

# PORT OF ÍSAFJÖRÐUR



[WWW.ISAFJORDUR.IS](http://WWW.ISAFJORDUR.IS)





The approach to Ísafjörður airport is a little unconventional.

## ÍSAFJARÐARBÆR MUNICIPALITY

Ísafjarðarbær municipality was formed in 1996 when the town of Ísafjörður merged with the neighbouring villages of Hnífsdalur, Suðureyri, Flateyri and Þingeyri, forming one community with approximately 4.000 inhabitants. Ísafjarðarbær is the principal town of the Westfjords peninsula in the northwest corner of Iceland.

The community is vast, all in all 2.400 square kilometres, and reaches from the beautiful waterfall Dynjandi in the south to the world famous bird cliff Hornbjarg in the north. The cliff is one of the biggest seabird colonies in the North Atlantic and is part of the Hornstrandir nature reserve which plays host to those travellers who want to experience total isolation, peace and quiet.

The fishing industry has throughout the centuries been the mainstay of all the towns and villages that form Ísafjarðarbær municipality. Following changes in the last two decades or so, this industry now accommodates only about 20% of the workforce. The local and national governments are the biggest employers, with 40% of the workforce between them, while commerce and services (18%) and industry (11%) make up most of the rest of the workforce.

Ísafjörður has always been known for its numerous events and festivals, both during winter and summer. Most of them celebrate the town's rich cultural tradition and plethora of outdoor recreation opportunities. Whether it's hiking, kayaking, running, skiing, sailing og playing the fine sport of swamp soccer, this town has events and festivals that will match every outdoor and nature lover's interests. Cultural events include music festivals for both rock and classical music, and the widely acclaimed acting festival Act alone.

## Ísafjörður

The town of Ísafjörður was granted municipal status in 1786 as one of the six official trading centres in Iceland. The town stands on a narrow spit of land in the fjord of Skutulsfjörður, which meets the waters of the larger fjord of Ísafjarðardjúp. It is the biggest town in the municipality with just over 2.700 inhabitants.

The fishing industry has always been the most important economic activity, but commerce, trading and industry also have firm roots in the town's history. The travel sector has been on a steep rise for the last two decades and its infrastructure has been steadily improving so the town can now receive hundreds if not thousands of guests in one day.

Despite its small population, Ísafjörður has an urban atmosphere and is known throughout the country for its flourishing cultural life. This is perhaps down to the fact that the town is the biggest one for hundreds of

miles so the people have always had to be culturally self-sufficient.

As the capital of the Westfjords peninsula, Ísafjörður is the centre for services and administration in the area. It has all school levels, including a recently established University centre which allows people to seek higher education without having to move away from home. The town also has a hospital and branches from numerous government institutions.

## Þingeyri

Þingeyri, by the fjord Dýrafjörður, is an old trading post. The main source of employment for the community's 300 inhabitants is the fishing industry, but tourism is becoming increasingly important. The village is surrounded by spectacular nature, including the "Westfjords Alps" where the peninsulas highest peak, Kaldbakur, can be found. It is accessible for most people.

## Flateyri

Flateyri, by the fjord of Önundarfjörður, is also an old trading post. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century it was home to one of the biggest whaling plants in the North Atlantic, but the plant burnt down in 1901 and was never rebuilt. Today, the fishing industry is the main source of employment, but tourism has also been growing in recent years.

