

DUE NORTH

ICELAND



ARE YOU DUE NORTH?

MORE DETAILS



North Iceland is an all-year-round destination filled with energy, magic, and tranquillity. Local travel agencies and tour operators provide quality service, and vast accommodation options are available. Friendly locals make visitors feel welcome. The name of the capital of North Iceland is Akureyri.

Explore geothermal areas, impressive waterfalls, canyons, and glacial rivers. Make sure you experience popular activities such as whale watching and bathing in various geothermal pools. In vibrant towns, you can taste local food in different restaurants and cafés after a day well spent out in pure and vast nature.

Enjoy the midnight sun in summer, and in winter, you have a 90% chance of seeing the northern lights during a five-night stay.

North Iceland is the leading winter destination for Icelanders. Try skiing from mountaintops down to the Atlantic Ocean, in designated ski areas, or by heliskiing. Hike on snowshoes to discover frozen waterfalls and visit exotic locations dogsledding, on snowmobiles, or in super jeeps.

Discover two magnificent tourist routes in North Iceland. On the Arctic Coast Way, travel between fishing towns and villages, going off the beaten path to discover some of the remotest areas in North Iceland, close to the Arctic Circle. On the Diamond Circle, you will be astounded by some of the rarest and most stunning sights and views of unearthly landscapes.



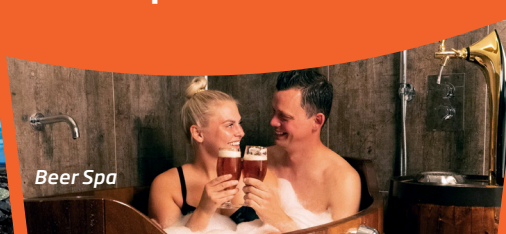
**Akureyri International Airport
is close to the capital of North Iceland.**



2



Arctic Henge



Beer Spa



Dimmuborgir



Hofsós

MORE DETAILS



ARCTIC COAST WAY

Traveling the Arctic Coast Way means leaving the common routes behind and going off the beaten track to discover some of the remotest places in Iceland, a unique adventure following 900 km of coastal roads close to the Arctic Circle.

Here, where volcanic land meets icy ocean, nature's force has carved a coastline of wild and pure beauty. The route includes six peninsulas reaching far out into the sea, taking you from

