



Vikings, Valkyries, & Volcanoes

Iceland Cultural Walking Adventure

CLASSIC JOURNEYS
THE WORLD'S FINEST WALKING TOURS



“Classic Journeys provides unbeatable access to experiences around the globe.”

—Travel + Leisure

Land of Fire and Ice

Iceland is rich with more cinematic landscapes and incredible experiences per square inch than anywhere. Game of Thrones doesn't even do it justice! Jaw-dropping footpaths lead to waterfalls, glaciers, black sand beaches and lava fields covered with insanely green spongy moss. For every ice cave, there's a geothermal pool. The Northern Lights curtain the night sky. Spectacular coastal and countryside walks each day are complimented by activities that range from tectonic snorkeling to horseback riding, glacier hiking to puffin watching. And true to Classic Journeys style of travel, your guides are dyed-in-the-wool native Icelanders, descended from shark fishermen and 9th century Vikings. So, you get true connections to local culture...not to mention the expertise that assures you'll get away from the crowds to experience Iceland at its very best. On several days we offer you a choice of activities — think of it as "choose your adventure" — all at no extra cost. And at the end of every day in this amazing land, you'll nestle into some of the country's finest hotels, and refuel with world-class Atlantic-and-farm-to-table cuisine. If you love adventure travel, welcome to paradise!

DAY 1

REYKJAVIK / ÞINGVELLIR NATIONAL PARK

- Go tectonic snorkeling at Silfra...

OR

- Hike in Þingvellir National Park

Right after you meet in Reykjavik, your Iceland adventure gets off to a fantastic start, as you choose your adventure — hiking boots or flippers. Each offers an unforgettable way to experience Þingvellir National Park. If you choose flippers, get ready for a snorkeling experience like no other. Slip into an insulated wetsuit (also called a 'dry suit') and flippers, then slide into the waters between the Eurasian and American tectonic plates. In this calm ribbon of water, the glacial melt is so clear that you can see down 100 feet and you have the distinct sensation of floating in midair! You can count on us to provide all of the equipment you need, along with the guidance and help of experienced outfitters. You don't need to be an experienced diver or snorkeler to take the plunge. Awesome doesn't begin to describe it.

Choose boots and a technicolor hike is waiting for you. A deep tectonic rift valley bisects the national park (also a UNESCO World Heritage Site), which also contains the country's largest natural lake and lava trails covered in springy bright green moss. The vistas are vast, and as you explore the park's trails with your guide you're fully immersed in the tumbled wilderness that's so unique to Iceland. Hard to believe, but this region was also the site of the world's oldest parliament, founded by Vikings in the year 930.

At day's end, settle into your luxury manor house hotel on a farm that's been owned by the same family for seven generations. After dinner, you may want to start a nightly ritual of enjoying the midnight sun in the summer months and checking the pitch-black skies for signs of the Northern Lights the rest of the year.

Overnight: Skalakot

Meals: D

DAY 2

SKÁLAKOT FARM

- Walk through sheep meadows to a waterfall
- Go for a horseback ride on the beach...

OR

- Take a coastal walk

OR

- Hike to see Viking ruins

Our hosts Jóhanna and Mummi are proud of their family farm, and you'll see why this morning. We'll join them for a walk on some beautiful trails out to the sheep barn where you'll often find lambs. There's a waterfall nearby too. It's far off the beaten track, quiet but for the rush and roar of the waters and your hike takes you to it.

The afternoon offers a pair of terrific multisport activities and an opportunity to choose your adventure. One of the family's passions is the breeding of short, sturdy, shaggy Icelandic horses. So you can saddle up for a ride that gives you a feel for how Icelanders have traveled their land for centuries. You'll actually wade across a lake, then ride on a beach with the North Atlantic on one side and a majestic mountain range on the other.

Prefer your own feet to horses' hooves? There's also incredible coastal walking to be done nearby as well if you prefer. Or, if you don't mind a drive, we can make for a trail that starts at a cape and climbs the slopes of Hjórléifshofdi to the top of the headland. The views are remarkable of course, but you'll also have a chance to explore some spectacularly-sited Viking ruins. In the summer breeding season, it's also home to a colony of Atlantic Puffins that make their nests by burrowing into the grassy hillsides.

Back at the hotel, you may want to join in the Icelandic tradition of a hot tub soak or hang out by the fireplace.

