such as seaweed. The shore is a garden; you just have to know where to harvest and what to collect.

## A Pioneer

Biologist Eyjólfur Friðgeirsson knows nature pretty well. He is passionate about the harvesting of nature, which he sees as a food source and a treasure for delicacies. In 2005 he started his company Íslensk hollusta (Icelandic Wholesomeness), promoting the use of natural Icelandic products in their own taste and freshness, such as cheese and varieties of herbal tea. Nothing is added or changed in the production of the products.

Eyjólfur is a pioneer in his field in Iceland. He was the first to revive the idea of using seaweed as a dried snack and adding Iceland

moss, angelica and birch leaves into cheese making. He was also the first to create a bath salt from Icelandic geothermal salt, using seaweed and Mount Hekla pumice. The country is rich in natural resources when it comes to nutriment.

His goal was to reawaken the folk knowledge about how to harness these gifts of the earth. The idea proved successful, and today his goods can be purchased in souvenir shops around Iceland. Northern Lights Salt gift packages, a seasoned salt made according to his special recipe, are available on board Icelandair's aircraft in their Saga Shop.

## Hand-Picked and Healthy

The hand-picked Icelandic moss is ready for use in tea or porridge. In the old days, seaweed was consumed in times of famine. Today we know that there is hardly a more nutrient-rich food. By adding seaweed to

your daily diet, you can be sure that you are consuming ingredients from unspoiled Icelandic waters.

Homemade sauces, juices and jams made from traditional materials are a treat. Pamper your body with a rich bath salt, or treat yourself with Icelandic Herbal Tea and Arctic Thyme Tea from Íslensk hollusta. Try the Viking Salt, produced with an ancient salt production method. The light and compact Seven Spices Gift Packet containing tea, salt and seaweed is an excellent contribution to your cuisine.

"Mother Earth knows what is best; we pick it for you, and you just have to take it home," says Eyjólfur. - DT



**Íslensk hollusta**

Skútahraun 7 • 220 Hafnarfjörður  
+354 864 4755  
íslenskhollusta@internet.is  
www.islenskhollusta.is



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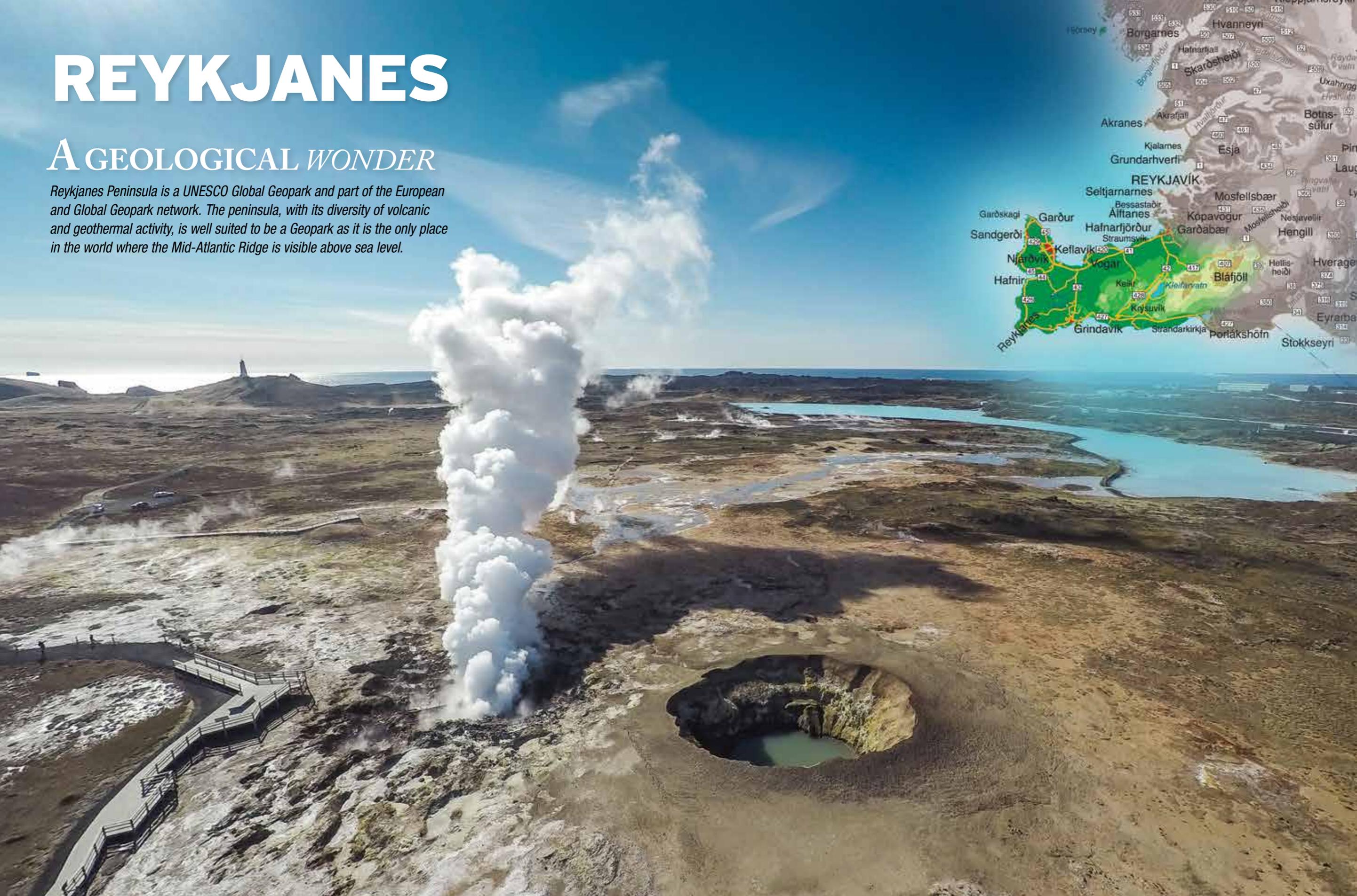


Eldhestar, Vellir, 816 Ölfus • Email: [info@eldhestar.is](mailto:info@eldhestar.is) • Tel: +354 480 4800

# REYKJANES

## A GEOLOGICAL WONDER

*Reykjanes Peninsula is a UNESCO Global Geopark and part of the European and Global Geopark network. The peninsula, with its diversity of volcanic and geothermal activity, is well suited to be a Geopark as it is the only place in the world where the Mid-Atlantic Ridge is visible above sea level.*



# THE PLACE TO STAY IN GRINDAVÍK

*Guesthouse Borg offers economical comfort in a friendly house*

In most countries, the opportunity to experience life in a fishing town has all but disappeared. Not so in Iceland, where Grindavík is one of the busiest. Situated a few kilometres from the world-famous Blue Lagoon, 20 minutes from Keflavík's International airport and 40 minutes from the capital, the town is packed with history going back as far as the first settlers.

A geological hotspot, the area offers such a wide array of other tours, sights and experiences that one holiday is not enough.

Guesthouse Borg is an ideal place to stay, meet interesting people and enjoy the facilities and fun the town offers. It caters for individuals, couples, families and groups of up to 16 people in a clean, modestly-priced homestay accommodation.



You'll find a full kitchen where you can cook your own meals, a laundry and a computer to go online. Breakfasts are provided on a self-service basis.

Owners Björk and Magnús make this a comfortable home from which to launch out to explore the area. -ASF

**Guesthouse Borg**  
 Borgarhrauni 2 • 240 Grindavík  
 +354 895 8686  
 www.guesthouseborg.com  
 ghborg@simnet.is



It's in the evenings and on weekends that things really take off, though. It's a small place, but packed with character. A piano in the corner is often pressed into use, making it a fun and inspiring evening. Whether you are a local or just visiting, you'll feel at home.

Bryggjan is open from 8am-11pm on weekdays and from 9am-midnight or so if there is a lot of action, on weekends. Bryggjan can also be found on Facebook by the name of "Bryggjan Kaffihús".-ASF

**Bryggjan**  
 Kaffihúsið í Grindavík  
 Miðgarði 2 • 240 Grindavík  
 +354 426 7100  
 fiskinet@simnet.is

# GRINDAVÍK'S HARBOUR CAFÉ

*The reputation of the Bryggjan netmakers' café is spreading fast*

Walk down to Grindavík's harbour and you may see the nets. Then you'll know you're there. Bryggjan's main work is repairing fishing nets and lines—nets that would completely cover the nearby mountain and lines that would stretch way beyond Reykjavík, over 50km away.

This is a fishing town and the café is a fishermen's café—though, with the growing number of visitors from all over the world

finding it, it is quickly becoming the café of choice in the area. Little wonder, as the help and friendliness of the owners is only matched by the delicious food they offer. My suggestion: don't leave without having a bowl of their soup. It's really good.

While I was there, one of the owners was spending time with visiting tourists, explaining the area and showing them on a map the best places to visit.

# ICELAND FROM ABOVE

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 PUBLISHER

# WEST *Iceland*





**BJARNALAUG** is a cosy indoor pool, with an outdoor hot tub, built 1944. Popular for baby swim classes, swimming lessons for schoolchildren and the general public. The pool can be rented out for various activities, such as birthdays, parties etc.

**Laugarbraut 6, Akranes**  
 (+354) 433 1130 • [www.akranes.is](http://www.akranes.is)  
 Open Saturdays, Sept-May 10-13



**JADARSBAKKALAUG** is a fun outdoor pool with a great sunbathing area, really fun slide, steam room and five hot tubs of different styles. In the town of Akranes, admission to the swimming pools is free for all children, people with disabilities and the elderly.

**Jaðarsbakkar, Akranes**  
 (+354) 433 1100 • [www.akranes.is](http://www.akranes.is)  
 Open daily 06:15-21, Sat-Sun 09-18



**HREPPSLAUG** is a small swimmingpool, built in 1928. Popular by those visiting nearby summerhouses as well as locals. Nicely surrounded by birch trees and pure Icelandic nature where steaming water pours in the pool from nearby hot springs.

**Laugabúð by Skorradalur**  
 (+354) 437 0027 • [www.vesturland.is](http://www.vesturland.is)  
 Open daily



**SUNDLAUGIN BORGARNESI** provides a big outdoor pool, three fun water slides, a wading pool, two hot tubs, one with a special massage water beam, a bubbling water area, an indoor pool, a steam bath fed directly from the Deildartunguhver geysir, and an amazing sauna.

**Þorsteinsgata 1, Borgarnes**  
 (+354) 433 7140 • [www.borgarbyggd.is](http://www.borgarbyggd.is)  
 Open daily 09-21



**KLEPPJÁRNSREYKJALAUG** is a 25m outdoor pool with cosy hot tubs and the perfect place to enjoy sunbathing. Located by the small local school of Kleppjárnshólmur village, this pool is a hidden gem for travellers wanting to relax in peace and quiet.

**Kleppjárnshólmur, Borgarfjörður**  
 (+354) 430 1534 • [www.borgarbyggd.is](http://www.borgarbyggd.is)  
 Open daily 08:30-16, Thu 19-21



**VARMALANDSLAUG** is a great outdoor pool, with a hot tub, amazing sauna, fully equipped gym and sunbathing facilities. Available almost any hour for larger groups. Those interested need to make an appointment by phoning Guðmundur at +354 898 8225.

**Varmaland, Borgarfjörður**  
 (+354) 430 1520 • [www.borgarbyggd.is](http://www.borgarbyggd.is)  
 Open June - Aug 09-18



**SUNDLAUGIN GRUNDAFIRÐI** is a small outdoor pool, with two nicely designed hot tubs. Located very close to the camping grounds, this pool is a 'must-visit' for stretching out after a day of hiking around the West. Surrounded by nature at its best.

**Borgarbraut 19, Grundarfjörður**  
 (+354) 430 8564 • [steini@gfb.is](mailto:steini@gfb.is)  
 Open daily May - Aug



**LÝSUHÓLLSLAUG** is known for its healing powers as the water, which is naturally heated mineral water traveling straight up from the earth. Great for both body and soul, this pool is a must visit. Two amazing hot tubs are also on the premises, but the pool is closed during winter.

**Lýsuhóll, Snæfellsbær**  
 (+354) 433 9917 • (+354) 435-6716  
 Opening hours on Facebook



**STYKKISHÓLMUR SWIMMING POOL** is an outdoor pool, with an amazing waterslide. Smaller indoor pool, outdoor wading pool and two hot tubs filled with glorious water straight from the well at Hofstaðir. The water is Frasenius certified, claimed to have regenerative powers.

