

5-Day Iceland Itinerary: Reykjavík & the South Coast

Reykjavík, Iceland & Vík, South Coast, Iceland · August · 5 days

Tailored for groups - includes group activities, social dining, and group-friendly options

Five days with friends, starting with two in Reykjavík and ending on the South Coast around Vík. Look forward to the Sky Lagoon, the Golden Circle stops at Þingvellir and Gullfoss, and a glacier walk near Skaftafell.

Open the interactive trip: live map, photos and links

Before you go: [Get a Iceland eSIM: data on landing](#)

What this trip might cost, per person for 5 days, flights extra:
Budget \$340 · Mid-range \$550 · Comfort \$770
Opening hours, prices and transport change. Please double-check bookings and times before you go.

YOUR TRIP AT A GLANCE

- 1

DAY 1

Sky Lagoon and Laugavegur in Reykjavík

Reykjavík · 2 nights
- 2

DAY 2

Þingvellir, Geysir and Gullfoss
- 3

DAY 3

Seljalandsfoss, Skógafoss and Reynisfjara

Vík · 3 nights
- 4

DAY 4

Glacier Walk and Lunch at Kaffi Hornid
- 5

DAY 5

Kvernufoss, Reykjadalur and Dyrhólaey
- ?

AFTER THE LAST DAY

Before you go: Reykjavík, Vík

Sky Lagoon and Laugavegur in Reykjavík

Arrival day: an easy start close to your stay

Sunrise 5:18 AM

Golden hour 8:37 PM

Sunset 9:48 PM

Your base for 2 nights: Reykjavík

Ease in with a soak at the Sky Lagoon, then walk Laugavegur, climb Hallgrímskirkja for the view and finish with dinner at The Seafort.

GO

12:30 PM · 1 hour

Keflavík International Airport to Reykjavík

Drive the Ring Road west for 50 km, about 45 minutes. Rental cars are easy to collect; take the scenic route along the coast if you have time. Cost is roughly 7,000-8,000 ISK per day for a mid-range SUV.

- Rental car (already have) · 45 minutes · Included in rental

- Airport shuttle bus · 45 minutes · \$21 per person

- Taxi · 45 minutes · \$50-65 per ride

Book a rental car

Book a transfer

1

2:30 PM · 2 hours

Book ahead

Sky Lagoon

\$44-59 per person · Open 10 AM-11 PM

A milky-blue geothermal pool fed by runoff from a nearby power plant, with views out to the Atlantic. The water stays around 38-40°C year-round. It's 15 minutes north of the city centre; drive or catch a shuttle bus from your hotel.

Insider tip: Book online in advance to save 500 ISK and skip the queues. Bring your own towel or rent one for 900 ISK.

Book tickets

Open in Google Maps >

2

5:15 PM · 1 hour

Laugavegur Street

Reykjavík's main shopping and eating strip, lined with cafes, galleries, and independent shops. It's a gentle 20-minute walk from Sky Lagoon back into the centre; stop for coffee and people-watch.

Insider tip: Stop at Kaffivín for a flat white and a slice of sourdough; locals go here daily.

Open in Google Maps >

3

7:00 PM · 45 minutes

Hallgrímur Kirkja viewpoint

Free

A concrete church with an 74-meter tower that dominates the skyline. Ride the lift up for views across the city, the bay, and out to the mountains. It's a 10-minute walk south from Laugavegur.

Insider tip: Go up just before 8:37 PM to catch golden hour light; the queues are shorter than earlier in the day and the views are warmer.

Book tickets

Open in Google Maps >

4

8:30 PM · 1.5 hours

Book ahead

The Seafort Restaurant

\$33-48 per person for dinner · Open 5 PM-10 PM

A candlelit spot near the Old Harbour, known for fresh Arctic char and lamb. Book a table by the window for views back over the water as the light fades. It's a 5-minute walk from Hallgrímur.

Insider tip: Order the catch of the day rather than the menu; it's often cheaper and always fresher. Ask for a table with a view when you book.

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

If you land early (optional, close to your stay, before the plan above)

Perlan Museum: A small, quirky museum inside a glass dome with views over the city from its rooftop. 10 minutes from central Reykjavík by car or bus.

Old Harbour walk: Colourful shipping containers, fishing boats, and seafood shacks. A 15-minute stroll through the most photogenic part of the city centre.

