

North Iceland



From Reykjavik, two airlines offer scheduled flights to Akureyri (icelandair.is) and Húsavík (eagleair.is). Flights are available from Akureyri to Grímsey island and Þórshöfn (norlandair.is).

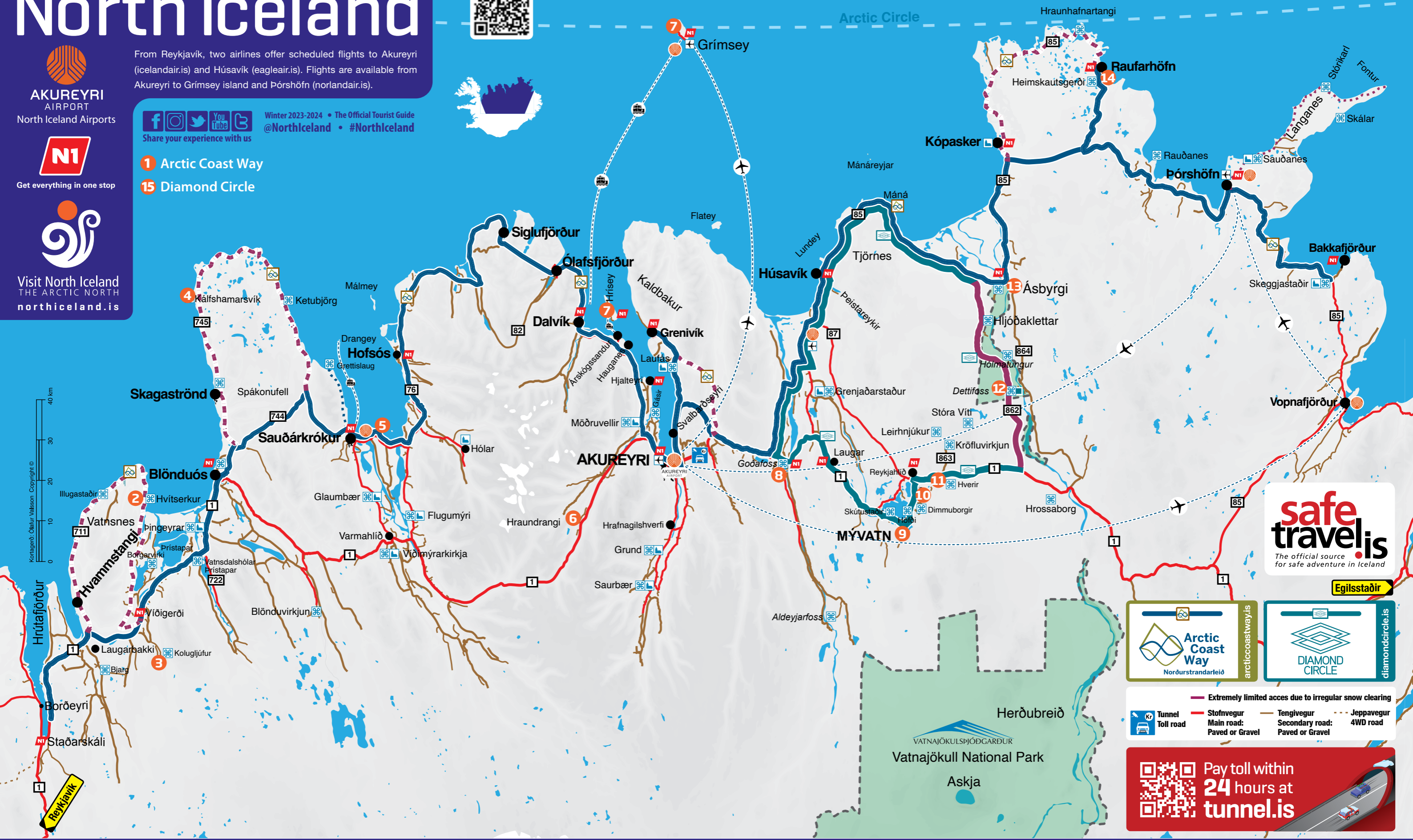
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arcticcoastway.is

DIAMOND CIRCLE
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— Extremely limited access due to irregular snow clearing

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1 Arctic Coast Way

The Arctic Coast Way leaves the much-travelled routes behind and guides visitors off the beaten track to explore the northern edge of Iceland so close to the Arctic Circle. It is not just about driving but welcomes you to a route with stories and experiences around every curve and over every hill. It invites you to slow down and unwind, and is not measured in milestones but in unexpected moments that will make visitors wish to return again and again.



2 Hvítserkur

A 15 m high monolith just offshore on the eastern side of Vatnsnes peninsula. Many bird species live on the rock and leave their mark, which is evident in the whiteness of their droppings. Nearby Hvítserkur, you can find excellent locations to spot seals, relaxing on black sand beaches.