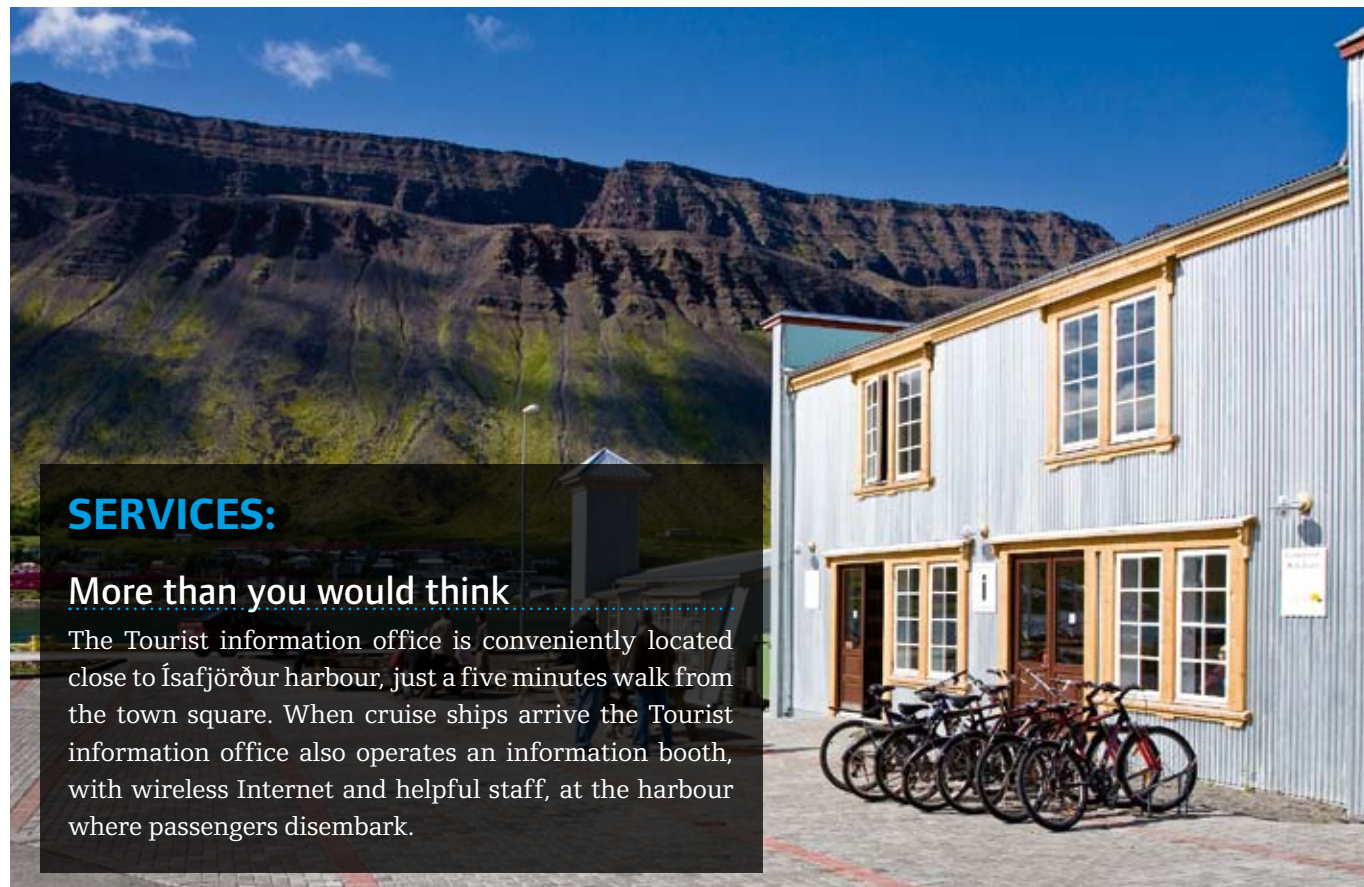
## Suðureyri

The village Suðureyri is located by the fjord Súgandafjörður. It is home to around 300 people and is known as "The original fishing village". Being close to rich fishing grounds, fisheries have always been the most important industry in this friendly and peaceful village, although tourism has played an increasingly important role in recent years, especially with the growing number of sea angling tourists who visit Suðureyri and Flateyri in drones every year.



Ísafjörður, the Old Bakery in town centre.





To help you make the most of your stay in Ísafjörður municipality, the Tourist information office can provide you with all necessary information on services, attractions, recreation opportunities and more.



#### Information:

Tourist information office:  
Aðalstræti 7, 400 Ísafjörður, Iceland  
Tel: (+354)-450-8060  
E-mail: info@vestfiridir.is  
The Tourist information office also operates a small info-hut at the harbour while cruise ships are in town.



