

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

## 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 may be 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](http://www.busstop.is).

Drive to the Skógarhólar Fields where our Horseman and guide Haukur, his team and horses from Hvammur farm will meet you. Skógarhólar is run by the Icelandic Horse Clubs Association and is located in Þingvellir National Park.

We enjoy our first riding day in fast tölt with a great view over the Bláskógarheiði Heath. These tracks were used for centuries by the people traveling to the parliament in Þingvellir. We pass Ármannsfell Mountain and ride further by Tröllaháls (Trollhill) on the tracks by so-called Draugabrekka (Ghostslopes). Our ride brings us north on Kaldidalur road. Here are the historical sites by every footstep as we get closer to our destination of the day, Brunnar. Only a few km from there we pass the legendary stone cairns Hallbjarnarvörður. The Sturlunga Saga, that describes battles of families in Iceland in the 13. Century, mentions this location as a meeting place of armies and their chieftains.

We leave the horses for the night at Brunnar and stay overnight at the cultural heart of Iceland, Þingvellir (Approx. 20 km)



## Day 2

Our route today leads us from Brunnar 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 tracks, there we also see the glaciers Geitlandsjökull, Langjökull and Þórisjökull. This impressive area without any vegetation reminds us of how rough nature can be in Iceland.

We leave our horses at Augastaðir Farm to rest and go for an overnight stay at Hotel Á by the farm Kirkjuból. 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 (Approx. 35 km)



## Day 3

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.

After a great day with the horses, they rest at Þorvaldsstaðir. We will visit the best-known cave in Iceland Surtshellir. The spectacular 3500 m long lava cave was a hideout for bandits back in the days. It is a great feeling to relax and enjoy the geothermal pool of Húsafell. Accommodation at Hótel Á (Approx. 20 km)



Overnight Hotel A.

## Day 4

We are leaving the grasslands of the farms in Borgarfjörður and heading for Iceland's Western Highlands. 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.

Our horses 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. Further, on we ride to Álftakrökur Mountain Cabin where wanted men were supposed to hide out from the law enforcement long ago (Approx. 30 km)



## Day 5

Further, into the mountains, we set course for the spacious Fellaskáli Cabin owned by the farmers of Víðidalur valley. There we have the main break of the day. The strong riding horses bring us safely through the ancient highland paths. We enjoy the magnificent view of the impressive highland mountains and the glaciers Langjökull and Eiríksjökull. We can see how the vegetation is changing into lush green colors, 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 south we ride further to the impressive part of the high plateau that belongs to the North Area Húnavatnssýsla District. Here the only inhabitants are foxes, birds and maybe some trolls. We are riding through the summer pastures of horses and sheep as we ascend towards our Mountain Cabin for the night, Haugakvíslarkáli in Víðidalstunduheiði Heath. (Approx. 35 km)



## Day 6

Today we are riding down from the highland plateau Víðidalstunguheiði heath to our beautiful valley Vatnsdalur. The horses already sense that we are getting closer to the juice grassland of home and tölt happily direction north. It is great to drive the horses through the very free fields of the highlands before entering the civilization again. 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 grateful 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. We spend the night at Haukur's Farm Hvammur. Here we enjoy our last evening of the tour together a good meal, storytelling and singing (Approx 35 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 7

Vatnsdalur is said to be one of the most fertile and beautiful valleys in Iceland, shaped by water, glaciers and volcanic activity. On our ride, we pass the historical farm Hof and cross Vatnsdalsá river. Vatnsdalur is the setting of one of the ancient sagas, the Vatnsdælasaga. On our way, we hear tales from Iceland's heroic past of bloody conflict, revenge, and love. We experience the spirit of our horses as we are heading towards home on the great riding paths at the banks of Vatnsdalsá River.

We thank our very special horses and say goodbye to Haukur and his crew.

