

Iceland – Arctic Desert

Come and discover Iceland with us! Iceland is an otherworldly place of fire and ice, marooned near the top of the globe. This is where the mighty forces of nature have created a volatile playground, perfect for a unique adventure riding experience!

Glaciers, lava fields, volcanoes, tundra, geysers, hot springs, waterfalls and fjords form a pristine wilderness landscape. We will explore this island on isolated roadways and remote gravel tracks. This Iceland Motorcycle Tour features a **mix of paved and unpaved roads**.



For our tour of Iceland on primarily paved roads only, please see [Iceland – Beyond the Wall](#). (2020 dates only)

At a glance

Duration (days): 12
Miles Covered: 1700
Riding difficulty: Moderate
Unpaved Roads: 40%
Culture Shock: Small

Highlights

- Iceland's capital, Reykjavik – see the settler building architecture and experience the vibrant downtown bars and restaurants.
- Riding by Iceland's geothermal pipeline, an amazing achievement with over 85% percent of houses in Iceland being heated with geothermal energy.
- This motorcycle tour of Iceland ventures past the largest glacier in Europe. Ride past Vatnajokull, familiar to Game of Thrones fans as "Beyond the Wall"!
- Cross the spot where the Eurasian and North American Tectonic plates meet in Iceland, literally tearing the island in half at the rate of one centimetre per year
- Visit Akureyri, Iceland's second city and the option to go whale watching.
- Take on the motorcycle riding challenge of the infamous F-35 interior road across Iceland, between Langjokull and Hofsjokull Glaciers.
- Westfjords, the most remote and isolated part of Iceland, where we ride deserted and twisty roads along the fjords. Visit the witchcraft museum and learn about some of the magic of the Westfjords
- Reach the westernmost point in Iceland, and also Europe. The nearest landmass due south is the Antarctic!
- Ride up to the Snaefellsjokull glacier, made famous by Jules Verne in the Journey to the Center of the Earth and Ride through the national park.
- Go native with Icelandic cuisine – if fermented shark sounds too extreme, sample smoked puffin, with a shot of Brennivin, an Icelandic Schnapps!
- Try a dip in geothermally heated pools, as great way to relax after a days ride!

ROUTE MAP

Itinerary

This is a 12 day, 11 night itinerary and includes between 40 – 50% gravel roads. It is the ultimate Iceland tour, taking you into the interior, out to the Westfjords and still allowing time for the traditional Icelandic tourist highlights.

12 July 2019. Day 1: Arrive Reykjavik

We meet you at Keflavik Airport and provide transport you to the Fosshotel in Reykjavik via the Airport Express service. Depending on the timing of the shipment, we will go to the docks to collect your bike or it may already be at the hotel. In the evening, there is a Tour Briefing and then we go out for a group Welcome Dinner

13 July 2019. Day 2: Reykjavik to Skogar (142 miles)

We aim to leave Reykjavik by midday, depending on the bike collection. Ride by Iceland's geothermal pipeline and visit waterfalls, geysers and glaciers along the way. You will see Pingvellir – see the continental drift and the ancient place where Iceland's chieftains first met to create what is now the oldest existing parliament. Wonder at the stunning waterfalls of Seljalandsfoss and Skogafoss. All spectacular, thundering cascades of water. Already you'll see how little traffic is on, making riding an utter delight.

14 July 2019. Day 3: Skogar to Hofn (200 miles)

Morning ride to visit the most southern point of Iceland and the Dyrholaey Reserve. Amazing views as you ride towards the largest glacier in Europe, Vatnajökull and the Skaftafell National Park. Get up close to Svinafellsjökull and hear it cracking and grinding as it moves and melts. Cross vast glacial plains and head to Glacier Lagoon and Iceberg Beach, where chunks of the glacier break off and float down to the ocean.

15 July 2019. Day 4: Hofn to Hallormsstadur (220miles)

A great section of gravel road as we head to Egilsstadir, and then another lovely dirt road through a beautiful valley before we take the Ring Road again.

16 July 2019. Day 5: Hallormsstadur to Brekka (253 miles)

This is an great days ride on some of Iceland's famous F-roads. Be prepared for river crossings! Then we head out to take the gravel road to Dettifoss and the Asbyrgi Cliffs.

17 July 2019. Day 6: Brekka to Akureyri (92 miles)

A short morning ride via Lake Myvatn, to Iceland's second city, and time to go whale watching in the afternoon.

18 July 2019. Day 7: Akureyri to Fludir (217 miles)

We take the famous F-35 which traverses the interior between two glaciers, Langjökull and Hofsjökull across the Highlands of Iceland and we finish close to the mighty Gullfoss Waterfall.

