



Southwest Iceland & the Golden Circle

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- ➔ Við Fjöruborðið (p126)
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Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Ion Luxury Adventure Hotel (p109)
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- ➔ Héraðsskólinn (p109)
- ➔ Garðar (p150)

Why Go?

Black beaches stretch along the Atlantic, geysers spout from geothermal fields, and waterfalls glide across escarpments while brooding volcanoes and glittering ice caps score the inland horizon. The beautiful southwest has many of Iceland's most legendary natural wonders, so it's a relatively crowded and increasingly developed area. The Golden Circle (a tourist route comprising three famous sights: Þingvellir, Geysir and Gullfoss) draws by far the largest crowds outside of Reykjavík, but visit during off-hours or venture further afield and you'll find awe-inspiring splendour.

The further you go the better it gets. Tourist faves like the silica-filled Blue Lagoon and the earth-rending parliament at Þingvellir are just beyond the capital. Churning seas lead to the Vestmannaeyjar archipelago offshore. At the region's far reaches lie the powerful Hekla and Eyjafjallajökull volcanoes, hopping Skógar and Vík, and the hidden valleys of Þórsmörk and Landmannalaugar.

Road Distances (km)

Selfoss	100				
Gullfoss	156	71			
Landmannalaugar	230	130	147		
Vík	226	130	177	218	
Reykjavík	51	57	113	185	186
	Keflavík	Selfoss	Gullfoss	Landmannalaugar	Vík



Southwest Iceland & the Golden Circle Highlights

- 1 Marvel at black basalt columns, sea stacks and rocky buttes on **Reynisfjara** (p149), near buzzy Vík
- 2 Set sail for **Vestmannaeyjar** (p153),

- with its zippy puffins and small town tucked between lava flows
- 3 Camp in **Pórsmörk** (p146), a lush kingdom surrounded by brooding glaciers

- 4 Explore the **Pjósárdalur** (p129), a valley of raw terrain and Saga settlements carved by the powerful Pjósá river
- 5 Traverse caramel-coloured peaks at **Landmannalaugar**