



Iceland
Explorer
Spring 2002

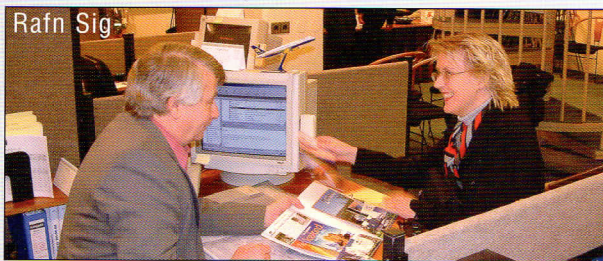
A SPECIAL WELCOME MAGAZINE FOR VISITORS TO ICELAND

Getting Stronger Every Day

Iceland Explorer, (in Icelandic, Islandsvínir h.f.) is now a group of independent companies with a new, much larger location, (uptown Hafnarfjörður) . The company now includes, Iceland Explorer magazine, Iceland Explorer Tours, Ovissuferðir (an Icelandic word meaning” Mystery Tours” and we have now become a handling agent for outbound travel through Heimsferðir (World Travel),



In short that means we are now a completely FULL SERVICE company with something for everyone. Travelers coming to Iceland for a vacation of any length will come through Iceland Explorer Tours. Folks in Iceland and even visiting groups, conventions and business meetings who want a great “mystery evening” as an incentive or just fun time for their employees can call do just that by going through our company Ovissuferðir. Finally, Icelanders who want to take their annual vacation pilgrimage to places like Italy, Prague, Canary and other vacation hotspots around the world, can book everything through us at Heimsferðir (World Travel).



The magazine is stronger than ever: Indeed there have been so many requests for it that we will begin publishing 8,000 copies of each issue with this one your holding in your hand. That might soon increase if the trend continues. To do that however and to continue with reasonably priced advertising for our many clients, we had to make a few, we think excellent changes.

First, the 16 page Explorer, generally published in the shoulder and “off-season” must end.

A 16 page magazine designed and printed in the number of copies needed, keeping the price of advertising as low as possible would look like a book of ADS and that is NOT what we are about. So, all issues from now on will be 24 page editions. With that we want to give each “issue” a longer shelf life for our advertisers. We are reducing the number of total issues to four more this year and five next year 2003.



This is our new Spring issue. It covers the period from April 15th to June 15th and is designed to be a preview of the great vacation destination Iceland is for summer travel. The next issue will be out on June 15th That will be the summer issue. After that September 9th as the “high season” is winding down and the shoulder season with great travel bargains starts to take hold. It will also be a focal point for the VestNorden Travel Mart being held in Akureyri on September 10 — 12th. The final edition of Iceland Explorer for the 2002 calendar year will be in late November and will be the Christmas Issue, Five issues are planned for 2003..

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Iceland Explorer

We will start this column by very quickly referring you to the very special information on page 2 concerning a complete facelift for Iceland Explorer companies. That includes this magazine.

The entire company, as a unit, is now bigger and better than ever. Check out the coupons from Arco Car Rental and Hard Rock Cafe in this issue and save. Spring is trying to...well...spring. The sun now comes up before 6:00 AM and doesn't set until nearly 9 PM. By next issue, June 15th, there will be 24 hours of daylight. This issue is chock-full of new sponsors and great new stories, all about the summer to come here in the Land of Ice and Fire. In this issue, we invite you

to meet the NEW Miss Iceland.is.

The river, stream, and lake fishing season is open as of April 1st...read all about it in the Explorer. The whales are coming back, the puffins will soon follow. There are lots of golf tournaments to play in and dozens of courses to play on. There are always great shopping bargains with the Tax-Free shopping and our restaurant sponsors will provide you with meals beyond belief. It's all in this Explorer. Enjoy, and if you ever have any comments...just E-Mail us anytime. Iceland Explorer Tours is truly, "All you need in Iceland" All the information you need is right below.



Bob Murray - Editor

IN THIS ISSUE

Spring 2002

*Food for Thought —
Dinners to Dine For*

On Golden Ponds and Shining Seas

Silver Threads & Golden Circles

*'Swingin' Around the
Clock*

Meet Miss iceland.is

...and lots of other free stuff

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Bæjarhraun 14, 220 Hafnarfjörður, Iceland.

Tel: 510 9502. **Fax:** 565 5355.

E-Mail: info@explorer.is

Editors E-mail: bobmurray@explorer.is

Editor's mobile phone: 868 1922

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Editor: Bob Murray;

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e-mail: rafns@vortex.is **Tel:** 553-7000/897-2108

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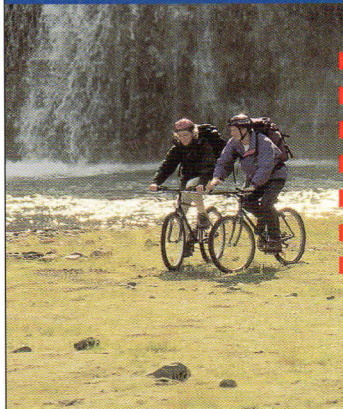


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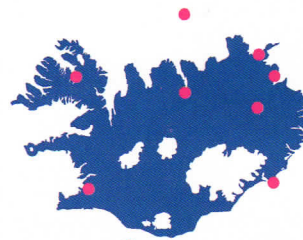
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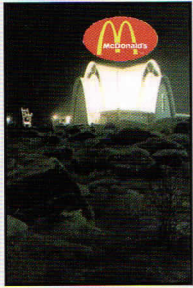


ICELAND NEWS



April - May - 2002

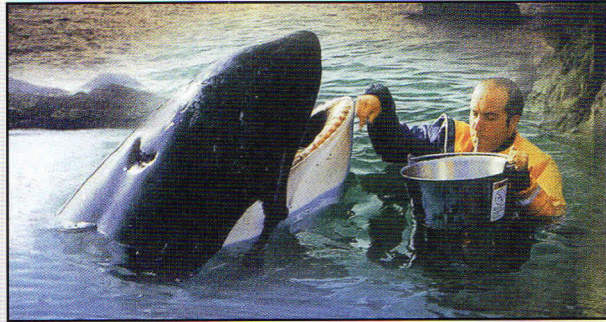
BLESS ME FATHER, I'LL HAVE A BIG MAC AND FRIES:



April 1st, is April Fools Day around the world and in Iceland it is no exception. Well, there is ONE exception. Most of the April Fool's pranks at home or in the office, never get off the launching pad without the perpetrator breaking up, laughing, or otherwise telegraphing the prank in some small way. In Iceland, the TV stations are masters at pulling off these April 1st stories, every year. They are all done with a deadpan seriousness, fooling hundreds of folks, year after year.

The story this year, perhaps one of their best, was that McDonald's had filed a complaint with the Mayor and Town Council of Kopavogur, a town just south of the capital Reykjavik. They said that the Church in there, from many angles, looked too much like the Golden Arches, thereby being a question of a possible copyright violation. (It does with a little imagination) They wanted the entire church covered up and said that people who came there to protest, would receive a free hamburger. The TV crews, McDonald's, the Mayor's office, were all in on the joke and gave very serious interviews on the news that evening... and the people came. Some brought the entire family in the car to "drive through" the church parking lot for the free offer. It was all in good fun and most who fell for it, laughed it off as it is an ages old Icelandic tradition on this day. But everything changes and the next day a small group said they were filing a complaint... essentially about being made fools of. Jay Leno would echo our thoughts perfectly....OH SHADAAAAP.

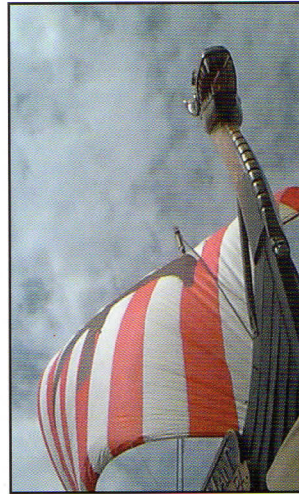
KEIKO KALAMITY....NAH!!!



