

Overseas Adventure Travel[®]

THE LEADER IN PERSONALIZED SMALL GROUP ADVENTURES SINCE 1978

Your O.A.T. Adventure Travel Planning Guide[®]



Untamed Iceland

2026

Overseas Adventure Travel®

347 Congress Street, Boston, MA 02210

Dear Traveler,

I am thrilled that you are considering exploring the world with O.A.T. There are so many wonderful destinations to discover, and the itinerary described inside is a perfect way to fulfill a travel dream.

When you join us, you will slip seamlessly into local life as you explore off the beaten path in your small group. Like all our itineraries, this one is designed to give you an intimate understanding of your destination, not just a superficial view. You will get to know community leaders and try your hand at local trades during your *A Day in the Life* experience, share traditional fare and lively conversation during a Home-Hosted Visit, discuss the Controversial Topics impacting everyday life, and visit sites supported by Grand Circle Foundation. And if you choose to travel solo, you will enjoy all these cultural experiences at an unmatched value, with our FREE Single Supplements—just one of the reasons we continue to be the leader in solo travel.

To ensure you experience the true culture and feel supported every step of the way, we provide the services of a local Trip Experience Leader from the beginning of your adventure to the end. Along with introducing you to the history and culture of their homeland, these friendly experts will gladly help you out with any special requests to make your trip even more special. You can also rely on the seasoned team at our regional office, who are ready to help 24/7 in case any unexpected circumstances arise.

Plus, you can put your own personal stamp on your trip, like the **87% of our travelers who personalize their experience**. Perhaps you will choose to see more of your destination by adding an optional trip extension to your itinerary. You can also arrive a few days early to explore independently and get acclimated, customize your air itinerary, and more.

I hope you find this Travel Planning Guide helpful. If you have any further questions, do not hesitate to contact one of our Travel Counselors at **1-800-955-1925**.

Warm regards,



Harriet R. Lewis
Chair
Overseas Adventure Travel

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Icelandic horses

Untamed Iceland Small Group Adventure

Iceland: Selfoss, Daeli, Akureyri, Reykjavik

Small groups of no more than 16 travelers, guaranteed

12 days starting from \$5,495

including international airfare

Single Supplement: **FREE**

For departure dates & prices, visit www.oattravel.com/ice2026pricing

Icelandic culture and traditions, together with the power of nature, combine for an unforgettable adventure in an unspoiled land of stark beauty. Meet hardy locals who carve a living from both the land and sea in farming communities and fishing villages. Watch for whales, journey near the Arctic Circle at Akureyri, and feel small against the thunderous falls and dramatic vistas that await.

IT'S INCLUDED

- 10 nights accommodation, plus 1 night in the U.S. on trips that return in September and October (does not apply to travelers whose final destination is New York or Boston)
- International airfare, airport transfers, government taxes, fees, and airline fuel surcharges unless you choose to make your own air arrangements (please note due to government actions taxes may change)
- All land transportation and 1 internal flight
- 23 meals—11 breakfasts, 7 lunches, and 5 dinners (including 1 Home-Hosted Dinner)
- 25 small group activities
- Services of a local O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader
- Gratuities for local guides, drivers, and luggage porters
- 5% Frequent Traveler Credit toward your next adventure

Prices are accurate as of the date of this publishing and are subject to change.



ITINERARY SUMMARY

DAYS	DESTINATION
1-3	Fly to Reykjavik, Iceland • Selfoss
4-5	Daeli
6-9	Akureyri
9-12	Reykjavik

PERSONALIZE YOUR ADVENTURE

OPTIONAL EXTENSIONS

Westman Islands: Volcanic Landscapes & Puffins

PRE-TRIP: 3 nights from **\$1,995**

Greenland's Natural Splendor & Inuit Culture

POST-TRIP: 4 nights from **\$3,295**

WHAT TO EXPECT

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Moderately Easy

Pacing: 5 locations in 13 days with one 1-night stay

Physical requirements: Travel over bumpy, gravelly, and sometimes icy roads, and walk over rugged and slippery paths. Board a boat for whale-watching during which you may get wet.

Flight Time: Travel time will be 5-18 hours and will most likely have one connection

View all physical requirements at www.oattravel.com/ice

ICELAND: THE O.A.T. DIFFERENCE

Unbeatable Value: Travel at the lowest price and per diems in the industry.

People-to-People Experiences: Enjoy our *Day in the Life* of a family-run farm to discover the inner workings of the property and the farmer's small businesses, learn about the iconic Icelandic horse, and help out with daily tasks during an overnight stay at the farm. Plus, enjoy a **Home-Hosted Dinner** with a local family in Akureyri, where you'll feast together on homecooked regional specialties and gain insight into Icelandic culture.

O.A.T. Exclusives: Throughout our journey, we'll engage in **Controversial Topics**, including a conversation with a local expert about the contentious issue of "blood mare" farming. We'll hear how Iceland is the only country in Europe to legalize this controversial practice, and how local people are divided over its existence in modern society.

Untamed Iceland

YOUR DETAILED ITINERARY

BEGIN YOUR ADVENTURE WITH AN OPTIONAL PRE-TRIP EXTENSION

3 nights in *Westman Islands: Volcanic Landscapes & Puffins*

Day 1 Depart U.S.

Day 2 Arrive in Keflavik • Ferry to Westman Islands

Day 3 Explore Heimaey • Local entertainment • Dinner at a local home

Day 4 Storhofdi hike • Boat tour • Explore Westman Island

Day 5 Ferry to Landeyjahofn Harbour • Overland to Selfoss • Join main trip

Day 1 Depart U.S.

Afternoon/Evening: You'll fly overnight from the U.S. to Keflavik, Iceland.

Day 2 Arrive Keflavik, Iceland • Overland to Selfoss

- Destination: Selfoss
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Hotel Selfoss or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Arrive in Keflavik, where an O.A.T. representative will assist you with the transfer to your hotel.

Upon arrival in Selfoss, we'll check in and meet up with our Trip Experience Leader and those travelers who took our *Westman Islands: Volcanic Landscapes & Puffins* pre-trip extension and those who arrived early in Selfoss before the main adventure. Selfoss is the largest town in South Iceland and the gateway to all that this

area of rich farmland and natural wonders has to offer. Located on the banks of the Olfusa River, it is home to around 8,500 inhabitants.

Lunch: On your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for suggestions on where to dine.

Afternoon: Your Trip Experience Leader will lead you on an orientation walk around the vicinity of our hotel. The remainder of the afternoon is free to relax and settle in after your overnight flight. Later, our group will gather for a Welcome Briefing at the hotel.

Dinner: At the hotel. Our Welcome Dinner will be a great opportunity to get to know your fellow travelers and toast to the journey ahead.

Evening: Free for your own discoveries—check with your Trip Experience Leader for ideas. Perhaps you'd like to stroll along the Olfusa River or explore the neighborhoods of Selfoss for a truly local experience.

Day 3 Visit wool studio • Explore the Golden Circle

- Destination: Selfoss
- Included Meals: Breakfast
- Accommodations: Hotel Selfoss or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll start the day with a drive to a local wool studio for an interactive session on wool dying, spinning, and knitting. Because of our small group size, we'll be able to help craft wool products using traditional techniques and speak openly with the studio owner about the Icelandic wool industry. We'll learn how natural ingredients are utilized throughout the production process, as well as why Icelanders have become so dependent on wool products over the centuries.

Then, we'll take a bus ride to discover more of Iceland's marvels as we circumnavigate the Golden Circle, a ring of natural highlights: Gullfoss waterfall, Geysir hot spring area, and Thingvellir National Park.

Our first stop will be Gullfoss waterfall, which features two tiers of rushing white water that flow into a hundred-foot-deep crevice. Each day, thousands of gallons of water plummet here, and on sunny days, it's a particularly beautiful sight to see the rainbows which form in the mist.

We'll see the falls, then drive to Geysir, the geyser from which all others take their name. Geysir is silent these days, but we'll witness the columns of water that shoot into the air from nearby Strokkur geyser. In this area of intense geothermal activity, puddles of water on the ground literally boil.

Lunch: On your own around in the vicinity of the Geysir hot spring. Your Trip Experience Leader is happy to provide you with options.

Afternoon: We'll continue our Golden Circle tour as we drive to Thingvellir National Park. The park sits in a major rift between two tectonic plates—the Eurasian and North American. This rift creates a valley in the land, ringed by rocky cliffs and fault lines. The mountains surrounding this plain, dotted with canyons, caves, streams and springs, form a natural amphitheater. It's not surprising that the world's oldest Parliament was formed here.

After our explorations in Thingvellir National Park, we'll head back to our hotel.

Dinner: On your own this evening. Check with your Trip Experience Leader for ideas.

Evening: Free for your own discoveries. Perhaps you'd like to spend your evening relaxing in the local Selfoss swimming pools, which features both hot and cold pools. Swimming is a popular pastime among Icelanders, providing the opportunity to observe and mingle with them.

Day 4 Discover Seljalandsfoss Waterfall • Super Jeep tour

- Destination: Selfoss
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Hotel Selfoss or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll drive to Seljalandsfoss Waterfall, situated along Iceland's Ring Road. Melting glacier water pours over a rocky cliff, creating a 180-foot waterfall shrouded in great clouds of mist. On a walking tour of the falls, we'll witness the raw, roaring power of this natural site (which truly must be seen—and heard—to understand). Seeing this waterfall will show our small group the effects of climate change firsthand and the dangers of an ice-less Iceland.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: Following our meal, we'll drive to Vik Village, where we'll get a true taste of the rugged Icelandic landscape with a Super Jeep Tour, an off-road driving experience led by a local guide. Depending on the weather, we may drive to the dormant glacier of Kotlujokull, or alternatively, we'll head to Hofdabrekku Heidi Mountain. Our excursion will last about 3 hours and will include a light hike.

Later, we'll return to our hotel in Selfoss, where you will have the remainder of your day free to explore on your own.

Dinner: On your own. Perhaps you'd like to enjoy fresh lamb shank, a popular dish among locals.

Evening: Free for your own discoveries. Your Trip Experience Leader is happy to provide suggestions.

Day 5 *A Day in the Life* of an Icelandic horse farm

- Destination: Daeli
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Daeli Guest House or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: After breakfast, we'll drive to a family-run farm in northern Iceland for our **NEW *A Day in the Life*** experience, where we'll meet the owner and his or her family. During our overnight stay, we'll get an intimate look into everyday life on the farm and learn what it's like to live in such a remote area. We'll also learn about Icelandic horses, what makes them unique and how they are bred.

The Icelandic Horse is a breed of horse developed in Iceland by Norse settlers in the ninth and tenth centuries. These settlers venerated the horses in North Germanic mythology, as they were crucial to the survival

and advancement of their civilization. As most horses would not thrive in Iceland's harsh climate, the Icelandic Horse developed unique characteristics that make it suitable for the often severe environment through centuries of selective breeding. Historically, they were intended to assist local farmers with sheepherding; however, today, they are also used for leisure, showing, and racing. These horses were bred from ponies, so they tend to be small in stature. Despite their size, they are known to be hardy and long-lived, and the government aims to maintain their good health by outlawing the import and export of horses, minimizing the risk of disease.

Lunch: We'll enjoy an included lunch as part of our ***A Day in the Life*** experience.

Afternoon: After lunch, we'll enjoy a horse show before joining the family for a walk around the surrounding wilderness. This a great opportunity to experience life in the Icelandic countryside firsthand as we learn about farming practices and hear from the farm workers.

Then enjoy some free time to explore independently. Perhaps you'll walk the grounds with your Trip Experience Leader, or sit and watch the horses frolic in the fields.

Dinner: Included at the farm.

Evening: Settle into your accommodations after dinner. The rest of the evening is free to explore.

Day 6 Overland to Akureyri • Herring Era Museum • Visit botanical gardens

- Destination: Akureyri
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Berjaya Akureyri Hotel or similar

Breakfast: At the farm.

Morning: We'll check out of our accommodations and drive to Siglufjörður, a fishing village nestled in a narrow fjord along the coast of northern Iceland.

Lunch: On your own in Siglufjörður—consult with your Trip Experience Leader for ideas.

Afternoon: After lunch, we'll visit the Herring Era Museum, the largest maritime museum in Iceland. Witness eleven different types of boats, a documentary about herring fisheries, and more.

Then, we'll continue our drive to Akureyri, Iceland's second-largest urban area. Situated on the northern fjords near the Arctic Circle, Akureyri is improbably sunny and enjoys a mild climate in spite of its location. Upon arrival, we'll check in to our hotel and receive our room assignments.

After checking in, we'll set off on an orientation walk through the town with our Trip Experience Leader, which includes a visit to the Botanical Gardens—a peaceful garden showcasing local and international flora. The orientation walk is an ideal time to glean ideas from your Trip Experience Leader about what sort of activities you'd like to seek out.

Dinner: At the hotel.

Evening: Free for your own discoveries. Perhaps you'd like to discuss what you learned and enjoyed today with your fellow travelers.