**Borgarbraut 4, Stykkishólmur**  
 (+354) 433 8150 • [www.west.is](http://www.west.is)  
 Open Mon-Fri 07-22, Sat-Sun 10-17



**SUNDLAUGIN AÐ HLÖÐUM** consists of an outdoor pool, children's pool with a nice slide, two hot tubs and a steam room. Located in a quiet and beautiful spot at the northern end of Hvalfjörður. Close by are a community centre, camping grounds and great surroundings.

**Innrimelur 3, Hvalfjarðarsveit**  
 (+354) 433 8980 • [www.hladir.is](http://www.hladir.is)  
 Open (summer) 14-21 daily, Sat-Sun 10-18



**HÚSAFELLSLAUG** is very popular amongst the summer cabin community as well as general travellers. Originally built in 1965, this gem has two cosy outdoor pools, two hot tubs and a fun slide! Perfect for all ages.

**Húsafell, Borgarnes**  
 (+354) 435 1552 • [www.husafell.is](http://www.husafell.is)  
 Open Mon-Fri 17-20  
 Sat 13-20, Sun 10-16



**ÓLAFSVÍKURLAUG** is a really fun pool, newly renovated with a new outdoor area, with a slide, hot tubs and a smaller pool / play area for children. Indoors, there is a small, 12.5m pool. The elementary school is close by with artificial grass and soccer pitch and a play area.

**Ennisbraut 11, Ólafsvík**  
 (+354) 433 9910 • [www.snb.is](http://www.snb.is)  
 Call for hours



**SÆLINGSDALUR SWIMMING POOL** is found in the midst of the beautiful surroundings of the Sælingsdalur valley. A 25m outdoor pool, a smaller wading pool, an amazing steam room and two hot tubs welcome visitors. This is truly the place to visit.

**Laugar, Búðardalur**  
 (+354) 434-1465 • [www.dalir.is](http://www.dalir.is)  
 Open Tue-Sat (call for hours)



**KOLVÍÐARNESLAUG** is truly a nature pool. An experience worth trying, where warm water surrounds swimmers and moss is growing everywhere. Steaming hot water enters the pool from a nearby pipe, so swimmers need to be aware of that. A hot tub is close by.

**Hótel Eldborg, Borgarnes**  
 (+354) 435-6602 • [www.hoteleldborg.is](http://www.hoteleldborg.is)  
 Call for hours



**SUNDLAUGIN Í HEIÐARBORG** is an indoor pool, originally meant for schoolchildren's swimming lessons. Right in the midst of Hvalfjarðarsveit, this is a nice opportunity to visit a local country pool for a quiet time of relaxation. A great place to stop, when driving through Hvalfjörður fjord.

**Heiðarskóli, Akranes**  
 (+354) 842-5585 • [www.hvalfjarðarsveit.is](http://www.hvalfjarðarsveit.is)  
 Open Mon-Thu 16-21, Sat 10-15



**GRAFARLAUG** is basically a hot spring, built into a small pool in 1956. Changing rooms are available for men and women, suitable for three people at a time. A fun place to visit in the summer.

**Reykjadalur, Dalir**  
 From main Road no. 1, take a turn at Road no. 60 and continue about 20km. Then follow a gravel road for approximately 2.2 km



HÓTEL BÚÐIR is a romantic hotel isolated in a gorgeous stretch of the west, close to sand beaches, lava fields and an impressive mountain ridge. World-class service, fine food and drink and luxurious rooms. Undoubtedly one of a kind.

**Hótel Búðir, Snæfellsbær**  
(+354) 435 6700 • [www.hotelbudir.is](http://www.hotelbudir.is)  
[budir@budir.is](mailto:budir@budir.is)



HÓTEL EGILSEN is a small boutique hotel exemplifying the town's charm, while offering all the high-end amenities of any modern hotel. You are guaranteed a good night's sleep in the COCO-mat beds with a book from the library.

**Ádalgata 2, Stykkishólmur**  
(+354) 554 7700 • [www.egilsen.is](http://www.egilsen.is)  
[booking@egilsen.is](mailto:booking@egilsen.is)



HÓTEL HÚSAFELL is a luxury hotel, offering thirty-six spacious rooms, including six deluxe rooms, each with a living room, grand bathroom, shower, double sink and a bath tub. On the premises are a golf course, swimming pool, service centre and bistro.

**Húsafell, Borgarnes**  
(+354) 435 1551 • [www.hotelhusafell.com](http://www.hotelhusafell.com)  
[booking@hotelhusafell.is](mailto:booking@hotelhusafell.is)



HÓTEL BIFRÖST is a truly perfect place to relax, with its original decoration and a fireplace from the 1940s. It has a large outdoor area with a magnificent view, perfect for observing the Northern Lights and stargazing with a telescope – guidance is available.

**Bifröst, Borgarnes**  
(+354) 433 3030 • [www.hotelbifrost.is](http://www.hotelbifrost.is)  
[hotel@bifrost.is](mailto:hotel@bifrost.is)



FOSSHÓTEL maintains a chain of conveniently-located hotels around the country, maintained at a high standard of quality. The Fosshótel Reykholt is located in one of Iceland's major historic sites, once the home of historian and poet Snorri Sturluson, where his famous hot tub still exists.

**Reykholt, Borgarfjörður**  
(+354) 435 1260 • [www.fosshotel.is](http://www.fosshotel.is)  
[reykholt@fosshotel.is](mailto:reykholt@fosshotel.is)



HÓTEL GLYMUR is "The Perfect Balance of Luxury and Comfort, a True Gem" says a returning customer. Only a 40min drive from the capital. Hótel Glymur is open year round. Stunning views and decor of high quality, it consists of a boutique hotel and 6 luxury villas.

**Hvalfjörður, Akranes**  
(+354) 430 3100 • [www.hotelglymur.is](http://www.hotelglymur.is)  
[info@hotelglymur.is](mailto:info@hotelglymur.is)



HÓTEL FRAMNES is a waterfront hotel originally built as a fishermen's hotel in 1954. Comfortable rooms with private bathrooms. The hotel has sauna and hot tub with a beautiful view of the ocean, perfectly located for Northern Lights sightings as well as whale watching in Grundarfjörður.

**Nesvegur 8, Grundarfjörður**  
(+354) 438 6893 • [www.hotelframnes.is](http://www.hotelframnes.is)  
[info@hotelframnes.is](mailto:info@hotelframnes.is)



HÓTEL HELLNAR is another Fosshótel is located in the peaceful surroundings of Snæfellsnes Peninsula. This award-winning, eco-friendly hotel offers hiking, horse riding and glacier tours. Hellnar's restaurant serves traditional Icelandic dinners and organic wines and beers.

**Hellnar, Snæfellsbær**  
(+354) 435 6820 • [www.fosshotel.is](http://www.fosshotel.is)  
[hellnar@fosshotel.is](mailto:hellnar@fosshotel.is)



HÓTEL HAMAR is an Icelandic hotel. Surrounded by relaxing nature, each guestroom has doors that open directly out onto the hotel grounds, providing great access and comfort. An 18-hole golf course, hot tubs and under-floor heating are a few of its luxurious details.

**Hótel Hamar, Borgarnes**  
(+354) 433 6600  
[www.icelandairhotels.com](http://www.icelandairhotels.com)  
[hamar@icehotels.is](mailto:hamar@icehotels.is)



HÓTEL RJÚKANDI is an eco-friendly family business offering thirteen rooms with all the right amenities. Traditional Icelandic dishes based on organic produce are served at the in-house restaurant and guests can enjoy a drink at the bar.

**Vegamót, Borgarnes**  
(+354) 788 9100 • [www.rjukandi.com](http://www.rjukandi.com)  
[info@rjukandi.com](mailto:info@rjukandi.com)



HÓTEL FRANISKUS is truly one of a kind. A former Catholic monastery, there is still a chapel inside the Fransiskus house which is open to visitors. The hotel offers 21 beautiful, fully furnished rooms, with beautiful views over the harbour, mountains and the magnificent Breiðafjörður bay.

**Austurgata 7, Stykkishólmur**  
(+354) 422 1101 • [www.fransiskus.is](http://www.fransiskus.is)  
[fransiskus@fransiskus.is](mailto:fransiskus@fransiskus.is)



HÓTEL HAFNARFJALL is an amazing country hotel, perfectly situated between the mountains and the ocean. With 16 simple, yet classically designed rooms with shared or private bathroom facilities. Free WiFi and parking on premises. Staff can help arrange area activities.

**Hafnarskógur, Borgarnes**  
(+354) 437 2345 • [www.hotelhafnarfjall.is](http://www.hotelhafnarfjall.is)  
[info@hotelhafnarfjall.is](mailto:info@hotelhafnarfjall.is)



HÓTEL Á is an old farm, refurbished as a restaurant and guesthouse, located between Reykholt and Húsafell, where guests eat in a cow-shed and sleep in a barn! All 15 rooms have private facilities and free internet access. Dinner is an amazing set menu with fish or meat.

**Kirkjuból, Reykholt Borgarfjörður**  
(+354) 435 1430 • [www.hotela.is](http://www.hotela.is)  
[hotela@hotela.is](mailto:hotela@hotela.is)



HRAUNSNEF COUNTRY HOTEL is a family-run hotel and restaurant as well as being a working farm. The hotel is a new two storey building, where each room has a separate entrance and a luxurious bathroom, a TV and a comfortable bed covered with Icelandic textiles.

**Hraunsnef Sveitahótel, Borgarnes**  
(+354) 435 0111 • [www.hraunsnef.is](http://www.hraunsnef.is)  
[hraunsnef@hraunsnef.is](mailto:hraunsnef@hraunsnef.is)



HÓTEL FLATEY is situated in the centre of the old village on Flatey island, the very heart of Breiðafjörður. Being one of the 10 highest rated hotels in Iceland, Hótel Flatey is truly a gem, where the atmosphere of the past has been faithfully preserved.

**Hótel Flatey, Flatey Island, Breiðafjörður**  
(+354) 555 7788 • [www.hotelflathey.is](http://www.hotelflathey.is)  
[info@hotelflathey.is](mailto:info@hotelflathey.is)



HÓTEL BORGARNES is a nice 3-star hotel located in the heart of Borgarnes. The hotel has 75 attractive rooms, all equipped with modern facilities, television, shower and telephone. Every effort is made to provide guests with good, personal service.

**Egilsgata 16, Borgarnes**  
(+354) 437 1119 • [www.hotelborgarnes.is](http://www.hotelborgarnes.is)  
[info@hotelborgarnes.is](mailto:info@hotelborgarnes.is)





THE NORWEGIAN HOUSE MUSEUM was the first two-storey, wooden-frame house built in Iceland. Constructed from wood imported from Norway in 1832, it has now been renovated to its original style and serves as a museum for Snæfellsnes.

**Hafnargata 5, Stykkishólmur**  
 (+354) 433 8114 • [www.norskahusid.is](http://www.norskahusid.is)  
 Open daily 14-18



LEIFSBÚÐ CULTURE HOUSE is a heritage building now serving as the cultural centre for the region. Here you can see exhibitions detailing the voyages and discoveries made by Erik the Red as well as having an amazing cup of coffee at the Café & Restaurant.

**Búðarbraut 1, Búðardalur**  
 (+354) 434 1441 • [www.visitdalir.is](http://www.visitdalir.is)  
 Open daily, call for winter hours



BJARNARHÖFN is a museum dedicated completely to the one species: the Greenland shark. Here you can learn all about the species, its habitat, and biology. If you're interested, you can even taste the shark meat, which is produced locally on the farm.

**Bjarnarhöfn, Stykkishólmur**  
 (+354) 438 1581 • [www.bjarnarhofn.is](http://www.bjarnarhofn.is)  
 Open daily 09-18



THE MARITIME MUSEUM IN THE FISHERMEN'S GARDEN maintains a collection that pays homage to the local communities connection to the ocean. With history revolving around the fishing industry, here you can view rowing fishing boats, and replica coastal lodgings.

**Sandahraun, Hellissandur**  
 (+354) 436 6619  
 Open June 1-Sep 15



LIBRARY OF WATER is a constellation of 24 glass columns containing water collected from ice from some of the major glaciers around Iceland. The sculpture installation offers a space for private reflection. There is also a private writers' studio where writers can take residency.

