

9 DAYS IN

Iceland

Land of fire, ice, and the road that keeps unfolding.

BASE
REYKJAVÍK & THE SOUTH COAST

DURATION
9 DAYS

DATES
9–17 JULY 2026

FROM THE EDITOR

Waterfalls you can walk behind, a canyon that opens like a wound in the earth, and a glacier you zipline off **upside down**. Iceland does not do subtle.

FROM THE EDITOR

Fire, Ice, And Nine Days In Between

"Nine days is enough to see fire and ice sit next to each other and somehow make sense."

BRANT PINVIDIC, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Iceland does not ease you in. You land in Reykjavík, drop your bags, and within a few hours you are floating in a lagoon carved out of an old lava field, looking back at a coastline that should not exist. Then the country spends the next eight days trying to top itself.

The trick, and the thing most people get wrong, is treating this like a checklist. The ring road is full of pull-offs where a tour bus empties out, everyone gets the same photo, and the bus pulls away. This guide runs the opposite way: snorkel the fissure between two continental plates before the crowds arrive, hike past the first viewpoint at Múlagljúfur when everyone else turns back, skip the beach that photographs better than it feels in person.

Some of what made this trip was not on any list. A wood-fired pizza and a hot tub under a sky that never quite goes dark. A herd of Icelandic horses on a working farm. Hanging upside down off the edge of a glacier because the guide asked if I wanted to try it and I said yes.

Nine days is enough to see fire and ice sit next to each other and somehow make sense. Rent the car, skip what I tell you to skip, and go in July when the light barely leaves.

— BRANT



PHOTO: REJECT AVERAGE — SKY LAGOON, REYKJAVÍK

ACCOMMODATION

Where To Stay

Two stays worth naming, two moods entirely. They are the two nights on this trip where the room is as much a part of the day as anything on the schedule.



PHOTO: REJECT AVERAGE — LAUNRÉTT 4 AIRBNB, LAUGARÁS (LEFT) & AURORA IGLOO SOUTH, HELLA (RIGHT)

Launrétt 4 Airbnb — Laugarás

Hot tub, cold plunge, sauna, a wood-fired pizza oven and BBQ on the deck, river views from the greenhouse breakfast table. This is home base for two nights on the Golden Circle side, and it is doing more work than most hotels in the country. Stay away from the river bank itself.

→ [Book on Airbnb](#)

Aurora Igloo South — Hella

A transparent dome under the South Coast sky for the final night out on the road. No lodge in this guide sells the sky better. Book direct and confirm the season — July means midnight sun, not aurora, but the dome is worth it either way.

→ auroraigloo.is · info@auroraigloo.is · +354 791 1122

Every other night on this route — Reykjavik on arrival and departure, and two stops along the South Coast — is a solid, comfortable stay chosen for location over personality. Good beds, good showers, close to the next morning's drive. Full addresses are in your booking confirmations.

GOOD TO KNOW

Practical Reality

GETTING THERE

Fly into Keflavík (KEF). Collect your rental vehicle at the airport — you will need it for all nine days. No trains here; this trip runs on the ring road and its detours.

GETTING AROUND

Self-drive, full stop. Distances are longer than they look on the map and weather can slow you down, so build buffer into every driving estimate.

MONEY

Iceland is expensive and almost entirely cardless-friendly — tap and go everywhere, including tiny cafés. Budget generously for activities; the lifts and tours add up fast.

WEATHER

It turns without warning. Pack a proper shell, layers, and waterproof boots regardless of the forecast, and always have a plan B for an outdoor day.

BOOKING AHEAD

Silfra snorkelling, Friðheimar lunch, the glacier zipline, and the ATV tour all fill up in July. Book every activity before you land, not after.

PACE

Do not overpack the days. The best stretches of this trip are the ones with room to stop for an unplanned viewpoint or an extra hour in a hot spring.

