Equus Journeys
HORSEBACK TRAVEL & EQUESTRIAN TRADITIONS SINCE 1972

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The Kjolur Trail

ICELAND

A pacey **horse riding trail** which crosses **Iceland** on historical tracks linking the North to the South. Explore the ancient **Kjölur trail**, that Icelanders used to ride when travelling to their annual summer parliament in Thingvellir. You ride amongst a herd of loose **Icelandic horses** and swap your mount once to twice a day. Ride between glaciers, through the highlands and sheltered green valleys, past glaciers, volcanoes and geothermal areas. Our most action-packed **riding tour in Iceland!**

Trail Riding	**8 days / 6 days riding**	**From £2,570**	


A great ride if you want to see as much as possible of the unspoilt Icelandic highlands.


Ride the Kjolur Trail in Iceland


Discover the beauty of Iceland on a trail riding holiday

ITINERARY

Highlights

- A mobile trail ride traversing the island from South to North (or vice versa) between the huge glaciers of Hofsjökull and Langjökull.
- Perfect choice if you want to see as much as possible of the unspoilt Icelandic highlands.
- The Kjolur trail follows a historical route originating from the first democratic foundations of the country.
- Visit the sights of the famous Golden Circle including Gullfoss waterfall, Geysir and Thingvellir lake.
- Experience the extra gait of the Iceland horse - the tölt - fast, smooth and comfortable, it's a unique feeling.
- Ride two or three horses each day and find one or two special favourites amongst the herd of free-running horses

Day 1 — 1 : Home - Reykjavik - Hvammur

Hvammur

Flight to Reykjavik. Please note flights are not included.
It is extremely important that your flight lands before 4pm. If you cannot take an earlier flight, you should arrive a day early and spend the night in Reykjavik.

On your arrival into Reykjavik airport, you can take the Flybus to the BSI (transfer on your own account), where you will be picked up by your guide at 6pm.

Dinner and overnight at the farm.

Please note that depending on the departure date this itinerary can run in the opposite direction.

Day 2 — 2 : Hvammur – Vatnsdalur Valley – Forsæludalur – Hvammur - 20 km riding

Hvammur

Today is your first riding day. Great riding tracks along the banks of Vatnsdalsá river give you the opportunity to enjoy a fast ride and experience the soft tölt! Vatnsdalur is one of the most beautiful valleys in Iceland and the setting of one of the ancient sagas, Vatnsdælasaga.
On your ride to Hvammur, you will hear tales from Iceland's heroic past of bloody conflict, revenge and love. The horses stay at Forsæludalur farm which is the last farm in the valley before you enter the highlands.

Stay overnight at Hvammur. The hot tub is a welcome sight after a full day in the saddle!

Day 3 — 3 : Hvammur – Forsæludalur – Öndvegi - 35 km riding

As you ride up the valley, the canyon of the Vatnsdalsá river appears with some its many waterfalls. Today, you will ascend up to the mountain plateau Grímstunguheiði. The fertile valley dotted with farms is left behind as the horses run freely over the soft riding paths of the northern highland. Enjoy the splendid view over the impressive highland mountains and glaciers around you and your riding companions.

Stay overnight at the mountain cabin Öndvegi.

Day 4 — 4 : Öndvegi - Áfangi - 35 km riding

On today's ride you will pass the mountains Sandkúlufell and Sauðafell, following a historical route. All the way back to the early settlement of Iceland, people travelled on horseback on exactly the same trails as you do today.

At the end of the ride, will be left close to river Kúlukvísl, while riders will be driven to the accommodation.

Overnight at Áfangi mountain cabin.

Day 5 — 5 : Áfangi– Hveravellir - 15 km riding

The destination of today's ride is Hveravellir, a unique geothermal area between Hofsjökull and Langjökull glaciers.
The trail will lead you over the Seyðisá river and into the highlands.
Under these rough conditions, the most famous outlaw - Fjalla Eyvindur - survived for years.

Overnight at Hveravellir mountain cabin.