Day 7 Visit Hverabraud & Namafjall • Walking tour of Dimmuborgir • Godafoss Waterfall • Home-Hosted Dinner

- Destination: Akureyri
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Berjaya Akureyri Hotel or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Drive to the Lake Myvatn area, sculpted throughout the ages by volcanic eruptions and renowned for its diverse bird population, with ducks, gyrfalcons, plovers, ptarmigans, and more. Along the way, we'll stop to visit Hverabraud, where we'll observe how locals harness geothermal energy to make homemade bread. Then, we'll drive to Namafjall, where we'll witness the bubbling, hot mud pools native to this area.

After, we'll continue on toward the Lake Myvatn area, and upon arrival at Skutustadir, explore the pseudocrater field, formed by steam explosions when lava flowed over wet earth. We'll also witness some of Iceland's more recent volcanic activity during a stop at a panoramic viewpoint overlooking the Námaskard geothermic area. Later, we'll visit the whimsical "black castle" lava formations of Dimmuborgir, where a lonely troll is said to have lived.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: We'll drive to Godafoss ("waterfall of the gods"), where the current carries rushing water along a glacial river and over the rocks, falling 40 feet into the pool below. It is said to have gained its name when one of the leaders of the country's parliament disposed of his statues of Norse gods at this waterfall upon the adoption of Christianity as the official religion in the year 1000.

Then, we'll drive back to our hotel in Akureyri, where we'll have a couple of hours to rest or discover the area on our own. Later, we'll break into smaller groups and depart for the home of a local family for a **Home-Hosted Dinner**.

Dinner: We'll be welcomed into the home of a local family, where we'll join them at their dinner table and see how they go through their daily lives—where they live, what they cook, how they eat, and how they feel about their

homeland. For our **Home-Hosted Dinner**, we'll share a homecooked meal featuring traditional Icelandic foods, such as lamb soup or fried fish and potatoes.

Evening: Free for your own discoveries. Perhaps you'd like to discuss what you learned and enjoyed today with your fellow travelers.

Day 8 Explore Dalvik • Whale-watching excursion

- Destination: Akureyri
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Berjaya Akureyri Hotel or similar

Activity note: Whale watching is weather dependent and relies upon the cooperation of migratory patterns, which can be difficult to accurately predict. The boat is not exclusive to O.A.T. travelers. If necessary, an alternate activity will be provided.

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: After breakfast, we will drive to Dalvik, a commercial fishing port. After we arrive, we'll set sail on a restored fishing vessel from the harbor for a morning whale-watching excursion. The onboard staff members are experts on local marine life, and with their help, we hope to spot minke whales, white-beaked dolphins, harbor porpoises, and humpback whales in the waters of the northern Atlantic. After taking in the sights, we'll sail back to the harbor.

Lunch: At a local restaurant in Dalvik.

Afternoon: After lunch, we'll drive back to Akureyri. The remainder of the day is free for you to plan as you'd like. For art enthusiasts, perhaps you'd like to explore the Akureyri Art Museum to get a sense of the creative Icelandic spirit.

Dinner: On your own. Your Trip Experience Leader is a wealth of information, so feel free to check with them for suggestions.

Evening: Free for your own discoveries. Perhaps you'd like to stroll once more through the Botanical Gardens before bidding farewell to Akureyri in the morning.

Day 9 Fly to Reykjavik • Visit Perlan museum

- Destination: Reykjavik
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Berjaya Reykjavik Marina Hotel or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We rise early this morning to check out of our hotel and drive to Akureyri airport for our flight to Reykjavik.

Upon arrival in Iceland's capital, we'll drive to Perlan, a museum and exhibition hall whose rotating glass dome dominates the Reykjavik cityscape. Interactive exhibits at this new, modern museum bring Iceland's unique natural wonders to life, from the volatile geothermal forces churning away beneath the surface, to the photogenic puffins that populate the country's bird cliffs, to the icy glaciers that cover the land.

Lunch: At a local restaurant in Reykjavik.

Afternoon: After lunch, we drive to our hotel in Reykjavik. The remainder of the day is free for your own discoveries. To help you familiarize yourself with the city, your Trip Experience Leader will lead an orientation walk.

Despite its small size (a population of a little over 120,000), Reykjavik feels remarkably cosmopolitan. From hip bars to extensive art galleries and a rich culinary scene, there's much to see, do, and discover. Reykjavik is

believed to be the first permanent settlement of Iceland, presumably established by Ingolf Arnarson in AD 874—though it wasn't until the late 18th century that it was officially declared a trading town and eventually modernized in the 19th century. Today, Reykjavik is regarded as one of the cleanest, safest, and most environmentally friendly cities in the world.

Dinner: On your own. Your Trip Experience Leader can provide recommendations.

Evening: Free for your own discoveries. Consult with your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Day 10 Explore Reykjavik • Geothermal power plant visit • Árbæjarsafn open-air museum

- Destination: Akureyri
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Berjaya Reykjavik Marina Hotel or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll drive to the Hellisheidavirkjun Geothermal Power Plant. Led by a local guide, we'll tour the plant and learn about green energy in Iceland. We'll have an opportunity to understand how clean energy is produced here, as well as ask any questions we may have.

Next, we'll drive to the Árbæjarsafn open-air historical museum in Reykjavik to gain insight into the living and working conditions of Icelanders in the past. We'll examine the turf houses and grounds before walking to our lunch spot, which is nearby. We'll also be entertained by a local musician and singer.

Lunch: At a local restaurant in Reykjavik.

Afternoon: After lunch, we'll drive back to our hotel in Reykjavik.

The remainder of the day is yours to explore.

Dinner: On your own—ask your Trip Experience Leader for suggestions on where to dine. Perhaps you'll try pan-fried haddock or leg of lamb.

Evening: Free for your own discoveries. Alternatively, you may wish to join your Trip Experience Leader in a vicinity walk to familiarize yourself with your new surroundings.

Day 11 Visit the Blue Lagoon

- Destination: Reykjavik
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Berjaya Reykjavik Marina Hotel or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll drive to the Blue Lagoon, one of Iceland's most famous natural wonders. The water in the lagoon—comprised of 70% sea water, 30% fresh water and maintained at a steady 100°F—is rich in blue-green algae, mineral salts and silica mud, all of which exfoliate the skin and leave it feeling smooth. For those who prefer an alternative to soaking, this massive complex also features restaurants, a hotel, spa and a gift shop, hot-pots, steam rooms, a sauna, a bar, and even a waterfall that provides a hydraulic massage.

After spending some time loosening up, we'll bid farewell to the Blue Lagoon and drive to the nearby town of Grindavik on the rugged Reykjanes Peninsula. The landscape here is vast and has been shaped through the centuries by dynamic volcanic forces.

Lunch: We'll enjoy an included light lunch at a local restaurant in Grindavik.

Afternoon: Return to Reykjavik after lunch. We'll have one final free afternoon before dinner.

Dinner: Gather at the hotel restaurant for our Farewell Dinner, where we'll toast to the discoveries we made throughout our shared adventure.

Evening: Free for your own discoveries. Reykjavik has a lively food and bar scene, so if you're feeling up to it, check with your Trip Experience Leader on where to go to continue celebrating your Icelandic journey.

Day 12 Return to U.S. or begin your post-trip extension

- Included Meals: Breakfast

Activity note: Depending on your air itinerary, trips returning in September and October will include an extra night in the U.S. upon arrival. This will not apply to travelers whose final destination is New York or Boston.

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Transfer to the airport for your flight home to the U.S. Travelers taking our *Greenland's Natural Splendor & Inuit Culture* post-trip extension will fly to Greenland this afternoon.

END YOUR ADVENTURE WITH AN OPTIONAL POST-TRIP EXTENSION

4 nights in *Greenland's Natural Splendor & Inuit Culture*

Day 1 Reykjavik • Fly to Kulusuk, Greenland • Helicopter flight

Day 2 Iceberg boat tour • Ammassalik Museum • Inuit drum dance

Day 3 Helicopter flight • Valley of the Flowers • Mountain Jeep tour

Day 4 Explore Kulusuk • Fly to Reykjavik, Iceland

Day 5 Reykjavik • Return to U.S.

PRE-TRIP

Westman Islands: Volcanic Landscapes & Puffins

INCLUDED IN YOUR PRICE

- » Roundtrip ferry from Landeyjahofn to the Westman Islands
- » Transfer from the Westman Islands to Selfoss
- » 3 nights accommodation
- » 8 meals—4 breakfasts, 1 lunch, and 3 dinners
- » 4 small group activities
- » All land transportation
- » Services of a local O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader
- » Gratuities for local guides, drivers, and luggage porters
- » All transfers

PRE-TRIP EXTENSION ITINERARY

Explore the scenic beauty and cultural treasures of the Westman Islands, a pristine archipelago off of Iceland's southern coast rarely visited by American travelers. Witness red cliffs, black sand, and lush landscapes while discovering one of Iceland's major fishing ports and a favorite home of the Atlantic puffin.

Day 1 Depart U.S.

Afternoon/Evening: Depart today on your overnight flight to Reykjavik, Iceland.

Day 2 Arrive in Keflavik • Ferry to Westman Islands

- Destination: Vestmannaeyjar
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Guesthouse Hamar or similar

Activity note: Travelers are advised to meet the group at the 10–11 supermarket after customs at Keflavik International Airport by 7am for the included transfer to our first hotel—which departs at approximately 7:30am. If travelers reserve a flight scheduled to arrive later than 7am, they are responsible for making their own arrangements to the first hotel.

Early Morning: Upon arrival at the airport, transfer to a hotel restaurant in Selfoss for breakfast.

Breakfast: At a hotel in Selfoss.

Morning: We'll drive along a scenic coastal route to Landeyjahofn Harbour, where we'll board a ferry for the Westman Islands. This small cluster of about 15 volcanic islands and 30 skerries off Iceland's southwestern coast is sparsely populated, yet full of natural and cultural delights. Today, we're headed toward the largest and only inhabited island.

Upon arrival on Heimaey Island, we'll walk to our guesthouse and check in.

Lunch: On your own, whenever you'd like. Check with your Trip Experience Leader for ideas. Perhaps you'll grab a sandwich at a local bakery.

Afternoon: Join your Trip Experience Leader on a short vicinity walk in the mid-afternoon, during which you'll have the opportunity to get acquainted with your new destination, as well as ask any questions you may have about the area. Then, enjoy a few free hours to explore or perhaps rest after the day's activities.

Dinner: At a local restaurant.

Evening: On your own this evening. Perhaps you'd like to get to know your fellow travelers over a drink.

Day 3 Explore Heimaey • Local entertainment • Dinner at a local home

- Destination: Vestmannaeyjar
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Guesthouse Hamar or similar

Breakfast: At the guesthouse.

Morning: Gather for a Welcome Briefing to preview our itinerary for the days ahead (including any changes that may need to occur).

Then, your Trip Experience Leader will lead an orientation walk around Heimaey, during which they will point out nearby places of interest. We'll also gain a better understanding of how a volcanic eruption in 1973 reshaped the town of Vestmannaeyjabær on Heimaey, the largest of the Westman Islands. Most of Heimaey's 4,500 residents depend on the sea—and never was that more true than in 1973, when the island was devastated by the massive eruptions of lava that sprayed into the air through fissures in the ground. Amazingly, the entire fishing fleet was in harbor, and everyone on the island was rescued. Eruptions continued for five months, reshaping the island, adding about 15 percent to its territory, and creating Eldfell, a volcanic cone. Vestmannaeyjabær has since been rebuilt, and today it is one of Iceland's major fishing ports.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: After lunch, we'll depart for a panoramic bus tour of the island, which spans 5.2 square miles. Throughout the tour, a local guide will help us uncover the natural geological marvels of the area, as well as witness more isolated parts of the island. During the months of June–August, it is possible to spot puffins throughout our exploration. Our tour concludes at Eldheimar, a museum which tells the story of the 1973 volcanic eruption. Referred to as “Pompeii of the North,” archaeologists have been working to understand the tragic events of this natural occurrence, and the museum displays remains from their findings. During our visit, we'll watch a film about the historic eruption and then explore the museum on our own.

Dinner: Included at a local home. During our dinner, we'll also enjoy entertainment provided by residents, including Icelandic folk songs and American classics. We'll also hear more about how the U.S. came to Iceland's aid in 1973 after the devastating volcanic eruption.

Evening: On your own. Consult with your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Day 4 Storhofdi hike • Boat tour • Explore Westman Island

- Destination: Vestmannaeyjar
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Guesthouse Hamar or similar

Activity note: The boat tour this afternoon is weather permitting.

Breakfast: At the guesthouse.

Morning: We'll drive to Storhofdi—meaning “great cape”—a peninsula off the southern tip of Heimaey (weather permitting). There, we'll view the Westman Islands' scenery during a

light hike, led by our Trip Experience Leader. The peninsula is home to one of the oldest lighthouses in Iceland (operating since 1906), and offers visitors a glimpse into the unspoiled nature of the island. This area also provides a great opportunity for bird watching.