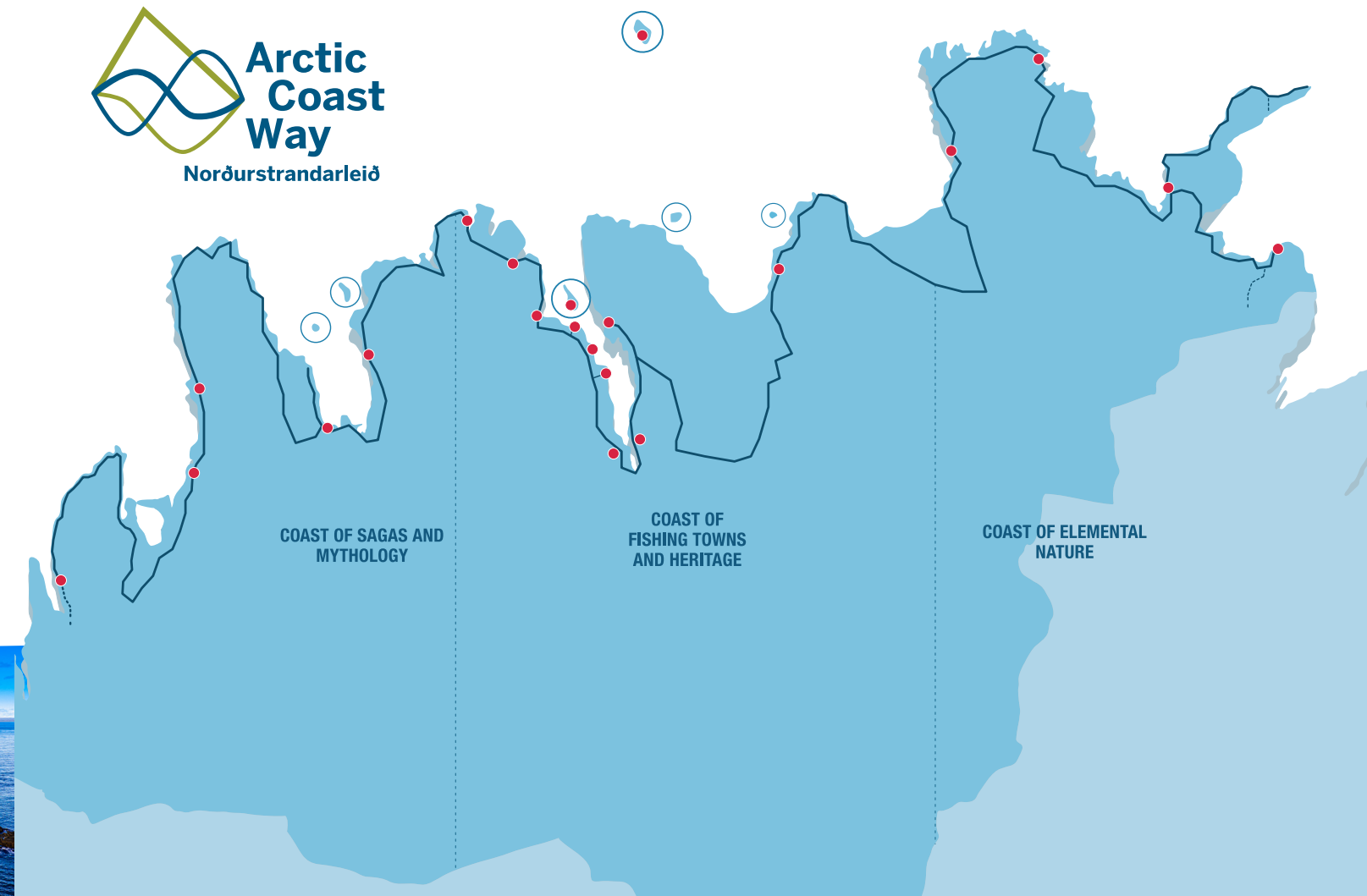
black sandy beaches to spectacular cliffs, along glacial river deltas and fjords to high mountains. Going one step further into remoteness by visiting some of the six beautiful islands off the north coast offers unforgettable experiences, and you might even want to straddle the Arctic Circle on Grímsey island. Each of the 21 little villages along the way tells unique stories about life on the edge of the Arctic.

Hero experiences on the Arctic Coast Way offer something authentic, rare and unique.

Kálfsfhamarsvík

Grímsey

Digranesvíti



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DIAMOND CIRCLE

The Diamond Circle is a magnificent circuit of 250km in North Iceland, including some of the most stunning sights and spots of mystical landscapes. The Diamond Circle has five key destinations, which include the historical and picturesque Goðafoss waterfall; the breathtaking blue and green landscapes of the Lake Mývatn nature paradise; the uncontrollable white energy of Dettifoss, Europe's most powerful waterfall; the crescent-shaped wonder of Ásbyrgi canyon; and Húsavík the buzzing whale capital of Iceland with deep blue seas ahead.

The Diamond Circle offers much more. Discover the stunning valley of Vesturdalur with the bizarre rock formations of Hljóðaklettur, the otherworldly volcanic fields of Krafla, the geothermal area of Hverir, the black lava formations at Dimmuborgir or the beautiful Tjörnes peninsula with its hidden trove of fossils and bird nests.



MAP OF DIAMOND CIRCLE NORTH ICELAND



The Diamond Circle gives an opportunity for an epic and unforgettable adventure that is waiting for you.



