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July 2001



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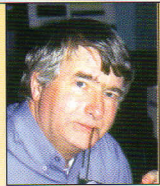
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Iceland Explorer



Well, nobody went to dinner courtesy of Iceland Explorer. There were a couple of guesses concerning the song and artists we were looking for, but none of them were correct. Actually, the closest to a correct answer we received was on June 18th. The E-Mail said, "you probably already have a winner." We didn't, but they were wrong too. The contest, found on the weather page, asked the title and artists of a song. The correct answers were the title of the song was Summertime, Summertime. The group name was the Jamies. It was a 60's "one hit wonder".

This edition of the Explorer focuses on travelling around Iceland. Some of the best spots to visit are just a short drive

from Reykjavik, others a longer drive, a boat cruise, or perhaps a short plane ride.

All of them are unique, many, one of a kind. If you haven't been to places like Snæfellsness, Akureyri, Husavik, the Fjords of the East, and a host of others, all I can say is what on earth are you waiting for? This issue has everything from golf, to rafting to photography tours and even a very unique story on Icelandic women from a very special guest writer who would know all about them.

Enjoy this edition of Iceland Explorer. The next issue will be out on August 3rd and will feature the Westman Islands as the Puffins learn to fly in August.

Bob Murray

IN THIS ISSUE

ROUGHING IT IN THE COUNTRY

Icelandic WOMEN EXPLAINED
(you decide)

WHITE WATER - WHITE RIVER

LANDSCAPE OF DREAMS

ON THE EDGE OF TIME

FORE !! times 24

**...what more could you ask...
but there is more,
and it's all free**

EXPLORER. Vol 4, no. 4.

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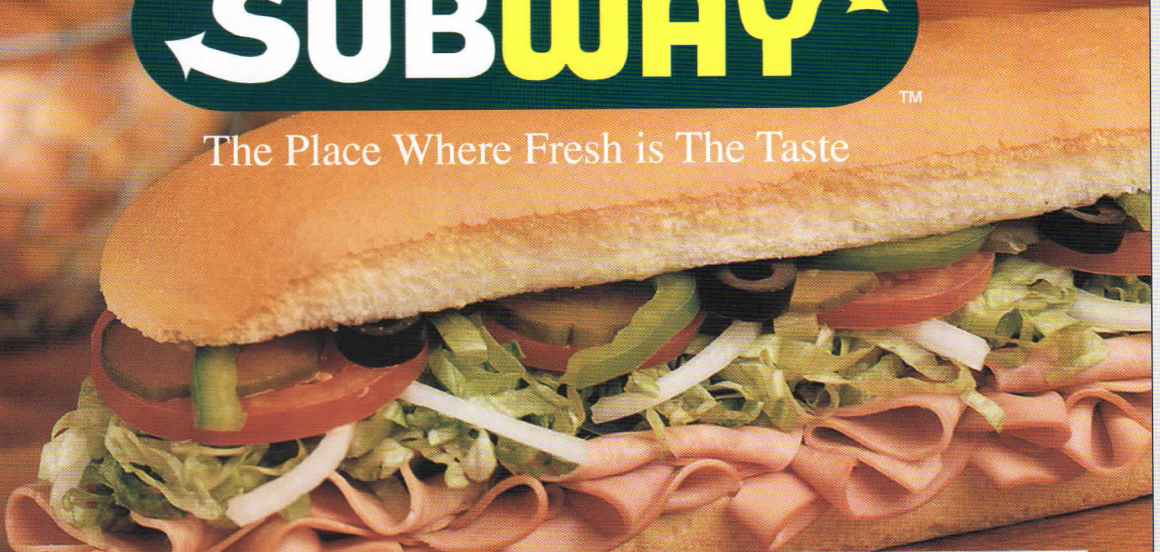
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ON THE EDGE... OF TIME

No matter what your interests or pleasure, Iceland probably has just what you're looking for and you really don't have to do much looking to find it.



This edition of the Explorer talks about sports and travelling to various parts of the country. Many of the things Iceland has to offer can be a short walk from your hotel or guesthouse. That depends of course on where you're staying. In Hafnarfjörður for example, a walk across the street will get you to fishing or whale watching and another short walk and you're on a very challenging golf course.

It's pretty much the same story in places such as Stykkisholmur, about three hours from Reykjavik by car or bus, Akureyri up north and Husavik just a little further east.

Speaking of Stykkisholmur, this is a great "headquarters" as a starting point for another great Icelandic adventure. Surely

you've heard about the book, perhaps seen the movie called Journey to the Center of the Earth. One thing you probably didn't know was that the author, Jules Verne, had never been to Iceland. Yet the mountain of which he speaks had been here for some time. If you didn't already know it, the mountain where the book's party of adventurers starts their journey and quest to reach the center of the earth is Snæfellsjökull, Snæfells mountain, an extinct, snow covered volcano, rising some 5,600 feet above the earth. The entire journey along this peninsula starting in Stykkisholmur, is one of incredible photographic beauty. Among the sights is Eldborg just about 30 miles from Borganes, where the energetic can climb to the rim of the 60- meter, (over 200 foot) top for some spectacular views. The number of and different types of activities from Stykkisholmur heading west to the mountain are numerous to mention. Simply think of something, it's probably close by. As you travel along the ring road to the glacier, you come to several small towns along the way each unique and just a little bit different than the one before it. The best thing to do is to plan a couple of days just photographing and staying at a small hotel or one of the guesthouses in the area.



