



# Golden Highlights of the South

*Ride through some of southern Iceland's most interesting and dramatic landscapes*

**Ride with the Herd  
Classic Southern Wilderness  
9 Day tour with 7 days of riding  
...2017**

## **First Night**

### **Overnight flight to Iceland**

Travelers from North America leave for Iceland on an overnight flight with an early morning arrival at Keflavik Airport in Iceland.

## **Day 1:**

### **Welcome to Iceland!**

Riders will arrive at Keflavik International Airport and then take the Flybus shuttle to the BSI bus terminal in Reykjavik. Luggage can be left here, you can get some breakfast, and it will be very convenient to explore a bit of Iceland's capital city. Around 5:30 PM, the outfitter will pick up riders at the BSI bus terminal, and take them to their farm in Hveragerdi, about an hour outside of the capital. The tour group meets over dinner and is given details of the tour ahead. Horses North clients are upgraded to a night in the comfortable Hotel Eldhestar.

## **Day 2 :**

### **Hveragerdi - Kolvidarholl**

After breakfast you'll spend a little time in the paddock getting to know the horses. After lunch the group will follow the ancient route to the moor on Hellisheiði over to the Hengil volcano along the Kristnitokulhraun lava field. This lava came from the eruption of Hengil in the year 1000, the same year Iceland officially became Christian. You'll ride on the track between lava and hills ("milli hrauns og hliðar"), and rest at Kolvidarholl, a wayside where people have stopped to rest for hundreds of years. You'll return to the farm hotel for dinner and a good nights sleep. 4 hours, 21 km.

*This tour takes you through a dramatic array of Iceland's most impressive landscapes. Your herd of horses will thunder into Thingvellir and one can imagine being a Viking in the year 1000 who has ridden for days to get here and is ready to attend to business and politics. Then there are soft grassy fields, hard lava trails, through river crossings, by towering rock formations and immense waterfalls. It's a tough ride, but worth every step!*

## **Day 3:**

### **Kolvidarholl - Heiðarbær**

The ride continues north below the Husmuli and Hengill Mountains. Soon everyone will dismount and lead the horses through the narrow cleft to Mararflulur (Valley of Horses). Riding through Dyrfjoll (Door mountains), you will soon reach the mountaintop, with a great view over Lake Thingvallav. After arriving near Heiðarbær the day will end with sightseeing at the old Althing (Icelandic Parliament). From here, it is not far to Skógarhólar to spend the night in a mountain hut. Iceland's national horse competition Landsmót was held at Skógarhólar until 1978. 38 km, 6-7 hrs.

## **Day 4:**

### **Skógarhólar - Geysir/Myrkholt**

Today's ride is a grand one across Thingvellir National Park. There is an exceptional view over the park, and Lake Thingvallavatn, the largest lake in Iceland. This is where the North American and European continental plates meet, and then part ways. Crossing the moor

Lyngdalsheiði and then making a stop at the caves Laugarvatnshellir. This days ride ends outside the village Laugarvatn, named after the lake nearby. The lake is warmed here by underwater hot springs. Then it's a short bus ride to the guest-house in Haukadalur, near the hot springs of Geysir. Another short bus trip for visit to Gullfoss, one of the most beautiful waterfalls in Europe. 35 km, 6-7 hours.

## **Day 5:**

### **Geysir/Myrkholt - Helgaskáli**

From Myrkholt the tour continues up towards the Icelandic highlands, leaving the inhabited farmlands. On the way into the desert-like landscape there are magnificent views over the glacial river Hvítá ("white river"), and it's easy to see how the river, over hundreds of years, has shaped the mountain, flowing deeper and deeper into it. Tonight is in a mountain hut called Helgaskáli beside the Litla-Laxá River. 35 km, 6-7 hrs.

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## Day 6:

### Helgaskali - Holaskogur

Off into the highland, including a stop at Haifoss, the second highest waterfall, 400 feet high, ending up at Holaskogur hut in a very pretty area. There may be ghost stories about the old hut, which is located a few hundred meters away from the newer one, and the brave can take a bath in the clean, cold Fossa River. 20 km in 4 hours.

