

WILD PHOTOGRAPHY HOLIDAYS



AROUND ICELAND IN WINTER

FROZEN LANDSCAPES
WILD BEACHES AND AURORA

HIGHLIGHTS

- Black beaches at Vík
- Reynisdrangar sea stacks
- Snæfellsnes Peninsula
- Many dramatic waterfalls
- Craters and lava formations
- Icelandic horses
- Glaciers
- Jökulsárlón Glacier Lagoon
- Ice cave excursion
- Diamond Beach
- Vestrahorn sunset & sunrise
- Aurora in iconic locations
- Quirky artists' village

- Eastern Fjords
- Geothermal landscapes
- Sunrises and sunsets
- Vatnsnes Peninsula
- Hvítserkur
- Black church of Búðir
- Snæfellsjökull glacier
- Mt. Kirkjufell
- Gatklettur sea arch
- Reykjavík

INTRODUCTION

Join us on our new all-inclusive complete circular tour of Iceland in winter to photograph the dramatic and re-

markable locations that make Iceland an incredibly rewarding destination for landscape photographers. Our unique 14-night itinerary is designed to get you to some special and remote locations that would otherwise be impossible to reach at this time of the year. Our experienced Icelandic driver will ensure that you travel between locations worry-free and comfortably in a vehicle designed for off-road travel in difficult conditions. This tour is a perfect choice for those who want to experience Iceland's best winter locations whilst developing both their creative and technical camera skills. There will be plenty of opportunities for aurora photography, sunrises and sunsets. You can expect to return home with a breathtaking collection of images.



Our regular guests have come to understand that when you book with Wild Photography Holidays there will be no hidden extras. All accommodation, meals, transfers and excursions are included, our prices are fair and our professional photographic guides top-notch. We have been running winter photographic tours in Iceland since 2010. Many of our guests have travelled with us multiple times, this has resulted in the formation of several friendship groups based on shared interests. We very much look forward to welcoming you in Iceland.

DAILY ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival in Reykjavík

Participants will be arriving on a variety of flights. The first night accommodation in a Reykjavík city hotel together with a Flybus transfer is included. We will meet for introductions and trip briefing at 19:00 before heading out into the city for dinner together.

Hotel Reykjavík (D)

Day 2: Vík, Dyrhólaey, Black Beaches & Sea Stacks

This morning, after an early breakfast, our driver will pick us up from our hotel and we will embark on our winter adventure with a journey to Vík í Myrdal in the southernmost part of Iceland. This area is famous for its subglacial volcano Katla, spectacular beaches, a very photogenic church, wild seas, stunning big waterfalls, fabulous mountain landscapes and dramatic black volcanic sands. The beaches around this area are rich in basalt column architecture. Sea arches, caves, cliffs and big waves in winter make for some dramatic photography, particularly at our sunset location on the west side of Vík's West Reynisdrangar beach. Back for dinner, then hopefully a chance to capture the aurora in one of several good spots that we know around this area. We stay in a comfortable hotel close to Vík and all locations.

Hotel Vík Area (B,L,D)

Day 3: Lava Fields, Icelandic Horses and Glaciers

This morning after a very early breakfast we will start with a sunrise on one of the black beaches. Maybe we will shoot from the east to catch some early morning



light on Reynisdrangar the sea stacks of Vík beach. Continuing our journey along the wild and awe inspiring south coast of Iceland we pass through vast lava fields and visit an abandoned farm with a turf covered roof. The location of the farm and the tiny turf roofed church beneath the mighty mountain of Lómagnúpur is spell-binding. Travelling further our vistas are of huge glacial sands, mountains and glaciers. We stop whenever the light and subjects are inspiring.

By lunchtime we should have arrived at the Svínafellsjökull glacier where we will encounter and photograph remarkable close up perspectives of bluish green crevasses and the milky brown lagoon. This surreal icy landscape includes vistas of Iceland's highest mountain, Hvannadalshnúkur. There are sometimes beautiful ice formations although it is worth noting that we can never predict what these natural phenomena will be like until we arrive as they are constantly changing. Driving east in late afternoon we will take our first look at the Jökulsárlón glacier lagoon in late afternoon light and



hopefully return in the evening for an aurora shoot over the floating icebergs.

