

# SOUTH ICELAND

The South of Iceland is unique and it is the part of the country visited by far the greatest numbers of foreign travellers. Everything that makes Iceland interesting to visit can be found in South Iceland all the year-round. History surrounds you everywhere, both ancient and recent. Other highlights are creative art, culture, flourishing trade and endless possibilities to enjoy outdoor life in all seasons. But above all there is the awesome and rugged nature stretching from the mountains and down to the sea.



## 1 Blue Lagoon

Situated in a vast lava plain on the south coast of Iceland's Reykjanes Peninsula, the Blue Lagoon holds nine million liters of geothermal seawater, covers an area of 8700 square meters, and has an average depth of 1.2 meters and a maximum depth of 1.6 meters. The lagoon's water is sourced directly from the Svartsengi geothermal field and its recirculation interval is 40 hours. In addition to the sublime pleasures of geothermal seawater, the lagoon offers a sauna, a steam room, a waterfall, a luxury lounge, a cafe, an in-water silica bar, an in-water beverage bar, and a tantalizing selection of in-water massage and treatments.

## 2 Hveragerði - Geothermal park

Right inside the town of Hveragerði there is an area of hot springs from which the community derives its name (hver = hot spring). The hot springs of Hveragerði are among the most remarkable natural attractions of South Iceland. Visitors to the hot springs can learn about geo-

thermal energy and the springs, which include Dynkur, spouting regularly, Ruslahver which has an interesting history, and many more.

## 3 Þingvellir – National Park

At Þingvellir the national assembly was established around 930 and continued to convene there until 1798. Many crucial events in Icelandic history took place at Þingvellir and it is at the heart of Icelandic nationhood. No less remarkable is the geology of Þingvellir. Visitors can get an interpretation of the history and nature of Þingvellir and find hiking trails and camping grounds. Þingvellir is Iceland's oldest National Park and now on the UNESCO World Heritage List. It is listed as a national park (since 1928) because of the special tectonic and volcanic environment. The continental drift can be clearly seen in the cracks or faults which are traversing the region, the biggest one, Almannagjá, being a veritable canyon.



Blue Lagoon - Photo credit: Chris Goldberg

## Did you know?

About 10 % of Iceland is covered by glaciers that contain the equivalent of 20 years of rainfall for the entire country. A glacier trek offers an unforgettable adventure in the powerful mother nature.

South Iceland has many large glaciers and few smaller ones. The best known glaciers are Eyjafjallajökull, Mýrdalsjökull, Langjökull, Vatnajökull and Jökulsárlón (glacier lagoon).

#### 4 Geysir

Geysir has lent its name to the English language in order to christen the phenomenon of the periodically spouting hot springs. You can walk around the Geysir area, a geothermal field where hot springs are in abundance, geysers explode and pools of mud bubble. Strokkur gives a performance every few minutes, shooting a tower of water and steam 30 metres into the air and Blesi with water the colour of turquoise delights the senses.

#### 5 Laugarvatn Fontana

Laugarvatn Fontana is located only one hour drive from Reykjavik, in the middle of the Golden Circle, on the black beach of beautiful Laugarvatn Lake. Be sure not to miss a visit to our Geothermal Bakery to taste the delicious rye bread that grandmothers of the area have been baking in the hot springs of Laugarvatn for decades

#### 6 Gullfoss - Waterfall

Gullfoss is actually two separate waterfalls, the upper one has a drop of 11 metres and the lower one 21 metres. The rock of the river bed was formed during an interglacial period. For thousands of years the river has followed its course delighting tourists with beauty and power.

#### 7 Urriðafoss - Waterfall

Urriðafoss is a voluminous waterfall in Þjórsá river, where the river falls off the margin of Þjórsárhraun lava field (360 m<sup>3</sup>/sec) in beautiful and peaceful surroundings. Þjórsárhraun lava field is the greatest lava flow on earth since the Ice Age. The waterfall is located right off highway nr. 1.

#### 8 Skógafoss – Waterfall

One of Iceland's most splendid waterfalls, Skógafoss tumbles 60 metres from the cliffs by Skógar. Before cascading off the cliffs as Skógafoss, the river flows through the Skógárgil gorge, which boasts more than twenty more waterfalls, each with its own charm



Gullfoss Waterfall - Photo credit: Marius Kluzniak



#### Visit Geysir Center/ Multimediashow

Modern multimedia shows combined with a plethora of information offers visitors the opportunity to become informed about some of the inexplicable natural wonders of Iceland, and even feel it on your own body as is the case with the earthquake simulator for instance.