FJÖRÚKRÁIN

The Restaurants

The Cuisine

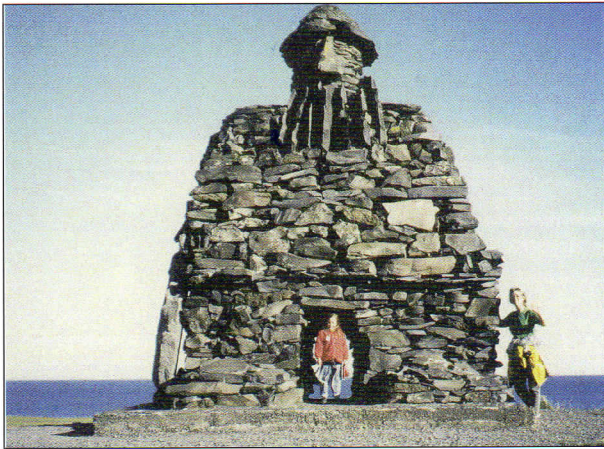
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From your hotel room, on a clear winter or summer night, a full moon can eerily light up the snow-capped glacier to give it a glow like you would never imagine. In those winter months, add to that mix, a possible Northern Lights display if you are somewhat lucky and you have found something that cannot be seen or duplicated anywhere else on earth. For a time, in the dark of a night sky full of stars, you might think you have left this one. In a few words, it is one of the most awesome sights you will ever see. You can begin your ascent up the glacier right to the 5500-foot summit, by snowmobile or snow-cat along with an experienced guide. What's the view like from the summit? Well, certainly the words on a clear day you can see forever come to mind. Just let your imagination run wild. After that, go for it, only in Iceland.



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MWR TOURS: July 2001

The tours listed in this article depart from the NATO Base tour office at the Naval Air Station in Keflavik. These same tours and others are available either by contacting your hotel desk lobby or from the tourist information centers in Reykjavik. Eligible participants for the tours listed below should contact the base tour office for complete details, prices and departure times of the trips on the dates listed.

SUNDAY, JULY 1ST & 29TH:
WHITE WATER RAFTING

SUNDAY, JULY 1ST:
HORSEBACK RIDING TOUR

THURSDAY EVENINGS IN JULY:
EVENING HORSEBACK RIDING

SATURDAY, JULY 7TH & 21ST:
THE GOLDEN CIRCLE TOUR

SUNDAY, JULY 8TH:
MOUNT KEILER HIKE

SATURDAY, JULY 14TH:
BORSMORK TOUR



SUNDAY, JULY 15TH:
DOG SLED ADVENTURE

WEEKEND: 14 — 15 JULY:
WEEKEND CAMPING AND CAVE EXPLORING

SUNDAY, JULY 22ND:
OCEAN KAYAKING

FRIDAY, JULY 27TH:
THE VIKING FEAST AT VIKING VILLAGE

SATURDAY, JULY 28TH:
WEST ICELAND TOUR

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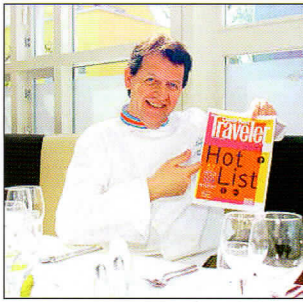
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**LAXNES
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FARM**



July 2001

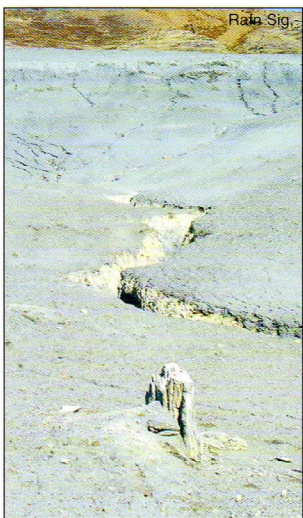
HALL ON THE "HOT LIST":



Icelandic and French trained TV Chef, Siggí Hall has now placed Icelandic cuisine on the world map garnering a listing in Condé Nast. This is the international magazine that rates the TOP 100 restaurants in the WORLD, with a circulation of close to one million readers. While it is true that it is extremely difficult to get a bad meal in Iceland at almost any restaurant, Siggí Hall has raised

the ante to an international level with his inventive creations. CNN has also been there and said, "The food is amazing". Iceland Explorer Tours sends visitors there regularly and they all say, almost identical things. One comment was, "It's simply the best". Congratulations to the Restaurant Siggí Hall at the Hotel Óðinsvél in Reykjavík.

A GENTLE SHAKE; BUT A QUAKE:



One more, small reminder that you are in a place that is very much alive occurred on June 14th at about 7:30 PM. An area in the southwest corner of Lake Kleifarvatn on the Reykjanes peninsula a small earthquake measuring 3.3 on the Richter scale occurred. This area is just a few miles as the crow flies from the International Airport and about 10 straight-line miles from Reykjavík. A few folks in Hafnarfjörður reported feeling the mild shake. Most had no clue until they saw it on the news that night. Right up to press-time there were very minor tremors still being reported occasionally in the same area, but you had to be there to feel them.

THE EARTH IN ICELAND IS NOT THE ONLY SHAKY THING:

On June 21st, the Icelandic Krona fell to an all time low of over 108 to the dollar. At that point, the Iceland Central Bank stepped in and sold 24 million U.S Dollars on the currency market. That caused the Krona to rise by 3.3%. The fixed rate the next morning was back to around 104 to the dollar. By the end of June the slippage of the krona was still evident but considerably more stable. The last reported rate at press time was just over 105 lkr to each \$1.00.

GOING DOWN !!

Haraldur Örn Ólafsson has successfully scaled the first of his quests to climb the seven peaks.

The first being Denali, perhaps better known as Mount McKinley in Alaska. Mother Nature having a say, in the matter however forced Örn and others to suddenly abandon most of their equipment on and near the summit of the mountain when a sudden blizzard hit on Tuesday, June 12th. After a rapid descent from the mountain-top to the base camp, the parties were flown to Anchorage where they were last reported resting comfortably.



ICELAND REJOINS INTERNATIONAL WHALING COMMISSION:

After leaving the IWC in 1992, the Icelandic Minister of Fisheries announced that Iceland was to rejoin the International Whaling Commission once again. The announcement came on Friday, June 8th. So far, reaction is mixed locally, concerning the decision. Iceland re-entered the commission with a zero quota for whale hunting, meaning that it will not resume hunting whales anytime soon.

Reaction from Paul Watson, the environmental activist of Sea Shepherd was quick, saying that if Iceland did resume whaling anytime, they could expect to see his ship, the Ocean Warrior in their harbour.