Day 6 — 6 : Gíslaskáli - Árbúðir - 35km riding

Gear up for a long day on horseback. You start the day by riding through the Valley of Thieves, called Thjófadalir, a remote grassy valley surrounded by high mountains. From the entrance of the valley you can enjoy splendid views off the fertile landscape.
Following the glacial river Fúlákvísl you will get a glimpse of the mighty glacier Langjökull.

The day ends at Árbúðir Mountain Cabin.

Day 7 — 7 : Árbúðir - Fremstaver - 25km riding

Your tour follows river Svartá for a while before crossing the river Hvítá, continuing along the slopes of Mt. Bláfell. During the last centuries, travelling through the remote Highland was a dangerous trip due to outlaws waiting to rob the riders.

Spend the night and rest the horses at Fremstaver Mountain Cabin.

Day 8 — 8 : Fremstaver - Geysir Hot Spring Area - Reykjavik

You say goodbye to the horses, Haukur and the crew and return back to Reykjavík.
On the drive back to Reykjavík BSÍ, you will visit the world famous natural wonders, Geysir and the majestic Gullfoss waterfall. The approximate arrival time at BSI is between 1pm-2pm.

We recommend booking a flight departing after 7pm to ensure you have enough time.

DATES & PRICES

DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	STATUS
20/06/2027	27/06/2027	£2,763	Guaranteed departure
27/06/2027	04/07/2027	£2,966	Guaranteed departure
07/07/2027	14/07/2027	£2,966	Guaranteed departure
14/07/2027	21/07/2027	£2,966	Guaranteed departure
17/07/2027	24/07/2027	£2,966	Guaranteed departure
24/07/2027	31/07/2027	£2,966	Guaranteed departure
16/08/2027	23/08/2027	£2,763	Guaranteed departure

Price details

- Flights to your destination (international/domestic) are not included, but can be booked on request - please contact us for rates.

- Rates are per person, based on sharing communal rooms. There is no single supplement as you should be prepared to share.

- All departures are confirmed regardless of the number of riders on the tour. Groups usually comprise from 6 up to 20 international riding guests plus guides. As you are riding with a herd of loose horses, it is easy to forget that there are other riders amongst them too and so the group size is never a problem.

- Airport transfers and additional nights in Reykjavik are not included. See here for more info on how to get from the airport to the city centre.

- This route runs from the South to the North one week and from the North to the South the following week. Both directions cover the same ground and offer the same spectacular views.

- Children from 9 years of age can be accommodated provided they are good riders, with parental consent and a good riding level

- Discounts are available for families of 3+ (two parents and one child aged 12+), and for children between the age of 9 and 12. Please contact us.
Please Note
The itinerary may be modified at anytime for security reasons, meteorological or events beyond our control such as blocked roads, rivers in flood, drought, strikes and local holidays. Equus Journeys, our local partners and their local guides will always strive to find the best solution and will alter the itinerary as needed.
The names of the hotels and accommodation are given for information only and depending on availability, they may be modified without notice and replaced by another of a similar standard.

Price includes

SUPPORT TEAM

1 English-speaking horse guide from Reykjavik
2 Icelandic tour leaders
2-4 assistants in charge of the free herd.

LOGISTIC

1 vehicle and driver
1 cook
2-3 horses per rider equipped with saddle and bridle

INLAND TRANSPORTS

Minibus

ACCOMMODATION

Dormitories in mountain huts with bunk beds and mattresses

MEALS

Full board from dinner on day 1 to lunch on day 8

EXTRA EQUIPMENT

First aid kit

Price doesn't include

MEALS

Beverages and personal extras
Lunch and dinner on day 8 are not included
Special diet supplement - please see above

TRANSPORT

Return airport transfers (FlyBus shuttle, easily bookable online - please ask us if you need help)
International flights

EXTRA

Tips to local team

INSURANCE

Cancellation and travel insurance are not included in the above listed price. Please note that insurance is mandatory. We recommend taking out an insurance policy as soon as your trip is booked to cover you in case of cancellation

Optional

ACCOMMODATION

Extra nights in Reykjavík: please contact us for the price

EQUESTRIAN INFO

Horses

The Icelandic horse is a part of the history and saga of the country and its Vikings. It is characterised by its extra pace - the tölt, which is fast and very comfortable. Some are also capable of an additional Flying Pace, which is similar to trot, but much faster and used for racing. Icelandic horses are small, sociable, comfortable and energetic. Icelandic tack consists of simple snaffle bridles, often with drop nosebands and straight cut saddles similar to English style.

