Discovering Our Planet Together



Wild Iceland Explorer

Explore a Microcosm of Iceland in the Remote Highlands & Snaefellsnes Peninsula

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Trip Details:

Days
9 Days / Jul–Aug

Price
From $13995

Wild Iceland Explorer

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Deep canyons draped in lime-green moss. Mighty waterfalls that plummet over basalt cliffs. Ancient volcanoes capped with glaciers, and hot springs simmering with steam. Ice fields spawning meltwater rivers. Puffins nesting in cliffside colonies above the frigid ocean where whales and seals swim. Few places on Earth can match Iceland for its vast array of natural wonders in such a small country. And no itinerary we know of reveals so much in this compact frame. On this rare naturalist-guided adventure into the rugged Highlands and around the Snaefellsnes Peninsula—often called “Iceland in miniature”—experience an impressive sampler of all the features that make Iceland so wondrous. And since we get you well away from the most crowded routes, you’ll have a more magical encounter with the fabled land of fire and ice.

Trip Highlights

Discover Highlights & Hidden Corners on Our Compact Journey

Elude crowds on a less-traveled itinerary to the west of Iceland, including an overland foray by custom 4x4 into the rugged Highlands—a rare inclusion

A Naturalist-Guided Itinerary That's Big on Nature's Best

Explore the Snaefellsnes Peninsula, "Iceland in miniature," with dramatic waterfalls, imposing peaks, pristine beaches, seals, whales and puffins

Diverse Activities Offer Exhilarating Adventures

Get close to Iceland's geology and wildlife as we hike, ride horseback, explore a lava cave, journey by 4x4 to a glacier volcano, and cruise to a puffin colony

Ready to Book? Call an Adventure Specialist at 800-543-8917



Wild Iceland Explorer Itinerary

Explore a Microcosm of Iceland in the Remote Highlands & Snaefellsnes Peninsula

Itinerary at a Glance

Day 1	Keflavik / Reykjavik
Day 2	Snaefellsnes Peninsula
Day 3	Snaefellsjokull / Svodufoss
Day 4	Kirkjufell Mountain / Stykkisholmur
Day 5	Husafell
Day 6	Kaldidalur Valley / Thingvellir National Park / Kerlingjarfjoll
Day 7	Central Highlands
Day 8	Keflavik
Day 9	Depart Reykjavik after exploring the land of fire and ice



Day 1

Keflavik / Reykjavik

Arrive in Reykjavik before your journey into Iceland's wild landscapes

- Explore Iceland's compact, walkable capital
- Join your Expedition Leader for a welcome dinner and preview of the adventure ahead

Arrive at Keflavik International Airport where you are met on arrival and transferred to our hotel in Reykjavik, about a 45-minute drive. If you arrive early, you may store your bags at our conveniently located hotel while you explore this compact, walkable city on your own. This evening, join our Expedition Leader for a welcome dinner at a local restaurant, with an orientation to all the adventures that lie ahead in this geological wonderland.

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Day 2

Snaefellsnes Peninsula

View puffins, explore a seal beach and take a 4x4 ride to a glacier

- Cruise to Akurey Island to view nesting puffins
- Watch harbor seals hauled out along Ytri Tunga Beach
- Take a private 4x4 up Snaefellsjokull Glacier Volcano

Start the morning with a private cruise to a puffin colony on the island of Akurey. The charming Atlantic puffin, with its clown-like visage, is Iceland's most famous bird, and the country is home to more than 60% of the world's population, with 8–10 million in total and 30,000 nesting just offshore from Reykjavik. From Reykjavik's old harbor, we sail 15 minutes to reach the rocky island, offering close-up views of these whimsical seabirds nesting on the cliffs.