Then, we'll drive back into town to visit Sagnheimar Folk Museum, a cultural exhibition displaying artifacts which chronicle various aspects of the island's past, including its deep connection to Mormonism and colorful sports history.

Lunch: On your own.

Afternoon: We'll walk to the harbor, where we'll depart for a boat tour (weather permitting) around Heimaey Island. During the tour, we'll board nimble RIB speedboats to venture near sea caves and get an intimate look at the shoreline and local wildlife.

After our boat tour ends, we'll have a few hours to explore independently. Perhaps you'd like to rent a bike and cycle your way around the island, or if you'd like to have a slower-paced afternoon, you could walk around town and mingle with locals.

Dinner: At a local restaurant.

Evening: The evening is free for your own discoveries. Check with your Trip Experience Leader for suggestions.

Day 5 Ferry to Landeyjahofn Harbour • Overland to Selfoss • Join main trip

• Included Meals: Breakfast

Breakfast: At the guesthouse.

Morning: We'll drive to the harbor, where we'll ride a ferry back to Landeyjahofn Harbour. Upon arrival, we'll drive to Selfoss. There, we'll meet the rest of our group as we begin our *Untamed Iceland* adventure.

POST-TRIP

Greenland's Natural Splendor & Inuit Culture

INCLUDED IN YOUR PRICE

- » Roundtrip airfare between Reykjavik and Kulusuk
- » 4 nights accommodation
- » 11 meals—4 breakfasts, 4 lunches, and 3 dinners
- » 5 small group activities
- » Services of a local O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader
- » Gratuities for local guides, drivers, and luggage porters
- » All transfers, including 2 internal helicopter flights

POST-TRIP EXTENSION ITINERARY

Cleverly christened “Greenland” by Erik the Red in an effort to attract settlers, 80 percent of this nation’s land mass is covered in ice caps, with picturesque towns and villages clustered along the coasts. After you travel through Iceland, come breathe the pure air, witness the magnificent icebergs, experience the Inuit way of life, and discover a land as exotic as it is remote.

Day 1 Reykjavik • Fly to Kulusuk, Greenland • Helicopter flight

- Destination: Ammassalik
- Included Meals: Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Hotel Ammassalik or similar

Activity note: Due to local conditions, the order of activities and hotel stays may be reversed; however, this will not impact the number of included features and meals. Your Trip Experience Leader will inform you of any changes to your itinerary. Helicopter transfer is weather-permitting and may need to be replaced with a boat transfer.

Morning: We'll bid farewell to Iceland and drive to Keflavik airport.

Lunch: At a local restaurant en route.

Afternoon: We'll journey to Tasiilaq, Greenland, by staggered helicopter departures from Kulusuk. We arrive in Tasiilaq early evening and check in to our hotel.

After, the rest of the afternoon will be free for your own explorations before we reconvene for a Welcome Briefing at the hotel.

Dinner: At the hotel.

Evening: On your own—check with your Trip Experience Leader for ideas. Perhaps you'd like to explore the surroundings of your hotel.

Day 2 Iceberg boat tour • Ammassalik Museum • Inuit drum dance

- Destination: Ammassalik
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Hotel Ammassalik or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Late this morning, we'll drive to the pier for a boat ride from Tasiilaq to behold the blue- and green-striped icebergs that flow from the Arctic Ocean. Throughout the ride, we may have the opportunity to spot whales and even pass by abandoned villages.

Lunch: At the hotel.

Afternoon: We will set out on a walking tour of the town and visit the Ammassalik Museum, led by a staff member of our hotel. Housed in an early 20th century church, the museum features exhibits on the history and culture of East Greenland, including an extensive mask collection, historical photos, bead work, traditional costumes, and carvings.

Later, we'll dive deeper into local culture by watching an Inuit drum dance at our hotel.

Dinner: At the hotel.

Evening: On your own—check with your Trip Experience Leader for ideas.

Day 3 Helicopter flight • Valley of the Flowers • Mountain Jeep tour

- Destination: Kulusuk
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Hotel Kulusuk or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll drive to the Valley of Flowers—a valley carpeted with green grass and dotted with delicate Arctic wildflowers. There, we'll enjoy a hike through the valley, led

by our Trip Experience Leader, during which we'll learn about the unique flora and fauna of this area and gain a different perspective on the Arctic climes.

Lunch: At the hotel, during which we'll also hear a Welcome Briefing about upcoming activities.

Afternoon: Later, we'll drive to the airport, where we'll take a short helicopter ride back to Kulusuk. During the short flight, we'll enjoy views of the ice-filled sea below.

Later this afternoon, we'll discover the natural surroundings of Kulusuk by minivan or motor coach, taking in views of rugged mountainscapes and jagged coastline. If we're lucky, we may spot wildlife, such as polar foxes and snow buntings (a species of bird). Our tour will take us through an area which was home to a former U.S. naval base. Along the way, we'll have the opportunity to stop for photos and explore a bit on foot.

Dinner: At the hotel.

Evening: On your own—check with your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Day 4 Explore Kulusuk • Fly to Reykjavik, Iceland

- Destination: Reykjavik
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Berjaya Reykjavik Marina Hotel or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: After breakfast, we'll check out of our hotel, and enjoy some free time in Kulusuk..

Later, we'll enjoy a guided walking tour of Kulusuk Village, led by our Trip Experience Leader. Kulusuk is a settlement of less than 300 people located in the Sermersooq municipality. During our tour, we'll walk by

a graveyard where the deceased have been laid to rest above ground, due to the rocky nature of the landscape. We'll also visit a local historical museum featuring exhibits and artifacts testifying to Greenland's indigenous inhabitants, and explore modern neighborhoods, where we'll come to understand why plumbing systems are not utilized here.

Lunch: At the hotel in Kulusuk.

Afternoon: You will have time to explore Kulusuk on your own in the afternoon (your Trip Experience Leader will provide suggestions for walking routes).

Later, we'll drive to the airport where we'll board our flight to Keflavik, Iceland.

Dinner: On your own. You might like to purchase something at the airport.

Evening: Upon arrival, we'll transfer to Reykjavik and check into our hotel.

Day 5 Reykjavik • Return to U.S.

- Included Meals: Breakfast

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Drive to the airport for your flight home to the U.S.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS & ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Your Passport

- Must be in good condition
- Must be valid for at least 6 months after your scheduled return to the U.S.
- Must have the required number of blank pages (details below)
- The blank pages must be labeled “Visas” at the top. Pages labeled “Amendments and Endorsements” are not acceptable

Need to Renew Your Passport?

Contact the National Passport Information Center (NPIC) at **1-877-487-2778**, or visit their website at **www.travel.state.gov** for information on obtaining a new passport or renewing your existing passport. You may also contact our recommended visa service company, PVS International, at **1-800-556-9990** for help with your passport

Recommended Blank Pages

Please confirm that your passport has enough blank pages for this adventure.

- **Main trip only:** If you are taking only the main trip, you will need 2 blank passport pages.
- **Pre-trip extension to Westman Islands:** No additional blank pages needed.
- **Post-trip extension to Greenland:** You will need 2 additional pages for a total of 4 blank pages.
- **Both a pre-trip and a post-trip extension:** You will need a total of 4 blank pages.
- **Stopover in Amsterdam, Helsinki, or Munich** No additional blank pages needed.
- **Stopover in Copenhagen, London, or Paris:** No additional blank pages needed.

No Visas Required

Travelers with a U.S. passport do not need any visas for this adventure, including the optional trip extensions.

Traveling Without a U.S. Passport?

If you are not a U.S. citizen, or if your passport is from any country other than the U.S., it is your responsibility to check with your local consulate, embassy, or a visa services company about visa requirements. We recommend the services of PVS International, a national visa service located in Washington D.C.; they can be reached at **1-800-556-9990** or **www.pvsinternational.org**.

Traveling With a Minor?

Some governments may require certain documentation for minors to enter and depart the country or to obtain a visa (if applicable). For further detail on the required documentation, please contact your local embassy or consulate.

Emergency Photocopies of Key Documents

We recommend you carry color photocopies of key documents including the photo page of your passport plus any applicable visas, air itinerary, credit cards (front and back), and an alternative form of ID. Add emergency phone numbers like your credit card company and the number for your travel protection plan. Store copies separate from the originals.

If you plan to email this information to yourself, please keep in mind that email is not always secure; consider using password protection or encryption. Also email is not always available worldwide. As an alternative, you could load these documents onto a flash drive instead, which can do double-duty as a place to backup photos during your trip.

Overseas Taxes & Fees

This tour may have taxes and fees that cannot be included in your airline ticket price because you are required to pay them in person onsite. All taxes are subject to change without notice and can be paid in cash (either U.S. or local currency). If applicable, you will receive a list of these fees with your Final Documents.

RIGORS, VACCINES & GENERAL HEALTH

Is This Adventure Right for You?

Please review the information below prior to departing on this adventure. We reserve the right for our Trip Experience Leaders to modify participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their condition would adversely affect the health, safety, or enjoyment of themselves or of other travelers.

PACING

- 5 locations in 13 days; one 1-night stay
- One 45-minute internal flight

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Not appropriate for travelers using wheelchairs, walkers, or other mobility aids
- You must be able to walk at least 3 miles unassisted over the course of each day, participating in 6-8 hours of daily physical activities and standing unassisted for 30 minutes at a time
- We reserve the right for Trip Experience Leaders to restrict participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their limitations impact the group's experience
- You may encounter animals on this trip. We make every effort to keep these encounters safe, however animals may behave unpredictably or dangerously at times. Please use caution when interacting with animals on this trip: Keep a safe distance, stay alert, and respect the animals

CLIMATE

- Daytime temperatures in Reykjavik range from 44-57°F in the warmer summer months to 35-50°F in the fall
- Evenings can be chilly, even in summer
- Iceland is sometimes subject to harsh weather, but the summer months are quite mild

TERRAIN & TRANSPORTATION

- Travel over some rugged paths, as well as bumpy, gravelly, slippery, and sometimes icy roads by motorcoach and on foot
- Travel by 19-passenger and 32-passenger motorcoaches and a whale-watching boat

ACCOMMODATIONS & FACILITIES

- Hotels feature a variety of Western-style amenities and personal services

Steps to Take Before Your Trip

Before you leave on this adventure, we recommend the following:

- Check with the CDC for their recommendations for the countries you'll be visiting. You can contact them online at **www.cdc.gov/travel** or by phone at **1-800-232-4636**.
- Have a medical checkup with your doctor at least 6 weeks before your trip.
- Pick up any necessary medications, both prescription and over-the-counter.
- Have a dental and/or eye checkup. (Recommended, but less urgent)

No Vaccines Required

Recommended Vaccines

At the time of writing there were no required vaccines for this trip. The CDC recommends that all travelers be up to date on their routine vaccinations and on basic travel vaccines like Hepatitis A and Typhoid, but these are suggestions only. However, this could change in future so we encourage you to check with the CDC yourself before meeting with your doctor.

Medication Suggestions

- An antibiotic medication for gastrointestinal illness
- Prescription pain medication in the unlikely event of an injury in a remote location

Traveling with Medications

- **Pack medications in your carry-on bag** to avoid loss and to have them handy.
- **Keep medicines in their original, labeled containers** for a quicker security screen at the airport and a better experience if you get stopped by customs while overseas.
- **Bring copies of your prescriptions**, written using the generic drug name rather than a brand name to be prepared for any unforeseen loss of your medications.

We recommend checking with the State Department for medication restrictions by country: **travel.state.gov** (Go to "Find International Travel Information", select "Country Information", then enter the country into the search bar; if you don't see any medications specifically mentioned under the "Health" section, then you can presume major U.S. brands should be OK).

Staying Healthy on Your Trip

Jet Lag Tips

- Start your trip well-rested.
- Begin a gradual transition to your new time zone before you leave or switch to your destination time zone when you get on the plane.

- Attempt to sleep and eat according to the new schedule.
- Avoid heavy eating and drinking caffeine or alcoholic beverages right before—and during—your flight.
- Drink plenty of water and/or fruit juice while flying
- Stretch your legs, neck, and back periodically while seated on the plane.
- After arrival, avoid the temptation to nap.
- Don't push yourself to see a lot on your first day.
- Try to stay awake your first day until after dinner.

Allergies

If you have any serious allergies or dietary restrictions, we advise you to notify us at least 30 days prior to your departure. Please call our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814**, and we will communicate them to our regional office. Every effort will be made to accommodate you.

Water

- Tap water is safe to drink in Iceland and Greenland
- Bottled water is also readily available, but tap water complies with all health safety criteria.

Food

- Food should not cause any health problems—salads, fruit, and dairy products are all fine—but try to vary your diet.
- Be careful with food that has been cooked and left to go cold, which might happen in some self-service places.

