



Continuing Education  
University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point



# Iceland: Knitting Under the Northern Lights

September 20-24, 2022

Led By: Herdís Friðriksdóttir and Sue Kissinger



## **An Itinerary for Iceland: Knitting Under the Northern Lights** **September 20th–24th, 2022.**

This trip is custom made with a focus on introducing the history, culture, and rich tradition of knitting in Iceland. Our group will meet local sheep farmers, visit a local mini mill, and learn about the production of lamb wool. They will also participate in a workshop where we hand dye our own yarn with Icelandic herbs. There will be time to visit the more popular tourist sights on the Golden Circle and soak in a natural hot pool.



Lodging is in a beautiful guesthouse which our group will have all for ourselves. We can use the living room for knitting together or go to the hot tub on the patio.

### **Trip Leaders**

#### **Sue Kissinger**

Sue Kissinger has travelled extensively throughout the United States, Canada, Central America, Africa and Europe. . Sue recently retired from UWSP where she worked for 30 years and as a career specialist and academic adviser. Sue has a B.S. and M.S. in Forestry from UWSP. Sue and her husband Don have built their dream home on a lake in northwestern Wisconsin and look forward to hiking, kayaking, fishing and spoiling their grandchildren.

She has lead over 20 UWSP international trips, including eight to Iceland, her favorite place to visit! Six of Sue's Iceland tours have been in collaboration with local Icelandic guide Herdis Fridriksdottir. Herdis is the founder of Understand Iceland, and her bio is below...

#### **Herdís Friðriksdóttir**

Our private guide Herdís Friðriksdóttir lives on the Golden Circle and knows the area well. She is a keen knitter and made a living of knitting wool sweaters while living in Denmark years ago. Herdís will teach us about culture and history and she will give us our own Icelandic names!

### **Day 1 – 20th September - Tuesday**

#### **Arrival - Sightseeing**

- Pick-up at KEF airport (early morning).
- Short guided tour around Reykjavík, stops at a few popular tourist destinations.
- Visit a wool shop to stock up on yarn, needles, and recipes.
- Lunch in a restaurant overlooking Reykjavík.
- Drive to the Golden Circle and check-in at the guesthouse, with time to rest.
- Enjoy a home cooked meal and an evening of knitting and sharing stories.
- Overnight stay in the guesthouse.

## **Day 2 – 21st September - Wednesday**

### **The Golden Circle**

- Breakfast at the guesthouse.
- Early risers can visit the local hot spring for steam baked rye bread for the breakfast table.
- Explore Gullfoss waterfall and Geysir hot spring.
- Visit a local farmer who designs her own wool garments.
- Lunch at Friðheimar tomato farm – tomato soup with freshly baked bread.
- Visit a local eco village where residents make handmade art out of recycled material.
- Visit Skálholt Cathedral and learn the love story of the bishop's daughter who fell in love with the wrong man.
- Enjoy a home cooked meal and an evening of knitting and sharing stories.
- Overnight stay in the guesthouse.

## **Day 3 – 22nd September - Thursday**

### **The Wolen Circle - the local farmer**

- Breakfast at the guesthouse.
- A journey around the Woolen Circle.
- Visit Uppspuni Mini Mill and the local farmer Hulda (her name means “the hidden”).
- Learn about the Icelandic sheep and the uniqueness of the Icelandic wool.
- Lunch in a local restaurant in a small town nearby.
- Visit the original wool gallery located in an old school – meet the experts in wool and knitting design.
- Soak in a natural hot pool with a chance to float around aimlessly or have a glass of wine.
- Enjoy a home cooked meal and an evening of knitting and sharing stories.
- Overnight stay in the guesthouse.

## **Day 4 – 23rd September - Friday**

### **The Wolen Circle - the hand dyeing workshop**

- Breakfast at the guesthouse.
- Head to the South Coast where we will visit Guðrún Bjarnadóttir.
- Workshop for 5 hours on hand dyeing yarn with Icelandic herbs.
- Participants will learn the dyeing process from start to finish.
- Included is a textbook in English and 1 dock of yarn of your choice.
- We take a break to have a lunch in the nearby town.
- Workshop continued.
- Visit a volcano crater.
- Nice farewell dinner in a local restaurant.



