

Itinerary - Eastfjords to Reykjavík - 9 Days

DAY 1: THE PICTURESQUE TOWN AND FJORD OF SEYÐISFJÖRÐUR

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On the first day of this trip, you will spend some quality time in the very picturesque town and fjord of **Seyðisfjörður**. Seyðisfjörður town is small and at the head of a narrow curving fjord with steep mountains all around. It is full of interesting sights and sounds, and is home to an amazing number of restaurants and cultural activities despite its size; the Blue Church hosts weekly concerts during summer and LungA Art Festival takes place in July. Enjoy strolling around the town and looking at some of the very pretty, traditional Norwegian-Icelandic timber houses, as well as the lovely harbour, home to one of Iceland's main ferry ports. This is where the ferry Norröna docks, with people travelling to Iceland from Denmark, Norway, and further afield. The fjord itself is very beautiful and offers several hiking trails. Fun fact: the inhabitants of Seyðisfjörður do not see the sun for several weeks during the dark months of winter due to the mountains surrounding them. So, when the sun makes an appearance again in February, the town celebrates with a community-driven, free outdoor art event called Art in the Light.

DAY 2: THE EASTFJORDS TO ONE OF ICELAND'S MOST REMOTE AREAS

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How about checking out some remote parts of Iceland? Start your day by going to **Jökulsá á Dal** river, once one of the biggest glacial rivers in Iceland, but now very much changed because of the **Kárahnjúkar** hydroelectric power plant. There is a viewpoint at the eastern edge of the bridge with great views into the gorge, which is 70 m wide and 40 m deep. Go to **Egilsstaðir** town and enjoy beautiful views of the sea and the surrounding mountains from the village's natural harbour. You might want a quick soak in the thermal pool close by in **Selárdalur** before carrying on with your day. Next up: **Hellisheiði** mountain road, which is only open to traffic during the summer months. Stay safe and enjoy the astonishing views and breathtaking landscape before reaching the remote fishing village of **Vopnafjörður**. End the day by visiting the northernmost village of Iceland, **Raufarhöfn**, before reaching **Kópasker**. The flat lowlands of **Melrakkaslétta** peninsula is a haven for bird watchers.

DAY 3: EUROPE'S MOST POWERFUL WATERFALL AND LAKE MÝVATN

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Are you ready to be blown away by some breathtaking nature? We hope so because today you will start off by visiting the enormous horseshoe shaped valley of **Ásbyrgi**, surrounded by dark cliffs up to 100 m high, where legend has it that the valley was formed by the footprint of Sleipnir, the Norse god Odin's horse. From Ásbyrgi, there is a short drive to **Hljóðaklettar** (only in summer), a distinctive cluster of columnar rock formations. You then drive to the most powerful waterfall in Europe, **Dettifoss**, dispatching 500 m³ of dark glacial water per second! As if all this wasn't enough, you will be spoilt for choice in the area around **Lake Mývatn** when it comes to beautiful nature and its various forces. Visit the hot spring area at the foothill of **Námafjall** volcanic mountain and the explosion crater **Viti**, easily accessible and a photographic hotspot on the circuit around Lake Mývatn. And if you have time, why not end a long day by bathing in the outdoor lagoon at **Mývatn Nature Baths** before retiring to your accommodation.

DAY 4: WHALES AND BIZARRE LAVA FORMATIONS

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Wake up and experience what it feels like to live in rural Iceland. There is still plenty to see and do in the area around **Lake Mývatn**, but first we recommend that you drive to the town of **Húsavík**, where you can visit a whale museum and even go out to sea to (hopefully) spot the real thing! Remember to allow for at least three extra hours for the sail. From Húsavík, you drive back down to Lake Mývatn, to the interesting geological phenomena **Skútustaðagígur** pseudo craters. Then you can go hunting for trolls turned to stone in the unique recreational area of **Dimmuborgir** with its bizarre lava formations and caves. Birdlife is abundant in the area around the lake as well so take your time today and enjoy!

DAY 5: WATERFALL OF THE GODS AND CAPITAL OF THE NORTH

First up today is the magnificent "Waterfall of the Gods", **Goðafoss**, where you can spend some time walking

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to the different viewpoints and marvel at the waterfall's power. Carry on your drive through the countryside heading for **Eyjafjörður** fjord, one of the country's longest fjords and home to the "Capital of the North", **Akureyri**. Here you can spend time strolling around the shops, visit some of the museums, churches, and the botanical garden; check out some of the many restaurants and cafés on offer, and maybe even visit the fantastic local thermal pool with its many slides, and other activities. End the day here, or drive a bit further along the fjord where you will find the pretty fishing village of **Dalvík**, where you could also end the day. Breathe in the fresh air mixed with scents of fish, go swimming in the local pool and visit the village's pretty church and charming harbour.