Húsavík



Skútustaðagígar



Hljóðaklettur





Hvítserkur



Ásbyrgi



Námaskarð

[MORE DETAILS](#)



NATURE HIGHLIGHTS

The vast and magnificent nature of North Iceland leaves no one untouched. Here you will find beautiful gorges such as Kolugljúfur and Jökulsárgljúfur with otherworldly rock formations. Multiple sea stacks are ranged along the coastline, for example, Hvítserkur on Vatnsnes peninsula and Stóri Karl on Langanes peninsula.

Volcanic landscapes near Lake Mývatn, brimming with geothermal energy, bring home to every visitor the earth's subterranean forces. The lake is the 4th largest in Iceland, and its surroundings are engulfed in lava formations and boiling mud pools that never cease to amaze.

Big and small craters created by explosions during volcanic eruptions will undoubtedly make an impression.

Fjords and peninsulas with steep mountains, formed by melting glaciers and glacial floods thousands of years ago, also remind visitors of the sheer forces of nature. Mountaineers can find thrilling hiking trails to suit them, while others may discover more accessible routes to enjoy the fantastic landscape. Adventure seekers can go into the highlands to experience the pure wilderness of North Iceland, and it is a tremendous experience to traverse this rough terrain on super jeep tours.

The nature in North Iceland has been shaped by glaciers, glacial floods, and volcanic activity throughout the centuries.

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WATERFALLS

The waterfalls in North Iceland are historic, extraordinary, picturesque, and powerful.

Dettifoss is the most powerful waterfall in Europe, with 500 cubic meters of water plunging over the edge per second. The waterfall can be viewed up close, with a good paved road and a viewing platform on the west side of Jökulsárgljúfur canyon in Vatnajökull national park.

Goðafoss is part of the Diamond Circle, next to the ring-road around Iceland. This waterfall played a crucial role in the history of Christianity in Iceland.

The name derives from the Icelandic word, “goð”, which translates to gods. Close to Goðafoss is **Aldeyjarfoss**, surrounded by basalt columns, ideal for photography.

You will also find **Kolufoss** in **Kolugljúfur** canyon close to the ring-road, not far from Hvammstangi town. This waterfall flows into a fantastic canyon, where legend has it that a giantess named Kola resided, sustaining herself by catching fish from the river.

Dettifoss

Kolugljúfur

Goðafoss

Dettifoss is the most powerful waterfall in Europe.



Arctic Open in Akureyri



Orbis et Globus in Grímsey



Hraunhafnartangi

MORE DETAILS



MIDNIGHT SUN

During summer, in June and July, when we have endless days, you can see the sun go down and then rise again in a matter of minutes. It is a genuine Arctic experience to witness this, especially recommended along the Arctic Coast Way, where visitors can see the sun setting on the horizon over the sea.

Bright nights last from the first week of May until mid August. In contrast, the days get shorter during winter. The shortest day is between 20-23rd of December, with a little over 3 hours of daylight.

**Summer solstice occurs on June 21st.
On this day, there are 24 hours
of daylight in North Iceland.**



MORE DETAILS



NORTHERN LIGHTS

The Northern Lights – also called Aurora Borealis – are among the most spectacular shows on earth, frequently seen in North Iceland and its surroundings on clear and crisp nights. The Northern Lights can be seen in North Iceland from late August to mid-April. Enjoy the clear skies by simply looking upwards towards those colorful dancing and flickering veils of light.

Or go on a guided Northern Lights tour, taking you to excellent locations for observation and photography. These tours often include visiting geothermal bathing areas, evening boat tours, snowcat tours, or sightseeing in unique places.

The chances of seeing the Northern Lights are 90% during a five-night stay in North Iceland.

Hvítserkur

Skútustaðakirkja

Sigluffjörður



Troll Peninsula

MORE DETAILS



WINTER MAGIC

North Iceland is the number one winter destination in the country. Seven flood-lit ski areas offer slopes and lifts for every level of skiers, open from late November to early May, plus excellent cross-country trails. The Troll Peninsula is world-renowned for its incredible slopes from mountain tops down to the shore of the Arctic Ocean. The backcountry ski season extends well into June, so it is possible to ski in the springtime while the midnight sun slowly sinks to the horizon.

