

Southern Region

Iceland

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



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Overview

Southern Iceland is the most visited part of the country outside Reykjavík. It runs from the Golden Circle east along the south coast. The region has big waterfalls, geysers, glaciers and black-sand beaches.

It is close to the capital, so it suits day trips and longer road trips. Most sights are beside the Ring Road.

When to visit

Summer has the longest days and the most open roads. Mountain roads in the interior open only in summer. Winter is dark and icy, but it is a good season for northern lights. Weather changes fast, and wind can close roads in any season. Check conditions before each drive: Road conditions (Vegagerðin).

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Poor Poor for sightseeing	1° / 6° Feels like -5° -1–2°	-3° / -11°	21 rainy days · Dry air
February	Poor Poor for sightseeing	1° / 6° Feels like -5° 0–2°	-3° / -11°	20 rainy days · Dry air
March	Poor Poor for sightseeing	2° / 7° Feels like -4° 0–3°	-3° / -10°	20 rainy days · Dry air
April	Poor Poor for sightseeing	5° / 9° Feels like 0° 3–6°	0° / -7°	18 rainy days · Dry air
May	Poor Poor for hiking	8° / 12° Feels like 4° 6–9°	3° / -2°	18 rainy days · Dry air
June	Fair Fair for hiking	11° / 15° Feels like 8° 9–12°	6° / 3°	17 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
July	Fair Fair for hiking	13° / 17° 11–14°	8° / 6°	18 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
August	Fair Fair for hiking	13° / 16° Feels like 10° 11–13°	8° / 5°	18 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
September	Poor Poor for hiking	10° / 13° Feels like 6° 8–10°	5° / 1°	21 rainy days · Dry air
October	Poor Poor for sightseeing	6° / 10° Feels like 1° 4–6°	2° / -4°	19 rainy days · Dry air
November	Poor Poor for sightseeing	3° / 8° Feels like -3° 1–3°	-1° / -9°	18 rainy days · Dry air
December	Poor Poor for sightseeing	1° / 7° Feels like -5° -1–2°	-3° / -12°	20 rainy days · Dry air

Varies by region: the smaller figure under each day temperature is the range from the cooler to the warmer parts.

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

Top sights

- A Seljalandsfoss is a tall waterfall with a path behind the water. Expect to get wet.
- B Skogafoss is a wide waterfall near Skógar. Stairs lead to a viewing platform on top.
- C Reynisfjara Beach is a black-sand beach with basalt columns. Waves can run far up the sand without warning, so **stay well back from the water**.
- D Fjaðrárgljúfur is a deep green canyon near Kirkjubæjarklaustur. Access can be limited in spring.
- E Geysir and F Strokkur are hot springs on the Golden Circle. Strokkur erupts every few minutes.
- G Gullfoss Viewing Platform looks over a large two-step waterfall on the Golden Circle.
- Thingvellir National Park is the third Golden Circle stop, set in a rift valley.
- H Secret Lagoon is a warm spring pool in a small village. I Kerið is a volcanic crater lake beside the road.
- Þórsmörk is a valley between glaciers, reached by hiking or a highland bus in summer. Vestmannaeyjabær is an island town reached by ferry.



Southern Region – Plan Your Trip

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Getting there

- **By air**: Fly to Keflavík International Airport (KEF). The first sights in the region are about 1 to 1.5 hours away by car.
- **By car**: The Ring Road (Route 1) runs through the region. From Reykjavík it is about 1.5 hours to Seljalandsfoss and about 2.5 hours to Vík.
- **By bus**: Intercity buses serve towns along the Ring Road, but many sights are far from stops. See Strætó.
- **Safety**: Check weather and road alerts at SafeTravel Iceland.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Iceland at a glance:

CURRENCY
ISK kr

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY

Type C / Type F
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
Icelandic

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Southern Region Must-Sees

The Southern Region of Iceland encompasses diverse geological features, including the 60-meter Seljalandsfoss and Skógafoss waterfalls, and the 122-meter Háifoss. Geothermal activity is centered at the Geysir area, where Strokkur erupts every few minutes. Coastal highlights include the basalt columns and black sands of Reynisfjara Beach and the 1973 DC-3 plane wreck on Sólheimasandur. For unique landscapes, the Fjadrargljufur Canyon showcases Ice Age formations, while the Silfra fissure allows for diving between the North American and Eurasian tectonic plates.





A Seljalandsfoss

Waterfall with a 60-meter vertical drop featuring a unique pathway that allows walking behind the cascade.

Iceland (63.61546, -19.98817)

Mo–Su

Open 24/7

seljalandsfoss.org



B Skogafoss

Spectacular waterfall approximately 60 meters high and 25 meters wide, featuring powerful cascades that often produce rainbows and panoramic views from the top.

Iceland (63.53210, -19.51129)



C Reynisfjara Beach

Black sand beach known for its striking basalt sea stacks, caves, and coastal views. Part of a UNESCO geological reserve with notable volcanic sand formations.

Iceland (63.40534, -19.07015)



D Geysir

Historic geothermal geyser known for its eruptions and geothermal activity within a notable hot springs area.

