

Iceland and the Northern Lights

EXCLUSIVE GUEST SPEAKER
Elín Björk Jónasdóttir

Chasing the Light

A remote Nordic island brimming with legendary volcanoes, glacier-cut fjords, rainbow-laden waterfalls and geysers may sound like the makings of Viking folklore, yet in Iceland's "Land of Fire and Ice," these fantastical, otherworldly scenes are as real as the blue-green auras that dance across the Arctic sky. Spend seven nights in ideally located hotels as you experience the natural beauty of this sparsely populated part of the world on an itinerary specially timed for the optimal viewing of the *aurora borealis*, otherwise known as the Northern Lights. From cosmopolitan Reykjavik to the harbor town of Siglufjörður and beyond, discover life in this egalitarian nation known for its small population, high standard of living and penchant for books, humor and fresh air. Explore the UNESCO World Heritage site of Þingvellir — where the North American and Eurasian tectonic plates meet, and where the nation's first open-air assembly was established in 930, lasting until 1798. As your journey unfolds, learn about Viking settlers, the herring industry and geothermal energy practices — all while enjoying guided evening excursions where we'll look to the heavens on a quest for a light show like no other.

Front cover: Northern Lights stream in behind Hallgrímskirkja, a monolithic Lutheran church in Reykjavik

This page: Northern lights over Goðafoss waterfall on Skjalfandaflljót river, Iceland



The Blue Lagoon in Reykjavik

TEXAS EXES[®]

— FLYING LONGHORNS —

Dear Texas Ex:

Experience the soul-stirring natural beauty of Iceland, learn about its storied history and see its countless wonders — including the magical shape-shifting aura of the elusive Northern Lights. This nine-day, eight-night land adventure features accommodations in the elegant **Hótel Borg** in the cosmopolitan capital of Reykjavik and the Icelandic-style **Siglo Hotel** — located in the heart of Siglufjörður.

Savor the warm healing waters of the Blue Lagoon on your first morning in this Nordic nation. Discover Iceland's most popular city on a tour of Reykjavik that includes visits to the Perlan, the National Museum and other iconic landmarks as you immerse yourself in the "Land of Fire and Ice." Feel the thrilling rush of the "Big Three" in the Golden Circle, including the Gullfoss waterfall, the Strokkur geyser and the cracks and gorges of the Atlantic Ocean Ridge. Play hide and seek around the dark towering lava formations of Dimmuborgir and explore the beauty and birdlife of Lake Mývatn. Step back in time in Siglufjörður, where towering mountains serve as a backdrop for the fascinating Herring Era Museum, just miles from the Arctic Circle.

Throughout your Iceland exploration, enjoy a series of guided evening excursions in search of the *aurora borealis*. If weather permits, you may look to the skies outside of Reykjavik and in the dark countryside that surrounds Siglufjörður, just below the Arctic, for one of the greatest light shows on Earth. This outstanding itinerary is brought to you by the Texas Exes travel program, which supports the association's mission of promoting and protecting The University of Texas at Austin and uniting its alumni around the world. While you do not have to be an alumnus of UT to travel with us, we do ask that all Flying Longhorns travelers have an active membership in the Texas Exes. Memberships start at just \$50.

The association is a huge proponent of continuing education and there is no better classroom than our world. Experience rich history and culture in the company of your fellow Longhorns! Are you ready for the adventure of a lifetime? We're standing by to answer all of your questions and/or take your reservation. Capacity is limited on this popular program and it may sell out quickly. Additional information about all Texas Exes Flying Longhorns trips can be found at travel@texasexes.org.

Best regards,

Your Flying Longhorns Travel Team,
Margaret, Janice and Leslie

**Contact the Flying Longhorns office to secure your spot:
1-800-594-3900 or travel@texasexes.org**



GUEST SPEAKER

Elin Björk Jónasdóttir

Icelandic native Elin Björk Jónasdóttir, head of the Icelandic Meteorological Office's (IMO) natural hazard monitoring and weather forecasting department, has considerable experience in land, aviation and marine forecasting. She has worked numerous severe weather events in Iceland for the past 15 years as a weather forecaster and coordinator, including volcanic eruptions, and has forecasted volcanic ash and gas distribution.