Hotel close to Glacier Lagoon (B,L,D)

Day 4: Southeast Iceland, Jökulsárlón

Our Southeast base is just a ten-minute drive from the glacier lagoon and the black sand beach (Diamond Beach), which is usually littered with sparkling sea-washed ice and is a particularly good place to be at sunrise when the sun brings out the colours and striking structure of the ice. The Jökulsárlón glacier lagoon is a remarkable location which will keep on giving in terms of

light, landscape and abstract photography. We will also take time to explore the breathtaking Fjallsárlón glacier lagoon, a remote less visited location with a superb glacial and mountain backdrop. Both locations are excellent for sunrises, sunsets and aurora.

Hotel close to Glacier Lagoon (B,L,D)

Day 5: Ice cave and Vestrahorn Sunset

This morning early after breakfast we will board a large modified 4x4 vehicle which will transport our group over the glacial moraine to photograph an ice cave beneath the Vatnajökull, Europe's largest ice-cap, a unique pho-

tographic experience and the source of some stunning images. Following a last look at Diamond Beach, we will head east, calling at Heinabergslón, a lagoon flowing from the tongue of the Heinabergsjökull (glacier). There is a good chance of spotting a large herd of Reindeer en route to their location.

Travelling further East we will arrive early evening at our accommodation on the southeast tip of Iceland close to the world class location of Vestrahorn on the Stokksnes Peninsula. The dramatic peaks of this spiky mountain rise directly from a wild beach of black sand filled with

undulating sand dunes and coastal vegetation providing a stark contrast to the snow covered peaks. This is a wonderful place to photograph the aurora arching over the striking rocky spires with colourful reflections in the wet black sand. This location is also a great spot to photograph the Milky Way.

Höfn Hotel (B,L,D)

Day 6,7: Vestrahorn Sunrise and Seyðisfjörður

Following a sunrise shoot of Vestrahorn and breakfast, we set off for the remote and spectacular artists' village of Seyðisfjörður, located in the far east of Iceland. Traveling north along the edge of the scenic eastern fjords, our day will be productive with lots of varied stops en route for photography. The basalt mountains along the way are dramatic, snow-covered, and often rise straight from the edges of the fjords. We will stop high above the village at a sunset viewpoint down the valley to the fjord below. The film 'Secret Life of Walter Mitty' has a famous scene where Ben Stiller longboards through a lovely wild landscape down the mountain road right into the village; this is that place, although in its winter attire, the vistas are even more dramatic. The small town's centre is known for its many original early 19th-century timber houses and the picturesque setting around the lagoon. Our accommodation is authentic and beautifully renovated. Locations around Seyðisfjörður include a variety of lovely and accessible frozen waterfalls, sheer-sided snow-covered basalt peaks dropping down to the fjord, abandoned farmhouses, and 'sheep-houses'. The residents, Icelandic long-haired sheep, roam along the edge of the fjord. We may also travel to a neighbouring fjord to the pretty coastal village of Bakkagerði.



Hotel Seyðisfjörður (B,L,D)

Day 8: to Dettifoss, Selfoss & Mývatn

This morning we set off for one of Iceland's most diverse and striking winter locations, Lake Mývatn. Here we will find desolate craters, bubbling mud pools and geothermal caves. The area is a microcosm of all the natural wonders that Iceland has to offer. Weird, wonderful snowy landscapes, geothermal phenomena, frozen lakes, crazy lava formations, ice-encrusted waterfalls and some fine locations for the northern lights. North Iceland will generally experience the aurora before the south purely due to its more northerly position. Our route today has some exciting locations. From Seyðisfjörður we skirt the vast uninhabited snow-bound interior with an early stop for coffee and photography in Möðrudalur, a village of quaint turf-roofed houses and most likely some very wild looking Icelandic sheep foraging in the snow. Onward to Dettifoss & Selfoss, two of Iceland's most dramatic and remote waterfalls, which are located in a remarkably wild place on the very edge of the Highlands. The Jökulsá glacial river flows north from the Vatnajökull ice cap. By the time the glacial waters reach this location, they are powerful beyond belief and will make for some exciting photography. We arrive at our accommodation in time to settle in before dinner. Hopefully, there will be aurora tonight right on our doorstep on the shore of Lake Mývatn? We will spend three nights in this iconic area. Cottages by Lake Mývatn (B,L,D)