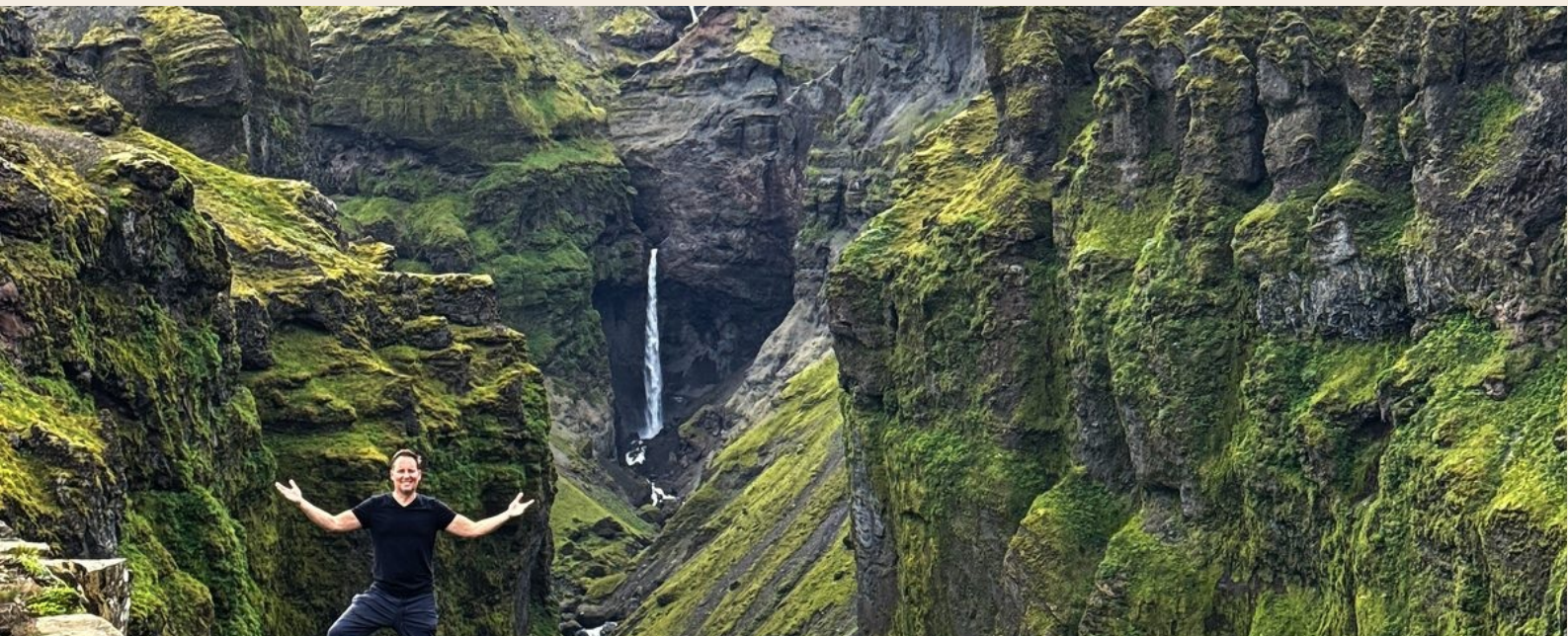


PHOTO: REJECT AVERAGE — MÚLAGLJÚFUR CANYON, SOUTH ICELAND

1

ARRIVAL · REYKJAVÍK

Land Soft, Then Get In The Water

You will want to sleep. Do not. The lagoon, the old town, and Iceland's most famous hot dog stand are all more effective than a nap, and the light will not fade until well past midnight anyway.