#### Diving in 3 Silfra - for the adventurous travellers

The Silfra Tectonic Fissure offers an unique and beautiful diving and snorkelling experience in one of the clearest waters in the world. Float between the American and European continental plates - you can even touch both continents at the same time! Note: previous experience required for diving or attending a dry suit course

#### Visit 9 Jökulsárlón Glacier Lagoon

Jökulsárlón is a large glacial lake in southeast Iceland, on the edge of Vatnajökull National Park. Join a boat tour and sail among the huge icebergs in the picturesque scenery of the lagoon. Jökulsárlón is considered as one of the natural wonders of Iceland.



Geysir - Photo credit: Andy Lederer





Seljalandsfoss Waterfall - Photo credit: Matt Malone

### 10 Mýrdalsjökull

Glacier Mýrdalsjökull's peak reaches 1493 metres and Katla Volcano inside the glacier erupts on average every 40-60 years. Sixteen eruptions have been recorded since the settlement of Iceland over 1100 years ago, the last one in 1918.

### 11 Seljalandsfoss – Waterfall

Seljalandsfoss is just over 60 metres high in a lovely location, surrounded by cliffs and green slopes. A footpath leads behind the waterfall.

### 12 Katla Unesco Global Geopark

Katla UNESCO Global Geopark covers 9% of Iceland (9542 km<sup>2</sup>). Characterized by active ice-capped central volcanoes, black sand from glacial outbursts and lava fields, Katla Geopark showcases the interaction between the rift zone and mantle plume. Diverse and frequent volcanic activity constantly changes the landscape, influencing the pattern of settlement. Learn about living with active volcanoes through enroute information panels, centres and museums, where you can also purchase hiking maps and booklets.



Reynisdrangar - Photo credit: Ben Husmann

### 13 Sólheimajökull – Glacier

Sólheimajökull glacier flows south of Mýrdalsjökull glacier in a U-shaped valley. It is about 8 km long and 1-2 km wide. The glacier advanced about 900 metres during the last few centuries, but retreated greatly from 1930 to 1964.

### 14 Eyjafjallajökull Glacier View

Eyjafjallajökull is one of the smaller ice caps of Iceland. The volcano has erupted relatively frequently since the last glacial period, most recently in 2010.

### 15 Reynisdrangar

Basalt sea stacks situated under the mountain Reynisfjall near the village Vík í Mýrdal, southern Iceland which is framed by a black sand beach that was ranked in 1991 as one of the ten most beautiful non-tropical beaches in the world. Legend says that the stacks originated when two trolls dragged a three-masted ship to land unsuccessfully and when daylight broke they became needles of rock.

**Tip!**

Eating/dining in South Iceland;

**Hver Restaurant** – close to Hveragerði.

HVER Restaurant's menu is sophisticated, emphasizing fresh, local ingredients.

**Varmá Restaurant** – in the Frost and Ice Hotel, Hveragerði

Varmá serves Icelandic local food based on the Slow Food concept. Guests will enjoy a lovely view over the river and the hot springs.

**Dining In Reykholt: (near Gulfoss)**

**Friðheimar** (Greenhouse/Restaurant) - Tomatoes are the theme of Friðheimar cuisine – and that's not surprising, since four different varieties of tomato are cultivated in the greenhouses, where food is served among the tomato plants. Try the one and only Friðheimar Tomato Soup served with sour cream, home baked bread, cucumber salsa, butter and fresh herbs.

**In Eyrarbakki (just 10 minutes from Selfoss):**

**Red House/ Rauða Húsið restaurant** - best known for locally-caught lobster and fresh seafood, but they also proudly serve Icelandic lamb and horse tenderloin.

**In Stokkseyri: (south of Selfoss)**

**Fjöruborðið** – The name means “at the seashore”, is a cozy seaside lobster restaurant in the quiet south-east coast time of Stokkseyri. Famous for serving the best lobster in Iceland!

**Just outside Vik:**

**The Black Beach restaurant** is located on one of the most amazing nature highlights of the south, Reynisfjara. In a short walking distance from the basalt formations and the cave Hálsanefshellir the restaurant offers a breathtaking view of Dyrhólaey and the ocean.

### 15 Vik

Vik is the central town in the Katla UNESCO GLOBAL Geopark and has developed as an important local commercial centre and service for the travel industry. Mýrdalur is the southernmost district of Iceland, bordered by the glacial river Jökulsá to the west and the river Blautakvísl to the east. Its northern border is the Mýrdalsjökull glacier (700 km<sup>2</sup>, Iceland's fourth largest glacier). Approximately 600 metres below the ice lies the dormant subglacial volcano Katla which the Geopark is named after. Its southern limits are black sands and the rolling Atlantic waves.

