




Northern Exposure trail

ICELAND

On this **riding trail in Iceland** discover the spectacular north of the country with its natural wonders and diverse landscapes. This part of Iceland is well known for its spectacular natural sights and extraordinarily diverse landscape. This **riding holiday** will give you the opportunity to visit Europe's largest waterfall, Dettifoss and the strange rock formations of Hljodaklettur as well as the volcanic activity around Lake Myvatn. There is also the chance to join a whale watching boat trip from Husavik (optional and at extra cost).

Trail Riding	 8 days / 5 days riding	 From £2,080		Family holidays from 9 y.o
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ITINERARY

Highlights

- The lunar landscapes of Lake Myvatn, an active volcanic area
- The most pleasant climate of Iceland and the unique spectacle of the midnight sun
- The thrill of riding with a herd of loose horses
- Discover the Icelandic horse and it's magical extra gait - the tölt
- The opportunity to bathe in the warm geothermal waters of the outdoor pool at the Mývatn Nature Baths.
- Optional whale watching trip
- This tour was nominated by the Sunday Times as one of the 10 best trails in the world.

Day 1 — 1: ARRIVE IN REYKJAVIK - No riding

Please note Day 1 is your arrival day - your tour and our services starts early in the morning of day 2. It is therefore necessary for you to arrive early and spend a night in Reykjavik before the start of your holiday.

Flights to Reykjavik are not included but can be booked upon request.

On arrival at Reykjavik airport (Keflavik) you need to transfer to your hotel by FlyBus (<https://www.re.is/tour/flybus/>). The transfer, hotel night and dinner are not included, but we can book a hotel for you upon request.

Day 2 — 2: REYKJAVIK - HUSAVIK - BJARNASTADIR - 20km riding

 Bjarnastadir Farm

The meeting point is at the domestic airport (Flugfélagið Ernir) for your flight to Húsavík and then transfer to Bjarnastaðir Farm. You should dress in your riding clothes so that you are ready to ride on arrival, and must remember to keep your passport in your hand luggage for this domestic flight.

At Bjarnastaðir, you will first have lunch and then start your ride with a short introduction to the Icelandic horse and its special gaits. You will be riding on the east side of the National Park Jökulsárgljúfur, before joining a sightseeing tour by bus to visit Europe's largest waterfall, Dettifoss and the famous Asbyrgi canyon. A wonder of nature, this wide, horseshoe shaped canyon has sheer cliff faces up to 100m high.

Overnight at Bjarnastaðir Farm.

Day 3 — 3: BJARNASTADIR - THEISTAREYKIR - 35km riding

 Refuge de Theistareykir

After breakfast, you will be driven to Kelduhverfi and start your ride from there. Today's ride takes you into the mountains to discover the fantastic views off Öxarfjörður Fjord. The rest of your trail today will see you ride to the geothermal area of Theistareykir.

Overnight at Theistareykir Mountain Cabin.

Day 4 — 4: THEISTAREYKIR - LAXARDALUR - 35km riding

 Bjarnastadir Farm

Ride from the Theistareykir area to Halldorstaðir in Laxardal. The landscape becomes rough as you ride across the geothermal area and lava fields to the desert area of Hólasandur. You will then ride down to Laxárdalur Valley and over the Laxá river to Halldórstaðir. Car transfer to Bjarnastaðir farm, where you stay the night with a hot tub on the premises.

Day 5 — 5: LAXARDALUR - 30km riding

 Bjarnastadir Farm

Saddle up again and head off through a black sand desert along the colourful Laxárdalur valley with the glittering Salmon River Laxa at the heart of it. A true day of contrasts in the ever-changing Icelandic landscape. Stop at the special Hraunsrett which is made of lava. Ride to Skógarhlíð, where you leave the horses before you head back to Bjarnastaðir farm where you will spend the night. Enjoy a nice hot bath in Jarðböðin, an outdoor lagoon with geothermal water.

Day 6 — 6: GELDINGADALUR – REYKJAHEIÐI - 40km riding

 Bjarnastadir Farm

Today, you set out through Geldingadalur Valley and Reykjaheiði heathland. At one point, you will practically cross over from one continental plate to another as you ride over the Mid-Atlantic ridge! It is a fascinating area with deep earthquake fissures, multi-coloured mountains and geothermal energy. With all the volcanic activity still going on, it is easy to understand that Iceland is still under “natural construction”. At the end of a full day in the saddle, you will ride into Öxarfjörður Fjord to Bjarnastaðir Farm, where the hot outdoor tub is waiting to soak your tired bones!

Day 7 — 7: BJARNASTADIR - HUSAVIK - REYKJAVIK - No riding

In the morning, return to Husavik by bus for an optional whale watching trip (please see dates and prices). For those not interested in the whale watching there are hot tubs in the town or you could go for a stroll.

In the afternoon, fly back to Reykjavik for a final night in the capital. Hotel night not included but can be booked upon request.

Day 8 — 8: DEPARTURE FROM REYKJAVIK

Transfer is by Flybus to Reykjavik airport in time for your flight home.