An article in USA Today on April 2nd, stated that Seattle telecommunications billionaire, Craig McCaw, who has spent over \$10,000,000 in his financial support of KEIKO over the last several years is pulling the plug on funding. His contributions have represented about 70% of the total funds expended on Keiko to date. Scientists, who thought re-introducing Keiko back to the wilds off the coast of Iceland, where he initially began life, would have probably occurred long before now. Recently, they've expressed hope that while it could happen soon, it may not now ever happen. Keiko will be the one to ultimately decide that, and he's not telling anyone. Keiko seems to have absolutely no interest in permanently rejoining other pods of Orca whales off Iceland's coast. They do play together on his supervised walks out to sea from time to time, but the other whales simply do not accept him as a permanent member of a given pod. His original pod has not been found, and therein may lie the real problem.

A decision was being made at presstime whether Keiko will be moved to Stykkisholmur or remain in the Westman Island's at least one more year. If he moves...or gets evicted, the original plan was that it would take place sometime in mid June of 2002

"ICELANDER FOR SALE":



NO !! not like a human Viking, but the famous Viking ship, ICELANDER. In the millennium year 2000, this replica of the original, sailed the exact route taken by Leif Eriksson from Iceland to America with all the stops in between. It was officially listed on e-bay.com just a few days ago. It might already be sold by the time you read this, but there was one bid for the full asking price when we wrote the piece. Where are the museums to afford themselves of this magnificent piece of Viking history???

The captain, who also owns the boat, is asking 60 million Icelandic kronur. In U.S. Dollars, that's \$600,000 as a minimum acceptable bid.

MARCH GOES OUT LIKE A LION:

The old saying goes that March goes out like a lion and April comes in like a lamb.

It certainly did on Easter Sunday, March 31st, this year when at least 5 or 6 different kinds of weather was observed sometimes within minutes and certainly within an hour or two.

Sometimes several different types were visible to the naked eye, all at once.

Bizarre would be the operative word here. Easter Sunday afternoon on the southwestern part of Iceland from Borganes to Hveragerdi, just about 20-25 miles apart as the crow flies we had; Gale force winds, snow, blizzard to white out conditions, rain, sleet, thunder, lightning (see next story) and bright sunshine. A few times, several very strange combinations of the 81 possibilities occurred together. WHEW!!

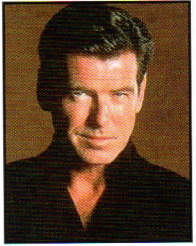


OUCH !!

An Icelandair 757 arriving in the area of the Keflavik International Airport from Oslo on Easter Sunday got first hand knowledge of the bizarre local weather after being struck by an extremely rare in Iceland, bolt of lightning. There was no damage to the aircraft as is the case most of the time but the plane was given a thorough check once on the ground to be sure and returned to service.



BOND; DIES ANOTHER DAY IN ICELAND:



The 21st film in the James Bond series, this one starring the latest of the 007's, Pierce Brosnan has been filming in Iceland over the last several weeks. Shooting wrapped up toward the end of March with the Icelandic scenes being shot at Skaftafell, on Vatnajökull Glacier, the Glacial Lagoon and even at the Blue Lagoon which, we have been told, is where the film may end.

That would be "warm" or "cool" depending on how you look at it and will certainly give a great boost to tourism in Iceland when the movie is released. No doubt Icelandic scenes will play a role in the film...just how and where it will end is supposedly still a secret.

THE ONE THAT DIDN'T GET AWAY:



With the opening of the fishing season in Iceland on the rivers lakes and streams the "tall tales tourists tell" about the "one that got away" will also increase proportionally. Deep sea fishing goes on year round however and

it was no tall tale when the biggest YSA (aka Haddock) ever caught in Icelandic waters was landed by a fishing boat on February 12th, 2002

The "Monster Fish" weighed in at 12 Kilos, over 25 pounds and was over three feet long.

This broke the record by over 9 lbs. What we didn't ever hear was if it was stuffed and mounted or fileted and eaten.



A HAUNTING WE WILL GO...A HAUNTING WE WILL GO:

This is right out of the "I DON'T BELIEVE IT DEPARTMENT" but it is true, here in Iceland. The question: Can the seller of a house, be held accountable to the buyer of a house, if the house is HAUNTED. The answer to that question, with some specifications is YES !!

First, there must be a lot of haunting going on. How and to what level that is determined, is a good question for openers. Perhaps there is a special haunting level meter you use, I don't know. After that, experts must be brought in to determine the level of haunting. We would assume that's sort of like a live "meter check"...once again we have no clue. Well, at any rate, while as of this moment, there has never been a court case over this, it could happen. There have been actual cases where the buyer of a house has had to have exorcisms performed to rid the place of uninvited polter-guests. Now, generally, or so we're told, Icelandic ghosts are friendly or at least able to share the premises with the tenant. They don't make much noise...or use a lot of electricity. It's when a foreign ghosts become a guests and haunt the premises when tenants start to have problems.



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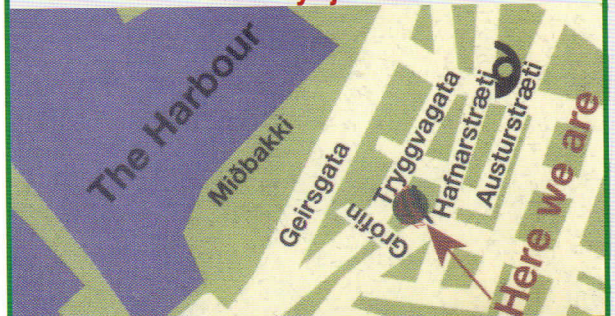
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Swinging Around the Clock

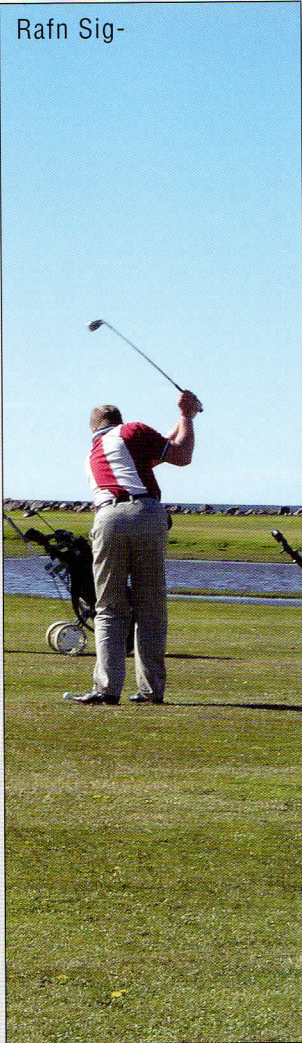
Golf in the "MIDNIGHT SUN"

Bob Murray

This is the season to get out and enjoy any number of outdoor sports. Yes, even here in Iceland for those of you reading this, but not here...right at the moment.

Perhaps the two most revered sports in Iceland are soccer (aka football) and golf. Icelanders take both seriously. This story is about golf in Iceland, in all it's many forms and on many of it's excellent and varied courses. First of all, football and golf widows are not nearly as common in Iceland as they are in America, simply because the women are almost as active in both sports as the men are. These days, just about anywhere there is grass in Iceland, there is a golf course not far behind. There are about 40 odd courses in Iceland now. A few of them are and more of them could be considered championship playing fields. If your looking for a challenge you are going to find one playing golf in Iceland. No, it's not because that golf courses in Iceland are moss covered, rock strewn, frost bitten, lava fields. Fact is, that many of the golf courses in Iceland are far better than their American and European counterparts when it comes to upkeep. We will focus on some of those, because they are so well-kept, extremely challenging and is where the majority of the tournaments are now played.

Rafn Sig-



This time of the year we are getting ready for the golf tournament season in Iceland. There are two major invitational tournaments and it appears a third, in the process of trying to get started this year.

The number one granddaddy of them all is the ARCTIC OPEN. This one is played each year and for the past 16 years, on the world's certified, northern most golf course, in Akureyri, Iceland, a stone's throw(if your name is Roger Clemens) from the ARCTIC CIRCLE.