Overnight: Skalakot

Meals: B, D

DAY 3

GLACIER HIKING

- Hike through scenic countryside

- **Experience a glacier on an expertly guided walk**

Fuel up at breakfast this morning. You're off on a big, invigorating and utterly unforgettable day of hiking on Solheimajokull Glacier. You'll start with a walk on some cinematic trails to reach the terminal face of the glacier. Then, with the assistance of our friends who are local glacier experts, you'll buckle on crampons and grab an ice axe before stepping onto the glacier itself. (Of course, we'll provide all of the top-notch equipment you need at no extra cost.)

Your guides know everything about the glacier. With them, you have chances to explore the caves and crevices all carved into the ancient aquamarine ice. Unlike tourists who venture a few steps onto the ice just to say they've done it, you'll go beyond the fringe and away from the crowds to experience the mind-bending scale and solitude most people never come close to. You'll even stop for a glacier picnic!

Later, enjoy a rest as we take an afternoon drive through spectacular coastal and mountain scenery. Your destination: an iconic modern Iceland hotel located – where else? – between two glaciers!

Overnight: Glacier Lagoon

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 4

DIAMOND BEACH / GLACIAL LAGOON

- **Walk on a black sand beach**
- **Explore a glacial ice cave**

OR

- **Get up close to icebergs from a Zodiac**

On summertime departures, you'll board a Zodiac to get more up-close and personal with the icebergs. With their shallow drafts, the boats can venture close to the floating sculptures and you can even get up to the face of the glacier to learn how the icebergs are calved. Fall through spring, you'll go ice caving on Vatnajokull Glacier. From the "snout" of the glacier, you'll gear up, and enter to explore one of the large otherworldly caves that form each year in the ice.

By now, you'll be well accustomed to the peculiar fact that many of Iceland's beaches are inky black sand, the product of volcanic basalt crushed to fine sand over the millennia. This afternoon, strike out for a walk on Diamond Beach along Glacier Lagoon, punctuated occasionally by small marooned icebergs. The ones on the beach look like diamonds. And the icebergs floating just offshore are blue, not white! Melting and wind erosion carve them into fantastical shapes.

Overnight: Glacier Lagoon

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 5

THE REYNISDRANGAR / BLUE LAGOON

- **Walk a coastal path with views to one of Iceland's most famous offshore landmarks**
- **Ease into a steamy soak at the Blue Lagoon**
- **Learn about (and have the chance to spot) Northern Lights**

You've seen and heard what a big part that mythology and legend play in Iceland culture. There's no better example than the Reynisdrangar, three sharp black pillars that burst from the waves offshore. Legend has it that they're really three trolls who stayed out too late and got turned to stone by the morning sun. It's one of those places where the geology is at least as interesting as the mythology. A coastal walk puts you in a perfect position to enjoy the anecdotes from your guide and the Instagram-worthy photos.

Iceland is also home to the world's largest breeding colony of Atlantic Puffins. About 700,000 pairs of the birds dig burrows in the grassy hillsides above the cliffs around the island. On summertime departures, your morning walk also provides the chance to spot the distinctive birds, and to learn about their habits and the environmental challenges they're facing.

Returning to Reykjavik, you'll end an immersive Icelandic week in the famed Blue Lagoon, a steaming lake filled with almost 2.5 million gallons of neon blue geothermal water. Like the Icelanders who love to relax here, you'll soak in water that fills the air with swirling clouds of steam. There's a spa. (You can get a massage floating in the water.) Most of the lagoon is no more than three feet deep, so you can move around at will.

The Northern Lights are a luminous glow in the night sky caused by solar storms as they travel from the sun and enter Earth's atmosphere. In Viking mythology, they were thought to be Valkyries, female warriors who guided the souls of dead to mythical Valhalla. The lights can occur any time of the year (and we've actually seen them in August!) but the best chances to see

DAILY ITINERARY

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them are September through April. After dinner, join your guide at an observatory to learn firsthand what causes them, how Icelanders have thought of them, and go in search of the lights.

Overnight: Reykjavik

Meals: B, D

DAY 6

REYKJAVIK

- Explore Iceland's capital at your leisure
- Extend your stay or make your way home

You've had a full week of adventure. So, it's your choice to sleep in this morning, explore Iceland's capital at your leisure, enjoy some shopping or make your way on your own schedule to Reykjavik airport for flights home.

Meals: B



Tour Hotels



Skalakot Manor Hotel

With gables that echo the nearby mountains, this family-owned manor hotel is a cozy and luxurious retreat. Rooms are decorated in true Icelandic style. The exceptional restaurant features local specialties from Arctic char to homemade bread.