PHOTO: REJECT AVERAGE
SKY LAGOON, REYKJAVÍK

- **Arrive Keflavík**
Collect luggage, pick up the rental vehicles. You will need them for the whole trip.
- **Drop Bags**
Drive to the hotel in Reykjavík and drop your luggage.
- Breakfast** **BakaBaka**
Fresh pastries, Icelandic breakfast, great coffee. The easy first meal.
- 3–3.5 hrs** **Sky Lagoon**
The lagoon, the 7-Step Ritual, a swim-up bar, lunch or drinks optional.
- Evening** **Reykjavík On Foot**
Park once and walk it. Optional early bite at Bæjarins Beztu Pylsur, the famous hot dog stand. Walk the waterfront to Sun Voyager, then up Rainbow Street to Hallgrímskirkja. Tower views if time allows.
- Dinner** **ROK or Kol Restaurant**
Modern Icelandic small plates at ROK, or something more premium at Kol.
- 21:00** **Welcome Drinks (Optional)**
Hús máls og menningar — a bookstore by day, a lively bar by night, often with live music.

2

THE GOLDEN CIRCLE

Snorkel Between Two Continents

Skip the park, do the water. Silfra is a fissure between the North American and Eurasian tectonic plates, and it is the single best thing on the Golden Circle route.



PHOTO: REJECT AVERAGE
SILFRA FISSURE, ÞINGVELLIR

- 07:00 Breakfast**
At the hotel before heading out.
- 07:30 Depart Reykjavík**
About 45 minutes to Silfra.
- 09:00 Silfra Snorkelling**
2.5–3 hours with **DIVE.IS**. Groups of six, guide included. Park at P5, arrive 15 minutes early.
We dive with them every summer — book direct: dive@dive.is, tell them Brant sent you.
- 12:30 Lunch — Fríðheimar**
A working tomato greenhouse turned restaurant. Book ahead, especially in July. **vinstofa.fridheimar.is**
Ask for Judit Kiss-Dragan, Booking Manager — fridheimar@fridheimar.is · +354 486 8894.
- 14:15 Geysir Geothermal Area**
Strokkur erupts every 5–10 minutes.
- 15:15 Gullfoss Waterfall**
Walk to both viewpoints.
- 16:00 Quick Stop**
Convenience store for pizza night toppings.
- 16:30 Drive To The Airbnb**
Check-in after 15:00.

⚠ **WORTH SKIPPING** Þingvellir National Park itself — overrated, busy. Do the snorkelling, skip the park wander.

Reject Average Moment

Wood-fired pizzas, a hot tub, a sauna, and a cold plunge under a sky that will not go dark. Tonight's stay: Launrétt 4 Airbnb, 806 Laugarás.

→ **Book on Airbnb**

3

MR ICELAND · SOUTH FARMLAND

A Slow Morning, Then Horses

The one unhurried morning of the trip. Take it. Everything after this is back-to-back until the flight home.



PHOTO: REJECT AVERAGE — HORSEBACK RIDING, MR ICELAND

- Morning** **Slow Start At The Airbnb**
Hot tub, sauna, cold plunge, the greenhouse, breakfast on the deck. Optional: Laugarás Lagoon across the road.
-
- 11:45** **Depart For Mr Iceland**
About 45–50 minutes.
-
- 13:00** **Horse Riding & Viking Dinner**
13:00–17:00. A guided horseback ride followed by a Viking-inspired dinner on a working farm. mriceland.is
Landeyjavegur, 861 Hvolsvöllur · [+354 844 7220](tel:+3548447220) · info@mriceland.is — good people, tell them Brant sent you.
-
- Evening** **Back To The Airbnb**
Second and final night at Launrétt 4.



PHOTO: REJECT AVERAGE
VIKING DINNER, MR ICELAND

Dinner is laid out on long tables inside a working barn, sheepskin covering the benches, candlelight instead of electric. It is exactly as unpolished and as good as that sounds — the kind of meal that photographs better than any restaurant on the trip because none of it is staged.

4

SOUTH COAST · VÍK

Four Waterfalls, One Black-Crust Pizza

The South Coast in a single day: walk behind one waterfall, find a hidden one, then a second pair of the same. By the time you sit down for pizza in Vík you will have earned it.



PHOTO: REJECT AVERAGE
SELJALANDSFOSS, SOUTH COAST

08:30

Depart Airbnb

About 50 minutes to Seljalandsfoss.