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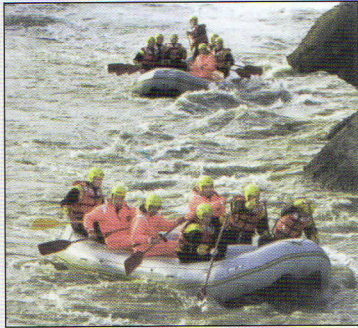


White Water

White River

Rapid Reaction

So, here you are in Iceland. You've got a few days to spend, perhaps, if you're in the military a few years to spend. Iceland is a beautiful country. You can see that from your Reykjavik Hotel room or after one trip around the Golden Circle or a swim the Blue Lagoon.



Nowadays, folks come to Iceland looking for a lot of different things. Some simply come because it is a different destination and many get off the airplane having no idea of what to expect. But, let's just take a hypothetical you, looking for excitement, adventure and something very different or extremely unique. You want to put a little fun in your life and you've already tried dancing. Well, there's a cruise on a glacial lagoon. That's certainly different, a great deal of fun and just a day away, more if you really want to take it leisurely, slow and easy. Yes, let's mark that down, we have to do that.

How about trying a little something different, something with a bit more of a "rush".

Ocean kayaking; yes, that could be the ticket. There could be just one occasional small problem here when you are ready to tackle this activity. Remember, the ocean, is the ocean. The seas just off the south coast of Iceland where the ocean kayaking, "happens" can from time to time get a bit rough. Rough is OK, that's where the "rush" would come into play. But, every once in awhile, the seas of south Iceland can get downright ugly, even on a sunny but occasionally very windy day.

Next choice. A very safe, but extreme water sport would have to be white water rafting. Some of the best of it happens right here in Iceland and not too far away.

If you've been on the Golden Circle to Gullfoss, you've seen the White River. The White river is where the fun takes place closest to the "big city", about an hour and a half away.

White water rafting trips are classified by the numbers, from one to six, based on thrills, spills and white knuckled excitement.

A one for example, would be a leisurely drift down a river or stream, with an occasional bump and grind from the rocks, or a dip here and there. Fun, yes,... different, certainly,...worth it, sure,... But, while I think you would walk away satisfied, you might just feel just a little bit unfulfilled.

A trip rated a six on the other hand is for the pros, and I think we don't even want to go there.

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FJÖRÐUR

- the mall by the sea



The rides on the White river are threes, to an occasional four, based on how fast the river is running at the time. These are best described as quick and cool, with the occasional wide-eyed and white knuckled expression from a majority of the participants. Here it can be said that the scenery comes to you. On these trips, four things will definitely happen. You will be fulfilled, you will feel the adrenalin rush, you will definitely be satisfied and you WILL get wet.



Everything you need for the trip by the way, is provided along with a short safety course before you make the actual run down the rapids. You will be glad of that. A great Icelandic Adventure? Count on it.

The crews that take the trips are professionals and experts who have been doing just this sort of thing for over a dozen years. You just have to bring yourself, pay the fee and a change of clothes might not be a bad idea either. Have fun.

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The Women of Scandinavia

Pórdís Lilja Gunnarsdóttir

EDITOR'S NOTE:

I recently ran across an article that I thought was an extremely clever, almost stunning comparison and description of Icelandic women, now recognized as some of the most beautiful in the world. While that would be easy for a man to say, a woman wrote this article. Read on.

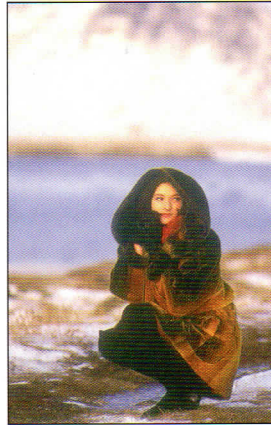


A striking reality about Iceland as of late is the press that has been generated about the stunning beauty of many of the Icelandic women. These thousands of beauty queens on this tiny island in the far North Atlantic, has for centuries lured both eligible and even ineligible men like the sirens of Greek mythology to its shores. Until recently, it has been a closely guarded secret by a comparative handful that had travelled here, while others wondered why.

Serious misconceptions have been made about many of the peoples of the world and Icelanders here are no exception. Icelanders, per capita, hold most of the world records in technology usage and consumer product acquisition. Yet, while our love of country, bigger than life itself is legendary, we can still at times, function like a big disorganized family.

Among several misconceptions about Iceland, even among many Icelandic men themselves are believing that most Icelandic women are far to distant and cold after hearing stories of promiscuity, bordering on nymphomania. Clearly, these stories emanate out of the frustration of those same men whose evening out, may not have gone as they had scripted.

The Women of the World



The truth is that Icelandic women bear a striking resemblance to the country itself. Indeed she is amazingly beautiful, unforgettable, natural, strong, mysterious, fresh, unique and unpredictable.

The Icelandic woman is like the geysers, so prevalent in Iceland. For long periods of time, she is quiet and serene but then without warning, can explode in an amazing display of steam and heat. And, like the icebergs in the Glacial Lagoon at Jökulsárlón, she is oh so beautiful, but with far more depth beneath the surface than above it. She is breathtaking like Vatnajökull glacier but can be

really dangerous if one is not paying attention or knows what they are doing.

Last but not least, beautiful Icelandic women are as numerous as the ubiquitous waterfalls in the country, but like those waterfalls, no two are alike. And just like the name Iceland might suggest, they might seem ice cold on the surface but consider the known geological fact that this island is boiling with volcanic fire underneath. That is how one can describe the Icelandic woman. She is hot, but irresistibly cool. TLG

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ROUGHING IT IN THE COUNTRY

In the summer months here in Iceland there are plenty of ranges to ride on the sturdy, sure-footed, proud Icelandic horse... if that's your pleasure. There are plenty of sights to see in a country where the landscape is apt to change from one year to the next. There is certainly more than enough to do whether that might be just sitting on a blanket on the ground in the middle of one of the many Reykjavik parks, or in what might be considered the middle of nowhere, also known as Iceland's interior. Perhaps, dancing the night away is your idea of a great time. Well, you can do that too, summer or winter.



Bo Lökkegaard

For those of us living here and certainly the majority of Icelanders, summer means heading out to the country, be it for a long weekend, a regular weekend, or at least part of a well deserved vacation. The reason is simple. There is a lot more space and a lot less people in these given areas, well, most of the time. Many times during the summer, its pack it up and move it out, at least temporarily to a special spot in the country for a little R & R.