19 July 2019. Day 8: Fludir to Heydular (217miles)

There'll be time to stop at the original "Geysir" before we turn north to Husafell on another great dirt road. Then we continue to the Westfjords, travelling on wonderful coastal routes on part dirt, part tarmac roads.

20 July 2019. Day 9: Heydular to Patreksfordjur (277 miles)

A fabulous days ride in and out of the coastal fjords – stop for a fantastic fish buffet in Isafjordur, before continuing through the single track tunnel and along more dirt roads to the massive Dynjandi Waterfall. Patreksfjordur has incredible views across the bay to the cliffs.

21 July 2019. Day 10: Patreksfordjur to Stykkisholmur (263 miles)

There's an option to ride out to the Latraberg Bird Cliffs and spot puffins at the start of the day, which is a along a stunning cliff side dirt road to the westernmost point of Iceland. Then return back along the southern coast roads and head across old lavafields to the north side of the Snaefellsnes Peninsula. This section can be very windy!

22 July 2019. Day 11: Stykkisholmur to Reykjavik (174 miles)

Drop by the Shark Museum at Bjarnarhofn. After, there is a small gravel road that take us up to the Snaefellsjokul glacier, but we need to check conditions and that it's open. We continue to Borganes (where you can see the Settlement Centre), and back into Reykjavik. Drop your bikes off at the freight depot and then our for the evening and our group Farewell Meal.

23 July 2019. Day 12: Depart Reykjavik

Transfer to airport for flight home.

Accommodation

It is important to understand that other than Akureyri (18,000 popn) and Greater Reykjavik (200,000 popn), all other settlements in Iceland are very small. Places marked in large, bold writing may be villages of 200 – 1,500 people. Places marked on a map can look as if they will be towns, but they are only a family homestead or a ranch. Some hotels are shown on the map in their own right, as they consist of a hotel, a restaurant (maybe a petrol pump) and that's it. Outside the greater Reykjavik area in the South West and Akureyri, everywhere is Iceland is remote and quiet, dominated by farms and fishing activities.

International hotel chains only exist in Reykjavik; outside of this area there are some small Iceland hotel chains such as Fosshotel and IcelandAir (with 8-10 hotels), but after that, pretty much all accommodation is family run and does not have an official star ratings.

In Reykjavik, we stay at an excellent 3* hotel. However, once we leave Reykjavik, the accommodation varies between hotels and family guesthouses and it has been chosen to reflect the area we are in; sometimes it is the only accommodation available in the area that can accommodate a group of our size. You should note that in guesthouses, sometimes rooms do not have televisions and on occasion, there are shared bathroom facilities (which is very common for Iceland), but often we have a guesthouse just for our group. Wifi is available at all accommodation, but in remote locations, you need to expect it to be slow and not consistent.

Just a note about the sleeping arrangements and what is the norm in Iceland. Beds are often single beds which are pushed together (for a double bed) or pulled "apart" (for two single beds), depending on the type of bed you have requested. Two single beds for people who are sharing, can still often be pushed close together. Please feel free to pull the beds away from each other! You should also note that it is normal to have two separate sleeping duvets for a couple using one large bed (one large duvet is just not the way it is done in Iceland).

Rooms will be on a double occupancy shared basis, unless you have booked for a Single Room. You should note that it is normal for a single room to be a smaller room with a single bed. Peak season in Iceland means a single room needs to have been requested at the time of making your booking to ensure availability.

Finally, a note about the showers. Iceland's hot water is supplied by geothermic pipelines and the hot water is straight from the ground. It can be scorching hot immediately you turn a tap on (so beware!) and also it can smell of sulphur, which can be off putting the first time you get in the shower. Please don't complain about how the water smells, it is what it is and is considered perfectly normal in Iceland!

Whats Included

You have the benefit of booking with a UK tour operator who has in place Financial Payment Protection Insurance with Towergate Stevens & Chapman, so that your money paid to us in advance is protected in accordance with The Package Travel Regulations 1992.

Before you go

- Access to GlobeBusters Team pre-departure to request individual meeting about preparing for the trip
- Departure Handbook, with maps, daily route notes and GPS information where available
- The assurance of booking with a UK tour operator and knowing that your money paid in advance is protected.

En Route

- Hotel bed and breakfast accommodation on a shared basis (unless Single Room booked).
- Standard of accommodation is majority 3* hotels and some private guesthouses
- 6 evening meals, including your Welcome & Farewell Meal.
- Local overnight hotel parking charges.
- National Park Entrances is free.

