



USC Alumni

Iceland and the Northern Lights

EXCLUSIVE GUEST SPEAKER

ELÍN BJÖRK JÓNASDÓTTIR

Iceland and the Northern Lights

A remote Nordic island brimming with legendary volcanoes, glacier-cut fjords, rainbow-laden waterfalls, and geysers may sound like the makings of Viking folklore, yet in Iceland's "Land of Fire and Ice," these fantastical, otherworldly scenes are as real as the blue-green auras that dance across the Arctic sky.

Experience the natural beauty of this sparsely populated part of the world during a one-of-a-kind, nine-day, seven-night journey specially timed for the optimal viewing of the Aurora Borealis, otherwise known as the Northern Lights. From cosmopolitan Reykjavik to the harbor town of Siglufjörður and beyond, discover life in this egalitarian nation known for its small population, high standard of living, and penchant for books, humor, and fresh air.

Explore the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Þingvellir—where the North American and Eurasian tectonic plates meet, and where the nation's first open-air assembly was established in 930, lasting until 1798. As your itinerary unfolds, learn about Viking settlers, the herring industry, and geothermal energy practices—all while enjoying guided evening excursions where we'll look to the heavens for a light show like no other.





USC Alumni

Dear South Carolina Alumni and Friends:

Experience the powerful, soul-stirring natural beauty of Iceland, learn about its storied history, and enjoy an up-close, insightful view of its countless wonders—including the magical shape-shifting aura of the elusive Northern Lights. This nine-day, seven-night land adventure features accommodations in the elegant HOTEL BORG in the cosmopolitan capital of Reykjavik and the Icelandic-style HOTEL KEA—located in the heart of Akureyri, the gateway to north Iceland.

Savor the warm healing waters of the Blue Lagoon on your first morning in Iceland. Discover Iceland's most popular city on a tour of Reykjavik that includes visits to the Perlan, the National Museum, and other must-see landmarks as you immerse yourself in the "Land of Fire and Ice." Feel the thrilling rush of the "Big Three" in the Golden Circle, including the Gullfoss waterfall, the Strokkur geyser, and the cracks and gorges of the Atlantic Ocean Ridge. Play hide and seek around the dark towering lava formations of Dimmuborgir and explore the beauty and birdlife of Lake Mývatn. Step back in time in Siglufjörður, where towering mountains serve as a backdrop for the fascinating Herring Era Museum, just miles from the Arctic Circle.

Throughout your Iceland exploration, enjoy a series of guided evening excursions in search of the Aurora Borealis. Look to the skies outside of Reykjavik and in the dark countryside that surrounds Akureyri, just below the Arctic, for one of the greatest light shows on Earth.

We expect this illuminating tour to sell out quickly, so book now while space and the early booking savings are still available.

Forever to Thee,

Tiffany Foxworth
CEO
USC Alumni Association

**To secure your spot, call Gohagan and Company at 800-922-3088
or visit gohagantravel.com/reserve**



SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER

ELÍN BJÖRK JÓNASDÓTTIR

Icelandic native Elín Björk Jónasdóttir, head of the Icelandic Meteorological Office's natural hazard monitoring and weather forecasting department, has considerable experience in land, aviation, and marine forecasting. She has worked numerous severe weather events in Iceland for the past 15 years as a weather forecaster and coordinator, including volcanic eruptions, and has forecasted volcanic ash and gas distribution.

Jónasdóttir oversees training and recruiting new forecasters and natural hazard specialists. She also is involved in case studies, analysis, developing new tools for forecasting purposes, and communicating weather-related hazards to civil protection authorities and the general public. In addition, she launched an impact-based weather warning system in 2017, when she became the IMO's head of weather services. She has been in her current role as of January 2023.

Elín earned a bachelor's degree in meteorology from the University of Oklahoma and a master's degree from the University of Oslo.

WORLD OF NATURAL WONDER



Experience the otherworldly beauty of the naturally occurring Aurora Borealis, more commonly known as the Northern Lights. This phenomenon is caused when streams of plasma escape the sun's surface and disrupt Earth's magnetic field, resulting in ribbons of color shimmering in the night sky above the planet's polar regions. Witness this along with other unparalleled geological riches of Iceland—home to 4,500 square miles of glaciers, 30 active volcanic systems, 800 hot springs, and more than 10,000 waterfalls.



INCLUDED FEATURES

- ◆ Transfers and luggage handling abroad if you purchased air through Gohagan & Company and your arrival(s)/departure(s) coincide with the scheduled group transfer(s).
- ◆ Experienced, English-speaking local guides for included excursions.
- ◆ Gratuities to local guides and drivers on included excursions and transfers.
- ◆ Hospitality desk at the hotel.
- ◆ Experienced Gohagan & Company Travel Directors at your service.
- ◆ Complimentary use of an audio headset during guided excursions.
- ◆ Automatic \$250,000 flight insurance policy for each participant ticketed on flights by Gohagan & Company.
- ◆ Meals included as noted in the itinerary (B,L,R,D).

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS



GOHAGAN & COMPANY

ARCTIC CIRCLE



9-DAY/7-NIGHT ITINERARY

Depart Home City

Day 1

Depart your home city.

Reykjavík, Iceland

Day 2

Arrive in Iceland's capital of Reykjavík and enjoy breakfast at the world-famous Blue Lagoon, surrounded by the spectacular views of the lava fields. Pack a swimsuit and water shoes in your carry-on if you'd like to take a restorative dip in these mineral-rich waters as your journey begins.

