



# Natural Wonders and Northern Lights



**HOLIDAY TYPE:** Small Group  
**VISITING:** Iceland

**BROCHURE CODE:** 29003  
**DURATION:** 4 nights

## In Brief

Experience why Iceland is known as the 'land of fire and ice' during this 4-night discovery of the country's incredible natural wonders. You'll also have exceptional Northern Lights viewing opportunities, experience a visit to the famous 'Golden Circle' and spend time in Reykjavik.

## Our Opinion

*“ Iceland is one of those places in the world where you still feel like nature is in complete control. The landscape here is really unlike anything else with its pitch black lava fields, volcanoes, geysers, lagoons and more, all calling out to be explored. I love this trip as it gives you the perfect insight into the natural spectacles of the island and the wonderful landscape that is everywhere. The high chance of seeing the Aurora is simply the icing on the cake. ”*

Amy Hope



## What's included?

**ALL OF THE ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES LISTED BELOW ARE INCLUDED IN THE HOLIDAY PRICE**

- **Transfers:** return group airport transfers
- **Accommodation:** 2 nights accommodation in Hotel Exeter in a standard twin/double room and 2 nights Hotel Ranga in a standard twin/double room (upgrades available)
- **Meals:** 4 breakfasts, 1 dinner
- **The following activities and equipment are included in the price:** Northern Lights hunt, super jeep excursion to Gullfoss and Great Geysir, 'fire and ice' guided tour of the south shore **(the order of activities is subject to change)**
- Services of our expert local guides
- **A note on flights:** flights are not included in the holiday price so that the best possible fares and schedule can be found at the time of booking. There are low cost and scheduled flights operating this route and our travel experts will happily provide a quotation and arrange the flights as part of the package

## Trip Overview

Iceland is known as the 'Land of Fire and Ice' for good reason. Volcanoes, glaciers, geysers and hot springs practically litter the south of the island and make it one of the most spectacular places in the world to witness the wonders of Mother Nature.

Iceland also boasts an enviable location within the Aurora Zone and with a dedicated super jeep tour and two nights at the famed Northern Lights hotspot, Hotel Ranga, your chances of seeing the Northern Lights are very high.

Your base for the first two nights is the stylish Hotel Exeter which is situated in the heart of Reykjavik. This is the ideal place from which to explore the vibrant city with galleries, cafés and shops on your doorstep and a range of additional activities which can be included (please see our '[Personalise](#)' section for more information). For the final two nights, you will be at the world-famous Hotel Ranga, a lovely countryside base renowned for its incredible food, hot tubs and Aurora viewing.

The activities on this trip have been designed to highlight the natural wonders of the island. On days three and four the group will have the services of a driver-guide who will show you as many of Iceland's natural wonders as possible. You will be able to marvel at the waterfalls of Gullfoss and Skogafoss, the erupting hot springs at Great Geysir, Thingvellir National Park, the Silfra Fissure, the infamous Eyjafjallajokull Volcano and the Myrdalsjokull Glacier to name just some of the highlights.

You will enjoy an Aurora super jeep tour from Reykjavik, which will take you far beyond the confines of the city and the sodium glare of its lights and into the darkness of the surrounding countryside. Your Aurora guide will determine your destination based on the weather and Aurora forecasts and hopefully, with the mobility of your vehicle, you'll be able to track down a spectacular display.

We love Iceland because it is unlike any other location that we offer. Here at The Aurora Zone, we understand that seeing the Northern Lights is usually everyone's top priority, but on this trip, there are so many other natural phenomena to witness, from volcanoes and glaciers to waterfalls and geysers, that you are sure to return home in awe of the sights that you have seen regardless of whether you catch a display of the Northern Lights.

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## Agenda

Please note the order of activities is subject to change

DAY  
1

FLIGHTS, ARRIVAL AND INTRODUCTION

Upon arrival at Keflavik Airport, you will be welcomed before being transferred to your accommodation at Hotel Exeter in downtown Reykjavik. This will be your first introduction to the unique landscape of Iceland with its endless lava fields, glaciers and dramatic volcanic backdrop.

You will be provided with an information pack and a timetable detailing the next few days of your programme and then the rest of the afternoon and evening are free for you to begin exploring vibrant Reykjavik. If you are arriving on an afternoon flight, there will be a welcome meeting at approximately 7 pm at the hotel.

Just a short walk from the hotel you will be at the exciting heart of the city and there is an array of attractions to tempt visitors here. Nearby the hotel is the National Theatre, the National Gallery of Iceland, the Icelandic Opera and the two main shopping streets of Reykjavik.

