

## ASTRONOMY GROUP – ICELAND - 26 SEPTEMBER - 02 OCTOBER, 2019

### DAY 1 | ARRIVAL - BLUE LAGOON



Once you have landed at Keflavik Airport in Iceland, head through customs and collect your luggage. There is a duty-free shop located by the baggage carousel, which you can shop at on arrival, while waiting for your luggage. Many items such as candy and snacks and drinks are less expensive here than at local shops.

Once you have collected your luggage proceed into the arrivals hall where your tour guide will meet you and escort you to your private coach, which will be waiting outside for you.\*

\*For group members arriving on an earlier date or on afternoon flights, you will be responsible for your own transfer on your day of arrival and for any additional hotel nights that may be required. We can arrange these for you, at an extra cost.

Transfer to local restaurant (Vitinn) for a group, buffet breakfast.



Following breakfast you will travel to the world-famous [Blue Lagoon](#) spa. A group admission and towel rental are included in your package. The Blue Lagoon is a man-made, unique wonder; a lagoon with pleasantly warm, electric blue, mineral-rich geothermal water in the middle of a black lava field. The high natural levels of silica and minerals give the Lagoon its rich blue colour and its healing power. The facilities include modern changing rooms and showers, an indoor geothermal pool, a winter garden,

restaurants and other services. Don't forget to pack your bathing suit (and water shoes, if you prefer to not go barefoot) in your carry-on luggage for easy access.

After you've enjoyed a couple of hours in the restorative, healing waters you'll be transferred to the nearby [Northern Light Inn](#) for check-in. The afternoon is free to have a rest, go for a walk in the surrounding lava fields and freshen up for the group dinner this evening.



*Outside the Northern Light Inn*

Watching the fantastic colours of the Northern Lights dance across the arctic sky is an unforgettable experience, and Iceland is one of the best places to see them. They are mostly observed on crisp, still evenings, and your location well away from the city lights gives you the best chance of witnessing this spectacular natural phenomenon. You will simply need to step outside of the hotel and look up into the sky. We can provide no guarantee, of course, as the aurora borealis is a natural phenomenon – it can be fickle and a bit unpredictable – but we have seen it on all five previous trips S&T and Spears Travel have taken to Iceland.

## **DAY 2 | REYKJANES PENINSULA**



After breakfast you'll be picked-up at the [Northern Light Inn](#) for a private tour of Reykjanes Peninsula. You'll drive to Grindavík village, following the west coast line of Reykjanes visiting sites as Gunnuhver hot spring, passing Reykjanesviti light house, the Bridge Between Two Continents, the church of Hvalneskirkja and finally drive to Garðsskagi light house before returning to the hotel.

This evening you'll enjoy a group dinner at the hotel followed by an astronomy lecture in the restaurant. Afterwards have a look outside to see if the northern lights are on display.



*Outside the Northern Light Inn*

### **DAY 3 | SOUTH SHORE**



After breakfast you'll check out of the Northern Light Inn and drive to Krýsuvík, a geothermal field where powerful jets of steam escape from deep below the earth's crust and visit the otherworldly surroundings of Kleifarvatn lake. Enjoy a delicious group lunch at Stokkseyri or Eyrarbakki and visit the black sandy beach of this area. This is the land of Njal's Saga – a region of breath-taking scenery and legendary stories. During your guided tour you'll encounter the wonderful variety of the south; from the wide plains formed by glacial rivers, to the sheer sea cliffs of Dyrholaey and the spectacular waterfalls of Seljalandsfoss and Skogarfoss.

Along the way you'll experience unforgettable views of the Hekla and Eyjafjallajokull volcanoes. Continue on to the [Stracta Hotel](#) for check-in.

This evening you will enjoy a group dinner at the hotel. There is an option for an astronomy lecture this evening as well.

If the Northern Lights decide to make an appearance all you have to do is step outside and marvel at Nature's own lightshow!

## DAY 4 | SKAFTAFELL DAY TOUR



An early start today for a long drive straight to Skaftafell National Park, without many stops along the way. Visit the park and take in the natural beauty of the area. There will be a group lunch enroute today.

Jökulsárlón Glacier Lagoon may be visited as a surprise “extra” if weather and road conditions allow. Here you’ll see icebergs floating in a lagoon of water which is running off the huge glacier.

After this visit you’ll head to the [Stracta Hotel](#) for a group dinner and relaxing evening at the hotel - another evening in which the aurora might appear overhead.



Stracta Hotel

## DAY 5 | REYKJAVIK



Following breakfast you'll check out of Hotel Laekur and drive back to Reykjavik. There will be a city tour before check in at the historic [Hotel Borg](#), your home base for the next two nights.