Once we're back on shore, we drive to the Snaefellsnes Peninsula. Often called "Iceland in miniature" due to the diversity of natural features found here, this prominent outthrust on Iceland's west coast holds glaciers, mountains, stratovolcanoes, lava fields, waterfalls, wild beaches and marine wildlife. We spend two nights based in the remote coastal hamlet of Budir, giving us ample time to explore the wealth of wild sights.

Ytri Tunga Beach is one of the best places in Iceland to see harbor seals, often hauled out on rocks just offshore. Once extensively hunted for their meat, fat for oil, and waterproof pelts, today they are appreciated by most Icelanders for their place in nature. After lunch in Hellnar, we walk from this traditional fishing village to another, bound for Arnastapi. The scenic trail along the shoreline passes lava cliffs and columnar basalt formations on one side, with mountains and Snaesfellsjokull Glacier on the other.

A much closer view of the glacier is in store this afternoon as we travel by 4x4 up the flanks of Snaefellsjokull. a 700,000-year-old stratovolcano rising nearly 5,000 feet above the sea. Identified by its conical shape, Snaefellsjokull is an imposing sight, formed when layers of lava and ash from successive eruptions build up around the vent, creating steep, sloping sides. Snaefellsjokull is also known as a glacier volcano, totally covered in ice, including its 650-foot-deep summit crater. Its last eruption was in the 3rd century. We get right next to its frozen flanks, climbing from the coast on a scenic drive over a mountain pass with dramatic views of the ice-cloaked volcano before us. On a clear day the views are stupendous, and we may be able to see all the way to Reykjavik. Snaefellsjokull is Iceland's most famous volcano, and many believe it to be one of the world's main centers of mystical energy—it holds the title role in in Jules Verne's 1864 novel *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, who posited that subterranean tubes inside the volcano led deep inside the planet.

Day 3

Snaefellsjokull / Svodufoss

Explore the volcanic landscapes of Snaefellsjokull National Park

- Ride Icelandic horses on a black sand beach
- Walk the rugged coastline past basalt pinnacles and bird cliffs
- Visit Svodufoss below the ice-capped volcano

Start the day with a short hike to see Bjarnarfoss, one of Iceland's most striking waterfalls. At 262 feet high, it falls in a two-tiered plume, plunging off a vertical wall of basalt columns cloaked in bright green vegetation. Tucked into a valley and backdropped by tall mountains, it makes for a photogenic scene, with white spray contrasting against the dark basalt cliff. Then enjoy a gentle horseback ride on the golden sands of Hraunlandarif Beach. This private experience is a special opportunity to get to know the famous Icelandic horse breed—unique to this island nation and fiercely protected: no horses from outside are permitted into Iceland, to keep the strain pure.

Next, we're off to Snaefellsjokull National Park for more scenic exploration. The park is named for the stratovolcano that domiantes it, and we admire dramatic views at every turn. Our tour of the park includes a dramatic coastal walk from Londrangar to Malarrif, passing the towering Londrangar basalt rock pinnacles, Thufubjarg bird cliff teeming with kittiwakes, guillemots and northern fulmars, and the tall white stone tower of Malarrif Lighthouse. We'll also walk on the black sands of Djupalonssandur Beach and peer into Saxholl Crater, accessed via a gradual staircase to the rim. The magnificent view over the collapsed core encompasses sprawling lava fields that surround it, and when skies are clear, you can see all the way to the Atlantic Ocean.

Our last stop is Svodufoss, one of Iceland's most photogenic yet less-visited waterfalls. The broad, powerful cascade sits in front of Snaefellsjokull Glacier, and on a clear day, we can see it and the ice cap together, making for striking photos. Although it's just 32 feet high, Svodufoss's clean drop over a columnar basalt cliff into the Laxa River below is a magnificent sight.