[Open Day 1 as a route in Google Maps](#)

Where to stay in Reykjavík

Book in central Reykjavík, around Laugavegur Street or the Old Harbour: you're within walking distance of restaurants, shops, and the thermal pools. Stay near the water if you can; it keeps the evening vibe relaxed.

Galaxy Pod Hotel

Budget · Hostel · \$

Budget-friendly, private pods, friendly common areas, close to city centre.

[Book now](#)

[Google Maps >](#)

Guesthouse Sunna

Budget · Guesthouse · \$

Quiet residential area, Icelandic hospitality, homemade breakfast, walking distance to cafes.

[Book now](#)

[Google Maps >](#)

Hótel Borg

Mid-range · Hotel · \$\$

Central square location, classic 1930s vibe, good value for Reykjavík.

[Book now](#)

[Google Maps >](#)

Canopy by Hilton Reykjavik

Mid-range · Hotel · \$\$

Modern, warm design, walkable to geothermal pools and restaurants downtown.

[Book now](#)

[Google Maps >](#)

101 Hotel

Mid-range · Hotel · \$\$

Central Reykjavík. Modern, good breakfasts, easy base for the Golden Circle loop.

[Book now](#)

[Google Maps >](#)

Apotek Hotel

Mid-range · Hotel · \$\$

Historic building downtown. Character, excellent restaurant, central location for early starts.

[Book now](#)

[Google Maps >](#)

[All stays in Reykjavík](#)

[Holiday rentals](#)

Where to eat

Kex Hostel

Icelandic comfort food · Lunch · \$\$

Casual vibe, local crowd. Order the fish and chips or lamb stew.

[Google Maps >](#)

Apotek Kitchen + Bar

Nordic · Dinner · \$\$

Relaxed downtown spot. Go for the Arctic char or slow-cooked beef.

[Google Maps >](#)

DAY 1: SKY LAGOON AND LAUGAVEGUR IN REYKJAVÍK (CONTINUED)

TOURS & DAY TRIPS FROM REYKJAVÍK

HALF DAY

Vatnajökull glacier walk

One of Europe's largest glaciers is surreal up close, with ice caves and crevasses you'll explore roped to a guide.

[Book now](#)

HALF DAY

Seljalandsfoss and Skógafoss waterfall route

Two of Iceland's best waterfalls are an hour apart; you can walk behind Seljalandsfoss and get soaked, then tackle Skógafoss's steep stairs for the view.

[Book now](#)

HALF DAY

Mývatn Nature Baths soak and geothermal loop

Warmer and less crowded than Blue Lagoon, it's set in a volcanic landscape; combine it with a drive through nearby geothermal hot springs and lava fields.

[Book now](#)

Pingvellir, Geysir and Gullfoss

Sunrise 5:18 AM

Golden hour 8:37 PM

Sunset 9:48 PM

Sleep in Reykjavík · night 2 of 2

A full Golden Circle day: walk through Pingvellir, watch Geysir's hot springs, stand beside Gullfoss, and stop at Skálholt on the way back.

PREFER A GUIDE? · HALF DAY

Snorkelling between continents

Silfra Fissure lets you swim in the rift valley between the North American and Eurasian plates in crystal-clear water; thrilling and unique.

[Book this tour](#)

1

8:00 AM · 2 hours

Pingvellir National Park

Free

Walk between two continental plates at the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, a rift valley where you can see the geological drama with your own eyes. The park also has a waterfall and a natural swimming pool if you want to dip in. Drive 50 km northeast from Reykjavík, about an hour.

Insider tip: Skip the main parking lot crowds and park at the far end near Öxarárfoss waterfall for a quieter walk.

[Book tickets](#)
[Open in Google Maps >](#)

2



10:30 AM · 1.5 hours

Geysir Hot Spring Area

Free

Strokkur geyser erupts every 5-10 minutes, shooting boiling water 40 meters into the air. There are also hot springs, bubbling mud pools, and colourful mineral deposits all over the ground. Drive 30 km from Pingvellir, about 30 minutes.

Insider tip: Position yourself to the side and slightly back of Strokkur for the best photos and to avoid the spray.

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

3

12:15 PM · 1 hour

Gullfoss

Free

A two-tier waterfall that drops 32 meters into a narrow canyon, with a roar and spray that fills the air. In August you'll see the full volume of glacial meltwater. Drive 10 km from Geysir, about 15 minutes.