Adventure seekers can go on Super jeep or snowmobile tours, traveling through landscapes that change dramatically during winter.

The Super jeep tours offer trips to areas that, during winter, are hard to reach in regular cars. The snowmobile tours provide the same experience but to different locations where their nimble agility is a valuable feature.

Dogsled tours are available from late October until late May, offering a unique experience. The amazing huskies will take their masters and their guests on a thrilling ride through terrain that would be hard to traverse by other means. Last but not least, hiking in the snow is, of course, available - wearing snowshoes.

In North Iceland you'll find the longest ski slope in the country, with up to 50 groomed slopes available.



Dog Sledding



Snowmobiling



Yule Lads in Dimmuborgir





Hamarsrétt Sheep Roundup



Grímsey Island



Ski Iceland



Yule Lads

MORE DETAILS



GEOHERMAL BATHING

Icelanders love visiting outdoor swimming pools, and at least one is found in every village. Soaking in an outdoor hot pool after a day spent skiing or hiking is a magical experience.

The **Mývatn Nature Baths** are surrounded by volcanic nature and the lava fields of the Mývatn district.

In Húsavík, you can unwind in hot seawater at **GeoSea** geothermal sea baths. While the warm sea works its miracles, you can enjoy views of the mountain range to the west and Skjálfandi Bay beneath the cliffs, close to the Arctic Circle.

In the **Beer Spa** in Árskógssandur, visitors bathe in both young beer and live beer yeast. If not showered off until some hours later, it has a potent effect on the body and skin. This treatment cleans the skin and has a highly positive impact on one's health.

The newest addition is the **Forest Baths**, open from spring 2022 near Akureyri town.

It's common for Icelanders to relax in warm geothermal water both in summer and winter, no matter the weather.



GeoSea



Grettislaug



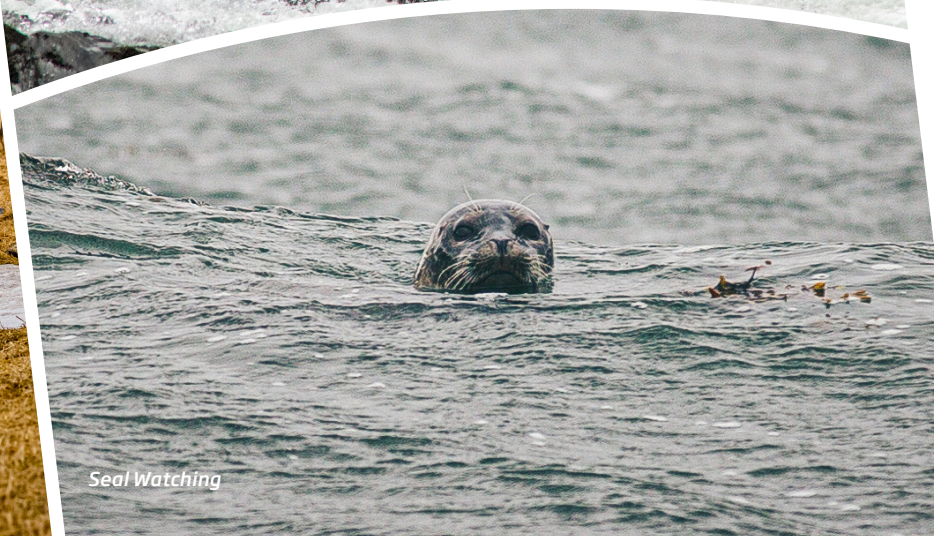
Mývatn Nature Baths



The Icelandic Horse



Whitewater Rafting



Seal Watching

[MORE DETAILS](#)



ACTIVITIES

In North Iceland, you will find a wide range of activities. Whitewater rafting is a unique feature involving two majestic rivers. In the West Glacial river, families can go together on an easy ride. In the East Glacial river, even the most experienced with the paddle will enjoy themselves to the fullest. The river has earned a reputation as one of the most exciting rivers in Europe.

