**Exploring Iceland on Horseback**

**Landmannalaugar Expedition**

**Behind the mountains**

**Dates 2017**

**Tour B August 15 – 21 (7 days / 6 riding days)**

Please note that this tour can also be booked as a longer version!

Tour A August 15 – 26 (12 days / 11 riding days)

Join us and our new partner, the well known horse breeders and trainers Kiddi and Birna on a 7 days tour to the fabulous area of Landmannalaugar and Fjallabak. We travel in the traditional style with a large herd of free running horses and stay overnight in rustic mountain huts. We ride into the stunning Fjallabak (“behind the mountains“) area. We couldn´t possibly think of a more wonderful area for riding than the wonderful tracks through huge lavafields and colourful rhyolite mountains with breathtaking views. We will spend the whole day hiking and bathing in the famous Landmannalaugar valley with its colourful liparit (rhyolite) mountains and naturally hot bathing spring. Let´s discover the new black lavafields of Laugahraun and the blue Peak of Mt. Bláhnjúkur with terrific views of this incredible mountain reserve.

This tour is only recommended for experienced riders that are capable and happy to ride for 6-9 hours/20 - 55 km a day. You should feel comfortable riding in all gaits over rough terrain and be willing to follow the speed of the free running herd. Join us on this thrilling ride on wonderfull soft tölting horses. Probably a little bit of heaven for every horse mad person to be able to travel on horseback through this stunning area with fellow Icelandic and international riders!

**Type:**   Multi days tour with a free running herd
**Duration:**  7 days/6 riding days – please note that this tour can also be booked as a longer version.
**Level of expertise required:** ONLY experienced riders in good physical shape.
**Area:**  South Iceland
**Accommodation:**  Mostly sleepingbag accommodation in rustic mountain huts. One night in hotel rooms with private facilities. The accommodation in Reykjavik is not included but can be arranged.

**Meals:** Full board during the ride starting/ending with lunch/picnic lunch on the first and last day.

**Max:** 14 guests (Min. 6 guests)

**Guide:** English speaking. Other languages may be on offer upon request.

**Group:** International

**Maximum Weight:** 110 kg

**Detailed itinerary**

**Group B: 7 days / 6 riding days: August 15 – 21**

**Day 1: 15.08 – Tuesday: Reykjavik – Bjarkarland (Introduction) – Seljalandsfoss – Fell**

Pick up at 9 am in Reykjavík in the morning. Pick up at your accommodation in Reykjavík can be arranged between 8 and 9 am. Please be ready at the earliest pick up time and already in riding gear. Short drive through the lush green farming area of South Iceland to Bjarkarland, home to our lovely host. Before lunch there will be a welcome meeting with a thorough introduction into the tour details and the Icelandic tack and special gaits of the Icelandic Horse. Look forward to meeting your Icelandic and international tour- and team members. After lunch we ride to the famous Seljalandsfoss waterfall. One of the interesting things about this waterfall is the fact that visitors can walk behind it into a small cave. From the waterfall we ride over the old brigde over Markarfljót glacial river and towards the beautiful Fljótshlíð farming area where we leave the horses at Fell but we drive to Hotel Fljótshlíð nearby and stay overnight in rooms with private facilities. Riding distance: ca. 25 km.

**Accommodation at Hotel in Fljótshlíð area**: Made up beds in double rooms with private facilities.

**Day 2: 16.08 - Wednesday:  Fell – Einhyrningur**

After a good breakfast buffet we drive to our horses at Fell and start our ride alongside the Markarfljót River. We ascend into the mountains to Einhyrningur Mountain Cabin where we spend the night. Enjoy the great view of Eyjafjallajökull Glacier and Thorsmörk Nature Park. (Riding distance ca. 25 km)

**Accommodation: Einhyrningur mountain hut. Sleepingbag accommodation in rustic mountain hut.**

**Day 3: 17.08. – Thursday: Einhyrningur – Mosar – Markárgljúfur Canyon**

This day takes us across the mighty Markarfljot River (on a bridge). We ride to the scenic Mosar area. This sensitive grazing area in the highlands pleases our horses and we spend the night in a mountain cabin. At the cabin we leave the herd behind and continue on horseback to explore the area some more. We ride along the majestic Markarfljótsgljúfur canyon which was carved out by the Markarfljót River, one of South Iceland’s largest rivers. The 100km long river, whose main sources are located in Mýrdalsjökull and Eyjafjallajökull Glaciers, has an enormous 1200km2 catchment area. Look forward to breathtaking views! (Riding distance ca. 25 km)