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Day 4

Kirkjufell Mountain / Stykkisholmur

View Iceland's most famous mountain & tour the Eider Center

- Photograph Kirkjufell reflected beside Kirkjufellsfoss
- Explore the fishing village of Stykkisholmur
- Learn about eider down production

Kirkjufell, or “Church Mountain,” is the most photographed geographic profile in Iceland, and we get here early in the morning before most other visitors arrive. Standing alone and visible for great distances, Kirkjufell’s symmetrical sides rise to a rounded cone top. Though it is just 1,519 feet high, its isolation makes it appear taller, since it is the most prominent landmark for miles around. A lake at the base offers a perfect mirror image of the peak on a clear, calm day. The classic image of Kirkjufell includes multi-plumed Kirkjufellsfoss, the series of waterfalls pouring off a basalt cliff in the foreground.

Next, take a walk through the fishing village of Stykkisholmur on the far northern point of the Snaefellsnes Peninsula. The picturesque town was originally a trading post in the 16th century, but its history goes back farther as one of Iceland’s earliest settlements, mentioned in the Sagas, one of the great early works of Icelandic literature. We’ll also view the lighthouse on Sugandisey Island, connected to the town by a bridge. Sykkisholmur sits on Breidafjordur Bay, the largest eiderduck area in the world, and we learn about down production at the Icelandic Eider Center. Through photographs, films and educational exhibits, view nesting, down collection and cleaning, and historic and contemporary methods for producing eiderdown.

This afternoon, we drive to Husafell, an isolated community on the edge of Iceland’s vast, uninhabited interior. Set in the valley carved by Langjokull, Iceland’s second-largest glacier, Husafell is one of Iceland’s hidden secrets—an ancient Viking settlement that today is a place to encounter fire and ice away from crowds.

Day 5

Husafell

Descend into a lava cave before soaking in geothermal baths

- Explore Vidgelmir, Iceland’s largest lava cave
- See Hraunfossar and the churning waters of Barnafoss
- Soak in the geothermal Canyon Baths beneath glacier-clad peaks

Vidgelmir is Iceland’s largest lava cave, and we take a private tour deep into its subterranean tunnels and caverns to witness firsthand the powerful geological forces that have sculpted this land. Volcanic eruptions have shaped not only the physical environment but also the culture of Iceland, and we hear myths and stories, along with science, as we explore this otherworldly terrain beneath the Earth's surface. Also nearby are two of Iceland’s many stupendous waterfalls. Hraunfossar, which means “lava waterfalls,” is actually a wide cataract—a collection of countless creeks and cascades streaming over a lava platform. Just above is Barnafoss, a torrent of foaming white turbulence blasting beneath a lava arch.

This afternoon, another experience is in store that captures the essence of Iceland: a private tour and soak in the Canyon Baths. The geothermal pools enjoy a grand view of the surrounding canyon, mountains and glaciers. Constructed from locally sourced, natural materials like flagstone from the canyon floor, the baths are hot-spring fed pools designed to blend into the environment using the age-old methods that created Snorralaug, a heritage-site pool dating back to the 10th century. The bathhouse is made from salvaged timbers from the area, and even the hooks in the changing room are repurposed horseshoes from a nearby family farm. Following this relaxing escape, return to our stylish hotel and anticipate an outstanding dinner featuring seasonal local fare.

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Day 6

Kaldidalur Valley / Thingvellir National Park / Kerlingjarfjoll

Cross Iceland's volcanic Highlands by custom 4x4

- Travel through the rugged Kaldidalur Valley
- Stand between two tectonic plates at Thingvellir National Park
- Hike among the colorful peaks and geothermal valleys of Kerlingarfjoll

Today we head deep into Iceland's vast and wild interior, making our way into the Central Highlands. Our route first takes us through the Kaldidalur Valley via a remote road over Iceland's second-highest pass, cresting to an elevation of 2,385 feet. Our own custom 4x4 mini bus with giant all-terrain tires has no trouble navigating the rugged gravel roads, which are off-limits to less capable vehicles. The drive is spectacular, with views of multiple glaciers, including Langjokull—the "long glacier"—which covers 360 square miles. We'll also see the shield volcano of Skjaldbreidur, formed around 9,000 years ago in an eruption that also created the basin of Thingvellir.