Depart the Blue Lagoon and head to the city center, less than an hour away. Enjoy free time before checking into the historic HOTEL BORG, a newly renovated boutique hotel located just steps from the National Cathedral and the Icelandic Parliament. (B,R)

Reykjavík

Day 3

Tour this Nordic nation's most popular city, beginning with a

visit to hilltop Perlan (also known as The Pearl)—a museum with a rotating glass dome. Take in 360° views from the observation deck before visiting Hallgrímskirkja, a monolithic Lutheran church that serves as an ode to modernism and Iceland's unique landscape.

After lunch, walk back through time at the National Museum where you can trace the nation's history from the Settlement Age, then stroll the old neighborhood where you'll find time-worn lanes adorned with colorful historic houses and charming shops.

Tonight, enjoy your first guided excursion in search of the Northern Lights. (B)

Reykjavík/Golden Circle

Day 4

Embark on Iceland's iconic Golden Circle Tour and discover the nation's "Big Three," beginning with the scenic lava plains at Þingvellir National Park,

a UNESCO World Heritage Site just 30 minutes outside of the city. Continue on to the spectacular Golden Waterfall, at Gullfoss Falls.

From there, head to the geothermal region for lunch at HOTEL GEYSIR, a meticulously designed property owned by an esteemed family with deep roots in the region. Catch Strokkur in action as it sprays a fountain of water and steam high into the air. On the road back to Reykjavík, see how Icelanders makes the most of geothermal forces during a short visit to Hellisheiði Power Plant. (B,L)

Reykjavík to Akureyri

Day 5

Check out of the hotel and enjoy a scenic drive to Akureyri, the "Capital of North Iceland" where you will enjoy lunch in a local restaurant and check in to the Icelandic-style HOTEL KEA. This afternoon, travel to

Brimketill natural water pool in Reykjanes Peninsula





Hauganes, a small fishing village on the western coast of Eyjafjörður bay, for an immersive excursion that includes the opportunity to take a relaxing soak in the thermal baths. With a population of less than 150 people, this idyllic region is known for its stunning coastal scenery, whale watching, and warm geothermal waters. Later, embark on another guided quest for the Northern Lights. (B,L)

Akureyri/Dimmuborgir/ Mývatn/Namaskarð/ Goðafoss

Day 6

Visit Goðafoss, the “Waterfall of the Gods,” where the wooden idols of Norse mythology were cast into the rushing waters as Icelanders voted to adopt Christianity. Enjoy lunch at the idyllic FOSSHOTEL MÝVATN HOTEL and take in the breathtaking

scenery of Lake Mývatn and the tiny craters of Skutustadir. See Namaskarð's gurgling sulfur cauldrons and the “dark castle” lava formation of Dimmuborgir.

As night falls, prepare for a final outing in search of the Aurora Borealis. (B,L)

Akureyri/Siglufjörður

Day 7

Embark on an excursion to Siglufjörður, the northernmost town in Iceland, located 28 miles from the Arctic Circle. This picturesque area, tucked between rugged mountains at the tip of the Tröllaskagi peninsula, is the herring fishing capital of the North Atlantic. Step into Siglufjörður's past as a tiny fishing hub at the Herring Era Museum, featuring a restored salt house and factory. Savor a fresh seafood lunch at SIGLO HOTEL, a cozy spot overlooking the marina. Enjoy your evening at leisure. (B,L)

Akureyri/Snaefellsnes/ Reykjavík

Day 8

Journey back to Reykjavík on a full-day excursion via the spectacular Snaefellsnes Peninsula in Búðir, famed for the dramatic black lava landscape and yellow sand beach. Enjoy a stop in Djúpálónssandur to explore the cove that once housed roughly 70 fishing stations. Stop in Malaríff to see the 20-meter lighthouse and continue to the small fishing community of Arnarstapi for lunch. Arrive in Reykjavík to check back in to the HOTEL BORG. Tonight, enjoy a farewell dinner at a local restaurant. (B,L,D)

Reykjavík/Return to Home City

Day 9

Transfer to the airport for your flight back to your home city. (B)

Siglufjörður





HOTEL BORG

A sophisticated landmark in the heart of Reykjavík, HOTEL BORG has been welcoming heads of state and travelers for nearly a century. Overlooking the gardens and cafes of Iceland's main square, the hotel is surrounded by such illustrious landmarks as the Parliament House and the National Cathedral. Revel in the understated elegance of Art Deco interiors, including custom furnishings, large bathtubs, and heated marble floors. The lower level has a dedicated spa, while restaurants, cafes, and shops are just steps away.



HOTEL KEA

Set in the heart of Iceland's second city, overlooking a stunning fjord, HOTEL KEA exudes a classic ambiance in the center of Akureyri, the gateway to Iceland's north. Enjoy the hotel's welcoming service and refined interiors. Climb the grand steps to the Church of Akureyri next door or stroll to nearby shops, museums, and gardens from this boutique property's prime location.



LAND OF FIRE AND ICE

Born of the monumental forces unleashed during the movement of the North American and Eurasian tectonic plates and carved out by formidable glaciers and incredible waterfalls, the “land of fire and ice” is a combination of intense natural energy and veritable calm. The topography of Iceland continues to evolve, yet many of its landscapes remain nearly unchanged since the first Viking settlers laid eyes on them more than 1,100 years ago. With its unique and dramatic terrain, Iceland is a popular destination for novice and seasoned outdoor enthusiasts and nature lovers alike.

2024 DEPARTURE DATE

February 17 to 25 (Tour Begins: February 18)

LAND RATES

per person, based on double occupancy, excluding taxes

**Early Booking
Rate through
Oct. 27, 2023**

*Rate after
Oct. 27, 2023*

Includes Accommodations

\$3,595

\$3,995

Singles are available upon request for an additional \$1,100.

To secure your spot, call Gohagan & Company at 800-922-3088 or visit gohagantravel.com/reserve

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