Dinner is not included tonight but there is a wide and varied choice of options available in the city. Alternatively, the hotel is attached to a street food restaurant, Lekock & Tail, which is open daily

**Included Meals:** None

DAY  
2

## FREE DAY IN REYKJAVIK AND NORTHERN LIGHTS HUNT

After breakfast in the hotel, your day is your own. You can explore the city at your own pace and take in the cafés, shops and cultural attractions. If you want to up the pace a little we can help arrange a variety of activities – a visit to the world-famous Blue Lagoon, glacier hike and even snorkelling between tectonic plates are all possible from here – see the '[Personalise](#)' section for details.

It would be easy to spend a huge amount of time in Reykjavik but tonight you will be setting off into the rugged countryside. Any Aurora hunter appreciates the need to be far away from light pollution to seek out a perspective display.

Your dedicated Aurora guide will be aware of the local weather forecasts and any recent solar activity and will be able to take you into an area where the chances of a display are high. There may be numerous vehicles out on any given night and the guides all communicate with each other to ensure that if there is an Aurora sighting then everyone can congregate in the same area. Generally, these tours are operated in super jeeps.

During your evening adventure, you will break at a restaurant for dinner, with one of its bestselling dishes (usually lamb or fish) as your set main. If Northern Lights luck isn't on your side then do not despair, tomorrow you are off to Hotel Ranga. This hotel is one of the most famous Aurora destinations in Europe.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

DAY  
3

## GULLFOSS, GEYSIR AND RANGA

After breakfast at the Hotel Exeter, it is time to bid farewell to the city and explore the island further.

You will check out of your hotel this morning and be picked up by your private driver/guide who will accompany you for the next two days. Your transport is in super jeeps, large off-road vehicles that allow you to get into the 'harder-to-reach' areas that elude the more typical coach trips.

Today's itinerary includes visits to three of the most renowned natural wonders in Iceland (together they form the famous Golden Circle) and throughout the day you will really begin to appreciate the incredible natural beauty of Iceland. It is really unlike any other place in the world.

Your first point of call is the Thingvellir National Park and the Silfra Fissure where you will see one of only two rift valleys in the world. The Icelandic rift valley has been formed by the pulling apart of the European and American tectonic plates. It was also the location for the Viking parliament and assemblies were held here until the early 20th Century making it a location of huge political and social significance.

Your journey continues to Geysir where you will find the erupting hot springs. The biggest geyser is Strokkur, which spouts boiling water metres into the air every few minutes. The natural power on display here is a remarkable sight to see.

From Geysir, your final point of call is Gullfoss waterfall where the torrents of the Hvita River plummet into a canyon 32 metres high. In the winter months, sections of the waterfall freeze and the effect is quite dramatic as large sections of ice blanket the powerful river water.

After your introduction to Iceland's rugged and dramatic countryside, your journey will continue on to Hotel Ranga, where you will be staying for the next two nights. This hotel has an exceptional Northern Lights record which makes it one of the most popular hotels in Iceland.

Ranga's reputation is based on its remote and wild location. The rooms either have views of Mt Hekla volcano or the East Ranga River. This location is ideal for Aurora hunting as the distance from any artificial light pollution creates a pitch black sky - the perfect backdrop for any displays of the Northern Lights. They take the Aurora very seriously here at Hotel Ranga – the staff are obligated to check outside every 15 minutes to see if any sign of a display is showing if so they will contact you in the rooms (if you have signed up for this service at reception). In the hours of darkness, they also turn off all outside lighting (including the lights in the car park) to give you the best possible chance of seeing the Aurora.

This evening you will enjoy dinner in the excellent restaurant, tucking into a delicious meal (payable locally). Afterwards, you may like to relax in one of the outdoor hot tubs.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY  
4

FIRE AND ICE

After breakfast at Ranga, your guide will return to show you more of this incredible land.

You will start by exploring the South Shore which is famous for the spectacular waterfalls of Seljalandsfoss and Skogafoss. At Skogafoss, you can get behind the water chute to enjoy a unique viewpoint.

During your day, you will come across one of the most infamous European volcanoes – Eyjafjallajökull, responsible for a great deal of travel disorder in 2010. Hekla, one of the most active volcanoes is also close by and your guide will take you to the best viewpoints.

You will travel close to the Myrdalsjokull Glacier where you will be able to get a real appreciation of the gigantic scale of these powerful forces of nature.

Once again, you can enjoy a delicious dinner at the hotel (payable locally). Please remember to take a warm coat with you to dinner as the Aurora tend to ignore the sanctity of meal times and you may need to abandon the restaurant and head outside at short notice.

There is also a small observatory for guests at Hotel Ranga to enjoy – this is a small structure which is sheltered from the elements and has a telescope to do some star-gazing if the Northern Lights are not active.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast

DAY  
5

DEPARTURE

After breakfast at the hotel, your guide will drive you back to the airport for your return flights.