#### Banks:

Ísafjörður has three banks; Íslandsbanki, Landsbanki and Sparisjóður. They are all in the town centre and are open on weekdays from 9:15 to 16:00.



#### AMTs:

ATMs/Cash machines can be found in Íslandsbanki, Sparisjóður and Neisti shopping centre in central Ísafjörður.



#### Telephones:

Tourist information office (phone cards)  
Neisti shopping centre (coins and credit cards)  
Hamraborg kiosk (coins only)



#### Public transport:

Ísafjörður has a bus system that operates on weekdays only. The system connects downtown Ísafjörður to the various villages and residential areas in the municipality, and can be useful for travellers going on short trips around the area.

Price: Adults: 280 ISK  
Children under 12 years: 100 ISK  
Senior citizens: 170 ISK

For timetables and further bus information, contact the Tourist information office.



#### Car rentals:

Hertz: (+354)-863-9023  
National: (+354)-840-6074



#### Taxi:

Tel: (+354)-456-3518  
(+354)-865-3709  
(+354)-895-3595



#### Internet access:

Tourist information office: Free access for up to ten minutes.

Harbour info-hut: Free wireless access + 3 computers with Internet access.

Public library: Free access for up to ten minutes. Moderate fee is charged for longer use.

Wireless Internet connection is offered in some of the guesthouses and cafés.



#### Bicycle rental:

Vesturferðir/West tours  
Tel: (+354)-456-5111



#### Kayak rental:

Kayaks can be rented in Ísafjörður, Flateyri and Heydalur. Contact the Tourist information office for further information and bookings.



#### Golf courses:

Ísafjörður: Nine-hole course, plus a six-hole training course with free admission.

Þingeyri: Nine-hole course.

Bolungarvík: Nine-hole course on a double system which serves as 18 holes.



#### Horse riding:

Horse riding is offered in Þingeyri and Heydalur. Contact Information centre for further information.



#### Fishing:

Deep sea angling and fishing in rivers and lakes is possible in the Ísafjörður area.

See [www.isangling.is](http://www.isangling.is) and [www.fisherman.is](http://www.fisherman.is) for deep sea angling, and contact the Tourist information office for lake and river fishing.



#### Swimming pools:

Ísafjörður municipality boasts four swimming pools for you to relax in and enjoy. The geothermal pool in Suðureyri is outdoors with two hot tubs, a play pool for the children and a steam bath.

Þingeyri, Flateyri and Ísafjörður each have an indoor pool with a hot tub and a sauna. Added to that, the neighbouring village Bolungarvík has an indoor pool, with two outdoor hot tubs and a waterslide.



#### Arts and crafts:

Craft stores and art galleries can be found in all the towns and villages in the area.

#### Ísafjörður:

- » Karitas, Aðalstræti 20
- » Hótel Ísafjörður, Silfurtorgi 2
- » Gullauga, Hafnarstræti 4
- » Hvesta, Aðalstræti 18

#### Suðureyri:

- » Á milli fjalla, Aðalgata 15
- » Hárverk, Sætún 5

#### Flateyri:

- » Purka, Hafnarstræti 11
- » Sæból, Ingjaldssandi

#### Þingeyri:

- » Gallerí Koltra, Hafnarstræti 7

#### Bolungarvík:

- » Drymla, Skólagata 3-5  
(Also at the Ósvör maritime museum)

#### Súðavík:

- » Víkurbúðin, Grundarstræti 3



#### Public toilets:

Tourist information office  
Ísafjörður harbour



#### Domestic flights:

Ísafjörður airport has two or three daily flights to Reykjavík. See [www.airiceland.is](http://www.airiceland.is)



#### Emergency telephone: 112





## THE WESTFJORDS HERITAGE MUSEUM

### Facts and figures:

The Westfjords heritage museum is located in one of the four houses that form the oldest building cluster in Iceland. They are all from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, which in Iceland is considered very old indeed, and are among the town's biggest attractions. The town of Ísafjörður was established and based on the fishing industry, and therefore it's only natural that the museum focuses mainly on maritime history. In the museum itself, as well as in the area around it, you will find all kinds of fishing- and fish production equipment, everything from basic fish hooks to ships.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, sundried salted fish (normally referred to as saltfish) was the country's most important export product and Ísafjörður was the saltfish capital of Iceland. To celebrate this heritage, the museum staff to this day produces saltfish by using this traditional method. The fish is flattened and left out to dry in the sun. This way, the fish doesn't need to be soured or refrigerated.