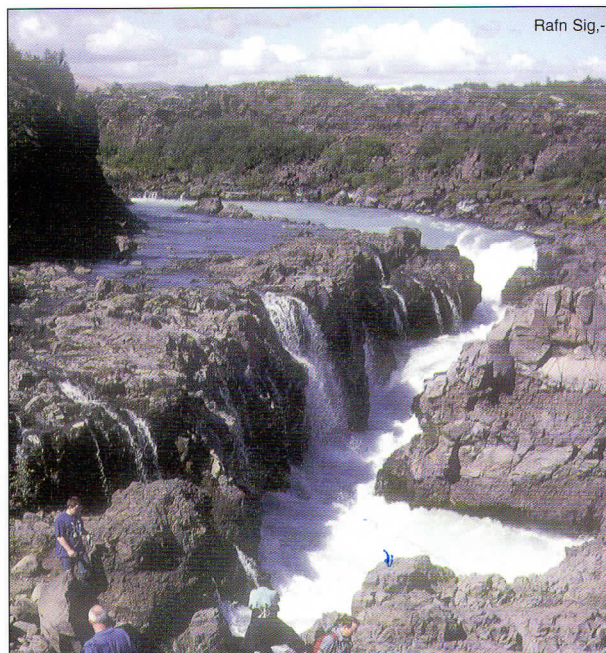


Rafn Sig,-



What used to be tents, blankets and sleeping bags; an ice chest, sandwiches and two or three gallons of potato salad, (still in existence by the way), are being rapidly replaced by "summer homes."

Still, the idea is simply to get away, sometimes, far away from the city where one can simply rest, relax and commune with nature. Summer homes now dot the landscape from barely outside the city and towns of Iceland, to far out in the country, miles it seems from anything. Many of them are individually owned. Many of them are purchased and operated by companies or unions. Company employees or union members can sign-up for a getaway week or weekend, in some cases, summer or winter, at extremely reasonable prices.



Rafn Sig,-

Rafn Sig-



In a few what might be considered choice areas, the numbers of summer homes seems to increase almost every weekend. A couple of areas are almost becoming small communities. Places like Hveragerði, in the rich fertile farmland areas, Husafell, out in the mountains and next to the glacier and right around Lake Laugarvatn, pretty self-explanatory, come to mind right away. As these areas grow, the part about “roughing it”, could I suppose, come to be seen as somewhat of a misnomer. Still, there are plenty of tents from small to giant economy size, dotting the landscape, pretty much everywhere in the country in the summer months. These folks are indeed roughing it. They have brought along the sleeping bags, a grill, and the very basic necessities from home. Entertainment “might” be a radio, more often a portable stereo, with plenty of fresh batteries to insure a relatively comfortable weekend in the country.

In a place like Husafell for example, the mountain can be directly in front of you with the mighty Langjökull glacier just to the left, its snow sparkling in the warm rays of the summer sun. Now that can be viewed as a perfect weekend hideaway in any language. You can drive to the foot of the glacier on most days. The road is a little rough, but taking it slow and easy can often be done in a regular, sturdy car. Once there, you can go for a snowmobile ride on the glacier itself, right in the middle of summer. Just a couple of miles in the opposite direction of your “summer camp hideaway” are the Lava and Children’s falls. Best of all, it’s a full 20 kilometres (12 miles) to the closest store...well it used to be.

Roughing it...well sure, you still can I suppose, but it seems that creature comforts are, actually have rapidly replaced the bare necessities on that weekend in the country. I can honestly say I’ve been there and done that. I spent the entire Easter weekend “roughing it” in Husafell at a summer-house and another weekend doing the same at Utlíð about five miles from Geysir.



It was really tough. The TV only got one channel. We had to grill “hot dogs” and hamburgers... once. The rest of the time, it was filet of lamb, steaks and we even had a go at lobster. We used the microwave to soften up the hamburger buns. The grandchildren spent the entire weekend it seemed in the jacuzzi hot tub, while I had to be content to sit in a very comfortable lounge chair on the house’s spacious patio and deck. The store was about 100 yards from the house and there was even a restaurant in case I burned the food on the grill. Oh! I almost forgot. Husafell had a nine-hole, golf course just down the street, (OK, path) and Utlíð had one just across the street. Husafell also had a small grass strip airport, about 300 yards from the house in case you need to get there in a hurry, and had a plane of course.

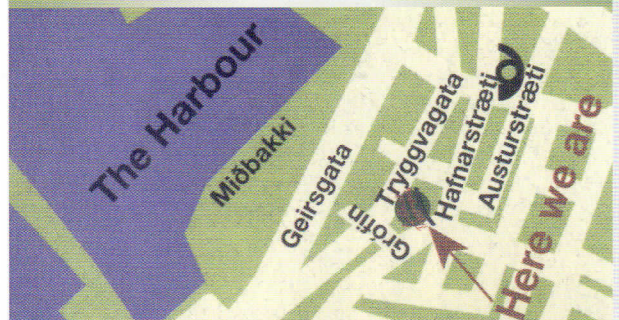
Roughing it, you bet. There’s nothing like it in the country of Iceland. I can’t wait for the next time.