En route we stop at Thingvellir National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, for an on-the-ground perspective on Iceland's geological and political origins. Here on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, the very epicenter of where the Icelandic landscape is forming, we can actually see fissures where the earth's crust is separating. Thingvellir is also where Iceland was founded politically, when Norse settlers formed the world's first parliament in 930 AD. On this site, 30 ruling chiefs met to discuss law and order on the island and to create a government. The Althing, an open-air assembly representing the whole of Iceland, is the oldest surviving parliament in the world, though today it meets in Reykjavik. This afternoon we reach Highland Base at Kerlingjarfjoll, a remote luxury outpost that is our jumping-off point for exploring the mountain wilderness around us. Take an introductory guided walk this afternoon, surveying the rugged peaks that rise in every direction.

Day 7

Central Highlands

Hike among rhyolite peaks and steaming geothermal valleys

- Trek past obsidian ridges, mineral-streaked mountains and active geothermal features
- Soak in a natural mineral-rich hot spring
- Learn more about Iceland's "fire and ice" geological forces

From our isolated base deep in the Highlands, we have easy access to the rugged terrain around us, and there's no more intimate way to explore it than on foot. Today is devoted to hiking amid these fantastical peaks, which rise in an array of shapes, forms and colors, the rock palette tinted by rhyolite and obsidian. Green alpine moss and lichen add occasional bright accents among the jagged ridges, volcanic summits, geothermal areas, and deep valleys. At times, the stark setting is evocative of a moonscape. After a day of exploration, do as the locals do: retreat to a steaming hot spring for a rejuvenating soak in the mineral-laden waters.

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Day 8

Keflavik

See Iceland's most famous geyser erupt & gaze into Kerid Crater

- Witness Strokkur Geyser and an array of simmering features at Geysir Geothermal Area
- Admire the vivid colors of Kerid Crater's walls and the turquoise lake at the bottom
- Enjoy a farewell dinner with your Expedition Leader and fellow travelers

Spend the morning exploring more of the rugged, colorful landscape around Kerlingjarfjoll, then make a scenic half-day drive back to Keflavik. En route we stop at the famous Geysir Geothermal Area featuring bubbling mineral springs, steaming fumaroles, mud pots and the active Strokkur geyser that erupts every 10 minutes or so, blasting hot spray as high as 100 feet into the air. The English word "geyser" is derived from the Icelandic word "geysir," which means gusher.

We also stop at Kerid Crater, a 6,500-year-old caldera filled with a lake that is one of Iceland's most visually stunning features. Unlike most craters formed by violent explosions, Kerid was created when the volcano's magma chamber emptied and the cone collapsed inward. The caldera, ringed by steep slopes, features vivid red iron-rich rock and green moss that contrast sharply with the bright blue-green water at the bottom.

Ultimately, we reach Keflavik, where we check into our hotel conveniently located near the airport. This evening, gather for a farewell dinner, with a chance to reflect on the full gamut of adventures we've enjoyed over the past week.

Day 9

Depart Reykjavik after exploring the land of fire and ice

- Transfer to the airport for homeward flights

Enjoy a final breakfast as our Iceland adventure comes to a close. A transfer is included from the hotel to Keflavik International Airport to meet departing flights.

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Wild Iceland Explorer Accommodations

Explore a Microcosm of Iceland in the Remote Highlands & Snaefellsnes Peninsula



Hotel Budir

Modern farmhouse meets cabin chic at this remote hotel offering stunning views of the Snaefellsjokull Glacier, with minimalist yet cozy decor, and a renowned restaurant.



Hotel Husafell

A modern, minimalist hotel immersed in nature and powered entirely by renewable energy, with spacious rooms and heated outdoor pools and hot tubs.