DAY 6: ICELAND'S LONGEST FJORD, ROCK MONSTERS, SEA BIRDS, AND SEALS

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Get ready for a busy day! If you have time, you can add an extra day to your itinerary to fully enjoy all the attractions mentioned. You start by visiting the beautiful village **Siglufjörður**, located in a fjord with the same name. On your way, you can visit **Hrísey** island, reachable by ferry from **Árskógssandur** and interesting for bird-watchers. At Siglufjörður, enjoy the mountain views and general atmosphere. Go down to the harbour and visit the interesting Herring Era Museum. Next up is the village of **Hofsós**, where the interesting Icelandic Emigration Centre, with exhibitions on Icelandic emigration to Canada and the USA in the late 19th century, comes highly recommended. There is also a thermal pool with an amazing ocean view here. Then you can visit **Hólar**, a former bishopric, and the most important historical site in northern Iceland. Carry on your drive and you will get a chance to visit a traditional turf church from the 19th century, **Víðimýrarkirkja**, as well as the lovely folk museum of **Glaumbær**. You will also see **Kolugljúfur** gorge with many waterfalls, and a stop at **Borgarvirki** volcanic plug is also recommended. Finally, you will see **Hvítserkur** rock, rising from the sea like a prehistoric monster. See if you can spot the colonies of sea birds and seal breeding grounds there. End your day in the peace and quiet of Northwest Iceland.

DAY 7: SEAL SPOTTING, HOME OF ERIK THE RED, AND PRETTY VILLAGES

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You might have seen some seals yesterday, but today is still a great day to see if you can spot some more! Start the day by visiting **Illugastaðir** in **Húnaflói** bay, and see if you can spot any seals from there. The seals inhabit the skerries near Illugastaðir all year round, and curious seals swim quite near to the shore. Carry on your drive and visit **Hvammstangi** village, where you can visit the Icelandic Seal Center. Next, you drive through **Hrútafjörður** fjord and take the mountain road Laxárdalsvegur to **Laxárdalur** valley, the site of one of the most impressive Icelandic Sagas, Laxdæla Saga. We recommend a stop at **Eiríksstaðir** Viking longhouse on your way, where you can step back in time and experience the lifestyle of 1000 years ago. On to **Stykkishólmur**, a beautiful town by the sea, where you can visit some of the village's lovely old houses and interesting museums, and finally the lovely small town of **Grundarfjörður** and its beautiful surroundings, dominated by the mountain **Kirkjufell**.

DAY 8: THE SNÆFELLSNES PENINSULA TO WEST ICELAND

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Today you explore the **Snæfellsnes** peninsula, before ending the day in the west of Iceland. From **Grundarfjörður**, head west to drive around the peninsula, through several very pretty towns by the sea. Now brace yourselves, as you are about to enter a place of (supposed) supernatural powers - Snæfellsjökull glacier and volcano, where Jules Verne based his novel "Journey to the Centre of the Earth". A view to the glacier dominates the park, but it is only visible on relatively bright days. Highlights in the park include walks on **Djúpalónssandur** beach, known for its lava formations, pebble stones, and trial stones for strength. **Arnarstapi** and walks by the picturesque cliffs is another highlight, especially in the summer when the birdlife can be enjoyed simultaneously. Carry on your drive and reach the friendly town of **Borgarnes**. Situated in the beautiful **Borgarfjörður** fjord, Borgarnes is home to the fantastic Settlement Center and many Saga sites. End your day here or carry on for another half an hour or so to end your day in the port town of **Akranes**. Enjoy the views over to Reykjavík and across Faxaflói bay.

DAY 9: WEST ICELAND TO REYKJAVÍK

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Start the day by exploring some of the main sites in **Borgarfjörður** fjord. Here you will find **Deildartunguhver**, the most powerful natural hot spring in the world, as well as **Grábrók** crater, and **Barnafoss** and **Hraunfossar**, two beautiful waterfalls, located close to the road. Furthermore, you can visit one of Iceland's most important historical sites, **Reykholt**, where the famous writer and political leader Snorri Sturluson (1179-1261), author of



the Snorra-Edda, lived and was subsequently killed. You could then go swimming in the recreational area of **Húsafell**. On the way back to Reykjavík, you drive through **Hvalfjörður** fjord, one of Iceland's largest and most picturesque fjords, where you could add a couple of hours to your trip and hike up to Iceland's highest waterfall, **Glymur**, at 198 m. End the day in Reykjavík and enjoy the city's many attractions.