

24 Hours in Reykjavík, Iceland



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Reykjavík, Iceland - *Stephanie Wilkins Photography*

Relaxing spas, breathtaking views and late-night partying make even the briefest of stop-overs in the Icelandic capital an unforgettable experience.

With its midnight sun and other-worldly volcanic landscapes, Iceland has become an increasingly popular tourist destination in the past decade. Many travelers who visit Iceland choose to do so as a stop-over on the way to or from another European destination, thanks to special deals offered by [Icelandair](#). From soaring church steeples to geothermal spas to all-night pub crawls, Reykjavík offers plenty of activity that will make even the shortest of visits a memorable one.

Laugavegur - Reykjavík's Main Shopping Street

Reykjavík is quite compact and easy to explore on foot. The main artery through the old town, Laugavegur is a logical starting point for anyone wanting to get a good sense of the town. Laugavegur and its intersecting streets offer plenty of high-end shopping as well as opportunities to buy an endless selection of Icelandic and Viking-themed souvenirs. The buildings here also provide a good example of traditional architecture. Many of the town's restaurants and bars are also centered in this area, offering a much-needed warm meal or cold beverage after your long flight.

Hallgrímskirkja

Perched high on a hill above old town Reykjavík, the modern Hallgrímskirkja church is visible from many points in Reykjavík. The massive interior is sparsely decorated with smooth stone walls and stunningly minimalist stained glass windows. The highlight of the church is the 75-meter high steeple, which you can visit for a small entrance fee. After a short elevator ride to the top, visitors are treated to an unbeatable view of Reykjavík's colorful rooftops and harbor below. Upon leaving the church, be sure not to miss the imposing statue of Leifur Eiríksson out front.

Runtur – The Traditional Icelandic Pub Crawl

If you want to get a true taste of Icelandic nightlife, you should schedule your stop-over in Reykjavík to include a Friday or Saturday night. Quiet and subdued Sunday through Thursday, the town comes alive on the weekends as its inhabitants party into the wee hours of the morning. Much of the activity takes place in the bars, clubs and pubs on or near Laugavegur. Come with lots of energy, as the party doesn't really get started until midnight and the fun can last until six or seven in the morning. Be sure to try some authentic Icelandic Brennivín, or "black death," a potent caraway-flavored schnapps that will bring some warmth back to your frozen toes on a cold arctic night.

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The Blue Lagoon

No trip to Iceland would be complete without a stop at the [Blue Lagoon](#). Set amidst a barren landscape of black lava flows, this geothermal spa has become Iceland's most famous tourist attraction. The milky blue waters are heated by a nearby geothermal power plant that looms in the distance. Open year-round regardless of weather, the lagoon allows visitors to enjoy silica mud treatments and massaging waterfalls as they watch clouds of steam rise from the soothing waters. Hundreds of thousands of weary travelers find rejuvenation here each year as they soak away the stress of flight delays and security checkpoints.

Towels and robes are available for rent, and the spa provides bathing and changing facilities, along with lockers for storing valuables during your visit. Food, beverages and spa treatments are available at additional cost. There is also a shop where travelers can purchase spa products to take home – just be sure to put them in your checked baggage so they're not confiscated at the airport. Located not far from Reykjavík's Keflavik airport, many visitors opt to stop for a soak either right after landing or right before boarding their departing flights. Trips from Reykjavík can also be arranged by most hotels.

While it is possible to spend days or even weeks exploring the natural beauty of Iceland, the capital city of Reykjavik offers plenty of excitement to keep you busy if you find yourself in town for only a short time. If your future travels take you to Europe, consider adding a day in Iceland for an unforgettable experience.

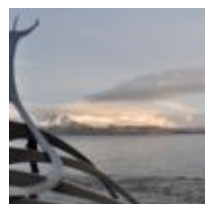
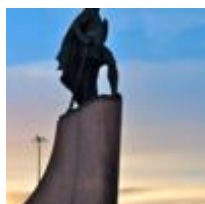
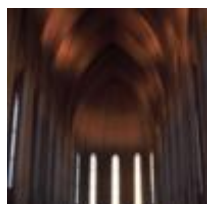
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