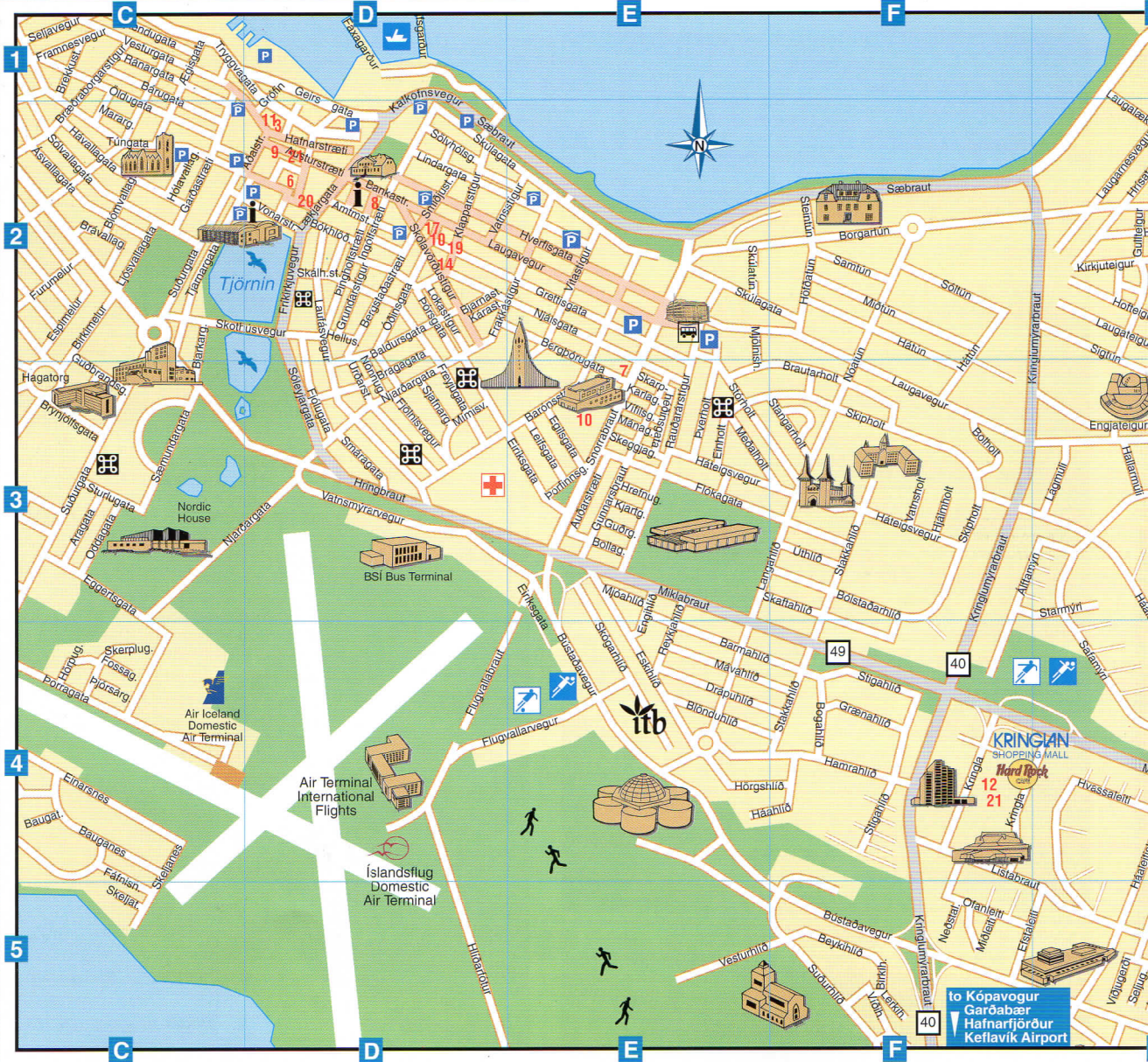


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If sports, almost any kind of sports is your “thing”, then Iceland should be high on your list as the place to come and “do your thing” in the wide world of sports. We have all the “snow” sports of course. The difference is that we have many of them year round on the glaciers of Iceland. But the summer months are when just about every sport you can imagine, blossoms at some place around the country.

In the summer, Iceland is a golfers paradise. The main reason is that you can play a most weeks of the summer months, 24-hours a day. For those beginners, amateurs, or professionals, who “sport” that sign on their office wall that says, “Work is for people that don’t know how to play Golf”, Iceland is the place you want to be. There are dozens of courses dotting the countryside, many not far from major towns and several in and around the city of Reykjavik. Some of them, at first glance, look easy to the naked eye. But, after one round, many wonder why their score was so high.

There are courses that run up the sides of mountains in places, even a volcano or two in others. There are some surrounded in lava fields where hitting into the rough, can really be rough. Generally it means an unplayable lie and more often than not a lost ball. Stroke and distance anyone? Some of the sand traps resemble bunkers and some of the greens can be a challenge. More often than not, playing golf on Iceland’s golf courses is not only a challenge, it’s an education. There are a few water holes. A couple of them are small, man-made ponds. The rest are creator made water hazards such as the Denmark straight, or the mighty North Atlantic. In 18 holes, these larger “water hazards” can come into play on an average of seven of them. A slight hook or a slice... don’t even bother to look for the ball... it is forever committed to the deep. Nothing can drive up a score faster than some of these tempting “go for the green”...oops, challenges.

Two tournaments that come to mind immediately in the summer golf season are the Arctic Open, played each year on the world’s certified, “northern most” golf course in Akureyri, Iceland. Each year over 250 people from around the world, arrive around the

longest day of the year, tee-off at midnight for this 36-hole tournament. For the golfer, professional or amateur, this should be the “one thing I have to do before I die” tournament. It’s a great time, every time, any year. Another tournament, just getting underway these days is something called the Volcano Open. This one is played in the Westman Islands, same idea and a far different and very difficult course. There’s just one major water hazard on the entire course, but it’s called the North Atlantic.



Icelanders dominated the no handicap division as might be expected with Sigurpáll Geir Svansson winning the Arctic Open tournament in the scratch or no handicap division. Second place went to Ingvar Karl Hermansson. Ólafur A. Gylfasson came in third, followed by David Barnwell in fourth place. About 187 persons participated in the four day event. Net play saw people from around the world in the winner’s circle, commonly called the 19th hole. First place went to John Smith, from South Africa. Second place went to Hal Corbin, a California Highway patrolman from the USA. Hal booked his trip in Iceland with Iceland Explorer Tours and went back home very pleased with his overall finish. Third place went to Sveinn Vidarsson from Iceland.

Iceland Explorer Tours, a division of the companies that own this magazine arranges tours all during the season for golfers around the world. You can come play in the Arctic Open, or you can have a specialized tour arranged for as little as a foursome on any course in the country. If you are up to a true golf challenge, E-Mail us at info@explorer.is It will be a golf vacation you will always fondly remember, that we promise.




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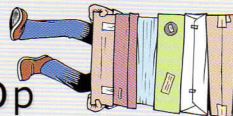
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Shop



TIL You Drop



...then get up and start all over again

Tax — Free shopping while not unique to Iceland certainly is has, as of late, become a huge value to visitors just vacationing here or perhaps sticking around for a spell.