You will ride with a group of loose horses and change mounts once to twice a day, to preserve the horses strength.

Guide & local team

Your guides are Hjalti and Asa who live at Kjoastadir farm, where the Kjolur starts/ends (depending on which direction you ride it). Their trademarks are good food and good horses! Hjalti has ridden the Kjolur more than 140 times and so you can be pretty sure he won't get lost!

Minimum riding ability

MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

You should be a confident rider, capable of riding over varied terrain at all paces. You should be open to learning a new style of riding - the tölt (fast pace and normally comfortable) and fit enough to maintain this pace for long periods.

Rider weight limit is 110kg/17,3 st/242lb

PACE

The ride can be fast, particularly as you have a herd of loose horses with you, so you should feel comfortable about keeping up with the group. The tölt, used most of the time, is a specific pace likened to a very fast walk which you sit to. The tölt is a fast pace - you can expect long periods of tölt, but canters are not frequent. Over technical terrain the horses will walk or trot.

TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

You will be expected to assist with grooming and tacking up your horse (guidance is available) and to help with meal preperations.

TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

You need to be physically fit for long hours in the saddle (5-8 hours). The terrain is varied to include steep ascents/descents, rocks/lava fields and there may be holes to avoid. You should also be prepared for the changeable weather. The climate is temperate (12°c - 16°c during the day) but the temperature can change suddenly with strong winds and rain always possible. During the summer months of June/July there is almost 24 hours of daylight.
Having previous experience of riding a trail of several days would be an advantage but it is not compulsory. Guests who do not ride regularly are requested to get fit prior to the ride. It is of particular importance to ensure you are comfortable and balanced when riding at speed across rough terrain and open spaces.

EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

Saddle bags are provided, as are rain coats.

Hard hats are mandatory. We recommend our riders to wear a helmet to the correct standard and you should bring your own to ensure a proper fit.

TRAVEL INFO

COMFORT

You will stay in mountain cabins. Some of the larger cabins may have more than one room, whilst smaller ones are dormitory style.

There are toilets available throughout the trail. Showers are possible on the first 3 nights (hot water is not guaranteed but it may be available for an extra fee).

You must bring your own sleeping bag.

Wifi and cell signal are limited throughout the holiday.

Please understand that accommodation in Iceland is usually basic, with little privacy, small rooms and limited showers.

MEALS

Lunches are simple picnics; dinners are generous and hearty.
You prepare your own picnic lunch at breakfast time.

Alcoholic beverages are not included in the tour price and are hard to get in the highlands. They can be bought at a reasonable price in the Duty-Free Store at Keflavik Airport upon arrival.

Vegetarian diets can be accommodated. However, more restrictive diets such as vegan or gluten-free cannot be catered for. Please inform your travel advisor upon booking.

CLIMATE

Contrary to popular belief, the general climate in Iceland is temperate and cool with extreme cold temperatures only recorded in winter. In summer the average temperatures are 10-12c but can be as low as 5c and as high as 25c. You should be prepared for both sun and rain and dress in layers.

TIPS

Tips are welcome but not expected. You should tip what you feel is appropriate and you are comfortable with.

PACKING LIST

There are some important packing considerations for a riding holiday in Iceland. The Icelandic horses have had no contact with other equine species and are not vaccinated. They do not have any resistance to diseases which are common elsewhere in the world and so it is important to take precautions to prevent the spread of infections.

- You should NOT take the following products into Iceland: saddles, bridles, halters, saddle pads, whips, brushes or any leather products which have been in contact with a horse.