**Accommodation: Mosar mountain hut. Sleepingbag accommodation in rustic mountain hut.**

**Day 4: 18.08. – Friday: Mosar – Hvanngil**

Another beautiful day awaits us while we ride behind the mountains from Mosar to Hvanngil. On the way we might meet some hikers who are hiking the famous Laugavegur trekking route from Landmannalaugar to Þórsmörk. Why hike – when you can ride! We will ride over vast ash and lava fields with spectacular views of green moss covered mountains. We have to cross the river Kaldaklofskvísl before we arrive in the charming Hvanngil area, a green oasis surrounded by mountains. We stay overnight in a cozy mountain hut and take an afternoon walk to the mountaintop overlooking the beautiful Fjallabak area with amazing glacier views! (Riding distance ca. 20 km) Tonight we need to prepare for two long riding days!

**Accommodation: Hvanngil hut. Sleepingbag accommodation in rustic mountain hut.**

**Day 5: 19.08. – Saturday: Hvanngil -  Mælifellssandur – Hólaskjól**

We follow the famous Fjallabak Trail across the Mælifellssandur, a black sand desert north of Myrdalsjökull Glacier. Through Álftavatnskrokur grazing area and past Lake Alftavatn we continue our ride and cross several small glacier fed rivers on our way to the cabin at Lambaskarðshólar. This is another riding day that features an ever changing landscape. We end our ride at Hólaskjól cabin, close to River Skafta. Hólaskjól is located at the foot of Lambaskarðshólar hills, at the edge of a lavafield originating from an eruption in Eldgjá during the years 934-940. Hólaskjól is in a peaceful, sheltered area with beautiful surroundings. Only a 5 minute walk away is a very impressive waterfall in the river Syðri Ófæra. Hot showers are available tonight. (Riding distance ca. 55 km)

**Accommodation: Hólaskjól Mountain Hut. Sleepingbag accommodation. Shower on site.**

**Day 6: 20.08. – Sunday: Hólaskjól – Landmannahellir**

Today will be another long but stunning ride when we ride towards the Landmannalaugar area and to Landmannahellir mountain hut. We ride the old authentic briddle path, the Landmannaleið, lying between the settlements of Land and Skaftártunga parishes which goes right through the Fjallabak Nature Reserve. Our view will be of colourful rhyolite mountains, dark lava fields, rock formations and incredibly green moss in many shades. We end the day in Landmannahellir hut, which has a long tradition as a highland resting place – for horsemen and autumn sheep gatherers alike. (Riding distance 55 km).

**Accommodation: Landmannahellir hut for 2 nights. Sleepingbag accommodation. Shower on site.**

**Day 7: 21.08 – Monday: Landmannalaugar**

This will be a well deserved resting day for our horses after two very long riding days. We enjoy a good breakfast and will go by bus to the famous Landmannalaugar area where we will spend the whole day to explore this magnificient area without any time rush. We will be walking through the narrow lava field tracks – to remote mountain sites places where only our feet will take us! Afterwards we will enjoy a sumptous lunch on site and enjoy the bath in the hot river - truly an once- in – a – lifetime experience. In the late afternoon we return by bus to Reykjavík. Drop off at BSÍ or accommodation. We are more than happy to arrange your Reykjavík accommodation for you!

Exploring Iceland reserves the right to alter routes, itineraries or timetables should the necessity arise. The estimated duration of tours as indicated by km or timing can change according to road or weather conditions.

**Please make sure you also read our Useful information!**

<http://www.exploringiceland.is/useful-information-about-riding-tours.html>

**Included Tour B August 15 – 21 (7 days / 6 riding days)**

* Transfer from/to Reykjavík on first day and last day. All transfers during the tour.
* 1 night in double rooms with private facilities.
* 5 nights in sleeping bag accommodation in mountain huts during the tour.
* Full pension during the tour starting with picnic lunch on the first day and ending with picnic lunch on the last day.
* 6 x riding days according to programme.
* Landmannalaugar fee.
* English speaking guide. Other languages may be on offer upon request.

**Price per person: Please see separate pricelist!**

**Horseback Riding in Iceland is a thrilling adventure not be beaten by anything!**

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO MEETING YOU IN THE SADDLE!**

Your Exploring Iceland Team