Insider tip: The upper viewing platform is closer to the falls and gets misted; bring a waterproof jacket or embrace the water.

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

DAY 2: PINGVELLIR, GEYSIR AND GULLFOSS (CONTINUED)

4

1:30 PM · 1 hour

Skálholt

Free

A historic turf-roofed church and cultural site in the foothills. It's a quieter stop than the main Golden Circle sights, with views over the valley and a good cafe for a rest break. Drive 20 km from Gullfoss, about 25 minutes.

Insider tip: The cafe serves good coffee and local baked goods; the turf-roofed bishop's house is photogenic.

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

5

3:00 PM · 45 minutes

Kerið Crater

Free

A volcanic crater lake with deep blue water and red-brown lava walls, formed about 3,000 years ago. A short loop walk goes all the way around the rim. On the drive back to Reykjavík, it's a quick detour that adds drama without much time lost.

Insider tip: Go in late afternoon when the sun hits the crater walls; the blue water pops against the rust-coloured rock.

[Book tickets](#)

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

GO

3:50 PM · 1 hour 15 minutes

Reykjavík to base

Drive back to Reykjavík, about 55 km and an hour. Grab an early dinner in town or rest up for tomorrow. You've seen the heart of Iceland today.

- Rental car · 45 minutes · Included in rental
- Bus · 1 hour · \$18 per person

[Book a rental car](#)

PREFER A GUIDE? · FULL DAY

Golden Circle loop

Þingvellir's rift valley, Geysir's spouting hot spring, and Gullfoss waterfall are Iceland's three heavyweight sights and you can see them all in a self-drive circuit.

[Book this tour](#)

[Open Day 2 as a route in Google Maps](#)

DAY 2: PINGVELLIR, GEYSIR AND GULLFOSS (CONTINUED)

Where to eat

Kaffi Krús

Icelandic · Breakfast · \$

Cosy spot near Reykjavík harbour. Order the rye bread soup and coffee before you drive out.

[Google Maps >](#)

Efstihlíð

Icelandic · Lunch · \$\$

At Thingvellir National Park. Lamb stew hits different after tectonic plates and geysers. Book ahead.

[Google Maps >](#)

Lindin Restaurant

Icelandic · Dinner · \$\$

In Laugavatn village on your way back. Fresh trout, slow evening light, local vibe.

[Google Maps >](#)

Seljalandsfoss, Skógafoss and Reynisfjara

Sunrise 5:11 AM

Golden hour 8:23 PM

Sunset 9:32 PM

Your base for 3 nights: Vík

Drive the South Coast past two big waterfalls and the small hidden one at Gljúfrabui, then end on the black sand at Reynisfjara.

GO

9:00 AM · 3.5 hours

Reykjavík to Vík via Route 1

3.5-hour drive east along the scenic south coast. Stop for fuel in Hveragerði (1 hour out) or wait until Selfoss. Pick up a packed lunch in Reykjavík before you leave or grab one at N1 petrol stations en route.

1

1:00 PM · 1 hour

Seljalandsfoss

Free

A 60m waterfall you can walk behind. The loop trail takes 20 minutes and rewards you with spray, a rainbow on clear days, and a perspective most visitors miss. 10 minutes off Route 1, 45 minutes west of Vík.

Insider tip: Start the loop clockwise to get the behind-the-waterfall shot first, before crowds thicken. Wear waterproofs.

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

2

2:15 PM · 45 minutes

Gljúfrabui

Free

A hidden waterfall tucked into a rocky alcove, fed by a glacier. A short 10-minute walk leads you into a moss-covered grotto. The approach crosses a stream; locals call it the 'secret' falls, though it's gaining crowds. 5-minute drive from Seljalandsfoss.

Insider tip: Go immediately after Seljalandsfoss while you're still wet. The grotto is magical in afternoon light but fills with tour groups by 3 PM.

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

3

3:30 PM · 1 hour

Skógafoss

Free

A powerful 60m waterfall with a full-width curtain of water. The main viewpoint gives you the iconic shot; a steep trail climbs behind it for a rare aerial view. 25 minutes east of Gljúfrabui on Route 1.

Insider tip: Climb the right-hand stairs to the upper viewpoint. Midges can be thick on calm days; a head net or insect spray helps.

