

ICELAND - HIGHLAND TRAILS - KING'S TRAIL NORTH TO SOUTH

ITINERARY

Day 1

Return transfers are included from Reykjavik BSI central bus station at 09:00 on the first day of the ride, dropping off in Reykjavik city on the last day between 17:00 and 18:00.

You will need to make your own accommodation arrangements in Reykjavik for the night before the ride.

There is a regular Flybus service (<http://www.re.is/flybus>) between Keflavik airport and Reykjavik BSI central bus station.

Depending on the time of your return flight, you may also need accommodation at the end of the ride. Please check with us if you are unsure of the timings.

It is possible to arrange drop off on the last day for some hotels in Reykjavik, except those in the very centre. For these hotels you will be dropped off at the nearest designated bus stop. You will find a map of the bus stop locations and further information at www.busstop.is.

Arrive at Hvammur farm in North Iceland where horses and staff are waiting for us. After a lovely introductory meal we ride past the historical farm Hof and cross Vatnsdalsá river. Vatnsdalur is the setting of one of the ancient sagas, the Vatnsdælasaga. You can sense the happiness of the free running horses as we are heading towards the highland.

The horses stay at Haukagil farm which is the last farm on this side of the valley before we enter the highland plateau. We stay overnight at Hvammur (c. Approx. 20 km)



Overnight Hvammur Farm. Hvammur farm is situated in the beautiful Vatnsdalur Valley which is so full of the old Sagas and has the famous salmon fishing river Vatnsdalsá running down the middle.



Day 2

We start off by gathering up the herd of horses we take with us on the adventurous trail. Today we are riding through the summer pastures of horses and sheep from the farmers in the north of Iceland. We ascend towards the highland plateau Víðidalstunguheiði heath. It is great to drive the horses through the very free fields of the highlands.

The highland opens up for us and we see the mighty Álkugil gorge with picturesque waterfalls tumbling down over rock formations. The wideness and freedom feeling are inspiring for horses and people. It is graceful to see the free running herd tölt on the soft paths of the peaceful area. We see the remains of the old Kings Trail and the tracks from traveling horses through the centuries. Here the only inhabitants are foxes, birds and maybe some trolls.

Overnight at Haugakvíslarskáli Mountain Cabin.



Day 3

Further into the mountains we set course for the spacious Fellaskáli Cabin owned by the farmers of Víðidalur valley. There we have the lunchbreak of the day. The strong riding horses bring us safely through the ancient highland paths. We enjoy the magnificent view over the impressive highland mountains and the glaciers Langjökull and Eiríksjökull as they get closer step by step. We can see how the vegetation is changing into lush green colours, created by rich soil and water from many lakes as we ride to the heart of Arnarvatnsheiði.

We pass the lake Réttarvatn on our way beside the beautiful lake Arnarvatn. Truly a fascinating mystical place of silence and tranquillity we will never forget. Fertile highland vegetation and rich birdlife are the highlights of this area. As we say goodbye to the north we ride further to the impressive part of the high plateau that belongs to the west area Borgarfjörður. Further on we ride to Álftakrúkur Mountain Cabin where wanted men were supposed to hide out from the law enforcements long ago (Approx. 35 km)

Overnight at Álftakrúkur Mountain Cabin.



Day 4

Our ride continues beside one of the biggest lava fields in Iceland Hallmundarhraun. This is a mystical area filled with legends of outlaws and tales from the past. You have the feeling you see elves and trolls in the formations of the lava. The horses already sense that we are getting closer to the grassland of the farms in Borgarfjörður Area, and tölt happily as we ride on the banks of the glacial river Norðlingafljót, which we will also cross during our ride.

Eríksjökull Glacier, which also is a Vulcano, is majestic on the east side of our trail. We will see the best-known cave in Iceland Surtshellir. The spectacular 3500 m long lava cave was a hideout for bandits back in the days. The horses will stay at Þorvaldsstaðir.

Overnight at Hótel Á.



Day 5

We spend the day riding through and exploring the extraordinary area of Húsafell. We sense the qualities of our Icelandic horses as they bring us through the biggest natural forest of Iceland, Húsafellsskógur. Húsafell, often called the pearl between the lava and the glaciers is a unique natural gem in a magnificent landscape. The place has a big historical importance.

There are tales all the way back from the settlement as well as stories of witchcraft and ghosts from later centuries. Today we will visit the exceptionally beautiful waterfall Hraunfossar. The water seems to appear from the lava but is actually a cold spring that surges through the ground and runs in rapids down

into the river Hvítá. After a great day with the horses they rest at Augastaðir and we enjoy Húsafell.

Overnight at Húsafell Gamli Bær Guesthouse.



Day 6

Our route today leads us from Augastaðir over the mystical ancient trail of Ok. This fascinating highland trail is named after the 1190m high impressive glacier Ok on the east side of the trails, there we also see the glaciers Geitlandsjökull, Langjökull and Þórisjökull. This impressive area without any vegetation reminds us on how rough nature can be in Iceland.

We leave our horses at Brunnar Mountain Cabin to rest and go for an overnight stay to the community center Brautartunga in Lundareykjadalur Valley.. A great place to enjoy our last evening of the tour together with a good Icelandic meal, storytelling and singing (Approx. 35 km)



Day 7

We continue our ride and enjoy the great view riding in fast tölt on the trail over Bláskógarheiði Heath towards National Park Þingvellir. These tracks were used for centuries by the people traveling to the parliament in Þingvellir. Here are the historical sites by every foot step as we get closer to our destination. Only a few km from Brunnar we pass the legendary stone cairns Hallbjarnarvörður.

Our trail brings us south by the Kaldidalur road, further on great riding tracks by Draugabrekka (Ghostslopes) and Tröllaháls (Trollhill). As we see the Ármannsfell Mountain we are close to Skógarhólar Fields were our great ride ends this time (Approx. 20 km)

Skógarhólar is run by the Icelandic Horse Clubs Association and is located in Þingvellir National Park. We thank our horses and say good-bye until next time. On route we experience the beautiful sites and history of Þingvellir often called the national shrine of Iceland.

