



CYCLING IN ICELAND

If you are planning an adventurous cycling trip, Iceland is unique in many ways. It is safe to travel here if you are properly prepared, and you will find Icelanders both helpful and friendly. You can plan your own trip, but there are also a few companies that specialize in guided bike tours.

The weather

Iceland's cool, oceanic climate is quite mild for its latitude, thanks to the Gulf Stream. The summers are short, and the best time to visit is late May to early September. The average daytime temperature around the coast during this period is 10-12°C (50-55°F). The average daily sunshine in July and August is 5-6 hours, and the nights are bright during the summer months. You might even experience the midnight sun if you are near the Arctic Circle. However, the weather is extremely changeable and unpredictable, so you should always be prepared for the unexpected. You might encounter sudden strong winds and even snow in the middle of summer. Even if you stick to the main roads, you should always consult the weather forecast, and in all cases carry warm clothing with you. You can get the weather forecast by telephone (902-0600), on www.vedur.is or just by asking the locals. Icelanders follow the weather forecast almost religiously. Wind speed and gusts (vindhvolfur) from windy places on the main roads are shown on electronic signs 10-30 km before those areas, and also on www.road.is. At wind speeds above 15-20 m/s, cycling becomes dangerous. Close to some mountains, gusts easily exceed 30 m/s, even pushing your bike can be dangerous. Try to keep your plans flexible so you can go with the wind or wait at a safe place. If you have to cycle against the wind, consider cycling in the late evening and at night (in June and July) as the wind often calms down in the evening. This has the added benefits of encountering far less traffic and experiencing wondrous sunsets and sunrises, but access to shops and services is of course limited. In the interior highlands, temperatures are lower, and the storms may be more extreme than in the lowlands.

The roads

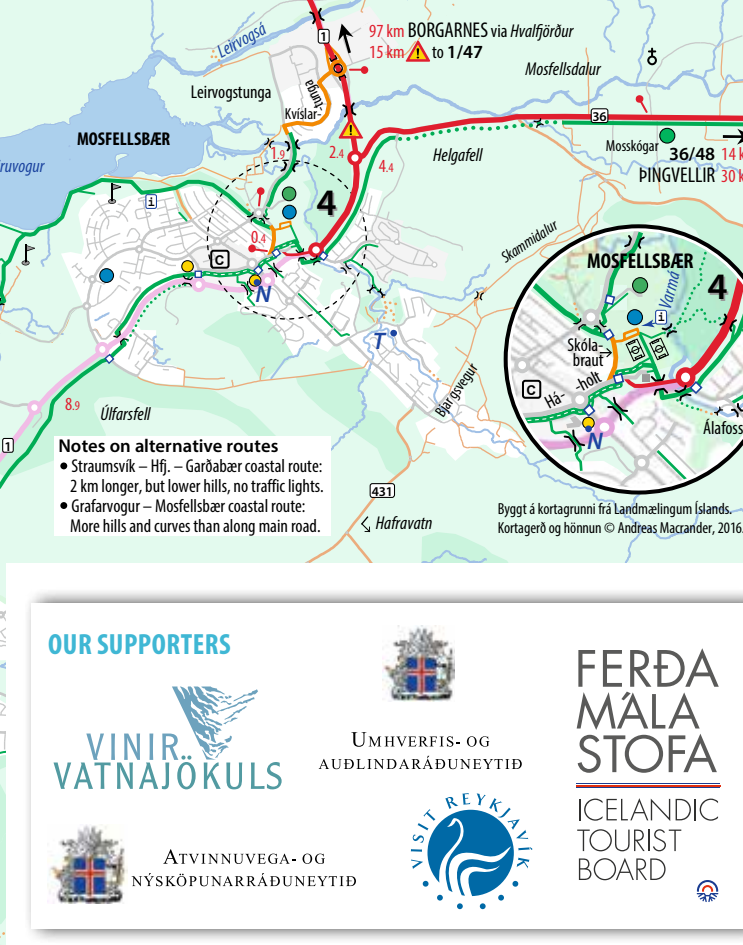
Most main roads are asphalted (albeit often with a somewhat rough surface), but there are still many gravel roads which are often the roads with the least traffic. The main highway in Iceland, Route 1, circles the country in around 1400 kilometers. Once you leave the south-west part of the country, traffic volume decreases, but vehicles still move fast. The roads also become narrower, especially once you exit Route 1. There is far less traffic on the gravel roads, but you may encounter long stretches with potholes, "washboards" or loose sand.

