

Breath of the Highlands, Iceland

Itinerary

Day One

You are met in Varmahlið in Skagafjörður at the bus station. The public bus from Reykjavík is included in the price of the ride. Alternatively you may wish to self-drive, arriving at around 14:00 so you are in time for the afternoon introductory ride.

Settle into your cottage before an introductory ride to get used to your horses. For those who have never ridden an Icelandic Horse before, your guides will instruct you in riding the different gaits.

After dinner perhaps enjoy a dip in the hot pool to relax after your long day.

Overnight at the Hestasport cottages.



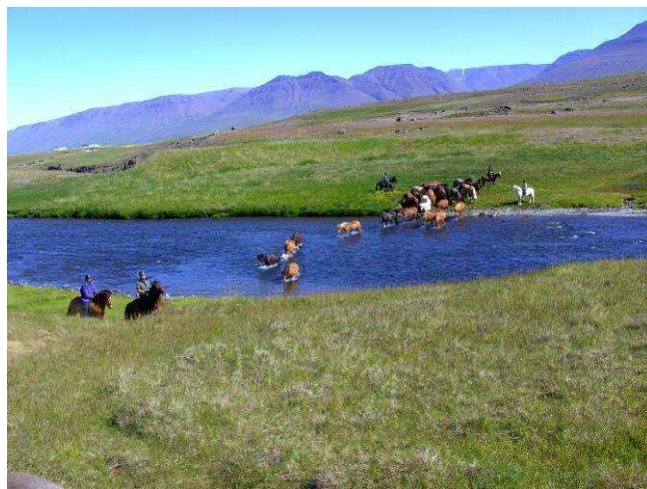
Please note that the itinerary may change depending on the weather at the time and other local conditions.

Day Two

After breakfast you head out on the trail to the highlands through the stunning river delta towards the pen at Mælifellsrétt. The herd of free-running horses will also start their journey towards the pen and you will meet the herd around noon. From this time you ride with the herd of horses deeper into the valley along a low-traffic road.

The ride ends at Gilhagi Farm, where the horses will stay for the night. You return to the Hestasport cottages, where a warm dinner awaits you.

Overnight at the Hestasport cottages.



Day Three

This morning, you need to pack your bags for the night (travelling clothes and extra kit can be left at the cottages). The horses wait for you at Gilhagi Farm, and soon you are on the trail again through the scenic valley Gilhagadalur into the highlands and up to the mountain hut Galtará, located not far from lake Blöndulón on Eyvindarstaðaheiði moor.

The horses stay at Galtará with you, and if you are lucky, you may be able to see the Hofsjökull and Langjökull glaciers shimmering in the distance.

Overnight at Galtará cabin.



Day Four

Time to pack up your bags again as you leave Galtará and the stillness of the highlands.

On the ride back you follow wide riding trails on which you can tolt endlessly.

Descending from Eyvindarstaðaheiði into Svartárdalur valley, you will see the corral Stafnsrétt where every year the sheep are gathered. This is your destination for today and you leave the horses here for the night and drive back to the cottages.

Overnight at the Hestasport cottages.



Day Five

Nice tolt trails today alternate with more challenging terrain and, as you cross the mountain pass Kiðaskarð, perhaps pause and look back over the wide highlands and the majestic glaciers.



From the pass the trail takes you down towards the pen at Mælifellrétt. Here you leave the horses and return to the cottages for a relax bathe in the hot tub.



Day Six

After breakfast you visit the folk museum Glaumbær, a collection of traditional turf houses where Icelanders lived throughout the centuries.



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Returning to your horses at Mælifellrétt you saddle up for the last leg of the trail. The horses are keen to return to their home pastures and it will be an exciting ride towards the stables. After passing through the glacier river delta, you stop at the farm Stokkhólmi for lunch.

The Icelandic horse is one of the few breeds in the world capable of five gaits. During the past few days you will have tried four of the five gaits and this afternoon you will have the opportunity to experience the Flying Pace. You will be aided by Hestasport's experienced riding instructor and her well trained pace horses.

You continue riding to Vindheimamelar, where it is finally time to say goodbye to your horses as they are released into the meadows.

You return to the cottages for a final dip in the hot tub after a long day riding, and a farewell dinner.

Overnight at the Hestasport cottages.

Day Seven

After breakfast you are transferred to the bus station in Varmahlíð. The public bus to Reykjavík bus station is included in the price of the ride.

Alternatively, we can arrange a bus over the famous Kjölur route (extra cost) or a domestic flight from Akureyri to Reykjavík domestic airport (extra cost).

Accommodation

Whilst on your tour (other than one night) you stay in comfortable cottages in Varmahlíð with made up beds. The cottages have twin bed rooms and private facilities (one or two bathrooms per cottage). It may be necessary to share. Single/twin cottages are sometimes available at extra cost.



The accommodation for one night on the trail is in a mountain cabin in four bed rooms. Sleeping bags are provided. There are shared toilets and hot showers.



On all mobile trails a support vehicle goes ahead carrying personal gear, cooking equipment and food.

All meals are included in your riding holiday and you will get to taste traditional Icelandic specialities such as fresh and smoked lamb, trout, salmon, and a variety of cheese and other dairy products.

Days can be long and you may ride late into the evening. You will make your own lunch from the ingredients available at breakfast. We recommend you make extra sandwiches as the lunch break may not be until late in the afternoon and you may wish to grab a bite during one of the shorter breaks. Some guests have recommended taking your own small sandwich box to stop your lunch getting squashed in your saddle bags.



Most diets including vegetarian, vegan and gluten free can be provided for with prior notice. When you meet your guide for the ride briefing on the first day, please remind them of your dietary requests.