**Bókhöðustigur 17, Stykkishólmur,**  
 (+354) 433 8154 • [www.libraryofwater.is](http://www.libraryofwater.is)  
 Open Tue-Sat 11-17



THE VOLCANO MUSEUM displays art and artifacts from the collection of professor and volcanologist Haraldur Sigurðsson, who has researched volcanoes worldwide for forty years. Born in Stykkishólmur, his appreciation of volcanic art is shared with all today.

**Aðalgata 6, Stykkishólmur**  
 (+354) 433-8154 • [www.eldfjallasafn.is](http://www.eldfjallasafn.is)  
 Open by request



GRUNDAFJÖRÐUR INFORMATION CENTER can assist with any information regarding travel within the Snæfellsnes peninsula. Housed in the same building as Café Emil, the photo museum, Bæringstofa, and a library, this is a perfect stop to make when in the area.

**Grundargata 35, Grundarfjörður**  
 (+354) 438 1881 • [www.grundarfjordur.is](http://www.grundarfjordur.is)  
 Open daily 9-17



AKRANES PHOTOGRAPHICAL MUSEUM is an interesting museum where you can travel back in time, enjoying the history of the town and the surroundings with an emphasis on the fishing industry. Don't forget the collection of old houses and boats exhibited at the Akranes Museum Centre.

**Garðar, Akranes**  
 (+354) 431 5566 • [www.museum.is](http://www.museum.is)  
 Call for hours



BORGARNES MUSEUM showcases two talked-about exhibitions: 'Children Throughout a Century' which narrates Iceland's history in the 20th century through photographs, and 'Oh to be a Bird!' which highlights the special species of birds found around Iceland.

**Bjarnarbraut 4, Borgarnes**  
 (+354) 430 7200 • [www.safnahus.is](http://www.safnahus.is)  
 Open Mon-Fri 13-17



FERSTIKLA provides a wealth of information about the whaling industry in Iceland, including its history and origin, hunting methods, processing and equipment. You can also see 50-metre, full-scale illustration of a fin whale on display - utterly fascinating!

**Ferstikla, Akranes**  
 (+354) 433 8940 • [www.ferstikla.is](http://www.ferstikla.is)  
 Closed in Winter



WAR AND PEACE MUSEUM tells the unique story of the occupation of Iceland from 1940-45. The story that unfolds through a rich history of artifacts and memorabilia details the important role Iceland played in leading to the victory of the Allies in World War II.

**Hlaðir, Akranes, Hvalfjarðarströnd**  
 (+354) 433 8877 • [www.warandpeace.is](http://www.warandpeace.is)  
 Open daily 11-17 (call if closed)



AKRANES MUSEUM AREA is able to authentically portray life in the olden days with a collection of exhibits focusing on farming, seafaring, housekeeping, medicine, sports and the social conditions in Akranes. A comprehensive look at life in the past!

**Garðar, Akranes**  
 (+354) 431 1255 • [www.museum.is](http://www.museum.is)  
 Call for hours



THE SETTLEMENT CENTER sheds insight into the settlement of Iceland. Detailing why vikings left their homeland, how they conquered the open ocean, how they discovered Iceland and established the world's first parliament, this is a multifaceted experience not to be missed.

**Brákarbraut 13-15, Borgarnes**  
 (+354) 437 1600 • [www.landnam.is](http://www.landnam.is)  
 Open daily 10-21



DALIR HERITAGE MUSEUM is an old-fashioned museum, displaying various items related to the daily life, culture and the history of Dalir region. Every item has its own history and a bit of wisdom to share. Discussions with the curator are encouraged and very welcome.

**Laugar Sælingsdal, Búðardalur**  
 (+354) 430 4700 • [www.dalir.is](http://www.dalir.is)  
 Open by request



THE AGRICULTURAL MUSEUM OF ICELAND explains the history of Icelandic agriculture by utilizing an extensive collection of farm machinery dating back to 1880, including the first horse-driven equipment and the first tractors imported to Iceland.

**Hvanneyri, Borgarnes**  
 (+354) 844 7740  
 • [www.landbunadarsafn.is](http://www.landbunadarsafn.is)  
 Open Thu-Sat 13-17



EIRÍKSSTAÐIR LIVING MUSEUM offers you a chance to step back to the Viking Era and immerse yourself in the sights, sounds and scents of Erik the Red's farm. Modern day vikings demonstrate the lifestyle of 1000 years ago, sharing their crafts and knowledge.

**Eiríksstaðir, Búðardalur**  
 (+354) 661 0434 • [www.eiriksstadir.is](http://www.eiriksstadir.is)  
 Open by arrangement



LANGAHOLT prides itself on a great variety of seafood, straight from the ocean, cod, catfish, and monkfish to name a few. As their motto goes: "The nature provides,—we deliver—proudly." Everybody is invited to enjoy the feast, both hotel guests and passers by, and truly the food is great!

**Langaholt, Snæfellsnes**  
 (+354) 435 6789 • [www.langaholt.is](http://www.langaholt.is)  
 Open all year round



BRÚARÁS - GEO CENTER is an information centre and restaurant 2km from the amazing Hraunfossar waterfalls. Especially famous for their traditional Icelandic meatsoup, the restaurant also offers other delicacies along with this spectacular view of the surroundings.

**Brúarás, Borgarnes**  
 (+354) 435 1270 • On Facebook  
 Open daily from 11-16



LAXÁRABAKKI is a small tourism company offering accommodation and catering services throughout the year and is located in Hvalfjörður fjord, next to the Laxá salmon river. Known for excellent food and inviting atmosphere, this is the place to visit!

**Laxárakki, Akranes**  
 (+354) 551 2783 • [www.laxarbakki.is](http://www.laxarbakki.is)  
 Open all year round



BJARGARSTEINN MATHÚS is a family-run restaurant, led by an experienced professional chef. The menu is seasonal, with a focus on local produce, as all meals are made from scratch. Perfect for experiencing good service in a warm environment with a magnificent view of Mt. Kirkjufell.

**Sólvellir 15, Grundarfjörður**  
 (+354) 438 6770 • [www.bjargarsteinn.is](http://www.bjargarsteinn.is)  
 Call for hours



THE GRILL HOUSE is the perfect diner style restaurant, serving everything from burgers, meat platters, steak and ribs, along with fries, salads, and other side dishes. Both succulent and full of flavour this food is what you would find at a classical American diner.

**Brúartorg 6, Borgarnes**  
 (+354) 437 1282 • [www.grillhusid.is](http://www.grillhusid.is)  
 Open daily 10-22



59 BISTRO BAR offers seasonal menu with fresh local ingredients. Also offering a catering service with big selection and variety of refreshments that will suit everybodys expectations. Great food, inviting atmosphere and even a huge screen for football fans!

**Grundargata 59, Grundarfjörður**  
 (+354) 438 6446 • [www.59bistro.com](http://www.59bistro.com)  
 Open daily 11:30-21



LA COLINA PIZZERIA is known for outstanding mouth-watering Italian wood-fired ovenbaked pizzas. "Pizza de Mar is to die for!", "Excellent Italian pizza at it best", "BEST PIZZAS we've ever had" are a few of the phrases guests have acclaimed after visiting!

**Hrafnaklettur 1b, Borgarnes**  
 (+354) 437 0110 • On Facebook  
 Open daily 17-21, weekends 12-21



FERSTIKLA offers delicious grill dishes, coffee and home-baked cakes. The restaurant has undergone renovations and a lovely sun deck has been added to the premises as well as a small food store. A great stop while driving through Hvalfjörður fjord.

**Ferstikla, Hvalfjörður**  
 (+354) 433 8940 • [www.ferstikla.is](http://www.ferstikla.is)  
 Open daily from 10



MATSTOFAN is an oriental restaurant at its best, a great find in Borgarnes. Great food served in large amounts, so no danger of walking out of here hungry. Perfect option while taking a break from other more traditionally served Icelandic dishes or fast food.

**Brákarbraut 3, Borgarnes**  
 (+354) 437 2017 • (+354) 892 8376  
 Open daily from 18



THE FISHING SPOT is a welcoming place specialising in incredible seafood dishes, from fish and chips at their finest to mussels, salmon or out of this world fish soup. Big portions are the norm and surely no-one will leave hungry. Simply excellent!

**Vesturbraut 12a, Búðardalur**  
 (+354) 434 1110 • On Facebook  
 Call for hours



GRÁBRÓK - HREÐAVATNSSKÁLI offers a blend of Icelandic and Swiss culture. Fresh and homemade pasta, both traditional Icelandic and Swiss dishes, along with pizzas, burgers, and hot dogs, to name a few. The bar has a variety of Icelandic and international drinks & brews.

**Hreðavatnsskáli, Borgarnes**  
 (+354) 421 1939 • [www.grabrok.is](http://www.grabrok.is)  
 Open daily 10-21:30



HRAUN RESTAURANT is an inviting and warm restaurant with lighted candles and beautiful place settings. Famous for their pizza, they also have great fresh salad, incredible fish & chips and lovely main courses for lunch or dinner. Also, don't forget to check out the burgers—the very best!

**Grundarbraut 2, Ólafsvík**  
 (+354) 431-1030 • On Facebook  
 Open daily from 08



VOGUR COUNTRY LODGE is a newly opened guesthouse, uniquely located in the beautiful Breiðarfjörður Bay. A true paradise hidden out of sight, where nature plays a great role. The Vogur's restaurant offers amazing food fitting its surroundings.

**Fellsströnd, Búðardalur**  
 (+354) 435 0002 • On Facebook  
 Open year round



GAMLA KAUPFÉLAGIÐ RESTAURANT offers everything from a simple kids' menu and traditional European food, to Mexican and Indian food. This impressive menu is complemented with a good selection of beverages and desserts.

**Kirkjubraut 11, Akranes**  
 (+354) 431 4343  
[www.gamiakaupfelagid.is](http://www.gamiakaupfelagid.is)  
 Open daily



SKEMMAN CAFÉ is a fun and inviting café, mostly open during the summer time. Famous for its waffles whether they are "salmon or chocolate waffles", pumpkin soup that pops up now and then, as well as the infamous skyr terta to name a few delicacies. Also the best coffee there is...

**Hvanneyri, Borgarfjörður**  
 (+354) 868 8626 • On Facebook  
 Open Saturdays 13-16



SKESSUBRUNNUR is a fantastic restaurant in Akranes, offering mostly local ingredients in their awesome meals. Perfect for groups or gatherings, as seating can be arranged for up to 150 people. Beautiful place with soul.

**Tunga 1, Akranes**  
 (+354) 863 1750  
[www.skeksubrunnur.is](http://www.skeksubrunnur.is)  
 Call for hours



**FINSENS FISH & CHIPS** is located directly on the harbour and serves up one dish: fish and chips. Using only the freshest catches of the day, this stand is regularly touted as the best fish and chips in Iceland by travellers from around the world.

**Hafnargata, Stykkishólmur**  
 (+354) 821 4265 • on Facebook  
 Open daily



**MEISTARINN STYKKISHÓLMI** is a hot dog stand you can't miss on your trip through Stykkishólmur. A must try as Icelandic hot dogs come dressed in several unfamiliar sauces. Make sure to get "ein með öllu" (one with everything)! Enjoy!

**Aðalgata, Stykkishólmur**  
 (+354) 848 0153 • on Facebook  
 Open daily 12-20



**NARFEYRARSTOFA** sources all their seafood from Breiðafjörður bay, where mussels and scallops have been cultivated since 2010. Using only the best, local, certified organic ingredients the area has to offer, this is sustainable gourmet at its finest.

**Aðalgata 3, Stykkishólmur**  
 (+354) 533 1119  
[www.narfeyrarstofa.is](http://www.narfeyrarstofa.is)  
 Open daily 11:30-21:00



**NESBRAUD EHF** is a fantastic bakery that has been in operation since 1904. Offering incredible, fresh pastries, bread, soup and made-to-order pizzas, you can also enjoy a cup of coffee—but don't expect any wifi; chat with the locals instead and make some new friends on your trip!

**Nesvegur 1, Stykkishólmur**  
 (+354) 438 1830  
 Open daily 7:30-20:30



**PLÁSSÍÐ RESTAURANT** is a charming country house that offers an authentic Icelandic dining experience. With a wide selection of fresh seafood, lamb, soup, beer and an excellent wine list, you're sure to have a superb evening enjoying what the Icelandic countryside has to offer.