Vik is the only seaside settlement in Iceland left without a harbour due to natural circumstances. Nevertheless, Vík's inhabitants used to go fishing and got products from ship before the roads were imposed in 1939.

### 16 Vestmannaeyjar

There are places in Iceland that simply need to be experienced. Vestmannaeyjar (the Westman Islands) fill that group by virtue of their natural beauty, the bounty of their wildlife, particularly birds, and by being historically and geographically one of Iceland's most distinctive places. The islands are part of a young and still active submarine volcanic system, most of them coming into being 10-20.0000 years ago. The passenger and car ferry Herjolfur makes the trip from Landeyjahöfn in 40 minutes.

Heimaey may only be about 13 km<sup>2</sup>, but that small area contains enough magical scenery and birdlife to delight the visitor for days. There have always been visitors to the islands, but as an industry tourism is recent. It is even possible to put a date to its birth: 1973 after the eruption, when visitors from all over the world came to view the aftermath and remains of the catastrophe. Other popular attractions are one of Iceland's best 18 hole golf courses, deep sea fishing, bird- and whale-watching as well as hiking up volcanoes, over lava fields or along the shore.



Downtown Vik - Photo credit: Chris Goldberg



Vatnajökull - Photo credit: Diana Robinson

### 17 Skaftafell and 18 Svartifoss waterfall

Öræfi was Iceland's most isolated district before the bridges to the west of it were completed in the early seventies. The natural contrasts are breathtaking: black sands below white glaciers, desolate wastes and green vegetation. Such a green oasis welcomes you at Skaftafell, just beside the broad desert of the Skeiðarársandur sands and the raging Skeiðará river. These contrasts and many more remind the visitor of nature's changeability.

### 19 Vatnajökull National Park

The national park includes the ice cap and its surroundings, with a total area of 13,952 km<sup>2</sup>, or 14% of Iceland. Few places in the world exhibit such a wide range of natural phenomena. The battle between ice and fire still rages within the park boundaries. Vatnajökull - the world's most voluminous glacier outside of the arctic regions. The glacier seems so close to the people of Southeast Iceland that they sometimes refer to the ice as if it were part of their backyard. Each of the icefalls and glacier tongues flowing towards the lowlands possesses an individual character and offers a variety of scenes.



