

Iceland –West fjords

10 – 19 June 2019

Expedition Outline

Iceland, is the most sparsely populated country in Europe and one of the last true wildernesses. We will start our expedition from Isafjordur, which is about one hour flight north from Reykjavik. We aim to explore the West Fjords, living and camping from our kayaks. The area is situated very close to the Arctic Circle and is blessed with 24 hours of light during the summer. We will be there during the summer solstice so it never gets completely dark. You will get the chance to see abundant wildlife and dramatic scenery as well as to camp in truly remote sites, and to visit some of the old farming and fishing villages where people carved out a living. This truly is a unique expedition and an adventure of a lifetime. **Iceland is different from any other place you have paddled.**

Experience needed

To get the most out of the expedition you should be an intermediate sea kayaker, comfortable in conditions associated with force 4 winds. If you have any questions regarding the required ability please feel free to contact us. The area is very remote and wild, so being comfortable camping is essential. Even though we will be there in midsummer it is still likely to be cold weather, and it can be wet, cold and windy from glacier driven winds .You will need to be prepared for this, and to bring ample clothing and weatherproof gear. Tents and sleeping bags must be of a decent standard to withstand strong winds and cold

What is included:

The expedition fee includes all of the kayaking equipment needed:

Buoyancy aids /PFD

Spray decks

Paddles

Sea kayaks

Experienced guide with area knowledge offering advice, assistance, planning and safety throughout the trip.

Not included:

Flights to Reykjavik and on to Isafjordur.

Accommodation, airport transfers, camping gear, food and drinks.

We will have the opportunity to pick up supplies in Isafjordur, which has several well-stocked supermarkets. Costs are slightly higher than UK but it really is not worth bringing food, unless you favour freeze-dried.

Standard screw top gas canisters for stoves can be purchased in Isafjordur, but white spirit is scarce and extremely expensive. In order to ensure that adequate gas is available for the expedition, please inform us of the number and size of canisters you need to buy. You should make sure you have adequate travel insurance. The weather and conditions in Iceland can be extreme, and can prevent paddling and flights.

Cost

£1500

Location and times

There are direct flights from the domestic airport in the capital with Iceland Air to Isafjordur each morning and evening, from the domestic terminal in Reykavek. This is a substantial distance from the International Terminal (Keflavik) and you have to catch a bus to the BSI bus terminal, and then a minibus or a short taxi ride to the domestic airport. Allow at least one hour to get through immigration and collect your bags and an hour for the bus, and try to be at the domestic terminal about 1 hour before departure. So we suggest an absolute minimum of 4 hours between your estimated landing time at Keflavik and take off for the internal flight, in case of delays. You can buy bus tickets inside the terminal in the arrivals area. Flybus and Airport Express (Gray Line) are the largest operators. The flights from Isafjordur can also be cancelled due to fog or wind.

We recommend arriving in Isafjordur on the 10th, which is the day before we launch to allow for transport delays, buying food and preparing your personal kit. There are flights each morning and each evening to and from Reykjavik. There are B&Bs and a campsite in the town.

We will meet up at 9 am on the 11th at the Kayak Centre in Isafjordur to go through the plan, pack boats and we aim to be on the water around midday. We will be back at Isafjordur on the 18th ready to fly out on the morning flight on 19th of June. This gives us 9 days away from civilisation, however we may not be able to paddle every day due to the nature of the environment.

What to bring

Passport

Travel insurance

Dry bags – various sizes

A 3 or 4 season tent

Sleeping mat and sleeping bag – suitable for cold conditions 3-4 season

Stove and pans

At least two changes of warm clothes, warm hats, gloves and water-proofs

Paddling kit – suitable for cold water paddling!

Water temperature is around 6-8°C and so poggies and/or gloves are essential. We also suggest a large jacket or storm cag that will fit over your buoyancy aid to help you regulate temperature on the water. Please be aware the weather in the West Fjords is very unpredictable and can go from +20 to 0°C.

We suggest paddling in a dry suits or Paddling trousers with a dry top with a choice of either thin or thick thermals depending on the day.

We do not recommend paddling in a wet suit, however if you choose to then bring extra clothing, and ensure you have good coverage for your feet – Sealskin or similar gortex socks and thick paddling shoes

Sponge

Sun cream

Insect repellent

Sunglasses

Camera

Personal first aid kit with personal medication.

Reading material if the elements keep us of the water.

A suitable bag to carry your kit up the beach (IKEA bag).

Suitable footwear for walking in the conditions and changing into at the end of the day

Iceland has cell phone reception in many (but not all) places. Ensure you have sufficient power banks.

Money, as there are two cafes we may be able to visit and restaurants in town before we leave.

Prepare for 8 breakfasts - 8 lunches – 8 dinners - plus snacks, hot drinks and soups.

There will be the opportunity to fish so bring a hand line or fishing rod, this is not a guaranteed way of supplementing your food.

We bring adequate safety kit however if you are a qualified first aider/medical professional please inform us or if you understand how to use safety equipment such as tow lines then please bring them along – a group can never have enough safety equipment on a trip!

If you have kit that you prefer (left hand paddle) or familiar with and fits you comfortably please bring it with you – We always travel with our personal paddles, PFD and clothing.