While Tax-Free shopping in Iceland is not unique, it IS different. With very little effort these days you can really track down some great bargains on quality merchandise and save big bucks if shopping for quality good is high, or even on your list of things to do in Iceland.



First, the differences. Iceland has tax-free shopping, **as you arrive**, in the duty-free stores at the airport. Why? Well, many items you find in the tax-free store upon arrival are very expensive on the local economy and are heavily taxed in many cases. Things you might want to consider are tobaccos and alcohol. Candies are another consideration for that “got the munchies” feeling when at your hotel late in the evening.

Shopping in town also has tremendous value. First, many folks that come here for a short or an extended stay, at some point, want to purchase an Icelandic sweater or other woollen goods. It’s no secret that Icelandic woollens are on top of the list when it comes to quality, value and durability. A hand or machine made Icelandic pullover sweater that could run from \$70.00 to \$100.00 at today’s kronur to dollar rate in Iceland will bring nearly three times that amount at fashion houses and exclusive shops from New York to Beverly Hills. In fact, you don’t even want to know what they cost in Beverly Hills, but that’s not the point. Value is.

High ticket items such as jewellery, for example a Rolex or other fine watch, silver and gold trinkets of all kinds, designer dresses for the ladies, exquisite designer suits for the men retailing for hundreds even thousands in Europe or America, cost less in Iceland. That’s BEFORE the tax refund.



So, the perfect shoppers scenario then is to find a sale or a discounted item that qualifies, (most do) pay the sale price, take advantage of the exchange rate, get the tax refund and you have really done quite well for yourself.

Keeep all the tax- free items you bought separate for your own convenience. Once at the airport, those items are subject to customs inspection along with the refund certificates over a certain amount except for the Icelandic woollen goods you may have purchased. Once upstairs at the departure terminal present the certificates to the Landsbankinn refund desk and get your money in any number of currencies. You can also have the amount credited directly to your Visa or Master Card/Eurocard. If you are in the military and serving a tour of duty in Iceland, you have a full 3 months, 90 days, prior to your permanent departure from Iceland to shop for tax-free bargains and all will qualify for refunds with the proper certificates. Just going back for leave DOES NOT QUALIFY.

Good Shopping!!


ROLEX

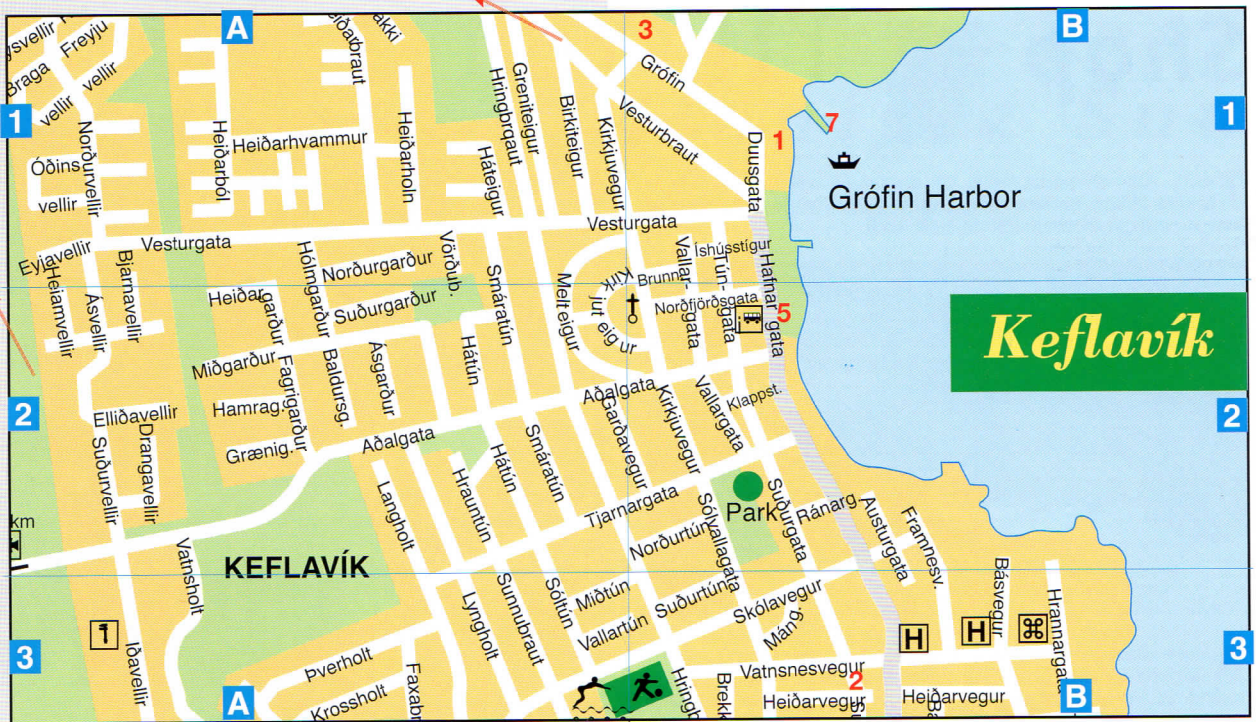
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| Ný Ung | 4 | Whale Watch Center | 7 |



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...unless of course it Rains



Here we are, smack dab in the middle of another summer here in Iceland as we start the month of July. The days are already starting to get shorter indeed. We lose an average of three minutes on either side of sunrise and sunset, about six minutes a day all month. But there is still plenty of sunshine and unlimited opportunities to enjoy it, on any tour of this truly beautiful country.

