

ARCTIC ADVENTURES INFORMATION PACKAGE

2 DAYS

SOUTH COAST GLACIER HIKE, NORTHERN LIGHTS & JÖKULSÁRLÓN ICE LAGOON

Welcome to your information package for the 2 day South Coast and Glacier Hiking Adventure. Together, we will visit some of Iceland's most stunning natural attractions on the south coast, including picturesque waterfalls, black sand beaches, majestic glaciers and a stunning glacier hike. Last, but certainly not least... you will visit the jaw-dropping glacier lagoon, Jökulsárlón.

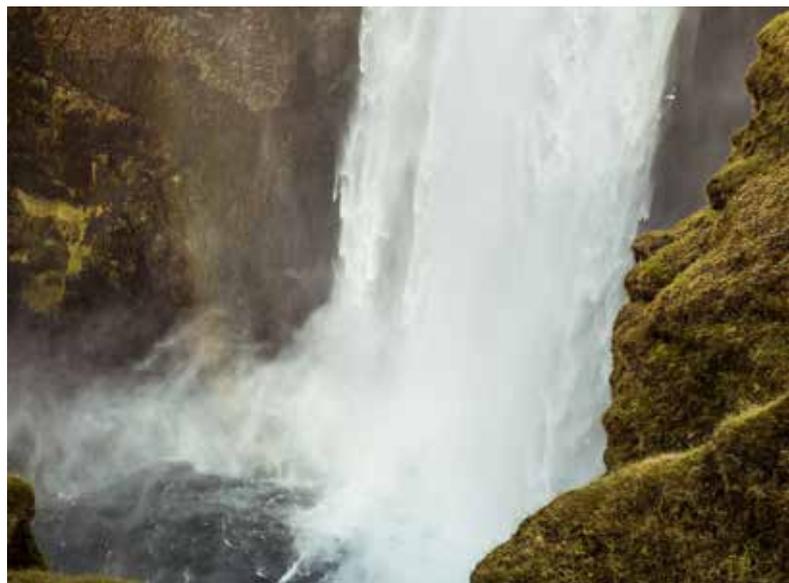
To help you prepare, we have put together an information package to read before your trip. This package will hopefully make a difference, adding to your comfort, knowledge and expectations about Iceland and building excitement about the journey ahead.

It is time to get ready for an exciting adventure in Iceland!



ABOUT THE TOUR

On this 2 day adventure tour of the south coast of Iceland, we will see some of Iceland's most beautiful landscapes and natural gems. This is a great way to see all of the must-sees along the south coast in only two days, showing you the diverse nature that Iceland has to offer. Everything from beautiful **waterfalls** and black sand beaches to magnificent glaciers and a glacier lagoon. You will set foot on the ice, with a never to be forgotten but easy glacier hike. Don't forget to bring your camera - you are in for a real treat!



***Please keep in mind that Arctic Adventures reserve the right to alter the itinerary and/or take different routes due to weather and/or road conditions. Also, due to limited availability of accommodations in Iceland, we may need to re-arrange the itinerary. However, our experienced travel planners aim to optimize your experience of the tour and make sure it's always the best possible.

*** Please note that in the darkest winter months, daylight is limited. This means that we need to keep to a tight schedule enabling us to see all of the sights in daylight. We would kindly ask that everyone keeps track of time, it is particularly important that all participants arrive punctually at the meeting points agreed with their tour guide.

ITINERARY - 2 DAY SOUTH COAST

Day 1



Start point: Your choice of pick up point in Reykjavík

Approximate driving distance: 330 km (205 miles)

Highlights: Seljalandsfoss - Skogafoss - Reynisfjara - Vík - Skaftafell

Accommodation: in the area around Skaftafell

Your adventure starts from your chosen **pick up point in Reykjavík**. Pick up begins at 08:00, but please note, picking everyone up can take up to 30 minutes, so we kindly ask you to be patient.

