



Sólar Eclipse, Northern Light and Geology Trip to Iceland 16th-23th March 2015

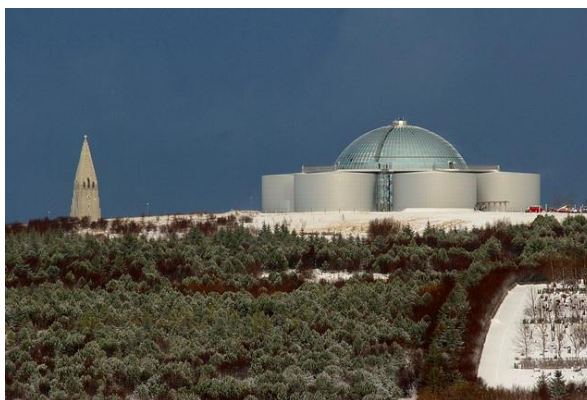
Day 1: Arrival/Reykjavik 16.3.2015

Welcome to Iceland! Once you arrive in Keflavik national Airport our guide will welcome you and give you a short information meeting about the tour and handing out your travel documents. Then you will pick up your rental car and drive to your hotel in the heart of Reykjavik. Explore the pearls of the city while staying the first night in the capital of the north. If you arrive early, you might be interested in optional day tours such as whale watching from Reykjavík Harbour. If you like to eat your dinner with a panoramic view over the town, is Perlan (the pearl) the perfect place for that.

Driving distance ~50 km/30 miles

Sites recommended in Reykjavik:

- *Hallgrímskirkja church*
- *Volcano show*
- *Perlan*
- *Viking Museum*
- *National Museum*
- *Laugarvegur main street*



Reykjavík, Hallgrímskirkja und Perlan, by Ófeigur Ö. Ófeigsson

Day 2: The Golden Circle 17.3.2015

Today your Iceland journey begins! You will start your day by driving to Þingvellir National park. Because of its beauty and historical value, it was accepted as UNESCO's heritage site in 2004. There you can see how Iceland's landscape looked like, when the first settlers arrived in Iceland in the 9. century. After exploring the treasures of the park, head south to see Strokkur, the geyser (spouting spring) and Gullfoss waterfall to complete the "Golden Circle". Enjoy the afternoon seeing the sizzling hot springs and geysers and the force of the great waterfall. Make your way to the south coast of Iceland. The active volcano Hekla (erupted last in 2000) decorates the panoramic view in the north once you reach road number 1 in Selfoss, if it is not hiding in clouds. Stay the night at Hella.

Driving distance ~270km/170 miles

Highlights of the day:

- *Þingvellir*
- *Gullfoss*
- *Geysir*
- *Kerið crater*
- *Skálholt*
- *Hekla Volcano*
- *Ev. northern lights*



Strokkur spouting, by Martin Gasser



Day 3: The South Coast-Volcano road 18.3.2015

While heading to Skaftafell National Park you will pass at least 4 active volcanoes, in parentheses year of last eruption: Hekla (2000), Eyjafjallajökull (2010), Katla which is hidden under Mýrdalsjökull glacier (1918) and Grímsvötn (2011). After breakfast and packing you will drive east to the picturesque waterfalls Seljalandsfoss and Skógarfoss. Above the waterfalls looms the mighty Eyjafjallajökull, we recommend to stop at the Eyjafjallajökull visitor center some 30 km east of Hvollsvöllur on road nr.1. Drive along the south shore to Dyrhólaey natural reserve with a big seabird colony during summer time. First birds may have already arrived to prepare the nests for the summer in March. You will cross Mýrdalssandur, the sander plain formed by floods following volcanic eruptions of Katla under Myrdalsjökull glacier. Then the road is leading through Eldhraun, a huge lava field formed by two eruptions: Eldgjá in 934 a.d and Lakagíggar 1781, the lava erupted from two different fissures lying parallel ~50 km north of the road number one. They are of the biggest eruption in historical times world wide. After passing Skeiðarársandur you will arrive at Skaftafell in the Vatnajökull National Park. We recommend the easy hiking trail to Svartifoss waterfall, that is surrounded by beautiful and pitch black basalt columns as well as the visitor centre of the National park where you find a lot of information about the volcanoes lying under Vatnajökull glacier. Stay the night in Skaftafell area.

Driving distance ~280km/170 miles

Highlights of the day:

- Seljalandsfoss
- Eyjafjallajökull Visitor Centre
- Skógarfoss
- Dyrhólaey
- Skaftafell
- Svartifoss
- Ev. northern lights



Eyjafjallajökull erupting in April 2010 from Hvollsvöllur, by Martin Gasser

Day 4: East coast and Breiðdalsvík –inside volcanoes 19.3.2015

Start your morning by exploring the place many people consider being the greatest sight of Iceland, the Jökulsárlón glacial lagoon. In your travel documents you have information about geological interesting localities between Skaftafell and Breiðdalsvík.