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

4

5:30 PM · 2 hours

Reynisfjara Beach

Free

Black sand beach backed by basalt cliffs with roaring waves and sea stacks. Walk the shore at golden hour (post-8:23 PM today) for the best light and fewer crowds. 25 minutes east of Skógafoss; park in the main lot and descend wooden stairs to the sand.

Insider tip: Arrive by 5:45 PM to settle in. Do your first wander now, then return to the village for dinner and come back for golden hour around 8:30 PM.

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

5

7:30 PM · 1.5 hours

Book ahead

Sævarborg

Free

A simple, friendly spot serving fish and chips or lamb soup in central Vík. Expect no frills and strong coffee. Book ahead for groups of four or more, especially on weekends in August. 2-minute walk from the main road through the village.

Insider tip: Sævarborg is cash-friendly and local. If it's full, Halldórskaffi (50m away) does decent burgers and has a long bar.

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

[Open Day 3 as a route in Google Maps](#)

Where to stay in Vík

Book accommodation in central Vík village, walkable to the black sand beach and restaurants. You're perfectly placed for early starts to glaciers and waterfalls on the next two days.

Hostel Skaftafell

Budget · Hostel · \$

Closer to Day 4 glacier activities. Basic but friendly. East toward Skaftafell, good for early starts.

[Book now](#)

[Google Maps >](#)

Guesthouse Vík

Budget · Guesthouse · \$

Friendly, simpler rooms, local knowledge. Owner books glacier tours, saves you hassle.

[Book now](#)

[Google Maps >](#)

Hotel Vík

Mid-range · Hotel · \$\$

Central location, clean rooms, good views of the coast. Only real hotel in town. Book early.

[Book now](#)

[Google Maps >](#)

Guesthouse Steinsstaðir

Mid-range · Guesthouse · \$\$

Farmstay 15 minutes outside Vík. Quieter, character-filled. Ask for directions; sat nav can be tricky.

[Book now](#)

[Google Maps >](#)

Hótel Vík

Mid-range · Hotel · \$\$

Right in the village. Clean rooms, big breakfasts, easy base for glacier drives.

[Book now](#)

[Google Maps >](#)

Icelandair Hotel Vík

Mid-range · Hotel · \$\$

Modern, comfortable. Restaurant on site. Good if you want to skip evening drives.

[Book now](#)

[Google Maps >](#)

[All stays in Vík](#)

[Holiday rentals](#)

Where to eat

Systur Kaffi

Icelandic cafe · Breakfast · \$

Grab coffee and a rye bread sandwich before heading out. They open at 8am, which gives you an early start on the coast.

[Google Maps >](#)

Halldorskaffi

Seafood, Icelandic · Dinner · \$\$

Simple spot in central Vík. Try the Arctic char or lamb stew. Book ahead; it's popular with tour groups.

[Google Maps >](#)

Skalinn

Icelandic · Lunch · \$\$

Between Vík and Skaftafell, closer to your glacier prep. Fish soup and local trout. Fill up here before heading inland.

[Google Maps >](#)

DAY 3: SELJALANDSFOSS, SKÓGAFOSS AND REYNISFJARA (CONTINUED)

TOURS & DAY TRIPS FROM VÍK

HALF DAY

Glacier walk on Vatnajökull

This is Iceland's largest glacier and you'll walk inside a real ice cave with a guide who knows the safest routes and hidden crevasses.

[Book now](#)

FULL DAY

Golden Circle day trip

Pingvellir (UNESCO site where continents meet), Geysir (active hot spring erupting every few minutes), Gullfoss (70-meter waterfall) in one loop from Reykjavik.

[Book now](#)

HALF DAY

Skógafoss and Seljalandsfoss waterfall hike

Two of Iceland's most accessible and dramatic waterfalls on the same road; you can walk behind Seljalandsfoss if water levels allow.

[Book now](#)

2-3 HOURS

Sky Lagoon or Blue Lagoon geothermal soak

Soak in naturally heated mineral water with views of lava fields (Sky Lagoon near Reykjavik is newer and less crowded than Blue Lagoon).

[Book now](#)

Glacier Walk and Lunch at Kaffi Hornid

Sunrise 5:11 AM Golden hour 8:23 PM Sunset 9:32 PM Sleep in Vík · night 2 of 3

Spend the day on a guided Vatnajökull walk on the Skaftafell route, then have a warm meal at Kaffi Hornid and a look from the Vík overlook.

