

Skýringar	Legends
Sundlaug	Swimming pool
Tjaldsvæði	Camping
Upplýsingamiðstöð	Information centre
Eldsneytissala	Fuel station
Heilsugæsla	Health care
Hringvegur	Ring road
Aðalvegur	Main road
Annar vegur	Secondary road
Vegarslóð	Track
Ferja	Ferry
Katla jarðvangur	Katla geopark
Þjóðgarður	National park

**LAUGARVATN**  
**fontana**  
 Geothermal Baths

**HVER**  
 - RESTAURANT -  
 Hotel Örk - Hveragerði

**safetravel.is**  
 The official source for safe adventure in Iceland

**Useful telephone numbers**

- Road Conditions: 1777
- Weather Information: 902-0600
- Emergency Number: 112

**Special driving & traffic information**

**Speed limits**  
 The speed limit in urban areas is normally 50 km per hour. Outside towns, it is 90 km, on paved roads and 80 km on gravel roads.

**Warning**  
 Domestic animals are often close to, or even on, country roads. Drivers who hit animals may be required to pay for the damage.

Travellers intending to explore out-of-the-way areas are encouraged to use the Travellers' Reporting Service ICE-SAR, tel. 570-5900

**MIDGARD ADVENTURE**

Daily tours and unique adventures  
 Join us:  
[www.midgardadventure.is](http://www.midgardadventure.is)

**Riding tours**  
 Stable visits  
[www.iceworld.is](http://www.iceworld.is)  
 +354 899 5619

**Icelandic Horseworld**

**GLACIER JOURNEY**  
 SNOWMOBILE & GLACIER JEEPS  
[www.glacierjourney.is](http://www.glacierjourney.is)

**HOTEL • BISTRO • CAR RENTAL**

**STRACTA HOTEL IN HELLA**  
[stractahotels.is](http://stractahotels.is) • [stractacars.is](http://stractacars.is)

**ICE CAVE TOURS & GLACIER HIKES**

YOU CAN BOOK YOUR ADVENTURE ONLINE  
[www.icecave.is](http://www.icecave.is)

**BOOK NOW!**  
 661-1810  
[ribsafari.is](http://ribsafari.is)

**RIBSAFARI**  
 VESTMANNAEYJAR

**on**  
 ORKA NATTURUNNAR

**JARÐHITA SYNING**

lobster • fish & chips • BBQ ribs • coffee

**hafidblaá.is**  
 +354 483-1000

**Hafid Bláa**  
 restaurant with a view  
 The Blue Sea

Published by Visit South Iceland and the municipalities 2017.  
 Photos: Páll Jökull Pétursson, Þórir Níels Kjartansson, Ásbjörg Árnadóttir, Arcanum, Þorvaldur Árnason, Katla Geopark, Glacierjeeps ehf., Laufey Guðmundsdóttir, Hótel Geysir, Visit Vatnajökull, Sigurda Líjja Guðjónsdóttir and others.

Design and layout: Páll Jökull Pétursson.  
 Map: Hans H. Hansen. Printing: Prentsmiðjan Oddi.

# About South Iceland

The South of Iceland is unique and it is the part of the country visited by far the greatest numbers of foreign travelers. South Iceland has a diverse and spectacular natural environment with great attraction that is easy to access and experience all year round. The great variety and the quality of services enables our guests to enjoy the best of what Iceland has to offer.

This great variety, both in natural attractions and activities inspires our guests to explore the area in three parts where every one of them is well worth the stay; the Southwest region, Katla Geopark and Vestmannaeyjar and Vatnajökull region.

History surrounds us everywhere, both ancient and recent. Other highlights are creative art, culture, flourishing trade and endless possibilities to enjoy outdoor life. But above all, there is the awesome and rugged nature stretching from the mountains and down to the sea.

In all seasons of the year travelers can find something to their liking. In winter, the sun is reflected on the pearly white snow; on long dark winter nights, the northern lights dance around the starlit sky and the moon wanders through the clouds. At such times beauty, peace and quiet reign, unforgettable to those who experience it. Trips across the highlands as well as the lowlands are an indescribable adventure during both summer and winter. All year round is busy in the countryside and the farmers' busiest times for tending the land is in spring and summer, when the luscious green foliage decorates this Atlantic island. In the summertime, life outdoors takes on a new form and visitors can enjoy hiking tours, riding trips, and angling in rivers and lakes. Natural environments become even more spectacular, making the visit to hot springs, lava fields, volcanoes, waterfalls, the highlands, glaciers, rivers and lakes, absolutely unforgettable. All life is reborn when the frosts of winter release their hold and the countryside is at its most beautiful in glorious summer.

