



Keep your eyes to the skies on our Icelandic trek
LAND OF THE NORTHERN LIGHTS
20 - 25 November 2024



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Iceland Land of the Northern Lights Trek

20 – 25 November 2024



Trip overview

The Trek

Explore the other-worldly landscapes of Iceland. Spend three days trekking across fields of geothermal activity with bubbling mud pools and hot springs, the peaks of the Mount Hengill heritage site and the fault lines between Europe and America. Keep your eyes to the skies and you might be lucky enough to experience Lady Aurora herself!

Iceland

Iceland is a Nordic island sitting in the North Atlantic and Arctic Ocean, just outside of the Arctic Circle. It is the most sparsely populated country in Europe and with its constantly active geologic border is littered with volcanoes, glaciers, mountains, geysers and lava fields.

It's capital Reykjavík, the world's most northerly capital, is the heart of Iceland's cultural, economic and governmental activity. Established as the first Icelandic settlement in 870 AD, Reykjavík has gone through many changes in its long and storied existence. It's home to the National and Saga museums, tracing Iceland's Viking history. The striking concrete Hallgrímskirkja church with its rotating Perlan glass dome, and the modern glass honeycomb structure of the Harpa concert hall and conference centre are architectural marvels offering sweeping views of the sea and nearby hills.

What is the experience like?

Who accompanies us?

You will be accompanied by local guides who have an excellent knowledge of culture and hiking in the region. The guides are first aid trained and will support you throughout your journey. You will also be accompanied by a Different Travel Company UK tour manager.

How tough is it?

This trek is graded **moderate to challenging**. You will be trekking long distances over varying terrain on consecutive days.

What is the climate like?

Temperatures can typically peak to around 6°C during the day and drop to around 1°C at night however you must be prepared for variations to this which are out of our control. Weather during the adventure will be dry with light winds and rain is possible. Please note: the temperatures and conditions above are historically accurate but climate change can impact the seasons so you may experience uncharacteristic conditions during the trip which are out of our control. The guides will assess the situation and make decisions to ensure the best enjoyment and safety of the group.



Where will we stay?

You will stay in a hotel or similar for the duration of the trip. Travel to and from the airport and hotel will be by private minibus.

What is the food like?

You will be provided with plenty of hearty Icelandic meals which typically include fish and lamb and will keep your energy levels high for each day of discovery. Please inform us in advance if you have any dietary requirements.

Practical information

Who can take part?

The minimum age is 18. It may be possible to participate if you are 16 or 17 years old but you must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. There is no upper age limit. The ideal candidate would be fit, healthy and determined, open to adventure and adaptable to unexpected changes.

How fit do I need to be?

If you do not already regularly exercise you should aim to start training (including plenty of hills) as early as possible. The best training is hill walking, which will prepare you for the type of terrain you will experience. Other activities which can complement hill walking include running, cycling, gym workouts, boot camps etc.

Building up your core and leg muscle strength is important so exercises such as squats, lunges, push-ups, planks and crunches will really enhance your training. These exercises can be done at home – no gym needed. You can download a number of free apps, which will help you train and track your progress, e.g. MapMyWalk, C25K (couch to 5k run), MyFitnessPal (for a variety of sports).

You must take your training seriously and arrive as fit as you can be, so you get the most out of this challenge.

How should I prepare?

You must engage in training (including plenty of walking up and down hills) before departure to ensure your best chance of enjoyment on the trip. This could include hill walking, running, cycling, gym workouts, boot camps, etc. You can download a number of free apps to help you train and track your progress, e.g. MapMyWalk, C25K, MyFitnessPal, etc. Attempting to complete the trek without training will make it more challenging than necessary and will be detrimental to your experience, and the experience of your teammates.

Medical Declaration

We require a medical form to be completed by everyone upon registering, and any pre-existing conditions, medications used and other medical issues must be specified. All your medical details are treated in the strictest confidence.

The information will be securely screened by a qualified medical professional, and details provided to your tour manager and local guides so our staff are adequately informed and prepared to support you during the trip. By completing our booking form you are giving consent for us to contact you confidentially with any follow up questions regarding your health.

If you declare any medical conditions you may be asked to provide more information, or we may request to contact your GP.