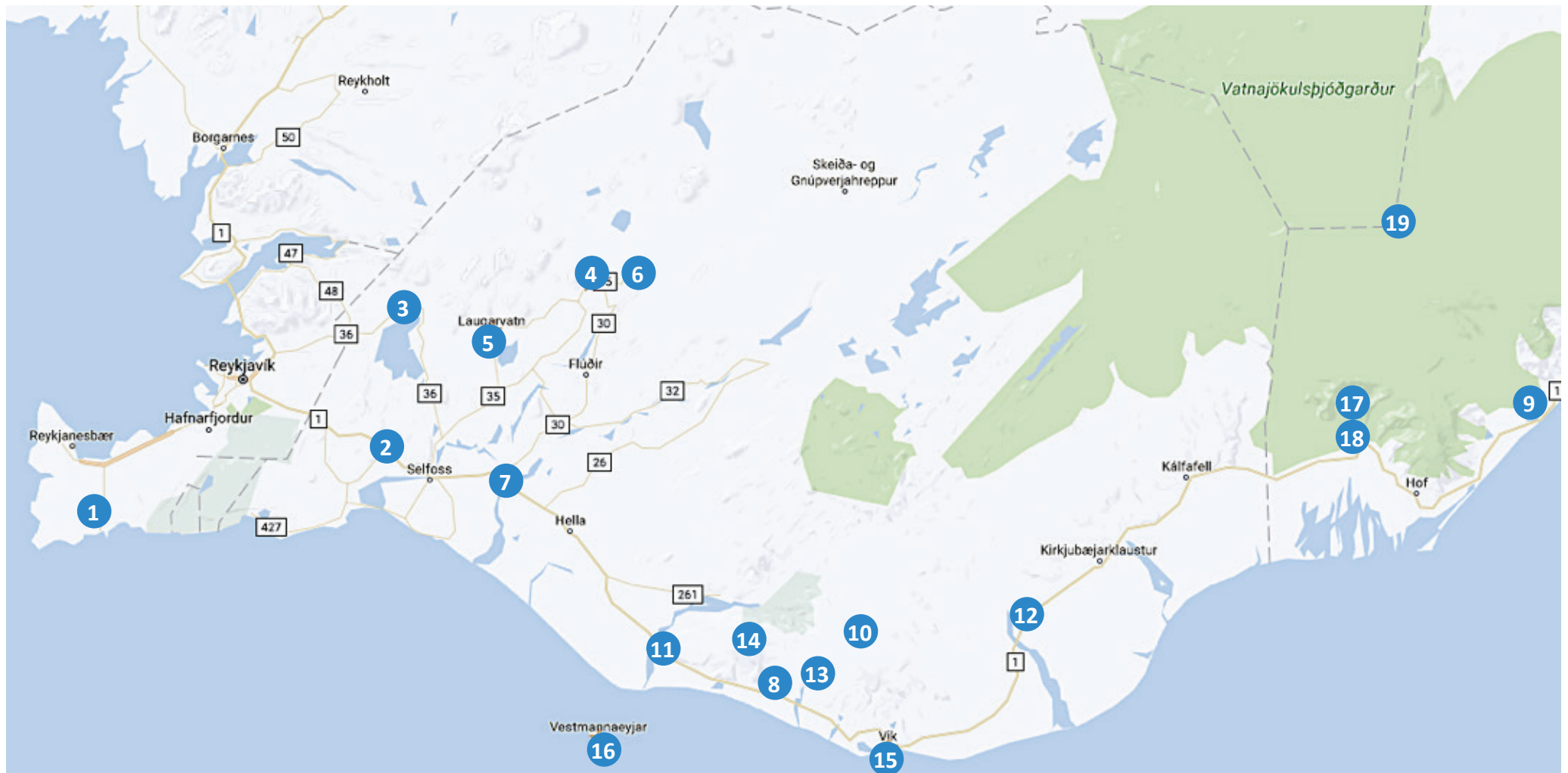
Vestmannaeyjar - Photo credit: Victor



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- 3 Þingvellir national park and Silfra Fissure
- 4 Geysir
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- 6 Gullfoss Falls
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# NORTH & EAST ICELAND

North Iceland is well known for a number of historic coastal towns, each with its own character that builds on the history and culture of the locals, and beautiful nature. For those traveling in the winter, the little light pollution and high mountains make this an ideal location to experience the Aurora Borealis.

East Iceland is an expansive region, where you can find culture, entertainment and a lot of outdoor activities in a picturesque nature. East Iceland offers a wide range of natural sights from mountains to waterfalls and glacial rivers to volcanic craters and is absolutely beautiful during autumn, when the nature is covered splendid colours.



## 1 Drangsnes

Drangsnes is a fishing village, pure and simple. Conveniently located near the fishing grounds, it thrives in its minimalistic ways. Although the new swimming pool in town is of top notch quality, the blend-in-with-the-locals way of bathing would be to dip into the small hot pools at the shore.

## 2 Laugarbakki

Laugarbakki village is situated in the west Húnaþing district, on the eastern side of Miðfjarðará river, and close to highway 1. The Saga of Grettir the Strong tells that horse fights took place here. Fishing is popular activity as well as relaxing in local hotpots.

## 3 Hvammstangi

Hvammstangi is the largest community in West Húnaþing whose history as a trading centre dates back over more

than 100 years. If you would like to see how people in days gone by conducted their daily trading in the general stores, the Trade Museum will tell you all you need to know.

Also, visit The Icelandic Seal Center which provides information on seals and the Vatnsnes area, besides serving as a general tourist information bureau.

## 4 Vatnsnes

An area of varied animal life, and it is here that we find the largest and most accessible seal sanctuary in Iceland, where the common seal (*Phoca vitulina*) can be seen at quite close range. The ring road round Vatnsnes is about 90 km and is mostly dirt road, passable all year round.



Borgarfirki, Vatnsnes peninsula - Photo credit: Janko Luin

## Did you know?

North Iceland is one of the best Icelandic areas for spotting whales. The favourable sea conditions and weather attract many species, including Humpbacks, Blue whales, Minke whales and Orcas. If you are lucky, you might even spot dolphins!

Join a whale watching excursion on one of the old oakwood boats and enjoy the nature and beautiful scenery.



### 5 Hvítserkur

Hvítserkur is a 15 m-high sea stack just off shore on the eastern side of Vatnsnes. Good seal spotting place at the estuary of the Sigridarstadir lake, south from the stack.