Highland Base Hotel

An off-grid retreat in Iceland's central highlands offering sleek design, geothermal baths, sustainable practices, and seamless access to the dramatic landscapes of Kerlingarfjoll.



Hotel Reykjavik Saga

This elegant new 4-star hotel in the heart of Reykjavik features sleek contemporary design elements and is just steps from all the city center attractions.



Park Inn by Radisson Reykjavik Keflavik Airport

Located in Keflavik just ten minutes from the airport, the hotel provides a convenient landing spot for our final night, with easy access for departing flights.

For detailed descriptions, visit nathab.com/europe/iceland-highlands-snaefellsnes-tour/accommodations.

The Essence of Iceland in Nine Days

Wild Iceland Explorer

If you're looking for an Iceland immersion that economizes on time and distance but is still chock-full of the diverse natural wonders the country is famous for, this is your trip. Here's what makes it ideal for that quest:

1 **Explore Two Less-Traveled Regions in Depth**

The west of Iceland sees fewer visitors than other popular areas of the country. Yet it's just as impressive and easily reachable. Just two hours' drive from Reykjavik lies the Snaefellsnes Peninsula, nicknamed "Iceland in Miniature" for the diversity of features it contains within a compact area. Witness powerful waterfalls, ride Icelandic horses on a wild beach, and climb the side of a glacier-capped volcano in our private 4x4 vehicle...then head inland to the lightly visited Highlands to hike in austere, multicolored mountains—so many contrasts!

2 **See Icelandic Wildlife on an Itinerary That Features It**

Visit one of Iceland's largest harbor seal colonies, take a private boat trip to watch hundreds of nesting Atlantic puffins, cruise the sea in search of whales and dolphins, and look for Arctic foxes.

3 **Go Farther Afield in Our Customized 4x4**

We've chartered the best possible vehicles for this itinerary: comfortable, spacious, well-appointed 4x4 mini buses with giant all-terrain tires to navigate remote secondary roads deep in the Highlands, giving you a genuine encounter with Iceland's wilderness. And we never fill our vehicles to capacity, so everyone has plenty of room.

4 **Soak in Geothermal Hot Springs on a Private Canyon Baths Tour**

Make an easy hike from a remote lodge to two secluded steaming pools in a stunning wild setting, and enjoy the rejuvenation of the mineral-laden waters just as the locals do.

5 **Travel with a Small Group for an Intimate Experience**

Conventional Iceland tours utilize large buses for groups of 30-40 or more, but we limit our group to just 12 guests, ensuring a quieter experience, plus the ability to get into remote places big motorcoaches can't reach— and allowing us to choose smaller hotels in more far-flung locations.

6 **Two Guides Offer a Richer Interpretive Experience**

Our trip is led by a Nat Hab Expedition Leader, plus a local Iceland guide who adds essential insider perspective. This arrangement also allows us to divide up on occasion into two smaller groups for excursions at different physical ability levels. And it means you'll get the utmost in personalized attention!

7 **Our Quality-Value Guarantee Ensures Your Outstanding Iceland Adventure**

When you travel with Natural Habitat, you receive our exclusive guarantee, clearly stating that we will meet the lofty expectations we set in our promotional materials. To our knowledge, this is the most ambitious guarantee made by any adventure travel company. Read our important promise.

Ready to Book? Call an Adventure Specialist at 800-543-8917

8 **Feel Good About Your Carbon-Neutral Journey**

We care deeply about our planet, as we know you do. When you travel with us, the carbon emissions from your trip are 100% offset—including your round-trip flights from home. Natural Habitat Adventures has been the world's first carbon-neutral travel company since 2007.

9 **Natural Habitat Adventures is WWF's Travel Partner**

Because of our commitment to environmentally friendly travel, as well as the exceptional quality of our worldwide adventures, we have been chosen by World Wildlife Fund—the world's leading environmental conservation organization—as its worldwide travel partner, a designation that makes us exceedingly proud.

