



St Wilfrid's Hospice
Making a difference to local lives

Iceland Volcanoes Challenge

12th - 17th October 2017

Information Pack

www.stwh.co.uk

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About Iceland

Iceland is an island located in the North Atlantic Ocean on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, a tectonic plate that separates Eurasia from the North American plate and the African plate from the South American plate. Its unique location on earth means that Iceland is subject to many dramatic forces of nature and as such offers incredible natural geological features such as gushing rivers, azure blue lakes, great green forests, hot springs, red hot lava, bright blue glaciers and mighty lava scarred volcanoes. But this is just the beginning! The Northerly location of Iceland means it is a fantastic place to spot the Aurora Borealis (Northern Lights) and the capital of Iceland, Reykjavík (where two thirds of the Icelandic population live) is a fantastic place to visit, where you will meet incredibly friendly and kind local people and learn about the history and culture of the country.



Eyjafjallajökull

Iceland was introduced to many people in 2010 when the mighty Eyjafjallajökull erupted leaving air traffic in meltdown for weeks across most of Europe and in turn, the world. Eyjafjallajökull, which means island (eyja) mountain (fjalla) glacier (jökull), is a volcano which is completely covered by an ice cap of around 100 square kilometres. The summit is at a 1,666m elevation. The volcano is fed by a magma chamber underneath the mountain which is part of the tectonic divergence of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge upon which Iceland sits. The Mid-Atlantic Ridge is part of the longest mountain range in the world and it spreads an average of 2.5cm per year! To pronounce the name of the volcano you say “EhYah FiatLa YurKut”.



Hengill

Hengill is an active volcano located in south west Iceland. It covers a vast area, around 100km² and the highest peak is Vörðu Skeggi which is at 807m altitude. From the summit there are great views over Þingvellir National Park, and if conditions are favourable you can see all the way to Iceland's second biggest ice cap, Langjökull on the northerly horizon. Although active, noticeable from the hot springs and fumaroles, the last eruption was over 2000 years ago.



Hekla

Hekla is one of Iceland's most active volcanoes with over 20 eruptions since 874, the most recent being in 2000. The volcano is subject to many folk tales and in the Middle Ages it was nicknamed ‘the Gateway to Hell’. Hekla is now measured at 1490m but it wasn't always this big. In 1947 there was a huge eruption during which 14 meters was added to the summit due to the huge amount of ash and debris. The eruption was so large the column of ash went 28,000m (17.3 miles) into the atmosphere! Seismic activity is closely monitored on Hekla, and indeed all the Icelandic volcanoes, and the appeal of this volcano is so great you can even view live webcams of the peak online.



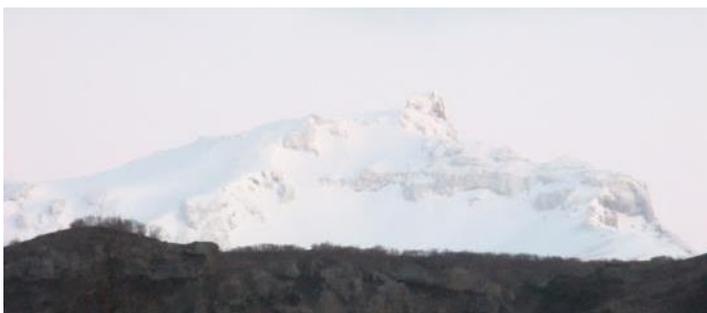
Itinerary

Day 1 (Thursday 12th October 2017): London - Reykjavík

Fly from London to Reykjavík and transfer 45 minutes to a central hotel. Welcome dinner this evening and overnight at hotel.

Day 2 (Friday 13th October 2017): Reykjavík – Hengill Volcano - Laugarvatn

Today we set off for the Hengill volcano, 30 km east of Reykjavík, where we attempt our first peak - Vörðu Skeggi (807 m), the highest point of this central volcano. From the summit you have great views over Þingvellir National Park, and if conditions are favourable you can see all the way to Iceland's second biggest ice cap, Langjökull on the northerly horizon. Having accomplished our first summit we drive to Þingvellir and have some time to explore the area. We end the day with a drive through the small town of Laugarvatn and to the geothermal area of Geysir, before continuing to our hostel for dinner and overnight.



