

# ICELAND 4X4 SELF DRIVE ADVENTURE | 14 Days



\*Guide decides on final routing as per current conditions on the day of travel



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Iceland, the land of fire, ice and northern lights, can you think of a better way to see it than by 4x4 along the remote tracks forged by Vikings? This adventure takes in the “must see” sights and then using our Arctic modified Hilux 4x4s we access the remote and wild central highlands of the country. You will see parts of Iceland rarely seen by others—this is not the usual tourist route on the tar ring road around Iceland. This adventure is timed so that there is a good chance of catching the northern lights whilst having enough daylight to explore Iceland during the day. During the adventure we stay in mountain huts, comfortable hotels, guest houses and hostals.

Northern Lights can be visible in Iceland from mid-August throughout winter. Staying in very remote areas, such as the highlands, gives optimal chances of seeing the lights. These areas offer complete darkness. Light pollution is one of the main factors of Northern Lights sightings. Other factors that impact sighting chances the most are solar storm activity and cloud coverage. *Northern lights are a natural phenomenon and sightings cannot be guaranteed.*

## Daily Itinerary

- D1: Reykjavík:** Arrive and catch the Flybus to our hotel. Free afternoon to explore the city before enjoying the welcome dinner at a centrally located restaurant. Please book your flights to arrive by midday at the latest.  
(Meals included: Dinner; Accommodation: 4-star hotel)
- D2: Þingvellir - Þjórsárdalur Valley:** After breakfast we will transfer from the hotel to Arctic Trucks headquarters. After a briefing and a tour around the Arctic Trucks headquarters the group will understand the basics of the vehicles and will be able to tackle the diverse conditions they will face during the tour. Arctic Trucks is the company that has made it possible to explore the remote areas of Iceland in guided self-drive tours, driving cars like those used in the well-known BBC television show Top Gear, in their journey to the Magnetic North Pole. Our first destination is the historic Thingvellir (Þingvellir) National Park, home of the ancient Icelandic Viking parliament that is registered as a UNESCO world heritage site. Next up we head to Þjórsárdalur valley where sights include Háifoss waterfall, Gjáin gorge, Hjalparfoss waterfall and great views of Hekla volcano.  
(Meals included: Breakfast/Lunch; Accommodation: Hellishólar Guesthouse)
- D3: Þórsmörk:** After breakfast we start heading into the highlands. If conditions allow, we take a gravel road and drive between two glaciers on the rutted tracks and crossing a few unbridged glacial rivers before we arrive at Þórsmörk valley at the foot of Mýrdalsjökull glacier and Katla volcano. It is impossible to reach the valley by regular vehicle; the guide will teach the group how to cross the rivers and why we need to deflate the tyres of the truck on the way. Highlights of the day include Þórsmörk, Emstrur, Álftavatn and Hrafninnusker. We arrive at the mountain hut in the late afternoon and enjoy a BBQ dinner.  
(Meals included: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner; Accommodation: Hvanngil Mountain Hut)
- D4: Langisjór & Eldgjá:** After breakfast, we drive through Mælifellssandur towards Langisjór lake with a stop at Eldgjá – the world’s largest volcanic canyon. We enjoy a full day in this beautiful environment, experiencing the dramatic contrasts in the vast landscape. We continue through Landmannalaugar, a highland paradise where the extraordinary colours of the area are a photographer’s paradise. On the journey we will drive on mountain tracks, gravel roads and crossing some rivers.  
(Meals included: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner; Accommodation: Hrauneyjar Highland Centre)
- D5: Landmannalaugar – Laugafell:** We start the day at the borders of the warm river at Landmannalaugar. After relaxing and enjoying a bath in the natural hot river we drive via Sprengisandur mountain road and enjoy highland driving at its best. The goal for the day is to get to Laugafell mountain hut, making stops at stunning locations along the way. Afternoon arrival at the hut where you can enjoy bathing in the natural springs and a BBQ dinner prepared by your guide.  
(Meals included: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner; Accommodation: Laugafell Mountain Hut)



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**D6: Laugafell - Mývatn:** Full day of driving via the Sprengisandur mountain road northbound to Mývatn. This is Iceland's uninhabited interior which is a vast, barren and black desert. Travel time depends on conditions and stops will be made as time allows. We anticipate a lot of driving today, arriving in the afternoon at Mývatn.