The interior highlands

The mountain roads in the interior highlands are usually closed until late May or even as late as July, depending on the seasonal snow melt. The Road Administration, www.road.is, informs about road conditions and seasonal opening dates. The highland roads are all rough gravel/dirt roads of various quality, ranging from packed mud to washboards, loose gravel and even sand, on which it may be impossible to cycle when it has been dry for some period. Many rivers must be crossed at fords and can become dangerous during or after rain, and, in the case of glacial rivers, during warm periods. You may therefore have to wait until late night or early morning to cross certain glacial rivers during the summer. Mountain bikes with fat knobby tires for good traction and comfort and low gear ratios to help climb steep hills are recommended. Please remember that in the highlands the nearest lodging can be far away. The highlands are generally devoid of any shops and services. There may be terrible storms, sandstorms or snow. Large areas have no mobile telephone coverage, and some tracks are very lonely. Depending on the road surface, progress can be very slow, and you may cover as little as 25 km per day. If you travel on lonely tracks or hike away from any roads, make sure that someone: friends, hut wardens or an emergency, safe travel is, knows about your travel plans, so that help can be arranged in the case of an emergency. The map overview only shows traffic volume, major roads, and the areas in which loose sand can be expected. Please study the map legend carefully. Those who plan to travel in the interior highlands must acquire further information that is not supplied by this map.

Traffic regulations

Cycling is allowed on all roads except the Hvalfjörður tunnel. However, the motorway-like main roads in the Capital Area are not suitable for cycling. It is better to use the bike paths there. When cycling on roads, cyclists should cycle on the right side of the lane farthest to the right, and allow motor vehicles to pass. Cycling on sidewalks and walking paths is legal in Iceland, but cyclists have to show regard for pedestrians. It is prohibited to damage the vegetation and soil by off-road or off-track cycling. The tire tracks may cause erosion, and plants grow very slowly in Iceland. Bicycles are required to have head- and taillights when cycling in darkness, through tunnels or when visibility is poor, but not in daylight. Children, 14 years and younger, are required to use bicycle helmets when cycling.



JOIN THE ADVENTURE

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BSI Bus Terminal • 101 Reykjavík • ☎ 580 5400 • main@re.is • www.ioyo.is

Travelling by plane and arrival at Keflavik airport

Cyclists bringing their bikes on flights to Iceland must pack them in suitable boxes. Keflavik airport: Conditions for cyclists were greatly improved in 2016. While it is not permitted to pack/unpack bicycles in the terminal building, a special container with an assembly stand for bicycles, tools and information material has been set up 100 m east of the arrivals exit (see the Keflavik mini map). Bike boxes can be stored at Bilahótel (grey building marked "Geysir", 800 m to the northwest, Arnarvöllur 4, tel. 455-0000). Cycling from/to Keflavik airport: A new bike path to the town of Keflavik begins at the bike container. To all other destinations you need to cycle on the roads. The main road to Reykjavik is quite wide for the most part, but there is heavy traffic. Shuttle bus from Keflavik airport to Reykjavik: Flybus connects with every flight; they also provide onward transport from the BSI bus terminal to Reykjavik campsites/City hostel and other guesthouses and hotels. Strætó route 55 operates to Hafnarfjörður or BSI, but this particular bus does NOT take bicycles. Reykjavik campsites/City hostel offer tools to assemble/disassemble bikes, and bike boxes can be stored there. Most domestic flights depart from Reykjavik city airport; please note that there are two terminals (see the Reykjavik map). In most domestic airports, you will find some space to work on your bike. Just be considerate and don't take up too much space.