Rafn Sig-



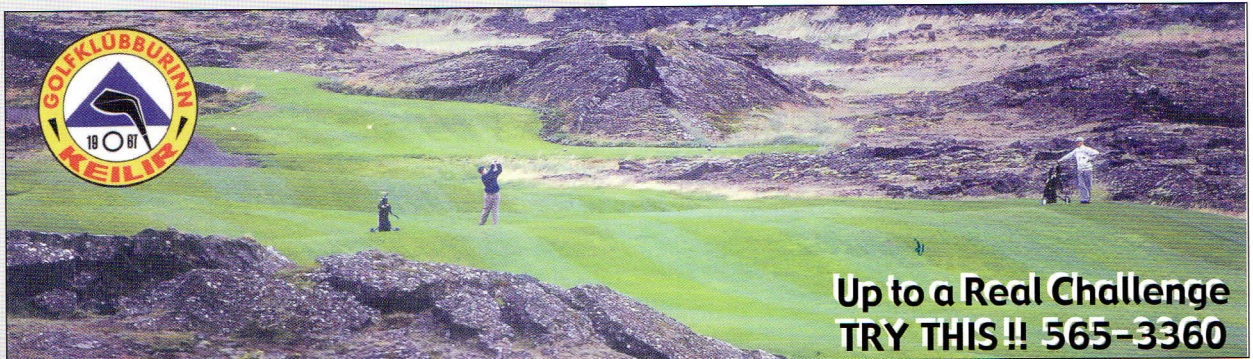

Every year the tournament brochures go out, the internet is abuzz with details and instructions on how to register. Each year over 180 golfers do just that. Sometimes, the questions from those who would like to play, but never have, are quite amusing.



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Tops among those are the following.

How is it possible to play golf in all that ice and snow?

Answer; What ice and snow?

Do you play with colored balls? (usually in the same e-mail)

Answer; Sure, if you want to.

What would be a good tee time?

Answer; 8...PM to Midnight

Can I really play around the clock, like 24 hours?

Answer; Sure, why not.

Won't I freeze to death playing 18 holes?

Answer; Only if you somehow freeze around 60°F

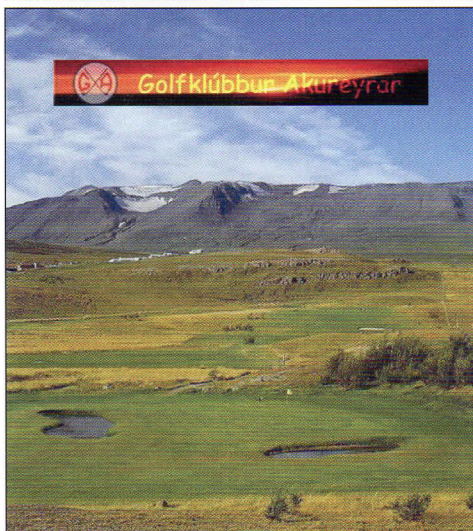
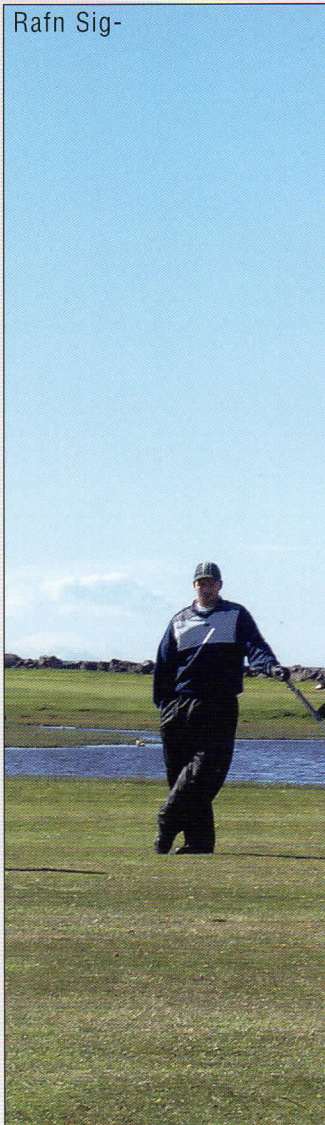
Want to play in the real Arctic Open, on the World's certified northern most golf course, where the sun NEVER really sets? Contact us.



Another tournament that has really just opened it's doors as an invitational tournament over the last couple of years is a tournament called the Volcano Open. This one is held on a small island, about 9 kilometers (5 miles) off of Iceland's main south coast called Heimay in the Westman Islands. It's called the Volcano Open because the Island is, some would say was, a volcano. About 4500 people live here now in the town. The course is extremely well kept, very challenging and the perfect place for a great tournament. This year, the tournament will be held from July 4th through the 7th. Want to play? Contact us.

A third tournament, at press time, was still essentially in the starting gate. We could get very little information on it except where it is scheduled to be played. That would be on two other excellent golf courses in the Reykjavik area. The first is a placed called Keiler Golf Club also known as the Lava course. This 18 hole course is a real challenge and nine of those holes have been carved out among volcanic lava and are immaculetey groomed, from tee to green. However, precision is the key on this course. An unscheduled hook or slice here means real trouble, usually an unplayable lie...and yes there are a penalties for hooking, slicing and getting in any other kind of trouble here. The second course where this tournament is scheduled to be played is at the Reykjavik Country Club. It too is another excellent Icelandic course and totally different from Keiler.

Currently, our tour company is NOT able to book you for this tournament, but we can include play on either course, on any other golf vacation you might like.



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Rafn Sig-



One more course that deserves special mention is the Sudurnes Golf Club, not far from the Keflavik International Airport on Iceland's far southwest coast. This one, even I have played often and it is yet another real challenge. It has at least one element from all the others we mentioned in this story. There are even parts of it that look like an easy par, maybe even a birdie. But, unless you are a real professional or just extremely lucky, pars are hard to come by and the only birdie you might get is one that happens to unfortunately cross the flight path of your drive.

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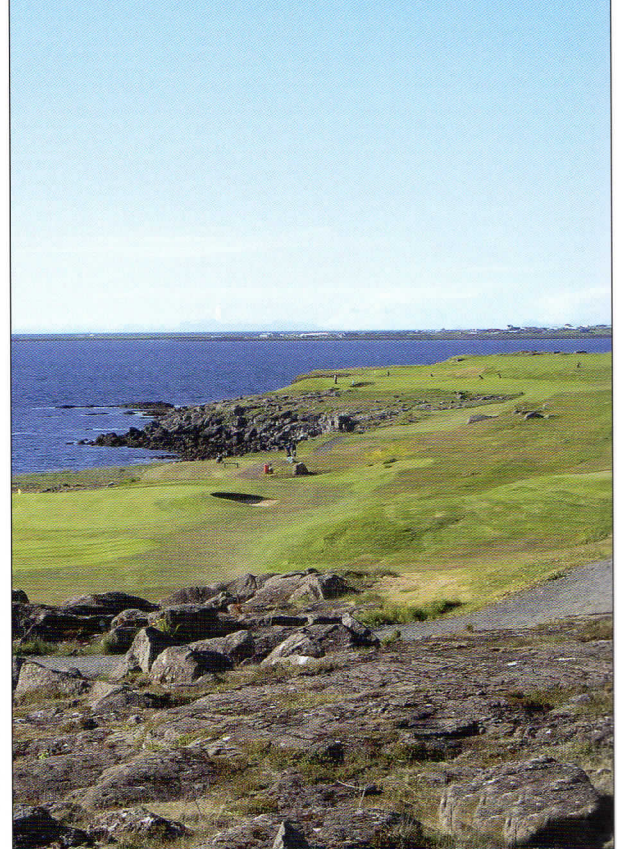
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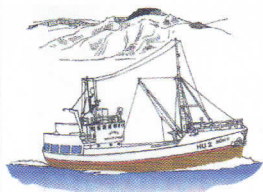
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Say Hello to the "NEW" Miss Iceland.is

Sólveig Helga Zophoníasdóttir



The only thing better than one beauty competition would be two of them. In Iceland this writer would say that it's almost a necessity since there are so many beautiful women. This is a short story about just one of them, who happens to be the new Miss Iceland.is for the year 2002,

Sólveig Helga Zophoníasdóttir, Solla as she prefers to be called, was born and raised in Akureyri, Iceland, the third largest town in the land of Ice and Fire, nestled in a beautiful fjord on the north coast. If we may digress for just a moment, Akureyri, is stunningly beautiful place, very different from the capital city Reykjavik. While life flourishes there, it is quiet and peaceful even in the center of town most of the time. Sometimes referred to as the capital of North Iceland, it is an absolute must stop on a tour, if you're time in the country will be more than a stopover.

Solla is 22 years old, 175 centimeters tall, (that's right around 5'7" guys) she is beautiful as you see from the picture and she is single...which of course you have to be to participate in the contest. Before we start getting e-mails guys she is spoken for....so to speak.