Day 3 (Saturday 14th October 2017): Laugarvatn – Hekla – Eyjafjöll

After breakfast we get ready for the 2nd summit of this challenge, the famous Hekla (1490 m), one of Iceland's most active volcanoes. The trail to the summit takes us through lava fields from different eruptions and the higher we get the more possibilities there are for encountering snow fields. There is not a crater on this volcano but a fissure that runs along the shoulder of the mountain, so it looks like an upturned boat seen from afar. If we have good weather conditions on the summit we will enjoy amazing views. Descending back to our vehicle we set off for the Skógar hostel which will be our base for the next 2 nights.

Day 4 (Sunday 15th October 2017): Sólheimajökull glacier exploration

Today we head to the Sólheimajökull glacier for a chance to try crampons and learn how they work, before the big climb tomorrow. This is an outlet glacier of the Mýrdalsjökull ice cap and you will be

introduced to some basic glaciology on this tour, as well as gaining insights into how the glacier affects its surroundings. After some hours on the ice we drive to the nearby Reynisfjara beach, a black sand beach with some majestic basaltic columns and puffins. Return to the hostel for the night and preparations for tomorrow's climb.



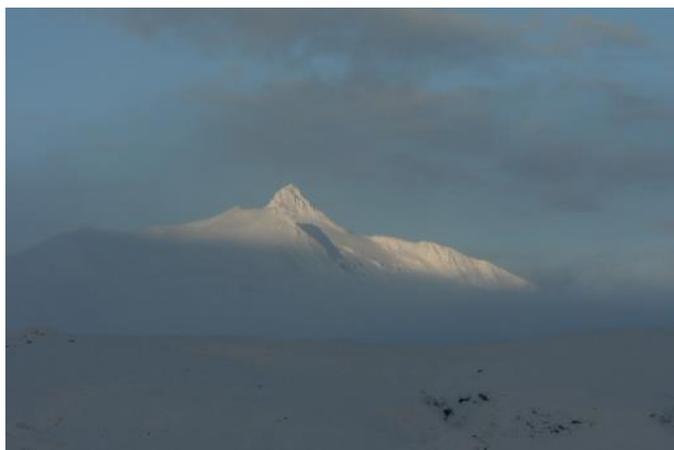
Day 5 (Monday 16th October 2017): Eyjafjallajökull Summit Climb

Today is the final summit of our challenge, and the biggest and toughest! Eyjafjallajökull is a glacier-covered volcano which is still active. The last eruption happened in 2010, creating havoc worldwide as air traffic across the North Atlantic came to a standstill. The first part of the climb, the foothills of the mountain, is on terra firma but once you reach the glacier you will rope up with your guide for safety. From the summit we'll have splendid views over the crater that erupted in 2010 as well as the area to the north of the mountain. We descend along the same route where they may be an opportunity to take a dip in a nearby natural pool, to ease the muscles at the end of the descent. We then drive back to Reykjavik for our last night in Iceland at our central hotel, stopping for dinner en route.

Day 6 (Tuesday 17th October 2017): Reykjavik - London

There may be time to explore Reykjavik (subject to flight times) before our transfer to the airport for the flight back to London.

N.B. The itinerary may change due to unusual weather patterns, the ability of the group and so on. We will do our best to keep to the set itinerary however we cannot be held responsible for changes that might occur outside of our control. In all such circumstances your guide and tour leader will have the final say in the interest of the health and safety of the group.



Trek Overview

The 4-day trek offers spectacular volcanic landscapes as you take on three of the country's volcanoes; Hengill (807m), Hekla (1490m) and Eyjafjallajökull (1666m). You will hike over lava fields created during previous eruptions, snow fields and vast glaciers as well as enjoying some of Iceland's other diverse landscapes. You will have an introduction to glacier exploration skills including using crampons and an ice axe – no experience needed.

Who accompanies us?

This trek is accompanied by professional English-speaking local guides who have an excellent knowledge of hiking in the region and a Different Travel Company UK tour manager. The staff members are first aid trained and will support you throughout your journey.

What about the weather and conditions?

Weather conditions will vary and could be rainy, bright and sunny, bitterly cold, snowy or cloudy (or all of the above) so it's crucial to be prepared for a range of possibly extreme weather conditions. October is the start of the autumn so drizzle or light rain is likely. Typically temperatures average around 8°C during the day and 0°C at night at this time of year but this is extremely variable so you **must** be prepared for deviations outside of these ranges. Low temperatures, cold wind and notoriously unpredictable weather conditions will be an added challenge and therefore it is vital that you bring **non-cotton** technical clothing (including good quality waterproofs) and broken-in waterproof boots to ensure maximum comfort and safety while trekking in cold conditions.