Day 9: Geothermal Wonders

For sunrise we will visit Hverarönd, a surreal and colourful geothermal landscape bursting with mud pots, steam

vents, sulphur deposits, boiling springs and fumaroles. The backdrop will be the almost Arctic pink and purple hues over some dramatic tabletop mountains. After breakfast, we will set off to drive to explore the area. Cottages by Lake Mývatn (B,L,D)

Day 10: Mývatn, Aldeyjarfoss & Hrafnabjargafoss

This morning we drive the short distance to one of Iceland's most iconic and dramatic craters known as Hverfjall. In winter this snow-covered crater dominates the village skyline, we will walk up to the rim for some really wild aerial sunrise shots of the surrounding landscape and the crater itself. After a late breakfast we will set off on the journey to photograph two important and distinctly waterfalls on the Skjálfandaflijót River which originates in Europe's largest glacier the Vatnajökull. We will pass by Goðafoss but save this for the following day. Our main objectives for today are Aldeyjarfoss and Hrafnabjargafoss in Iceland's Highlands. These two falls are inaccessible in winter unless travelling in modified 4x4 vehicles. The drive is exciting over wild snow covered terrain. The first waterfall Aldeyjarfoss is a twenty minute walk downhill from the vehicle. It's startling blue water, symmetrical shape and the surrounding ice-encrusted basalt columns make quite a magnificent sight; it is truly one of our favourites. Next stop a few kilometres up river we visit the lovely Hrafnabjargafoss waterfall which is easily accessed. This powerful waterfall becomes ice encrusted in winter and flows beautifully through the ice into a shapely river bowl. This location is remote and very little visited. En the route back to Mývatn we may possibly sight Nacreous clouds or 'Mother of Pear clouds' These Polar phenomena have been



increasingly sighted by our groups up in the North of Iceland, they are actually rarer than the aurora. Cottages by Lake Mývatn (B,L,D)

Day 11: Mývatn, Goðafoss, Vatnsnes, Hvítserkur

This morning we will have an early breakfast and set off on our journey north to Hvítserkur. In just under an hour we will stop to photograph Goðafoss. The waterfall is one of the most spectacular and accessible waterfalls in Iceland. The gorgeous blue water of the river Skjálfandaflijót

falls from a height of twelve meters over a width of thirty meters. The rock cirque below is ice encrusted and in places the water flows freely down into an attractive amphitheatre. There are many vantage points including both banks from the cliff tops and also from the very edge of the water. Onward to Iceland's northerly capital Akureyri for a stop in one of its loveliest coffee & cake cafe's before embarking on a three hour journey to our remote hotel, located almost on the tip of the Vatnsnes Peninsula. Here it is common to spot seals. After checking in



to our hotel we will head out to the cliffs and down onto the beach to photograph the distinctive Hvítserkur which is sometimes called Elephant rock. This is the distinctive feature of the beach and can look very special at sunset.

Guests on the 12-day itinerary will depart today from Akureyri and fly to Reykjavík.

Hvítserkur Hotel (B,L,D)

Day 12: Hvítserkur to Snæfellsnes

Today after breakfast we will travel west to the Snæfellsnes Peninsula in West Iceland, thought by many to be

one of the most beautiful places on the island. Considered one of the world's most powerful energy spots, it is home to many artists, photographers and other creative people. The area is dominated by the remarkable snow-covered volcano Snæfellsjökull where Jules Verne sent his intrepid travellers on their 'Journey to the Centre of the Earth'. The North Atlantic coast is never far away. Our hotel in Arnastapi is situated close to some superb sunrise locations including the dramatic sea arch and cliffs of Gatklettur.

Snæfellsnes Coastal hotel (B,L,D)

Day 13: Snæfellsnes Locations

This is an overview of our locations during the two days we are based on Snæfellsnes.

Snæfellsjökull glacier – this is the dominating feature of the peninsula and provides an excellent backdrop to many of our images.