## Day 7:

### Holaskogur- Fellsmuli

You'll ride along Iceland's longest river, the Thjórsá, passing Mt. Búrfell, which, in the old days, was the home of trolls. Also on the river is a magnificent view over Thjofafoss (the "Waterfall of the Thieves"), about which many stories are told. Iceland's most active volcano, Mt. Hekla, watches over you as you leave the horses at Fellsmuli Farm and then go on to the old community center Brúarlundur for the night.  
45 km in 8 hrs.

## Day 8:

### Fellsmuli

You'll start the last day riding along the Eystri-Ranga River, with its grassy banks and soft trails. All day long you'll have a view of Mt. Hekla, which was once believed to be the way from earth down to hell. You'll bid farewell to the horses at Laugaland, and late in the afternoon, everyone will be taken back to Reykjavik where you'll be dropped at your hotel (another upgrade for Horses North clients). Often riders all go out to one of Reykjavik's many good restaurants for a last dinner together, (but it's not included in the price!). 24 km 4 hours

## Day 9:

### Farewell, perhaps ...

After breakfast the tour officially ends. Travelers returning home will have a few hours to shop, visit museums, or tack shops before the bus returns to Keflavik airport for flights back home. Those lucky enough to be exploring more of Iceland can get underway.

## Travel Dates:

The Golden Highlights Tour runs 6 times in 2017 Below are travel dates — we can arrange for an earlier arrival or later departure Your arrival day in Iceland is always a transfer day, which allows you to rest from the short night of sleep on the flight, before you start riding on the second day.

LV N Amer		Return N Amer
Thu June 8	-	Sat June 17
Sun July 2	-	Tues July 11
Thur Aug 17	-	Sat Aug 26
Sat Aug 26	-	Mon Sept 4

The Price is **\$4013** p/p double,  
**\$4212** single occupancy.

Some tours depart from the outfitter's farm in Hveragerdi, and some start from another farm named Fellsmuli- same itinerary, just reversed routes.

**Finer Print: Price includes** international airfare from the US east coast\*, airport transfers and any pre and post ride accommodations needed. The ride itself includes 8 nights and 7 days of riding, with rain gear and helmets.

**Accommodations and Meals:** First night, pre ride will be in comfortable rooms at the Hotel Eldhestar with private bath, TV, wifi and access to a hot tub. During the ride itself you'll be in sleeping bag accommodations in guesthouses and mountain huts for 6 nights,. After the ride you'll spend a night in Reykjavik in a 3 star hotel with private bath. Most meals are included -an Icelandic breakfast buffet, a packed lunch on the trail and dinner with a starter, entree and lots of vegetables. Drinks can be purchased at the hotel.

**\*Flights Price includes** round trip airfare, including fuel surcharge and US departure taxes to Iceland, from Icelandair's east coast gateways - Boston, New York, Newark and Washington Dulles International. We can also book flights from Icelandair's other gateways such as: Minneapolis, Chicago, Denver, Seattle, Portland, Anchorage, Toronto, Edmonton, and Halifax, which may add to the price. Not all gateways have daily departures but we can arrange additional nights accommodations before or after your tour.

**\*Not included** in the price are travel insurance, breakfast and lunch on your arrival day, dinner on your last riding day back in Reykjavik, lunch and dinner on the day of departure and the cost of any additional travel. **Finest print.** Please note that our tour prices are subject to revision until you book your tour by making a deposit. The prices listed on print material may not be the latest available price.

Our contract rates for air aren't always available as we get close to travel dates. While we make every effort to keep prices on our webpages and their PDFs up to the minute, things can change quickly. We welcome phone calls or email about prices and any other details.

**Horses  
North, LLC**

P.O. Box 475  
Millerton, NY 12546 USA  
Toll Free **888 686-6784**  
From Europe **01 518 789-4890**

Email: [hn@icelandadventure.com](mailto:hn@icelandadventure.com)  
[www.IcelandAdventure.com](http://www.IcelandAdventure.com)  
[www.HorsesNorth.com](http://www.HorsesNorth.com)