If you would like to spend more time in Iceland, then the '[Personalise](#)' section of this page for details of the options available.

**Included Meals:** Breakfast

## Personalise this tour

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### Our pick



### Day 2 option – visit to the Blue Lagoon

This is one of Iceland's most famous natural attractions which draws huge numbers of visitors each year. The dusky blue water combined with the wispy steam that hovers above the Blue Lagoon is in stark contrast to the jet-black volcanic rock which surrounds the waters. It's a great place to relax and an incredible wonder to marvel at. This excursion can be booked with or without transfers from Reykjavik and includes entry fee and towel rental.

Please contact our Travel Experts for a quote.

©Blue Lagoon

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### Other options

ACTIVITIES



## Day 2 or 3 Option – Snorkelling between Continents

Iceland's natural wonders go far beyond the Northern Lights and there can be no place that demonstrates this more than the Silfra Fissure in Thingvellir National Park. Here the powers of the land of fire and ice have combined in order to create an unforgettable experience for guests to enjoy.

The Silfra Fissure is effectively a crack in the Earth's crust which is caused by the tectonic plates of Eurasia and America drifting apart. This gap has then been filled with

glacial melt water, filtered through 50 kilometres of volcanic rock, creating some of the purest and clearest water on the planet! Snorkelling here is unbeatable as the visibility can stretch for up to 70 – 80 metres and the water is an almost peacock blue colour.

Your guide will collect you from your hotel in Reykjavik for the hour-long transfer to the National Park. Here you will be kitted out in your dry suit, snorkel and flippers and spend between 30 – 40 minutes enjoying this magical underwater world.

This tour can be added to day 2 or day 3 of your trip.



## Day 2 or 4 Option – Glacier Hike

Although you will get close to glaciers during your holiday there is little that compare to actually getting up close and exploring the ice on foot. The experience allows you to gain a real sense of the scale of these ice walls and also to begin to understand some of the processes that shape them and how they shape the landscape around them.

With a highly experienced guide, you will attach crampons to your shoes and walk across the vast expanse of centuries-old ice. There are few places where glaciers

are so accessible and we can highly recommend the experience.

This tour can be added to day 2 or day 4 of your trip

### TRIP EXTENSIONS



## Extend your stay in Reykjavik

Reykjavik is the most northerly capital in the world and has a huge amount to offer any visitor. There is small town friendliness here but also a sense of a cool urban culture filled with edgy art.

The city has a wide range of architecture and many of the traditional wood-clad buildings have been restored and create a great deal of colour. There is a vibrant café culture and some exceptional dining experiences to be had, no matter what the budget.

Attractions such as art galleries are also worth visiting and the city's long and rich history means there is a variety of museums to enjoy, detailing its Viking past up to its integral use as a base during WWII. The city is also well known internationally for its thriving nightlife.

We can arrange for you to return to Reykjavik following your holiday or spend longer there at the start of your holiday, whichever you prefer. Our team has a great deal of knowledge regarding the central hotels and will be happy to tailor the accommodation to meet your needs. There are modern hotels, quirky boutiques and sleek luxurious options to choose from and most are within easy reach of the harbour and the city centre shops and attractions.

As we have had the pleasure of sampling the food here on many an occasion, we will be more than happy to make recommendations of the gastronomic kind to help suit your requirements.

Of course, if you would also like to include additional activities or Northern Lights hunts we can create a package including these for you.

Simply contact our Travel Experts for a quotation.



## Extend your stay at Hotel Ranga

Two nights at the Hotel Ranga are already included in your trip but, subject to availability, there is the chance to extend your stay and enjoy this accommodation further.

Hotel Ranga enjoys a much-deserved reputation for its welcoming hospitality and delicious food as well as its enviable location, in a remote Icelandic setting, far from any light pollution. The rooms here are very comfortable and extending a stay is a popular choice with those looking to relax and further improve their chances of seeing the Northern Lights.

Your stay is on a bed and breakfast basis but there will be the option to upgrade to the half board option if you wish.

During the day, you can make use of the hotel's hot tubs or lounge area or book local excursions to explore the beautiful South Shore region (including glacier hiking and jeep tours).

In the evening, you will want to keep watch for the Northern Lights and handily Hotel Ranga runs an Aurora alert service and will knock on your door if the Northern Lights make an appearance. Your chances of witnessing a display remain high should conditions be right.

Image credit: Hotel Ranga

## Included Accommodation

### Exeter Hotel (Nights: 1-2)



Exeter Hotel sits in an ideal location, within easy walking distance to a variety of restaurants, cafes and bars, offering a fantastic choice of cuisine and atmosphere. Situated close to the old harbour, there

are several museums and galleries nearby, giving you the chance to soak up the culture of this fascinating city.