GO

6:15 AM · 1 hour 15 minutes

Skaftafell Visitor Centre car park to Skaftafell Glacier Trail

1-hour drive from Vík to the Vatnajökull National Park car park. Check in at the visitor centre, then walk 30 minutes to the glacier base where your guide meets you. The trail climbs through birch forest and moraines before you reach the ice.

1

7:45 AM · 3 hours Book ahead

Vatnajökull Glacier Walk (Skaftafell route)

\$88-117 per person with guide · Open Guided tours depart regularly 8 AM-2 PM; book ahead

Strap on crampons and walk 2-3 hours on the glacier itself. Your guide leads you across blue ice, into meltwater channels, and past crevasse fields. No technical climbing, but solid fitness needed. Cost around 9,500 ISK (70 USD) per person with a licensed guide operator based at Skaftafell.

Insider tip: Wear layers: it's cold on the ice, but you'll warm up hiking. Waterproof gloves are essential; bring or rent from the guide.

Book tickets

Open in Google Maps >

GO

11:00 AM · 1 hour 15 minutes

Skaftafell Visitor Centre car park back to Vík

Drive back to Vík, 1 hour. Stop for a late lunch in town before the afternoon rest.

2

12:15 PM · 45 minutes

Kaffi Hornid

\$18-33 per person for lunch/coffee · Open 11 AM-5 PM

Simple seafood café on Vík's main street. Order the fish soup and a lamb sandwich. Quick, filling, and budget-friendly after an exhausting morning on the ice.

Insider tip: Go early to avoid the lunch rush; they run out of soup by 2 PM.

Open in Google Maps >

PREFER A GUIDE? · 2-3 HOURS

Reynisfjara black sand beach and basalt caves

Walk the black volcanic sand, explore sea caves, and watch waves crash against basalt columns; go early to beat tour buses.

Book this tour

5-Day Iceland Itinerary: Reykjavík & the South Coast · Trip Global · Booking links may earn us a commission, at no extra cost to you 12 / 18

3

5:00 PM · 1 hour 30 minutes

Vík viewpoint (Reynisfjara carpark overlook)

Free

Drive 10 minutes from town. This quieter angle of the black-sand beach and basalt cliffs sits just above the Reynisfjara car park. Sit with a coffee and watch the light shift across the sand for an hour before heading back to rest.

Insider tip: Golden hour starts around 8:23 PM tonight; come back here at 8 PM if you have energy for a second wind and the best light of the day.

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

[Open Day 4 as a route in Google Maps](#)

Where to eat

Gásir in Egilsstaðir

Icelandic seafood · Breakfast · \$\$

Early fuel before the drive: fish soup, rye bread, strong coffee. Open 8am.

[Google Maps >](#)

Kaffi Hornid

Icelandic · Lunch · \$\$

In Höfn, on your way back. Lamb stew or fresh fish. Quick turnaround, packed tables.

[Google Maps >](#)

Halldórsskálinn

Icelandic comfort food · Dinner · \$\$

Back in Vík. Grilled Arctic char, creamy mushroom sauce. Cosy, reliable, worth the wait.

[Google Maps >](#)

Kvernufoss, Reykjadalur and Dyrhólaey

Sunrise 5:11 AM

Golden hour 8:23 PM

Sunset 9:32 PM

Sleep in Vík · night 3 of 3

Your last day on the South Coast hits the waterfalls you've skipped, sinks into a geothermal pool, and ends with basalt sea cliffs at golden hour. A perfect wind-down before heading home.

1

7:30 AM · 1 hour

Skaftafell waterfall car park to Systrafoss

Free

Start early to beat crowds at this thundering two-tier fall hidden in a ravine. The short walk (15 mins each way) is easy and the spray hits different before mid-morning heat kicks in. Drive 15 minutes east from Vík.

Insider tip: Wear waterproof layers or embrace the soaking. Stand on the lower platform for the best photo angle without the midday glare.

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

2

9:00 AM · 1.5 hours

Kvernufoss waterfall

Free

A smaller, often quieter cousin to Skógafoss with the same drama and a rocky gorge you can walk behind. The trail is gentle and the light through the mist is incredible. 20 minutes west from Systrafoss.

