

ICELAND: LAND OF FIRE AND ICE AND SO MUCH MORE!

WITH MELANIE ELLIOTT AND SARA
WILLIAMS

JULY 11 – 24, 2016

Known for its volcanos, glaciers, waterfalls, geysers, and (slowly!) shifting tectonic plates, Iceland is indeed the Land of Fire and Ice. Our tour will take us to all of these as well as lava fields, basalt columns and black sand beaches. Iceland is also the home of puffins, gannets, terns and many other birds, not to mention several species of whales, reindeer, and the elusive Arctic fox. Along with geo-thermally heated greenhouses producing an immense amount of vegetables and fruit (even bananas!), Iceland boasts the most northerly botanic gardens in the world! It traces its history from the early Vikings. We will visit museums devoted to its Sagas and early settlement, a fish skin tannery, a working farm, a herring museum, enjoy guided walks in National Parks, and stop at a woolen mill. There will be opportunities to soak in natural hot springs, ride Icelandic horses, and attend theatre (in English). This is a customized small group tour accompanied by Melanie Elliott and Sara Williams.



Melanie



Sara

Melanie, an award winning educator and conservationist, lives to share her outdoor knowledge and philosophy. She manages the Ecological education area for ED Foundations, College of Education, University of Saskatchewan, specializing in bird identification, waste reduction, field trips and bat rescue and release. As a Saskatchewan Education Council Tour Certified Guide she has lead tours to Alberta National Parks, Churchill, MB, Florida, Costa Rica, Australia, South America, South Africa and Namibia.

Retired as the Horticultural Specialist of the University of Saskatchewan, Sara Williams has been hosting garden tours for over 20 years - to Great Britain, Europe, Ireland, and further afield to Turkey, Hawaii and Morocco. She is author of many gardening books, including the recently revised *Creating the Prairie Xeriscape* and *The Saskatoon Forestry Farm Park & Zoo: A Photographic History* and has written hundreds of articles for various publications.



Akureyri Botanical Garden



Puffins

For more information and to
book *Iceland: Land of Fire and
Ice* please call or email Ruth

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MONDAY, JULY 11 ARRIVE REYKJAVIK

Early morning arrival into Reykjavik. We are met and transferred to the Blue Lagoon for a swim followed by a 2 hour city tour. Overnight Reykjavik. (D)

TUESDAY, JULY 12 REYKJAVIK GARDENS

Today we'll visit Reykjavik's parks, green spaces and private gardens. Overnight Reykjavik. (B)

WEDNESDAY, JULY 13 WEST ICELAND

First the Alafoss Woolen Mills and the Hand-made Knife Shop. Then the Agricultural University of Iceland specializing in agriculture and environmental sciences to learn about horses, horticulture and wool. Next we'll visit Deildartunguhver hot springs, followed by the Heimskringla Museum, home of Snorri Sturluson who wrote the country's best loved *Egils Saga*. The day will conclude with the Hraunfossar and Barnafoss waterfalls. Overnight in Glymur. (BD)

THURSDAY, JULY 14 SNÆFELLSNES PENINSULA

In Borgarnes, we'll visit the Settlement Centre, a museum illustrating the sagas and Iceland's early history. We continue to the Snæfellsnes Peninsula with its Glacier, made famous by Jules Verne's *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*. En route, we'll pass Búðir, once the most active trading hub on the south coast of Iceland. Time permitting, an optional stop at the Hellisandur Maritime Museum. Overnight in Olafsvik. Evening Option: The one-man show, *Mar*, at the Freezer Theatre in Rif. (BD)

FRIDAY, JULY 15 NORTH ICELAND

We'll spend the day exploring Iceland's history. In Eiríksstaðir, step back to the Viking Era and immerse yourself in the sights, sounds and scents of Erik the Red's farm where modern day Vikings demonstrate the lifestyle of 1000 years ago, sharing their crafts and knowledge. Next, a short stop at the Þingeyri church where monks once transcribed the Bible and the sagas. Then Glaumbaer, a well-maintained turf farmhouse museum with Icelandic horses. In Hofos, we'll visit the Icelandic Emigration Centre, and in Saudarkrokur the Tannery Visitor Centre to see how fish-skin is processed into high-quality leather. Overnight in Saudarkrokur. (B)

SATURDAY, JULY 16 AKUREYRI

En-route to Akureyri, we'll visit the Herring Era Museum in Siglufjörður with a herring-salting demonstration and the "herring girls". We continue our journey through tunnels before arriving in Akureyri. Enjoy a free afternoon exploring Lystigardurinn Botanical Garden, the Coventry Window in Akureyrarkirkja, or Akureyri Museum & Garden. Overnight Akureyri. (B)