Travelling by bus and bike

In Iceland, public transport buses are operated by several companies. The Public Transport map shows which company operates which routes. For schedules, prices etc., refer to the operator's websites. On most routes, reservations are not possible, but a few routes require pre-booking for bikes. It is always advisable to contact the operator who is intended to travel with before setting off in order to confirm your travel plans and check for weather-related changes. Always ask about the conditions for taking your bike on the bus. Some Strætó routes, shown with dashed lines, run on demand only. Call the operator several hours before departure. Long-distance buses depart from different locations in Reykjavik, marked on the Reykjavik map. Strætó: Mjódd terminal, a few services also from BSI terminal. IðOY and the BSI: BSI terminal. Strætó: Harna and campsite, Trer: City center and campsite. Buses have scheduled stops in every village, but, if necessary, you can get on or off the bus anywhere where the main road meets smaller roads on the bus route in rural areas. Just be sure to make it clear that you want the bus to stop. In the Capital Area and other areas with local buses, buses only stop at marked stops. In rural areas, bikes are put in the luggage compartments of the buses. Some buses have additional space in trailers or on bike racks. On most services, there is capacity for 4 ± x bikes. The exact number of bikes on any given bus can not be guaranteed but bikes are usually accepted as long as there is room for them. For all rural buses, you can buy tickets on the bus with cash or credit card. For Strætó, bikes of 20 tickets are also sold at a few filling stations in rural areas and at some bus terminals and swimming pools in the Capital Area. Apart from Strætó, most operators charge ca. 3500 kr for the transport of bicycles. The yellow Strætó city bikes in the Capital Area can accommodate up to 2 bicycles, if the space is not needed for other passengers, children's prams or wheelchairs. On the bus, tickets must be paid for in cash (ca. 420 kr) or bought in advance; bikes go free of charge. Nevertheless, cycling is usually the better alternative within Reykjavik.

Travelling by ferry and bike

The Smyril Line ferry sails every week all year between Hirtshals in Denmark, Tórshavn in the Faroe Islands and Seyðisfjörður. Most domestic ferries charge for the transport of bikes. Pre-booking for bikes is not necessary, but you should contact the operators to confirm sailings. The ferry to Vestmannaeyjar sometimes has difficulties with the harbour in Landeyjahöfn. As an alternative, they operate from Þorlákshöfn. On such days, Strætó route 52 terminates in Hvolsvöllur, and a special bus connects with the ferry in Þorlákshöfn. The ferry across Breiðafjörður makes an intermediate stop on the small island Flatey. Cyclists who want to stay in Flatey have their bikes lifted on/off the ship by crane, while for through passages, bikes are stored on the car deck.

EuroVelo 1 – The Atlantic coast route

There are plans for Iceland to become part of the EuroVelo network of designated cycling routes, www.eurovelo.com. Although the intended route Seyðisfjörður – South Iceland – Reykjavik has not been formally opened yet, it is already shown on this map.

Scheduled Buses

The STRÆTO System

This is the main official bus system. Tel. 540 2700 - www.buss.is

ICELAND ON YOUR OWN

A system operated by REYKJAVIK EXCURSIONS and SBA-Norðurland. Reykjavik Office: Tel. 580 5400 - www.ioyo.is Akureyri Office: Tel. 550 0700 - www.ioyo.is

The STERNA System

A system operated by Sterna Travel. Tel. 551 1166 - www.sternatransel.com

TREX

Tel. 587 6000 - www.trex.is Schedules to Þórsmörk (Bíðar and Langidalur) and Landmannalaugar. Summer schedule 15 June - 15 Sept. 2016

Main lines in the Westfjords

Isafjörður - Halmavík: Tel. 893 1058, 847 0285 & 540 2700 Brjánslækur - Isafjörður: Tel. 456 5006 - www.wa.is Brjánslækur - Patreksfjörður - Látrabjörg: Tel. 456 5006 - www.wa.is Isafjörður - Súrnayri - Flangry - Þingeyri: Tel. 893 6356 - www.isafjordur.is