We drive south through small villages such as Selfoss, Hella and Hvalsöllum before stopping at our first highlight of the day, the stunning **Seljalandsfoss Waterfall**. We recommend that you put your waterproofs on for this part of the tour! You can walk behind the very beautiful cascade of this really unique waterfall, not surprisingly there is a lot of spray - a wonderful and refreshing way to start your day of sightseeing.

We jump back on the minibus and head to off to **Skógafoss Waterfall**, another natural wonder of the south. It is great to stand at the foot of this waterfall and feel the overwhelming power as the roaring torrent drops 60 m from the former sea cliffs. Again, there is plenty of spray, so if you want to get nice and close, you should put on those waterproofs!

Our next stop is **Reynisfjara**, Iceland's most famous black sand beach. A dramatic setting featuring powerful ocean waves, basalt columns and impressive rock formations and cliffs. See the Reynisdrangar basalt stacks rising above the sea, located out in the ocean beneath Mount Reynisfjall - this is a truly captivating sight and a really special photo opportunity.

We stop for around an hour for lunch at **Vík in Mýrdalur**, a charming little village in the valley in the southernmost district of Iceland. We then head farther east, driving through unique landscapes and making a short stop in Kirkjubæjarklaustur along the way. We will arrive at our accommodation in the Skaftafell area early in the evening.

After dinner, your guide will give a short introduction to the **Northern Lights** and go over the aurora forecast for the evening with the group. Hopefully, the chances will be good and your guide will show you the best place to watch out for them. However, this has been a wonderful but long day of driving for your guide and he/she needs to rest for the following day. So your guide may take a short walk with you to the best viewing point, or just point you to the location. The places where we stay are located in quite remote areas, well away from city lights. Darkness is needed to see the lights at their best, you will be in a great location... so fingers crossed, and let's hope the Northern Lights will come out to dance!



Day 2



Start point: Around Skaftafell

Approximate driving distance: 440 km (273 miles)

Highlights: Skaftafell - Svínafellsjökull - Jökulsárlón - Ice Cave

End point: Your selected drop off point in Reykjavik

We start nice and early with breakfast at our hotel before checking out. Today is truly a spectacular day spent mostly in Europe's second largest national park - **Vatnajökull National Park**, which is filled with diverse landscapes, terrain and ecosystems.

Does the scenery look familiar? You have probably seen these settings in numerous films including James Bond (A View to Kill & Die Another Day), Interstellar, Batman Begins, The Secret Life of Walter Mitty, Tomb Raider and last but not least... the popular TV-show, **Game of Thrones!**

Our first stop is **Jökulsárlón Glacier Lagoon**, a natural phenomenon which is not only one of Iceland's most famous tourist destinations but also an Icelander's favorite - and for a good reason. The immense beauty will leave you awe-inspired and speechless, as you watch huge and amazingly shaped icebergs floating through the vast lagoon, the deepest lake in Iceland. A short walk away, you will come to the **Diamond Beach**, which acquired its name from the glistening icebergs sitting stranded on the black sand, these surreal ice diamonds of all sizes and shapes are totally unforgettable.

You can also look forward to a glacier hike on Svínafellsjökull, an outlet glacier of Vatnajökull Glacier. On average, the ice is 400 m thick and it extends over approximately 8,100 square km, roughly 8% of Iceland's total area, making it the largest ice cap in Europe. Your certified glacier guide will issue you with crampons and all the other glacier gear and give you a safety briefing - then it is onto the glacier for an unforgettable but easy hike. You will see and learn all about the dynamic forces of nature which create crevasses, moulins, amazing ice formations and also the blue and greenish tones in the ice.

After enjoying an exciting day of glacier hiking, seeing breathtaking sights and experiencing the incredible Vatnajökull National Park we begin our journey back to Reykjavik. We will travel the same route as the day before, but there will be a lot of new things to see and enjoy on the way.

We drop you off where we picked you up in Reykjavik after two days of exciting adventures. We get back to Reykjavik between 20:00 and 22:00 in the evening.