After spending most of her teen years growing up in Akureyri, at 17 she headed to the "big city" to start her adult life with her many and varied interests. Solla is very knowledgeable, friendly and very down to earth. Among her employment experiences to further her knowledge and education in the "real world," Solveig has worked at an art gallery and now works for an advertising agency.

The competition this year consisted of 11 hopefuls vying for the title of Miss Iceland.is-2002.

When all was said and done at the just held competition, Solveig came out the winner. Among the awards is the use of a brand new VW Golf for the full title year, a scholarship, a summer vacation in Portugal, A painting by an Icelandic artist, (art is one of her favorite things) and many other prizes as well. Solveig's plans are to move abroad to either England or Sweden in the next few years, to study design and design history. Right now in addition to work, she volunteers a lot of her free time to the Icelandic Red Cross doing whatever is needed.

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HOT STUFF AS OF Spring 2002

CLIMB EVERY MOUNTAIN:

That's just what Icelandic mountainer Haraldur 'Orn 'Olafsson planned to do months ago and as this magazine was going to press, that is just about almost what he has done. With six of the world's tallest mountains knotted in this safety belt, Haraldur was a little more than halfway up the final mountain, mighty Everest, a little



more than 10,000 feet from the summit. At one of the mountain base camps, Haraldur fell ill with a stomach flu and had to postpone the ascent for a couple of days. But that has cured itself and Haraldur is now headed for the heavens and the super thin air of the summit some 29,000 plus feet from terra firma. We'll say Good Luck...and we'll hear all about his adventures around the world in the next edition of Iceland Explorer. We will be interviewing him for the next edition..

DON'T..FENCE ME IN:

The area around the Hotel Saga and the Haskolabio Theatre will be essentially "OFF-LIMITS" to all but the participants of the NATO Conference during it's run in May. A security fence will be constructed around the perimeter of both as an added safety precaution for conference participants during the



conference. Special badges and passes will be required of everyone from the players to the press and anyone else including service agencies, employees and anyone else who may have anything to do at the conference or any reason to be there. It's all being done due to the general world situation these days in the Middle East. While it would be literally impossible for a terrorist gain entrance to Iceland due to it's already second to none security at the airports, conference organisers and participating NATO governments are taking no chances. The fence will disappear when the conference is over.

RUNNIN' FOR COVERS:

It seems the cover of the last edition of Iceland Explorer, suddenly took on a life of it's own, first, from a very few "self designated" saving mankind from ourselves" types (or so we're told) and then again after being featured on a local TV show.

Requests for the magazine soared and we almost ran completely out of the issue. Then we took another look at the cover. Now it's our turn. For the record: The cover of course is one of the water tanks at the Pearl, (coinciding with the article inside). The bronze figured statues are symbolic musicians. From left to right they are supposed to be a saxophonist / trumpet player, a drummer, a keyboard player and a vocalist. The statues are between one and five meters apart but "appear" close together in the photo: Our photographer was trying to color-balance the lights on the tank, and the statues could not be moved, plain and simple. If you were one of those who had any different impression of the cover, we say, next time... "Look before you leap."