At the very end of the month, the sun will still be rising in the East at just after 4:30 AM and actually setting in the West after 10:30 PM. Here is a list of the sunrises and sunsets on certain days to plan your outdoor activities



| DAY & DATE: | SUNRISE | SUNSET |
|----------------------|---------|----------|
| Mon. July 2nd, 2001 | 3:14 AM | 11:53 PM |
| Wed. July 4th, 2001 | 3:18 AM | 11:50 PM |
| Sat. July 7th, 2001 | 3:25 AM | 11:45 PM |
| Wed. July 11th, 2001 | 3:35 AM | 11:34 PM |
| Mon. July 16, 2001 | 3:50 AM | 11:20 PM |
| Mon. July 23rd, 2001 | 4:10 PM | 11:00 PM |
| Fri. July 27th, 2001 | 4:23 AM | 10:48 PM |
| Tue. July 31st, 2001 | 4:36 AM | 10:35 PM |



July promises to be the warmest month of the year in Iceland. Here the farther north you travel the WARMER the days can be. Sounds strange but it IS TRUE. For example, we should have several days in the 60's and just maybe a couple of days in the seventies. In Akureyri, they should have many days in the sixties and could have several days in the 70's. If not right downtown Akureyri, a couple of places around Akureyri, the to the east near Myvatn, the northeast near Asbyrgi and to the northwest near Dalvik, could even touch 80°F. July is the perfect month to visit Akureyri and see the incredible Botanical Garden there along with Lake Myvatn and all the other sites. Plan for three or more days if at all possible. Trust me, it's the one place perhaps more than any other that you won't want to leave. Here are the stats for the month of JULY. Mind you, these stats are for Reykjavik:

| | | |
|-----------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Ave Temp: | 51°F or 11°C | Cool and Clean |
| Max Temp: | 75°F or 24°C | Warm and Serene |
| Min Temp: | 38°F or 3°C | Cold for July |
| Ave Wind: | 15 Mph/ 13 Knotes | Kites fly in the Sky |
| Max Wind: | 61 Mph/ 53 Knotes | Perhaps you join the Kite |
| Ave Rain: | 2.5 inches | Passing Showers Day/Night |
| Max Rain: | 5.2 inches | Wet you will be |
| SNOW: | None (so far) | The only month snow free |



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Nature Watch

Puffins, Whales & Wildlife in Reykjavík



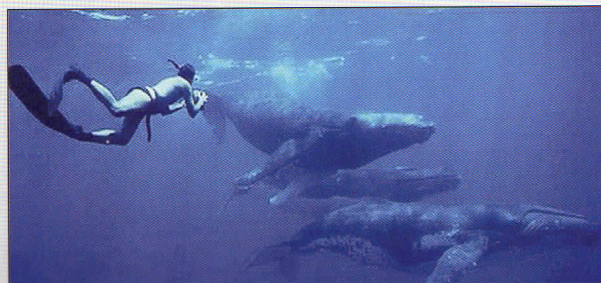
The ocean, man's last great frontier on Earth.

The ocean, vast and mysterious, crowned by towering waves and plunging to unimaginable depths.



Bo Lökkegaard

The seas of the mighty North Atlantic, the Straight of Denmark, the depths of Faxaflói Bay call to you each good summer day. These are the playgrounds of giants roaming, playing or simply cruising around on any given summer day. It is an ocean teeming with wildlife in the air above and sea life in the depths below. It is here that the giant whales, the largest sea creatures known to man and dolphins, guardians of ships, clown princes to the oceans of the world perform almost daily.



Bo Lökkegaard

Whale watching is not a new phenomenon to Iceland but departures directly out of the capital city of Reykjavík are. Enter a new high-speed catamaran, the motor vessel Hafsúlan, departing right from the capital city and just a short walk from many of the hotels and guesthouses in the area.



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In the summer months, daily departures leave at 10:30 AM and proceed to some of the rich playgrounds of these giant sea creatures. Add to that, a cruise by and around Lundy, now better known as Puffin Island, where these most unusual sea birds make just one of their many summer homes each season. You'll most likely see the Arctic Tern, the "hovering bird" with an attitude and an unforgettable call. Dolphins when found in "schools" which is most of the time seem to sense that it's



"showtime" and perform for you in unison, individually or in large groups. Like an aerial demonstration team, these "Blue Angles" of the deep leap and twist from the depths to considerable heights and back to the sea below. Some just cruise along with the ship in perfect harmony with you and each other.



Then, enter the whales, Minke whales for the most part but a trip to the fertile grounds along the southwest coast of Iceland has produced many kinds on any given day. With a few hours to spend in town, this just might be quite an adventure. Whale watching in Iceland. Always fun and on over 90% of the occasions, a whale watch in Iceland can be absolutely awesome. See the ad and phone number just below to arrange for a trip, directly out of Reykjavik Harbor. You can even arrange to be picked up from the front door of your hotel.



Whale Watching from Reykjavík



With our new high-speed catamaran, the Whale Watching Centre now offers tours directly from the city of Reykjavik. Our excursions take in all the best whale watching spots around Iceland's south-west coast. Atypical tour takes about 3 hours, including sightseeing around Lundy, (Puffin Island) and other spectacular natural wonders, a comfortable distance from Reykjavik. Departures are scheduled daily at 10:30 AM from the main harbor in downtown Reykjavik

whalewatching.is

Daily at 10:30

WHALE WATCHING CENTRE tel: 421-2660.

Landscape of Dreams

It's no secret that more and more people discover Iceland every year. Some think of Iceland as that cool summer vacation spot that offers everything, just in smaller quantities, as any other



place in the world. Some are discovering that Iceland is a place for fun year-round. Sure, there's a lot less daylight in the winter months, but this myth that prevails that it is completely dark here for a full six months of the year, is pure nonsense. Then of course there are the terribly uneducated few who when someone brings up ICELAND as a potential vacation spot, hear, "Iceland, your joking, right?"

Right now, we are right in the middle of a very nice summer. So far, it's been slightly cooler than most are, but still very pleasant. In June, after two or more days of beautiful sunshine and clear skies, payback has almost been instantaneous. That meant cloudy skies, cooler and even a spell of rain or drizzle. Be that as it may, summer in Iceland is a time to explore everything.



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It simply doesn't make any difference where you go, or for how long. There will always be something different to see and something different to do. If the sunshine and clear skies are not where you are at the moment, you just make plans to go where the sunshine is. That, can quite often, be as little as 20 miles away. Essentially, if you can think it, you can probably do it in Iceland.