Jónasdóttir oversees training and recruiting new forecasters and natural hazard specialists. She also is involved in case studies, analysis, developing new tools for forecasting purposes and communicating weather-related hazards to civil protection authorities and the general public. In addition, she launched an impact-based weather warning system in 2017, when she became the IMO's head of weather services. She has been in her current role since 2023.

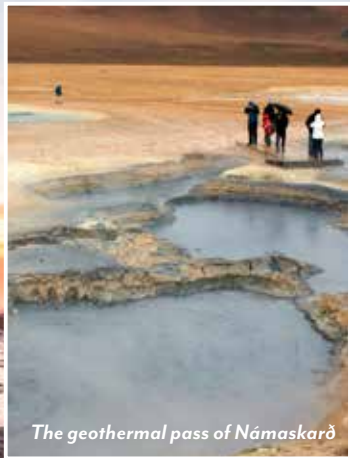
Elin earned a bachelor's degree in meteorology from the University of Oklahoma and a master's degree from the University of Oslo.

World of Natural Wonder



The Northern Lights illuminate "dark castle" lava formations at Dimmuborgir

Embark on a quest to see the otherworldly beauty of the naturally occurring *aurora borealis*, more commonly known as the Northern Lights. This phenomenon is caused when streams of plasma escape the sun's surface and disrupt Earth's magnetic field, resulting in ribbons of color shimmering in the night sky above the planet's polar regions. Experience opportunities to witness this along with other unparalleled geological riches of Iceland — home to 4,500 square miles of glaciers, 30 active volcanic systems, 800 hot springs and more than 10,000 waterfalls.



The geothermal pass of Námaskarð

INCLUDED FEATURES

- ◆ Transfers and luggage handling abroad if you purchased air through Gohagan & Company and your arrival(s)/departure(s) coincide with the scheduled group transfer(s).
- ◆ Experienced, English-speaking local guides for included excursions.
- ◆ Gratuities to local guides and drivers on included excursions and transfers.
- ◆ Complimentary bottled water in your hotel room.
- ◆ Experienced Gohagan & Company Travel Directors at your service.
- ◆ Complimentary use of an audio headset during guided excursions.
- ◆ Automatic \$250,000 flight insurance policy for each participant ticketed on flights by Gohagan & Company.
- ◆ Meals included as noted in the itinerary (B,L,R,D).



GOHAGAN & COMPANY



2025 | 9-DAY/8-NIGHT ITINERARY

Depart Home City

Day 1 | February 15

Depart your home city.

Reykjavík, Iceland

Day 2 | February 16

Arrive in Iceland's capital of Reykjavík and enjoy breakfast en route to the world-famous Blue Lagoon, surrounded by the spectacular views of the lava fields. Pack a swimsuit and water shoes in your carry-on if you'd like to take a restorative dip in these mineral-rich waters as your journey begins.

Depart the Blue Lagoon and head to the city center for a visit to Hallgrímskirkja, a monolithic Lutheran church that serves as an ode to modernism and Iceland's unique landscape. Enjoy lunch on your own before checking into the **Hótel Borg**, a newly renovated boutique hotel located just steps from the National Cathedral and the Icelandic Parliament. (B,R)

Reykjavík

Day 3 | February 17

Explore this Nordic nation's most popular city, beginning with a visit to hilltop Perlan (also known as The Pearl) — a museum with a rotating glass dome and 360° views.

After lunch, walk back through time at the National Museum of Iceland where you can trace the nation's history from the Settlement Age, then stroll the old neighborhood where you'll find time-worn lanes adorned with colorful historic houses and charming shops.

Tonight, weather permitting, enjoy your first guided excursion in search of the Northern Lights. (B)

Reykjavík/Golden Circle

Day 4 | February 18

Embark on Iceland's iconic Golden Circle tour and discover the nation's "Big Three," beginning with the scenic lava

plains at Þingvellir National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage site just 30 minutes outside of the city. Continue on to the spectacular "golden waterfall" at Gullfoss Falls.

From there, head to the geothermal region for lunch at Gullfoss Café in the Geysir area of Haukadalur.