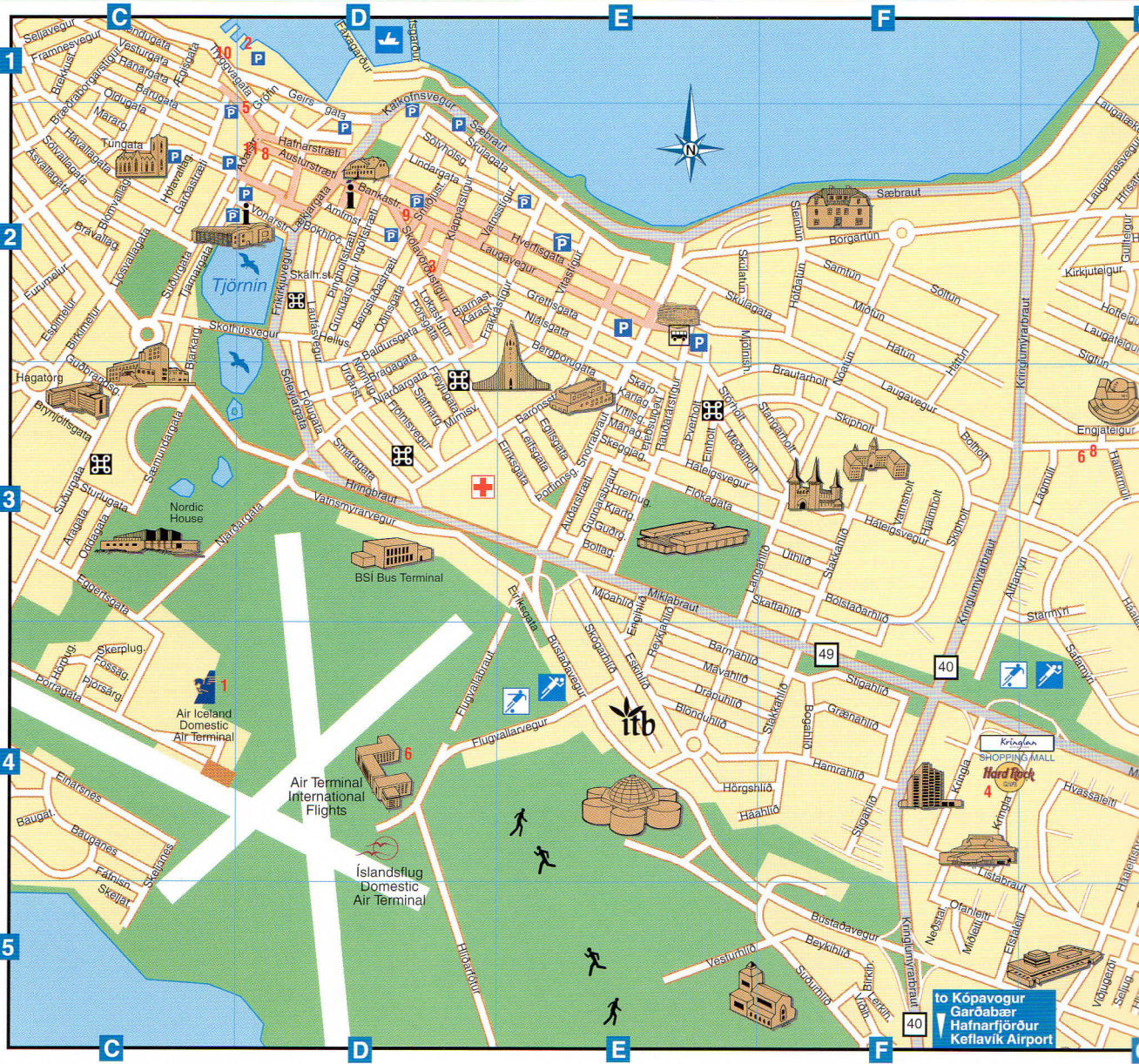
Whale Safari from Reykjavik



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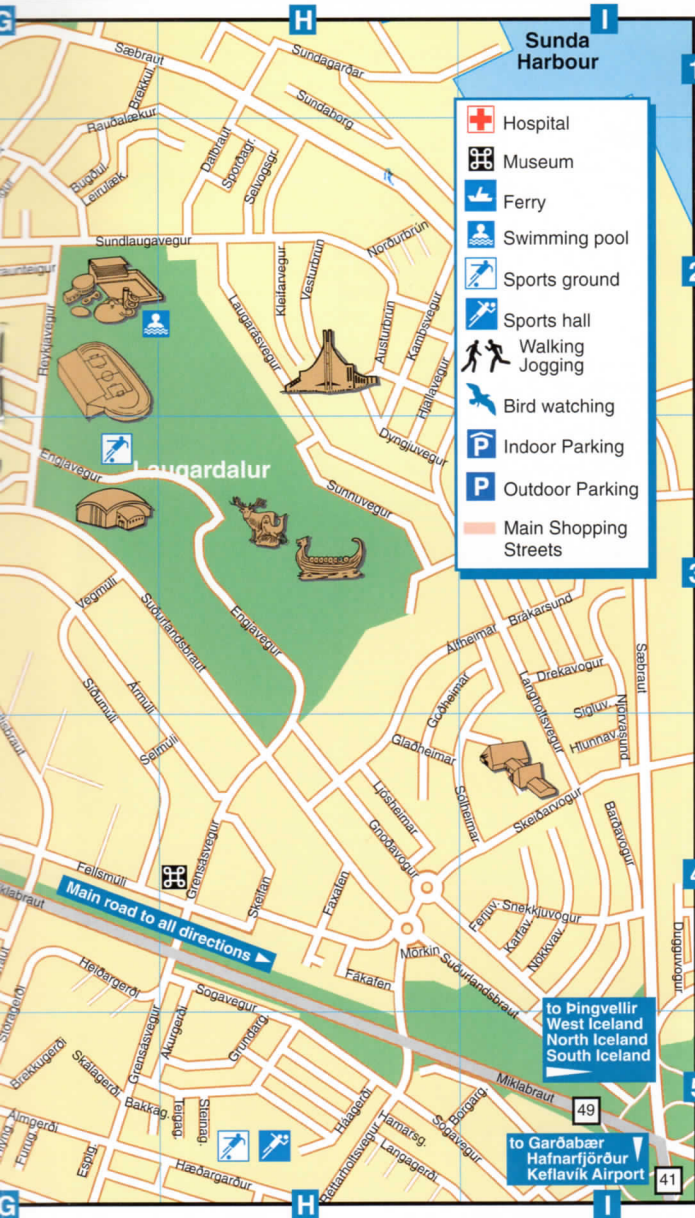
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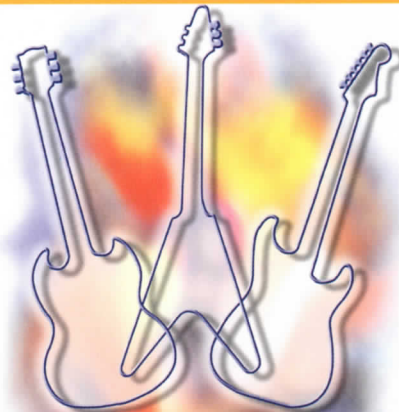


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Food for Thought - Dinners to Dine For

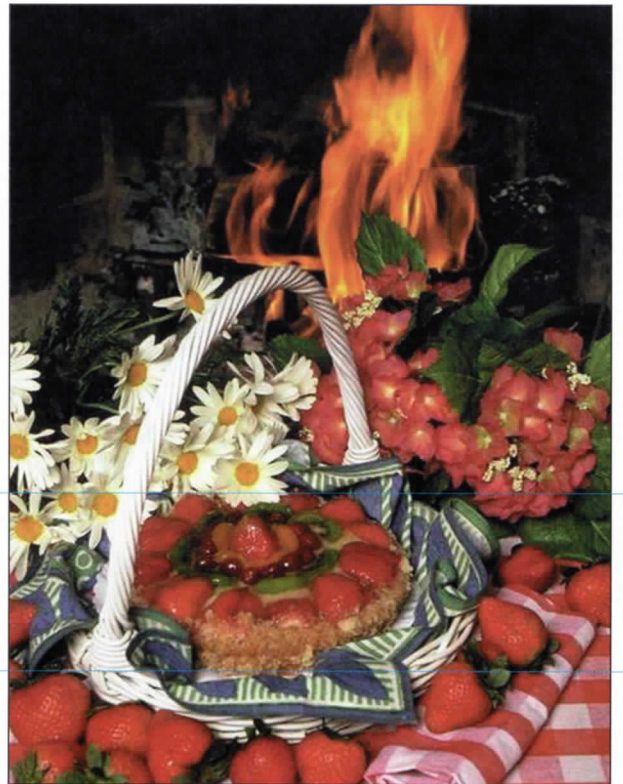
Bob Murray

It is absolutely no secret that Iceland has the very best and the freshest seafood in the world. The cold North Atlantic rich fishing grounds around Iceland have for centuries been the countries best natural resource. Indeed, fishing accounts for about 70% of Iceland's exports around the world.

Yet, one of the major questions, frequently asked by people contemplating a trip to Iceland is, "What do you all eat up there... would I like it?"



The answer is you bet. Once here, diners who visit any one of the nearly 170 area restaurants, featuring every type of food you could imagine, (and perhaps a few you didn't imagine) at nearly every restaurant, are startled, amazed and pleased by not only the presentation but by the freshness and quality of the food.



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I first came to Iceland in 1972, I moved here in 1996. I knew how good the food was so that perhaps if there were to be the single motivation for relocating here, that could have been enough. Shortly after arriving I began to partake. I started on what we will call a See-Food Diet...meaning when I saw food, I'd eat it. There are some who believe that I am still on it.

To become a Master Chef in Iceland one must attend a combination of 6 years formal school training in the culinary arts and two years internship in a formal restaurant environment.

Unlike some tourist destinations of the world particularly with seasonal help, it is not enough to be able to identify the kitchen and know how to tie the apron in the back. Icelandic chefs are among the world's best, without exception and have the awards from various world competitions to prove it.

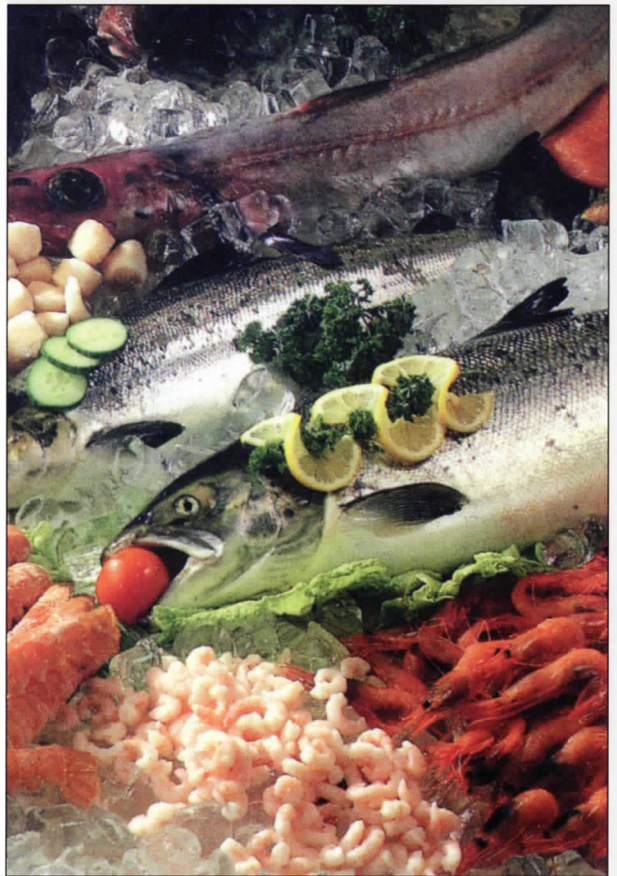
Obviously, while pizza is not one of the basic food groups, more pizza is consumed in Iceland per capita than anywhere else in the world. Last year, believe it or not, General Mills realized that it's cereal, Cocoa Puffs, had the most per capita consumption of the breakfast foods in Iceland. One must ask oneself whatever happened to pancakes and oatmeal? The answer is, they're still around and quite popular.

When it comes to any food group or product, Iceland also is proud to certify some if not the most strict standards in production and control from the care and feeding of the animals, the catching and processing of fish, and the care and control of all food products. The very strict standards also apply to anyone and everyone associated in anyway with the food industry. There are simply no exceptions to this policy or rule. The end result of all of this, is the superior quality of everything.



Icelanders have a lot of "gatherings". These special events, (by no means a complete list) are weddings, confirmations, birthdays, holidays, office parties, and often, just Tuesday...or any other day of the week. At most all of these events there is generally food, superior food. Also, if there are twenty people invited to a particular function, there is food enough for forty. Absolutely no one ever leaves the gathering hungry.

Alas !! there is yet another weakness that even surpasses the Appetizers and the dinner meal. That is the Icelandic baked goods and pastries...dessert to us commoners. This is ART, plain and simple. The pastries are generally small but have a little bit of everything in them from chocolate to marzipan. and oh!! so much more. I once thought each must contain about 3,000 calories. They do not but I'm still not convinced even after consuming six or more at any given tray.



For now though, there is one thing you can be absolutely sure of. When it comes to a meal in Iceland, you can rest assured that you will be dealing with top quality, controlled under the strictest standards of cleanliness and handling. The fact that when you receive it at your table your not quite sure whether to photograph it or eat it, just adds to the entire concept of it simply just doesn't get any better than here.