## **Day 5 – 24th September - Saturday**

### **Depart**

- Breakfast at the guesthouse and check-out.
- Drive to Reykjanes peninsula.
- Explore Gunnuhver hot spring, the bridge between the continents, and a lava rock pool.
- Lunch in a local restaurant.
- Drop off at the airport with plenty of time to get the Tax-free refund.



### **Information on the tour**

#### Lodging:

Our group will stay in a lovely guesthouse in double/twin rooms with private bath, breakfast included. We will have the whole guesthouse for ourselves, and we will take care of our own breakfast.

#### Transportation:

Transportation includes pickup and drop-off from airport and drive to every destination.

#### Activities:

The activities are all easy and don't require fitness level.

### **Pricing: \$2,699 per person**

#### Included in price:

- Lodging in double/twin rooms with private bathrooms. Breakfast included.
- All meals, breakfast, lunch, and dinner every day. (except for breakfast for the first day)
- Activities included: Secret Lagoon, Lunch at Friðheimar Tomato Farm, admission fee to different natural sites.

#### Not Included in price:

- Roundtrip airfare.
- Extra purchases (such as souvenirs alcoholic beverages, snacks etc.).
- Travel insurance.



## Cancellation Policy

Since we make financial commitments in advance, no refunds will be issued for cancellations less than 90 days prior to the trip. Cancellations received more than 90 days before the trip will receive a full refund minus \$99 non-refundable deposit. However, you may send a substitute in your place. Please email us at [uwspceweb@uwsp.edu](mailto:uwspceweb@uwsp.edu) to inform us of a cancellation or substitution. You may wish to consider purchasing travel insurance through another vendor.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Where will the group stay?**

Our group will stay in one place, in the guesthouse “The White house” on the Golden Circle. It is a lovely home inside a small village in a very safe environment. The house has been renovated so every room has a private bathroom. There is a large kitchen, a nice living room and dining area, and a patio with a hot tub!

### **Do I have to be a detergent knitter to participate and enjoy the trip?**

No, you do not need to be a committed knitter. It is enough to enjoy learning about the traditions of knitting, about wool, and Icelandic sheep. There are plenty of activities and learning experiences apart from knitting, although the group will sit around and knit in the evening. If you don't have anything on your knitting pins, you can still enjoy the evenings by sharing stories or soaking in the hot tub.

### **What will we eat?**

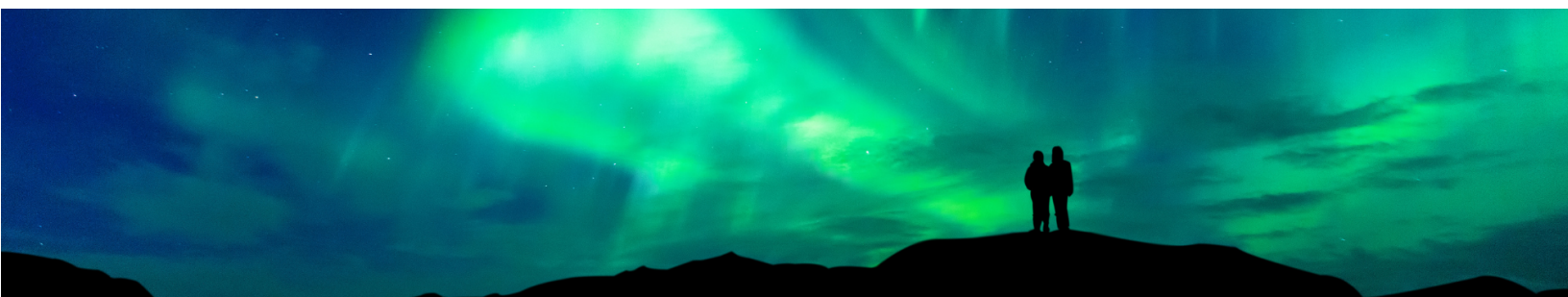
There will be a breakfast buffet in the guesthouse with local ingredients, fresh fruit, freshly baked bread, cheese, yogurt, skyr, muesli, eggs, coffee, tea and juice.

Lunches will be in local restaurants. All meals will be ordered beforehand, and the meals will be varied, fish, vegetarian, or meat.

Dinners will be home cooked, and participants can join in the cooking. The last dinner will be a nice pre-ordered meal in a local restaurant.

### **I have food allergies –food restrictions. Will that be a problem?**

No, that will not be a problem. Just send an email to [herdis@understandiceland.is](mailto:herdis@understandiceland.is) with a list of your restrictions or allergies and it will be taken care of.