09:20

Seljalandsfoss & Gljúfrabúi

Walk behind the falls, then two minutes to the hidden Gljúfrabúi. 45–60 minutes.

10:30

Drive To Skógafoss

About 30 minutes.

11:00

Skógafoss & Kvernufoss

View from the bottom, then walk to the hidden Kvernufoss. 45–60 minutes. Skip the stairs — just as impressive from below.

12:15

Drive To Vík

About 35 minutes.

13:45

Skool Beans Café

A converted school bus. 30–45 minutes. The bagels and hot chocolate are the move.

14:30

Lunch — Black Crust Pizzeria

Signature black charcoal pizzas. 1 hour. blackcrustpizzeria.com

15:45

Drive To Tonight's Stay

About 1 hour toward Kirkjubæjarklaustur. Optional stop at Fjaðrárgljúfur Canyon nearby — a great sunset spot.

⚠ **WORTH SKIPPING** Reynisfjara Black Sand Beach — overrated, crowded, underwhelming in person.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Don't skip Kvernufoss — quieter, underrated, and half the crowd of its famous neighbor. And order the Pepperoni at Black Crust without hesitation.

5

THE BIG ONE · MÚLAGLJÚFUR

Hike To The Top Of The Canyon

This is the day. A canyon that opens wider the further you climb, then an afternoon on a glacier lagoon paddling between icebergs. Go early, go all the way to the upper viewpoint, and do not let anyone tell you the lower one is enough.



PHOTO: REJECT AVERAGE
MÚLAGLJÚFUR CANYON, SOUTH ICELAND

07:30

Depart

About 2 hours to Múlagljúfur.

09:30

Múlagljúfur Canyon

Lower viewpoint is 20–25 minutes; the upper viewpoint is 35–40 minutes one way with a steep final stretch. Allow 2.5–3 hours total.

12:30

Drive To Jökulsárlón

Glacier Lagoon, about 20 minutes.

13:00

Lunch & Explore

Glacier Lagoon Café, walk the lagoon, watch for seals.

15:00

Glacier Lagoon Kayaking

2–2.5 hours with **Troll Expeditions**.

Fiskislóð 45-H, Reykjavík · +354 519 5544 · info@troll.is — good friends of ours.

17:30

Return West

Back toward tonight's stay near Kirkjubæjarklaustur. If you skipped Fjaðrárgljúfur yesterday, tonight's return drive is a good window for it.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Don't stop at the first viewpoint — hike to the top. It's the single best experience on this entire trip.

6

SÓLHEIMAJÖKULL · HELLA

Walk The Glacier, Then Zipline Off It

A guided glacier walk that ends with a zipline stretched across the ice. Ask if you can go upside down. The answer is usually yes.



PHOTO: REJECT AVERAGE — GLACIER ZIPLINE, SÓLHEIMAJÖKULL

09:30 Depart
A scenic drive west toward Sólheimajökull Glacier, 2.5–3 hours.

12:30 Lunch
Near Sólheimajökull or in Vík.

13:30 Private Glacier Zipline
About 3 hours with **Ice Pic Journeys** — a guided glacier walk followed by the zipline.
Mýrargata · +354 497 1335 · info@icejourney.is

16:30 Drive To Tonight's Stay
About 1 hour to Hella.

Evening Final Night On The South Coast
Relax in the glass igloo, watch the light, dinner in Hella or on-site.

Aurora Igloo South — Hella

The last stay of the trip, and the one built entirely around the sky above you. A dome tent with a bed, a table, and nothing between you and the weather but glass.

→ auroraigloo.is · info@auroraigloo.is · +354 791 1122

7

HVERAGERDI · BLUE LAGOON

One Last Adrenaline Hit, Then Silica Mud

Volcanic terrain on an ATV in the morning, the Blue Lagoon at night. Go late — a 19:30 entry means a quieter lagoon and a better mask-and-steam-room routine.



PHOTO: REJECT AVERAGE — ATV ADVENTURE, HVERAGERDI

Morning Depart Aurora Igloo South

Toward Hveragerði.