### 6 Kolugljúfur canyon

As you drive along Víðidalur, you will come to Kolugil Farm which stands beside the Víðidalsá river. Just below the farm, the waters flow peacefully downwards to plunge into the deep, rugged gorge called Kolugljúfur. Their journey then sends them cascading over many waterfalls which bear the name Kolufossar Falls in honour of the giantess, Kola. It is a breathtaking sight to drive across the bridge and watch the calm waters of the river suddenly leap and tumble onwards over so many impressive falls - a sight which will leave no one unmoved.

### 7 Siglufjörður

Siglufjörður offers a variety of interesting and enjoyable things to do and see - both for the tourist and for those in search of some outdoor activity.

During the summer, it is the mountains, the lake and the black sandy shores which call to us, and there is a wide selection of walks and hikes in both mountain and valley to tempt the visitor. A few hours walking through the area's rugged landscape gives one the chance to savour the peace and tranquillity which emanates from these natural elements.

The winter turns the town into a paradise for the skier and is a dream come true for the outdoor enthusiast. Check out the Síldarminjasafnið herring museum or the Folk Music Centre

### 8 Akureyri

Whatever the time of year, Akureyri is a lively and energetic town, and home to around 20.000 inhabitants. It is by far the most densely populated community outside the Reykjavík area, and is the centre of trade, culture and services for the north of Iceland. Things to see while you're there: Akureyrarkirkja, the Akureyri Botanical Garden and the Akureyri Art Museum.



Kolugljúfur - Photo credit: Marie Jirousek

**Tip!**

#### Visit Myvatn Nature Baths

Relax in the alkaline bathing lagoon and enjoy the scenery. The temperature of the water in the lagoon and basin is around 36 - 40 °C. Geothermal water in Iceland usually contains sulfur, which is considered to have a positive effect on asthma and other respiratory diseases.

Myvatn Nature Baths also feature two steam baths, which are built straight on top of a geothermal area and the sulfurfree steam rises up through holes in the floor. Typically the humidity in the steam baths is close to 100% and temperature is around 50°C.



Myvatn Nature Baths - Photo credit: Jennifer Boyer

### 9 Lake Myvatn

Mývatn is the 4th largest lake in Iceland, 37 km<sup>2</sup> in area. Its shores are indented with many coves and inlets and its surface is dotted with around 50 small islets and skerries. Midges (Chironomidae) are abundant and the ubiquitous swarms of these tiny flies give the Lake its name.

On and around the lake there is a teeming and varied birdlife, and Mývatn is the habitat of many kinds of lake and marsh birds. However, much of Mývatn's fame is due to the fact that, during summer, there are more different species of duck gathered on and around the lake than anywhere else in the world.

Located in the heart of north-east Iceland about 105 kilometres (65 miles) south of the Arctic Circle, Lake Mývatn with its unique nature and rich birdlife is one of Europe's greatest natural treasures.

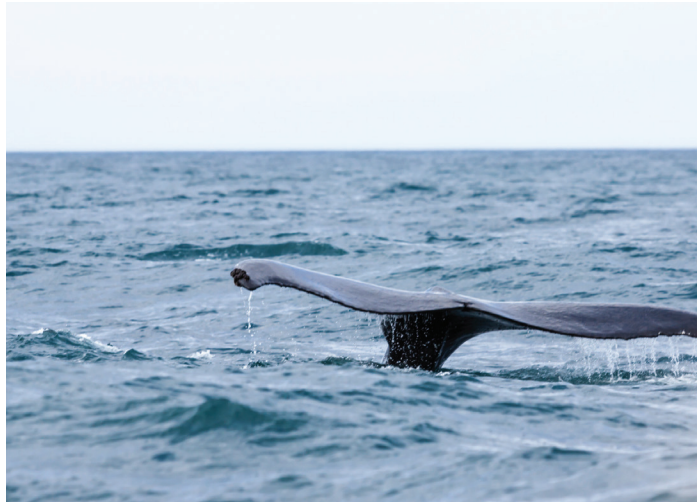


Fáskrúðsfjörður - Photo credit: Ben Husmann

### 10 Fáskrúðsfjörður

Fáskrúðsfjörður is in the centre of the eastfjords, in between peninsulas Vattarnes and Hafnarnes. At the bottom of the fjord there is a grassy valley with lovely arctic woodlands. The route from Reyðarfjörður along the coast is very scenic and should not be missed. It offers great views to the hollow cliff island of Skríður. The island is home to a colourful birdlife, with the unique wonder the 'Puffin Cave' sheltering thousands of puffins and a great colony of Gannets that can be seen plunging like arrows into the water. The town at the bottom of the fjord goes by the name of Búðir, but everyone calls it Fáskrúðsfjörður.