3 Kolugljúfur

In Viðidalur valley, the river Viðidalsá flows by the farm Kolugil down into a magnificent gorge, Kolugljúfur. The powerful waterfalls the gorge creates, Kolfossar, are named after the Troll-woman Kola.



4 Kálfsamarsvík

Kálfsamarsvík is a small cove in the northern part of Skagi peninsula, with unusual, beautifully formed sea cliffs of columnar rock, created about 2 million years ago. At the beginning of the 20th century, fishing boats plied the waters and there was a small community of about 100 inhabitants at Kálfsamarsvík. However, by around 1940 the village had become deserted.



5 Borgarsandur

East of the town Sauðárkrúkur is the beautiful Borgarsandur black sand beach with dunes and marram grass. It is easy to walk from Sauðárkrúkur or park your car at the west end of the beach and take a walk to enjoy the view over Skagafjörður, where Drangey islands is a highlight.



6 Hraundrangi

The mountain Hraundrangi rises to an unusually sharp point, less than half a square metre at the peak. It is a lava spire that remains with the rest of the ridge after much of the original mountain, Háafjall, fell in a large rockslide many centuries ago.



7 Grímsey and Hrísey islands

Grímsey is the northernmost inhabited island of Iceland and lies on the Arctic Circle, while Hrísey is in the middle of Eyjafjörður fjord. On each island, the population is tiny but there are millions of birds. Find puffins in Grímsey and the ptarmigan in Hrísey, and many more species. Flights to Grímsey are available from Akureyri, and the Grímsey ferry sails from Dalvík. The ferry to Hrísey sails from Árskógssandur every two hours, and the trip only takes 15 minutes.



8 Goðafoss

The "Waterfall of the Gods" is in the glacial river Skjálfandafljót, just off the Ring Road by Fosshóll. The name of the waterfall refers to an incident in one of the Icelandic Sagas where Þorgeir the Lawspeaker threw his symbolic likenesses of the old Nordic gods into the waterfall.



9 Lake Mývatn

In the Lake Mývatn region, located on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, the most exciting sights are of a volcanic or geothermal nature, the centerpiece being the 37 km² lake Mývatn itself. Places of interest include the pseudocraters at Skútustaðir, Höfði peninsula, Dimmuborgir lava formations, Hverfell crater, Hverir hot spring area, Krafla volcanic area, and Mývatn Nature Baths. The site is also considered to be one of the best bird-watching locations in Iceland.



10 Dimmuborgir

Dimmuborgir or Dark Cities is an area of randomly strewn lava rocks and cliffs, surrounded by vegetation such as low bushes and plants. Dimmuborgir is a place of surprises with its myriad forms and images, small caves and towering volcanic rock, pierced by natural apertures. The most famous of these formations is the cave "The Church", aptly named for its dome-like ceiling.



11 Námaskarð

At the foothills of this spectacular volcanic mountain is an expanse of hot springs called Hverir that are known for their variety. You will also discover fumaroles, mud pools and mud pots that all seem to be boil with relentless energy. The pass Námaskarð is strategically located at a short distance from the Krafla volcano system as well as other interesting geological spots like Búrfellshraun lava field and the desert Mývatnsöræfi.



12 Dettifoss

Dettifoss has the greatest volume of any waterfall in Europe, 500 cubic metres of water per second plunging over its edge. Dettifoss is 45 m high and 100 m wide. A pleasant hiking trail, 34 km in length, winds along the canyon from Dettifoss to Ásbyrgi.



13 Ásbyrgi

Ásbyrgi is a densely wooded horse-shoe shaped canyon in Öxarfjörður, where you find numerous hiking tracks. Ásbyrgi is part of the Vatnajökull National Park. Informative visitor's centre, shop, golf course and camping site are located by Ásbyrgi. Many hiking tracks are in the vicinity of Ásbyrgi.



14 Arctic Henge

Set in Raufarhöfn, one of the most remote and northernmost villages in Iceland where the Arctic Circle lies just off the coast, the Arctic Henge (Heimskautsgerðið) is under construction. Similar to its ancient predecessor, Stonehenge, the Arctic Henge is like a huge sundial, aiming to capture the sunrays, cast shadows in precise locations and capture the light between aligned gateways.



15 Diamond Circle

The Diamond Circle can be described as a magnificent circuit of 250km in the Northeast of Iceland, which includes some of the most stunning sights and spots for unearthly landscapes. The Diamond Circle has 5 key destinations which include the historical and picturesque Goðafoss, the unearthly blue and green landscapes of Lake Mývatn nature paradise, the uncontrollable white energy of Dettifoss the most powerful waterfall of Europe, the crescent-shaped wonder of Ásbyrgi canyon and Húsavík the buzzing whale watching capital of Iceland with the deep blue seas ahead.

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