Jetskiing on the Arctic Ocean is an exciting option for those who want to explore the shore from the seaside or enjoy the wildlife differently. Full body suits, helmets, and guides ensure smooth sailing under the Midnight Sun.

An alternative to whale watching is seal watching. Seals can be found all along the Arctic Coast Way, especially around the Vatnsnes peninsula, where you will also find the Icelandic Seal Center in Hvammstangi town.

The Icelandic Horse is a unique breed, with five gaits instead of the usual four. They are on display in companies that offer both shows and short and long riding tours. Ride through the untouched, charming nature of North Iceland both in summer and winter, sometimes along ancient paths, rich in history.

If you are planning a trip with multiple activities, it's recommended to get in contact with a local travel agency that can help out with scheduling.

MORE DETAILS



WHALE WATCHING

Whale watching is one of the most popular activities among visitors in North Iceland, and can be done from Húsavík, Akureyri, Hjalteyri, Hauganes and Dalvík.

The number of species and favorable weather and sea conditions make North Iceland one of the best areas to spot whales. Skjálfandi is a sheltered bay, and Eyjafjörður is the longest fjord in Iceland, offering perfect locations for a boat ride all year long, surrounded by birds and beautiful scenery.

The experience is completed by spotting dolphins and minke, humpback, or even blue whales play beside the particularly appealing oakwood boats used exclusively in North Iceland. A RIB safari tour is ideal for those who choose closer proximity to the whales, and specially designed whale watching boats are also available. Sailing in an electric-powered schooner, looking out for the giant humpback whales is also a unique experience.

Húsavík, where you can see a full size, 24 m long skeleton of a blue whale, is called the whale capital of Iceland.





Stórikarl



Grafarkirkja

THE ICELANDIC PLEDGE

I PLEDGE TO BE A RESPONSIBLE TOURIST.
WHEN I EXPLORE NEW PLACES,
I WILL LEAVE THEM AS I FOUND THEM.
I WILL TAKE PHOTOS TO DIE FOR,
WITHOUT DYING FOR THEM.
I WILL FOLLOW THE ROAD INTO THE UNKNOWN,
BUT NEVER VENTURE OFF THE ROAD.
AND I WILL ONLY PARK WHERE I AM SUPPOSED TO.
WHEN I SLEEP OUT UNDER THE STARS,
I'LL STAY WITHIN A CAMPSITE.
AND WHEN NATURE CALLS,
I WON'T ANSWER THE CALL ON NATURE.
I WILL BE PREPARED FOR ALL WEATHERS,
ALL POSSIBILITIES AND ALL ADVENTURES.

TAKE THE PLEDGE AT
[VISITICELAND.COM](https://www.visiticeland.com)

MORE DETAILS



SUSTAINABILITY AND PLEDGE

Sustainable tourism might be a challenge, but it is also an opportunity. Tourism in North Iceland takes this responsibility seriously through the development of specific projects such as the Arctic Coast Way or Birding Iceland. By developing sights and attractions in remoter areas, the economically weaker communities benefit from tourism as a new source of local income. This opens up new perspectives and encourages local people to find a livelihood in their home regions.

Iceland is rich in natural resources such as clean air and pure water, and the tourism companies strongly emphasize treating nature with the utmost respect. The priority is always to keep interventions in nature as low as possible.

An ever-larger number of local tourism companies are investing in sound environmental practices such as CO2-neutral transport, recycling, conservation, and cooperation with ecological research. Whale watching companies follow a code of conduct for responsible whale watching, and visitors who want to watch seals are encouraged to follow the seal-watching code of conduct.