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On Golden Ponds or Shining Seas

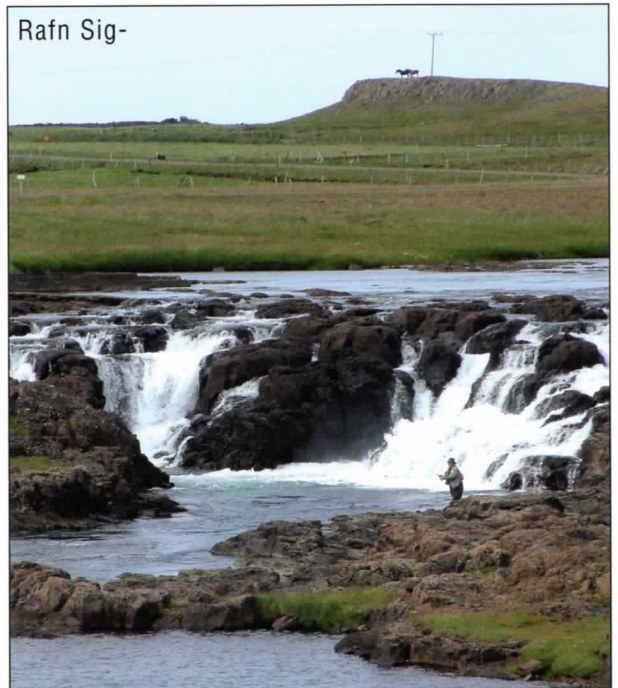
Bob Murray

Rafn Sig-



Being on an island means of course that in addition to the lakes and streams that abound everywhere, you are, very naturally, surrounded by water. That means that any and every type of fishing you might be interested in, is right here and it's right now. If you are more of a nature lover, haven't ever been fishing...and we know you're out there, there is whale and dolphin watching. You never really know what whales you "might see" and by the less than 5% chance there are no whales on a given day for any reason, there are probably plenty of dolphins, sometimes in large schools playing around.

Rafn Sig-



Suddenly, it's April. This year, even Easter came early this year. The snow we thought would never come, finally did and now we are having trouble making it go away. But all the major holiday's have passed, officially it's spring, the lakes and streams are now open and the fishing season has begun. Of course, there are a few, true, "died in the wool," (a-"fish"-e-a-nados) that have been thinking about little else since the 15th or 18th of October when they were last able to "cast their flies upon the water" as the "fish police" were closing down the sport for the winter ahead all around them. They have been relegated to the garage or basement of the house, tying flies all winter. To them, April 1st, the second day of Easter in Iceland this year, was really Christmas.

Rafn Sig-



The dolphins are great fun to watch. They seem to have no fear, generally are like poetry in motion with perfectly timed precision like moves in perfect unisons. When the schools of them are large, more often than not, they seem to break off into about five or six different simultaneous pods, all doing their own show, from single performers, to duos, to groups. It is truly something to see here and there are many whale watching boats that will take you to the best places from wherever you might be staying. For right now though, let's go back to fishing and the possibilities. For family or friends that might be here for a while or if perhaps there are children travelling with you you'd like to introduce to the great outdoors, here are two suggestions. There is deep-sea fishing of course with a variety of boats that leave from just about every sizable coastal town, countrywide. All of these trips provide everything you need from rods and reels to bait, (rarely used) and protective gear as needed. All you have to do is show up and pay the fee assessed depending on the trip. Some of the companies will even pick you up right at your hotel or at any other pre-arranged place. Talk about full-service.



Elding

Pre-arranged fishing trips here in Iceland can range from just a couple of hours relatively close to shore, to four or more hours much further out in the deep blue sea. Of course, with deep-sea fishing, you never know what might swim by or what you might “hook-up” with. One rule of thumb, well actually two. The further out you go, the larger the fish will probably be. Once again though, that is the rule, there is the exception. The other is the type of fish you might catch on one of the deep-sea trips. Roughly 60-80% of the time you more than likely will find cod at the other end of the line. The reason is simple. There are just more of them in most areas than other types of fish. The exception is that just about anything that happens to be in the area might end up on the other side of your line. That adds to the excitement of a great fishing trip whether your with your own special group or even better with a boat load of people you don’t even know; well, not at the start of the trip anyway. Freshly caught cod are very good eating and many of the deep-sea trips will filet and cook your catch right on board the boat on the way back to port. Another very popular place, summer and winter, is Reynisvatn, a small city owned but privately run lake about 15 minutes east of Reykjavik



Here the person, the group or the family can “buy” a license, which is good up to a full year or until you, catch five fish to take with you. This lake is stocked periodically with rainbow trout, grown in, but not common to, Iceland.

Char, Arctic char and salmon are the naturally common fish caught in the lakes and streams. Fishing in the streams and rivers can be quite an adventure. It doesn’t have to be, but it can be very expensive. Licenses are required on all of Iceland’s internal waterways and can range from 800 — 1,000 Isk per day, (\$5.00 - \$10.00 at current rates) to licenses in some places, part of the Laxa for example, that can cost several hundred, and get this, up to \$1,500.00 for a 24-hour permit. It all depends on where,

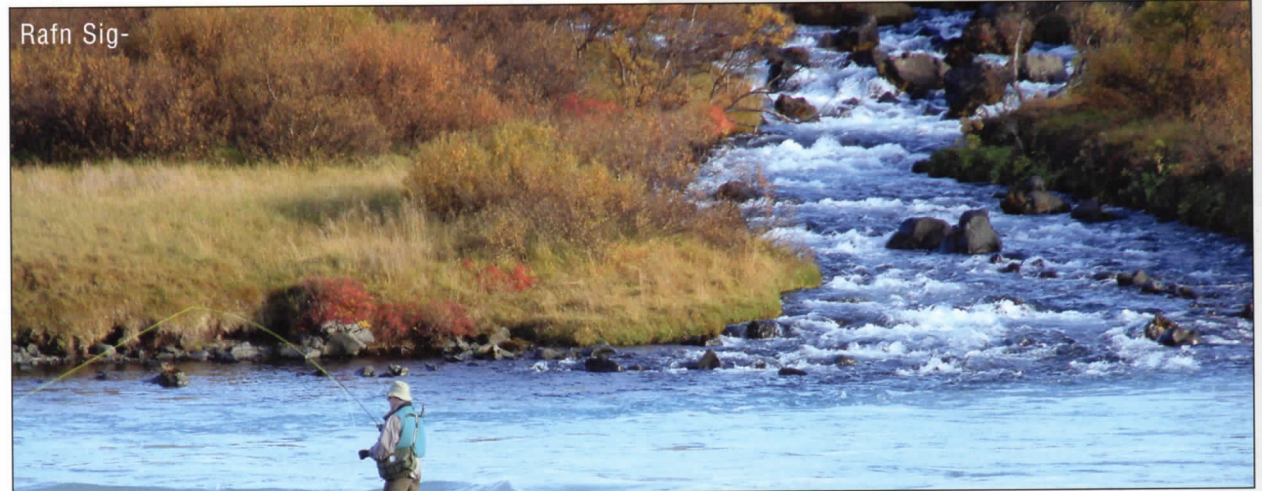
and the specific day and week.

Generally, these licenses come with a cabin and a stocked for cooking kitchen, for an overnight or weekend stay. July is the “really high season.” There are a couple of places on the upper Laxa River and in and around Borganes that run the highest, to what some might call ridiculous. Here is where we are talking about a license fee that can approach as much as \$3,500.00 dollars a day. Yes, you read that correctly. Now, I love to fish, but not \$3,500.00 worth, unless ownership of the property was involved and certainly not for a day or the week-end.