### **Could I stay in a single room?**

The guesthouse only has one single room, unfortunately.

### **Will there be a lot of time spent driving around?**

No, the longest journey on a bus will be to and from the capital area, around an hour. The trips during the days will be mostly 30 minute rides.

### **Will there be a lot of walking?**

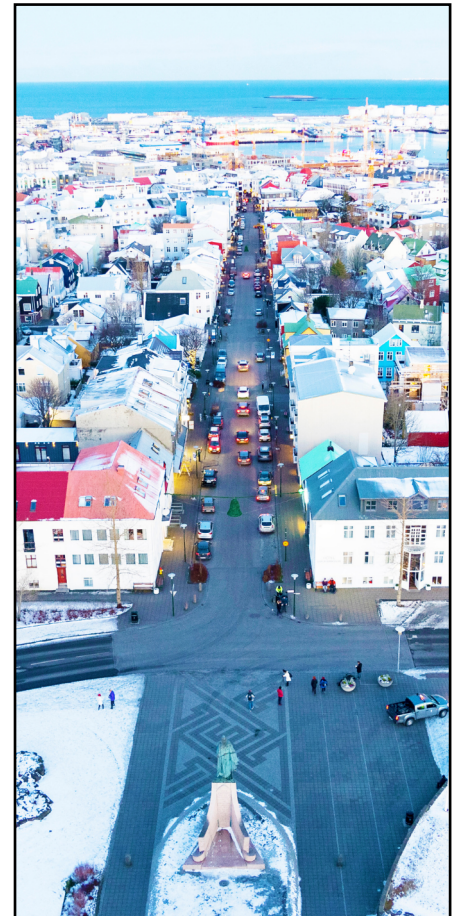
No, the time spent walking is very limited, maybe 10 minutes at the most. You can however take walks in the local village of the guesthouse in the evenings or early mornings.

### **Will I see the Northern Lights?**

There are no guarantees for seeing the Northern Lights as they might not be visible during the trip. Northern light exposure depends on the solar wind and solar activity cycle, and of course on cloud cover. On an overcast night the lights will not be visible. The lights are most active around the equinox, in Sept/Oct and March/April so there is a good chance to see them. During the trip we will keep a close eye on the aurora borealis forecast and scout for the lights whenever they might be visible. The guesthouse is in a small village in a rural area so light pollution will not disrupt the view of the Northern lights.

### **Some Things to Keep in Mind:**

- Alcohol is very expensive in Iceland. If you want to bring alcohol along on the trip, I recommend that you buy it at the duty free store at the airport. There are some limits to how much you can bring but the staff at the airport will help you figure it out.
- Almost all shops, restaurants, and cafés accept credit cards. Many of them do not accept American Express however. They will always ask for your pin number so please remember it. There are ATMs available but might not be in the area you will be travelling in. There is an ATM at the airport in case you need cash.
- The Northern Lights are a naturally occurring phenomenon that no-one can control. Seeing them is always dependent on weather conditions and Northern Lights activity on any given date. We will do our best for you to see them! [Daily aurora forecast.](#)





## What to pack for your Iceland trip

The weather in Iceland changes constantly. In fact, Icelanders have a saying “If you don’t like the weather, just wait 5 minutes!” [Check the long term weather forecast for Iceland](#). This will give you an idea of what to expect in terms of temperature and precipitation during your stay.

During your stay in Iceland, you can expect the temperatures to range from 35°F-50°F. There could be anything from bright blue skies to gray and drizzling with wind, so come prepared for everything. Dressing in layers is the way to stay comfortable.

We recommend bringing a warm sweater, jacket, hat, scarf and mittens as the days might be cool. Here are some suggestions:

### Packing list—not an exhaustive list—feel free to add other items

- Lightweight shirts (Short sleeved and sleeveless)
- Long sleeved shirts
- Long pants and jeans
- Long johns
- Lounge pants (Sweatpants/yoga pants)
- Underwear/bra/PJ’s
- Hiking shoes
- Walking shoes
- Socks
- Fleece and warm sweater
- Light down jacket
- Rain gear (jacket and pants) Not plastic ponchos
- Slippers
- Warm hat, gloves/mittens, scarf
- Bandana
- Swimsuit
- Toiletries
- Please bring your refillable water bottle as Iceland has some of the best drinking water!
- Earplugs and sleeping mask
- Chargers and electric adapters for Europe