**Frúarstigur 1, Stykkishólmur**  
 (+354) 436 1600  
 Open daily - Call for hours



**SÆLKERAHÚSÍÐ** is a delightful coffee house that offers freshly-baked cakes and pastries made by the owner herself! The outdoor garden is a fantastic spot to soak up the sunshine and enjoy your tasty treats while passing through Stykkishólmur.

**Aðalgata 24a, Stykkishólmur**  
 (+354) 847 0170  
 Open daily - call for hours



**SJÁVARPAKKHÚSÍÐ** is a delightful restaurant located above the marina in a 100 year old heritage house. The atmosphere is relaxed, warm and inviting, and decorated with photos honoring local fisherman heroes. Stop by and enjoy a great meal with great company!

**Hafnargata 2, Stykkishólmur**  
 (+354) 438 1800 • [www.sjavarpakkhusid.is](http://www.sjavarpakkhusid.is)  
 Open Sun-Thurs 12-23, Fri-Sat 12-03



**SKÜRINN** serves up astounding burgers, fries, craft beer and a mean apple pie if you end up getting a craving for American casual fare. Be prepared to indulge when you arrive; as their motto goes, "This is a bad place for a diet!"

**Þvervegur 2, Stykkishólmur**  
 (+354) 544 4004  
 Open daily 12-14 and 18-21



**STYKKIÐ PIZZAGERÐ** If you're craving pizza, head straight here for one of the best-tasting pizzas you can get during your travels around Iceland. If you're craving something sweet, try their chocolate bread for dessert! You'll be craving it for the rest of your trip!

**Borgarbraut 1, Stykkishólmur**  
 (+354) 438 1717 • on Facebook  
 Open daily 17-20:30



**ENGLENDINGAVÍK** is located in an old building by the Bay and known for amazing scenery over the rocks and sealife nearby. True to heart, the chef focuses on locally sourced materials and offers amazing food in a place everyone needs to experience.

**Skúlagata 17, Borgarnes**  
 (+354) 555 1400 • [www.englendingavik.is](http://www.englendingavik.is)  
 Open daily - call for hours



**GALITO** restaurant offers a wide variety of courses on their à la carte Menu, focusing on the finest cuisine suitable for everyone with good service in a relaxing environment. Visitors have repeatedly mentioned the langoustine pizza as "phenomenal". Definitely worth a try!

**Stíllholt 16-18, Akranes**  
 (+354) 430 6767 • [www.galito.is](http://www.galito.is)  
 Open daily - call for hours



**HVERINN** is a home cuisine restaurant using ingredients straight from producers as well as organic, locally grown vegetables. Also offering traditional Icelandic pastries, amazing coffee and a wine bar. At the location one can buy handcrafts, organic vegetables and other necessities.

**Kleppjárnsreykir, Reykholt**  
 (+354) 571 4433 • [www.hverinn.is](http://www.hverinn.is)  
 Call for hours



**FJÖRUHÚSÍÐ** is a cosy café offering home-made cooking, seafood, fresh bread, pastries, cakes and waffles with jam and whipped cream... to name a few delicacies. Located on a beautiful spot near the coast, this is truly one of the best places on earth to be!

**Hellnar, Snæfellsbær**  
 (+354) 435 6844 • on Facebook  
 Open 01/05 - 15/11



**MUNADARNES RESTAURANT** is a cosy, yet elegant place with a variety of dishes, ranging from amazing lamb courses, lobster soup, hamburgers, salmon and smaller dishes. There are dining area both indoors and outdoors, where a play area for children is popular, also minigolf and a small football pitch.

**Munadarnes, Borgarnes**  
 (+354) 525 8440 • (+354) 898 1779  
 Call for hours



**HÚSAFELL BISTRÓ** is nestled between lava fields and glaciers, just a few kilometres from the unique Hraunfossar lava waterfall. Dimmed lights and a central fire set the mood in dark winter hours, while nature plays its role in summer. Known for big and tasty course portions, this one is a treat.

**Húsafell, Borgarnes**  
 (+354) 435 1550 • [www.husafell.is](http://www.husafell.is)  
 Open all year, call for hours



**OK BISTRO** is famous for its mix of international modern cuisine and traditional Icelandic cooking. Emphasis is placed on freshness and locally grown food, lamb dishes, mussels, seafood and vegetables are of extremely good quality as the ingredients come straight from nature.

**Digranesgata 2, Borgarnes**  
 (+354) 437 1200 • [www.okbistro.is](http://www.okbistro.is)  
 Open daily 12-14, 17-21

# Stykkishólmur

- **STYKKISHÓLMUR** is situated on the northern side of the Snæfellsnes peninsula. Beautiful and well-preserved old houses are a feature in the town centre.
- **STYKKISHÓLMUR** is also known as the gateway to the innumerable islands of Breidafjörður Bay, which is renowned for its natural beauty and remarkable wildlife.
- The church in Stykkishólmur is interesting architecturally. It makes a beautiful landmark both from land and sea. The view from the church over Breidafjörður is spectacular.
- Good swimming facilities, hot tubs with water with healing properties.
- Distance from Reykjavik City Centre: 172km.
- Open Wi-Fi for tourists in hotels, the youth hostel, bed and breakfasts, camping site, restaurants, cafés, museums, swimming pool, boat tours and a 9-hole golf course.
- **STYKKISHÓLMUR** boasts exceptionally environmentally-conscious directors and inhabitants and, along with four other municipalities on the Snæfellsnes peninsula, it is the first community in Europe to get the EarthCheck environmental certification. The town is operated in as an environmentally friendly way as possible, continually measuring various environmental indicators. The town was also the first municipality in Iceland to start fully sorting its waste as well as the first town in Iceland to receive the prestigious Blue Flag eco-label for its harbour. It has been a European Destination of Excellence (EDEN) since 2011.





**STYKKISHÓLMUR SWIMMING POOL** is an outdoor pool, with amazing waterslide. Smaller indoor pool, outdoor wading pool and two hot tubs filled with glorious water straight from a the well at Hofsstaðir. The water is Frasenius certified, claimed to have regenerative powers.

**Borgarbraut 4, Stykkishólmur**  
 (+354) 433 8150 • [www.west.is](http://www.west.is)  
 Open Mon-Fri 07-22, Sat-Sun 10-17



**LIBRARY OF WATER** is a constellation of 24 glass columns containing water collected from ice from some of the major glaciers around Iceland. The sculpture installation offers a space for private reflection. There is also a private writers' studio where writers can take residency.

**Bókhöðustígur 17, Stykkishólmur,**  
 (+354) 433 8154 • [www.libraryofwater.is](http://www.libraryofwater.is)  
 Open Tue-Sat 11-17



**THE NORWEGIAN HOUSE MUSEUM** was the first two-storey, wooden-frame house built in Iceland. Constructed from wood imported from Norway in 1832, it has now been renovated to its original style and serves as a museum for Snæfellsnes.

**Hafnargata 5, Stykkishólmur**  
 (+354) 433-8114 • [www.norskahusid.is](http://www.norskahusid.is)  
 Open daily 14-18



**STYKKISHÓLMUR LIBRARY** has great variety of books, DVDs and other documents for rent and access to the internet. The loan period is 30 days unless otherwise stated, daily fines are 20kr. per item. Photocopying A4 pages is 25kr., and A3 35kr. Internet costs 100 kr. per 15 minutes.

**Hafnargata 7, Stykkishólmur,**  
 (+354) 433-8160 • [www.stykkisholmur.is](http://www.stykkisholmur.is)  
 Call for hours



**THE VOLCANO MUSEUM** displays art and artifacts from the collection of professor and volcanologist Haraldur Sigurðsson, who researched volcanoes worldwide for forty years. Born in Stykkishólmur, his appreciation of volcanic art is shared with all today.

**Aðalgata 6, Stykkishólmur**  
 (+354) 433-8154 • [www.eldfjallasafn.is](http://www.eldfjallasafn.is)  
 Open by request



**HÖFDAGATA** is the oldest bed & breakfast in Stykkishólmur, with both hot tub and barbecue in the garden! Offering wholesome breakfasts each morning they do their best to accommodate vegan and vegetarian eaters. Located right in the midst of Stykkishólmur, this is the perfect place to be.

**Höfdagata 11, Stykkishólmur**  
 (+354) 694 6569 • [www.hofdagata.is](http://www.hofdagata.is)  
 ella@hofdagata.is



**BED AND BREAKFAST BÆNIR OG BRAUD** stands on a hillside by the old town with a terrific view over the fjord. With variety of rooms to suit singles, groups and families, this cool place offer guests luxury bathrobes, fluffy towels, WiFi, hot tubs, BBQs and a huge patio for sunbathing.

**Laufásvegur 1, Stykkishólmur**  
 (+354) 831 1806 • [www.baenirogbraud.is](http://www.baenirogbraud.is)  
 info@baenirogbraud.is



**OUR HOME APARTMENTS** is a cosy apartment hotel in Stykkishólmur. Close to the swimming pool, playground, and about 5min walk from town, this is an ideal place for families. Offering small apartments with fully equipped kitchen, dining and living rooms and large balconies.

**Laufásvegur 21-43, Stykkishólmur**  
 (+354) 899 1797 • (+354) 861 3123  
 info@ourhomeapartments.com



**STYKKISHÓLMUR CAMPING GROUND** is perfectly located next to Víkurvöllur golf course, only 5 minutes walk to swimming pool, supermarket, restaurants and all general services. On the premises are toilets, two outdoor showers, washing machine/dryer, electricity boards and general info. station.

**Aðalgata 29, Stykkishólmur**  
 (+354) 438 1075 • [mostri@stykk.is](mailto:mostri@stykk.is)  
 Call for rates and hours



**HRAUNHÁLS** is an 82 square metre summer house on a traditional Icelandic farm, in Helgafellssveit. Offering a well-equipped kitchen, spacious living room, WiFi, great bathroom with shower, as well as a special laundry/storage room with washing machine, you really have everything you need!

**Hraunháls, Stykkishólmur**  
 Find on [TripAdvisor.com](https://www.tripadvisor.com)



**HÓLMUR-INN** is a very well situated guest house, five minutes walk from the harbour, restaurants and the swimming pool. Known for its warm and friendly atmosphere, clean and well decorated rooms as well as an excellent breakfast buffet (included).

**Skúlagata 4, Stykkishólmur**  
 (+354) 899 9144 • [www.holmur-inn.is](http://www.holmur-inn.is)  
 holmurinn@simnet.is



**FOSSHOTEL STYKKISHÓLMUR** offers both a spectacularly luxurious suite and nearly 80 stylish rooms equipped with private bathrooms, phone, TV and WiFi. Scandinavian breakfast buffet in the amazing restaurant which has breathtaking view of Breiðafjörður bay.

**Borgarbraut 8, Stykkishólmur**  
 (+354) 430 2100 • [www.fosshotel.is](http://www.fosshotel.is)  
 stykkisholmur@fosshotel.is



**HARBOUR HOSTEL** offers a great range of hostel accommodation in mixed dorms, family rooms and private rooms all with keycard-access. Amazingly beautiful view over the harbour and Breiðafjörður Bay. Cooking facilities for self-catering. Free WiFi.

**Hafnargata 4, Stykkishólmur**  
 (+354) 517 5353 • [www.harbourhostel.is](http://www.harbourhostel.is)  
 info@harbourhostel.is



**HÓTEL FRANSISKUS** is truly one of a kind. A former Catholic monastery, there is still a chapel inside the Fransiskus house which is open to visitors. The hotel offers 21 beautiful, fully furnished rooms, with beautiful views over the harbour, mountains and the magnificent bay Breiðafjörður.

**Austurgata 7, Stykkishólmur**  
 +354) 422-1101 • [www.fransiskus.is](http://www.fransiskus.is)  
[fransiskus@fransiskus.is](mailto:fransiskus@fransiskus.is)



**STYKKID PIZZAGERÐ** If you're craving pizza, head straight here for one of the best tasting pizzas you can get during your travels around Iceland. If you're craving something sweet, try their chocolate bread for dessert! You'll be craving it for the rest of your trip!

**Borgarbraut 1, Stykkishólmur**  
 (+354) 438 1717 •  
 Facebook: Stykkidpizza  
 Open daily 17-20:30



**SUNDABAKKI GUESTHOUSE** is known for excellent breakfast, especially on Sundays as there are more pastries than! Offering spacious comfortable and bright rooms, well refurbished kitchen with tea and coffee, a big living room/lounge area with TV and free WiFi.