(Meals included: Breakfast/Lunch; Accommodation: Vogafjós guesthouse)

**D7: Mývatn:** Today you explore the unforgettable Lake Mývatn area, a geological wonderland. Highlights include Dimmuborgir lava formations and caves, Krafla caldera and the Námaskarð geothermal area. Afternoon free, we recommend visiting Mývatn Nature Baths.

(Meals included: Breakfast/Lunch; Accommodation: Vogafjós guesthouse)

**D8: Askja:** Day tour to Askja, a huge caldera (deep volcanic crater) that is still in the making. We travel on rough gravel roads and tracks navigating through rugged lava fields to reach Askja. This area was used as one of the main astronaut training locations for NASA's Apollo 11 lunar landing in 1969. Highlights of the day include Askja caldera, Öskjuvatn lake and Herðubreiðarlindir oasis. Return to Lake Mývatn in the late afternoon.

(Meals included: Breakfast/Lunch; Accommodation: Vogafjós guesthouse)

**D9: Dettifoss - Ásbyrgi - Akureyri:** Today we leave Mývatn and head to Dettifoss waterfall, the most powerful waterfall in Europe. We continue to Jökulsárgljúfur within Vatnajökull National Park where we explore Ásbyrgi, a forested horse-shoe shaped canyon and the Hljóðaklettur rock formations. On our way to Akureyri, we might stop at Goðafoss waterfall, depending on time and group preference.

(Meals included: Breakfast/Lunch; Accommodation: *Icelandair Hotel Akureyri or Hotel Norðurland*)

**D10: Akureyri:** Rest day. The cars will not be available for use today. There are optional activities available (at your own cost).

(Meals included: Breakfast; Accommodation: *Icelandair Hotel Akureyri or Hotel Norðurland*)

**D11: Kjölur Mountain Road:** Morning free to explore Akureyri, capital of North Iceland. After lunch we head back towards Reykjavik, via the Kjölur mountain road. Conditions of the road vary, and stops will be made along the way as time allows. Evening arrival at the mountain hut where the group will enjoy dinner together.

(Meals included: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner; Accommodation: Hveravellir mountain hut)

**D12: Kjölur – Golden Circle - Laugarvatn:** After breakfast we continue south on the Kjölur mountain road. Depending on conditions it can take some time to get to the main road. Today we will explore the "Golden Circle" with the highlights of Gullfoss waterfall and the Geysir geothermal area.

(Meals included: Breakfast/Lunch; Accommodation: *Minniborgi or Efstidalur*)



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**D13: Borgarfjörður- Reykjavík:** We start the day by driving the Kaldidalur road towards Borgarfjörður and visit Langjökull glacier en-route. Enjoy the “Into the Glacier” tour on a Langjökull glacier and witness the man-made ice cave (tour optional). We stop at Hraunfossar waterfalls before returning to Arctic Trucks headquarters where the 4x4 journey ends. Transfer to our hotel in Reykjavik, check in and relax before enjoying a farewell dinner with the group at the hotel.

(Meals included: Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner; Accommodation: 4-star hotel)

**D14: Depart:** Catch Flybus to the Keflavik International Airport and depart for home.

Meals included: Breakfast

***Please Note: Itinerary Subject to Change – guide decides final routing as per current conditions on the day of travel.***