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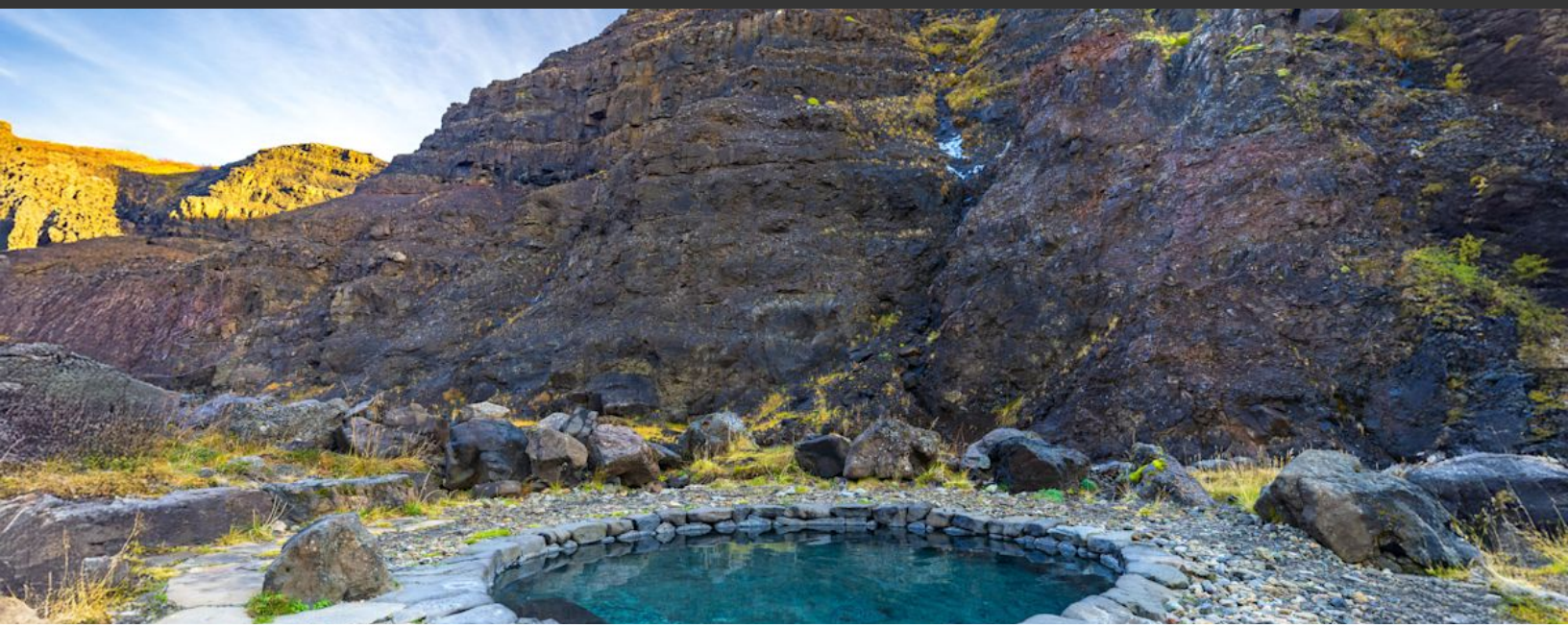

Dates & Pricing Summary:

Price
From $13995

Group Size
Limited to 12 Travelers

Wild Iceland Explorer Dates, Pricing & Info

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2027 Departures

Departure – Return	Pricing	Notes
Jul 3 - Jul 11, 2027	$14395	Natural Habitat Explorers Pricing Available
Jul 9 - Jul 17, 2027	$13995	
Jul 15 - Jul 23, 2027	$14395	
Jul 24 - Aug 1, 2027	$14395	

2028 Departures

Departure – Return	Pricing	Notes
Prices and dates not confirmed for 2028		
Jul 13 - Jul 21, 2028	From $13995	
Jul 17 - Jul 25, 2028	From $13995	
Jul 22 - Jul 30, 2028	From $13995	
Jul 30 - Aug 7, 2028	From $13995	
Aug 4 - Aug 12, 2028	From $13995	

Departure – Return	Pricing	Notes
Prices and dates not confirmed for 2028		
Aug 9 - Aug 17, 2028	**From $13995**	

See https://www.nathab.com/europe/iceland-highlands-snaefellsnes-tour/dates-fees for the latest pricing details.