**Sundabakki 14, Stykkishólmur**  
 +354) 438-1435 • +354) 894-9542



**LANGEY GUESTHOUSE** is praised for having guests feel very welcome and at home. Guests have been known to enjoy the few minutes morning stroll to the local bakery, pick up several pastries for breakfast, make coffee in the kitchen, and enjoy it all in the bright breakfast room. Pure pleasure.

**Víkurgata 5, Stykkishólmur**  
 +354) 898-1457 • On Facebook



**HAMAR GUESTHOUSE** is a gorgeous, newly renovated house in the town of Stykkishólmur, one of the most beautiful towns in Iceland. The house was built in 1904 and is located in the heart of town. It is designed in a cosy old style but equipped with modern equipment.

**Pvervegur 12, Stykkishólmur**  
 +354) 552-2423 • +354) 490-1625



**STUNDARFRIDUR COTTAGES 1 & 2** offer a cozy escape in nature with great facilities, comfy double bed with smaller bunk above, sofa, tv and basic cooking facilities along with a gas BBQ out on the porch. There were games and DVDs available to make guests really feel like home, and only a short drive from Stykkishólmur town.

**Hólar 1, Stykkishólmur**  
 Find on [TripAdvisor.com](https://www.tripadvisor.com)



**HEIMAGISTING ÖLMU** is located near the ocean, only five minute walk from down town. A cosy small guesthouse, accommodating up to 10 people, it offers a shower, small living room and while cooking is not allowed, guests can have breakfast and make their own coffee in the guesthouse.

**Sundabakki 12, Stykkishólmur**  
 +354) 438-1435 • +354) 848-9833  
[almdie@simnet.is](mailto:almdie@simnet.is)



**HÓTEL BREIÐAFJÖRÐUR** is widely known for its friendly and welcoming staff, in particular "Lara at the front desk" as mention by quite a few happy visitors. Clean, comfortable and at a great location in walking distance to any big or small place in town.

**Aðalgata 8, Stykkishólmur**  
 +354) 433-2200  
[www.hotelbreidafjordur.is](http://www.hotelbreidafjordur.is)  
[info@hotelbreidafjordur.is](mailto:info@hotelbreidafjordur.is)



**HVÍTAHÚSIÐ** is a cosy one bedroom, one bathroom cottage in the land of Skjöldur in Helgafellssveit country. Providing duvet, linen and towels for 2 persons, host Snorri is sure to make you welcome and surely at home as well as answering questions about the area.

**Helgafellssveit, Stykkishólmur**  
 +354) 893-6097 • +354) 898-6107  
[www.bassiskjoldur.is](http://www.bassiskjoldur.is)



**HÓTEL EGILSEN** is a small boutique hotel exemplifying the town's charm, while seamlessly offering all the high-end amenities of any modern hotel. You are guaranteed a good night's sleep in the COCO-mat beds with a book from the library.

**Aðalgata 2, Stykkishólmur**  
 +354) 554-7700 • [www.egilsen.is](http://www.egilsen.is)  
[booking@egilsen.is](mailto:booking@egilsen.is)



**FINSSENS FISH & CHIPS** located directly on the harbour and serves up one dish: fish and chips. Using only the freshest catches of the day, this stand is regularly touted as the best fish and chips in Iceland by travellers from around the world.

**Hafnargata, Stykkishólmur**  
 +354) 821-4265  
 Facebook: Finsensfish  
 Open daily



**MEISTARINN STYKKISHÓLMI** is a hot dog stand you can't miss on your trip through Stykkishólmur. Icelandic hot dogs come dressed in several unfamiliar sauces. Make sure to get "ein með öllu" (one with everything)!

**Aðalgata, Stykkishólmur**  
 +354) 848-0153  
 Facebook: meistarinnsth  
 Open daily 12-20



**NARFEYRARSTOFA** sources all their seafood from Breiðafjörður bay, where mussels and scallops have been cultivated since 2010. Using only the best, local, certified organic ingredients the area has to offer, this is sustainable gourmet at its finest.

**Aðalgata 3, Stykkishólmur**  
 +354) 533-1119  
[www.narfeyrarstofa.is](http://www.narfeyrarstofa.is)  
 Open daily 11:30-21:00



**NESBRAUD EHF** is a fantastic bakery that has been in operation since 1904. Offering incredible, fresh pastries, bread, soup and made-to-order pizzas, you can also enjoy a cup of coffee - but don't expect any wifi; chat with the locals instead and make some new friends on your trip!

**Nesvegur 1, Stykkishólmur**  
 +354) 438-1830  
 Open daily 7:30-20:30



**PLÁSSÍÐ RESTAURANT** is a charming country house that offers an authentic Icelandic dining experience. With a wide selection of fresh seafood, lamb, soup, beer and an excellent wine list, you're sure to have a superb evening enjoying what the Icelandic countryside has to offer.

**Frúarstígur 1, Stykkishólmur**  
 +354) 436-1600  
 Open daily - call for hours



**SÆLKERAHÚSIÐ** is a delightful coffee house that offers freshly baked cakes and pastries made by the owner herself! The outdoor garden is a fantastic spot to soak up the sunshine and enjoy your tasty treats while passing through Stykkishólmur.

**Aðalgata 24a, Stykkishólmur**  
 +354) 847-0170  
 Open daily - call for hours



**SJÁVARPAKKHÚSIÐ** is a delightful restaurant located above the marina in a 100 year old heritage house. The atmosphere is relaxed, warm and inviting, and decorated with photos honoring local fisherman heroes. Stop by and enjoy a great meal with great company!

**Hafnargata 2, Stykkishólmur**  
 +354) 438-1800 • [www.sjavarpakkhusid.is](http://www.sjavarpakkhusid.is)  
 Open Sun-Thurs 12-23, Fri-Sat 12-03



**SKÚRINN** serves up astounding burgers, fries, craft beer and a mean apple pie if you end up getting a craving for American casual fare. Be prepared to indulge when you arrive; as their motto goes, "This is a bad place for a diet!"

**pvervegur 2, Stykkishólmur**  
 +354) 544-4004  
 Open daily 12-14 and 18-21



# EVERYTHING VOLCANIC

*World-renowned volcanologist, Haraldur Sigurðsson, creates Iceland's most comprehensive volcano museum*

Snæfellsnes is considered the jewel of the west coast, in part, because the region has a taste of everything Icelandic. If you're looking for mountains, they're there. If you want to attempt a glacier walk, Snæfellsnesjökull awaits. If you're interested in volcanoes, Eldfjallasafn Volcano Museum in Stykkishólmur is the place to visit. The museum showcases works of art, old and new, which depict volcanic eruptions, as well as artefacts, and volcanic rocks. The museum focuses on volcanoes around the world.

## Volcanic hot spot

Iceland has a high concentration of active volcanoes due to its location on the divergent tectonic plate boundary



of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, and also because it sits over a geological hot spot. The island has 30 active volcanic systems, of which 13 have erupted since the settlement of Iceland in 874 AD. The most recent eruptions occurred in 2014 at Holuhraun near the Bárðarbunga system and the eruption under



Eyjafjallajökull in 2010 that produced an enormous ash cloud.

## Riveting museum

Diverse aspects of volcanoes are presented at the Volcano Museum, from the science, geology and their environmental effects to how they appear in art and literature. Talks



are given daily in the museum in English and Icelandic about volcanoes and their effects, as well as information on geology for people with little or no previous knowledge of volcanoes. For visitors who would like an in-depth tour of the geology behind volcanoes, the museum offers geology excursions that visit a number of dramatic locations along the Snæfellsnes Peninsula.

## Passionate curator

The world-renowned volcanologist Haraldur Sigurðsson created the Volcano Museum to share the wealth of knowledge he has accrued. Haraldur was born in Stykkishólmur in 1939, completed a BSc degree at Queens University in Belfast in 1965, and received his PhD from Durham University in England



in 1970. He worked at the University of the West Indies from 1970, conducting research on Caribbean volcanoes. He served as professor of volcanology at the University of Rhode Island for 40 years. His research has been principally in volcanology, both on land and on the ocean floor. He has worked in Indonesia, Italy, West Indies, USA, West Africa, Greece, South and Central America and elsewhere, but Iceland remains firmly his home where the Volcano Museum is close to his heart. -JG



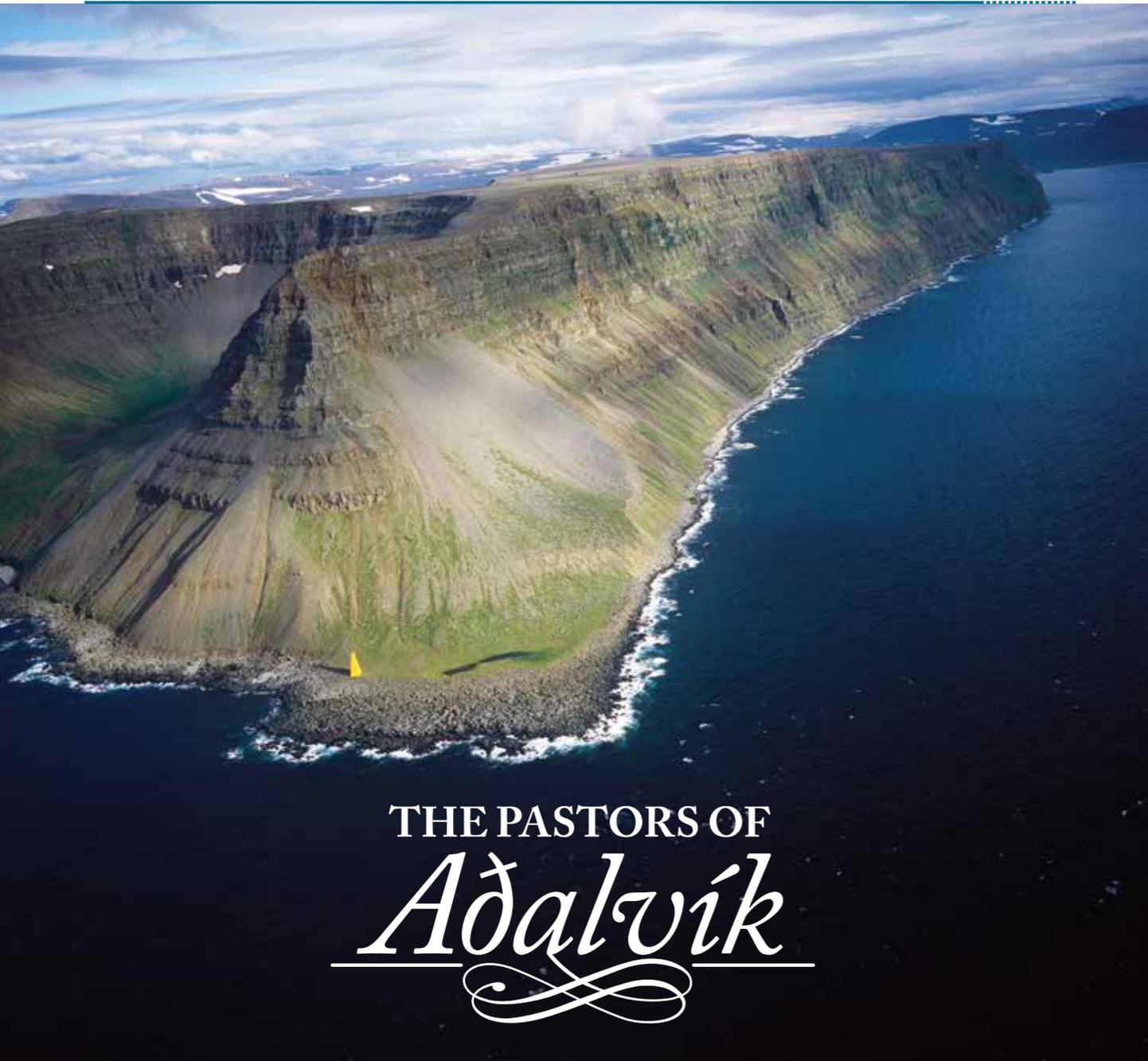
**Volcano Museum Stykkishólmur**  
 Aðalgate 6 • 340 Stykkishólmur  
 +354 433 8154  
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# WESTFJORDS

## *Iceland*





## THE PASTORS OF *Aðalvík*

North of Ísafjarðardjúp lies Aðalvík bay, open to the sea. The Ritur mountain marks the southern end of the bay, while to the north, Straumnes rises, steep and majestic. The wreck of the *Goðafoss*, a ship that ran aground in 1916, may still be seen on the shore.