Local Bus Lines in the Westfjords

Patreksfjörður - Bíldudalur: Tel. 456 2636 & 893 2636 Isafjörður - Bolungavík: Tel. 892 1474 & 456 7195 - www.bolungavik.is Westfjords Tourist Information: Tel. 450 8060 - www.westfjords.is

SAVUST

Bus System of the Eastfjords Tourist Info in Egilsstaðir: Tel. 471 2320 - www.savust.is

Askja & Herðubreiðarlindir

FIJALLASYN: Tel. 464 3941 & 464 3940 - www.fjallasyn.is MYVATN TOURS: Tel. 464 1920 - www.myvatntours.is

Domestic Flights

AIR ICELAND destinations:

Reykjavik, Isafjörður, Akureyri, Egilsstaðir, Grímsey, Þórshöfn, Vopnafjörður. Tel. 570 3030 - www.airiceland.is

EAGLE AIR destinations:

Reykjavik, Vestmannaeyjar, Höfn, Húsavík, Bíldudalur, Gígur. Tel. 562 4200 & 562 2640 - www.eagleair.is

BLUE LAGOON TRANSFERS

Reykjavik Excursions Tel. 580 5400 - www.re.is

KEFLAVIK AIRPORT TRANSFERS

flybus flybus+ Tel. 580 5400 - www.flybus.is Keflating Tel. 586 1310 - www.keflating.com AIRPORT EXPRESS www.airportexpress.is

Reykjavik Bike Tours

Rent-A-Bike / Segway Tours / Bike Tours / Private Tours

Ægisdagur 7 - Old Harbour www.reykjavikbiketours.is Call / text: + (354) 694 8956 www.reykjaviksewaytours.is

USEFUL WEBLINKS FOR CYCLISTS

Weather in Iceland

www.vedur.is www.bjorgur.is/locales/en www.jr.no

Road conditions

www.road.is

Filling stations also offering food, WC and air pumping, found in every town

www.n1.is www.olis.is www.skeljungur.is

Shop chains with seasonal bike equipment

www.hagkaup.is www.byko.is www.husa.is

Accommodation & camp sites

www.cyclingiceland.is/camping_huts www.hostel.is www.farmholidays.is www.tjaldar.is/en

Swimming Pools

www.swimmingiceland.com

Travelling in Iceland

www.safetravel.is www.planiceland.com www.visiticeland.com www.visitreykjavik.is www.travelnet.is www.nat.is www.fl.is www.utivist.is

Map & addresses & phone book

en.ja.is/kort

Other free online maps

www.cyclingiceland.is www.map.is www.lmi.is

Bike plan of the Capital Area

www.cyclingiceland.is/reykjavik reykjavik.is/gonguhojolastrig

CYCLIST'S WEBSITES AND BLOGS

The Icelandic Mountain Bike Club www.fjalahjolaklubburinn.is/english Mirjam Wouters www.cyclingdutchgirl.com

Ulf Hoffmann www.bikingiceland.com Michael Erens members.ziggo.nl/erens/iceland.htm

USEFUL PRINTED INFORMATION

Free booklets

widely available in tourist informations etc.: Around Iceland / Rund um Island Comprehensive information with town maps, phone numbers of all accommodation & camp sites, places of interest etc. Books available in book shops The Biking Book of Iceland by Ómar Smári Kristinnsson (4 books available), Cycle trails in the Westfjords, West, South West and South Iceland. Google it!