13:30 Lunch

In Hveragerði.

Afternoon ATV Adventure

Volcanic terrain, the last adrenaline hit of the trip, with **4x4 Adventures Iceland**.

Hraðfrystihús Þórkötlum · +354 857 3001 · info@atv4x4.is

18:00 Check In

Tonight's hotel near Keflavík Airport.

19:30 Blue Lagoon

19:30–22:00. Later entry means a quieter lagoon. Silica mud mask, geothermal pools, swim-up bar, steam room.

8

REYKJADALUR

A River That Gets Warmer As You Climb

One last hike before the flight home: a steaming valley that ends in a naturally heated river, warmest the further upstream you walk.



PHOTO: REJECT AVERAGE
REYKJADALUR HOT SPRING THERMAL RIVER

Morning

Depart For Reykjadalur

Back out toward Hveragerði.

Hike

Reykjadalur Thermal River

A scenic hike through steaming geothermal valleys to a naturally heated river. 45–60 minutes each way, moderate difficulty. Basic changing facilities near the river. Wear a swimsuit under your clothes, or bring a dry bag with a towel and change of clothes. Comfortable hiking shoes matter — the trail is uneven and muddy. Bring water and a light snack. Allow 3–4 hours.

Evening

Return To Tonight's Hotel

Back near the airport for the final night.

9

RETURN · KEFLAVÍK

Departure Day

Safe travels home. Hotel checkout by 11:00 — check your individual flight time and plan your airport arrival accordingly.

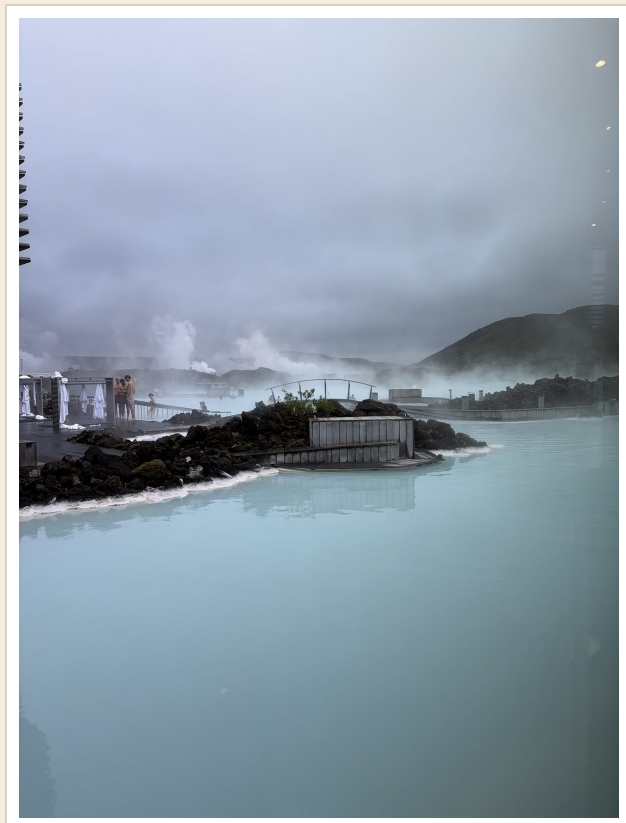


PHOTO: REJECT AVERAGE
BLUE LAGOON, EVENING

By 11:00

Hotel Checkout

Check your individual flight time and plan airport arrival accordingly.

Depart Keflavík

Nine days, four waterfalls, one glacier, and a canyon nobody forgets. You'll already be planning the return before you land.

SOUTH ICELAND & THE GOLDEN CIRCLE

Gallery



PHOTOS: BRANT PINVIDIC / REJECT AVERAGE

SOUTH ICELAND

Ready To Go?

Book Silfra, Friðheimar, and the glacier zipline the moment your flights are set — July fills up fast. Everything else in this guide is tested, sequenced, and ready for you to follow. Tell them Brant sent you.

PLAN WITH BRANT

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