

Skagafjörður

Northwestern Iceland · Iceland

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



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Overview

Skagafjörður is a wide region of valleys and farmland in north Iceland. It is the centre of Icelandic horse breeding, with many farms and riding tours.

The main town is Sauðárkrókur. The region also has old turf buildings, some of the best-preserved in the country, and a coast with islands and sea cliffs.

When to visit

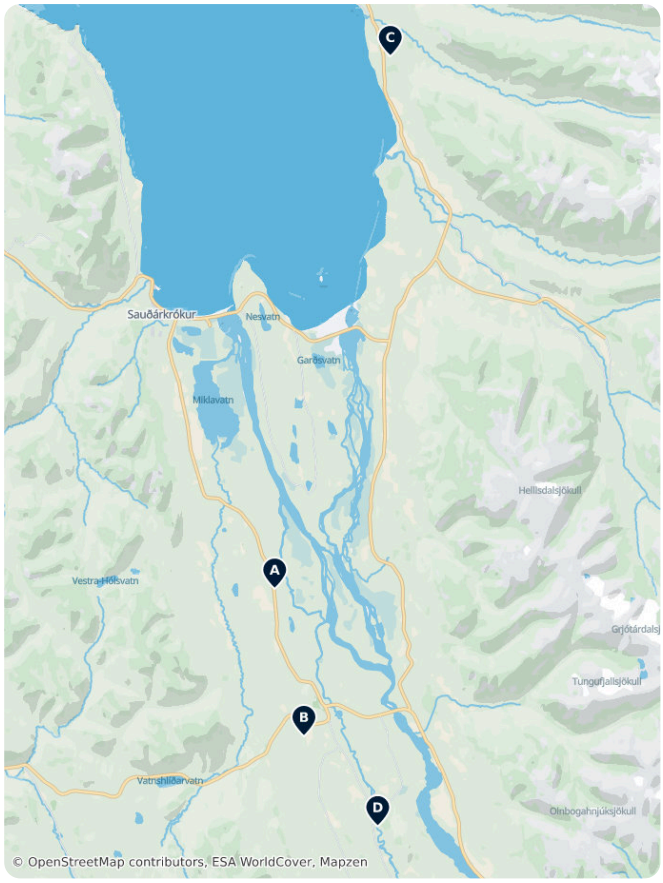
Summer is best for riding, hiking and boat trips. The horse round-up in early autumn is a local tradition. Winter is quiet, with snow on the mountain roads.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Poor Poor for sightseeing	-1° / 5° Feels like -8°	-6° / -14°	20 rainy days · Dry air
February	Poor Poor for sightseeing	-1° / 5° Feels like -8°	-7° / -14°	19 rainy days · Dry air
March	Poor Poor for sightseeing	0° / 5° Feels like -6°	-6° / -13°	20 rainy days · Dry air
April	Poor Poor for sightseeing	2° / 7° Feels like -3°	-3° / -10°	17 rainy days · Dry air
May	Poor Poor for sightseeing	6° / 11° Feels like 1°	1° / -5°	17 rainy days · Dry air
June	Fair Fair for hiking	10° / 15° Feels like 7°	5° / 0°	15 rainy days · Dry air
July	Fair Fair for hiking	13° / 18°	7° / 4°	17 rainy days · Dry air
August	Fair Fair for hiking	12° / 17° Feels like 9°	6° / 3°	18 rainy days · Dry air
September	Poor Poor for hiking	8° / 14° Feels like 4°	4° / -2°	20 rainy days · Dry air
October	Poor Poor for sightseeing	3° / 9° Feels like -2°	-1° / -8°	20 rainy days · Dry air
November	Poor Poor for sightseeing	0° / 6° Feels like -6°	-4° / -12°	20 rainy days · Dry air
December	Poor Poor for sightseeing	-1° / 5° Feels like -8°	-6° / -14°	20 rainy days · Dry air

Climate data: NASA POWER (MERRA-2); NASA POWER + Copernicus ERA5-Land and ERA5 · 1996–2025

Top sights

- A Glaumbær is a turf farm that shows how people lived in Iceland for centuries. It is now a museum.
- B Víðimýrarkirkja is a small church with turf walls from the 1830s, one of the oldest in Iceland.
- C Grafarkirkja is a small turf church in the north of the region.
- D Reykjafoss is a waterfall on the river near the road, with a walk of about 1 km.
- Drangey is a steep island in the fjord linked with the sagas, reached by a boat tour in summer.



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Getting there

- **By car**: The region is on the Ring Road. Akureyri is about 1 hour 45 minutes away. Reykjavík is about 4 hours.
- **Nearby**: Dalvík is across the mountains to the north-east.
- **By bus**: Long-distance buses stop in Sauðárkrókur, with fewer in winter.

Sveitarfélagið Skagafjörðu Essentials

Skagafjörður is a region in Northern Iceland defined by its deep cultural roots and dramatic landscapes. This list features historic turf architecture at Glaumbær and Víðimýrarkirkja, alongside the 17th-century Grafarkirkja. Explore the geothermal waters of Grettislaug and the bird-rich cliffs of Drangey island. The area is the traditional heart of Icelandic horse breeding, celebrated at the Horse History Center in Hólar, a former bishopric. Natural highlights include the Reykjafoss waterfall and the regional hub of Sauðárkrókur.





A Reykjafoss

A multi-tiered waterfall on the Svartá river, located near the natural geothermal pool of Fosslaug.

Iceland (65.49456, -19.38319)



B Vidimyri Turf Church

A beautiful staple of old Icelandic architecture. Services are still held here, but you can always just take a look around the church.