Electricity Supply

Barring the occasional and unpredictable power outage, electricity is as readily available as it is in the U.S. Travelers dependent on electricity supply (as in the case of those with sleep apnea) may wish to bring a rechargeable battery as a backup.

MONEY MATTERS: LOCAL CURRENCY & TIPPING GUIDELINES

Top Three Tips

- **Carry a mix of different types of payments**, such as local currency, an ATM card, and a credit card.
- **Traveler's checks are not recommended.** They can be difficult to exchange and the commission fee for cashing them is quite high. It's more practical to view them as a last resort in the event of a special situation.
- **Plan to bring a reserve of cash if you are taking the Greenland extension.** ATMs can be difficult to find and shut down at night in Greenland. We recommend that you bring a combination of cash and a credit card instead of relying on ATMs.

Local Currency

For current exchange rates, please refer to an online converter tool like www.xe.com/currencyconverter, your bank, or the financial section of your newspaper.

Iceland: Icelandic *krona* (Íkr)

Greenland: Danish *krone* (Kr).

How to Exchange Money

If you want to exchange money before your trip, you can usually do so through your bank or at an exchange office. Your departure airport in the U.S., a travel agent, or an AAA office are also possible outlets. Or you can wait and change money on the trip instead—but it might be helpful to arrive with some local currency in case you run into a bank holiday or an “out of order” ATM.

On your trip, the easiest way to obtain local currency is to withdraw funds from a local ATM. The ATM will give you local money and your bank at home will convert that into U.S. dollars.

You may be able to exchange cash at some hotels, large post offices, and money exchange offices, however they do not typically offer good exchange rates and can be difficult to find. To exchange cash, you'll usually need your passport and bills in good condition (not worn, torn, or dirty). New bills (post 2014) are best.

Please note that many banks in Europe will only exchange money for their own customers. Never exchange money on the street. All exchange methods involve fees, which may be built into the conversion rate; ask beforehand.

ATMs

When using the ATM, keep in mind that it may only accept cards from local banks, and may not allow cash advances on credit cards; you might need to try more than one ATM or more than one card.

Many banks charge a fee of \$1–\$10 each time you use a foreign ATM. Others may charge you a percentage of the amount you withdraw. We recommend that you check with your bank before you depart.

Lastly, don't forget to memorize the actual digits of your card's PIN number (many keypads at foreign ATMs do not include letters on their keys—they only display numbers.)

In most countries, ATMs are widely available in major cities. If you are in a rural location, it will likely be harder to find an ATM.

Iceland: International ATM networks are available throughout large cities and small towns.

Greenland: ATMs are far more limited in Greenland. Typically, you can find them in banks and in the larger post offices. But generally speaking, the more rural the community in Greenland, the less likely it is you'll find an ATM. Plus many ATMs in Greenland are not 24/7; they shut down at night. Since we'll be traveling in parts of Greenland that have limited ATM access, a combination of a credit card and some cash is a better idea than relying on an ATM card. The cash can be U.S. dollars (which some hotels will accept) or Danish currency (which is accepted everywhere in Greenland). You can get Danish currency in Iceland before you leave for Greenland.

Credit & Debit Cards

While traveling, most countries and major cities will accept credit cards. Even if you don't plan on using a credit card during your trip, we still suggest that you bring one or two as a backup, especially if you are planning a large purchase (artwork, jewelry). We also suggest that you bring more than one brand of card (i.e. Visa, MasterCard, American Express) if possible, because not every shop will take every card. For example, although Discover and American Express cards are accepted in some countries outside the U.S., they are not widely adopted, so other brands will work at a much larger range of stores, restaurants, etc.

If you are visiting a country that does not commonly accept credit cards, they will be listed below.

Iceland: Credit and debit cards are widely accepted in Iceland. **However, some credit card machines may require you to enter your PIN.** If your credit card doesn't have a PIN, you can use another form of payment. For example, a debit card can be useful in place of a credit card because debit cards use PINs.

Greenland: Credit and debit cards are starting to gain momentum in Greenland. You'll be able to use a credit card at most hotels and tourist shops in Greenland—but you won't be able to pay with plastic absolutely everywhere. So for Greenland, it would be a good idea to have some cash as well.

Chip Cards

Many countries have adopted credit cards that have an embedded computer chip. These cards are inserted into the reader instead of swiped. The card owner then authorizes the purchase using a PIN instead of signing.

Though this technology is common in the U.S., occasionally there are machines in other countries that can't read U.S. cards or the machine can read the card, but asks for a PIN. This doesn't happen often, and is nothing to worry about. You can usually resolve the situation by asking the cashier to let you sign. (If you don't speak the language, just mime signing on your hand.) If you are not able to sign for a purchase, such as at an automated ticket booth, you can use another form of payment, such as a debit card that has a PIN.

Notify Card Providers of Upcoming Travel

Many credit card companies and banks have fraud alert departments that will freeze your card if they see suspicious charges—such as charges or withdrawals from another country. To avoid an accidental security block, it is a good idea to notify your credit card company and/or bank you will be using your cards abroad. You can do this by calling their customer service number a week or two before your departure. Some banks or credit card companies will also let you do this online.

You should also double-check what phone number you could call if you have a problem with a card while you are abroad. Don't assume you can use the 1-800 number printed on the back of your card—most 1 800 numbers don't work outside of the U.S.!

Tipping Guidelines

Of course, whether you tip, and how much, is always at your own discretion. But for those of you who have asked for tipping suggestions, we offer these guidelines:

- **O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader:** It is customary to express a personal “thank you” to your Trip Experience Leader at the end of your trip. As a guideline, many travelers give \$10–\$14 USD (or equivalent in local currency) per person for each day their Trip Experience Leader is with them. *Please note that these tips can only be in cash. If you are taking any of the optional extensions, your Trip Experience Leader during the extension(s) may not be the same as the one on your main trip.*
- **Housekeeping staff at hotels:** \$1–2 per room, per night
- **Waiters:** Tipping at restaurants is not common in Iceland. Locals might round up the bill to the next 500–1000 ISK and tell the waiter to keep the change, but it is not expected. Tipping is not necessary—and may not be possible—when paying by credit card.
- **Taxis:** Taxi drivers do not expect a tip either. There is usually a service charge included in the cost of your ride, so do not feel obligated.

Please Note: Your tour price includes gratuities on the main trip and optional extensions for local guides, drivers, and luggage porters that may assist you during the scheduled activities on your adventure. All tips are quoted in U.S. dollars; tips can be converted and paid in local currency or in U.S. dollars. Please do not use personal or traveler's checks for tips.

AIR, OPTIONAL TOURS & STAYING IN TOUCH

Land Only Travelers & Personalized Air

Quick Definitions

- **Land Only:** You will be booking your own international flights. Airport transfers are not included.
- **Air-Inclusive:** You booked international air with us. Airport transfers are included as long as you didn't customize your trip's dates (see next bullet).
- **Arrive Early or Stopover (select adventures only):** If you chose one of these Personalization options and purchased air through O.A.T, accommodations and airport transfers are included. However, if you chose one of our Personalization options, but did not purchase air through O.A.T., accommodations are included, but airport transfers are not. If you chose one of our Personalization options, and purchase air through O.A.T. but not the accommodations, the airport transfers are not included. We have included transfer options below.
- **Personalization on Your Own:** If you have not purchased air through O.A.T. and decided to arrive early, stay longer, or stop in a connecting city on your own, you are responsible for airport transfers and accommodations. For your convenience, a preliminary list of your included hotels is available on your My Planner at www.oattravel.com/myplanner under "My Reservations" to help you with selecting a hotel for your additional time.

If you are taking the pre-trip extension, *Worlds of Fire: Iceland's Westman Islands*, please arrange a flight that arrives at the Keflavik International Airport by 7:00am on Day 2 of the extension. The group will meet at the 10-11 Supermarket (after Customs) in the airport for the included group transfer to the first hotel which typically departs at around 7:30am based on flight arrival times. If you arrive early, this means you may be waiting a couple of hours for the rest of the group. If you are not able to meet the group in time for the included transfer, you are responsible for making your own arrangements to get to the first hotel in the Westman Islands. Please be aware this information applies to Land Only travelers.

Airport Transfers Can Be Purchased

For eligible flights, airport transfers may be purchased separately as an optional add-on, subject to availability. To be eligible, your flight(s) must meet the following requirements:

- You must fly into or fly home from the same airport as O.A.T. travelers who purchased included airfare.
- Your flight(s) must arrive/depart on the same day that the group arrives or departs.
- If you are arriving early, you must have arranged the hotels through our Arrive Early personalization option

Airport transfers can be purchased up to 45 days prior to your departure; they are not available for purchase onsite. To learn more, or purchase airport transfers, please call our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814**.

If you don't meet the requirements above, you'll need to make your own transfer arrangements. We suggest the Rome to Rio website as a handy resource: www.rome2rio.com

Optional Tours

Optional tours are additional add-on tours that allow you to personalize your adventure by tailoring it to your tastes and needs. And if you decide not to join an optional tour? Then you'll have free time to relax or explore on your own—it's about options, not obligations.

What You Need to Know

- All optional tours are subject to change and availability.
- Optional tours that are reserved with your Trip Experience Leader can be paid for using credit/debit cards only. We accept MasterCard, Visa, and Discover credit cards; we can also take MasterCard or Visa debit cards as long as the card allows you to sign for purchases. (You won't be able to enter a PIN.)
- To ensure that you are charged in U.S. dollars, your payment will be processed by our U.S. headquarters in Boston. This process can take up to three months, so we ask that you only use a card that will still be valid three months after your trip is over. The charge may appear on your credit card statement as being from Boston, MA or may be labeled as "OPT Boston".
- Your Trip Experience Leader will give you details on the optional tours while you're on the trip. But if you'd like to look over descriptions of them earlier, you can do so at any time by referring to your Day-to-Day Itinerary (available online by signing into My Planner at www.oattravel.com/myplanner).

Communicating with Home from Abroad

To ensure you are available during your trip, you will receive two copies of your hotel list, including phone numbers, with your Final Documents. One copy is for you to bring, and one to leave behind with friends or relatives in case they need to contact you during the trip.

Cell Phones

If you want to use your cell phone on the trip, check with your phone provider to see if your phone and service will work outside of the U.S. It may turn out to be cheaper to rent an international phone or buy a SIM card onsite. If you want to use a local SIM, just make certain your phone can accept one.

Calling Apps

Another option is to use a smartphone app like Skype, FaceTime, or WhatsApp. We recommend you use WhatsApp to communicate with home while abroad and with your Trip Experience Leader while onsite. You will need a Wi-Fi connection if you do not have international coverage. Other calling options include smartphone apps such as Skype or FaceTime. You will need a Wi-Fi connection for these apps and the calls may count towards your phone plan's data allowance. Many smartphones—and some tablets or laptops—come with one of these apps pre-installed or you can download them for free from the appropriate apps store.

Calling Cards and 1-800 Numbers

When calling the U.S. from a foreign country, a prepaid calling card can be useful because it circumvents unexpected charges from the hotel. Calling cards purchased locally are typically the best (less expensive, more likely to work with the local phones, etc.).

One reminder: Do not call U.S. 1-800 numbers outside the continental United States. This can result in costly long distance fees, since 1-800 numbers do not work outside the country.

Internet

Nearly all hotels in Iceland have complimentary wireless Internet service (WiFi). Most hotels will also offer a limited number of computers in the lobby or business center for guests to use. So you can either bring your own device during the trip and use WiFi where it is available, or leave your device at home and rely on hotel computers.

How to Call Overseas

When calling overseas from the U.S., dial 011 for international exchange, then the country code (indicated by a plus sign: +), and then the number. Note that foreign phone numbers may not have the same number of digits as U.S. numbers; even within a country the number of digits can vary depending on the city and if the phone is a land line or cell phone.

Iceland: +354

Greenland: +299

PACKING: WHAT TO BRING & LUGGAGE LIMITS

Luggage Limits

MAIN TRIP LIMITS	
Pieces per person	One checked bag and one carry-on per person.
Weight restrictions	Checked luggage is limited to 44 lbs total . Carry-ons are limited to 13 lbs total .
Size Restrictions	Standard airline size: checked luggage should not exceed 62 linear inches (length+ width + depth). Carry-ons should not exceed 43 linear inches
Luggage Type	Duffel bag or soft-sided suitcase.
TRIP EXTENSION(S) LIMITS	
Greenland post-trip extension: Use a small duffel bag, backpack, or overnight bag as your checked luggage (should be about the same size as a carry-on for an international flight). Checked bags are limited to 22 lbs total and carry-ons are limited to 13 lbs total. Other extensions: Same as the main trip.	

REMARKS/SUGGESTIONS

Luggage rules: Luggage rules and limits are set by governmental and airline policy. Enforcement of the rules may include spot checks or may be inconsistent. However one thing is the same across the board: If you are found to have oversized or overweight luggage, you will be subject to additional fees, to be assessed by—and paid to—the airline in question.