In the event that your medical issues at the time of booking represent a concern for your safety and wellbeing, or the safety and wellbeing of others in the group, you may be recommended not to take part. If this happens your booking will not be confirmed and the deposit will be refunded.

We must be informed if any conditions or medication change, or if new conditions develop. If necessary confirmation of fitness to travel from your GP or specialist may be required.

Please note that we will never unreasonably deny participation on a trip nor contravene the Equality Act 2010.

Health & Safety

Your health and safety is our top priority so rest assured that we are taking steps to ensure you not only have a memorable experience, but a safe one too.

We constantly monitor and follow the advice of the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) who provide recommendations and advice to British travellers about travel to a certain destination.

Health and safety is our top priority so we will **NEVER** operate a trip in an area where there is clear and present risk to our team members, whether that is due to a health outbreak, political instability, natural disasters or anything else.

If travel restrictions either in the UK or Iceland prevent safe travel we will look to either postpone or cancel your trip at no cost to you.

Please note that at the time of travel there may be enhanced safety and security measures in airports, bag drop may take longer, and you may need to provide a certificate of health or proof of vaccination.

We will inform you about any information pertinent to your travel arrangements.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us on info@different-travel.com.



Trip cost

A £350 registration fee is payable at the time of booking. You can then choose one of the three payment options:

1. **Self-funded:** Pay your own tour costs balance of £1,800 by 11 September 2024. You are welcome to fundraise separately for any charity of your choice, but this is not mandatory. Any fundraising undertaken cannot be used for your trip costs.
2. **Sponsorship:** Fundraise £3,600 for your chosen charity by 28 August 2024. This includes your £1,800 tour costs balance and a £1,800 donation to charity.
3. **Flexi:** Pay your own tour costs balance of £1,800 and fundraise £1,800 for a charity of your choice by 28 August 2024. Any fundraising undertaken cannot be used for your trip costs.

What is included?

- ✓ Return flights from London (inc. current taxes and fuel surcharges),
- ✓ Transfers and transport in Iceland
- ✓ Accommodation in hotels (5 nights)
- ✓ Meals as specified
- ✓ Local guides
- ✓ Different Travel UK tour manager.

What is excluded?

- ✗ Lunch on Day 5
- ✗ Travel insurance
- ✗ Tips (suggested £50-60pp)
- ✗ Personal expenses (e.g. drinks, souvenirs etc.)
- ✗ Vaccinations



Itinerary

Day 1 (Wednesday 20 November 2024): London - Reykjavik

Depart London for Reykjavik and transfer to a hotel on the southern coast of Iceland.

Overnight: Hotel

Meals: Dinner

Day 2 (Thursday 21 November 2024): Nesjavellir – Reykjadalur – Hveragerdi

After breakfast we drive to Nesjavellir from where our day's hike starts. We will hike across a field of geothermal activity with bubbling mud pools to Ölkelduháls. From there we continue down to the magical valley of Solfataras and hot springs called Reykjadalur where those brave enough can dip into a natural hot river. We continue down to the car park near Hveragerði where our bus awaits us. We will have a short drive back to our hotel.

Overnight: Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Trek: approx. 14km

Day 3 (Friday 22 November 2024): Hengill – Mt. Vorduskeggi

After a good breakfast, we drive up to the Mt Hengill area. From there we will hike up to Vörðuskeggi Peak (805m). From the top, you will enjoy views of Lake Þingvellir and Langjökull to the north and Eyjafjallajökull and the distant Westman Islands. From there we will hike up to Mt Skeggi the highest peak in the Hengill Heritage Site. We will then return to our hotel for dinner and a jacuzzi!

Overnight: Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Trek: approx. 13-14km

Day 4 (Saturday 23 November 2024): Þingvellir National Park - Reykjavik

A short drive brings us to the National Park of Thingvellir where we will hike along the fault lines that divide America and Europe. After the hike, we drive to Reykjavik for your celebration dinner in town.

Overnight: Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Trek: approx. 10km



Day 5 (Sunday 24 November 2024): Reykjavik

Today is free for you to explore Reykjavik or take an optional excursion to visit the Blue Lagoon (*payable separately*).

Overnight: Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, dinner

Day 6 (Monday 25 November 2024): Reykjavik - London

Today we take the flight home back to London.