Víðiholt, 560 Skagafjörður, Iceland (65.53880, -19.47038)

Mo–Su 09:00–18:00

northiceland.is/en/other/place/vidimyrarkirkja-church



C Glaumbær Museum

This preserved farmhouse from the mid 18th century now serves as an exhibition place - focusing on rural life in Iceland.

Glaumbær, Sauðárkróksbraut, 560 Sauðárkrókur, Island (65.61081, -19.50494)

glaumbaer.is/is/information, +354 453 6173



D Grafarkirkja

Iceland's oldest turf church, reconstructed in the 17th century. It features rare decorative wood carvings and is enclosed by a circular turf wall.

(Unnamed Road), 566, Iceland (65.86961, -19.36838)



E Saudárkrókur

The largest service town in Northwest Iceland, situated on the south shore of the fjord. It serves as a hub for local commerce and coastal tourism.

Sauðárkrókur, Northwest, Iceland (65.74611, -19.63944)

F Hólar

A historic ecclesiastical site and former bishopric featuring a 1763 stone cathedral. It currently houses a university specializing in equine science and aquatic biology.

(65.73319, -19.11160)

G Grettislaug

Two stone-lined geothermal pools on the fjord's shore, named after the saga hero Grettir the Strong who supposedly swam here from Drangey Island.

Iceland (65.88222, -19.73639)

drangey.net

H Drangey

A steep-walled volcanic island rising 180 meters from the sea. It is a major nesting site for puffins and guillemots, accessible by seasonal boat tours.

(65.94564, -19.69133)

I Icelandic Horse History Center

Located at the historic Hólar site, this exhibition details the development and cultural significance of the Icelandic horse breed through the centuries.

4 Prestssæti, Hólar 551, Iceland (65.73277, -19.11181)

sogusetur.is, +354 455 6345

Peaks and Glaciers

The landscape of Skagafjörður is defined by the high-alpine terrain of the Tröllaskagi Peninsula and the rugged coastline of Skagi. This collection features prominent peaks like the 1,000-meter Sótahnjúkur and the sharp Fúinhyrna, alongside the ancient ice of Tungnahryggsjökull and Hjaltadalsjökull glaciers. Along the coast, the Ketubjörg cliffs rise 120 meters above the Greenland Sea, characterized by dark basalt formations and seasonal waterfalls dropping directly into the ocean.



A Ketubjörg cliffs

Basalt cliffs on the eastern side of the Skagi peninsula, rising 120 meters and featuring a waterfall that plunges directly into the sea.

(66.03432, -20.00934)

B Tungnahryggsjökull

Glacier situated in the central Tröllaskagi mountains, serving as a source for several regional glacial rivers.

(65.68588, -18.84757)

C Hjaltadalsjökull

Mountain glacier located at the head of Hjaltadalur valley in the Tröllaskagi highlands.

(65.57680, -18.89513)

D Fúinhyrna

Sharp mountain peak located in the Tröllaskagi peninsula.

(65.63569, -18.95745)

E Sandfell

Mountain peak in the Skagafjörður region.

Iceland (65.86493, -19.74755)

F Kolugafjall

Mountain peak located inland from the Skagafjörður coastline.

Iceland (65.77093, -19.87598)

G Rauðafell

Mountain peak in the Skagafjörður district.

Iceland (65.85362, -19.75410)

H Réttarfell

Mountain peak located on the Skagi peninsula.

(65.83862, -19.97210)

I Nónnibba

Peak overlooking the valleys of Skagafjörður.

Iceland (65.83983, -19.74170)

J Miðtindur

Mountain peak in the Skagafjörður region.

Iceland (65.87978, -19.80003)

K Þumlungur

Distinctive peak in the southern part of the Skagafjörður district.

(65.62475, -19.83775)

L Sótahnjúkur

Prominent peak reaching over 1,000 meters in the northern Tröllaskagi peninsula.

Iceland (66.02635, -19.11540)

Historic Churches of Skagafjörður

Skagafjörður is home to some of Iceland's most significant religious landmarks, ranging from rare turf structures to historic cathedrals. This collection includes Grafarkirkja, the oldest turf church in the country, and the red sandstone cathedral at Hólar, which served as the seat of power for Northern Iceland for centuries. These sites showcase the evolution of Icelandic ecclesiastical architecture from 17th-century turf-and-stone traditions to the timber and stone designs of the late 19th century.





A Vidimyri Turf Church

A beautiful staple of old Icelandic architecture. Services are still held here, but you can always just take a look around the church.

Víðiholt, 560 Skagafjörður, Iceland (65.53880, -19.47038)

Mo–Su 09:00–18:00

northiceland.is/en/other/place/vidimyrarkirkja-church



B Grafarkirkja

Iceland's oldest turf church, dating to the late 17th century. It is noted for its intricate wood carvings and circular turf wall.

(Unnamed Road), 566, Iceland (65.86961, -19.36838)

C Sauðárkrókskirkja

Timber church completed in 1892, designed by Rögnvaldur Ólafsson. The interior contains a notable altarpiece by Danish artist Anker Lund.

(65.74975, -19.65062)

saudarkrokskirkja.is

D Hólakirkja

A red sandstone cathedral built in 1763 on a site that served as the episcopal seat for Northern Iceland for seven centuries. It houses a rare 16th-century altarpiece.

(65.73335, -19.11378)

E Glaumbæjarkirkja

Timber church built in 1926, located next to the Glaumbær turf farm museum. It serves as a central landmark in the Skagafjörður heritage area.

(65.61129, -19.50468)

F Hofsósskirkja

Small timber church built in 1860, located in the historic village of Hofsós.

(65.89587, -19.40734)

G Hofsstaðakirkja

Traditional timber church dating from 1900, representing the rural architecture of the late 19th century.

(65.69783, -19.36574)

DATA SOURCES

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