Above the bay is extensive lowland, much of it verdant and picturesque. Several valleys lie inland between the mountains, the southernmost being Staðardalur. In

this valley is Lake Staðarvatn, where a water-horse, or kelpie, is said to reside and play various pranks. A farm named Staður with a church stands by the lake.

On the shore by Staðardalur is Sæból, formerly a fishing centre, where a village existed at one time. Another fishing hamlet developed at Látrar, at the northern end of Aðalvík.

Aðalvík was once quite densely populated, like other places in the Hornstrandir region;

people lived by farming and fishing and exploiting various other resources. Today, however, the place is deserted – the last inhabitant left in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Nevertheless, many houses remain standing and are used by their owners in the summertime. Although Hornstrandir is far off the beaten track, mainly accessible by sea, the region attracts growing numbers of tourists, who are drawn by the magnificent natural environment.

One of the many buildings that remain standing at Aðalvík is the church of Staður, a handsome edifice with a vestibule, tower and choir loft.

### War in the Spiritual Realm

In past centuries many renowned clergymen served the parish of Staður in Aðalvík. One of them was Snorri Björnsson, generally known as Snorri of Húsafell, in reference to the parish where he later served. He spent 16 years at Staður in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. He was believed to have supernatural skills, which came in useful in his relations with the Hornstrandir folk: Snorri generally got the better of them with his magical tricks.

A story told of Snorri when he was at Staður says that the pastor was once doing some carpentry down by the sea, while nearby a neighbour, who had supernatural skills, was also doing the same. This neighbour was carving runes into a rod of wood, designed so that anyone who read the runes would go blind. He threw the rod into the sea and let it drift to where the pastor sat. The Rev. Snorri was unaware of the trick, read the runes and immediately went blind. But Snorri was a fine poet and in this situation he made use of his poetic skills and made up verses to regain his sight. Then he scraped all the runes off the rod, flung it back in the sea, and said: "Go back to your master and you shall cause his death, if he intends to use you for evil purposes again." The farmer saw the rod and grabbed it. He planned to carve it with such powerful runes that the pastor would die. But the knife slipped off the rod and into the farmer's chest, up to the hilt. Thus the farmer died, and so received his just deserts for his attempt on the pastor's life.

The Rev. Snorri was succeeded at the parish by the Rev. Vigfús Benediktsson, who remained at Staður for 18 years. According to folklore, he was subjected to sorcery by some of his parishioners, but fortunately he had a wife who knew how to respond. The Rev. Vigfús first served the parish of Staður in Aðalvík. There were many sorcerers in the congregation, who were opposed to the pastor. One Saturday the pastor went with two brothers by boat out to an island with their lambs. When they reached the island they put the lambs ashore to graze. The pastor disembarked but the others stayed in the boat. When the



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pastor returned, the brothers had gone with the boat and left him behind alone.

The pastor's wife was named Málfríður. She was an intelligent and experienced woman, who was said to have magical powers. She came down to the sea when the boat arrived and asked the brothers where Vigfús was. They told her he was writing his sermon for the next day, and smirked. She replied that it was quite possible that he might address them tomorrow. Then they went their separate ways; the brothers went home and thought no more of the pastor.

Early the following day the same brothers came to church. When they entered the church the pastor was standing before the altar. He preached a fierce sermon over them, which they well deserved. After Mass Málfríður said to them: "Now you have had the sermon you need, and it serves you right". They answered that they had not yet thanked the pastor for the sermon, but they would do so another time. And all summer they never came to church, until

the first Sunday of the winter. One of the brothers was a married man and sat in the choir, while the other was unmarried and sat in the nave. The pastor's wife saw that they were continually smirking at each other, and as soon as the pastor stepped into the pulpit, both brothers walked out. Some time passed. When the pastor was in the middle of his sermon, Málfríður called out to him: "Fúsi, go out; the sooner the better". The pastor immediately stopped the sermon and walked out of the church and up above the churchyard. He saw one of the brothers heating a pot, while the other was writing some magical runes. The pastor came up to them and made to empty the pot, but his wife had arrived by this time and stopped him. She took the pot and poured the contents over the head of one of the brothers, then threw the pot at the other and both fell down dead. Málfríður said afterwards that it was as well they acted at once, for the brothers had intended to kill the Rev. Vigfús in the pulpit with their sorcery. While the Rev. Vigfús was pastor of Aðalvík, he was constantly at loggerheads with magicians and in the end he had to leave, for his life was in danger. When he served in Austur-Skaftafellssýsla (at the other end of the country), his old parishioners were always sending ghosts to plague him, but his wife could always turn them back and ensure they did not harm him. The Rev. Vigfús said that all these spells would be the death of him if he lived longer than his wife. But it did not come to that, for she survived him and died peacefully in old age.

# BOREA ADVENTURES

Borea Adventures is a small adventure company based in Ísafjörður in the Westfjords of Iceland. The company is owned and operated by people who are passionate about the outdoors, in particular the spectacular nature and fascinating cultures of the regions bordering the Arctic Circle. It is a passion they love to share, by providing people with access to these remote areas on their fun-filled and safe adventure trips and expeditions in Iceland and Greenland.

Borea Adventures adheres to the principles of low impact, sustainable tourism. Their trips are 'silent', since they try to minimise the use of any kind of noisy and polluting engines. Indeed, they like to encourage physical activity, suited to all levels of ability, from easy sailing and hiking through to exhilarating action sports.

They both rely on local knowledge and respect local culture. In fact, they take great pride in only using guides with a thorough knowledge of the local nature and history. Their priority is to guarantee their guests an enjoyable wilderness experience, in perfect harmony with the natural environment that supports us all.

Borea Adventures offers a variety of fascinating trips, but they can also customise trips for groups looking to put together their own itinerary

for a unique adventure in the Northern Wilderness.

The Westfjords' hub Ísafjörður is the mecca for day trips in the Westfjords of Iceland. This small and picturesque town, nestled between rugged mountains, offers unique opportunities for all sorts of outdoor pursuits. With the domestic airport only a few minutes away from their office, you can fly in and out on the same day and still manage to have an exciting adventure!

Their day trips vary in length: some are 3 hours and others can be up to 13 hours long. Each trip varies in difficulty and there is something to suit everyone's interest and capabilities.

Borea's local guides have extensive experience in outdoor travel. They have great passion and respect for nature and look forward to sharing it with you. Safety is of the utmost importance to their guides, guaranteeing you a memorable adventure. They are true adventurers at heart and would love to show you the best that Iceland has to offer.

Homemade Organic Lunches—Included!

Throughout the years Borea has recognised the importance of eating a healthy homemade snack during their expeditions. Eating delicious food full of natural energy

ingredients gives us the power and drive we need to keep us strong, alert and happy throughout our adventures.

Their trips are: Kayaking, hiking and biking. Their favourite project is Kvíar Lodge, a farm house abandoned since 1948.

Kvíar was a farm in Kvíadalur Valley, a beautiful setting at the edge of the water with panoramic views over the expansive Jökulfirðir Bay. With history of habitation since the 14th century, you can clearly see signs of turf houses and stone walls around the farm. The last inhabitants left in 1948 and the house was left open to the elements.

In 2012, Borea came up with the idea of using the house for their adventures, turning it into a true adventure base for guests to enjoy.

After a lot of hard labour, the house has been brought back to life, and offers adventure seekers and free spirits a perfect platform for all things outdoors.

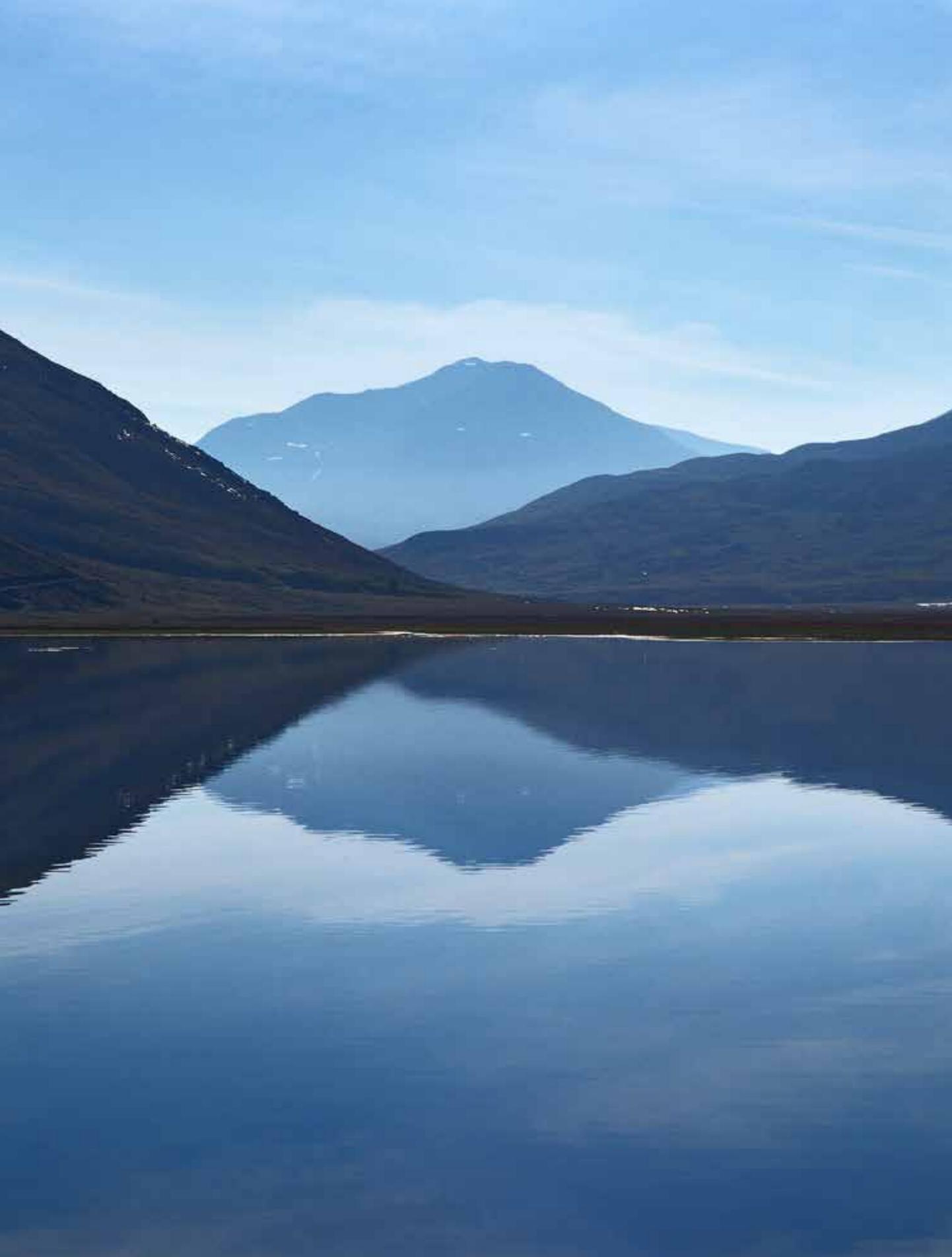
The Adventures you can experience in Kvíar...depending on season:

- Hiking in pristine wilderness
- Skiing from mountain tops to the sea
- Kayaking between abandoned fjords
- Exploring wildlife

- Arctic foxes, seals and birds within reach
- Relaxation and solitude
- Drangajökull Glacier is close by
- History of times gone by
- Fishing for arctic char and sea angling.

# NORTH *Iceland*





## THE EXPERIENCE OF A LIFETIME

*Iceland on Horseback with Pólar Hestar of North Iceland*

One of Iceland's most iconic symbols can be found in its own special breed of horse, known for its friendly nature and its two extra gaits. The hardy and sure-footed Icelandic horse is an excellent introduction to the world of riding, and what better way to experience Iceland than from the back of one of these magnificent creatures that have been part of the Icelandic landscape for over a thousand years.

Now you can get a feel for the real Iceland with Pólar Hestar Tours of North Iceland who offer a range of riding tours that appeal to all levels of ability, from the absolute beginner all the way to the most seasoned rider. The tours can be arranged for from 1 to 4 hour periods.