Weight Limits in Iceland vs International Flights: On the main trip, the flight from Akureyri to Reykjavik has a luggage limit of 44 lbs for checked luggage. If you prefer to bring the standard 50 lbs of luggage for your international flights, you will have the option to pack an overnight bag and send your excess luggage with the motorcoach, which will meet the group at the airport upon arrival in Reykjavik the following day. If you choose this option, any remaining luggage that you do bring on the flight must be under the 44 lb limit.

Bring a small additional bag for the post-trip extension in Greenland: The stricter weight limits for Greenland are due to the helicopter rides. To work around this limit, our Trip Experience Leaders suggest bringing a smaller bag to use in Greenland. This lets you work around the limit by leaving excess luggage in Reykjavik before departing for Greenland. At the end of the extension, you'll return to Reykjavik and pick up your luggage. If you would like to take advantage of this "left luggage" service, bring an additional small bag with a lock.

Don't Forget:

- **These luggage limits may change.** If the airline(s) notify us of any changes, we will include an update in your Final Documents booklet.
- It's a good idea to reconfirm baggage restrictions and fees directly with the airline a week or so prior to departure. For your convenience, we maintain a list of the toll-free numbers for the most common airlines on our website in the FAQ section.
- **Baggage fees are not included in your trip price;** they are payable directly to the airlines.
- The luggage limits above are based on your regional flights, which may be less than your international flights. Even if your international airline offers a larger weight limit, you will need to pack according to the lower restrictions.

Your Luggage

Checked Luggage

One duffel bag or suitcase. Look for one with heavy nylon fabric, wrap-around handles, built-in wheels, and a heavy duty lockable zipper. Please do not bring a rigid (clamshell) suitcase.

Carry-on Bag

You are allowed one carry-on bag per person. We suggest a tote or small backpack that can be used as both a carry-on bag for your flight and to carry your daily necessities—water bottle, camera, etc—during your daily activities.

Small Additional Bag

- **Optional for the main trip (flight between Akureyri and Reykjavik):** You have the option to pack an overnight bag for this part of the trip and you will be able to send your excess luggage with the motorcoach, which will meet the group at the airport upon arrival in Reykjavik the following day.
- **Strongly recommended for the post-trip extension in Greenland:** During the extension, you will be able to store your excess luggage at the hotel in Reykjavik where you will be able to retrieve it upon your return.

Locks

For flights that originate in the U.S., you can either use a TSA-approved lock or leave your luggage unlocked. Outside of the U.S. we strongly recommend locking your luggage as a theft-prevention measure.

Clothing Suggestions: Functional Tips

As you will experience a wide range of temperatures and weather conditions, we suggest several layers of clothing. If you like to hand-wash your clothes, look for fabrics that will dry out overnight. You can buy clothing designed especially for travel, with features like wrinkle-resistant fabric or built-in sun protection.

- **Footwear:** You'll be on your feet a lot during the trip, and walking over some rough and slippery surfaces. The soles of your shoes should offer good traction. Sturdy and comfortable walking shoes with arch support are suggested.
- **Everyone should bring layers,** even in summer, so you can adjust as the temperature varies.
- **Wind + rain = Bring good rain gear.** Because Iceland is so windy, the rain often comes in sideways. A waterproof layer over your clothing (such as a raincoat/windbreaker and waterproof pants) is more effective than just an umbrella.

Style Hints

Dress on our trip is functional and casual. You might want to bring one slightly dressier outfit for dining on your own at nicer restaurants, or for the Welcome and Farewell Dinners, but that is totally up to you.

Suggested Packing Lists

We have included suggestions from Trip Experience Leaders and former travelers to help you pack. These lists are only jumping-off points—they offer recommendations based on experience, but not requirements. You may also want to consult the “Climate” chapter of this handbook.

And don't forget a reusable water bottle—you'll need it to take advantage of any refills we offer as we are working to eliminate single-use plastic bottles on all of our trips.

Recommended Clothing

- ☐ Shirts: Mainly long-sleeved shirts but also short-sleeved shirts.
- ☐ Trousers: Comfortable and loose-fitting so you can easily hike, enjoy a boat ride, or be active.
- ☐ Shoes and socks: Comfortable, sturdy, highly supportive walking shoes—lightweight hiking boots are recommended. There will be hiking on rocky paths so sturdy walking shoes are essentials. Also recommended is a pair of water-tolerant footwear in case of heavy rain.
- ☐ Light cotton or wool sweater. During colder times of year, this is useful for layering.
- ☐ Hat, gloves, and warm socks.
- ☐ **Rain gear that protects you from top to toe.** Because Iceland is so windy, the rain often comes in sideways. Some combination of a raincoat, waterproof windbreaker, waterproof pants, and a hat/hood is in order.
- ☐ For Icelandic weather, layers (sweater, fleece, jacket, etc.) are key. Thermal underwear is recommended for all seasons, even summer so you can adjust to the varied weather. Although the summers are in general rather mild cold spells are common especially in the north of Iceland.
- ☐ Underwear and sleepwear.
- ☐ Lined windbreaker.
- ☐ A folding or collapsible walking stick for hiking.
- ☐ A swimsuit is recommended for Icelandic-style thermal swimming pools.

Seasonal Clothing Recommendations

You can expect summer daytime highs in Iceland to be in the 50s and 60s °F and only occasionally reach or exceed 70 °F. September and October will be significantly cooler, with some days like early winter in the northern U.S. Wind is likely and rain is possible during any of our outdoor activities.

For spring and fall (May, September–October)

- ☐ You'll want long, warm trousers, and not shorts.
- ☐ You'll mostly want long-sleeved shirts.

- ☐ Warm outer gear is a must. This means a warm wind and waterproof jacket, hat, and gloves.
- ☐ Bring clothing you can layer (sweater, fleece, jacket, etc.); thermal or long underwear adds warmth without bulk and doesn't take up much room in your luggage. Layers are key for this season, so you can adjust to the varied weather.
- ☐ Snow can occur as late as May and as early September, so factor that into your clothing and footwear choice. *Our staff in Iceland also recommend crampons (spikes) for these months, but those are completely optional—do not feel the need to purchase them if you don't want to.*

For summer (June–September)

- ☐ Summer is often quite cool, so the best choices are long trousers. Early June and late August can be closer to spring/fall weather.
- ☐ There are often periods during summer that are quite rainy; so good rain gear is useful.
- ☐ Blindfolds (eye shades) are recommended because it is very bright in Iceland through the summer nights.
- ☐ There are a lot of black flies especially around Lake Myvatn but also in other places so a head net is useful.

Essential Items

- ☐ Daily essentials: toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, hairbrush or comb, shaving items, deodorant, etc. Our hotels will provide the basics like soap and shampoo/conditioner, but if you are sensitive to fragrances or new products, you may wish to bring your preferred brands. Most hotels do not provide a washcloth, so you may wish to pack one.
- ☐ Spare eyeglasses/contact lenses. If you wear eyeglasses, consider a string or band to keep them from falling into the water during the whale watch.
- ☐ Sunglasses, 100% UV block
- ☐ Sunscreen, SPF 15 or stronger
- ☐ Insect repellent
- ☐ Cold-water hand-wash laundry soap such as Woolite and plastic hang-up clothespins
- ☐ Photocopies of passport, air ticket, credit cards
- ☐ Moisturizer and sun-blocking lip balm

- ☐ Packets of pocket-size tissues or small roll of toilet paper
- ☐ Moist towelettes and/or anti-bacterial “water-free” hand cleanser
- ☐ Water bottle (narrow-mouth)
- ☐ Electrical converter & plug adapters

Medicines & First Aid Gear

- ☐ Your own prescription medicines
- ☐ Travel first aid kit: Band-Aids, headache and pain relief, laxatives and anti-diarrhea tablets, something for upset stomach. Maybe a cold remedy, moleskin foot pads, antibiotic cream, or allergy medication.
- ☐ An antibiotic medication for gastrointestinal illness
- ☐ Optional: A strong prescription pain medication for rare emergency purposes
- ☐ Optional: Motion sickness medication for the boating activities (if you are prone to motion sickness)
- ☐ Optional: Allergy medication. If you suffer from allergies, keep in mind that we’ll spend a lot of time outdoors on this adventure.

Hairdryers: Hairdryers are provided at most hotels in Iceland, but not in the hotels in Greenland.

Home-Hosted Visits

Many of our adventures feature a visit with a local family, often as part of the *A Day in the Life* experience. It is customary, though not necessary, to return your hosts’ generosity with a small gift. If you do bring a gift, we recommend that you bring something the whole family can enjoy, or something that represents your region, state, or hometown. Get creative and keep it small—peach jelly from Georgia, maple sugar candy from New England, orange blossom soap from California; something that can be used or used up is best. When choosing a gift, be certain to consider the local culture as well. For example, we do not recommend alcohol in Muslim communities because it is forbidden in Islam, and your hosts may be religious. Not all O.A.T. adventures include a Home-Hosted Visit; please check your final itinerary before you depart.

Electricity Abroad

When traveling overseas, the voltage is usually different and the plugs might not be the same shape.

Voltage

Electricity in Iceland and Greenland is 220 volts. In the U.S. it is 110 volts. Most of the things a traveler will want to plug in—battery chargers, smartphones, tablets or computers—can run off both 110 and 220–240. But you should check the item or the owner’s guide first to confirm this before you plug it in. If you have something that needs 110 volts—like a shaver or a hairdryer—you can bring a transformer to change the current. (But transformers tend to burn out, so it might be better to leave whatever it is at home.)

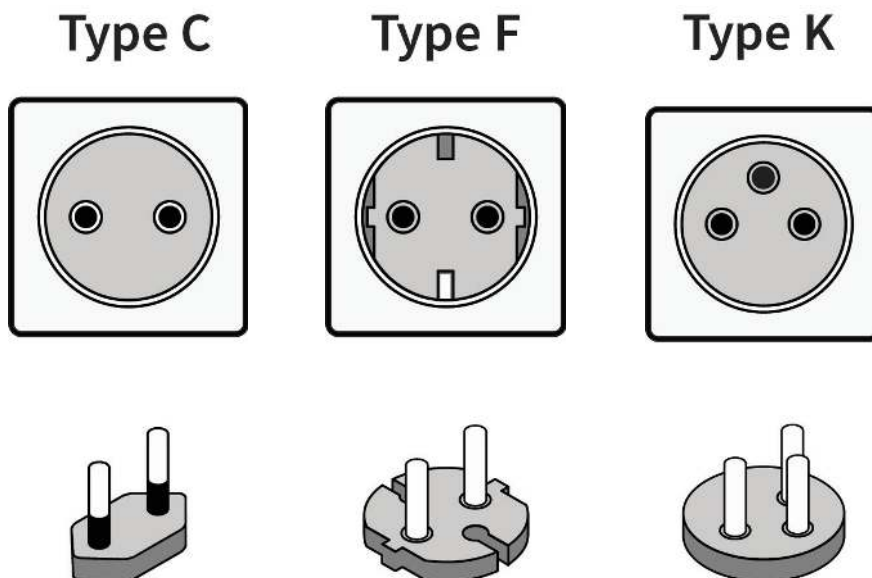
Plugs

The shape of plugs will vary from country to country, and sometimes even within a country depending on when that building was built. To plug something from the U.S. into a local socket you’ll need an adapter that fits between the plug and the socket. Because there are many different types of plugs in this region, it may be easier to purchase an all-in-one, universal adapter/converter combo. Versatile and lightweight, these can usually be found at your local electronics goods or hardware stores. Sometimes you can buy them at large retailers too, like Target or Walmart. If you forget to bring an adapter, you might also find them for sale at the airport when you arrive at your destination.

Different plug shapes are named by letters of the alphabet. Standard U.S. plugs are Type A and Type B. Here is the list of plugs for the countries on this trip:

Iceland: C and F

Greenland: C or K



Availability: Barring the occasional and unpredictable power outage, electricity is as readily available on this adventure as it is in the U.S. Travelers dependent on electricity supply (as in the case of those with sleep apnea) may wish to bring a rechargeable battery as a backup.

CLIMATE & AVERAGE TEMPERATURES

The summers are short and cool in Selfoss while the winters are long, snowy, and windy. It is mostly cloudy year round with temperatures that vary from 27°F to 57°F. The temperature in Selfoss is rarely below 14°F or above 62°F.

Iceland: Though Iceland's climate is cool, warm ocean currents keep it more temperate than you might expect for its northerly location. Highs in Reykjavik during the summer months, with their long hours of daylight, average in the 50s but can easily reach the 60s or low 70s—like fall days in the northeastern U.S. Humidity can be low at summer's outset (May), when the air has exceptional clarity on sunny days. September and October in Iceland are cooler and you'll want to have a warm jacket, warm hat, and gloves available. The winter months bring below-freezing weather and shorter daylight hours, offering a unique opportunity to go in search of the Northern Lights, but you'll need warm winter gear.

It's often windy, so bring a good windbreaker. The weather can change rapidly, so be prepared to add or remove outer layers during the course of a day's tour.