Where will we stay during the trek?

In Reykjavik you will stay in a central hotel with en-suite bathroom (2 nights) on a twin-share basis, and then two different basic hostels during the trek (3 nights).

Who can take part?

The trek can be undertaken by anyone of any age (min. 18 unless accompanied by an adult) as long as you have a good level of fitness and you are healthy and determined. Adequate preparation, planning and training is important because the fitter you are the more you will enjoy this experience. An ideal candidate would be someone who plays a sport and/or regularly exercises (e.g. running / gym / classes), a hill walker or trekker or someone who enjoys being out of their comfort zone.



How tough is it and what is the terrain like?

The trek is rated *challenging* for a person of a good level of fitness. The terrain will vary each day but will generally be undulating with some very steep sections, some flat areas and some downhill sections. You may walk over snow or ice covered ground depending on the weather conditions at the time so ice axes, crampons or snow shoes (provided) may be required. You do not need to have technical climbing skills or previous experience as your expert guides will provide you with support and assistance throughout. Having trekking experience is a bonus but is not a prerequisite.

How far will we trek?

Each day you will cover approximately 15km (9 miles) which, because of the variable terrain, can take up to 8 hours to cover. There are two very long days which could be up to 14 hours trekking so please ensure you have trained properly in advance for this challenge with a particular emphasis on endurance cardiovascular fitness and core and leg strength.



How fit do I need to be?

This tour is classified as '*challenging*' for someone of a good general level of fitness. You cannot be too fit for this challenge so everyone should train before departure including walking, cardiovascular workouts and work to improve both your stamina and your ability to walk up and down gradients. This trek will involve hiking over rough terrain, glaciers, through some streams and possibly over snow or ice covered areas so training to trek on hills while carrying a heavy daypack is essential! Terrain will be a variety of steep, moderate and flat terrain which may be slippery underfoot.

If you do not already regularly exercise or participate in a sport it is advised that you start training at least 6 months before departure to ensure your best chance of success and enjoyment on the challenge. Trying to complete the challenge without training will hinder your experience. Hill walking should form an important part of your training due to the inevitable ascents and descents involved in this trek.

All participants must complete a medical declaration form upon registering, and any pre-existing conditions, medications used and other medical issues must be noted and (if relevant) confirmed by your GP. Any conditions that

develop must be declared and a new medical form completed.



Trip cost: £330 registration fee + £2,500 minimum sponsorship for St Wilfrid's Hospice.

What is included? Return flights from London (including all current taxes & fuel surcharges), all transfers & transport in Iceland, accommodation in a 3* hotel in Reykjavík, basic hostels on trek, most meals, local guides and a Different Travel tour manager.

What is excluded? Lunch on day 6, personal expenses such as drinks, souvenirs, laundry etc., any vaccinations required, travel insurance, tips and personal trekking kit.

Can I extend my stay in Iceland?

Yes you can! A 2 day Reykjavik extension is available with this trip, offering an opportunity to visit the famous Blue Lagoon thermal baths and explore more of Reykjavik. Details available upon request.

Is the trip ATOL protected?

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www.atol.org.uk/ATOLCertificate.

How will I raise the sponsorship required?

Most people find that this is far easier than they imagined, and we will give you as much support as you need to reach, and even exceed your target! Here are some suggestions for how you could raise your sponsorship. We will send you lots more ideas when you sign up!

- Non-uniform day at local school: £300
- 2x supermarket bag-packs: £500
- Car boot Sale/ eBay auction: £250
- 2 x quiz nights: £500
- Sponsorship (friends, family etc.): £300
- Host a party, charge £10 to attend: £400
- Ask five friends/ family members to raise £100 each: £500
- Dress down day at work/ lunch money donation: £300
- Donate your skills - ironing, babysitting, gardening, DIY: £250
- Karaoke Night: £250
- Sponsored beard-shave/ leg wax: £200
- 4 cake sales at work: £50 a time: £200
- Bucket shake at supermarket: £100

Total: £4,050

How do I sign up?

Complete the enclosed booking form and return with your registration fee to:

**Samantha Moore,
St Wilfrid's Hospice,
Grosvenor Road,
Chichester,
West Sussex
PO19 8FP**

Or you can email your completed form to
samantha.moore@stwh.co.uk.

Once your place is confirmed we will email you a training guide, fundraising pack and much more!