Later this afternoon, watch the Strokkur geyser in action as it sprays a fountain of water and steam high into the air. On the road back to Reykjavík, see how Icelanders makes the most of geothermal forces during a short visit to Hellisheiði Power Plant. (B,L)

Reykjavík/Siglufjörður

Day 5 | February 19

Enjoy a scenic drive to Siglufjörður, the northern most town on the mainland. Located 28 miles from the Arctic Circle, this picturesque area — tucked between rugged mountains at the tip of the

Brimketill natural water pool in Reykjanes Peninsula





Tröllaskagi peninsula — is the herring fishing capital of the North Atlantic.

Stop along the way for lunch at the **Hotel Blönduós** before checking in to the Icelandic-style **Siglo Hotel**. This afternoon you will enjoy a visit to the Forest Lagoon, located in the Vaðlaskógur forest.

After dinner on your own this evening, you may embark on another quest for the Northern Lights. (B,L)

Siglufjörður/ Dimmuborgir/Mývatn/ Namaskarð/Godafoss

Day 6 | February 20

Visit Godafoss, the “waterfall of the gods,” where the wooden idols of Norse mythology were cast into the rushing waters as Icelanders voted to adopt Christianity.

Enjoy lunch at the idyllic **Fosshotel Mývatn Hotel** and savor the breathtaking scenery of Lake Mývatn and the tiny

craters of Skutustadir. See Namaskarð’s gurgling sulfur cauldrons and the “dark castle” lava formation of Dimmuborgir.

As night falls, prepare for a final outing in search of the *aurora borealis*. (B,L)

Siglufjörður

Day 7 | February 21

Step into Siglufjörður’s past as a tiny fishing hub at the Herring Era Museum, featuring a restored salt house and factory.

After lunch back at the hotel, you will travel to Hauganes, a small fishing village on the western coast of Eyjafjörður bay. This idyllic region is known for its stunning coastal scenery, whale watching and warm geothermal waters. Tour one of its historic fishing sites and enjoy a food tasting.

Return to the hotel and find a local spot for dinner on your own this evening. (B,L)

Siglufjörður/Hraunfossar/ Reykjavík

Day 8 | February 22

Journey back to Reykjavík, stopping along the way to see the Hraunfossar “lava waterfalls” in Borgarfjörður — distinctively turquoise blue waters that flow over the Hallmundarhraun lava field.

Savor a hardy lunch at the family-run Hraunsnef farmhouse restaurant, which offers an authentic Icelandic farm-to-table experience as part of your day-long excursion.

Upon arrival in Reykjavík, check in to the **Hótel Borg** with the afternoon at leisure to relax or explore the city at your own pace. Tonight, enjoy a Farewell Reception and Dinner at a local restaurant. (B,L,R,D)

Reykjavík/Return to Home City

Day 9 | February 23

Transfer to the airport for your flight back to your home city. (B)

Siglufjörður, the northernmost town of mainland Iceland





Hótel Borg

A sophisticated landmark in the heart of Reykjavík, **Hótel Borg** has been welcoming heads of state and travelers for nearly a century. Overlooking the gardens and cafes of Iceland's main square, the hotel is surrounded by such illustrious landmarks as the Parliament House and the National Cathedral. Revel in the understated elegance of Art Deco interiors, including custom furnishings, large bathtubs and heated marble floors. The lower level has a dedicated spa, while restaurants, cafes and shops are just steps away.



Siglo Hotel

Built into the Siglufjörður harbor, the **Siglo Hotel** offers classic rooms with views of the surrounding mountains and marina. Each room offers a romantic window seat to watch the world go by in this charming little Icelandic haven. Enjoy the hotel's many amenities, including outdoor spas and a great room with a fireplace to relax after a day of touring. Savor food and drink at the hotel's Sunna Restaurant and lobby bar or explore other restaurants located nearby.





2025 DEPARTURE DATE

February 15 to 23

(Tour Begins: February 16)

Standard Rate

Early Booking \$1,000 Savings*

\$5,195

\$4,195

***Early Booking Savings of \$1,000 are available when you book by 6/19/24 and pay in full at time of booking. If you pay only your deposit by early booking date, you still save \$500 per person.**

All rates are per person, based on double occupancy. Singles are available upon request for an additional \$1,560 and are subject to availability.

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Final payment due October 18, 2024

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The Northern Lights in Iceland