Maps

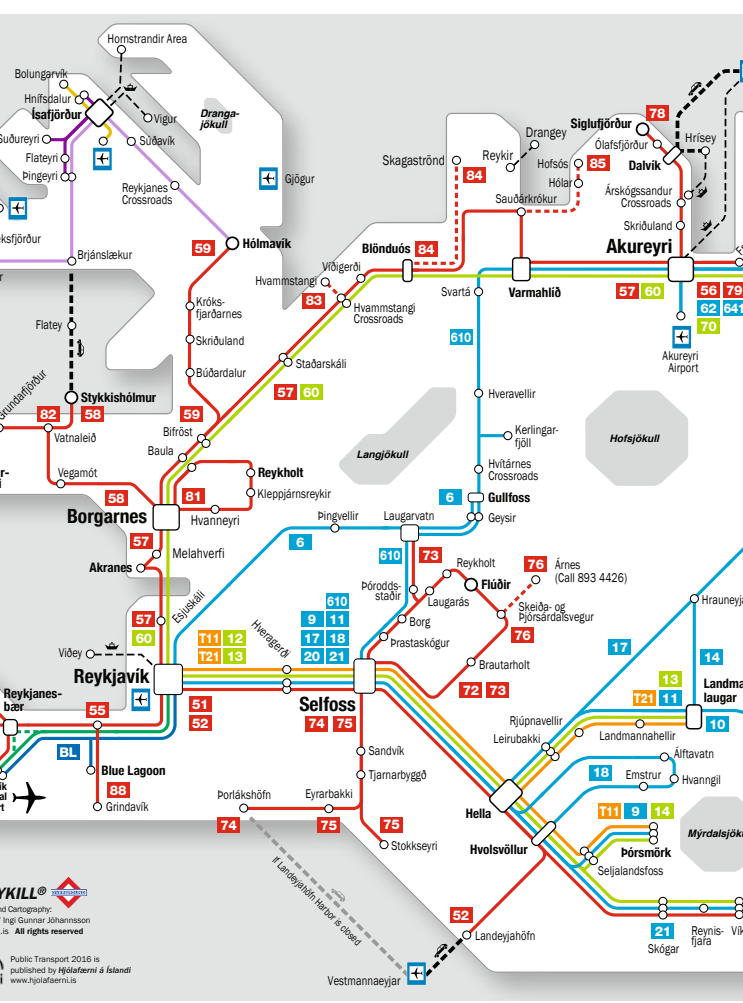
widely sold in book shops, filling stations and tourist information centres: Ferabokart 1:250,000 by Íbni Fjörðungskort 1:300,000 by Farleya Good maps are recommended, particularly for travelling in the highlands.

CYCLING ICELAND Summer 2016

List of campsites and huts Leaflet available at tourist informations and camp sites and www.cyclingiceland.is/camping_huts

TRI WWW.TRI.IS

www.publictransport.is



Scheduled Ferries

Reykjavik - Viðey Island

Tel. 519 5000 & 533 5055 - www.elding.is

Vestmannaeyjar from Landeyjahöfn

Tel. 481 2800 - www.herjolur.is

Stykkishólmur - Flatey - Brjánslækur

The ferry across Breiðafjörður Bay Tel. 433 2254 - www.seatours.is

Reykir - Drangey with Drangey Tours

Tel. 821 0090 & 821 0091 - www.drangey.net

ÚTIVIST

Travel Association, Laugavegi 178, Reykjavik, tel. +354 562 1000 Mountain huts: Bæsar in Góbaland, tel. +354 893 2910 Fimmvörðuskáli hut, tel. +354 893 4910 Other huts: Strútskáli, Dalakofu, Sveinastindur, Skælingar, Álfavötn. For more information call our office, tel. 562 1000 www.utivist.is utivist@utivist.is

VATNAJÖKULLSPJÓÐGARÐUR NATIONAL PARK

Vatnajökull National Park spans the largest glacier of Iceland, vast highland areas, volcanoes, rivers and lakes. In its southwestern part, Lakagígur is a series of craters formed during the Skaftældalur eruption in 1783 which left behind lava flows extending over 60 km. In this magnificent area we recommend three routes leading to the Laki craters. Please note that services in this highland area are limited. You need to bring all provisions, and remember to take enough water from the fords and rest places. There are a few huts and you can put up your tent at the campsite in Blágl which provides water and a shower.

The Laki cirde (39 km)

The heart of the Laki area is encircled by the roads F207 and F206. Within this ring, there are many beautiful volcanic craters. Fragile green moss contrasts with the landscape of black ash and lava. There are interesting hiking trails at the Laki mountain and at the Tjarnargígur crater lake. The river Varmá which has been displaced by the lava flows is crossed in the western part of road F207. The original path of Varmá was 2 km south of Laki where you can see only a few small streams today. Water is also available at the rest places at Laki and Tjarnargígur and in Blágl.