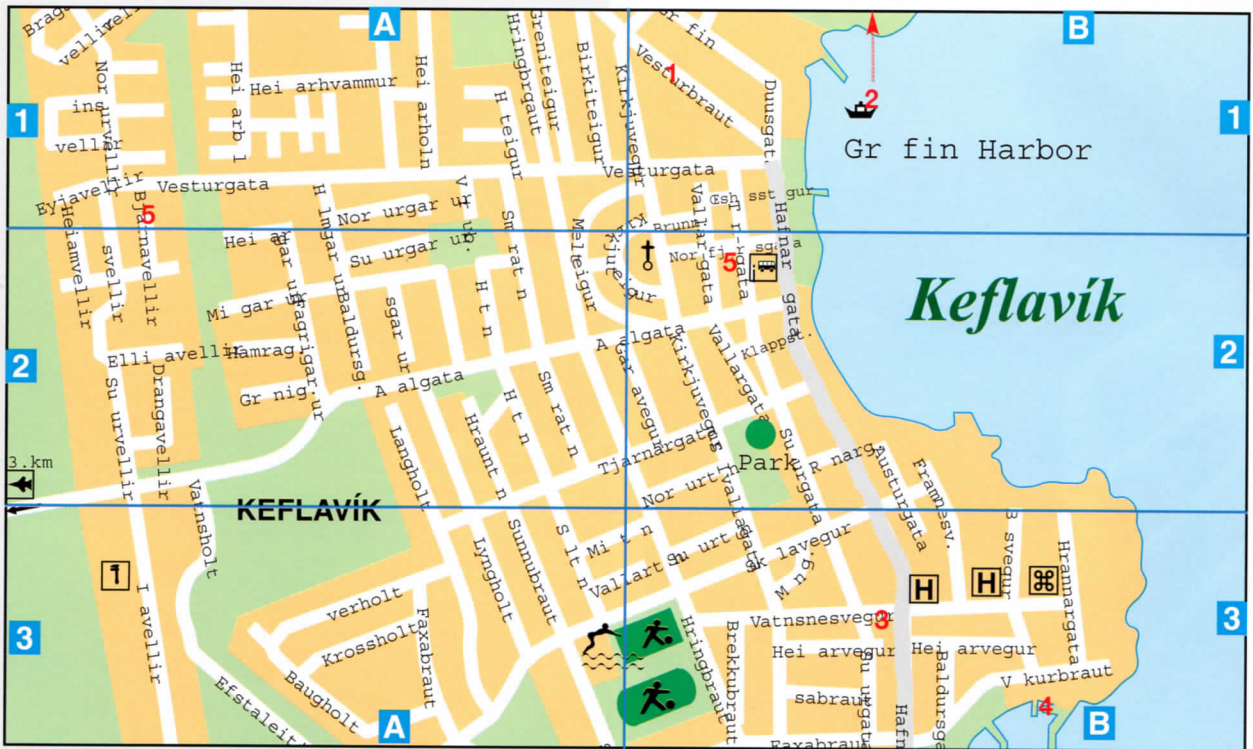


Most of these licenses are purchased by big Icelandic companies and others around the world, most likely for, their boards of directors. There are a few individuals that go this route as well, but not too many.

Finally, there is fly-fishing. There are any number of great places and many of them not very far from Reykjavik. One such place is right on the Reykjanes Peninsula, near the Krisuvik geothermal field. Another place, again, not far away is a place, when translated from the Icelandic means “ugly pool”. It is anything but ugly. In fact it is deep in a canyon in a very quiet and beautiful place. I am also told it has some of the best “fly fishing” in Iceland. Indeed some say it is “simply the best.” So... there you have it, a look at the types and a few of the places where the fishing is great, right here, right now in Iceland, and not far from you. For the most part, with the right gear, and sometimes a good guide you won’t have to talk about the “one that got away” ...because it won’t.



Rafn Sig-



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April Snow-showers,

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The first day of summer in Iceland is always a holiday and as hard as it might be to believe ALWAYS occurs in April. This year it will be celebrated on April 25th. Banks and some...actually most retail stores will close for the day, and since it is a Thursday, anywhere from some to many individuals will take leave from work and some businesses on Friday as well and head for the hills. From there it will be four glorious days at the (AKA) summer houses to "get them ready" for summer. Some however have been doing that all winter. They will just sit out on the deck, sit in the hot tub and heat and eat in the microwave while thumbing through all the cable channels. Talk about roughing it !! Here are all the stats you need. Happy Spring & early Summer.



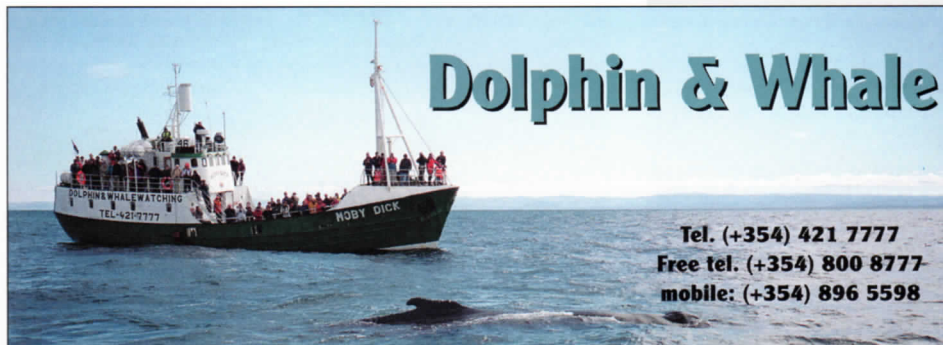
Day & Date:	Sunrise:	Sunset:
Fri, April 19th	5:45 AM	9:15 PM
Tue, April 23rd	5:30 AM	9:28 PM
Tue, April 30th	5:07 AM	9:50 PM
Sun, May 5th	4:50 AM	10:06 PM
Sat, May 11th,	4:31 AM	10:22 PM
Tue, May 21st	4:00 AM	10:57 PM
Fri, May 31st	3:31 AM	11:27 PM
Sat, June 15th	3:04 AM	MIDNIGHT

APRIL 2002

Ave Temp: 38°F or +4°C	Getting warmer every day
Max Temp: 56°F or +13°C	Short sleeve shirts by the way
Min Temp: 6° F or -14° C	Heavy coats wouldn't you say
Ave Wind: 12 Knots/14 Mph	A gentle breeze in which to play
Max Wind: 68 Kts/78 Mph	Heavy wind for April or May
Ave Rain: 3.5 Inches	Over 19 days a piece of cake
Max Rain: 6.0 Inches	If in one day we have a lake
Ave Snow: 6.0 Inches	Yes, we still have this they say
Max Snow: 25 Inches	...or this could make a real snow day

MAY 2002

Ave Temp: 44°F or 7°C	Warmer for the man
Max Temp: 66°F or 19°C	Hey, plug in the fan
Min Temp: 23°F or - 5°C	No, plug in the heater
Ave Wind: 13 Knots/15 Mph	About a 7 on the meter
Max Wind: 59 Knots/68 Mph	Moves you right along
Ave Rain: 3.0 Inches	For the month this is a song
Max Rain: 8.2 Inches	Now this is pretty wet
Ave Snow: 4.0 Inches	Wet turning white, not a good bet
Max Snow: 6.0 Inches	But white it could possibly get



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SILVER THREADS AND GOLDEN CIRCLES

Bob Murray

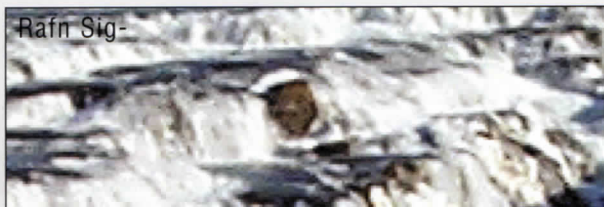
The tragic events in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania on 9/11, nearly brought the travel industry to a screeching halt in 2001. Airline companies around the world were flying with next to empty planes on some flights. Hotels suffered and some smaller independents, simply folded. Restaurants had plenty of room for dinner most every night at nearly every traveller destination. No reservations were required and no one place escaped, not even in a place called Iceland.