Staying in the southern countryside and witnessing the beauty, listening to the wind and the silence, discovering the peace and quiet, and last but not least you may discover yourself.

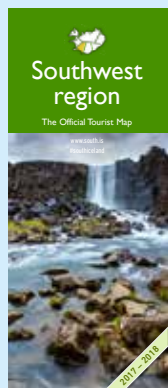
**South Iceland  
Welcome to Spectacular.**

**www.south.is**  
Share your experience  
**www.facebook.is/visitsouthiceland**  
**#southiceland**



**Visit South Iceland**

You can find more information about South Iceland in these regional tourist maps.



# Nature Highlights



## 1 Hveragerði - Geothermal Park

Right inside the town of Hveragerði there is an area of old hot springs and fumaroles, from which the community derives its name (hver = hot spring). The hot springs of Hveragerði are among the most remarkable natural attractions of South Iceland. Visitors to the Geothermal Park can learn about geothermal energy, the old hot springs, the new geysir which is spouting regularly and the geology surrounding the town.



## 2 Arnarcker - Cave

Arnarcker is an interesting cave in the Leitarhraun lava field. A marked path leads from the information sign by the road to the cave, and a ladder has been placed at its opening. Take great care when inspecting the cave.



## 3 Þingvellir - National Park

At Þingvellir the national assembly was established around 930 A.D. and continued to convene there until 1798. Many crucial events in Icelandic history took place at Þingvellir and it is at the heart of Icelandic national identity. No less remarkable is the geology of Þingvellir. Visitors can get an interpretation of the history and nature of Þingvellir and find hiking trails and camping grounds. Þingvellir is Iceland's oldest National Park and now on the UNESCO World Heritage List. It is listed as a national park (since 1928)

because of the special tectonic and volcanic environment. The continental drift can be clearly seen in the cracks and faults which traverse the region, the biggest one, Almannagjá, being a veritable canyon. This also causes the, often measurable, earthquakes in the area.



## 4 Kerið - Crater

A 55 m deep volcanic crater, about 3000 years old. It is part of a group of volcanic hills called Tjarnarhólar and it is now filled with water.



## 5 Þjórsárdalur - Valley

Þjórsárdalur valley was the site of a flourishing Settlement Age community that was later abandoned and then disappeared under ash in 1104, when the volcano Mount Hekla erupted for the first time in Iceland's recorded history.



## 6 Stöng and The Saga-Age Farm

Sites of about 40 buildings have been unearthed in the Þjórsárdalur valley and the best preserved and most remarkable is the farmhouse at Stöng excavated in 1939. Based upon the Stöng farmhouse a replica Saga-Age farmhouse was built in 1974 to mark the 1100th anniversary of the settlement of Iceland. Open to the public all summer.



## 7 Geysir

Geysir has lent its name to the English language in order to christen the phenomenon of the periodically spouting hot springs. You can walk around the Geysir area, a geothermal field where hot springs are in abundance, geysers explode and pools of mud bubble. Strokkur gives a performance every few minutes, shooting a tower of water and steam 30 metres into the air and Blesi with water the colour of turquoise delights the senses.



## 8 Gullfoss - Waterfall

Gullfoss is actually two separate waterfalls, the upper one has a drop of 11 metres and the lower one 21 metres. The rock of the river bed was formed during an interglacial period. For thousands of years the river has followed its course delighting tourists with beauty and power.



## 9 Urriðafoss - Waterfall

Urriðafoss is a voluminous waterfall in Þjórsá river, where the river falls off the margin of Þjórsáhraun lava field (360 m<sup>2</sup>/sec) in beautiful and peaceful surroundings. Þjórsáhraun lava field was the greatest lava flow on earth since the Ice Age. The waterfall is located right off highway number one.



## 10 Hekla - Volcano

One of the most famous volcanoes in the world, Hekla is believed to have erupted at least twenty times since the settlement of Iceland, and five times in the 20th century. The latest eruption was in February 2000.