*** Your safety is always our number one priority. Keeping this in mind, please note that Arctic Adventures may adjust the itinerary and/or take different routes or glaciers. These changes are generally due to weather and road conditions although other factors may also be the reason. However, our experienced travel planners aim to optimize your experience of the tour and make sure it's always the best possible. During the darkest winter months in Iceland, daylight is limited. Therefore, we kindly ask that participants arrive at the meeting points agreed with the tour guide on time so that we can see all the fascinating sights in daylight.

PICK UP INFORMATION

Arctic Adventures offers a pickup service from authorized points in the Reykjavík area. However, these do not include private apartments, Airbnb apartments or Keflavík International Airport. Please have a look at our website where you can find [detailed information regarding our pickup](#) procedures and a list of selected locations where we can pick you up.

If your accommodation is not on the list, then please choose the nearest pickup location. We have provided maps and directions for all major hotels, hostels and guesthouses in the Reykjavík area on our website. You can update your pick up location on [my.adventures.is](#) up to 48 hours before your tour starts.

Keep in mind that the driver guide on your tour probably has to pick up at a few locations so it might take up to 30 minutes for the guide to reach your pickup location. Our vehicles are all marked with the Arctic Adventures logo so please look out for a vehicle looking something like the one below.

Want to know more? Read more about [Pick up Information on our website](#).



! Please note that several tours might have pick up at the same pick up location and time as yours. Our guides will have a lists of all passangers for all the cars. Please have your voucher ready when the car arrives.

ACCOMODATION AND MEALS

On this tour, you will be spending one night in a hotel or guesthouse in the Skaftafell area. You will be accommodated in a standard comfortable room with made up beds. Towels are provided and you will have access to free WiFi. We are often asked if hair dryers are available, and they certainly are, if you cannot see a hair dryer in your room, then you just need to ask at the reception desk.

Hotel Breakfast - Included

Breakfast at your accommodation is included. This will be a Nordic style breakfast buffet generally offering bread, crispbread, cereals, fruit juice, teas, coffee, milk, butter, jams, sliced vegetables, fruit, boiled eggs, cheese, ham and often salami. Extras often include yogurt or the famous Icelandic Skyr, we recommend that everyone visiting Iceland tries this particular delight.

Lunch and Dinner - Your Choices

Along the way, we will be stopping at gas stations, shops/supermarkets and restaurants where you can purchase snacks, food and meals. Examples of what you can find at these places are sandwiches, warm meals, hot dogs, soups, hamburgers, chocolate bars, snacks, drinks, etc. Normally, we eat dinner at the hotel we stay at or find another restaurant in the area. Keep in mind that some of the hotels we stay at offer a more extensive evening menu but country hotels sometimes offer just the dish of the day rather than a menu. Some of the freshest fish in the world and delicious wild mountain lamb dishes feature strongly on Icelandic menus. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the meals, just ask your guide on the tour, he/she will be happy to provide information about the food options available.

Allergies and Dietary Restrictions

In the booking process, you will be asked whether you have any dietary restrictions. For example, if you are vegetarian, vegan, gluten free, lactose free, diabetic or have allergies. Please also mention your dietary restrictions to your guide on the tour so that he/she can do his/her best to accommodate them.

Generally, accommodating dietary needs is not a problem on the road. However, if you have complicated dietary restrictions or require specific alternative items, e.g. if you are vegan/lactose intolerant and also need to be gluten free, it may be best to bring them with you or ask your guide to stop at a local supermarket before leaving Reykjavik. Options on the road can be limited and we don't want you to get hungry.



ABOUT THE NORTHERN LIGHTS

Northern Lights or Aurora Borealis occur when streams of particles thrown out from the sun collide with gas particles in the earth's atmosphere. The type of gas particle will determine the color of the aurora producing green, dark or bright red, purple, blue, pink or yellow tones. Green lights occur most often, although red aurora appear least frequently, they are more likely to be seen in Iceland than anywhere else in the world. The best months to see the northern lights is between September and March when it's dark and clear. We need a good northern lights forecast, darkness and clear skies - and a little luck!