***Please Read the “In the Know” section at the end of this itinerary for important information about this adventure.***



## ICELAND 4X4 SELF DRIVE ADVENTURE | 14 Days

<p><b>Dates:</b> 25 Aug – 07 Sep 2020 - 4-7 cars</p>	<p><b>Inclusions:</b> Accommodation as per the itinerary including a combination of hotels, guesthouses, hostals and huts (based on the specified hotels <i>or similar</i>); sleeping bags, pillows, pillow slips and sleeping sheet will be supplied for the nights in huts (bed/bunk bed and shared facilities); pick up and drop off at accommodation in Reykjavik to Arctic Trucks HQ; Toyota Hilux AT38 vehicles as specified for 11 days with standard vehicle insurance; two-way radios in vehicles; all breakfasts; 10 lunches; 6 dinners (includes welcome and farewell dinner and 4 dinners in huts); 1 support vehicle with 1-2 local guides depending on group size.</p>
<p><b>Prices:</b> <b>This adventure is priced in the local currency of ISK (Icelandic Kronar), however, the local operator must be paid in EUR, so we have quoted approximate EUR, AUD and USD prices below. The actual amount will depend on exchange rates at the time of payment.</b></p> <p><b>2 people per 4x4:</b> EUR9,996/AUD16,090/USD10,995* per person, double or twin rooms if available</p> <p><b>3 people per 4x4:</b> EUR8,110/AUD14,190/USD9,695* per person, triple share rooms if available</p> <p><b>4 people per 4x4:</b> EUR7,015/AUD11,290/USD7,725* per person, double or twin rooms if available</p> <p><b>Solo traveller in guide car:</b> EUR5,738/AUD9,240/USD6,325* per person, single room if available</p> <p><b>Single supplement:</b> EUR1,455/AUD2,345/USD1,600* where single rooms available</p> <p><i>*Prices assume a minimum of 4 vehicles, maximum of 7 vehicles (plus support vehicles). 2021 pricing is estimated only and will be confirmed in early 2020. All prices above subject to exchange rate variance. Terms and Conditions apply (see booking form).</i></p>	<p><b>Exclusions:</b> Airfares; arrival/departure transfers; fuel; meals or beverages other than stated in the above inclusions; shower fees in huts; optional tours and activities (e.g. into the glacier tour on day 13 ISK17,688 per person); travel insurance (highly recommended); visas (if required); vaccinations (if required); vehicle excess; local tips; any fees or taxes that may be implemented by landowners, the government, service providers etc; any service not specifically listed under "included".</p> <p><b>Why isn't fuel included in the price?</b> Because exchange rates can fluctuate a lot, the least expensive way to pay for the fuel is for you to pay this directly to the car hire company six weeks before the tour starts. That way no currency changes or fuel price fluctuations affect the price. The fuel cost is ISK174,240 per car – the car hire company will send us a payment link via email which we will forward to you to pay on your credit card when due. This payment will go direct to the car hire company not via Self Drive Adventures.</p> <p><b>More about vehicle insurance:</b> There is a EUR3,000 self-risk insurance that comes with the truck. The insurance is a collision-waiver and if there is a collision, the customer would have to pay a maximum of EUR3,000. However, this is only in case of a collision. There is no insurance for the body of the trucks, undercarriage, tyres or any damages that happen when driving off legitimate roads (we will stay on approved tracks and roads). The full contract will be provided on booking.</p>
<p><b>Flights:</b> <b>Please do not book flights until you have been advised that we have received deposits from the minimum number of participants for this adventure.</b></p> <p>Flights need to be arranged to arrive in Reykjavik on day 1 so that you are present for the briefing at 5pm followed by a welcome dinner. Otherwise please arrive 1 day prior. We can assist with booking additional nights of pre and post tour accommodation. You can fly out anytime on day 14 from Reykjavik.</p>	

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### In the Know: *Iceland*

This “In the Know” fact sheet provides you important information about traveling in Iceland prior to booking this adventure. As always, if you have any other questions about joining this adventure, please do not hesitate to contact our knowledgeable team.

**Gallery:** This is a general gallery on Iceland: <https://www.selfdriveadventures.com/gallery-ice>

**Mindset:** The mindset required on this adventure is one of flexibility. You need to understand that travelling in Iceland may not always go smoothly as weather may affect our route.

**Vehicles:** Arctic Trucks with their 38” wheels. Arctic Trucks is the company that made the 4x4s used in the Top Gear episode when they drove to the North Pole. Their depot is also their workshop where they convert the cars which you will tour when you collect your 4x4s. Fuel is not included in the price.

**Driving Ability:** The skills required are a driver’s licence and a good dollop of common sense. Some 4x4 experience would be recommended.