Insider tip: Walk behind the curtain of water if you're steady on wet rocks. The caves and shadow play beat the front view.

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

3

11:00 AM · 3 hours

Reykjadalur Hot Spring River

Free to visit; \$26-33 for hot spring tours · Open Anytime; guided tours available 10 AM-3 PM

Hike into a geothermal valley where a warm river runs through moorland and you can soak in natural pools heated to 38-40°C. The 4km round-trip walk is moderate (1.5 hours), rewarding at the end. 25 minutes drive north from Kvernufoss.

Insider tip: Bring a swimsuit under your hiking clothes. Go midweek if possible; weekends pack out. Arrive before 1 PM to claim a good soak spot.

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

4

3:00 PM · 2 hours

Dyrhólaey Lighthouse

Free

A peninsula jutting into the sea with 120m basalt cliffs, puffin colonies (though scarcer in late August), and views back to Vík and glaciers. The drive loops the headland in 1.5 hours with multiple pull-outs for photos. 30 minutes drive south from Reykjadalur.

Insider tip: Skip the 200kr lighthouse interior. Stay on the cliffs during golden hour from 8:20 PM for the best light on the arch and black sand beach below.

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

5

8:30 PM · 1 hour

Vík village and black sand beach

Free to explore; \$37-58 for dinner in vill · Open Anytime; restaurants open 12 PM-10 PM

Walk Vík's main street for supplies or a last coffee, then stand on the black sand with basalt columns framing the sunset. It's your home base's signature view, quiet by evening. 10 minutes drive from Dyrhólaey.

Insider tip: Golden hour peaks around 9 PM. Face the columns and have the sun behind you for silhouettes on the sand.

[Open in Google Maps >](#)

Open Day 5 as a route in Google Maps

Where to eat

Halldórsskálinn

Icelandic · Breakfast · \$

Fuel up with lamb soup and fresh bread before heading out early to beat crowds at waterfalls.

[Google Maps >](#)

Kozey Kaffihús

Café · Lunch · \$

Grab wraps and coffee in tiny Vík village. Quick, good, right on the drive between sites.

[Google Maps >](#)

Lava Restaurant

Modern Icelandic · Dinner · \$\$

Sit down for Arctic char or lamb while the sun barely sets. Book ahead, worth the drive to Skaftafell area.

[Google Maps >](#)

What should I know about driving in Iceland?

Drive on the right

Kilometres; speed limits in km/h

Licence: A licence in English (or with an official translation) is usually all you need; an International Driving Permit is cheap and avoids questions at the rental desk. Most rental companies need you to be 21 or older and charge extra under 25.

- Headlights on at all times, day and night, without exception.
- Speed cameras everywhere: 50 km/h in towns, 80 on gravel roads, 90 on Ring Road outside towns.
- Gravel roads are slippery; slow down, watch for loose rocks, and drive defensively in wind.

[Book a rental car](#)

Which glacier walk is best near Reykjavík?

Solheimajökull is 3 hours south and easiest for beginners (crampons provided, no ropes). Vatnajökull in the southeast is more remote but spectacular. Most August tours run once or twice daily; book at least 2 days ahead.

Should I do the Blue Lagoon or a natural hot spring?

Skip the pricey Blue Lagoon (8,000-13,000 ISK) in August crowds. Head to Secret Lagoon near the Golden Circle (free, 20 minutes from Route 1, quieter) or Sky Lagoon in Reykjavík (4,500 ISK, fewer tourists, better views).

What's the weather like in Reykjavík in August?

Expect 12-15°C (54-59°F), often windy and changeable. Pack layers, a waterproof jacket, sturdy hiking boots, and sunglasses. The sun barely sets, so bring a sleep mask if you're sensitive to light.

Do people speak English in Reykjavík?

Spoken here: Icelandic. English is spoken fluently almost everywhere, especially by people under 40.

Useful phrases:

- Halló (HAHL-oo): Hello
- Takk (TAHK): Thank you
- Já (YOW): Yes
- Nei (NAY): No
- Hversu mikið? (KVEHR-soo MIK-ith): How much?

Is Reykjavík safe for visitors?

Roads are good but narrow and winding; gravel sections are common in the highlands. Flash floods can close routes quickly, so check road conditions daily at [road.is](#) before heading out.

What's the emergency number in Iceland?

