

Mountain Challenge (self-catering), Iceland

Location

For three days you will explore beautiful forgotten trails in the backlands of Skagafjörður. Just like Icelanders, we ride with an accompanying herd of horses and together we climb up and down narrow valleys and canyons, cross countless rivers and enjoy smooth tölt on grassy paths. During this adventurous challenge your horses will carry you off into barely touched nature, away from civilization. You will stay in comfortable timber cottages during the ride and are welcome to enjoy a relaxing bath in the natural hot tub after a long day in the saddle.

Itinerary

Day 1:

You are met at around noon in Varmahlið, near Skagafjörður, at the bus station. Alternatively you may wish to self-drive. There should be time to settle into your cottage before an afternoon ride.



Meet your guides and the horses for an introductory ride (c.12 km) through the Héraðsvötn river delta towards the corral at Mælifellsrétt. Leave the horses here for the night and return to your cottage at Hestasport.



Day 2:

After breakfast, return to the horses and head into the valley of Mælifellsdalur leaving all traces of civilisation behind. The trail today leads you between the mountains of Mælifellshnjúkur and Reykjafjall, with possible views of Hofsjökull and Langjökull glaciers, before heading down Einarsdalur valley and the narrow gorge Stafnsgil.

Here you cross the river many times before heading towards the corral at Stafnsrétt. The horses stay here for the night and you are transferred back to the cottages for the evening where you can relax in the hot tub after a full day in the saddle.



Day 3:

The trail this morning takes you climbing up a steep hill, Stafnsbrekka. From the top you will find a beautiful view of the glaciers you may have glimpsed yesterday. Continuing on, you ride along and over

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Kíðaskarð pass and down to today's lunch spot surrounded by high mountains.

After lunch, you will return to the lowlands of Skagafjörður and soon you will cross the river Svartá. After visiting Reykjafoss, the 'steaming' waterfall, you return to Vindheimamelar.

After your last ride it is time to say goodbye to your horses and guides before returning to your cottage for one more dip in the hot tub and your last night at Hestasport.



Day 4:

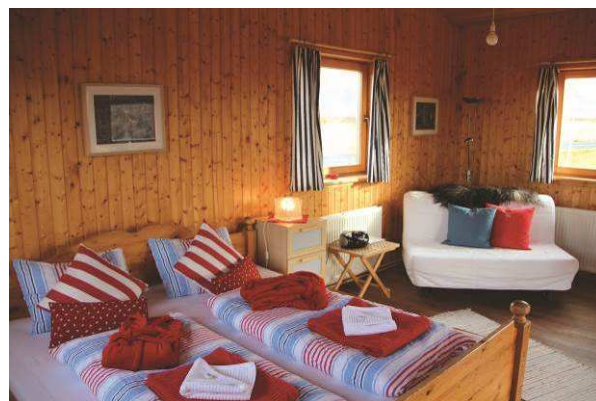
The next morning you will be transferred back to the bus station in Varmahlíð or make your own way by hire car.

Accommodation

You stay in Hestasport's comfortable cabins in Varmahlíð. Two people booking will have a cabin to themselves. Each cabin has a kitchen and bathroom with shower. The beds are "made-up" and towels are provided. There is a hot tub right outside the front door!



These stays are on a self catering basis. There is a shop in Varmahlíð, which is c.1km away, although you may wish to bring some of the essentials (coffee, tea, cereal) with you. You may also wish to treat yourself to a meal or two at the Varmahlíð Hotel, which is within easy walking distance.



Háabrekka Country House

Háabrekka Country House is situated 12km from Varmahlíð at the base of Mælifellshnjúkur mountain. The stables are 6km away.



It features two bedrooms, a large living room and lounge area, spacious kitchen and bathroom.



Outside there is a terrace with seating area, barbecue and a natural stone hot tub. The house can accommodate up to six guests.



These stays are on a self-catering basis. There is a shop in Varmahlíð, although you may wish to bring some of the essentials (coffee, tea, cereal) with you. The nearest restaurant is about 2km away.

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