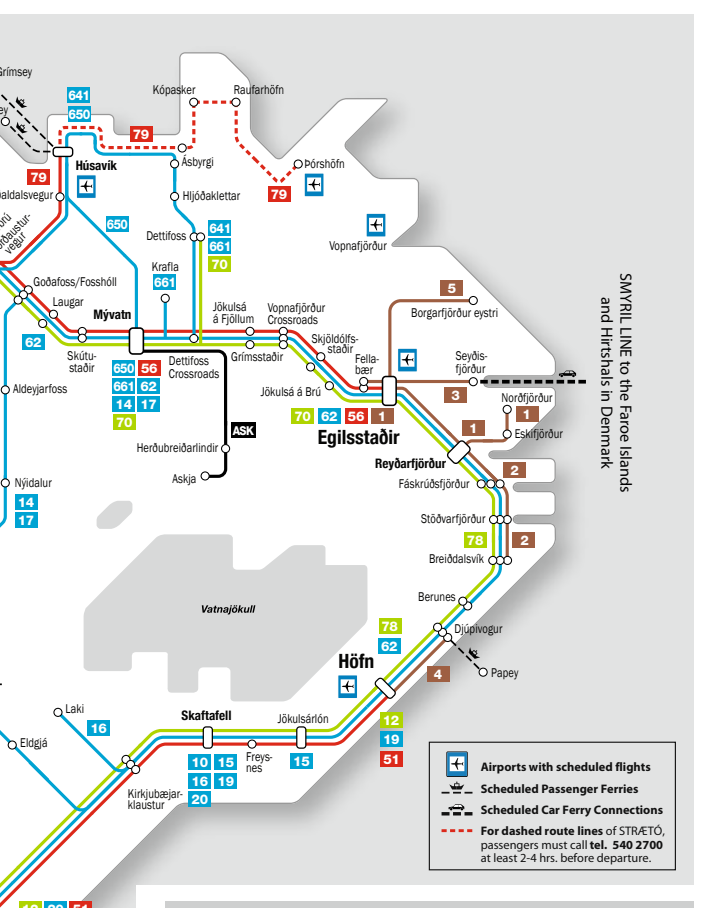
The middle route F206 (35 km)

The main access road to Laki is F206. It is quite easy to cycle, the climbs are not too steep, but you need to cross several fords. The route begins 6 km west of Kirkjubæjarklaustur. After passing the bridge over Skaftá, a 1 km detour to the fast Járfljúfur gorge is recommended before continuing north. After the fast Járfljúfur a track along a power line leading to Leifðalsfjell intersects the F206. Continuing on the main road, you pass a deserted farm, and 1 km farther north you will reach the first of several fords. Geirlandís is the largest, but usually safe to cross. North of Geirlandís, a short detour to the east leads to Fagfiriss, a stunning waterfall. After several smaller fords and Hellisá ford, you reach the Laki circle at the crossroads of roads F206 and F207.