Further reading: [All about the Northern Lights](#)



FACTS ABOUT GLACIERS

Glaciers can only develop in areas where there is snow in the same place throughout the year, fresh snowfalls then compress the older layers, reducing the air pockets and increasing density. The older snow is transformed into a state which is something between ice and snow, called firn, after around two years. Firn needs to be compressed for around 100 years before it becomes dense enough to be ice.

People are often surprised to hear the glacier cracking as it adjusts and moves. New features form and moulins, ice ridges and networks of crevasses are always building and evolving. The glacier is peaceful but it is also a place of great power, possessing enough force to shape the valley and bedrock beneath it.

The glaciers are subject to freeze/melt cycles each year, glacial rivers in Iceland flow far more generously in spring and summer, swollen by large volumes of meltwater. The overall percentage, of a great glacier, such as Vatnajökull, which melts each year is comparatively small, and every winter more ice is built. However, this is not enough to compensate for the fact that global warming is causing the glaciers to retreat at an accelerating rate. It is so important that we understand these precious ice wildernesses, enjoying them respectfully whilst we have the opportunity. If present trends continue they will not be preserved in fully glory for our great grandchildren to see.

Vatnajökull glacier is the largest volume glacier in Europe, many outlet glaciers or glacier tongues radiate out from this great central ice-hub, including Svínafellsjökull and Falljökull, where our glacier hikes take part.

Further reading: <https://adventures.is/information/about-glaciers/>



GLACIER HIKING

Glacier hiking is one of the most amazing experiences you can have in Iceland, walking over the surface of the ice is just so special, like traversing a magic white kingdom which time forgot. Encountering different places is such an exciting adventure, and the glacier is very different!

So what is glacier hiking like? First and foremost, your glacier hike on Vatnajökull Glacier is rated as an easy hike, the pace is slow and determined by the needs of the participants, anyone capable of hiking at a slow pace for an hour can do it. You are provided with ice crampons which fasten securely onto your hiking boots. The crampons have long spikes to prevent you from slipping and sliding about - you will be more secure walking on the glacier than you would be on an icy sidewalk. You need to wear plenty of layers and waterproof jacket and trousers, together with headwear, gloves and scarves. Obviously, it is cold on the glacier, but temperatures can vary a little, so being flexible with your layers is best. If you like to have a drink or snack when you are hiking, you should bring one.

Glacier Photography

Cold conditions will deplete camera batteries far faster than warmer conditions. So traveling in Iceland during the winter months you should always make certain your battery is fully charged each day and carry several spare batteries with you. Standing before the most mesmerizing sight you have ever seen and being out of battery is not a happy experience! On the glacier, if you want to make images and colors more vibrant you should use a polarizing filter to reduce glare and reflection. Bright ice and snow will hoodwink your camera into believing there is more light than there actually is, so automatic flash will not always operate when you need it to. If you are using a camera with an exposure compensation meter you should overexpose by 2 thirds.



CLOTHING

Icelandic people like to say that “there is no such thing as bad weather, just bad clothing”. Being prepared for Iceland’s changeable weather conditions is strongly recommended so that you can fully enjoy your stay here. In our experience, we have learnt that the 3-layer structure is the best way to go, it works well all year around.

1. First a base layer, the one that’s closest to your skin. The best is thermals or any type of insulating layer.
2. Next up we have the sweater (fleece or wool recommended) or primaloft layer. This is the one that keeps the warmth of the base layer in.
3. The third one is the wind and water protection. An outer shell or a parka comes in handy here depending on the season.



Rather than a few warm and bulky garments, we recommend a selection of lighter and more versatile pieces that can be worn in various combinations to better manage the wide range of conditions that you will encounter in Iceland.

Be aware that you must adjust these instructions according to the season when you are visiting Iceland. In summer the kind of hiking pants which zip off to become hiking shorts can be good. It can, on occasions, be warm enough to wear shorts and T-shirts but every day when you are out of the city you need to be prepared for every other kind of weather. In winter, you will need a warm jacket, like a thick down jacket. If you don’t have one, then make sure you pack plenty of thermals, primaloft and warm sweaters to layer. We recommend fleece, wool or even better, the Icelandic lopapeysa.