Short Duration Tours are perfect for beginners or those with a little riding experience. These reasonably priced tours run from just one hour to two hours up to half-day tours of 4 hours and are also available in winter, weather permitting. This is a wonderful introduction to the Icelandic horse and great fun for both adults and children.



For intermediate riders there are many options to choose from, including the popular 'Between the Fjord and the Valley of the Elves Tour'. This 6-day, 5-night tour takes you through lovely landscapes, with breathtaking views, delightful deep green valleys with rushing brooks and along a fascinating scenic coastline.

### Ring Around the Midnight Sun

The fragrance of early spring, bright nights and the awakening nature are characteristics of this tour, which consists of several rides and sightseeing by bus. You will experience the days around the midnight sun visiting the famous

turf houses of Laufás, the whales in Eyjafjörður fjord and the amazing area around the breathtaking Lake Mývatn. A Midnight Ride, as a highlight of the week at this special time of year, when the sun hardly sets, is included.

### Fascinating North Iceland Tour

Take part in this exhilarating 8-day, 7-night tour—a wonderful opportunity to experience the diversity of Iceland's mesmerising nature.

The tour's itinerary includes some of North Iceland's well known waterfalls as well as Europe's most active volcanic area. You can witness the breathtaking Highlands, once the domain of outlaws, elves and trolls, and journey over ancient lava fields in this unforgettable tour that is suitable for more experienced riders.

-ASF/EMV

*Pólar Hestar Tours is run by the husband and wife team of Stefán and Juliane and has been a firm favourite with horse lovers from around the world for over 30 years.*



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# EAST *Iceland*





# EXPLORING UNTOUCHED BEAUTY

*Vopnafjörður is home to striking nature and fun outdoor activities*

Vopnafjörður is surrounded by picturesque mountains, wondrous waterfalls and historical farms. It's one of the best spots on the island to enjoy Iceland's peace and tranquillity and home to an array of wildlife. The history of the village dates back 1100 years, when the bay was first settled by Viking seafarers from Norway. Foreign merchants frequently sailed to Vopnafjörður in the early modern age, and a settlement gradually formed on a peninsula where the village stands today.

## Stunning nature

The village has numerous opportunities for relaxation and outdoor activities. Many well-marked walking trails lead through the region's natural pearls. One of them, 'the elephant', is a significant rock pillar on the east side of Vopnafjörður that bears a striking resemblance to an elephant. Fuglabjarganes is a prominent cliff that juts out on the northern coast of the town. You can get a good look at it from a marked hiking path from Strandhafnarvegur road, which runs along the Fugla River. The scenery is beautiful with white beaches, towering cliffs and impressive rock caverns and pillars. Vopnafjörður is only 60 to 90 minutes away from outstanding

features of Iceland like Dettifoss, Mývatn and Langanes and only 2-3 hours from Herðubreið, 'the queen of Icelandic mountains', Askja and Holuhraun.

## Outdoor activities

Vopnafjörður is a birdwatcher's dream and the Tangi peninsula north of the village is a beautiful and remote spot to watch seabirds. Vopnafjörður also offers several hiking routes that vary from easy to challenging. Beginners will find a wide range of mapped routes and marked trails that offer scenic views of the whole of area—the bay, the Tangi Peninsula, inland areas and mountains. Hike to the end of the Tangi Peninsula to find interesting rock formations and beaches. Other activities could include a round of golf at the well-maintained 9-hole course or taking a dip in the heated swimming pool.

## Culture and history

The old farm of Bustarfell is one of the best-preserved traditional Icelandic turf houses that many Icelanders called home for centuries. The museum offers a great opportunity to see how people's way of life has changed through the centuries. The foundations of the current house are



from 1770, but the house has undergone alterations over the years.

The East Iceland Emigration Center is dedicated to the emigration years 1870-1914, the years following the great Askja eruption of 1875 that displaced hundreds of people. The centre focuses on the history of the region and renewing contact with emigrants' descendants. There are many documents and photos on display, making it a fascinating place to visit. -JG



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www.vopnafjordur.com



# WELCOME TO GEYSIR



THE GEYSIR CENTER IS DIRECTLY OPPOSITE OF THE GEOTHERMAL AREA OF THE GREAT GEYSIR AND STROKKUR



## GEYSIR GLIMA BISTRO

COFFEE HOUSE WITH FRESHLY GROUND COFFEE

SWEET ICE CREAMS & CAKES

TRADITIONAL ICELANDIC MEAT SOUP

FISH SOUP & VEGETARIAN SOUP

LOCAL FOOD

MUSEUM OF HOT SPRINGS, VOLCANO AND ICELANDIC GLIMA



## THE GEYSIR CENTER

HAUKADALUR

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# SOUTH *Iceland*



*The wealth of South Iceland lies in the variety of geological, historical and nature sites along with the long list of activities that can be experienced in the region. This region has geological wonders such as Geysir; the waterfalls of Gullfoss, Háifoss, Skógafoss, Systra and Seljalandsfoss; Þingvellir, where the tectonic plates crack the Earth; Europe's largest glacier, Vatnajökull; the Kerð caldera; world-famous volcanoes like Hekla—"the Gateway to Hell", Lakagígar, Laki, the notorious Eyjafjallajökull and the Katla Geopark; fantasy sites like Þórsmörk and Jökulsárlón. Here are historical sites like the world's longest-running parliament at*

*Þingvellir; museums, churches, the Stöng settlement, the Saga centre and villages like Eyrarbakki. Activities abound. Tours take you to all the sites, including the glaciers. Horse riding tours are popular. Try the riverjet, boat trips or kayaking; scuba diving in clear waters, fishing or caving. Independent travellers can try hiking and cycling, camping or caravanning. Winter activities are just as thrilling. Fortunately, there is plenty of accommodation available throughout the region from camping to high-class hotels and restaurants to suit every taste. A developed infrastructure helps you get the most from your trips.*

# SEE ICELAND IN SAFETY, COMFORT AND STYLE



## Reykjavik Excursions Golden Circle and South Shore Adventure Tours

With Icelandic winter weather being rather unpredictable, it's good to know that you don't have to brave the elements on your own. Reykjavik Excursions is one of Iceland's oldest tour companies, with experienced drivers and years of experience under its belt. With a large variety of tours to choose from, we take a look at two of their most popular day tours: South Shore Adventure and the Golden Circle.

### First up, the South Coast

Reykjavik Excursions' South Shore Adventure tour is the optimal solution for seeing all those iconic places that the south coast is so well known for—Seljalandsfoss, Skógarfoss, Reynisfjara beach, Vík and Mýrdalsjökull. This 10½-hour day tour departs from the BSÍ bus terminal in

Reykjavík, taking you over the beautiful Hellisheiði heath that overlooks the south coast from its eastern flank. Passing several small villages, the tour makes its first stop in Hvalsöllum, just a stone's throw from the famous Eyjafjallajökull volcano that erupted spectacularly in 2010.

### A must for nature lovers, photographers and history buffs

On this tour, you'll get a chance to walk up to (but not on) a real live glacier, Sólheimajökull, that flows out of the Mýrdalsjökull ice cap. Then it's on to Reynisfjara, the black sand beach known for its massive columnar basalt cliffs and sea stacks. After lunch (not included) in the picturesque village of Vík, you'll have a guided tour of Skógar Museum where some 15,000 cultural artifacts are on

display. Here you will learn about the life and times of Icelanders over the centuries and gain an appreciation for the Icelandic way of life. Afterwards you will visit the landmark waterfall Skógarfoss that thunders down from a 60m high precipice and then onwards to Seljalandsfoss, the only waterfall in Iceland that you can walk behind.

### The Famous Golden Circle

Located within 100km of Reykjavík, the Golden Circle continues to be one of Reykjavik Excursions' most popular destinations. The tour encompasses three of the most popular Icelandic tourist spots, known for their geological, historical and scenic significance. Thingvellir National Park, the original site of the world's oldest running parliament, is unique in that

it sits on the divergent plate boundary of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge. Next is the Haukadalur Geothermal Area where you'll see the dormant Geysir that gave its name to these steam spouts, a spouting geyser named Strokkur and bubbling mud pools in a steamy, otherworldly landscape.

Gullfoss, (Golden Falls), is a raging, double cascade waterfall, as spectacular as they come—and equally impressive when the temperature drops below freezing. En route, you will tour Friðheimar Greenhouse, where geothermal energy is used to grow pesticide-free tomatoes and cucumbers, year round. Friðheimar's refreshing homemade tomato soup (not included) is a tempting option, should you want a hot, filling meal during the tour. Shorter versions of the Golden Circle tour are also available.

### Helpful tips

Should you decide that a Reykjavik Excursions tour is right for you, here are a few helpful tips to make the most of your tour. 1. First and foremost: dress warmly. The wind chill factor needs to be taken into consideration, particularly in winter, so do dress warmly in layers and don't forget your gloves and hat. 2. Wear sturdy shoes—you wouldn't want to scuff up your brand new Nikes. Iceland's volcanic nature is not always kind to the latest fashion footwear. Sneakers will not cut it! Lastly, all of Reykjavik Excursions tours are available with guidance in English, but did you know that most tours are also available in French, German, Scandinavian, and now Spanish?

Be warm, be well and enjoy Iceland this winter with Reykjavik Excursions.



**Reykjavik Excursions**

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*A Jewel in Iceland's Winter Crown*

# SOUTH EAST ICELAND'S VATNAJÖKULL REGION

The Vatnajökull region is narrow stretch of land that lies just below Vatnajökull Glacier, spanning from Lómagnúpur in the west, to Hvalnes on its eastern border. From the highest peaks of Hvannadalshnúkur down to the expansive glacial outwash plains that characterise the area, the district embraces over 200km of Iceland's main ring road.

## Where the snowcaps glisten

Glistening glacial lagoons, thundering rivers, waterfalls, black sand beaches and numerous ice caves are just some of the natural gems that can be found within the region's borders. When the Northern Lights appear, they make an unforgettable sight over Vatnajökull Glacier's gleaming ice cap and the surrounding winter landscape. The area is also known for its fresh seafood, especially langoustines, aka Norway lobster, and restaurants throughout the district are keen to show off this specialty in a variety of ways. For families with kids there is a fun 2km

nature trail by the sea, with beautiful views of the glacier where the solar system comes to life! Free maps of the trail are available at the Hofn Visitor Centre (Gamlabuð).

## Into an ice-blue world

Should you have your heart set on visiting an ice cave, look no further, because the Vatnajökull region boasts many of these stunning ice-blue caves. They are only accessible from November to March for obvious reasons and several local companies run by experienced teams of caving experts offer tours into this awe-inspiring world of subglacial speleology. Booking in advance is highly encouraged as tours fill up quickly. For important safety reasons, it is not recommended to go into an ice cave without a certified glacier guide.

## Höfn

Well situated just off Road No.1, the attractive harbour town of Höfn makes an

excellent base for further exploration of this vast region and beyond. With a population of just over 2,000 inhabitants, the town and its surrounding area boast a number of comfortable hotels and guest houses, a supermarket, petrol stations, a pharmacy, as well as several notable restaurants known for their fresh langoustine dishes.

At the tourist information office located in the Hofn Visitor Centre (Gamlabuð) you will find maps, brochures, souvenirs and helpful staff on hand who can answer all your questions. For directions and opening hours, please check their website <http://www.vatnajokulsthjodgardur.is/english/operations/visitor-centre/hofn-visitor-centre/>.

For further information about the Vatnajökull region, please check out the website listed below.



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# THE ENCHANTED ISLAND

Hotel Borealis, a Countryside Hotel with Style and Soul

While travelling in Iceland during autumn, the weather and the sun's changing light create a unique atmosphere in the countryside. Famous poet Rilke found appropriate words for this time of contemplation and retreat: "Lay your shadows upon the sundials, and o'er the isles allow your winds to vent".

## Enjoying Northern Lights

As darkness returns in autumn, the Northern Lights start illuminating the night skies, and as Hotel Borealis is situated far away from light pollution, the darkness makes them shine even brighter. And there is nothing like soaking in the hotel's hot tub after an exciting day as the Northern Lights dance above you!