Support Crew

- Motorcycle Tour Leader on motorcycle to accompany the group.
- GlobeBusters Support Vehicle, equipped with satellite phone, spare fuel, water, tools, selected spare parts and emergency first aid kit, acting as a sweeper vehicle
- Support Driver, with motorcycle mechanical experience and first aid qualifications

Motorcycle Freight

- Sea freight of your motorcycle from UK to Iceland Return, facilitating all Customs formalities completed on your behalf.
- In transit insurance for your motorcycle during freight, subject to £500 excess

Not Included

- Airport Transfers in Iceland
- Return passenger airline flights to get to the start and from the finish point for the tour.
- Personal travel, accident and medical insurance
- Entrance fees to sights and parks, optional excursions, meals (all except where stated). Personal spending money, tips, souvenirs or other extras.
- Personal documentation (eg visas, passport), vaccinations, personal taxes, border crossing fees.
- Fuel, oil & other motorcycle consumables, toll road fees, traffic fines.
- Any other item not specifically included in the price.

Flights

For clarity, we do not include your passenger flights. It is your responsibility to organise your own flights to and from the destination. You need to book an outward flight to our start point, Reykavik to arrive no later than around 2pm on 21 August 2020. The earliest leave date is any time on 1 September 2020. However, **do not book your flights until the tour is designated as a Guaranteed Departure.**

Should you wish to arrive before the official start date or stay after the official end date, please simply request extra nights at the time of booking and we can make the reservation at our group hotel.

Please also refer to our [terms and conditions](#).

Useful Info

What riding experience do I need?

This is a 60% paved road tour, with sections of around 40% unpaved roads to access remote locations of interest. There are also some river crossings. Traffic levels are extremely low with good driving standards. Iceland can have changeable weather conditions all year; however July and August are the best times for motorcycle touring. We recommend this Tour for riders who have some experience of riding on unpaved surfaces, such as gravel or dirt. All roads used are public highways and shown on maps. Gravel roads are normally well maintained, but you do need to be aware of deeper gravel or ruts on bends and river crossings.

How does the motorcycle freight work?

Your tour price includes the freight of your motorcycle from the UK to Reykjavik. You must bring your bike to our shipping depot (close to Grimsby, UK) for sea freight out to Iceland. The drop off for your motorcycle is normally around 10-12 days prior to the start date. We will load the container and once it arrives in Iceland we do the Customs procedures and take your bike to the hotel so it is waiting for you. At the end, we take your bike back to the shipping depot in Iceland for sea freight back to the UK.

Can I hire a bike?

If you are not based in the UK and want to take part in this tour, you can hire a BMW GS motorcycle from our local Travel Partner in Reykjavik.

What about flights?

We do not include flights in your tour price. You must book your own passenger flights to arrive / depart Reykjavik, once we have confirmed to you that this tour is a guaranteed departure. From the UK, there are direct flights from London, Aberdeen, Belfast, Manchester with a combination of Iceland Air, British Airways, Easyjet, WOW. Book your flight to arrive no later than 2pm then send us your flight details. On arrival please use either an airport taxi or coach transfer to reach the group hotel – more details are provided in our Trip Notes prior to departure.

Do I have to ride in a group?

No! We do not make you ride in convoy. We offer you the freedom to decide how you would like to ride. We give you a road book, GPS co-ordinates and hotel information. You can use this to self-navigate. If you prefer to ride with our Motorcycle Leader, then you can do this. However, we strongly caution against riding alone on the dirt roads; we recommend that ride such roads in a group of at least three riders.

What is the average group size?

Our groups are normally 10 – 12 riders (some riders will have passengers).

Is this ride suitable for a passenger?

Your passenger needs to be an experienced tourer and you both need to have previous experience of riding two up on gravel / dirt roads. There will be water crossings and passenger may need to walk across these or go over in the support vehicle. Otherwise, we strongly recommend you consider our paved road tour of Iceland, which is 95% paved road. Please note we cannot guarantee seats in the support vehicle for passengers as priority is given to anyone who may be ill or injured.

Is there a support vehicle?

Yes, this tour operates with a GlobeBusters Support Vehicle and Driver. It will carry one small piece of luggage per person (maximum 60 litre bag), which must be waterproof and dustproof. Suitcases and wheeled trolleys are not suitable and can be left in the hotel in Reykjavik.

What documents do I need?

You will need your original documents as follows: Passport, Driving Licence, Motorcycle Registration / Title Document (in the UK, V5, log book), Motorcycle Insurance. We will need you to upload copies of these documents to our secure website so that we can make the necessary freight arrangements. In addition you must have travel/medical insurance. Visas are not required for UK/EU citizens. For other nationalities, please check with our preferred visa agency www.thevisamachine.com.

Available Dates & Prices

Date	Rider Shared Room	Single Supplement	Passenger Shared Room	Bike Rental
Aug 21 – Sep 1, 2020	£4,495	£1,300	£2,995	BMW R 1200 GS: £2,250 BMW F 800 GS: £1,850 BMW F 700 GS: £1,380