**Driving Conditions:** The route is planned largely avoiding main roads with extensive travel off road and on remote tracks, trails and through river crossings. All crossings will be made first by the local guide and you will be given guidance on how to drive the terrain. You drive on the right-hand side of the road (left hand drive car).



**Convoy Size:** The minimum number of 4x4s in our convoy is 4 and maximum 7 (excluding support vehicles). Most vehicles tend to have two guests, however, up to four can be accommodated. The convoy does travel together, so you need to be willing to be flexible to fit in with the determined start time each day, stops for breaks etc. We try to allow breaks for photos, toilet stops, sightseeing, lunch, morning and afternoon tea but road conditions and travel time for the day may affect how long or how many of these we may have. We have VHF radios in the cars for communication.

**Activity Level:** You will be in and out of the 4x4 quite a lot taking short walks to view sights. A moderate fitness level is recommended as you may walk up to 1 hour at a leisurely pace.

**Weather/Season:** The joke is “If you don’t like the weather, just wait five minutes”. Due to the Gulf Stream, Iceland enjoys a cool, temperate maritime climate; refreshing summers and mild winters. The weather is also affected by the East Greenland polar current curving south-eastwards round the north and east coasts. As a result, sudden weather changes are common, and travellers should prepare accordingly. Temperatures should range between 6-15°C but could also get up to 20°C. There is a chance of rain. We will supply a packing list to help you pack the correct clothing for the weather you will encounter. You can follow the weather report here: <https://en.vedur.is/>

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**Accommodation:** Hotels, guest houses, hostels and huts will be used on this adventure. In the huts (3 nights) you will be in very close quarters in bunk room style accommodation with shared kitchen and ablutions. You may be sharing these bunk rooms with other hikers exploring this area. The ablutions may be in a separate building from your sleeping quarters and you usually need to pay ISK500 (in coins) for a hot shower. You will be provided with a sleeping bag, sleeping bag liner, pillow and pillow slip for the nights in the hut. As your local guide is providing all the meals during your stay in the huts, we request that you assist with meal preparation and clean up. There will often be shared amenities in the hostel/guest house accommodation.

**Food:** See the itinerary inclusions for meals that are included. Food in Iceland is a typical European style, but there are some interesting local specialities to try. Fermented shark (harkal) and the famous Brennivin “fire water” to name a couple. Breakfast is provided every day in hotels and huts and a picnic lunch on the days we are driving. There are 3 nights in mountain huts—dinner is provided on these nights, there is a welcome and farewell dinner included but all other dinners are at your own cost. You may want to buy some snacks for your vehicle especially if you would like to have happy hours. There will be tea/coffee available during the day at mealtimes.

**Escort & Local Guiding:** On this adventure you will be guided by an expert Arctic Trucks English speaking guide. The decision of the guide is final on all matters likely to affect the safety or well-being of any person participating in the trip.

**Flights:** Before booking flights and other arrangements it is your responsibility to confirm with us that we have the minimum number of cars required for this adventure to depart.

**Prices:** Please review the inclusions and exclusions section of the itinerary. Here we have provided our best estimates for additional known costs over and above the inclusions of the adventure.

**Money:** Iceland is almost a cashless society. Credit Cards/Debit Cards are the easiest, most convenient and the usual way to pay for items in Iceland (mainly Visa/Mastercard). ATMs are available in all the towns and there is one at the Keflavik international airport. There is also a bank that handles foreign exchange in the arrivals and departure halls.

**Risks & Health:** All travel can involve some health risks. We are not medical practitioners and, as such, we cannot dispense advice in this matter. You should consult a medical practitioner to cover all the risks and vaccinations required or recommended as there are diseases like Diphtheria, Whooping Cough and others in Iceland. If you don't know where to start—try your GP or a travel clinic. These two websites can also provide current information: <https://www.traveldoctor.com.au/destinations/iceland> and <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>

**Insurance:** We highly recommend that your travel insurance covers emergency evacuation as we will be in remote locations. You could also ask if your insurance will cover the 4x4 hire excess – some cover car excess, but it may not cover a 4x4 driving off-road.