If you have come to Iceland for that vacation simply to get away from the stresses and pressures of everyday life and just totally relax, we have found what we believe is the perfect place. That place is called Lake Myvatn, about 50 kilometers in a straight line, and a 60-mile drive from Akureyri, in north Iceland. With June's temperatures already reaching past the mid 60's, Myvatn quite simply can be that little piece of heaven, right here on earth.



The frequently clear skies of summer, lighter winds and often considerably warmer than Reykjavik temperatures that often occur in this area are close to being a phenomena all its own. One question we always get is how come when we travel north, closer to the Arctic Circle, the temperatures more often than not get warmer. That does occur in the summer, the reverse is true in the winter.

To say that Myvatn is beautiful in the summer months is an understatement. It is here that you find a lake of crystal clear water and carpets of lush, green, perfectly manicured grass, adorning most of the areas scenic lookouts. Many of these areas are awash in flowers, some planted, some just growing all on their own, year after year. There are stone pillars, like castles, archways if you will, perhaps even perhaps time portals, rising out of the waters of a small area closest to your camera lens. Clearly, about half of the people who take the day tour from Akureyri to this area say they

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would be content to just end the tour right here, spread a blanket on the ground, take several deep breaths and totally relax. You really have to be there just once, to completely understand.

The opportunities for some incredible photography, amateur or professional, has inspired many to go through from one to several rolls of film in just this one area alone. Some take advantage of sightseeing flights in and around the area of the lake. They see still another picture of this part of Iceland. Surrounding the lake are small green and brown moon-like craters suggesting very active geothermal upheavals as the area was being formed. Bringing that into even clearer focus are the essentially active geothermal fields of Krafla, the dark castles of Dimmuborgir and the boiling mud fields of Námaskarð

The pictures tell the story, perhaps better than we ever could. With that in mind, have a look at what this entire area, a relatively small part of everything that is Iceland offers. Then come have a look for yourself.



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HOT Flashes



HOT STUFF AS OF July 2001

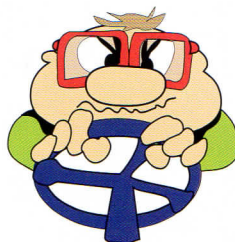
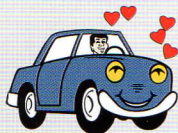
HOT COVER:

There are generally anywhere from a few to several inquiries about the magazine covers that appear with each edition of Iceland Explorer. The cover of the June issue received a considerable amount of attention as we thought it might. E-Mails and faxes ranged from everything to wanting to write to Miss Iceland to meeting her and asking her out. Sorry guys, she is "spoken for". Several requests asked if this cover and a couple of others were available for purchase. The answer is YES. Covers on Iceland Explorer Magazines are generally available for purchase. Photographers grant us the right to use the covers and we in turn refer any queries to them about possible purchase. You may contact us by E-Mail and we will refer you to the photographers directly. They are always listed on page 3 of the magazine.



IN SEARCH OF COURTESY:

Olis Filling Stations, radio station RAS 2 and Sjóva Almennar insurance companies are looking for Iceland's most courteous driver. The contest continues all during July with one winner being chosen each week. The people selected in the weekly contest will then compete for the title of the most courteous driver in Iceland. Winner's will receive holidays abroad and free gasoline. All drivers in Iceland are eligible. One quick



note. While folks are out and about looking for Iceland's best and most courteous drivers, that means Iceland's worst can also be spotted at the same time. These folks can also win things like police citations and fines of all kinds. A word to the wise...Group "A" is better.

BETTER BUS BUYS BEGIN:

Taking the bus in Reykjavik just got better for frequent users and a little more expensive for the once in awhile rider. On July 1st the companies in Reykjavik and Hafnarfjörður merged into one company and two sub-divisions. But that's not important; the new fares, routes and system is.



For the once in awhile rider, the fares increased from 150 or 180 Ikr for the single ride to 200 Ikr. For the frequent "flyer" rider, the cost of the monthly "GREEN CARD" came down from 3,900 Ikr to 3,700 Ikr. A ten- ticket pass sheet is now 1,500 Ikr. That amounts to 150 kronur a ride. Best of all, the transfers received on EITHER of the companies, are now good on BOTH companies. That was not the case earlier. Essentially what might have cost 330 Ikr before, using the two individual companies, can now be a little as 150 Ikr, a reduction of over 50%. It is now possible to go all the way from Arnarholt in Kjarlanes, west of Mount Esja all the way to Hafnarfjörður in a single ride and fare as low as 150 Ikr. This ride before would have been 330 Ikr. There are also several new routes with buses marked #13, 16, and 17, which essentially will take you between the new mall and Kringlan from everywhere. A new booklet showing all the route changes, routes added and running times is now available for purchase at all bus stations.

Drink The "REAL THING" WIN "Free Stuff"



When touring in Iceland these days and enjoying the "real thing" otherwise know as Coca Cola, look under the bottle-cap before properly throwing the bottle and cap away. WHY?!!

Well, the Icelandic Coca Cola Company is right in the middle of its now annual, "Summer Adventure contest which awards all sorts of prizes to people who get a lucky bottle-cap.

The winning symbols will be right on the plastic insert, right under the bottle top. You've purchased the product anyway so why not have a look under the cap. You might just be pleasantly surprised.

Four winners will receive trips to some adventure spot around the world. Other winners are as follows: 100 winners will receive a Nokia 3310 mobile telephone. Another 100 winners will receive a mini cassette player with built in radio. There are 50 Coca Cola ice chests available for travelling to just about anywhere. Two thousand winners will receive tickets for two to a special Coca Cola sponsored concert in August. There are 2,500 one- use cameras for taking some great pictures while on your tour of Iceland. Finally, 30,000 winners will receive a two liter-bottle of Coke or Diet Coke simply by turning in the winning cap. Those caps are redeemable at any ESSO station in Iceland.

THAT MAKES A TOTAL OF 34,754 WINNING CAPS.

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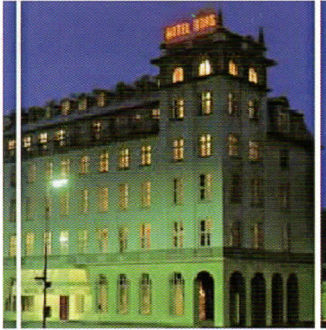


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