It is a modern, comfortable hotel, built with style and relaxation in mind. The on-site bakery is the perfect place to grab some freshly cooked delights, open daily from 7am-4pm. Make use of the hotel's sauna and unwind after exploring Iceland by day.

## Room Type

**Standard double/twin rooms:** these stylish and comfortable rooms are furnished in a modern design. All rooms are en-suite and have a shower, hairdryer, tea/coffee maker, safe, fridge, TV and desk. Free Wi-Fi is available throughout.

### Hotel Ranga (Nights: 3-4)



As a charming four-star hotel, Hotel Ranga is one of Iceland's most sought-after accommodation options, predominantly due to its perfect location. Located away from light pollution, the hotel has an Aurora door knocking service and has earned an enviable reputation for being a remarkable spot to witness a potential display of the Northern Lights.

Not counting its Aurora potential, the hotel is equally renowned for its wonderful food and charming hospitality. In addition to its comfortable rooms, the hotel also has a range of delightfully themed suites that are always popular with guests. The hotel has constructed a roll-off roof observatory which has room for up to 30 people and is equipped with two high-quality 11-inch computerised telescopes perfect for stargazing or Northern Lights viewing.

## Hotel facilities

- Breakfast and evening meals are served in the main restaurant, which offers lovely views over the surrounding countryside. When it comes to food you are in splendid culinary hands. The restaurant uses a 'farmers' market' concept to really capture the flavours of the region. They try to make the most of the local produce by taking advantage of traditional cooking methods and recipes. Main options include fish, lamb, beef, chicken, or a vegetarian dish
- In the hotel, there is also a lounge and bar area which is a great spot for relaxing in the evenings
- The hotel also has three very popular outdoor hot tubs, which are not only perfect for relaxing in but also provide the ideal vantage point should the Northern Lights make an appearance

## Guest bedroom types

### STANDARD DOUBLE/TWIN

The hotel has 24 standard bedrooms. All guest bedrooms are en suite and well equipped with TV, telephone, Wi-Fi, bath, shower, hairdryer and mini bar. There are bathrobes and slippers available for guests, ensuring easy visits to the hot tub. The rooms either have a view of the Hekla Volcano or the River Ranga.

### DELUXE ROOMS

The hotel has 20 deluxe rooms which have the same facilities as the standard rooms but are larger in size. The majority of the deluxe rooms have a king size bed. These are available on request and for a supplement. Please contact our travel experts for a quotation.

### SUITES

Hotel Ranga has four junior suites (decorated with the themes of Asia, Australia, North America and South America) and three master suites which are slightly larger (decorated with the themes of Africa, Antarctica and the Royal Suite). These are all fully equipped with TV, telephone, en-suite bathroom, mini bar, coffee machine and bathrobe and slippers. These are available on request and for a supplement. Please contact our travel experts for a quotation.

**Image credits: Hotel Ranga**

# The Specifics

## Holiday group size (approximate)

Minimum 4 and maximum 18 people (approximately)

## Group Size

We always try to provide an approximation of the group size you can expect to be with for the

duration of each of our holidays. It may be that you are joined by others for parts of your holiday (such as transfers and particular activities) but the above number reflects those you can normally expect to be with from beginning to end. If group size is something which is particularly important to you, please speak to our Travel Experts and they can suggest the best holidays for you.

Tailor-made holiday group sizes will vary for all activities as will the group size for any additional activities you book.

## Minimum numbers required for a holiday to operate

Some of our holidays require a minimum number of participants to operate (as listed in the 'Group Size' section). If your holiday departure has not yet reached the minimum number, you will be told at the time of booking. In the unlikely event that your chosen date is not guaranteed by nine weeks before your scheduled departure date, we will contact you to discuss the available options as per our [booking conditions](#).

## Minimum and maximum age

If a specific minimum age applies to this holiday, it can be found in the Key Facts box on the holiday Overview page.

Unless otherwise stated in the Key Facts box on the holiday Overview page, the minimum age for participation in an Aurora Zone holiday is typically 12 years old (there may be younger children in some destinations who have booked with other companies). If an adult-only environment is important to you, then please contact our Travel Experts and they will advise on the best dates and destinations for you. If you are looking for a holiday designed specifically for families then please see our sister company [www.activitiesabroad.com](http://www.activitiesabroad.com).

## Itinerary amendments

The order of activities listed in this agenda is provided for guidance only, your final and detailed itinerary will be provided either with your final travel documents (which are uploaded into your online account around a week prior to departure) or upon arrival.

## Terms and Conditions

Our full booking terms and conditions can be found on our website: <https://www.theaurorazone.com/booking-conditions>