Sundried saltfish is for sale at the museum, but if you are leaning more towards fresh fish, it doesn't get much better than at Tjörúhúsið, a restaurant situated next to the museum in another one of the old houses.

The museum owns no fewer than nine boats and ships of various sizes and different make. Some of them are on display on land next to the museum, others are operated at sea. A boat trip in Gestur, the oldest engine powered boat that has been preserved in Iceland, can be ordered for groups.







Maasdam, 55.451 grt. and 220 metres long, at the Port of Ísafjörður.

## ÍSAFJÖRÐUR HARBOUR

### History:

When towns were forming in Iceland in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, a good natural harbour was one of the most important factors. In that sense, Ísafjörður had an advantage over most other towns in Iceland. The harbour is naturally protected on every side by steep mountains or land spits so the need for man-made protective structures was not as great as in most other towns.

Construction of the harbour in its current form started after 1930, although various piers and docks had already been built. The harbour has been steadily improved over the decades and like any other service structure, it needs to be updated regularly to keep up with modern demands.

### Port facilities Ísafjörður

Pilot: Compulsory

Tidal movements: 2.3 metres

### Maximum ship dimensions

#### Sundabakki

Length: 230 metres

Draft: 7.8 metres low spring tide

Airdraft: No

Beam: No restrictions

#### Ásgeirsbakki

Length: 270 metres

Draft: 7.0 metres low spring tide

Airdraft: No

Beam: No restrictions

Limitations: 150 meters ships

Draft: 6.5 meters

### Anchorage

Available: Yes

Pontoons: Yes, 40 metres, can use both sides

Tugboat: Available 12.5 tonne pull power

### Port services

Bunkers: Available by trucks

Supplies: Available

Waste handling: Yes all kinds of waist, separated

Fresh water: Yes, 40 metres per ton per hour, health analyses certificate available

### Transportation

Shuttle service: Available upon request

Excursion buses: Yes

Taxis: Yes

Public transport: Yes, weekdays only

### Passengers' facilities in pier area

Terminal building for passengers: No

Tourist information for passengers: Yes, information centre in pier equipped with Internet facilities and 250 metres away at Tourist information office, with Internet and telephones.

Shopping: Within walking distance and open daily

Public toilets: Yes



Maasdam at Sundabakki and Van Gogh (near) at Ásgeirsbakki.

Local currency: Icelandic Króna (ISK)

Currency exchange: Yes, in banks open weekdays

ATM/Cash machines: Yes, 3 in town area open 24 hours

Internet access: Yes, library, information centre in pier and Tourist information office, some cafés offer wireless

Guide service: Yes

City maps: Yes

Public telephones: Yes

Mail boxes: Yes

### Distances

City centre: 0.2 km

Airport: 5 km for domestic flight only to Reykjavík. (Reykjavík international airport)

### Contact

Mailing address:

Harbour building

Ásgeirsbakki

400 Ísafjörður

Iceland

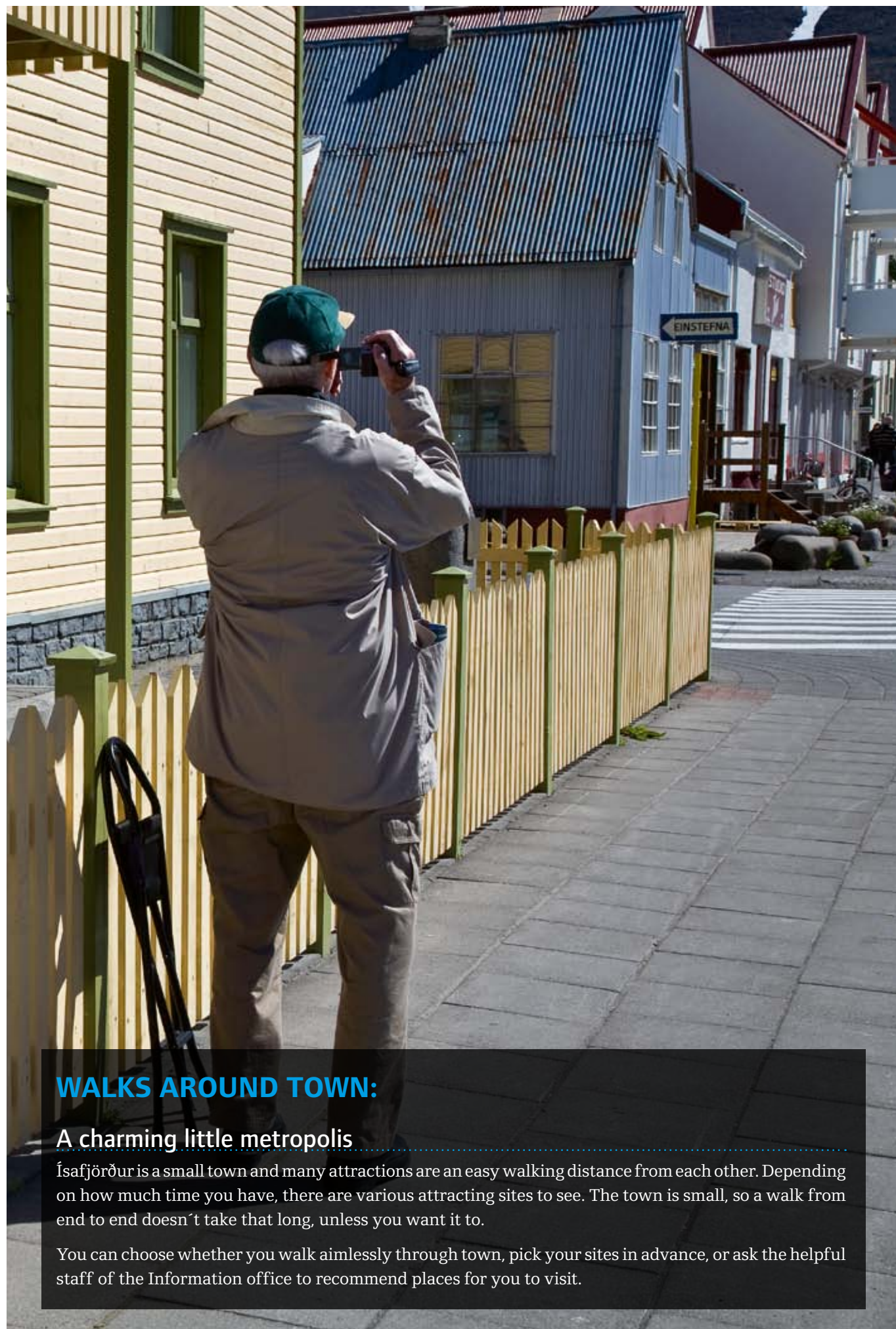
Tel: (+354) 450-8080

Fax: (+354) 456-4523

Email: port@isafjordur.is

Contact: Guðmundur M. Kristjánsson, harbour master





## WALKS AROUND TOWN:

### A charming little metropolis

Ísafjörður is a small town and many attractions are an easy walking distance from each other. Depending on how much time you have, there are various attracting sites to see. The town is small, so a walk from end to end doesn't take that long, unless you want it to.

You can choose whether you walk aimlessly through town, pick your sites in advance, or ask the helpful staff of the Information office to recommend places for you to visit.



The old hospital has been converted into a museum and a library.

**The Westfjords maritime museum** is only a couple of minutes' walk from the harbour. The museum tells the story of fisheries and the fishing industry, with a special focus on the industry's role in the development of Ísafjörður.

**Ísafjörður old town** is right in the town centre, a few minutes' walk from the harbour. Stroll through the narrow streets with their wooden 19<sup>th</sup> century houses and breathe the town's history. A history map that guides you through town is for sale at the Tourist information office.

Ísafjörður downtown has a variety of stores, cafés and restaurants. Taste some of the local delicacies, be it fresh fish, still warm buns from either of the towns two bakeries or something else. Browse through some of the exciting craft and art that the locals have on offer in the centre of town.