## 11 Landmannalaugar - Volcano region

Landmannalaugar is a region near the volcano Hekla in the southern section of Iceland's highlands. The area displays a number of unusual geological elements, like the multi-coloured rhyolite mountains and expansive lava fields. The mountains in the surrounding area display a wide spectrum of colours.



## 12 Merkjáfoss/Gluggafoss - Waterfall

The Merkjá River has several beautiful water-falls, but the most outstanding is Gluggafoss or Window Falls (also known as Merkjáfoss). The upper half of the cliff is palagonite or tuff rock and the lower ledge is basalt. The river has formed tunnels and grooves through the soft rock and a series of 'windows' in the tunnels, thereby earning the name 'Gluggafoss'.



## 13 Seljalandsfoss - Waterfall

Seljalandsfoss is just over 60 metres high in a lovely location, surrounded by cliffs and green slopes. A footpath leads behind the waterfall.



## 14 Þórsmörk - Valley

Þórsmörk is a beautiful woodland nature reserve surrounded by rugged and majestic mountains, glaciers and glacial rivers. Þórsmörk can be reached all year round on 4x4 vehicles and by scheduled busses during the summer. Two unique hiking paths lead to Þórsmörk; Laugavegur, which starts from Landmannalaugar and Fimmvörðuháls from Skógar.



## 15 Skógafoss - Waterfall

One of Iceland's most splendid waterfalls, Skógafoss tumbles 60 metres from the cliffs by Skógar. Before cascading off the cliffs as Skógafoss, the river flows through the Skógargil gorge, which boasts more than twenty more waterfalls, each with its own charm.



## 16 Mýrdalsjökull - Glacier

Mýrdalsjökull's peak reaches 1493 metres above sea level and Katla Volcano inside the glacier erupts on average every 40-60 years. Sixteen eruptions have been recorded since the settlement of Iceland over 1100 years ago, the latest one in 1918.



## 17 Sólheimajökull - Glacier

Sólheimajökull glacier flows south of Mýrdalsjökull glacier in a U-shaped valley. It is about 8 km long and 1-2 km wide. The glacier advanced about 900 metres during the last few centuries, but retreated greatly from 1930 to 1964.



## 18 Dyrhólaey - Headland

Sheer headland rising 120 metres out of the sea with a huge natural arch near Vík í Mýrdal. Reynisdrangar sea stacks and Mýrdalssandur sands are also magnificent sights. An amazing area of strength and beauty.



## 19 Hjörleifshöfði - Headland

Hjörleifshöfði is a 221 metre high headland made of tuff. For a long time after the last ice age it was an island but by the time of the settlement it was an isthmus on the side of a fjord. Now it lies more than two kilometers from the sea.



## 20 Fjaðrárgljúfur - Canyon

Fjaðrárgljúfur is a magnificent and massive canyon, about 100 metres deep and about two kilometres long. The canyon has sheer walls, and is somewhat serpentine and narrow. The river Fjaðrá has its source in the mountain Geirlandshraun and falls off the head edge in this stunning canyon until it makes it down into Skaftá river.



## 21 Eldhraun - Moss covered lava field

In 1783 a huge lava flow streamed from Lakagígur in what became known as the 'Skaftá Fires'. This is believed to have been one of the greatest lava flows in a single eruption in the history of the world. It's cubic measure is approximately 16km<sup>3</sup> and the square measure around 580km<sup>2</sup>. All around thick woolly fringemoss (Racomitrium lanuginosum) forms a continuous layer which gives off a grey color when dry, but a beautiful green after rain. The moss is very sensitive for tramping so please stay on trails. It has taken the moss 200 years to grow and one step will make a scar into the layer which can take a decade to grow back.



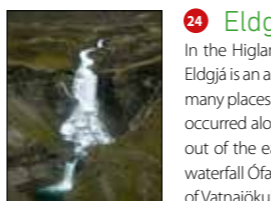
## 22 Vatnajökull National Park

The national park includes the ice cap and its surroundings, with a total area of 13,952 km<sup>2</sup>, or 14% of Iceland. Few places in the world exhibit such a wide range of natural phenomena. The battle between ice and fire still rages within the park boundaries. Vatnajökull is the world's most voluminous glacier outside of the arctic regions. The glacier seems so close to the people of Southeast Iceland that they sometimes refer to the ice as if it were part of their backyard. Each of the icefalls and glacier tongues flowing towards the lowlands possesses an individual character and offers a variety of scenes.