Your feet need particularly careful consideration, so make sure that you bring comfortable and worn in hiking shoes. We recommend waterproof hiking boots with ankle support (can be rented) or similar. It is recommended that you wear thick socks designed to be worn with hiking boots. For the glacier hiking, you need to use crampons and these can only be fitted to hiking boots, if you do not own a pair you can rent good boots from us simply by adding them in the extras and upgrade section below.

Further reading: [The Weather in Iceland and How to Dress for it?](#)

GOOD TO KNOW BEFORE THE TOUR

Medical conditions and medications

Please let us know when you book your tour about any medical condition your guide should be aware of, it is imperative that the guide is aware of this information so that he/she can keep everyone safe and happy. Remember to bring any medication you take or are likely to need. For example, asthma inhalers or painkillers, even if you seldom require them.

Mobile phone & internet connection

The mobile phone connection in Iceland is strong in most places. Some overseas mobile services do not work here and their fees vary. An Icelandic SIM card will overcome these issues. We recommend getting an Icelandic SIM card if you wish to have signal throughout your trip. Iceland has the highest percentage of internet users in the world and the 4G connection is mostly excellent, although, there are a few places along the road where the connection is spotty. In addition to this, you will also find WIFI signal in all accommodations for this tour.

Currency and ATM's

The Icelandic króna or ISK is the currency of Iceland. It is quite important that you have enough ISK coins with you because in some places you have to pay 100/200 ISK to use the bathroom. For almost everything else credit, debit and Caxton type cards are accepted, even for small purchases such as a coffee. Other currencies are very rarely accepted. ATMs can be found in Reykjavík and in the small towns you will visit. Outside of the towns there are very few ATMs.

Luggage information

On this tour you are permitted to take your day backpack and one piece of luggage weighing 20 kg. If you have more or heavier luggage with you, you will need to book storage for the surplus luggage before you arrive, there is a small fee for using this facility. Luggage storage in Reykjavík can be added to your booking using the link in the extras and upgrade section.

Extras and Upgrades

Extras and rental equipment include hiking boots, luggage storage, waterproof jacket & pants, towel rental & entrance to Mývatn Nature Baths. You also have the option of upgrading to a single room and/or Whale Watching in a powerful Rhib Boat, a standard whale watching and sea angling tour is included. If you have already booked your tour but would like to add extras or upgrade your booking that is no problem. Just use this link:

<https://adventures.is/2-day-tours-rental-equipment-and-upgrades/>

Further reading: [What to know about Iceland](#)

FURTHER QUESTIONS

You should now be prepared for your upcoming adventure. If you have any questions then please don't hesitate to contact us at info@adventures.is. We look forward to meeting you and enjoying 6 days of traveling around Iceland together!



"Incredible 2 Day Tour of the South Island!"

"This tour showed us waterfalls, black sand beaches, iceberg lagoon, walked a glacier, explored an ice cave, viewed the glaciers and volcanoes from afar, and saw the Northern Lights. It was everything we wanted, packed into 2 full days. These are busy days, you will have things to do all day and end the evening around midnight (if you want to see Northern Lights) well worth the price.

We stayed the night at a pleasant hotel overlooking the mountains, outstanding dinner and breakfast, very comfortable clean accommodations..."

TripAdvisor, reviewed February 2017 by Chazz B



"Best Trip Ever!"

"My husband and I went on the 2 day south coast tour. Oliver was our amazing tour guide for the two days. We cannot express in words how much fun we had. He seriously took such good care of us, and did everything he could to satisfy all of our requests. He showed us as much as possible and made sure our small group was taken care of everywhere we went! We had an amazing time, and strongly recommend any one to go on this tour when visiting Iceland..."

TripAdvisor, reviewed March 2017 by pnbanav

[See more reviews on our tripadvisor page](#)