

WALKING EXPEDITION TO ICELAND, JULES VERNE STYLE

August Icelandic trek takes travelers to the centre of the world and beyond

Hubbards, Nova Scotia - One of the greatest journeys of all time started at the top of the earth at a place where time had all but forgotten. And now you can walk in the footsteps of legends August XX, and see why Iceland is as magical and mysterious as the day Jules Verne first put paper to pen to create Journey to the Center of the Earth.

The mighty ice capped volcano Snæfellsjökull and lush foothills, are the fictional starting point of Jules Verne's famed novel, Journey to the Center of the Earth, and it is only one many spectacular stops on a new Icelandic walking tour offered by Scott Walking Adventures. You'll also visit two of the "Natural Wonders of the World". Gullfoss Waterfalls - an enormous white glacial cascade dropping 105 feet into a narrow canyon. And the Great Geyser, an overwhelming sight that has been described as spectacular natural phenomenon beyond description.

Iceland is one of the last places on earth largely unspoiled by the ravages of modern civilization. It is an island of raw, dramatic landscapes born from volcanic eruptions and carved out by glaciers. Other parts have hardly changed since the first Viking settlers saw them more than 1100 years ago. It makes touring there as close to walking the earth at the beginning of civilization as you might find.

"It's been said that a tour of the countryside of Iceland is like touring through an outdoor museum of natural history, and certainly that was my impression when I first traveled there," says Angela Chisholm, President of Scott Walking Adventures. "I did a biking tour there and fell in love with the surroundings, and I came back and put this new tour together. You're walking on top of glaciers and craters and you really feel like you're on a different planet - - its' magical and mysterious at the same time."

This unique adventure will take you through areas of boiling mud pots and fumaroles, young lava fields, exotically coloured rhyolite mountains, and rugged coastlines. Focusing on three completely different areas in Iceland, you'll begin with two days on the Reykjanes Peninsula, where the mid-Atlantic Ridge rises from the bottom of the ocean, slicing the island into two geological regions. The resulting landscape is dominated by rough lava fields steaming with geothermal activity.

Your knowledgeable guide will lead you through the glistening green valley of Thorsmörk and the multicolored mountains of Landmannalaugar, and introduce you to the extraordinary beauty of the region and its people.

"The people of Iceland are as interested in you as you are and of their way of life. They are very friendly and open to sharing their way of life with you," says Angela. "This is a country that has come a long way in a short period of time, you still have an opportunity to speak to elders that can tell you about how it was before technology – they give a very distinct and interesting perspective."

After all, Angela says, at Scott Walking Adventures people continue with walking tours not so much for the walking alone, but for the camaraderie and sharing experiences with like-minded people.

Rugged and natural geophysical wonders by day are complimented by sublime and comfortable accommodations by night. Whether in the capital of Iceland Reykjavik or the traditional fishing village of Grundarfjörður where you'll stay at the Hótel Búdir - a

Condé Nast Traveler pick as one of the 100 best new hotels worldwide - - you'll be treated to warm Icelandic hospitality and folklore while dining on some of the freshest seafood you'll ever taste. Maybe you'll even choose to try out some local delicacies. Whichever you choose, you'll be well taken care of at the end of each day's trek.

"Our agenda is flexible because we really want people to have time to 'stop and smell the roses' along the way. Our guests enjoyment is the most important facet of every trip, not how many miles we do in a day," says Angela.

IF YOU GO:

Scott Walking Adventures provides walking and hiking vacation packages which include carefully selected lodging, transportation in air-conditioned vans, all meals, tips for lodging and meals, knowledgeable and friendly regional guides, all park entrances, all taxes all from \$3,595 CAN. Call 1-800-262-8644 or visit www.scottwalking.com.

MORE:

Iceland is an island of geologic wonders. During this 7-day, 6-night tour you'll also see:

- Gullfoss, the golden waterfall, and Geysir, a geothermal phenomenon, nears the Snaefellsnes Peninsula;
- the Hveragerdi area, a highly active geothermal area with many hot springs and a river that is actually warm enough to bath in;
- the Reykjanes Peninsula and a visit to one of Iceland's oldest churches Strandarkirkja;
- the Reykjanesviti lighthouse across a changing landscape part of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, where the North American plate is pulling away from the European plate;.
- the geothermal spa the Blue Lagoon, perhaps the most supernatural looking body of mineral-rich water on Earth where swim-able temperature averages about 40C (104F);
- the Thorsmörk Valley, an incredible oasis area hidden between three glaciers in the southern part of Iceland;
- the hidden waterfall in the Stakkholtsgjá Canyon which offers a magnificent view of the entire area surrounded by ice caps and glaciers;
- Icelandic moss fields, meadows of wool grass, steam springs, and lava formations;
- the historical Thingvellir and Kaldidalur Valleys, and
- the Langjökull glacier, and Barnafoss and Hraunfoss Waterfalls.