- Your riding clothes must be thoroughly cleaned at least 5 days before departure (riding breeches, jumpers, coats, gloves) and should be washed in temperatures of at least 40c.

- Items which cannot be washed at 40c, such as riding hats or leather boots must be thoroughly disinfected at least five days before departure:
1. Wash in detergent.
2. Dry thoroughly
3. Spray with a 1% solution of Virkon detergent (10g per litre of water)

Please visit the Icelandic veterinary authority website to learn more.
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Please pack carefully and sensibly: the following guide is here to give you an idea of what to bring. This list must be adapted depending on the season and individual needs. If possible, please opt for a soft bag instead of hard shell suitcase.

Head
- A riding helmet is compulsory and we recommend that you take your own to ensure a correct fit.
- A flyhat to wear over your helmet may be a good idea in the summer months, when flies can be be an issue
- Sunhat for when not riding
- Sunglasses - with a cord attached so they don't fly off when riding
- Buff or bandana for protecting your neck and face from the elements
- Warm hat for cold evenings/days

Upper body
- Thermals in case of cold weather
- Long sleeved shirts provide protection from the sun or extra warmth
- Down jacket or gilet for cold evenings
- T-shirts
- Lightweight fleece or jumper
- Warm polar fleece or equivalent
- Waterproof jacket

Legs
- Lightweight, comfortable riding trousers or jodhpurs - we recommend riding in them at home before taking them on holiday to ensure they don't rub.
- Waterproof over trousers
- Casual clothes for the evenings (jeans or walking trousers)
- Thermal trousers

Hands and Feet
- Comfortable riding boots. We recommend short boots with half chaps but you may wish to take long chaps. We don't recommend taking your favourite long leather boots in case they get damaged. It is recommended your boots are waterproof as you may be crossing rivers and they can get wet.
- Sandals/flip-flops
- Several pairs of warm socks
- Gloves

Nightwear
- Sleeping bag and sleeping bag liner
- A small camping pillow
- Slippers (you will have to remove your shoes inside the accommodation)
- Eye mask

Other useful items
- Towel
- Fly net against bugs
- Swimsuit - for hot tubs
- Camera and high capacity memory card. Spare battery
- Bumbag for carrying your camera and small items whilst riding
- Wet Wipes or equivalent (for when washing facilities aren't available)
- Ear plugs (for light sleepers)

Medical kit
- Sunscreen and lip balm - should be high factor
- Insect repellent

- Any medication you regularly take
- Blister plasters in case of any rubs
- Antiseptic cream, plasters, aspirin, anti-histamine, insect-bite salve etc...
- Spare prescription glasses/contact lenses
- Eye drops
- Imodium or similar anti-diarrhoea medication
- Re-hydration sachets
- Antiseptic wipes
- Handwash gel

Our Recommendations

- Backpacks cannot be worn whilst riding. We recommend a small bumbag or a coat with pockets so that you can carry small items with you during the day.
- We recommend travelling in your riding boots and carrying your hat and some riding clothes in your hand luggage - then if your luggage goes astray you are still able to ride!
- Carry a copy of your passport and insurance documentation with you.

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

1. **Travel light.** It's a little known fact, but the lighter you pack, the better for the environment as heavy bags will produce higher emissions (when flying a plane or driving a car!).
2. **Reduce plastic waste.** Take your favorite reusable bottle with you. Avoid single-use bags, cups, or straws.
3. **Preserve nature.** Always take your rubbish with you during the ride and recycle them. Leave all the flowers or plants as you found them, and never get too close when observing wildlife. Make sure to use eco-friendly products such as body wash or laundry detergent (if camping) to protect both your skin and the environment.
4. **Choose your experiences carefully.** Respect animal life by not participating in any activities that abuse wild animals (shows, elephant rides, etc.).
5. **Support local populations.** Buy local handicrafts, be respectful of customs, and learn about the culture of local communities.
6. **Share!** Raise awareness among your family and friends about sustainable tourism.

For more information please see this page .