Iceland (64.31384, -20.29951)



E Strokkur

Active geyser erupting every 5 to 15 minutes with water fountains reaching up to 40 meters high. Located within a geothermal area, it is known for frequent and reliable eruptions.

Iceland (64.31270, -20.30077)

Mo–Su 00:00–24:00



F Fjadrargljufur Canyon

Scenic canyon with steep walls, a winding river, and a waterfall visible from an observation platform. Known for its geological significance and hiking opportunities.

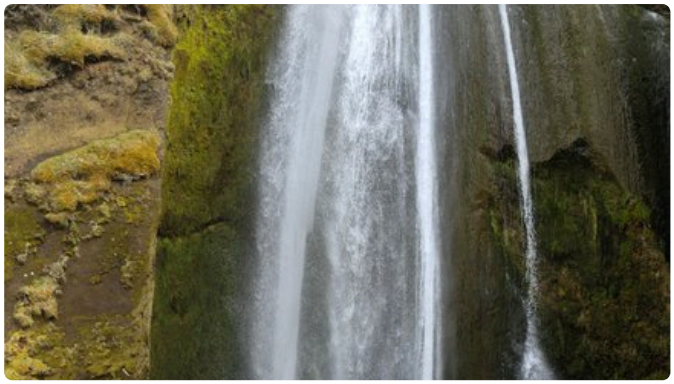
Iceland (63.77260, -18.17372)



G Bruarfoss Waterfall

Waterfall in a spring-fed river surrounded by dense birch shrubbery, notable for its striking blue waters.

Hlauptunga, 801, Iceland (64.26423, -20.51587)



H Gljufrafoss

A 40-meter waterfall partially hidden within a short canyon, accessible by trail and staircase.

Iceland (63.62076, -19.98634)

Mo–Su

Open 24/7



I DC-3 Plane Wreck

Abandoned U.S. Navy DC-3 aircraft wreck lies on a black sand beach, known for its striking and surreal appearance. The site features a relatively intact fuselage set against a dramatic Icelandic landscape.

(Unnamed Road), 871, Iceland (63.45912, -19.36503)



J Silfra Diving

Silfra is a rift formed in the Mid-Atlantic Ridge – the divergent tectonic boundary between the North American and Eurasian plates – and is...

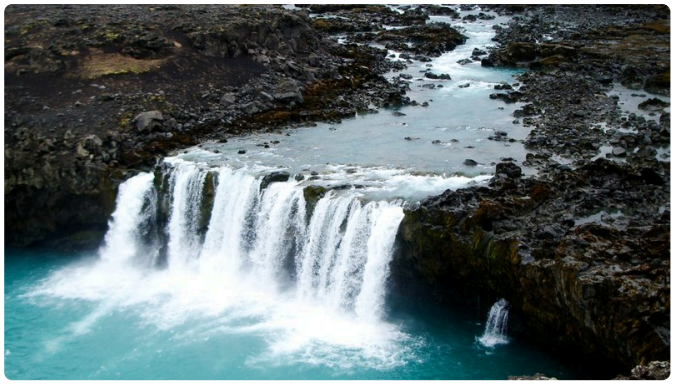
Iceland (64.25519, -21.11694)



K Háifoss

With the height of 122 meters, Háifoss is the third highest waterfall in Iceland.

Iceland (64.20792, -19.68699)



L Thjofafoss

Þjófafoss is located on the river Þjórsá on the east side of the Merkurhraun lava fields in the south of Iceland, at the southwest tip of...

Iceland (64.05674, -19.86658)

Iceland's Hidden Gems

Explore the lesser-known wonders of Southern Iceland, ranging from the 1973 US Navy DC-3 aircraft wreck on Sólheimasandur's black sands to the geothermal river of Reykjadalur. This collection features the secluded Gljúfrabúi waterfall tucked inside a canyon and the historic Seljavallalaug, one of the country's oldest outdoor pools. Discover the reconstructed Viking-era turf houses at Stöng Commonwealth Farm and the dramatic volcanic landscapes of the Þjórsárdalur valley, including the multi-tiered waterfalls of Gjáin and the turquoise waters of Þjófafoss set against the Merkurhraun lava fields.





A Reykjadalur

A hiking area featuring natural hot baths in a scenic valley north of Hveragerði.

Iceland (64.04795, -21.22228)

