

## Iceland Photo Tour with Royce Howland & Tim Vollmer June 2014

### June 15<sup>th</sup> – Arrival

Pick up at Keflavík airport and drive to the accommodation.

*Dinner and overnight in Reykjavík – 2 nights*

### June 16<sup>th</sup> – Icelandic themes through a review of Icelandic art & culture

We will visit the Einar Jónsson sculpture museum and the National Gallery in Reykjavík. Opposite the sculpture museum is Hallgrímskirkja church. **“Presiding majestically over the capital area Hallgrímskirkja is the crowning landmark and star attraction of Reykjavík city.”** [www.visitreykjavik.is](http://www.visitreykjavik.is)

We explore the downtown area walking from the church down to the lake Tjörnin and beside the lake we have the National Gallery. **“The NG is a national museum with the main emphasis of the collection 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century Icelandic art, but international art is featured as well.”** <http://www.listasafn.is/?root=1>

From the lake we walk to the cemetery of Hólavallagarður.

Depending on weather and light, during the day we will visit the harbour front, including Harpa Concert Hall and Conference Centre. **“Harpa’s glass façade is designed by renowned artist Olafur Eliasson, in cooperation with Henning Larsen Architects. The design is based on a geometric principle, realised in two and three dimensions. Reminiscent of the crystallised basalt columns commonly found in Iceland, the southern facades create kaleidoscopic reflections of the city and the striking surrounding landscape.”**

<http://en.harpa.is/harpa-my-house>

### June 17<sup>th</sup> – Borgarfjörður – Hraunfossar and Barnafossar waterfalls – Húsafell

**Húsafell** is a unique natural area covered with forest and closed to the glacier Langjökull glacier. **Hraunfossar - Lava Falls** - are beautiful and unusual natural phenomena. Clear, cold springs of subterranean water seep through the lava and run in falls and rapids into the Hvítá River. **Barnafoss - Children's Falls** - takes its name from two children who disappeared many, many years ago from the nearby farm Hraunsas. There was a rock arch over the waterfall and the children are believed to have fallen off it into the river. Their grieving mother destroyed the arch and put a curse on the falls that nobody would ever be able to cross the river on such a rock arch and live, so don't even try.

*Overnight in Snæfellsnes – 3 nights*

### June 18<sup>th</sup> – Snæfellsnes peninsula – glacier – national park

The peninsula is about 90km long and known for its diverse landscape and magical beauty with the glacier towering over the National Park at the far end.

It is believed that Snæfellsjökull is one of seven main energy centres of the earth and here was the setting for the famous work of Jules Verne, *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*.

Here you have a range of mountains, black and light sand beaches, craters, lava fields, fjords, fishing villages, geothermal areas, mineral springs and cliffs with rich birdlife.

**Places of interest** – decided with instructors.

**Gerðuberg** a unique belt of basalt columns, massive and spectacular, and a farm of the same name situated below them.

**Búðir** history stretches back far. Long before there was a hotel there, it was a trading centre from the 17th century. **Búðir church** and Búðahraun lava has a romantic air about them and the view is magnificent to the glacier and the sea.

**Sönghellir** (“**Singing cave**”), known for its echoes and ancient inscriptions on the walls. It’s on the southeast side of Snæfellsnes glacier.

#### **Arnastapi the coast**

Arnastapi was an important trading post in the past and now there is good anchorage for small boats. Here are rugged shore cliffs and abundant bird life. A very interesting old path follows the coastline where you can see old landing places of fishermen, lots of birds, like the kittiwake, the Arctic tern and the fulmar and pass through a lava field.

#### **Hellnar**

For centuries, Hellnar was among the largest fishing villages beneath the Snæfellsjökull ice cap. From Arnastapi to Hellnar is a hiking path (1hour) ending at a nice coffee house, Fjöruhúsið (seashore house) where you can get coffee and delicious soup.

#### **Bárðarlaug**

Bárðarlaug at Hellnar is a crater pool and said to have been the bathing pool of the Bárður Snæfellsás.

**Djúpalónssandur** is a beautiful pebbled beach, with a series of rocks of mysterious form emerging from the ocean.

#### **Lóndrangar**

Uniquely-formed remnants of ancient basalt volcanic dikes sticking out from the sea. Lóndrangar and the hill Svalthúfa are the remains of a crater which has been eroded to its present form by the sea.

**Saxhóll** crater is easy to climb. There is a great view over the area from the top.

**Drápuhlíðarfjall** Mountain is beautifully colorful. It is composed of sulphur, basalt, jasper, rhyolite and lignite.

### **June 19<sup>th</sup> – Kirkjufell – Bjarnarhöfn – Stykkishólmur town**

We drive to the northern side of the peninsula to Stykkishólmur where whale watching is an option.

#### **Stykkishólmur**

Stykkishólmur is beautifully-situated on the northern side of the Snæfellsnes peninsula. With beautiful and well-preserved old houses in the town centre.

#### **Bjarnarhöfn**

Interesting shark museum where you can taste shark produced on the farm.

The owner, Hildibrandur, welcomes you with his charm and shows you around.

**Kirkjufell** This well-known landmark for Grundarfjörður is believed by many to be the most beautiful mountain in Iceland.

### **June 20<sup>th</sup> – Kaldidalur valley – Golden Circle – Þingvellir – Geysir hot springs – Gullfoss waterfall**

From Snæfellsnes to the Golden Circle the route lies through Borgarfjörður and Kaldidalur valley/Cold valley, an interior route or highland track which lies between the glaciers Langjökull and Ok.