## 23 Lakagígur - Craters

Lakagígur (Laki Craters) lie in a row, 25 km in length, in the Highlands above Kirkjubæjarklaustur. The craters were formed in the eruption 'Skaftá Fires' in 1783 and stretch from the southwest to the northeast through Mt. Laki (818 m above sea level), ending at Vatnajökull. Mt. Laki commands splendid views of the craters and the surrounding landscape. The area is only accessible by 4x4 vehicles as there are unbridged rivers to cross. The Lakagígur and its surroundings is a part of Vatnajökull National and are extremely sensitive to intrusion and are travelers therefore encouraged to seek information before entering the area.



## 24 Eldgjá - Eruptive fissure

In the Higland by road F208 the eruptive fissure Eldgjá is to be found. Eldgjá is an approximately 40 km long eruptive fissure, 600 metres wide in many places and up to 200 metres deep. From 934 to 940 AD an eruption occurred along the whole fissure and poured magma estimated 18 km<sup>3</sup> out of the earth. Today Eldgjá is a peaceful place with the magnificent waterfall Ófærufoss located in the middle of the fissure. The area is a part of Vatnajökull National Park.



## 25 Langisjór - Lake

Langisjór is a lake which is 20 km long and 2 km wide in some places. The lake is to the southwest of Vatnajökull, between the mountains Tungnárfjöll and Fögrufjöll, in a beautiful and picturesque landscape. Its is 27 km<sup>2</sup> in diameter, it reaches a depth of 75 m and the water surface is 670 m above sea level. The view of mountains at the lake is magnificent, the lake is among the purest mountain lakes in Iceland.



## 26 Skaftafell and Svartifoss - waterfall

Óræfi is Iceland's most isolated district before the bridges to the west of it were completed in the early seventies. The natural contrasts are breathtaking: black sands below white glaciers, desolate wastes and green vegetation. Such a green oasis welcomes you at Skaftafell, just beside the broad desert of the Skeiðarársandur sands and the raging Skeiðará river. These contrasts and many more remind the visitor of nature's changeability.



## 27 Öræfajökull - Glacier

Extending south from the Vatnajökull ice cap and towering to 2110 m, Öræfajökull is Iceland's highest mountain. Its height actually depends on the season and the depth of snow, since the peak itself, Hvannadalshnjúkur, is topped with ice which is thickest in spring and thinnest in autumn. Skaftafell and Öræfajökull are a part of Vatnajökull National Park.



## 28 Ingólfshöfði - Headland

At the edge of the Atlantic Ocean, Ingólfshöfði is a headland which is isolated by black sands and perilous rivers from the rest of the mainland. However, it is home to thousands of nesting seabirds and gulls, especially puffins and the great skua. This historical cape is named after the first settler of Iceland, Ingólfur Arnarson, who spent his first winter there with his family after moving to Iceland, 874-875 AD.



## 29 Jökulsárlón - Glacial lagoon

The size of the main lagoon, called Jökulsárlón, is about 20 square kilometres. In 1932 the same area was still covered by ice. Many species of fish are found there, as well as seals, which can number into the hundreds during winter.



## 30 Haukafell - Recreation area

In 1985 the local Forestry Society started planting saplings at Haukafell. Not only are the trees now becoming established, but there are bountiful berries to be picked every August. This pleasant outdoor spot also has a good campsite and washing facilities.



## 31 Heinaberg - Mountain

The Heinaberg area is part of the national park, and offers interesting sets of basalt columns in addition to the glacier tongue Heinabergsjökull and the lagoon. The valley Heinabergsdalur, 7 km long, reaches to Vatnsdalur valley, which ice used to dam off and keep full of water. Nowadays, the view down into the valley is magnificent, since massive icebergs are often left stranded along its floor.



## 32 Lónsöræfi/Stafafellsfjöll - Wilderness

The Stafafellsfjöll mountains, today also called Lónsöræfi, dominate the skyline east of Vatnajökull glacier and have long included one of Iceland's most extensive protected areas. Besides the deep, rugged canyons, the landscape displays a wide range of colours due to rhyolite and other attractive rocks. In contrast, there are lushly vegetated, sheltered valleys, and a good chance of spotting reindeer. The area has many hiking trails, but keep in mind that getting there can be very difficult and one should always seek advice from a visitor- or information centre before attempting to go there.



# South Iceland

The Official Tourist Map

www.south.is  
#southiceland



Visit South Iceland

2017 - 2018