As you reach Höfn, known as the lobster (langoustine if you will) capital of Iceland, and are feeling hungry, we recommend stopping at the Hotel Höfn for a lobster feast or lobster soup. A magnificent stone collection, called Huldusteinn, you can see in the old swimming pool.

It is worth to visit the second visitor centre of the Vatnajökull national park in the village of Höfn, close to the harbour at Gamla Búð.

From Höfn to Breiðdalsvík are you driving along a magnificent fjord landscape, formed by glaciers of the last Ice Age which ended 10'000 years ago. Just after the village Djúpvíogur you will pass the farm Teigarhorn, which is a natural reserve and stone museum. Keep on to the next village, your destination of this trip: Breiðdalsvík. At 6 p.m. there is a welcome and information event for you at Breiðdalssetur Geology center. Stay the night at Hótel Bláfell in Breiðdalsvík.

Driving distance on this day: 250 km/155 miles



Highlights of the day:

- Jökulsárlón
- Höfn, lobster meal, stone museum
- Reindeer by the road, most likley Lónarea
- Djúpivogur
- Teigarhorn
- Breiðdalssetur, geology centre
- Ev. northern lights



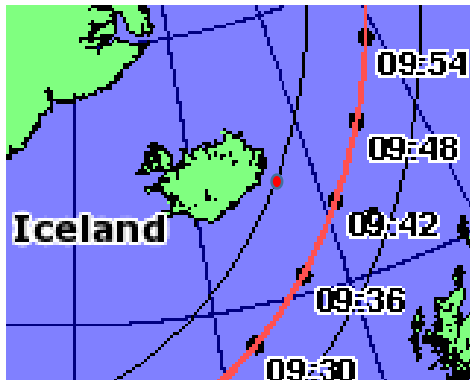
Breiðdalsvík bay, by Martin Gasser.

Day 5: Solar Eclipse on sea 20.3.2015

This will be our great day, and if the weather allows, we will take you out to the sea in a tourist boat into the zone, where the total solar eclipses takes place. We will start at around 3 a.m. from the Harbour of Breiðdalsvík, hopefully with dancing Northern lights above us. One way takes 5 hours on the boat (100km), the totality starts at around 9:40 and lasts around one minute, if you are sensitive to seasickness, take your medicine with you. If it is not possible to go on sea, we will be preparing a back up plan in Breiðdalsvík. Stay the night at Hótel Bláfell in Breiðdalsvík.

Highlights of the day:

- Sólár eclipse
- Ev. northern lights



Solar eclipse March 2015, red dot approximate planned location of visit.



Total solar eclipse from 1999 in Germany



Day 6: Back journey to Kirkjubæjarklaustur 21.3.2015

Before you leave Breiðdalsvík you have the possibility to listen to a geological presentation about Eastern Iceland at 10 a.m. at Breiðdalssetur, East Iceland Geological Centre. When you head south you can stop at every location you did not have time on your journey to Breiðdalsvík, along the East Fjords to Kirkjubæjarklaustur. If you are lucky you may see reindeer on your way south, specially when you reach the Lónarea.

Driving distance ~ 360 km/220 miles

Highlights of the day:

- *Breiðdalssetur, geology centre, presentation*
- *Stone and bird museum Djúpivogur*
- *Reindeer by the road, most likley Lónarea*
- *Ev. northern lights*



Reindeer on the road in the Eastern Fjords, by Skarphéðinn G. Þórisson

Day 7: Back Journey to Keflavík, 22.3.2015

Follow road number 1 from Kirkjubæjarklaustur to Hveragerði. There we recommend you to drive to Þorlákshöfn (turn left in Hveragerði) and from there along the South coast of Reykjanes Peninsula to Grindavík, and Keflavík. You are passing several lavafields, younger than 2000 years. If you are interested in geothermal Energy have a look at Gjáin exhibition in Grindavík. The Reykjanes Lighthouse lies close to the geothermal area Gunnhver. If you feel more like relaxing visit the Blue Lagoon. Stay the night in Keflavík.

Driving distance ~290 km/180 miles

Highlights of the day:

- *Gjáin Grindavík <http://www.grindavik.is/v/429>*
- *Gunnhver geothermal area and Power Plant*
- *Reykjanesviti lighthouse, bird memorial*
- *Blue lagoon*



Lavafield, Reykjanes light house, steam of power plant and geothermal area Gunnhver, photo Sveinbjörn Sveinbjörnsson

Day 8: Departure 23.3.2015

Thanks for visiting Iceland. We wish you a safe journey home!