**The old hospital** has been converted to a cultural centre in Ísafjörður. It houses a public library, archives and art gallery among other things. It offers Internet access. Admission to the cultural centre is free and it features exciting art exhibits during the summer.

**Jónsgarður.** Close to the old hospital is a small park. Its main attraction for visitors is an arch made from whalebones.

**Hiking out in nature** is easy in Ísafjörður, whether you are after long or short routes, easy or strenuous.

**Take a stroll along the bustling harbour of Ísafjörður.** See as the local fishermen bring their small boats to land and smell the atmosphere of fish as fresh as it gets. Just be careful not to get in the way, fishermen are busy people.

**Cycling around Ísafjörður.** Cycling is perhaps the most efficient way to move around the fjord. You can rent a bike and cycle your way around the Ísafjörður area. Ask about biking routes at the Tourist information office.

**Kayaking in Ísafjörður.** Kayaking is the proper way to commute around town if you're of the adventurous sort. See the town from a different point of view as you sail between the trawlers and greet the ducks and seabirds that live in the fjord. Kayaking tours for small groups are on offer in Ísafjörður and the neighbouring town of Flateyri. Ask about these tours at the Tourist information office.







## DAY TRIPS:

### History and nature

A variety of day trips is on offer in Ísafjörður municipality and neighbouring towns, partly in connection to cruise ship arrivals. Depending on the costumer's wishes, these trips can be made by bus, boat or on foot.

## Life & Culture

Travellers are taken on a guided tour to an old fisherman's hut in Bolungarvík where they meet an old time fisherman who tells them about life in fishing stations of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Next, they enjoy an Icelandic music programme in Bolungarvík's local church, have a sip of fresh mountain water that flows down Buná river and waterfall in Tunguskógur and visit the oldest cluster of houses in Iceland, Neðstikaupstaður, where Ísafjörður's maritime museum is located. Travellers are offered a taste of Icelandic specialties, such as schnapps, dried fish and shark.

Included: Bus tour, guidance, museum admittance, performance by the youth theatre, music program and a taste of Icelandic specialties (can be excluded upon request).  
Duration: Appr. 3 hours.  
Accessibility: This tour is not suitable for the physically disabled as some of the stops include uneven paths.

## A visit to an abandoned village

Take a trip to Hornstrandir nature reserve, the village of Hesteyri to be precise. The village is only accessible by boat and a walk through it is truly a magnificent experience. In 1952 the people of Hesteyri, without telephone, electricity and roads, made the decision to move away from the area, leaving everything behind.

The boat ride from Ísafjörður takes about 70 minutes.

Included: Boat tour, guide and refreshments.

Accessibility: This tour is not suitable for the physically disabled as the walk through the village is on uneven ground. An inflatable boat is used to take land if the tide is low and the pier inaccessible.

## A calm island crowded with birds

The island Vigur has earned itself a great reputation and has for many years been the area's biggest attraction. Its five friendly inhabitants welcome you with their relaxed easy manner and somehow it feels like time stands still.

After a half an hour's boat tour from Ísafjörður you take a leisurely walk around the island which gives you a perfect opportunity to see the abundance of birds in their natural environment. The island is home to thousands of birds; eider ducks, arctic terns, puffins, black guillemot and more. From mid August there are no puffins and few other birds on the island. However, music or other types of traditional entertainment is provided instead.

The only windmill in Iceland, built in 1830, is located in Vigur. As is the oldest boat in Iceland which is built around 1800.

Refreshments are served by the farmer's family in a mid-19<sup>th</sup> century house, completing an enjoyable day on the island.

Included: Boat tour, refreshments and guide.  
Duration: 3 hours.  
Accessibility: Not suitable for physically disabled since there are no hiking trails on the island, only paths on grass.

## Mountains and villages

This tour gives you a great opportunity to view the best of the best, from Bolungarvík to beautiful Önundarfjörður. On your way to Flateyri you will go through the longest tunnel in Iceland.