Cycling Iceland Summer 2016

Editor: Sesselja Traustadóttir, Director of Hjólafermi á Íslandi. Produced by Hjólafermi á Íslandi in cooperation with Andreas Macander, Ómar Smári Kristinnsson, Nina Ivanova and Hugafurð. © Hjólafermi á Íslandi 2016 - 4th English Edition. All information subject to change. Copyright exists on all layouts, designs and logos. ISBN 978-9935-93210-5 The Cycling Iceland 2016 map is based on maps from the National Land Survey of Iceland. Special thanks to: Haukur Eggertsson, Páll Guðjónsson, Danni Mikkelsen, Orri Páll Jóhannsson, Þórhur H. Ólafsson, Kristinn Jón Eysteinnsson, Tómas Guðberg Gíslason, Erla Bili Bjarnadóttir, Helga Stefánsdóttir, Bjarki Valberg, Jón G. Snaelund, Asbjörn Ólafsson and other employees of The Road Administration, Karl Benediktsson, Kjartan Guðnason, Robert Berman, Jessica Anna Tadhunter, Christina Maas, Mary Frances Davidson, Maria Eriksdóttir, Morten Lange, Ann Dávidsson, staff members in Guðbjörg National Land Survey of Iceland, The Environment Agency of Iceland, Icelandic Tourist and tourist information staff around Iceland. Cycling Iceland is supported by most of the companies that are listed with address and phone numbers. Other companies are listed under "Google It!" based on info available to us as on 20 May 2016. Title photo from Fjarðarhelli near Seyðisfjörður taken by Andreas Macander. While we take great care to get the details correct, we cannot accept responsibility for any errors. Check details for yourself, take care, and enjoy your time cycling in Iceland. This map is dedicated to our generation, our children and our future. You are welcome to contact us for any comments, ideas and corrections and if you want to order the Cycling Iceland 2016 map. hjolafermi@hjolafermi.is - www.hjolafermi.is - tel. +354 864 2776

www.cyclingiceland.is



Djúpivogur - Papey with Papey Tours

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Árskógssandur - Hrísey

Tel. 695 5544 - www.hrisey.net

Dalvík-Grímsey & Dalvík-Hrísey

Tel. 458 8970 - www.seafor.is

Akureyri - Grímsey Arctic Circle Express

Tel. 462 6800 - www.ambassador.is

Húsavík-Flatey & Húsavík-Grímsey

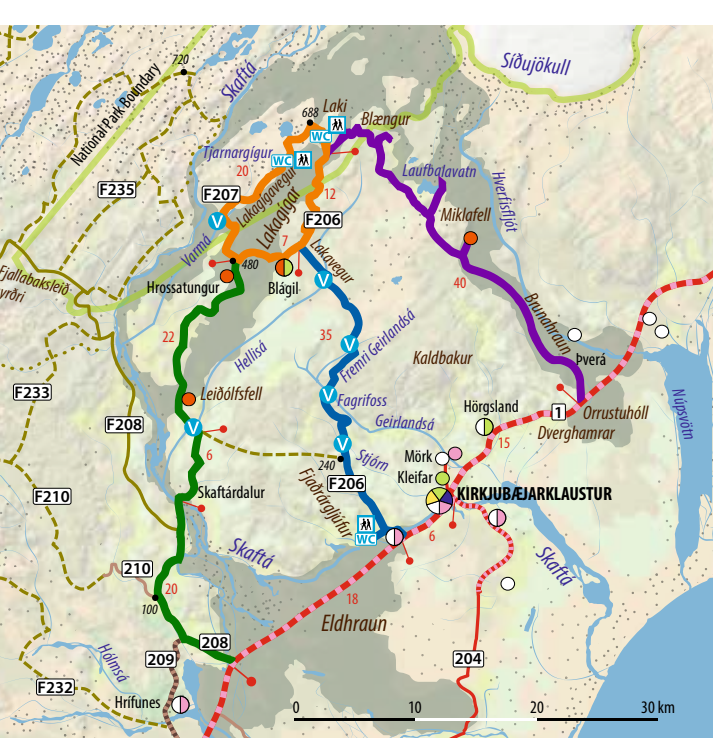
Gentle Giants - Tel. 464 1500 - www.gentlegiants.is

To Hornstrandir Area & Vigur

BOREA: Tel. 456 3322 - www.borea.is VESTURFERDIR (also to Vigur): Tel. 456 5111 - www.vesturferdir.is