DATES & PRICES

DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	PRICE INCLUDING FLIGHTS	STATUS
25/06/2023	02/07/2023	£2,165		Guaranteed departure

30/07/2023	06/08/2023	£2,165	Full
06/08/2023	13/08/2023	£2,165	Full
13/08/2023	20/08/2023	£2,165	Guaranteed departure
20/08/2023	27/08/2023	£2,080	Full

Price details

- Flights to Reykjavik are not included, but can be booked on request - please contact us for rates. Flight from Reykjavík to Húsavík are included.
- Rates are per person, based on sharing a collective room. There is no single supplement as you should be prepared to share.
- Groups usually consists of 6 to 20 international riding guests plus guides. All departures are confirmed regardless of the number of riders on the tour.
- Transfers to and from Reykjavik airport, and from/to Reykjavik domestic airport, are not included in the price for the trip. See <https://www.re.is/tour/flybus/> for more info on how to get from the airport to the city centre. To reach the domestic airport, you will need to take a taxi or a city bus: <https://straeto.is/en>
- Accommodation in Reykjavik is not included and can be booked upon request.
- Optional whale watching tour at the end of your ride: €80/£75/\$90. These are approximate costs and this is payable locally.
- Family and children discounts available - please contact us.
- Children from 9 years of age can be accommodated provided they are good riders. Teenagers 14+ years old may come unaccompanied, but with parental consent, a good English level, independence and a good riding level.

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 since Reykjavik
- 1 Icelandic expedition leader
- 2-4 assistants in charge of the free herd.

LOGISTIC

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

INLAND TRANSPORTS

- Minibus
- Flight from Reykjavík to Húsavík and return

ACCOMMODATION

- Collective room in Guesthouses
- Nights in collective mountain huts with bunk beds and mattresses

MEALS

- Full board from first diner to last breakfast

EXTRA EQUIPMENT

First aid kit

Price doesn't include

MEALS

Beverage and personal extra
Free dinner on day 1 and 7 in Reykjavik

TRANSPORT

Return international airport transfers (FlyBus shuttle) or domestic airport transfers (taxi or city bus)
International flights

EXTRA

Tips to local team
Whale watching on day 6: see dates and prices

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 it's Vikings. It is characterised by it's 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.

Minimum riding ability

MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

You need to be a competent rider who is comfortable riding at all paces in the outdoors. You will be riding with a group of loose horses and so experience of riding in a group is essential.

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

PACE

There will be long periods of tölt along the sandy tracks and grassy pastures. There will also be walking and trotting across more difficult terrain. The tölt is a fast pace - you can expect long periods of tölt, but canters are not frequent.

TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

You will be expected to assist with grooming, tacking and un-tacking your horse. The whole group gets involved in meal preparation.

TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

You need to be fit and have good stamina for the long periods of tölt, which is a fast but comfortable pace. There are some long hours in the saddle (5-8 hours) and the terrain can be rough. The weather can also be unpredictable.

Experience of riding a trail over several days would be an advantage but is not essential. Riders who do not ride regularly would need to get back into the saddle before joining this ride.

EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

Comfortable Icelandic saddles with saddle bags.

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.

You will be provided with a raincoat but should still bring your own warm coats to wear underneath.

TRAVEL INFO

COMFORT

On the trail, you stay in shared rooms and require sleeping bags. Bathrooms are shared. On a few occasions, you may have to pay for hot water.

MEALS

Lunches are simple picnics; dinners are generous and hearty.

You prepare your own picnic lunch at breakfast time.

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.

GUIDE AND LOCAL TEAM

Halldor and Elin, your hosts at Bjarnastadir farm are renowned for their excellent horse breeding. Halldor is a respected member of the community and is known as the "mountain king" for his skill leading shepherds to gather sheep in the autumn.

TIPS

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

PACKING LIST

IMPORTANT

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)

For more details please visit the Icelandic veterinary authority website:

<http://www.mast.is/english/frontpage/import-export/import/ridingequipment>

Head

- A riding helmet is compulsory and we recommend that you take your own to ensure a correct fit.
- 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 sun, wind or rain
- 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 (plus a spare in case one gets wet)
- Waterproof jacket - rain can be difficult to predict and it's better to be prepared. In the mountains the weather can change quickly

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.
- Take two pairs
- 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/flipflops
- Several pairs of warm socks
- Gloves - your hands are particularly exposed to the sun, wind or rain whilst riding

Nightwear

- Sleeping bag and sleeping bag liner
- A small camping pillow
- Slippers (you will have to remove your shoes inside the accommodation)
- An eye mask can help with the 24hr daylight

Other useful items

- A 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
- Headtorch or small torch for moving around at night - bring spare batteries and bulbs
- Water bottle (2 litres or 2 x 1 litre)
- 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

- Please bring a soft bag instead of hard shell suitcase and pack light because transport space is limited.
- 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 (camera, sunscreen, lipbalm etc)
- 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.