SUNDAY, JULY 17 LAKE MÝVATN AREA

The area around Lake Mývatn is one of Iceland's major bird breeding grounds and one of spectacular volcanic activity. Our first stops are Laufas, a traditional turf farmhouse and the waterfall, Goðafoss. Around the lake we'll visit Grottagja Hot Springs and the Sigurgeirs Bird Museum. After a 1.5 km hike to the rim of Hverfell crater we'll immerse ourselves in the Mývatn Nature Baths. Overnight Laugar. (BD)

MONDAY, JULY 18 HÚSAVÍK / JÖKULSÁRGLJUFUR

Our journey today involves whales and unspoilt nature. In Húsavík explore the Whale Museum and village, or take an optional 3 hour whale watching tour. Then head to Jökulsárgljúfur National Park where we'll enjoy a guided wildflower walk, visit the horseshoe-shaped Asbrygi Canyon and Dettifoss, Europe's largest waterfall. Overnight in Egilsstaðir. (BD)

TUESDAY, JULY 19 HALLORMSSTAÐUR

Start the day with a visit to Hallormsstadir Arboretum on the west bank of Lake Lagarfljót. Continue to Icelandic author Gunnar Gunnarsson's home in Skriduklaustur. At the Snæfellsstofa Visitor Center we'll learn how volcanoes and glaciers have formed the surrounding region and the effects of eruptions and glacial outburst floods on the daily lives of people. In the afternoon, explore the fishing village of Seyðisfjörður, full of Scandinavian character with a craft market and church concert. Overnight in Seyðisfjörður. (B)

WEDNESDAY, JULY 20 EASTERN FJORDS

The Eastern Fjords offer remote farms and small fishing villages. Our drive today takes us by Reyðarfjörður, Fáskrúðsfjörður and Djúpavogur. In Stöðvarfjörður we'll visit Petra's Garden and Stone Collection - rare rocks and minerals collected over many decades. Our day

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ends with a tour of Holmur Farm with its owners where we'll learn about local agriculture. Overnight Holmur Farm. (BD)

THURSDAY, JULY 21 SKAFTAFELL PARK

This morning we'll enjoy a boat tour on the iceberg-filled Jökulsárlón Glacier Lagoon. Then, a choice of a walk: to the edge of a glacier in Skaftafell National Park; or one that highlights flora and fauna. Heading along the south shore, we'll pass Kirkjubæjarklaustur village and Eldhraun lava fields with a stop at the "kirkjugólf" basalt pavement. Then a visit to the Vik Wool Factory, one of the oldest and best known knitwear producers in Iceland. Continue to Dyrholaey Cliffs, a seabird reserve known for its puffins. Overnight near Vik. (BD)

FRIDAY, JULY 22 SOUTH SHORE

Our first stops today are Skogarfoss waterfall and the Skogar Folk Museum. Next, the Eyjafjallajökull Visitor Center. In 2010, this volcano erupted throwing black ash plumes 11km into the air and closing down European airspace for many days. Watch a film that describes life before, during and after the eruption. In Hvolsvöllur, we'll take a guided tour of the Njala Saga Center. Overnight near Hella. (BD)

SATURDAY, JULY 23 BACK TO REYKJAVIK

Today we return to Reykjavik. En-route we'll visit the massive Gullfoss Falls (raincoat recommended) and Geysir, a geothermal area of hot springs, steaming creeks, multi-coloured mud formations, and Strokkur, "the churn" that spouts every 5 to 10 minutes. We'll gain insight into geothermally heated Icelandic greenhouses at Friðheimar where we'll enjoy lunch among the tomatoes. Next, we'll tour Þingvellir National Park and national shrine. A designated UNESCO World Heritage site, the oldest parliament in the world first assembled here in 930 AD. Continue to Hveragerði, the town with the highest concentration of geothermal greenhouses in Iceland that provides much of its homegrown produce, including bananas. There we'll visit Garðyrkjudskólinn í Hveragerði horticultural college and the Náttthagi plant nursery. Our last stop in

Iceland is the Geothermal Park where you can try boiling an egg and taste rye bread baked in the hot ground. Overnight in Reykjavik. (BLD)

SUNDAY, JULY 24 DEPARTURE

Free time until your transfer to the airport. (B)



Rate For Double Occupancy: \$6940 per person
Rate For Single Occupancy: \$8810 per person
These rates are based on a minimum of 20 passengers.

Tour includes: Transfers and transportation, accommodation, tours and excursions per itinerary, meals per itinerary, English-speaking guide and more.