FERDAFÉLAG ÍSLANDS

www.fi.is

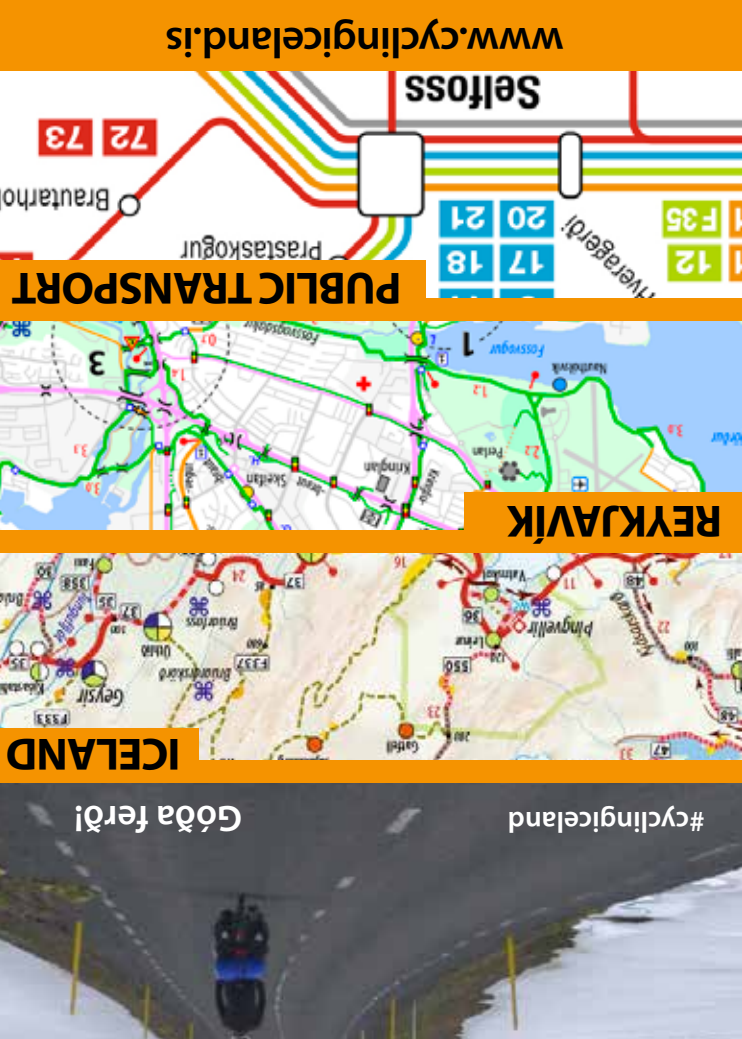


The western route (48 km)

The western route is best to cycle on the return trip from Laki. In this direction, the steep sections are downhill, and there is less danger of getting lost. In a lava field in the southwest of the Laki circle, turn on a track to the hut Hróssatungur. After the hut, the route continues to the south, always remain on the main track. After some streams, the track passes the western side of Leifðalsfjell, where there is accommodation in a turf hut. 1 km farther south, turn left at the power line and follow it to the southeast 2 km later, you will reach the ford across Hellisá. It is quite shallow and calm and usually easy to cross. The main track continues along the power line until reaching the F206. Cyclists may turn right 1.5 km after the ford onto a horse riding path which is closed for motorized traffic. You will pass a gate and follow the path to the south. After 5 km, the track leaves the highland and descends to the farm Skaftárdalur. From the farm, use the bridge over Skaftá. After 4 km, you reach road F208 / 208 that connects with road No. 1.

The eastern route (40 km)

This jeep track is not always well-defined, and it has some steep climbs in both directions. The route begins roughly 0.5 km south of the rest place at mount Laki. The first section (formerly a part of F206) goes eastward along the southern foot of mount Laki. Then the track turns left uphill to the northeast. In the slopes of mount Blængur, the route turns to the south and descends. After a turnoff to the nearby hut Blængur (closed) the main track continues south, crosses a few streams and aims at Miklafell. At the mountain, a path to the northeast leads to Laufbalavatn. At the lake you can find one of the most remarkable systems of lava caves in Iceland, protected as a natural monument. If you are properly equipped, you may explore these magnificent caves, but take care to not get lost. The main track turns west around Miklafell, and is rather rough in this section. South of the mountain, a short detour leads to the hut Miklafell (accommodation). Continuing to south through a lava field, the track improves while descending to the farm Þverá. After 2 km you finally reach road No. 1 at Orrustuhöll which is a conspicuous tuff "island" in a lava flow ca. 15 km east of Kirkjubæjarklaustur.



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