OVERNIGHT: Hvolsvöllur | **NIGHTS:** 2



Fosshotel Glacier Lagoon

Remote beauty and contemporary comfort are what this hotel is all about. Situated between two massive glaciers, the property's rooms have big windows that keep you close to the stark beauty. The fine dining restaurant reflects the modern aesthetic.

OVERNIGHT: Öræfi | **NIGHTS:** 2



Alda Hotel

Situated right on Laugavegur, the city's main shopping street, this cool hotel is in the heart of the action. Rooms are decorated in clean Scandinavian style. There's a fitness center, views of mountains and sea, and even a chocolate shop.

OVERNIGHT: Reykjavik | **NIGHTS:** 1

Tour Dates & Prices

To see the full list of dates and prices for this tour, go to our website by clicking [here](#).

Want to travel with just your group on a date of your choosing? Visit [CLASSICJOURNEYS.COM/PRIVATE](https://classicjourneys.com/private) to learn more about Private Journeys.

Trip Essentials

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| TRIP LENGTH | 6 Days, 5 Nights |
| START | Lobby of Alda Hotel, Reykjavik, Iceland |
| END | Lobby of Alda Hotel, Reykjavik, Iceland |
| TERRAIN | Easy to moderate on good trails and coastal paths |

What's Included

- All breakfasts, 2 lunches and 5 dinners
- Full-time experienced guide(s) who are with you throughout the trip and handle behind-the-scenes logistics
- Admissions to tastings, historic sites and other scheduled events as noted in the detailed daily itinerary
- Gratuities for hotels, meals, and baggage
- All land transportation during the trip

Above & Beyond Benefits

- Invisible Check-In
- Privileged Access Events

READY TO BOOK?
CLICK TO MAKE A RESERVATION

Or give us a call

1-800-200-3887

Mon-Fri 8:00AM – 5:00PM PST

moreinfo@classicjourneys.com

AMBASSADOR CLUB

As a Classic Journeys guest, you are invited to join the Ambassador Club after your first Classic Journeys tour. As a member, you'll have access to [a whole suite of Ambassador benefits](#) you can use immediately and as often as you like.

ENJOY THE UNEXPECTED

When you travel with Classic Journeys, you can expect handcrafted surprises built into every trip, but some things just can't be anticipated. Unusual weather, a once-a-year festival or an unscheduled site closing will inspire us and your local guide to improvise and modify this itinerary. Likewise, the hotels named here are used on the majority of our trips, but occasionally one of them can't accommodate us. If that happens, you can count on us to let you know before departure and make sure you're in a hotel of equal or better quality. It's our goal to make your trip exceptional!

**Any discount offered cannot be combined with other offers, and only applies to published (regularly scheduled public) departure dates in our catalogs or on our website.

THE Classic Journeys Difference



HANDCRAFTING TRIPS OF A LIFETIME.

At the end of the day, we fundamentally believe that every guest on every departure of every trip should have a trip of a lifetime. We're fortunate to play the role of well-connected friend, linking our guests with amazing guides, artisans, winemakers, hoteliers, restaurateurs, naturalists, and too many others to list here.

That's what motivates me and our team — in our La Jolla HQ and around the world — every day. Join Us!

Samuel
President & Founder



You can expect the highest standards:



Luxurious Lodgings:

Ours include coveted properties that appear in "World's Best" and "Gold List" rankings.



Included Activities:

You'll never be surprised with add-on fees on your activities that include snorkeling to cooking lessons.



Local Guides:

Your guides are locals who are always at your side like well-connected friends.



Small Group Travel:

With an average of just 10-12 guests, it's a small footprint that guarantees you access that's off-limits to larger groups.



Amazing Cuisine:

From Michelin-starred restaurants to lunch in a farmhouse kitchen, you'll have a seat for the region's signature dishes.



Unmatched Value:

"Excellent value" and "unbeatable access" are two of the reasons that Travel + Leisure has consistently voted us a World's Best Tour Operator.

You'll enjoy these handcrafted travel experiences in Iceland...

- Choosing your own adventure from amazing (and included) options each day
- Exploring a glacial ice cave or viewing icebergs from a Zodiac
- Riding the famed Icelandic horses or walking along a black sand beach
- Walking - and picnicking - on a glacier
- Snorkeling in glacial water, and soaking in the famed thermal baths at Blue Lagoon

"Atli's knowledge combined with the serenity of Iceland was superb. I decided I want to be with Atli when the zombie apocalypse comes."

-Julie Hart., Longview, TX.