“The Icelandic Pledge” invites travelers to take an oath, to be a responsible tourist when visiting the country and agreeing to respect Iceland’s nature.

Please travel safely and respect nature
wherever you go!



MORE DETAILS



TASTE NORTH ICELAND

Local products of North Iceland reflect their natural origin, the climate, the soil, the water, and the environment in which they grow. They stand for purity and freshness, demonstrate the diversity of producers, and tell others about the local food culture, heritage, and methods developed over centuries.

Whether in a fantastic contemporary restaurant or farm accommodation in the countryside, you will consume freshly landed fish within hours of its catch and the meat of lambs that spent long summer days free-roaming in a natural environment. There will be arctic moss, herbs, berries,

and mushrooms foraged in mountains and valleys as well as auk from the seacliffs at the Arctic's edge and volcano bread - baked overnight, buried in bubbling black sand heated by a hot spring.

North Iceland has a colorful beer history. The first micro-brewery in Iceland, Kaldi, was opened in 2006 in Árskógsströnd, North Iceland. You can visit several breweries from Skagafjörður to Húsavík, all of which are famed for their excellent beer brewed from pure Icelandic water.

**Many restaurants offer "The catch of the day"
- so you can taste fish as fresh as it gets.**





Glaumbær



Icelandic Herring Era Museum



Hof Cultural Center

[MORE DETAILS](#)



CULTURE AND HERITAGE

North Iceland is crisscrossed by traces and sites of its turbulent history and the Icelandic sagas. Storytelling has been essential in Iceland since the settlement, and there is hardly a waterfall, a mountain, or a lava field that is not linked to sagas, stories, and legends. Multiple museums showcase different aspects of life in Iceland, from Viking sagas to the golden era of herring fishing in the previous century. Visitors can discover how Icelanders lived in turf houses and learn about their crafts and designs, made from wool or other locally sourced materials.

Traditional celebrations have lived on through the centuries. "Porrablót" is a midwinter festival where people feast on traditional food, celebrating the return of the rising sun after

a long dark winter. "Réttir" are gatherings of people, horses and sheep, an essential aspect of life in Iceland, signaling the successful roundup of sheep being returned from their mountain pastures.

Art has a massive presence in the area, and you can choose between visiting the artists in their studios or viewing more prominent art galleries and exhibitions. Akureyri boasts one of Iceland's most vibrant music scenes, attracting local people and visitors into town each weekend.

Major events in the Icelandic sagas took place in North Iceland. You can experience some of them in museums and exhibitions.

MORE DETAILS



COUNTRYSIDE

Iceland was settled around 874, and in the following decades and centuries, many people moved to Iceland. Agriculture has been critical to the islanders' livelihood ever since the settlement. Population patterns formed mainly in the areas where conditions were suitable for cultivation and keeping livestock.

Discover the countryside in North Iceland, taste the local food, and stay at guesthouses that offer a true authentic countryside experience. Get to know the farm animals, our sheep, horses, cows, and the Icelandic Settlement Hen. See how Icelanders lived in turf houses or visit our small but charming forests.

Icelandic Horse

Icelandic Lamb

Icelandic Settlement Hen

The Icelandic horse is unique for having 5 gaits; the most sought after being the smooth "tölt", known for its comfort.



Spákonufell

[MORE DETAILS](#)



HIKING TRAILS

Hiking in North Iceland is the perfect way to immerse oneself in the unspoiled nature, experience the sounds of nature or the opposite; the absolute silence. Guided tours are offered throughout the region, and for some trails, they are recommended.

Discover a variety of hiking trails in North Iceland, where you'll find trails marked by difficulty, distance, access, ascent, estimated time to complete each trail, and the best time to go on the trail.

See a map with hiking trails on our website, with information about each trail.