Sea cliffs – the cliffs around the Snæfellsnes coastline are precipitous, majestic and very attractive with a huge variety of differing and interesting rock formations that are easy to access.



Beaches – Snæfellsnes has black sand beaches of volcanic origin generally give some really unusual striking images. One fine example is the black beach of Djúpalónssandur with its strange lava formations and fabulous sunsets. The black beaches in Winter are often hammered by dramatic wild seas.

Sea stacks and arches – there are a variety of stacks and arches around the peninsula providing fine dramatic photographic subjects

Mt. Kirkjufell – the chameleon shape of this mountain is well known to all Icelandic landscape photographers. It provides striking images both at sunrise and sunset; it's also amazing to see the northern lights swirling high above its rocky ridges.

Berserkjahraun – situated between Grundarfjörður and Stykkishólmur this dramatic lava field flowed some 3,000 to 4,000 years ago. It features strange shaped mountains and convoluted snow-covered lava.

The Black Church of Budir – a frequently photographed subject, it never fails to produce new and stunning im-

ages. It also makes a fabulous foreground for the aurora. Snæfellsnes Coastal hotel (B,L,D)

Day 14: Snæfellsnes and Reykjavík

After our sunrise shoot we will return to our hotel for breakfast before checking out of the hotel. We will spend several hours exploring Snæfellsnes locations before returning late afternoon to Reykjavík. We will check in to our hotel before heading out to the city for a celebratory meal together.

Hotel Reykjavík (D)

Day 15: Homeward Flights

After breakfast there will be an included transfer to the airport for your homeward flight. WPH services finish after breakfast. (B)

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Airport transfers to and from the international airport on Days 1&15
- All accommodation
- All meals



- Transport in modified 4x4 vehicle with Icelandic driver
- Ice cave visit

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- International flights
- Travel insurance
- Drinks and snacks between meals
- Soft- & alcoholic drinks
- Anything not listed as included

ACCOMMODATION

We'll be staying in a variety of accommodation. In Reykjavík, we'll be in a 3-star hotel close to the city centre. In the countryside, we'll be in scenically located hotels and cottages. We'll have 11 nights of hotel accommodation with private rooms and en-suite bathrooms. In Mývatn, we'll have 3 nights in one- or two-bedroomed lakeside cottages. The two-bedroomed cottages will have a shared bathroom, a sitting area, and a small kitchen.

The price is based on single rooms. Double or twin rooms are available for friends and couples who wish to share.



If you would like us to book extra hotel nights before or after the main trip dates then please get in touch with the office.

FLYBUS AIRPORT TRANSFER

The Flybus transfer is included in the price of the holiday. You will be sent your tickets online shortly before your departure date. The Flybus is the most convenient way to get from Iceland's international airport to your hotel and back. The buses run all day and the bus stop is right outside arrivals. The bus takes you to the BSÍ cent-

ral bus station. There you will be directed to a smaller bus that will take you to your hotel.

FOOD

We will generally eat dinner in the hotel restaurants, lunch will be in a variety of locations and breakfasts will always be at our hotels. Please let us know when you book if you have any special dietary requirements.

ALCOHOL

This is rather expensive in Iceland, it might be worth considering bringing a bottle of your favourite 'tipple'! All the restaurants that we eat in serve alcohol.

Spending Money

Icelandic Krona can be easily obtained at the airport ATM machine; these are plentiful throughout Iceland. There will be opportunities to buy presents and souvenirs in many of our locations. Credit cards are accepted in all places for even small purchases.



TRAVEL INSURANCE

It is recommended that you take out appropriate insurance to cover personal accident, medical costs, repatriation and loss of baggage. We will need a copy of your travel insurance at the time of booking.

Passport and Visa Requirements

A passport valid for at least three months beyond the length of stay required by all except nationals of Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden who are only required to produce national identity cards issued by the authorities in their countries of origin. Visas are not required but a return ticket will need to be shown by Australian, Canadian and USA nationals. Other nationalities please enquire before booking.

LANGUAGE

Icelanders speak Icelandic; they also tend to speak rather good English.