Mo–Su

Open 24/7



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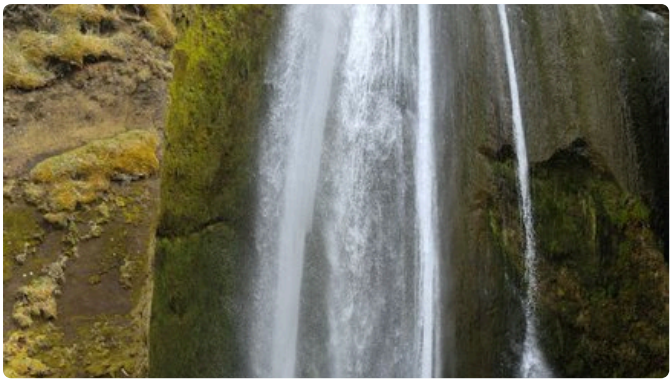
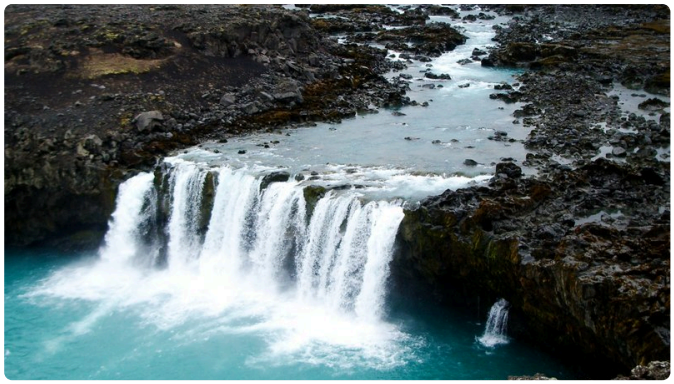


C Gljufrafoss

A 40-meter waterfall partially hidden within a short canyon, accessible by trail and staircase.

Iceland (63.62076, -19.98634)

Mo–Su Open 24/7



D Thjofafoss

Þjófafoss is located on the river Þjórsá on the east side of the Merkurhraun lava fields in the south of Iceland, at the southwest tip of...

Iceland (64.05674, -19.86658)



E Gjain

Gjáin is a small valley with small waterfalls, ponds, and volcanic structures situated in Þjórsárdalur in the south of Iceland.

Iceland (64.15018, -19.73626)



F Stöng Commonwealth Farm

Þjóðveldisbærinn Stöng is a reconstructed viking-era farmstead in Iceland, located in the Þjórsárdalur valley near road 32 in Árnessýsla...

Þjóðveldisbær 1, 804 (64.12013, -19.82043)

thjodveldisbaer.is/en, +354 488 7713



Seljavallalaug

Seljavallalaug is a protected 25-metre outdoor pool in southern Iceland.

Iceland (63.56611, -19.60770)

Majestic Mountains and Peaks

Southern Iceland’s landscape is defined by these prominent peaks, ranging from the sheer 688-meter cliffs of Lómagnúpur to the moss-covered volcanic cone of Mælifell. Many of these sites, such as Þríhyrningur, hold significance in Icelandic sagas, while others like Reynisfjall serve as vital nesting grounds for Atlantic puffins. These geological formations offer insights into the region's volcanic history and provide vantage points overlooking glacial outwash plains and the Atlantic coast.





A Reynisfjall

A 340-meter-high tuff mountain overlooking the village of Vík. It is a major nesting site for puffins and other seabirds during the summer, featuring distinctive basalt columns at its base and views of the Reynisdrangar sea stacks.

(Unnamed Road), 871, Iceland (63.43587, -19.03267)

B Fagradalsfjall

A prominent peak located in the southern interior near the Biskupstungur region, offering views of the surrounding glacial rivers and highland plains.

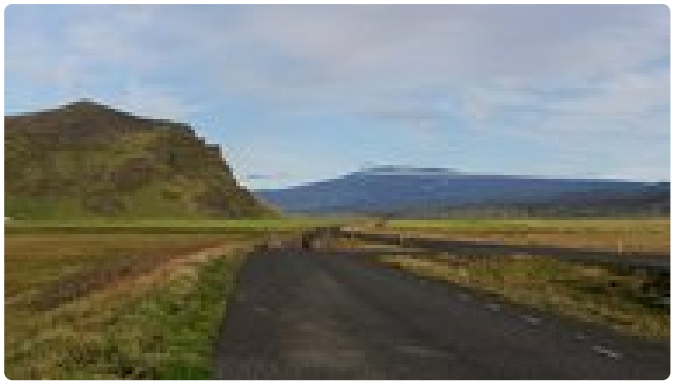
Iceland (64.44889, -20.30814)



C Lómagnúpur

A 688-meter-high mountain featuring one of Iceland's most iconic vertical cliffs. Located along the Ring Road, its sheer rock face was formed by marine erosion and volcanic activity, standing as a landmark of the Skeiðarársandur plains.

Iceland (63.99278, -17.52482)



D Pétursey

A solitary palagonite mountain rising from the coastal sands. Historically used as a landmark for sailors, it is home to numerous bird species and is associated with local folklore regarding petrified trolls.

Iceland (63.46783, -19.27115)

E Mælifell

A 791-meter-high volcanic cone covered in bright green grimmia moss. Located in the black sand desert of the Emstrur region, it was formed during a subglacial eruption and is a prominent landmark on the Fjallabak South route.

(63.79718, -18.94717)



F Þríhyrningur

A distinctive three-peaked mountain near Fljótshlíð. It is famously mentioned in Njáls Saga as the location where Flosi and his men hid before the burning of Bergþórshvoll.

Iceland (63.78892, -19.96330)



Hestfjall

A 322-meter-high volcanic mountain in the Grímsnes region. Situated near the Hvítá river, it provides panoramic views of the surrounding farmlands and the distant Kerid crater.

Iceland (64.01834, -20.67046)

DATA SOURCES

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