Siglufjörður



Game of Thrones



Oblivion

MORE DETAILS



FILM IN NORTH ICELAND

In recent years Iceland has become a popular place for major film productions and TV shows, first and foremost due to breathtaking landscapes, black sand beaches, waterfalls, mountains, and lava fields. North Iceland offers all of these while being hailed as a winter paradise and an excellent location for viewing the Northern Lights. These attributes are the main reason why film and TV producers choose North Iceland for their projects.

Examples of such films and TV shows include Oblivion, Prometheus, The Tree of Life, Noah, The Fate of the Furious, Under an Arctic Sky, Game of Thrones, and Trapped.

In Game of Thrones, many of the locations beyond the “Wall” take place in the Lake Mývatn area; Dimmuborgir (dark castles), Grjótagjá (underground caves), and Kálfaströnd with its beautiful lakeside lava formations.

Siglufjörður is the primary location in Trapped, an Icelandic mystery television series that has been distributed and broadcast across the world.

Iceland offers reimbursement of 25% of the costs incurred during the production of films and television programs in Iceland.

MORE DETAILS



BIRDING ICELAND

Birding trails, bird-watching hides, and bird exhibitions are available throughout North Iceland. You can see up to 80 species of birds on three different trails; North East Iceland, North West Iceland, and Eyjafjörður fjord. Each of these has its unique aspects, with places like Lake Mývatn, Drangey, Hrísey, and Grímsey all offering stunning panoramas.

The rich birdlife of North Iceland is distributed over widely varying habitats displaying a diversity seldom surpassed in Iceland. Lake Mývatn is a good example, where the number of duck species is among the country's highest.

Accessible areas abound for spotting species such as Barrow's Goldeneye, Harlequin Duck, Gyrfalcon, Rock Ptarmigan, The Great North-ern Gannet, and The Guillemot. Wetlands are famed for teeming birdlife, offering an essential habitat for numerous Icelandic breeding species; several of the most renowned areas are in North Iceland.