Rafn Sig-

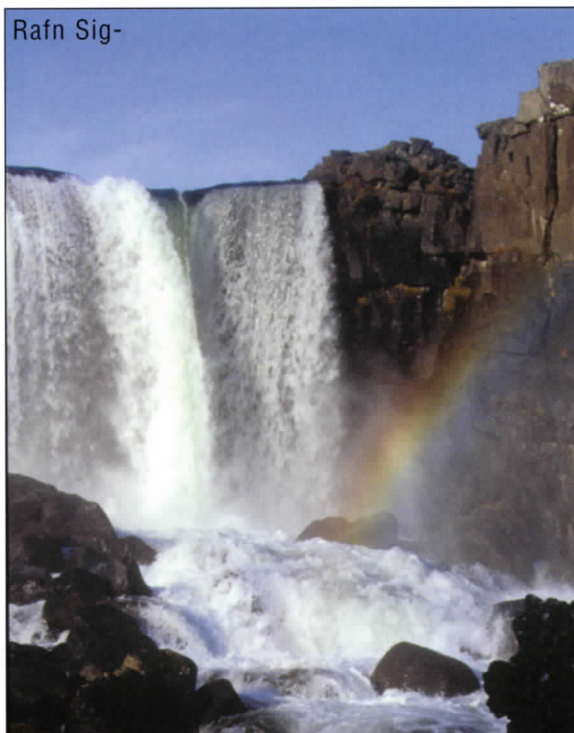


But, what was very nearly a direct hit at many tourist destinations around the world, was, by all considerations, just a glancing blow to the tourist industry in Iceland. The travel industry is starting to come back slowly in most places and is approaching "red hot" again in others. Iceland with the best airport security in the world, the meter falls here on the side of "red-hot".

Rafn Sig-



Rafn Sig-



Iceland's Golden Circle tours are for the most part full day tours that take anywhere from five to approximately nine hours depending on whom you've booked the tour with. Some are extended versions of the deluxe model and up to 13 hours long. We have the standard Golden Circle, The Golden Circle Express, the Diamond Circle and variations on all of those. Simply put however, if your time in Iceland is limited for any reason, perhaps to just a two or three day stopover and you only have the time to do just one full day tour, a version of the Golden Circle should be that tour. It is just a great introduction to the real beauty and many of the different wonders that are Iceland. It will leave you wanting more; much more.

Rafn Sig-



Rafn Sig-



When you arrive at the civilian terminal on Icelandair, the initial view of the landscape is quite honestly, not very impressive. In this case however, first impressions are completely inaccurate, indeed, dead wrong. Be prepared to be amazed. The Golden Circle tour, departing from Reykjavik, can be done in a couple of ways. My personal preference is heading out on highway one, through the Hengill Pass, to Hveragerdi. One minute, your viewing parts of the capital city. A few minutes' later, hills and mountains are all around you. On a day when there are lots of low puffy white clouds, moving rapidly across the sky and shadowing the landscape as they go, you can really get the feeling of being one with nature. It can really be humbling.

Rafn Sig-



Rafn Sig-

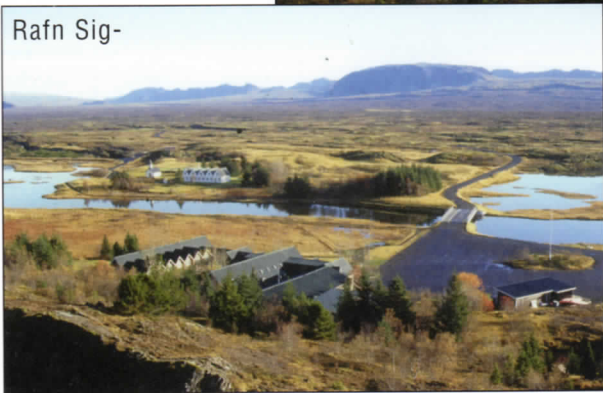


These "Golden Circles" however, no matter how long they are, the directions they, take or how they are done will afford you the opportunity in just one day to see many of the things you could witness in America. The difference is you would have to travel from Niagara Falls to Yosemite National Park and as far west as Hawaii to see it all...and you'd have to do it all the same day to qualify.

Descending though the pass, there is the small town of Hveragerdi. One of the many greenhouses in this area is a commercial venture called Eden. The tour makes a stop here for a look around the greenhouse and for refreshments. While there, check out the postcard wall. You'll get a fairly good idea of the many incredible sights Iceland has to offer. Once back on the coach and headed back to highway one, (less than half a kilometer) Iceland Explorer tours makes a brief diversion to Selfoss, one of the towns that felt the full force of the pair of 6.5 earthquakes in June of 2000. It's a pretty little town as we make a quick

drive down the main street. Today, unless you really look carefully, you would not ever know that there was an earthquake there at all. We then head to highway 35 where you'll briefly see the summerhouse that likes to live dangerously and our next stop, the extinct volcano Kerith. From the road, it's just a few yards to the top of the crater. The crater cannot be seen from the road. The bus pulls off the roadside by a small sign and parking area, seemingly in the middle of nowhere. You walk just a hundred feet or so and suddenly there you are, actually standing "in" a volcano. Now, where else in the world can you do that? If the weather has been good, meaning that there's been no rain for a few days and you have good sturdy shoes, it's possible to walk right down into the crater to the water filled cone some 60 feet below. It's not terribly difficult we do recommend that you exercise caution here walking down the inner cone of the volcano. We would not recommend it for smaller children.

Rafn Sig-



Rafn Sig-



From here, we board the bus and head for a brief stop at the church at Skalholt. This is a typical country church with a beautiful mural, constructed out of thousands of mini-tiles behind the altar. The small museum in the church basement often fascinates visitors with the stories and history of Iceland in this area, hundreds of years before.

Rafn Sig-



From here, it's on to one of the advertised main attractions of the tour, not that they haven't been pretty decent so far. We're off to see a geyser; a geyser called Strokur. "Strokur" erupts every five minutes on average, sometimes to heights of 60 feet or more. A result of the two major earthquakes in 2000 and an occasional tremor still felt there from time to time in the area, Stroker on occasion still erupts higher than ever before sometimes reaching heights of close to 75 feet. Not only that, several brand new hot cauldrons have formed in this very active field. The piece d' resistance however is that the old geyser has reawakened. As of the time this article was written, it was having small eruptions at least once and sometimes as many as three times a day. Being there when it happens is the trick as there is very little if any warning before it decides to erupt. There is also a new gift shop and the Geysir Theatre you just might want to check out.

Rafn Sig-



It truly is fascinating for a lot of reasons. First as with most everything in Iceland, you aren't hundreds of feet or yards away from the natural phenomena's. Second, Geysir, "the old one" was somewhere between nearly extinct and seriously dormant for dozens of years. They could force an eruption by pouring hundreds of kilos of soap in its crater. Sometimes it would work in hours, sometimes not for days. Many Icelanders have lived here all their lives and never seen the "old one" go off, except perhaps on film. Without exception, almost every "site" in Iceland offers a very up close and personal view of everything from a great many angles. It's a still or video photographers paradise. Follow the marked path here and please remember, the bubbling water is boiling water in the many other small craters in the field. Another tip is to insure that you are always "upwind" of the geyser. If not, trust me, you will get wet. The water, cooled somewhat by the air as it erupts, can still be plenty hot. It is here that we most often have to literally beg our visitors to get back on the bus. It's on this stop of the Golden Circle tour we always hear, "can we see just one more eruption pleaseeeze".

Rafn Sig-



You really do find it hard to leave this place, but it's a very short ride to the next major attraction on this tour Gullfoss, the golden falls. One observation area is located just before a path that leads directly to the falls. The view here and the roar of the water, often reminds one of a little smaller version of Niagara Falls in New York. As you approach the falls though, you realize that they are not small at all. On many partly cloudy or sunny days, a beautiful rainbow is usually visible in the mist created by the water pounding on the rocky, narrow canyon below. In the winter, the entire first ridge of the falls is frozen, producing an awesome sight, again, a photographers dream. It's one place in the summer and a very different sight in the winter. You should really go each season. Generally, the time allotted to explore the falls and take them all in is about an hour.

Rafn Sig-



From here it's off to the site of the ancient Icelandic parliament, the oldest parliament in the world, called Thingvellir. In times since past, elected town and village representatives rode on horseback to Thingvellir and conducted the business of the land. Meetings were held outdoors. Needless to say, whatever needed to be discussed, or voted on, was done so in a very business-like manner and no doubt, very quickly. You'll be able to walk several paths in the area and see the natural fault line, "where east meets west". This fault gets bigger each year. You'll be able to stand in the same spot where Throrer, the "law giver" and chieftain of that time stood over 1,000 years ago and pronounced the laws. Toss a coin and make a wish in the natural crystal clear pool at the park and see the waterfall and area below that also has a very interesting history. Your guide will tell you the entire story.

Rafn Sig-



From Thingvellir, if it's the standard tour we head back to the "big city" of Reykjavik, stopping briefly if possible at a place called the Alafoss wool factory. It's right on the way back and a great place for some real wool and souvenir bargains.



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