Call 112 for police, ambulance or fire. It's free and works from any phone, including a foreign mobile.

Do you tip in Iceland?

Tipping isn't expected but is appreciated. Round up at cafes or leave 5-10% at restaurants if the service was good. Most places include service in the bill.

BEFORE YOU GO (CONTINUED)

What do only locals know about Reykjavík?

- Fill up fuel in Reykjavík or at N1 stations on the road; petrol is pricey (around 200 ISK/litre) and pumps are scarce in remote areas.
- Book the glacier walk (Vatnajökull or Sólheimajökull) a day ahead online; they fill up fast in August and you need a guide.
- Drive the Golden Circle (Þingvellir, Geysir, Gullfoss) in a loop from Reykjavík; allow 8-10 hours with stops and it's best done as your first full day to adjust to the light.
- Skip the Blue Lagoon near Reykjavík (overpriced and crowded); soak at Sky Lagoon or Mývatn Nature Baths instead, or find smaller hot springs like Laugavellir en route.

BEFORE YOU GO: VÍK

What should I know about driving in Iceland?

Drive on the right

Kilometres; speed limits in km/h

Licence: A licence in English (or with an official translation) is usually all you need; an International Driving Permit is cheap and avoids questions at the rental desk. Most rental companies need you to be 21 or older and charge extra under 25.

- Headlights must be on at all times, even in daylight.
- Speed limits: 50 km/h in towns, 80 km/h on rural roads, 90 km/h on main highways. Police use cameras.
- Single-track roads: pull into passing bays or reverse if oncoming traffic appears; it's routine, not rude.

[Book a rental car](#)

Is 3 days in Vík enough?

Yes, if you're focused. You'll do a glacier walk, hit 2-3 waterfalls, explore Reynisfjara, and soak in a hot spring. A fourth day lets you tackle the Golden Circle or explore more of the coast without rushing.

Can I fit the Golden Circle into a Vík trip?

Barely. It's 5-6 hours driving from Vík return, leaving one full day. Do it as your own thing from Reykjavik beforehand, or skip it for more glacier time and waterfalls. August has long daylight so an early 6am start makes it feasible.

Which glacier walk should I book?

Sólheimajökull (near Vík, 2.5 hours, ISK 12,500) is most accessible. Vatnajökull (further east, 4 hours, ISK 15,000) is bigger but longer driving. Both are reliable and suitable for no experience needed. Book now.

What hot springs are near Vík?

Sky Lagoon and Blue Lagoon are both 2+ hours north. Skip them; instead, soak at Seljavallalaug (30 min drive, free, natural pool) or Laugavellir (45 min drive, geothermal river). Both are worth the drive and quieter than the famous pools.

What's the weather like in Vík in August?

Expect 12-14°C (54-57°F) with occasional rain and wind. Pack layers, waterproof jacket, sturdy hiking boots, and gloves. Bring sunscreen even on cloudy days.

Do people speak English in Vík?

Spoken here: Icelandic. English is widely spoken in Vík, hotels, and restaurants, but signs on hiking trails and in villages are often Icelandic only.

Useful phrases:

- Halló (HAHL-oh): hello
- Takk (TAHK): thank you
- Já (YOW): yes
- Nei (NAY): no
- Hvar eru salernir (KHVAR AY-roo SAH-lair-nir): where's the toilet

Is Vík safe for visitors?

Rivers swell with meltwater in summer, so don't cross unmarked streams and respect all warning signs near waterfalls. Keep your vehicle fueled (petrol stations are sparse) and carry a charged phone.

What's the emergency number in Iceland?

Call 112 for police, ambulance or fire. It's free and works from any phone, including a foreign mobile.

Do you tip in Iceland?

Tipping is optional and not expected. Round up restaurant bills or leave 5-10% for good service if you want to, but most locals don't tip.

What do only locals know about Vík?

- Book glacier walks (Vatnajökull, Sólheimajökull) in advance during August; they fill up fast and operators require minimum group sizes.
- Hit the Golden Circle as a day trip from Reykjavik before heading south to Vík, not the other way around.
- The black sand beaches (Reynisfjara, Skaftafell) get crowded by midday; start hikes early or go late evening in the endless daylight.
- Fill your petrol tank in larger towns like Vík or Skaftafell village. Smaller villages have limited or no fuel options.