The balance of the day is free to explore the city and dinner is on your own today. Reykjavik has a wide variety of restaurants to choose from, with various types of cuisine and price points.

Here are a few suggestions for places to see on your free time:

**Scenic View** at the Pearl vantage point. Built in 1988 the Pearl is a remarkable building, unique in Iceland and probably the whole world. A glass dome constructed atop huge tanks in which natural hot water is stored for heating the city, The Pearl offers the visitor great views of the capital area and beyond.

**Art & Culture.** Reykjavik Art Museum also known as Hafnarhus (translating as Harbor House) which serves as the institute of contemporary art. New developments in art are explored through diverse exhibitions of Icelandic and international artists. An exhibition of paintings by the Pop artist Erró is a permanent feature.

**Shopping.** Reykjavik has become known for cutting edge design, international and design jewelry, hip fashion, art galleries and music scene. The trendy 101 quarter in the city center around the main shopping street of Laugavegur and the nearby Skólavörðustígur offers fabulous shopping at very affordable prices.

**History and Culture.** The National Museum displays objects that provide insight into Icelandic cultural history - displays that encourage visitors to dwell on the past, present and future. Reopened after extensive refurbishment, the museum houses new, dynamic exhibitions that fulfill all the modern standards required of such an establishment housing the nation's treasures.

**For the taste-buds.** Stop by at the local hot-dog stand and try the famous Icelandic hot-dogs or pylsur with all the special trimmings. This is very popular amongst the local people and you will see the long queue, especially on weekends.



After dinner, your bus driver will collect you from your hotel to go on a Northern Lights tour. The tour heads away from the city lights to give you the best chance of witnessing this shimmering natural wonder. Duration: 2.5-3 hrs

## DAY 6 | GOLDEN CIRCLE



Start the day visiting Þingvellir, a remarkable geological site and the most historic site on the island. Þingvellir is the site of the world's oldest democratic parliament, founded in 930. Located by Lake Þingvallavatn, the largest lake on the island, Þingvellir is now a National Park. The beautiful canyon running through the park is actually the meeting point of two of the earth's tectonic plates, giving to the chance to see the dividing line between North America and Europe. Þingvellir's combination of natural phenomena and historical significance have made it a symbol of Iceland's national identity.

After spending time in Þingvellir, head on over to the fertile farmlands of the South Coast. Continue to Gullfoss, the Golden Waterfall, one of the most impressive waterfalls in Europe. Here you will see thousands of tons of icy water thunder majestically down in double falls into a deep canyon.

Only a few minutes' drive from Gullfoss is the famous Great Geysir, which has given its name to spouting hot springs all over the world. You will see one of the most active geysers in the area, Strokkur, spouting up to 30 meters (90 feet). After an eventful day we head back to Reykjavik.

There will be a group farewell dinner this evening at a local restaurant.

## DAY 7 | DEPARTURE AIRPORT TRANSFER



All good things must come to an end, including your visit to Iceland. Our driver will pick you up at your hotel and take you to Keflavík airport for your departure flight. We schedule your airport transfer to be 2.5 – 3 hours before the earliest flight departure of the group members. Should you be leaving substantially earlier or later than the main group individual transfers can be arranged for you, at a small extra fee.

We wish you a great trip home and hope you will bring back many great memories of Iceland. We look forward to seeing you in the Land of Fire and Ice again!

### **Included:**

A private coach with driver and guide for above itinerary  
2 nights of accommodation at [Northern Light Inn](#)  
2 nights of accommodation at [Stracta Hotel](#)  
2 nights of accommodation at [Hotel Borg](#)  
Breakfast daily at hotels  
Breakfast buffet on day 1 at local restaurant Vitinn  
Dinner at local restaurant in Hafnarfjordur on day 1 (2 course meal, coffee/tea/natural spring water)  
Entry and towel rental at the [Blue Lagoon](#)  
Two dinners at Hotel Laekur  
Greenhouse visit and lunch at Friðheimar and Hveragerði, respectively  
Visit to Hellisheidi Power Plant  
Visit to Skogar Folk Museum  
Visit to the National Museum, Reykjavik

### **Not Included:**

International airfare  
Transfers for individual arrivals  
Entrance fees not mentioned above  
Beverages, snacks and meals not specified  
Optional tours  
Lunches and dinners not specified  
Beverages, snacks and meals not specified  
Porterage at hotels  
Travel insurance (highly recommended) (We can send you a quote)  
Room outside of normal check-in/check-out times  
Optional excursions or pre and post trips  
Tips and gratuities  
Anything else not mentioned under "included"