**Pingvellir** is a remarkable geological site, and the most historic place on the island, where the world's oldest democratic parliament was founded in 930. The area is part of a fissure zone running through Iceland, being situated on the tectonic plate boundaries of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge. It's a magnificent showcase with all its faults and fissures and the beautiful mountains around it. We will visit the **Gullfoss** waterfall, one of the most impressive waterfalls in Europe. A few minute drive from Gullfoss is the world famous **Geysir** region, where hot springs are in abundance, such as the famous great Geysir which has given name to hot springs all over the world. We will see one of the most active geysers in the area, **Strokkur**, spouting up to 20 meters.

*Overnight in the highlands – 2 nights*

### **June 21<sup>st</sup> – Landmannalaugar – the Highlands**

**Landmannalaugar** literally means people's pools and situated in the southern highlands close to the volcano Hekla. The name refers to the natural geothermal pools travelers can bathe in. There are some unusual geological elements in the area such as multi-coloured rhyolite mountains and lava fields. The mountains display a wide spectrum of colours including pink, green, brown, yellow, purple, blue, black and white.

We take ~~2~~ days the day exploring the area.

### **June 22<sup>nd</sup> – Fjallabaksleið nyrðri**

Today we leave Landmannalaugar and make our way to our guesthouse in Southeast Iceland. We will travel on **Fjallabaksleið nyrðri** which means Northern road behind the mountains. Among the sights is **Eldgjá canyon** (fire canyon). Eldgjá is the largest volcanic canyon in the world, 40km long, 270m deep and 600m wide at its greatest. Ófærufoss waterfall is within the canyon, a magnificent waterfall.

*Overnight in the southeast coast – 3 nights*

### **June 23<sup>rd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> – Vatnajökul glacier National Park**

**Vatnajökull** glacier towers over this region and has immensely affected the landscape. We will visit many of Vatnajökul's outlets and outwash areas and the **Jökulsárlón** a famous glacial lagoon full of icebergs were we can take a short boat tour and sail among the huge icebergs, an unforgettable experience! The glacial scenery continues with a visit to the stunning **Skafafell**, Iceland's second largest national park were the landscape has been formed in thousands of years by different influences of fire and water (volcanic eruptions and the glaciers). Here you will walk up to the waterfall **Svartifoss** which is surrounded by lava columns, arranged in a hexagonal pattern. The dark columns has given rise to its name "Black waterfall" These majestic columns create a vertical wall which Svartifoss falls down on, and is a sight truly bewitching.

We will also visit Höfn town and nearby area stopping where we have good view to Vesturhorn mountain.

### **Jun 25<sup>th</sup> – Klaustur-Vík-Reynisfjara-Skógafoss and Seljalandsfoss**

Today we head back to Reykjavík.

We will stop at Fjarðargljúfur a spectacle canyon which is easily accessible. We stop at **Kirkjubæjarklaustur** village which became well known in Iceland during the Lakagígar volcanic eruption in 1783 were a huge lava flow streamed from the craters in what became

known as the “Skafta Fires.” This is believed to have been one of the greatest lava flows in a single eruption in the history of the world.

**Reynisdrangar** are basalt sea stacks situated very near to **Reynisfjara beach** and the village **Vík í Mýrdal**. According to legend the Reynisdrangar needles were formed when two trolls were trying to drag a three-masted ship to land. When daylight broke they turned to stone. The needles can be seen clearly from the village of Vík and are 66 meters above sea level at their highest. Next stop is **Dyrhólaey** which is a 120-meter high promontory, not far from Vík and is the southernmost part of the country. From the top you have a great photographic view. After Dyrhólaey we drive to **Skógafoss** which is one of the biggest and most beautiful waterfalls in the country with a width of 25 meters and a drop of 60 meters. Due to the amount of spray the waterfall consistently produces a single or double rainbow which is normally visible on sunny days. Next stop is **Seljalandsfoss**, another spectacular waterfall, one of the most famous one and very picturesque. You can walk behind this waterfall and get a different photo angle.

*Dinner and overnight in Reykjavík*

### **June 26<sup>th</sup> – Departure**

#### **Transfer from Reykjavík to Keflavík airport**

If time permits before we need to get to the airport, we will visit the **Reykjanes peninsula**. This area lies on one of the world’s major plate boundaries, the Mid Atlantic Ridge and has a lunar landscape pitted with craters, volcanic and geothermal wonders. We will pass by **Kleifarvatn** the biggest lake in the area which began to diminish after a big earthquake in 2000; 20% of its surface has since disappeared. Then we drive west along the coast to **Grindavík** a fishing village and if there is time we visit **Reykjanesviti** lighthouse and **Gunnhver** the geothermal area.

#### ***Price per person in double/twin room***

***USD \$6,725 – Minimum 6 persons***

***USD \$5,790 – Minimum 8 persons***

***USD \$5,190 – Minimum 10 persons***

***USD \$710 – Single room supplement***

#### **Included**

- Transfer to/from airport upon arrival and departure
- Private bus according to itinerary
- 3 nights at a guesthouse in Reykjavik with shared facilities
- 8 nights accommodation in the country with private facilities
- Full board from dinner on day one to breakfast on day 12
- Meeting facilities in the evening
- Professional photographers/instructors Royce Howland & Tim Vollmer

#### **Not included**

- International flights
- Optional tours
- Drinks and other meals than stated in included section