Also, know that **when conditions are windy, the temperature will feel several degrees cooler than it really is, a phenomenon known as “the wind chill effect”**. Locals are used to it, but it often catches visitors by surprise—anything a local describes as a “light breeze” probably requires an extra layer, like a windbreaker or jacket. In winter, this may mean wearing three layers (a top, a fleece/sweater, and a jacket/coat).

Westman Islands, Iceland: The Westman Islands enjoy a relatively temperate maritime climate similar to the rest of Iceland.

Greenland: Greenland is cooler than Iceland, with an arctic climate whose high temperatures average below 50° F in the summer months; however, afternoon highs can reach the 60°s F from June through August. During summer you can expect high humidity and foggy days.

NOTE: If you are taking one of our optional stopovers before or after your OAT adventure, please be aware the climate and temperatures might be different from what you experienced during your tour. To prepare for weather differences and pack appropriate clothing, we recommend the following world weather sites:

- www.intellicast.com
- www.weather.com
- www.wunderground.com

Climate Averages & Online Forecast

The following charts reflect the **average** climate as opposed to exact weather conditions. This means they serve only as general indicators of what can reasonably be expected. An extreme heat wave or cold snap could fall outside these ranges. As your departure approaches, we encourage you to use **www.weather.com** for a more accurate forecast of the locations you visit.

Average Daily High/Low Temperatures (°F), Humidity & Monthly Rainfall

MONTH	SELFOSS, ICELAND			AKUREYRI, ICELAND		
	Temp. High- Low	% Relative Humidity	Average # of Days with Rainfall	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (avg)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)
JAN	37 to 26	82	13	33 to 24	80	5.1
FEB	37 to 27	78	13	34 to 25	80	6.5
MAR	39 to 28	78	13	35 to 26	80	5.6
APR	44 to 32	75	12	40 to 30	80	3.5
MAY	50 to 38	73	11	48 to 37	75	2.3
JUN	55 to 45	77	11	54 to 44	75	4.4
JUL	58 to 48	80	12	57 to 47	80	3.3
AUG	57 to 47	82	11	56 to 46	80	5.1
SEP	52 to 42	83	14	48 to 39	80	6.5
OCT	45 to 35	83	12	42 to 33	85	5.2
NOV	40 to 30	81	12	36 to 27	85	5.0
DEC	37 to 27	81	13	33 to 24	80	4.6

MONTH	REYKJAVIK, ICELAND			WESTMAN ISLANDS, ICELAND		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)
JAN	35 to 27	78 to 79	3.4	37 to 31	79 to 78	5.7
FEB	37 to 29	79 to 77	2.9	38 to 33	79 to 79	4.6
MAR	37 to 29	79 to 74	3.0	38 to 32	79 to 77	4.5
APR	41 to 33	81 to 72	2.2	40 to 35	81 to 77	3.9
MAY	47 to 39	83 to 69	1.7	45 to 40	86 to 80	3.3
JUN	52 to 44	85 to 73	1.8	49 to 44	89 to 84	3.3
JUL	55 to 47	86 to 75	2.0	52 to 47	91 to 86	3.2
AUG	54 to 46	88 to 75	2.4	52 to 47	90 to 85	3.7
SEP	49 to 41	83 to 72	2.8	47 to 28	85 to 81	5.4
OCT	44 to 36	81 to 75	3.5	43 to 28	83 to 81	6.0
NOV	38 to 31	80 to 78	3.3	39 to 34	81 to 80	5.3
DEC	36 to 28	78 to 77	3.3	38 to 32	78 to 79	5.8

MONTH	GREENLAND		
	Average Temp.	% Relative Humidity (avg)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)
JAN	17	80	4.5
FEB	16	80	3.9
MAR	16	79	3.9
APR	24	79	3.0
MAY	32	83	2.5
JUN	39	84	2.2
JUL	42	83	2.0
AUG	42	83	2.7
SEP	37	78	3.3
OCT	29	80	3.4
NOV	22	80	3.8
DEC	17	78	4.0

ABOUT YOUR DESTINATIONS: CULTURE, ETIQUETTE & MORE

O.A.T. Trip Experience Leaders: A World of Difference

During your adventure, you'll be accompanied by one of our local, Trip Experience Leaders. All are fluent in English and possess the skills, certification, and experience necessary to ensure an enriching adventure. As locals of the regions you'll explore with them, our Trip Experience Leaders provide the kind of firsthand knowledge and insight that make local history, culture, and wildlife come alive. Coupled with their unbridled enthusiasm, caring personalities, and ability to bring diverse groups of travelers together, our Trip Experience Leaders ensure that your experience with O.A.T. is one you'll remember for a lifetime.

Icelandic Culture

Iceland is about the size of New York state, but with only 360,000 people, its population is far lower. That hasn't kept them from impressive social achievements. There's a running joke that Icelanders like to boast "*Ísland, best í heimi*" (Iceland is the best in the world) and back it up with "per capita" statistics. For instance, Iceland has a 99.9% literacy rate and more published authors than any other nation, per capita (1 in 10 people will publish a book). Iceland has more Grand Master chess players per capita than any other nation. More musicians per capita. And the highest internet usage per capita. Given the small population, some of these boasts must be delivered with tongue in cheek, for instance, Iceland has more Nobel Prize winners per capita. (There was only one—but one in 360,000 is still the world's best ratio.)

Facetiousness aside, Icelanders have a lot to be proud of. Theirs is an open, tolerant, and prosperous society, with virtually no crime, a strong safety net of social welfare programs, a stellar environmental record, and one of the lowest poverty rates in the world. It is a nearly classless society, and almost everyone is called by their first name.

On the other hand, something visitors find odd is the fact that last names are almost meaningless here. People do not have surnames, but take the first name of their father and append a "-son" (son) or "-dóttir" (daughter) to it. So a woman named Helga whose father's name is Ólaf would be called "Helga Ólafsdóttir" while her brother Lars would be "Lars Ólafsson". Women do not take the name of their husband upon marriage. Until recently the patronymic naming convention was traditional, but nowadays people can also choose to take their mother's name. This is not surprising in a nation that ranks first in the world for gender equality. For instance, more than 30 of the country's 62 parliamentary seats are held by women.

Education is valued and considered a basic right, with university education available to all and free (save for the minimal registration fees). Iceland has a very high literacy rate, and on Christmas Eve it is traditional for family members to exchange books as gifts. During this seasons, so many new books are published they've invented a word for the Christmas book flood: *Jólabókaflóðið*. Because the Icelandic language has not changed much since medieval times, most people can (and do) read the traditional, 10th- and 11th-century Icelandic Eddas and sagas with ease. These tales are still widely loved, and the sources for a lot of Icelandic folklore.

Much has been made of Iceland's supposed widespread belief in elves (called *huldufolk*). Some surveys have asserted that up to 62% of the people believe that the existence of elves is "likely." There are also stories about construction projects being diverted lest they interfere with purported elfin dwellings. If you are in Iceland over the holidays, you can be the judge because between Christmas and New Year's is when the elves and trolls supposedly come out to shake things up!

Some of Iceland's strength may come from the fact that its culture has had to thrive in a pretty harsh physical environment. Self-sufficiency, independence, and a strong work ethic are valued. In fact, many people have more than one job—not for economic reasons, but to keep busy during the long, dark winters. Those winters may also account for the nation's high rate of social cohesion: people stay in contact with friends, family, and neighbors. Friendship and social supports are very important, and even people who are not related may refer to each other using kinship terms. People trust their neighbors. In fact, you might be taken aback to see unattended baby strollers and carriages left outside cafes and shops—with sleeping infants inside them. This is very common. Though you may find Icelanders to be reserved or matter-of-fact at first, you will very quickly discover their helpfulness and love of fun.

Religion and Religious Observance

Irish monks inhabited Iceland as early as the 8th century, even before the Vikings arrived. But the Vikings themselves also adopted Christianity around 999, and since then, Christianity has been the main religion in Iceland. With the Reformation sweeping Norway and Denmark in the 16th century, Iceland soon followed suit. Today, the official state religion is Lutheranism. When people are born, they are automatically registered as members of the (Lutheran) Church of Iceland. About 67.2% of Icelanders say they are Lutheran, but in name only because only about 11% of the people attend church.

A small percentage of people identify as Catholic or other Christian denominations, and there is also some representation of Bahai, Jewish, Muslim, and Buddhist believers. But the fastest-growing religion in Iceland is a surprising one: *Ásatrú*, the old Norse pagan religion. The contemporary iteration of this pantheistic belief system is closely tied to ecological awareness, and the warlike aspects of the old gods like Odin and Thor have been replaced with an emphasis on caring for the earth and spreading peace.

Language

The official language is Icelandic, a Germanic language that is closely related to Norwegian and Faroese, but separate and distinct from them. Icelandic also has Gaelic and Celtic influences. Though everyone in Iceland speaks Icelandic, nearly all Icelanders also speak English—and speak it quite fluently. The study of English is mandatory in Icelandic schools. Many people also speak Danish or German.

Useful Phrases

Since everyone speaks English so well, you probably won't need to use these popular idioms and slang terms—unless you want to impress your Icelandic hosts!

- Two things that go together are *borgari* (burgers) and *bjór* (beer.) If you eat too much of the former, you might get *feitt* (which means “fat,” but also means “cool”). If you drink too much of the latter, you might get *sauðdrukkinn* (drunk as a sheep), in which case someone may tell you “*ról-ex*.” This has nothing to do with your watch, it’s a cognate of the Icelandic *rólegur* (calm down) and the English “relax.”
- If someone tells you “*áfram með smjörið*” they are literally saying “on with the butter.” It’s equivalent to “carry on” or just keep on doing what you’re supposed to be doing.
- *Ég kem alveg af fjöllum* means “I come completely from the mountains,” but it’s not meant to describe your origins. It means “I have no idea what you are talking about.”
- Just as Brooklyn has been taken over by hipsters, so, too, has Reykjavik 101, the center of town. So if you are acting a little too trendy, an Icelandic might say *Þú ert nú meiri latteþjandi lopatrefillinn*. (“You are such a latte-drinking, wool scarf.”)

Meals in Flight

Flights to Iceland are shorter than to the rest of Europe, so airlines **rarely provide** meals during the international flight. You might want to have something to eat before boarding the plane (we will provide breakfast on your first day after you arrive at the hotel).

Meal Prices

Iceland is an expensive country in general, but especially when it comes to food—which makes sense given that many ingredients need to be imported or are grown in special greenhouses. To give you a sense of what to budget, here’s some sample prices in USD. Please keep in mind that these are guidelines only and are subject to change.

- Light takeaway lunch (sandwich, soup): \$11–\$17 per person
- Lunch in a cafe: \$20–\$30 per person
- Dinner entrée in a high-end restaurant: \$40–\$70 per person

Previous travelers have suggested lowering costs by hitting up local grocery stores; choosing dishes with ingredients from Iceland (i.e. fish, lamb); looking for happy hour deals in local pubs; and trying one of Iceland’s Thai restaurants (which is kind of like their version of a Chinese takeout place).

Taking Photographs

The etiquette of photographing people in most countries is about the same as it would be on the streets of your hometown. You need permission to take a close-up, but not for a crowd scene. Be especially polite if you want to photograph children or older women. If you want to shoot a great portrait, show interest in your subject and try to have a bit of social interaction first. Then use sign language to inquire if a picture is OK.

Please do not take photographs of military personnel, military compounds, or other official institutions/personnel (such as police). This may result in the confiscation of your camera.

In museums or at archaeological sites, there may be restrictions on using your flash. Please obey any signs or directions by staff; the no-flash rule protects the fragile artifacts and artwork from damage by repeated exposure to light. Occasionally, there may also be a small fee levied by the museum or site for the privilege of taking photos.

Safety & Security

As you travel, exercise the same caution and awareness that you would in a large American city. Don't be overly nervous or suspicious, but keep your eyes open. If you are venturing out after dark, go with one or two other people.

Carry a one-day supply of cash, and your passport, in a travel pouch. Don't leave valuables unattended in your hotel room. Most hotels will offer use of a hotel safe at the front desk or an electronic in-room safe (for which you can set your own personal number). Please utilize this.

Pickpockets may create a sudden distraction. In any sort of puzzling street situation, try to keep one hand on your wallet or money belt. If an encounter with a local turns out to be long and complicated and involves money or your valuables, be very careful.

Icelandic Cuisine

Most visitors are surprised by the freshness, variety, and overall quality of Icelandic cuisine. For a small island whose arable land is limited by climate and geography, ecology-minded Iceland has developed ingenious techniques for raising and preparing produce, fish, and livestock that is organic, non-GMO and free of chemicals. In Reykjavik you'll find innovative chefs experimenting with New Nordic and other cutting-edge cuisines, plus plenty of ethnic eateries. But here are some traditional specialties to try.