Included

Accommodations, services of Nat Hab's professional Expedition Leader(s) and local guide, all meals from dinner on Day 1 through breakfast on final day, some gratuities, airport transfers for those arriving by air on Day 1 and departing by air on the final day, all activities and entrance fees, all taxes, permits and service fees.

Not Included

Travel to and from the start and end point of your trip, alcoholic beverages, some gratuities, passport and visa fees (if any), optional activities, items of a personal nature (phone calls, laundry, etc.), airline baggage fees, required medical evacuation insurance, optional travel protection insurance.

Mandatory Insurance

Since the areas we travel to are remote and wild (that's why we go there!), we require that all guests have, at minimum, medical evacuation insurance for this program. This is for the safety of all guests. We require that your chosen independent insurance plan includes at least $250,000 in medical evacuation coverage.

To protect your investment and to provide peace of mind while you travel, we also strongly recommend purchasing comprehensive travel insurance. Plans may cover everything from medical treatment to trip cancellations and delays and lost luggage. Please contact our office if you would like more information about the medical evacuation and comprehensive travel insurance policies we offer by calling 800-543-8917.

Getting There & Getting Home

This trip begins and ends in Reykjavik. You must arrive at Keflavik International Airport (KEF) no later than 3:30 pm on Day 1 in order to be ready for a welcome dinner and briefing beginning at 5:30 pm. Upon arrival, you will be met by a Nat Hab representative and transferred approximately one hour to the hotel.

You may depart at any time on the final day of the trip. Should you wish to extend your stay, we can drop you at your preferred hotel within the city center of Reykjavik.

Our Natural Habitat Adventures Travel Desk can best assist with your travel reservations, as our staff is familiar with the specific requirements of this program and can help arrange the most efficient itinerary. Please call us at 800-543-8917. While we offer the best available rates to us on airfare and additional nights accommodations, you may occasionally find special web rates or lower fares online..

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Wild Iceland Explorer Extensions

Explore a Microcosm of Iceland in the Remote Highlands & Snaefellsnes Peninsula



Iceland: Circling the Land of Fire & Ice

An immersive journey into the rugged grandeur of a land sculpted by intense geological forces. Make a full loop around Iceland on the most comprehensive nature adventure this compact country has to offer.

$16995 (+air)



Ultimate Iceland Photo Expedition

Go longer, farther and deeper into the most remote corners of Iceland in pursuit of stunning landscape shots and native wildlife—with private flightseeing and boat tours for every possible perspective.

$18995 (+air)



East Greenland Arctic Adventure

Encounter raw Arctic beauty on Greenland's remote east coast near the edge of the ice sheet. From our deluxe expedition camp, explore by boat, kayak and on foot, where very few travelers venture.

$15795 (+air)



East Greenland Photo Expedition

Photograph raw Arctic wilderness on Greenland's rarely visited east coast near the edge of the Greenland ice sheet. From our deluxe expedition camp, we shoot by boat, kayak and on foot, in exceptional solitude.

$15795 (+air)



Iceland & Greenland: A Nordic Discovery

Discover less-traveled sides of these two Nordic countries on a unique itinerary that combines the geologic drama of Iceland’s rarely visited Highlands with Greenland’s mighty glaciers, fjords and Inuit culture.

$20495 (+air)

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Natural Habitat & WWF: Discovering Our Planet Together

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