CLIMATE

Iceland's climate is tempered by the Gulf Stream. Summers are mild and winters rather cold, the weather is very changeable at all times of the year, in Reykjavík there may be rain, sunshine, drizzle and snow all in the same day. Expect temperatures to be down to -7°C on occasions (see clothing list). Most importantly for us, the lack of pollution means that the clarity of the light is often exceptional with phenomenal 'big skies' and really atmospheric cloud patterns.

CLOTHING SUGGESTIONS

As we will often be standing around in one location it's important to have some warm clothes. The best solution to temperature control is to have a number of layers available from lightweight thermal underwear through mid-layer insulation to a windproof jacket. A warm down jacket is great for standing around. For the lower body choose a pair of warm trousers. There are numerous makes and types of warm trousers to choose from, just ensure that the cut is generous to allow freedom of



movement. We will sometimes be walking in snow and on ice so good quality warm walking boots are recommended. A pair of wellington boots can be useful on the beach but these are not essential if space/weight is an issue.

CLOTHING

If you have any questions feel free to contact us at any time before the trip:

- backpack to contain camera gear and few spare items
- pair warm trousers, fleece lined are great
- thermal tops e.g. 'Smartwool' (base layer)
- thermal leggings e.g. 'Smartwool' (base layer)
- light fleece/wool jumper
- duvet jacket, down or synthetic
- waterproof jacket
- waterproof trousers
- quality warm walking socks
- leather/waterproof walking boots
- warm hat
- fleece neck-warmer

- light warm gloves
- warm windproof over-mittens
- ‘hot-hands’ or similar, www.hothandsdirect.com
- casual clothes for hotel wear
- sun cream, sunglasses
- head torch
- small, basic first aid to include plasters and any medications of a personal nature

MICROSPIKES

In case of ice underfoot we advise you to bring a pair of so-called ‘microspikes’ such as the [Unigear Ice Microspikes](#). They are easy to pull on and off and offer excellent traction in icy conditions. You will be advised when to wear them by our guides.

You can generally find them on Amazon, but it’s best to check in a local outdoor store first. It’s important to get the right size that will easily fit on the boots you’re planning to wear.

PHOTOGRAPHIC EQUIPMENT AND INFORMATION

- Specially designed camera bags or rucksacks like F-Stop, Lowepro and Peak design.
- A camera with interchangeable lenses such as a digital SLR or a mirrorless system camera.
- A set of lenses to cover the whole range from wide-angle to telephoto, for example...
For full-frame cameras: 16–35mm wide-angle, 24–105mm mid-range and a 70–200mm or longer tele zoom. For crop format cameras: 10–20mm wide-angle, 17–50mm mid-range and a 70–200mm or longer tele zoom.



- Spare camera
- Tripod and remote release
- Neutral density, graduated filters and polariser, if you use these. At least one neutral density filter in the range of 4–6 stops is recommended.
- Lens cloth
- Sensor cleaning device (optional)
- Lightweight ‘trekking’ absorbent towel for drying cameras and equipment
- Rain cover for camera and camera bag
- Sufficient memory cards for the whole holiday as it may not be possible to buy more during the trip.
- A laptop/tablet with the image editing applications of your choice, essential for checking and presenting images during the trip and for one-on-one sessions with the tutor. All of the places we stay in have Wi-Fi.



- Backup storage device (optional)
- Spare batteries and chargers
- All the electrical sockets are [European three-pin](#), so you might need a travel plug adapter.

PARTNERS

Non photographer partners will be very welcome although this primarily a photography holiday we also visit some very beautiful and relaxing places. If any participants do not wish to join the walks/photographic sessions they will be able to relax in and around the accommodation. The

cost will be the same for photographers and non photographers.

OUTDOOR TRAVEL

This is an outdoor travel holiday and the itinerary is dependent on the weather, local conditions and other variables. Wild Photography Holidays may use their discretion to change the itinerary should conditions dictate this; your health, safety and enjoyment will always be our primary concern when making such changes.

MORE INFORMATION

We hope that this information has answered some of your questions about the holiday, It doesn't hope to answer everything. If you have any questions please get in touch.

BOOKING THIS HOLIDAY

Fill in the online booking form, or give us a call on +44 (0)1270 440222.

LINKS

View [images and information for this tour](#) on the website. Read about our [approach to teaching photography](#)