## In Nature's Heart

Hotel Borealis, just a few kilometres from the charming town of Selfoss, offers the serene silence of an elegant countryside retreat while activities and bustling life are on hand a short distance away. The welcomingly neat white houses have been tastefully furnished by blending last century's Icelandic antiques with modern style and prove to be so cosy you might never want to leave!

Offering 20 comfortable rooms with



bathrooms, cosy bungalows for families and a small villa, Hotel Borealis is able to meet the needs of individuals and groups.

The hotel has a special room for conferences and events and 'Hlaðan', a renovated barn that is a perfect location for a romantic Icelandic country wedding. Hotel

Borealis also serves well as a calm retreat for writing a book or contemplating the magic of the Icelandic changing light. When the autumn sun pours out her golden beams on the heather and red leaves, nearby Þingvellir National Park turns into an enchanted island. Cuddle up in a traditional wool sweater and take a stroll through the famous former site of Iceland's parliament, discover Gullfoss waterfall and Geysir on a day trip, try golfing on the nearby course or fishing in Lake Úlfjótvatn. Then, with daylight slowly fading, return to Hotel Borealis for a marvellous dinner, served on antique tables in the spirit of good, old Icelandic hospitality. The chef prides himself on only using local products such as highland lamb, arctic char from Lake Þingvallavatn and vegetables grown in the area's greenhouses for his delicious meals. -DT



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HELLISHÓLAR COTTAGES, GUESTHOUSE AND HOTEL

# A LITTLE BIT OF ICELANDIC PARADISE



Set in one of the most idyllic locations in South Iceland, Hellishólar offers a variety of accommodation for the weary traveller who is looking for a good night's sleep in peaceful surroundings.

The sprawling Hellishólar property is located 17 minutes from Route 1, near the village of Hvolsvöllur in the middle of Fljótslíð, a picturesque farming district sheltered by three glaciers: Mýrdalsjökull, Eyjafjallajökull and Tindfjallajökull.

## Cosy Cottages

Why not bed down for the night in one of Hellishólar's 25 popular, fully-furnished cottages? Each cottage can sleep from 3 to 6 people and has a small kitchen for making your own meals. If you prefer, you can also have your meals in the on-site restaurant that serves breakfast, lunch and dinner.

## So Many Choices!

At Hellishólar there is also a guesthouse and a brand new hotel called 'Hotel Eyjafjallajökull' with 18 spacious and comfortable bedrooms, all with ensuite bathroom.

## A Glorious View of Nature

The views from Hellishólar are, in a word, stunning! In winter, when the Northern Lights are visible, one has only to step outside the door and look up. The lack of light



pollution makes Hellishólar an ideal location for Northern Lights viewing.

In summer, the long days bring optimum opportunities to experience the many activities that are possible at Hellishólar—trout fishing on the lake, salmon fishing from the river that runs through the property and enjoying a round of golf on the

18 hole golf course. Hellishólar is the perfect base from which to explore South Iceland year round. See you there! -EMV

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Lake in the Highlands with Lava in front.



## REFRESHING VÍK

*Halldór's Café satisfies locals and travellers alike*

Guests at Halldór's Café are greeted by the scent of steaming soup and freshly baked bread as they walk through the door. Across from Vík's shoreline, with its black sand beaches, Halldór's Café emphasises the use of only quality ingredients from the locality in their cooking. Whether be it a freshly caught salmon you crave, steaks from grass-fed cattle or free range lamb served with the accompaniment of locally grown greens—you can be sure that Halldór's Café will deliver. They also offer a variety of lighter meals such as soup of the

day and light salads, and those with a bit of a sweet-tooth will not be disappointed, as the menu includes home-baked cakes and home-made ice cream from a local farm.

Originally, Halldór's Café was the general store, built in 1831 to meet all of the needs of Vík. Today, it continues to satisfy patrons with its menu, which has something for every taste, using local produce, where possible.

Halldór's Café supports artists with a rotating display of local talent featured on its walls, and serves up steaming cups of coffee and cake, ideal for meeting and

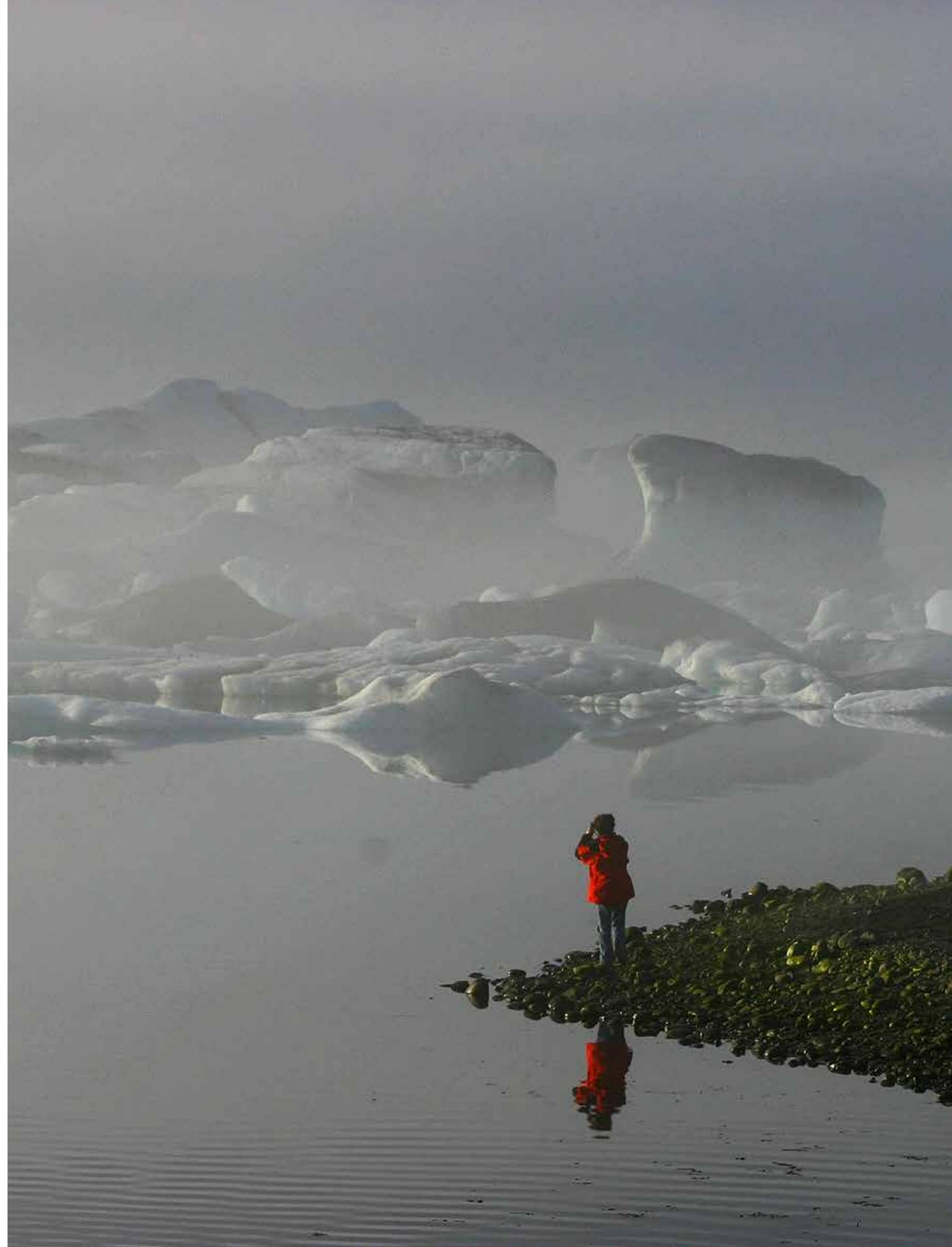
greeting old friends or new acquaintances. The café is open all year round. Summer opening hours are from 11:00am to 10:00 or 11:00pm, and winter openings are from 11:00am to 9:00pm. When travelling in the area around the beautiful Vík, be sure to stop at this charming café and get greeted with a welcoming smile and a seductive menu. -JB



**Halldórskaffi**

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# A DELIGHTFUL EXPERIENCE IN STOKKSEYRI

*Icelandic Times checks out Fjöruborðið Restaurant*

Chef Eiríkur Þór Eiríksson was busy pouring drinks when we arrived. The well known song 'Vorkvöld í Reykjavík', (a Spring Evening in Reykjavík) was playing softly in the background. A table of tourists who had spent the day exploring a glacier with a guide, talked animatedly over dinner in the front room. The low slung building with pleasantly creaky wooden floors, once serving as the search and rescue building of Stokkseyri, is now one of the most popular lobster restaurants in Iceland, with over 45,000 patrons dining there in 2014.

### 15 tons of lobsters can't be wrong

Fjöruborðið's website says that some 15 tons of lobster are used annually to make its famous soup, aka langoustine soup. Hmm...impressive statistics but does it really live up to its reputation? After all, there are many fine restaurants right in the capital, so is it really worth the 45 minute drive over a mountain in sometimes dubious weather conditions? Yes! I am happy to report that the soup was sublime. And just forget the word soup, how pedestrian! Chef Eiríkur informs me that it is, in fact, a classic bisque de langoustine.



Whatever name you go by, it was delicious and I would have happily eaten another bowlful had I not needed to move on to taste everything else that was set before me: lobster tails that were perfect in themselves, homebaked bread with various dipping sauces and if, per chance, you are not partial to sea food, there is a wonderfully tender roasted fillet of lamb served with baby potatoes and red wine sauce that is excellent. A crisp salad made with local produce was

refreshing and nicely complemented the seafood and meat dishes. Right on cue as soon as we had finished the lobster tails, our attentive server brought a warm wet cloth for our, by then, messy hands, which was much appreciated.

From the outside, Fjöruborðið appears deceptively small but in fact, it can seat several hundred all told, something that those having a tête-à-tête in the main building would never guess. Facing the ocean out back, a large permanent marquee can seat another 100 or so guests. All that to say, groups are welcome.

Favoured by tour guides who often bring their clients here as the ultimate finish to a perfect day of sightseeing, the restaurant has received several well known personalities such as Prince Frederik of Denmark, the Rockefellers, Clint Eastwood, Martha Stewart, Bette Midler and Cherie Booth (wife of Tony Blair). -EMV



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# STRACTA HOTEL HELLA

*A New Hotel on Iceland's South Coast*



Located in the peaceful village of Hella in South Iceland, Stracta Hotel is one of Iceland's newest hotels, catering for every budget. Built in 2014, the hotel gets high marks for its ability to incorporate a pleasant modern look seamlessly throughout its well thought out concept and design.



### A Room for Every Budget

The hotel encompasses a wide variety of room options—from high-end deluxe suites, each with its own private hot tub and well-stocked mini-bar, right down to budget rooms with shared facilities. There are also studio apartments and spacious cottages, with simple self-catering facilities that are perfect for families with children. Whichever you choose, you can always count on comfortable beds, free access to the hotel's hot tubs, saunas and wi-fi throughout the hotel.

### Northern Lights Prime Time

Stracta Hotel's prime location, situated far from the light pollution of the bigger towns, allows guests a fabulous opportunity to view the northern lights from October through April. Imagine yourself lounging in a cosy hot tub, glass of wine in hand, as the Northern Lights swirl through the skies

above. Should the auroras happen to make their appearance while you are sleeping, a wake-up call can be arranged so you don't miss this experience-of-a-lifetime event!

### Healthy Food Choices Abound

Food options and choices are varied at Stracta Hotel. The bar and bistro located on the ground floor is where you can order healthy sandwiches, salads, cakes and deserts, coffee, teas and a variety of wines and spirits. They even offer asian food. Guests will enjoy the panoramic views of the surrounding countryside from the second floor dining room where a buffet style dinner is served every evening.

When the weather is fine you can take your dinner out onto the balcony, or sit outside on the patio below, where you can enjoy the long summer nights. Planning a day out? Why not purchase a freshly made packed

lunch from the bistro to take with you on your journey?

### Health, Wellness and Activities

Experience Iceland via a wide range of activities that can be arranged at the front desk. Horse riding tours, local farm visits, super jeep tours of nearby Eyjafjallajökull volcano or even an exciting helicopter tour over the most famous South Iceland sites are all possibilities. Rental cars are offered at a special price for hotel guests. Fancy a massage or healing treatment? Stracta Hotel is well connected! Local therapists make themselves available to hotel guests and offer massages, meditation, Reiki and cranial-sacral massages.

Hotel Stracta welcomes you! -EMV



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