**360 bird species have been recorded in North Iceland,
and about 85 species nest here.**

Gyrfalcon



Puffins

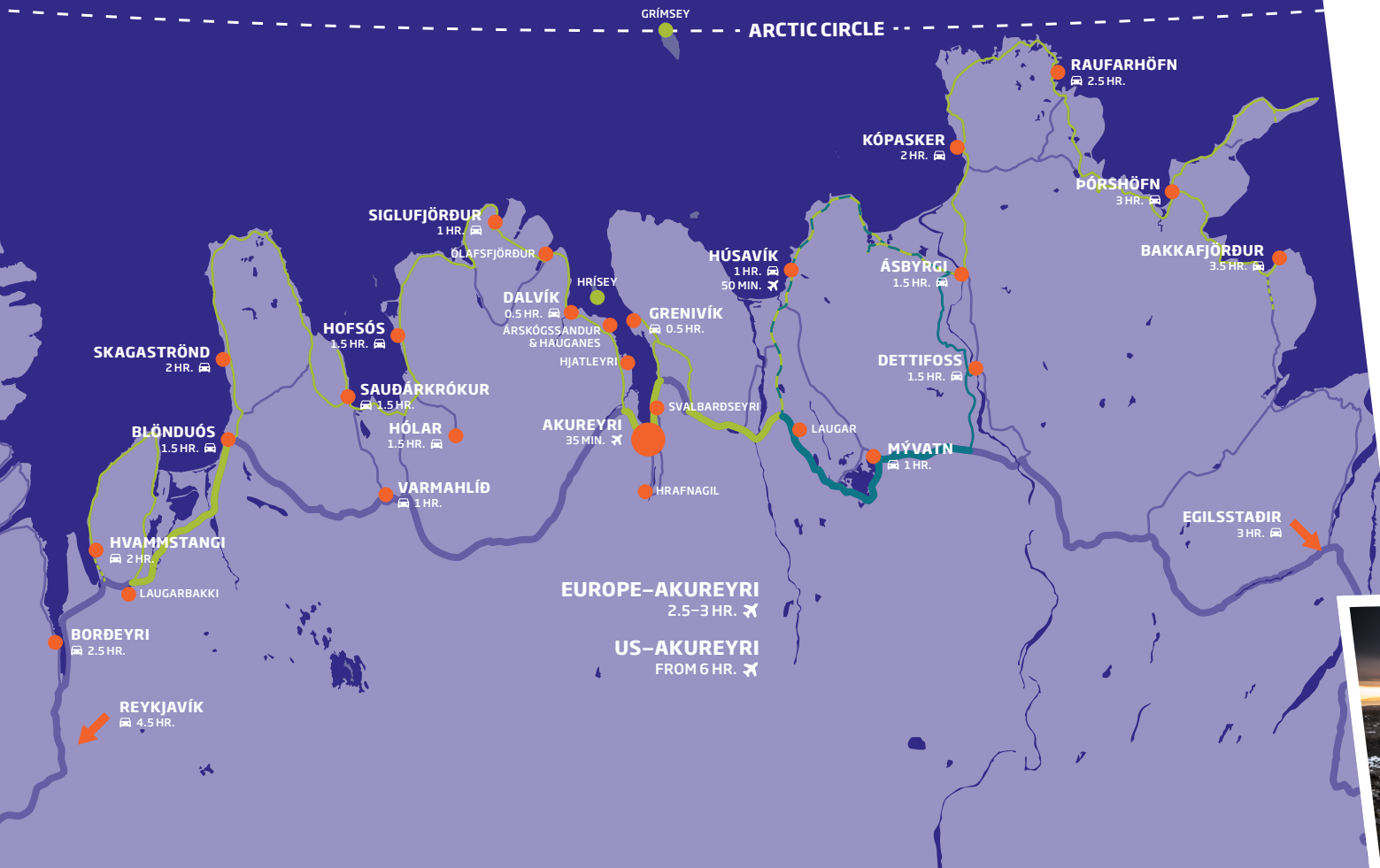


Harlequin Duck



FROM AKUREYRI BY CAR 🚗
TO REYKJAVÍK BY AIRPLANE ✈️

ARCTIC COAST WAY 🟡
DIAMOND CIRCLE 🟢



MORE DETAILS



AKUREYRI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Conveniently located between Europe and the US for international flights to the Arctic North, Akureyri Airport also has several scheduled domestic flights, including to Reykjavík, which is also served from Húsavík airport, Grímsey Island, Þórshöfn and Vopnafjörður. International air traffic through Akureyri Airport includes a series of charter flights from the Netherlands, scheduled and charter flights to Greenland, several single charters to different European destinations, and frequent visits by private jets.

Akureyri International Airport has one runway 2,400 m long and 45 m wide, which can safely accommodate large airplanes. The airport is controlled by highly qualified air traffic controllers (ATC).

The **Icelandic Route Development Fund** supports new routes for Akureyri Airport. In addition, Isavia offers discounts on airport charges. Visit North Iceland, and North Iceland tourism companies also offer their support and cooperation in developing new routes for Akureyri Airport.

The airport is just five minutes from the center of Akureyri.



MORE DETAILS



TRAVEL TRADE

Visit North Iceland is the Destination Management and Marketing Organization responsible for the marketing and promotion of North Iceland. The main projects include working with tourism companies and municipalities to coordinate marketing for the region and encourage innovation in tourism. Also, to cooperate with Visit Iceland and the Icelandic Tourist Board in developing and promoting tourism.

Our Travel Trade website contains a good overview of the ongoing projects and material for marketing, such as videos, images, and trade content. You'll also find information and marketing material for both the Arctic Coast Way and Diamond Circle.

Don't hesitate to get in touch with us at info@northiceland.is

Mannamót Natural Iceland Travel Trade Show
is an annual event where you can meet representatives
from up to 250 tourism companies
from all over Iceland.



Black Sand Beach

Grenivík

Super Jeep

Aldeyjarfoss



NORTH ICELAND SEASONS