The town became a trading post in 1880. From the latter part of the 19th century until 1935, the town was the main hub for French fishermen off East of Iceland. The town is famous for its French heritage and has a strong connection to its French counterpart, Gravelines. It is worth while to visit the French Museum and learn more about these historical connections. There used to be a French consul, a French hospital and a French chapel. It is also believed that France had a say in the fact that the district doctor was positioned in Búðir. The village road signs are also in French



Whale watching in Húsavík - Photo credit: Sergii Gulenok



Dettifoss Waterfall - Photo credit: Peter Nijenhuis

Tip!

#### Not to miss:

##### Local Food Festival

A new food culture festival in the North in the last weekend of September or first weekend of October. The purpose of the festival is to draw attention to the north and the great food industry that goes on in the North, a diverse selection of restaurants, food culture and other sectors related to food

##### 11 Dettifoss waterfall

Europe's most powerful waterfall located in Vatnajökull National Park in Northeast Iceland. Dettifoss can be reached by a new tarmac road (Route 862) and by an older gravel road (Route 864). Dettifoss waterfall is along the Diamond Circle, a popular route around Húsavík and Lake Mývatn in North Iceland.

##### 12 Whale watching in Húsavík

The town of Húsavík is located on the edge of Shaky Bay and probably one of the best places in world from where to watch whales. The chances of seeing whales are higher than anywhere else in Iceland. The most typical whales to visit Skjálfandi bay are Humpback whales, Minke whales and Blue whales. Joining a sailing tour to see these magnificent creatures is a must do activity while in Húsavík.