A 10 minutes' bus ride takes you from Ísafjörður to Ósvör, an old fisherman's hut near the town of Bolungarvík. There you'll meet an old time fisherman who tells you about life in the fishing stations of yesteryear.

Next you will call at the Westfjords folk museum in Ísafjörður, the oldest cluster of houses in the land. There you'll see Morrinn perform, the only professional teenage theatre in Iceland, and get a taste of Icelandic specialties including schnapps, dried fish and shark.

In the calm town of Flateyri you'll enjoy an Icelandic music programme in the town's church.

Included: Bus tour, guidance, museum admittance, performance by the youth theatre, music program and a taste of Icelandic specialties (can be excluded upon request).  
Duration: Appr. 3 hours.  
Accessibility: Not suitable for the physically disabled as some of the stops include uneven paths.

## Sea kayaking in Önundarfjörður

Drive over to Flateyri in Önundarfjörður fjord. Meet with your guide, who will instruct you on safety precautions and get you ready for your adventure.

Önundarfjörður is the ideal location for kayaking. It boasts beautiful scenery, rich bird life and just about the perfect geographical situation. You might get really lucky and have a seal or even a whale joining you on the way. From there, head back for the bus to pick you up to join your ship again.

Included: Transport, guidance, kayak.  
Duration: 3-4 hrs.  
Accessibility: Activity tour. Only for quite fit people.

## Visit the original fishing village

This tour will take you through the biggest tunnel in Iceland, over to the green, luscious, narrow fjord of Súgandafjörður. Your destination is the Original Fishing Village of Suðureyri. This town, a typical fishing village of merely 300 inhabitants, is a charming little place.

Upon your arrival, you will get the rare opportunity to visit a fully functioning fish factory, where you can witness the process that turns fresh fish into a fillet. Take a stroll with your guide through the village and visit the guys who prepare the bait for the line boats. See if they will give you some for the cod in the lagoon. After you've seen all this, your guide will take you to Talisman, the

seafood restaurant in the village. There you'll be treated to a light lunch, all of which, of course, comes from the ocean. Your last stop is the cod lagoon, feed the cod that come so close that you can even pet them—watch out so you don't get caught by the cod!

Included: Bus tour, guidance, fish nibblets, light lunch, bait for the cod and a tour through the fish factory with protective clothing.  
Duration: Appr. 3 hours.  
Accessibility: The floor in the fish factory is wet and can be slippery. Outdoors, the walk is on paved streets.

## The back streets of Ísafjörður

The Westfjords largest town is Ísafjörður. The town centre is interesting to walk around as there are old streets and houses that have no similarity in the whole country.

The tour begins in downtown Ísafjörður where a local guide will meet you and walk with you around town. Each house has its history. We will see the house where our president was born and see buildings of all architectural styles and designs found in Icelandic towns and cities. The final stop is the Maritime museum, from where you'll walk back to the ship.

Included: Guided walk and admission to the Westfjords folk museum.  
Duration: 2-3 hrs.  
Accessibility: Walk is on paved streets with little or no elevation.

## Flowers and fjords

Driving across the mountains gives an excellent view of the harsh landscape; narrow passes across sharp mountain ridges, deep, sheltered fjords where farms and villages huddle on a narrow strip of land. Visit Skráúður, the first Icelandic botanical garden, founded in 1909.

From there, you'll drive to Flateyri. The village, located on gravel spit, was formed around shark fishing in the middle of the nineteenth century. In Flateyri your bus will drop you off by the church; a charming, small and intimate church, quite typical for smaller towns in Iceland. In the church you will enjoy an Icelandic music programme.

From the church you'll take a stroll with your guide down the small main street of Flateyri. Visit the old bookstore and the merchant's home where time stands still. There you'll find an exhibition reflecting the history of Flateyri.

Included: Bus tour, guidance, music program, refreshments (can be excluded).  
Duration: Appr. 3 hours.  
Accessibility: Not suitable for the physically disabled as some of the stops include uneven paths



Dynjandi waterfall in Arnarfjörður, about 90 km drive from Ísafjörður.



This brochure is published by the Port of Ísafjörður  
in collaboration with the Westfjords Tourism Office.

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