- **Reykjavik Hot Dogs:** A hot dog usually consisting of a blend of beef, pork, and sometimes lamb.
- **Kjötsupa:** *Traditional Icelandic lamb served with roasted herbs such as **blóðberg** (Arctic thyme).*
- **Skyr:** A creamy Icelandic yogurt similar to Greek yogurt in taste and served with berries.
- **Plökkfiskur:** Mashed fish stew made with potatoes, onions and cod or haddock, mashed up with herbs (such as dill or parsley), and white pepper.
- **Hardfiskur:** Fish jerky that is often served with Icelandic butter and **rúgbraud**, a dark rye bread baked in an earthen pot buried next to a hot spring
- **Hákarl:** Shark meat that has been fermented underground till nearly (but not quite) rotten, then hung to dry for four to six weeks.

Greenlandic Cuisine

As an island nation covered in permanent glaciers with a harsh climate and little vegetation, the sea is Greenland's most important source of food. Before the island's colonization and the introduction of international trade, many spices, fruits, and vegetables were not available, and the native Inuit's relied only on what they could hunt or gather. As such, meals in Greenland are high in protein and primarily utilize seafood (seal, whale, fish, or shell-fish) or less common land meats (reindeer, lamb, musk-ox, foxes, or bird), all of which can be served boiled, dried, frozen, fermented, or raw. Many dishes are served with root vegetables like onion, potatoes, and turnips and rice or barley. Crowberries and blueberries are used for cakes and other desserts with angelica, rhubarb, turnips, and bluebells eaten as snacks, raw or cooked. Much of Greenland's cuisine is based off the native Inuits but due to their close contact and shared history, has been influenced by the Netherlands and the nearby neighbors of Britain, America, and Canada. While some Greenlandic dishes will look similar due to the influence, the island is heavily set in its Inuit heritage. Here are some popular Greenland dishes.

- **Kiviak:** An Inuit delicacy where a seal is gutted and, with the blubber still intact, filled with whole sea king birds. Stuffed with birds, the seal is sowed together and sealed airtight with more blubber, to prevent flies. The 'seal bag' is buried for three to twelve months to ferment before being dug up in the winter for a birthday or wedding celebration.
- **Mattak:** The raw hide of a narwhal or white whale. It is prepared with either blubber or dried reindeer meat and often called Greenlandic chewing gum or Greenlandic candy.
- **Suassat:** Greenland's national dish. A soup traditionally made with seal but whale, reindeer, or seabirds are common substitutes. The soup is also made with onions and potatoes, seasoned with salt and pepper, and served with rice or barley.
- **Arfivik:** Smoked whale meat served with onions and potatoes.

Shopping: What to Buy, Customs, Shipping & More

There may be scheduled visits to local shops during your adventure. There is no requirement to make a purchase during these stops, and any purchase made is a direct transaction with the shop in question, subject to the vendor's terms of purchase. O.A.T. is not responsible for purchases you make on your trip or for the shipment of your purchases.

Returns

If you discover an issue with an item, you should contact the vendor directly and expect that any resolution will take longer than it would in the U.S. We recommend that you keep a copy of all your receipts, invoices, or contracts, along with the shop's contact information. Keep in mind, local practice may vary from U.S. standards, so don't assume that you have a certain number of days after the purchase to speak up or that you are guaranteed a refund.

Crafts & Souvenirs

Iceland

Hand-knit Icelandic sweaters and other woolens, including hats, mittens, and jackets, are widely available. Icelanders enjoy contemporary Scandinavian-style housewares and accessories so you'll find a good selection of these, many with Icelandic themes. The Laugavegur and Skolavordustigur shopping streets in the heart of Reykjavik have contemporary boutiques and shops offering European fashions and accessories, plus unique Icelandic designs and jewelry.

VAT: Although prices are inflated by a hefty Value-Added Tax (between 11-24%), non-European Union citizens can receive a refund. For more details and a list of all tax-free shops, ask at the tourist office for a copy of the Tax-Free Shopping Guide.

Greenland

Tupilaks—small figures carved in bone, tooth, or stone, like ones that traditionally represented the spirits of ancestors—are souvenirs typical of Greenland's Inuit culture. You'll also find soapstone carvings, *tugtupit* precious stones, and other crafts and nature-based items.

U.S. Customs Regulations & Shipping Charges

For all things related to U.S. Customs, the ultimate authority is the U.S. Bureau of Customs & Border Protection. Their website, www.cbp.gov has the answers to the most frequently asked questions. Or you can call them at **1-877-227-5511**.

The top three points to know are:

- At time of writing, your personal duty-free allowance is \$800 for items brought with you. Items totaling more than \$800 are subject to duty fees.
- **Items shipped home are always subject to duty when received in the U.S.** Even when the shop has offered to include shipping and duties in the price, this typically means shipping to the nearest customs facility and payment of the export duties—not door-to-door shipping or payment of the import duties. All additional duties or shipping charges would be your responsibility. Unless an item is small enough to send by parcel service (like FedEx), chances are you will need to arrange shipping or pick-up once the item is in the U.S. and will need to pay customs duties.
- It is illegal to import products made from endangered animal species. U.S. Customs & Border Protection will seize these items, as well as most furs, coral, tortoise shell, reptile skins, feathers, plants, and items made from animal skins.

DEMOGRAPHICS & HISTORY

Iceland

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 39,769 square miles
- **Capital:** Reykjavik
- **Languages:** Icelandic is the official language; English, Scandinavian languages, and German are also spoken.
- **Ethnicity:** Norse/Celtic descent 94%, foreign-born 6%
- **Location:** Iceland is an island bordered by the North Atlantic Ocean.
- **Geography:** Poised atop the geologically active mid-Atlantic Ridge, where tectonic plates are separating as Europe drifts away from North America, Iceland is one of only two places in the world where an undersea mid-ocean ridge rises above sea level. Iceland's 3,088 miles of coastline are punctuated by numerous rugged fjords, while some 63 percent of the mountainous interior is treeless tundra.
- **Population:** 376,248 (estimate)
- **Religions:** Lutheran Church of Iceland 73.8%, Roman Catholic 3.6%, Reykjavik Free Church 2.9%, Hafnarfjordur Free Church 2%, The Independent Congregation 1%, other 3.9%, none 5.6%, and unspecified 7.2%
- **Time Zone:** Iceland is on UTC ("Greenwich Mean Time"), five hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is 11am in Reykjavik.

National Holidays: Iceland

In addition to the holidays listed below, Iceland celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit **www.timeanddate.com/holidays**.

01/01 New Year's Day

Late April First Day of Summer (moves each year)

05/01 Labor Day

Late May Ascension Day (moves each year)

06/17 Icelandic Republic Day

12/24 Christmas Eve

12/25 Christmas Day

12/26 Second Day of Christmas

12/31 New Year's Eve

Iceland: A Brief History

Geologically speaking, Iceland is one of the youngest places on earth, and thanks to its ongoing volcanic and glacial activity, you can still see it being born. The first known human to take note of this roiling mass of fire and ice was the Greek explorer Pytheas, who wrote of an island he called "Ultima Thule." He described it as a realm of ferocious storms and even more ferocious, dog-headed people. That did not stop Irish monks (called *papars*) from settling here around 700 AD. They left after Norse settlers began arriving in the ninth century. Many were fierce Vikings, as you would imagine, but just as many were Scandinavian farmers, herders, and traders looking for better opportunities. It was one of these Norwegian farmers, Flóki Vilgerdason, who gave the island its current name, Ísland or Iceland.

By 930 AD, there were many settlements, all connected through commerce, intermarriage, and various agreements over land and resources. Realizing that they needed some sort of government to define and uphold laws, they wrote a constitution and created the Althing (*Alþing* in Icelandic), which exists today as the oldest active legislative assembly in the world. The Althing met at the natural amphitheater of Thingvellir, where local chieftains gathered annually to elect leaders. Among the decision made there was the adoption of Christianity by Iceland in 1000 AD, notable for the fact that it took place peacefully. The 11th and 12th centuries were a peaceful Golden Age when the literary tradition of the Icelandic saga developed. But by the early thirteenth century, Iceland descended into clan warfare.

That internal strife left an opening for Norwegian King Haakon to claim Iceland in 1262—a claim superseded in 1397 by Denmark, who held the island for the next 600 years. It was an era beset by trade restrictions, pirates, kidnappings, plagues, crop failures, and a series of devastating volcanic eruptions that caused about 20% of the population to die of starvation. By the 19th century, Icelandic nationalism was on the rise. Between 1855 and 1918, Iceland won increasing degrees of autonomy, with Iceland becoming a sovereign nation under the Danish Crown in 1918. In 1944, following a referendum in which 97% of Icelanders voted to sever ties with the Danish Crown, the establishment of the free Republic of Iceland took place in a ceremony symbolically located at Thingvellir, site of the ancient Althing.

During World War II, Iceland's vulnerability as a potential Nazi target led the British to occupy the defenseless island. The Icelandic government allowed US troops to move in in 1941. When the US military left in 1946, it retained the right to re-establish a base at Keflavík should war threaten again. In the postwar years, Iceland only reluctantly became a member of NATO, with the provision that its citizens would not participate in any offensive action, and that no foreign troops would be based there during peacetime. That proviso fell apart with the Cold War. The US only relinquished its base at Keflavik in 2006. Today Iceland is a multi-party parliamentary democracy and a member of NATO.

At the dawn of the 21st century, Iceland enjoyed one of the highest standards of living in the world, but it was severely affected by the global economic downturn. In 2008, the government took over all three of Iceland's failing major banks, but weeks later had to apply to the International Monetary Fund for emergency aid. The coalition government was forced to resign, and the new Prime Minister formally applied for EU membership in 2009.

The ensuing years saw a series of banking scandals and controversies around the repayment of loans to the IMF and the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. Perhaps because of this, most Icelanders do not wish to pursue EU membership. Meanwhile, the Icelandic economy has been making a tremendous comeback, thanks to a surge in tourism.

Greenland

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 836,330 square miles
- **Capital:** Nuuk (Godthab)
- **Languages:** Greenlandic (West Inuit) is the official language; Danish and English are also spoken.
- **Ethnicity:** Inuit 88%, Danish and others 12%
- **Location:** Greenland is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean, Greenland Sea, Arctic Ocean, and Baffin Bay.
- **Population:** 56,583 (estimate)
- **Religions:** Evangelical Lutheran, traditional Inuit spiritual beliefs
- **Time Zone:** Greenland is two hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 6am in New York, it is 8am in Nuuk.

Politically, Greenland is connected to the Kingdom of Denmark, but in 2008 it won a measure of independence due to a referendum on self-rule that passed with a 75% approval rating.

National Holidays: Greenland

In addition to the holidays listed below, Greenland celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit **www.timeanddate.com/holidays**.

01/01 New Year's Day

01/06 Epiphany

05/01 May Day

05/16 General Prayer Day

06/21 National Day

12/25 Christmas Day

12/26 Boxing Day

12/31 New Year's Eve

Greenland: A Brief History

Greenland was one of the last places on the planet to be settled, with the earliest known humans (the Saqqaq culture) crossing from northern Canada about 4000 years ago. By 2400–1300 BC, a second group of Paleo-Eskimoes (called Dorset I or Independence I) arrived. They left large, snow-cutting knives that indicate they built igloos. After a 900-year gap when Greenland appears to have been uninhabited, an Inuit group called Dorset 2 settled in the island's north. Around the tenth century, they were followed by the Thule culture, which spread along the east and west coasts. Thule people developed the kayak, harpoon, and dogsled. Today's Inuit are descended from the Thule and are known as the Inussuk.

Norse sailors from Iceland had sighted Greenland by 900 AD, but it wasn't until 985 AD that Eric the Red created a long-term settlement here. It was not a voluntary move—Eric had been banished from Iceland (just as he had been banished from Norway) over disputes that ended up with several of his neighbors dead. The matter was settled in the Althing (assembly), which ordered Erik to leave Iceland for three years. He landed on the western coast of Greenland, near present-day Nuuk. At the time, the area was uninhabited. (The ancestors of today's Inuit inhabitants migrated here around AD 1200.)

When his exile was over, Erik returned to Iceland telling people about the marvelous “Greenland” he had settled. According to his saga, it was an intentional bit of marketing because he knew “green land” would sound enticing to those whose land was poor, and who had just barely survived a famine. He set out at the head of 25 Viking ships, but only 14 made it. At its peak during the 13th century, Greenland's Vikings numbered around 5,000 souls. By the 1500s they had either disappeared or died out, and no one knows exactly why. It could have been that they died of disease or attrition; they might have brought on environmental catastrophe by over-clearing forests and causing soil erosion; they may have died in conflicts with Inuit people; from the effects of climate change; or all the above.

With the Viking demise, the Inuit had Greenland largely to themselves for several centuries, save for the occasional visit from Norse or English whalers. King Christian IV claimed the island for Denmark in 1605, after European interest had been revived by the search for a Northwest Passage. But it wasn't until 1721 when the Norwegian missionary Hans Egede arrived that settlement by Europeans resumed. Egede found the Inuit receptive to Christianity and established the

Evangelical Lutheranism that is still practiced in Greenland today. For the next 200 years or so, the territory was disputed by Norway and Denmark. In 1933, the Permanent Court of International Justice ruled in favor of Denmark.