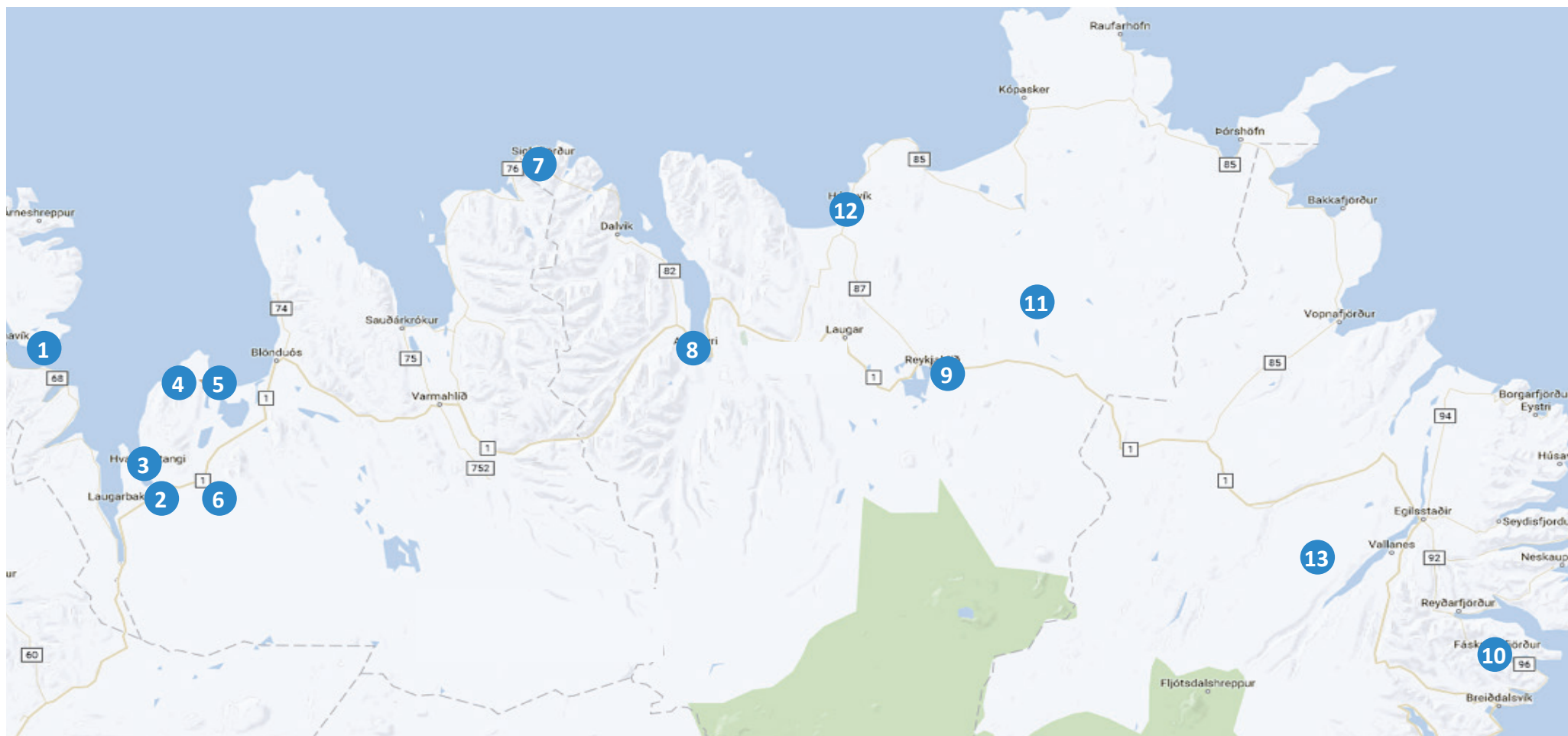
##### 13 Hengifoss waterfall

One of the highest waterfalls in Iceland and the most popular natural attraction in East Iceland. It is located 34 km from Egilsstaðir town on the way to Vatnajökull national park.



- 1 Drangsnes
- 2 Laugarbakki
- 3 Hvammstangi
- 4 Vatnsnes
- 5 Hvitserkur
- 6 Kolugljúfur canyon
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- 8 Akureyri
- 9 Lake Myvatn & Myvatn Nature Baths
- 10 Fáskrúðsfjörður
- 11 Dettifoss waterfall
- 12 Húsavík
- 13 Hengifoss waterfall



# WEST ICELAND & WESTFJORDS

West Iceland is a world where culture, nature and history complement each other, creating a unique experience. This vast area consists of fjords, valleys, craters, glaciers, volcanoes and the much-loved phenomenon of wide open spaces. Travel through historical Borgarfjörður, home to most of the Icelandic sagas and their heroes, or venture close to the centre of the earth at Snæfellsjökull Glacier on the Snæfellsnes peninsula before crossing over to Dalir, cradle of the great explorers, Eirík the Red and his son, Leif the Lucky, the first European to set foot in America.



## 1 Breiðafjörður

Breiðarfjörður has around 3,000 islands, islets and skerries. One of them is Flatey, an island that is really worth visiting. Several geothermal sites can be found like the beautiful basalt columns. Breiðarfjörður contains about half of Iceland's intertidal area and the tides can be up to six meters. There are around 50 breeding bird species including Common Shag, Glaucous Gull, White-tailed Eagle, Common Eider, Black Guillemot and Grey Phalarope. The area is important staging area for the Brent goose and the Red Knot. The Common Seal and the Grey Seal have their main haul-out on the islands and the skerries.

Check out the lighthouses at Akranes – without a doubt the most picturesque location in Akranes on the outmost point of the peninsula.

## 2 Snæfellsjökull glacier

The Snæfellsjökull glacier is 1446m above sea level. The glacier is an active volcano, having been built up through numerous eruptions during the last 800,000 years. Many believe the glacier to be one of the seven main energy centres of the earth and its mystique is noticed by many. The glacier plays big role as the Center of the Earth in the novel Journey to the Center of the Earth (1864) by Jules Verne.

Snæfellsjökull is a part of the Snæfellsjökull National Park which was established on June 28, 2001. The Park's purpose is to protect and conserve the areas; the unique landscape, indigenous plants and the animal life as well as important historical relics. At the same time, the Park is meant to allow visitors easier access as well as improved opportunities to get to know the area.



Breiðafjörður - Photo credit: Jonathan

## Did you know?

**3** Borgarnes and the surrounding Borgarfjörður region can be regarded as the setting for most of the Icelandic sagas. The area's landscape, nature and culture reflect this heritage and bring history to life.

Visit **4** Reykholt - one of Iceland's most notable historical sites and home of Iceland's best-known author Snorri Sturluson during the years 1206 - 1241.



### 5 Stykkishólmur to Brjánslækur (ferry)

The car ferry Baldur crosses Breiðafjörður between Stykkishólmur in the north of the Snæfellsnes peninsula and Brjánslækur on the south side of the West Fjords. There are two departures from Stykkishólmur from June to August. There is a daily departure during winter. A ferry ride considerably shortens the route between the south and mid-west of the country and the West Fjords region. The ferry has a stopover at Faltey Island

See website for schedule: <http://www.seatours.is/ferry-baldur/schedule>

### 6 Látrabjarg cliffs

The cliffs of all cliffs, Látrabjarg, are home to birds in unfathomable numbers. This westernmost point of Iceland (and Europe if Greenland and the Azores are not counted) is really a line of several cliffs, 14 kilometres long and up to 441 m high. And it's as steep as it gets, dizzyingly so. Safe from foxes, the birds are fearless, and provide stunning photographic opportunities from close range. The puffins are particularly tame and are the ones frequenting the grassy, higher part of the cliffs. But look out, the edges are fragile and loose and the fall is high. Látrabjarg is thus deservedly the most visited tourist attraction in the Westfjords. The cliffs are easily accessible by car and when you're there, a walk along the cliffs awaits. The whirling sensation will not fade, and neither will the memories.

