



## ***Icelandic Tourist Board***

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### **VISIT ICELAND OFF THE BEATEN TRACK THIS SUMMER**

#### **Quirky Island Destinations Beckon**

How do you get away from it all on vacation when you're already on a remote island in the North Atlantic? It could be difficult when you find yourself in increasingly popular Iceland. At times, it seems like all the world is beating a path to Reykjavik, the northernmost capital city in the world.

But if you want to truly experience Iceland like a local, consider going off the beaten track. After all, 80 percent of Iceland is uninhabited. There are miles and miles of mountainous scenery without evidence of any human imprint. In fact, this is a country where you can drive for an hour and not see another car.

Here's a look at some quirky little-known destinations:

- **Iceland is More Than Vikings – They Also Have Salfish** – We're going to take a wild guess here, but we're pretty sure Iceland has the world's only museum dedicated to salted cod fish. The Icelandic Salfish Museum in Grindavik, not far from the international airport and a 40-min. drive from Reykjavik, displays the story of salted cod production and its importance to the economy throughout the centuries. There's even

real saltfish placed around the exhibition for its olfactory appeal. Ok, so it's not the Eiffel Tower, but it's a new experience for those who have "been there, done that." (For more information: [www.saltfisksetur.is](http://www.saltfisksetur.is)).

- **Row, Row, Row Your Viking Longboat** – Gunnar Marel Eggertsson, 52, wants to show you his ship. But not just any ship. The *Islendingur* ("Icelander") is a 75-foot replica of a wooden Viking longboat, the kind used to settle the country from 870 to 930 A.D. Eggertsson spent six years building it with methods and tools based as closely as possible on those used by his Viking ancestors. It's a ship created so authentically, it sailed from Iceland to New York in 2000, to commemorate the 1,000th anniversary of the discovery of the New World by Leifur Eiriksson (Sorry, Chris. You were 500 years too late). The Viking ship, now on dry land, can be seen at any time of day, year-round, only five minutes from the international airport in Keflavik. (For more information or to tour the boat for a donation of about \$10, contact Capt. Eggertsson at [vikingship@simnet.is](mailto:vikingship@simnet.is)).

- **Bond for a Day** – Iceland's spectacular glacial lagoon, *Jokulsarlon*, is ready for its close-up. Huge ice blocks that have broken from the edge of the glacier float around the lagoon. Visitors can whisk around the lagoon in specially-designed amphibious boats to witness white and turquoise icebergs up close and personal and see why the lagoon is so attractive to Hollywood – scenes from *Tomb Raider*, *Batman Begins*, and James Bond's *Die Another Day* have all been filmed there. The tour lasts a full day and is located five hours from Reykjavik on Iceland's geographically diverse southern coast. (For more information: [www.icelandexcursions.is](http://www.icelandexcursions.is); [www.jokulsarlon.is](http://www.jokulsarlon.is) – click the British flag for English).

- **Bridge Between Two Continents** – On the Reykjanes peninsula, in southwest Iceland not far from the black sand beaches that director Clint Eastwood used as a stand-in for Iwo Jima in his movie "Flags of Our Fathers," lies the Bridge Between Two Continents. It's situated in the dramatic surroundings of the *Alfagja* rift valley, a yawning chasm that marks the boundary of the Eurasian and North American continental tectonic plates. So, technically speaking, your 60-foot stroll takes you from North America to Europe without going through customs or immigration, or even taking off your shoes for security.

“It’s one of the newest spots in Iceland, only 750 years old,” Jóhann D. Jónsson, tourist officer for the area of Reykjanes, tells Iceland Review. “From 1226 through the 1240s, the area was all on fire.” To find it, get a map, then look for a tiny sign and a lava rock parking lot that appears to be in the middle of nowhere. (For more information on Reykjanes peninsula, log onto [www.reykjanes.is](http://www.reykjanes.is)).

Approximately 300,000 visitors a year come to experience Iceland’s spectacular Northern Lights, glistening waterfalls, ancient geysers, purifying hot springs and spas, majestic mountains, and tempting cuisine – an impressive palette of outdoor adventure, sports, culture and food. For information about the sights and tastes of Iceland, visit [www.icelandtouristboard.com](http://www.icelandtouristboard.com), or [www.icelandnaturally.com](http://www.icelandnaturally.com).

For a view of some of Iceland’s four to six million Atlantic puffins breeding in the hills of the Westman’s largest island, Heimaey (pop. 4,300), log onto <http://puffin.eyjar.is>.

Editor’s note – For images of Iceland, contact Jamie Gribbon, [Jamie@blumenfeldpr.com](mailto:Jamie@blumenfeldpr.com), 203 655 1600.

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