Meals: Breakfast

N.B. This itinerary may change due to weather, the ability of the group and so on. We will do our best to keep to the itinerary but we cannot be held responsible for changes outside of our control. In all circumstances, your guide and tour leader will have the final say in the interest of health and safety.

KIT LIST - ICELAND

The kit you take can make the difference between being 'just a trek' or a 'memorable trek'.

Our kit lists are put together with feedback from our own experiences and those of participants who have taken part in our previous trips.

The items on this list do not take into account your personal preferences based on your previous experiences, or individual requirements.

PLEASE NOTE: This list is just a guideline and is not exhaustive or take into account personal preferences.

For information about items on this list please refer to the trip dossier or contact The Different Travel Company on info@different-travel.com

*Please consider eco-friendly or biodegradable options.

ESSENTIAL

SUGGESTED

OPTIONAL

DOCUMENTS + FLIGHT ESSENTIALS	✓
Passport and Copy	ESSENTIAL
E-Tickets	ESSENTIAL
Travel insurance	ESSENTIAL
ATM and credit card (s)	ESSENTIAL
Cash (£ Sterling)	ESSENTIAL
Pen for immigration forms	ESSENTIAL
Sunglasses (preferably polarized)	ESSENTIAL
Mobile phone + charger	ESSENTIAL
Camera + spare batteries	SUGGESTED

LUGGAGE	✓
Suitcase/large holdall	ESSENTIAL
Daypack (25 – 30 litres)	ESSENTIAL
Hand Luggage (take note of dimensions from airline)	ESSENTIAL
Combination padlocks	ESSENTIAL

CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR	✓
Trekking boots: Wear on flight or carry in hand luggage	ESSENTIAL
Lightweight trek trousers (zip off trousers ideal)	ESSENTIAL
Non-cotton base layer	ESSENTIAL
Non-cotton, technical t-shirts	ESSENTIAL
Non-cotton long sleeved top/shirt	ESSENTIAL
Trek socks	ESSENTIAL
Underwear	ESSENTIAL
Warm jacket (e.g. down/Primaloft)	ESSENTIAL
Warm mid layer or fleece	ESSENTIAL
Waterproof jacket	ESSENTIAL
Waterproof trousers	ESSENTIAL
Thermal top and bottoms (can also be used as pyjamas)	ESSENTIAL
Sun hat	ESSENTIAL
Warm hat	ESSENTIAL
Warm gloves	ESSENTIAL
Buff (www.buffwear.co.uk)	SUGGESTED

HEALTH AND HYGIENE*	✓
Hygiene kit to include: toothbrush and toothpaste, antiperspirant deodorant, wet wipes, shampoo, conditioner, shower gel, nailbrush and nail care kit	ESSENTIAL
Personal first aid kit to include: prescription medicine, insect repellent, ibuprofen, paracetamol, plasters, blister plasters (e.g. Compeed), Imodium, rehydration salts (Dioralyte), antiseptic cream (e.g. Savlon), Anti-histamine cream/tablets, lip balm with SPF protection, zinc oxide tape, nail scissors/tweezers, muscle rub (e.g. Deep Heat), throat lozenges, decongestant, Vaseline	ESSENTIAL
Hairbrush/comb	ESSENTIAL
Feminine care products	SUGGESTED
Travel towel	SUGGESTED

OTHER KIT	✓
Sun block (high SPF)	ESSENTIAL
Toilet bag: toilet paper, wipes, hand sanitiser, nappy sacks	ESSENTIAL
2 ltr water hydration system (e.g. Camelbak)	ESSENTIAL
1 ltr metal/insulated water bottle	ESSENTIAL
LED head torch + spare batteries	ESSENTIAL
Adaptor (European 2 round pin)	ESSENTIAL
Ear plugs	ESSENTIAL
Trainers/casual shoes for evening	ESSENTIAL
Casual clothing for travel days	ESSENTIAL
Hiking poles – to be stowed in hold luggage for flight	SUGGESTED
Energy food/snack bars	SUGGESTED
Swimwear	OPTIONAL
Bags for dirty washing	OPTIONAL
Spare glasses/contact lenses	OPTIONAL
Video camera + charger	OPTIONAL
MP3 player/ipod	OPTIONAL
Portable power bank	OPTIONAL
Books/packs of cards	OPTIONAL
Travel pillow	OPTIONAL