### 7 Patreksfjörður - Europe's most westerly town.

Patreksfjörður - Europe's most westerly town. Patreksfjörður is the biggest town in the southern part of the Westfjords, with a population of around 660. Early in the 20th century, Patreksfjörður was a pioneering force in Iceland's fishing industry, initiating trawler fishing. Still today the chief occupation is commercial fishing and fish processing. Patreksfjörður has a new, absolutely gorgeous outdoor swimming pool, and if you prefer natural hot pots you will find them within an easy driving distance from the town.



Látrabjarg - Photo credit: Maedi

**Tip!**

West Iceland offers a lot of activities for animal enthusiasts

Join a whale watching tour along the Snæfellsnes peninsula; nowhere else in Iceland you will get a chance to see the Big Five: Blue Whale, Fin Whale, Humpback Whale, Minke Whale and Killer Whale. It's possible to see these whales during summer months. Killer Whales are also possible to see during winter, as they follow the herring that has chosen the peninsula as their overwintering habitat.

Puffin tours run between June - August. See the birds lined up along the edge of the cliffs on Melrakkey island. A slow cruise around the island is a perfect way to see these furry creatures in their nesting environment.



Stykkishólmur - Photo credit: Britt-Marie Sohlstrom



Puffin - Photo credit: Tristan Ferne





Ísafjörður - Photo credit: Jonathan



Dynjandi waterfall - Photo credit: Jennifer Boyer

## 8 Bíldudalur

Nested by the fjord Arnarfjörður, a location which is not only beautiful but also responsible for Bíldudalur's reputation as the "good-weather-capital of the Westfjords". The main industries in this picturesque village are sea mineral processing and fish farming, while tourism has also been increasing. Check out the the Icelandic Sea Monster Museum in Bíldudalur which offers an action-packed multimedia display of such tales, something the whole family can enjoy together

Explore Dynjandi waterfall on your way to Westfjords main town, Ísafjörður. Simply enthralling; The Westfjords' favourite front-page model for decades, and is never short of breathtaking. The biggest and widest part of the waterfall is the one that gets all the attention and the photos, even though there are impressive, albeit smaller, waterfalls further down the river. In fact, one is formed in such a way that the brave can walk behind it, relatively dry.

## 9 Þingeyri

A small village situated on a spit of land in one of Iceland's most scenic fjords, Dýrafjörður – try the Belgian Waffles at Simbahöllin - a homely café set in a beautifully renovated old Norwegian house from 1915.

## 10 Ísafjörður

The largest town in the Westfjords peninsula, with some 2600 inhabitants. It is an ancient church site and a trading post since at least the 16th century, although a real town did not start to form until after mid-19th century.

Ísafjörður has a long history and therefore the community has many stories to tell. There are two places that are a must stop in Ísafjörður if you want to know more about the community. The Westfjord Heritage Museum and the Old Hospital (which after renovation in 2002 and 2003 is called The Museum House).

Ferries to **11** Hornstrandir Nature Reserve depart from Ísafjörður daily during the summer months; 3 reasons to go to Hornstrandir Nature Reserve; 1) the bird cliffs surrounding the bay of Hornvík, are a magnet of gigantic proportions, 2) there is no infrastructure and the tourists few in relation to the sheer size of the area, the sense of remoteness is strong, and 3) the area is a haven for the Arctic fox (think hunting-ban and bird-packed cliffs), the chances of spotting one are high

**Tip!**

If you return to Reykjavik along Route 1:

Stop in **12** Drangsnæs - a small fishing village, pure and simple. Conveniently located near the fishing grounds, it thrives in its minimalistic ways. You may want to have a dip in the small hot pools at the shore

Hólmavík witchcraft museum - The Museum of Sorcery & Witchcraft takes visitors on a tour into the mystical world of the supernatural. The history of witch-hunting in 17th century Iceland is presented at the exhibition as well as various aspects of magic from more recent sources.

**13** Hraunfossar waterfalls- Lava Falls - are beautiful and unusual natural phenomena. Clear, cold springs of subterranean water seep through the lava and run as tiny waterfalls and rapids into the Hvíta River



Snæfellsjökull - Photo credit: Glacier Guides



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