By the late 1930s, Greenland's strategic North Atlantic position prompted Nazi Germany to extend its war operations there. In response, the Danish ambassador to the United States, Henrik Kaufmann, signed a treaty with the U.S. allowing for the building of bases and the protection of Danish Greenlanders against German aggression. He did this without the knowledge of the Danish government, and was subsequently accused of treason. But Kaufmann held firm and even encouraged other Danish diplomats to act on their own against Nazi aggression. The U.S. Thule air base is still operational on Greenland.

Greenlanders have held full Danish citizenship since 1953 and have exercised home rule in domestic affairs, with their own parliament, since 1979. In 2009, a special referendum was passed to increase Greenland's self-rule, giving the local population more control over the courts, police, and coast guard. Although it was a step towards autonomy, Greenland's economy remains very much tied up with Denmark's. But as part of the 2009 rule, Greenland can declare full independence if it wishes; it would have to be approved by a referendum. Most people in Greenland and Denmark believe that full political independence lies in Greenland's future. The question is a matter of pace.

RESOURCES

Suggested Reading

Iceland

Woman at 1,000 Degrees by Hallgrímur Helgason (2018, Fiction) Octogenarian Herra makes an appointment for her own cremation, then waits out her time in her garage. Here she occupies herself with a hand grenade, a Facebook account, anonymous digital attacks on her family, and a head full of memories that take us to World War II Europe, the Westmann Islands, Argentina, Reykjavik and back. A roller coaster of a ride that is at once bawdy, outlandish, gleeful and tragic.

The Little Book of the Icelanders by Alda Sigmundsdóttir (2018, Nonfiction) Here are 50 lively essays on the quirks, habits, and inscrutable customs of Iceland.

Seawomen of Iceland: Survival on the Edge by Margaret Willson (2016, Nonfiction). Margaret Willson, an anthropologist and former seawoman, dives into the maritime culture of seawomen in Iceland, who have been fishing in Iceland for centuries, a job deemed a predominantly male profession by most of Iceland and the rest of the world.

Butterflies in November by Audur Ava Olafsdóttir (2014, Fiction) Things are going badly for our unnamed narrator, a young woman who gets dumped twice in one day and also finds herself the reluctant caregiver of her friend's four-year old deaf-mute son. But when the boy helps her choose a winning lottery number, the two set out on a picaresque adventure along Iceland's Ring Road.

Burial Rites by Hannah Kent (2013, Fiction) A novel based on the true story of Agnes Magnúsdóttir, an Icelandic woman waiting to be executed for murder in 1829. Since there are no prisons for women she is sent to wait out her execution on a remote farm. Previous travelers highly recommended it, but also mentioned there are a few tough scenes.

Greenland

This Cold Heaven by Gretel Ehrlich (2003, Memoir) The author describes her travels throughout Greenland, a world of awesome and treacherous beauty, and shares the history and cultural anthropology of the people who live here.

The Sea Road by Margaret Elphinstone (2000, Fiction) The accidental discovery of North America is told by a Viking woman, Gudrid who lives on the edge of the known world in a Greenland settlement.

The Greenlanders by Jane Smiley (1998, Literature) This marvelously researched novel recreates life in the Viking settlements in Greenland that disappeared 500 years ago. Smiley delves into the medieval colonies, their struggles to survive in the harsh environment, contacts with indigenous people and causes of their disappearance. It includes the tale of the Norse discovery of North America.

Suggested Films & Videos

Iceland

Under an Arctic Sky (2017, Documentary) Can you imagine surfing the frigid waters of northern Iceland during the biggest storm in decades, along a beach ringed by frozen white mountains and illuminated by the shimmering green curtains of the Northern Lights? You will, after watching this crew of daredevil surfers go in search of the perfect wave.

Of Horses and Men (2013, Drama) This cult classic examines the intense, funny, and almost spiritual relationships between men, women, and horses. Set amidst the colossal landscapes of rural Iceland, the story reveals how the horses enjoy more honest, intimate and unselfconscious connections than their neurotic human masters.

The Secret Life of Walter Mitty (2013, Comedy) Ben Stiller plays James Thurber's famous daydreamer in this updated story of a meek functionary in the photo department at *Life* magazine. Mitty withstands the abuse of his boss, and lets his feelings for a co-worker go unspoken—until some valuable negatives go missing and he sets out in search of them. Greenland and Iceland are the spectacular backdrops where Walter's real adventures finally surpass the ones he had previously only imagined.

Journey to the Center of the Earth (2008, Adventure) This latest version of the Jules Verne sci-fi classic stars Brendan Fraser, and was shot in and around Snæfellsjökull National Park.

Jar City (2006, Drama) In this tangled bit of Nordic noir, a Reykjavik detective tries to piece together the connections between a cold case from 1974 and a recent death. A good choice if you like gritty TV police procedurals like "Prime Suspect." In Icelandic with subtitles.

Greenland

A Polar Year (2018, Documentary) A Danish teacher accepts a job in a remote coastal village in Greenland with no running water and a population of 80—nearly all of whom are suspicious of the newcomer. The teacher forges a connection with a charming Tunumiit boy, Asser Boassen, and gradually comes to understand the enormous challenges facing the Inuit people.

Journey to Greenland (2016, Comedy) Two unemployed French actors (both named Thomas) travel to the Inuit community of Kullorsuaq, where the father of one of the two Thomases lives. There's something for everyone in this lighthearted film that looks and feels like a travelogue, was shot like a documentary, and is essentially a buddy flick.

Smilla's Sense of Snow (1997) The mysterious death of an Inuit boy in Copenhagen leads Smilla, an arctic ice researcher, to a mining town in Greenland, where some horrific secrets (of the corporate and cosmic kind) are revealed. The international cast includes Julia Ormond, Gabriel Byrne, Richard Harris and Vanessa Redgrave.

Useful Websites

Overseas Adventure Travel

www.oattravel.com

Overseas Adventure Travel Frequently Asked Questions

www.oattravel.com/faq

International Health Information/CDC (Centers for Disease Control)

www.cdc.gov/travel

Electricity & Plugs

www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plugs-and-sockets

Foreign Exchange Rates

www.xe.com/currencyconverter
www.oanda.com/converter/classic

ATM Locators

www.mastercard.com/atm
www.visa.com/atmlocator

World Weather

www.intellicast.com
www.weather.com
www.wunderground.com

Basic Travel Phrases (80 languages)

www.travlang.com/languages

Packing Tips

www.travelite.org

U.S. Customs & Border Protection

www.cbp.gov/travel

Transportation Security Administration (TSA)

www.tsa.gov

National Passport Information Center

www.travel.state.gov

Holidays Worldwide

www.timeanddate.com/holidays

History & Culture

en.wikipedia.org

Useful Apps

Flight Stats

Track departures, arrivals, and flight status

LoungeBuddy

Get access to premium airport lounges around the world

Timeshifter

Personalized tips for avoiding jetlag, based on neuroscience and your own data

GoogleMaps

Maps and directions anywhere in the world

Triposo

City guides, walking maps, and more – and it works offline

Rome2rio

Where to go, what to see, and what to do in more than 160 countries

Flush or Sit or Squat

Find a clean toilet anywhere

Uber

Ride sharing around the world

Visa Plus and Mastercard Cirrus

ATM locations

Shows the location of the nearest ATM in your network

TunnelBear

Provides a secure VPN (virtual private network) that will encrypt your browsing data when you use a public WiFi network

What's App, Skype, or Signal

WiFi calling anywhere in the world

Duolingo, FLuentU, or Babbel

Learn dozens of foreign languages

Google Translate

Fast and simple translations

XE

Currency conversions

SizeGuide

Clothing and shoe sizes in all countries

Best Units Converter

Converts currency, mileage, weights, and many other units of measurement

Tourlina

For women only, it connects you with other female travelers

Happy Cow

Locate vegan and vegetarian eateries in 195 countries

Eatwith

Dine with locals all over the world

Meetup

Connects you with locals who share your interests

Skyview

Identifies constellations and heavenly bodies

Travello

Find travel friends on the road

ALIX for One

Created by and for women, it identifies solo-friendly dining spots in major international cities

TripWhistle

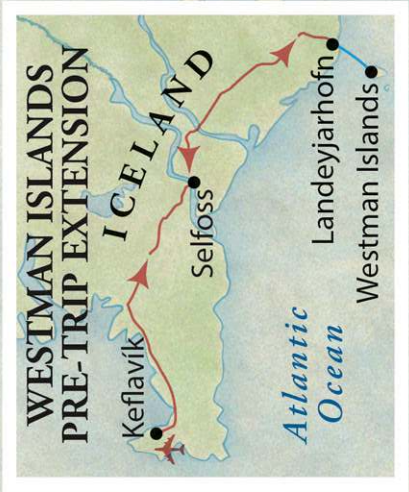
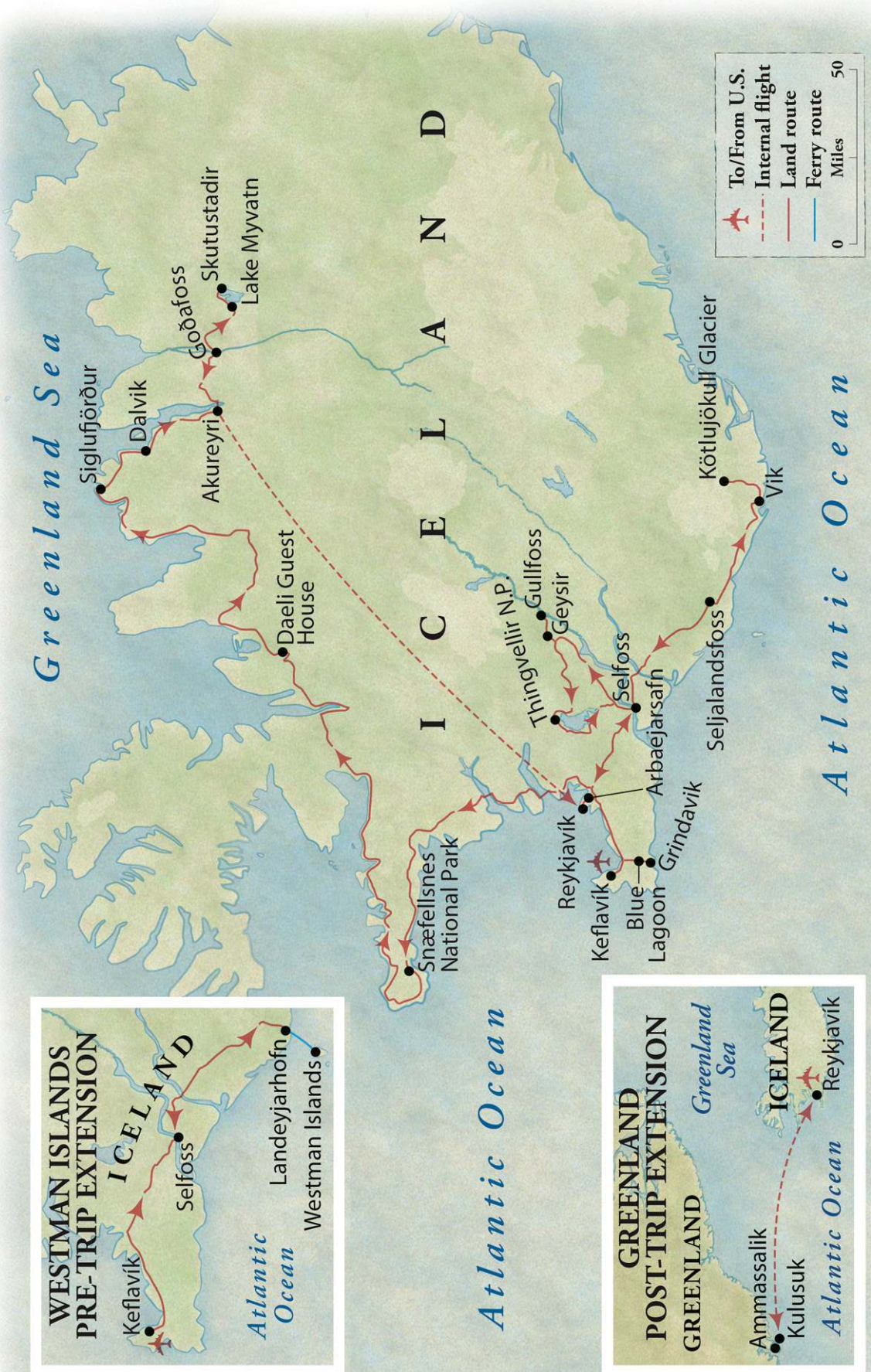
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from Edina, MN



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from Foster City, CA



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23-time traveler from Oakland, CA



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