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ATTRACTIONS



1 LÁTRABJARG CLIFFS
The cliffs of all cliffs, Látrabjarg, are home to birds in unfathomable numbers. This westernmost point of Iceland is really a line of several cliffs, 14 kilometres long, up to 441 km high and as steep as it gets, dizzyingly so. Safe from foxes, the birds are fearless and provide stunning photographic opportunities from a close range. Bird photography for dummies, you might say. The puffins are particularly tame and are the ones frequenting the grassy, higher parts of the cliffs from June until mid August. But look out, the edges are fragile and loose and the fall is high, don't be silly, stay safe and respect the birds' territory.

Látrabjarg is thus deservedly one of the most visited tourist attractions in the Westfjords. The cliffs are easily accessible by car and when you're there, a walk along the cliffs awaits. The whirling sensation will not fade, and neither will the memories.

Along the way to Látrabjarg is the Museum of Egill Ólafsson at Hnjóttur that displays a unique collection of old items from the Southern Westfjords. The museum shows the history of fishing, farming and everyday life in the area.

An exhibition about the rescue of the British trawler Dhoon, that stranded at Látrabjarg in 1947, is found at the museum as well as an attractive cafeteria and tourist information center.



2 DYNJANDI WATERFALL
Simply enthralling: The Westfjords' favourite front-page model for decades, never short of breathtaking. The biggest and widest part of the waterfall is the one that gets all the attention and the photos, even though there are impressive, albeit smaller, waterfalls further down the river.

There are guided tours available from Ísafjörður and Patreksfjörður for those wanting a little extra.

To enjoy, follow this simple step-by-step manual:

- Stop your car at the parking lot.
- Walk all the way up to the biggest part of the waterfall, it takes about 15 minutes.
- Take a deep breath and enjoy the surroundings.
- Whenever ready, go back down to the car.
- Tick off this article and continue working your way through the check-list.



3 RAUÐASANDUR
Rauðasandur, (Red Sand), is precisely that: a beach with endless red sand. Well, not endless, but 10 km is a lot. The magnificent hues of the sand differ with daylight and weather, and the beach is the biggest pearl in a string of coves with sand ranging in colours from white through yellow through red to black, and in coarseness from very fine to sole-hurting chips of seashells. Just pure sand enlivened by countless seabirds and seals, an oasis with unique tranquility. Forget everything, except maybe getting the perfect shot of the ever-changing hues of yellow, orange and red.

Here's just pure sand and unique tranquility. You might want to step out of the car, get the camera out and start walking on the seemingly endless beach. Not up for a walk? Why not enjoy a cup of coffee at the French café and look at the spectacular view were Snæfellsjökull glacier in Snæfellsnes peninsula imperiously rivets your attention in the background.



4 HORNSTRANDIR
This territory of the Arctic fox has been uninhabited since the 1950s. As isolated as it was then, it attracts the casual half-day visitors and serious gore-tex hikers alike.

Its main attractions are three. First, the bird cliffs surrounding the bay of Hornvík, are a magnet of gigantic proportions. On the eastern side of the bay the cliff reaches a height of more than 500 metres, and the birds are teeming. Second, the sense of remoteness and lack of modern infrastructure allows for the authentic off the grid feel. The nature is pure and the tranquillity unmatched. Third, as the area is a haven for the Arctic fox (think hunting-ban and bird-packed cliffs), the chances of spotting one are high.

Boat tours depart from Ísafjörður and Norðurfjörður.



5 ÁRNESHREPPUR
Árneshreppur is one of the smallest communities in Iceland, but comprises a large area. The inhabitants earn their income by raising sheep, but in recent years, tourism has grown in importance.

Stunning landscape, proximity to the natural elements and rich fauna are the area's main attractions. Additionally, the area and community are steeped in history, such as of the Icelandic sagas, witch-hunts, herring adventures and folklore. A boat connects Norðurfjörður to Hornstrandir, perfect for hikers and those wanting to marvel the area from the sea.

Tourism has in the last few years seen a remarkable upswing. Travellers can camp in several places and choose from a variety of other accommodation choices. Kaffi Norðurfjörður (you guessed it, kaffi is both café and coffee) and Hótel Djúpvavik offer an array of local food. In Djúpvavik, a herring factory closed down in the 50's has been honoured by an exhibition about its history. At Kört, local handicrafts and history are combined. Other services are available as well, such as a grocery store, a filling station and a unique swimming pool by the seaside

WESTFJORDS

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6 GEOTHERMAL POOLS
Public swimming pools can be found in almost every town and village of the Westfjords. Opening hours are usually long, the entrance cheap and more often than not there is a hot tub or two for those who prefer relaxing to swimming. Natural geothermal pools can also be found all over in the region, relaxing in one of them is a fantastic way to end a day of sightseeing. A strict etiquette applies in the public pools of Iceland. Guests are required to wash thoroughly without swimsuits before and after entering the swimming pools. These rules can usually be bent when bathing in the natural pools though, as these often lack both changing rooms and showers.

TRAVELLING WITH KIDS

HEY KIDS THIS IS FOR YOU!
Travelling with adults can be such a nuisance. They usually pretend to know everything and then end up making all the wrong decisions. It is a universal fact that the best way to ruin a perfect vacation is to leave the adults in control. Hence, we decided to provide you with a toolkit for the struggle ahead. Read the following text and use the recommendations there to battle the bad ideas from the old folks in the front seats.



SANDY BEACHES
Iceland is not exactly known as the land of golden beaches – unless, of course, you're going to the Westfjords. The area has almost half of Iceland's coastal line and you will quickly realize that white and golden beaches are not uncommon. The Barðaströnd coastline, Rauðasandur, Breiðavík, Hænuvík, Kettildalir coastline, Önundarfjörður and Norðurfjörður are amongst the spots where you can find beautiful beaches to play on. Although it is not recommended to try swimming in the ice-cold sea, building castles and creating sculptures of sand is great fun for all generations. So too, is collecting shells and looking for signs of intellectual life, such as worms, starfish and amphipods.



BIRDS
You saw a picture of a puffin in one of the travel books or brochures before you came to Iceland, right? And after you arrived, you quickly had the pleasure of meeting an arctic tern in person, right? But there are more birds, so many more, and here in the Westfjords you have found the best possible place to get to know them. The Reykhólar area is probably the best bird-watching site in Iceland, the home to around 60 different types of birds, including the white-tailed eagle. Látrabjarg and Hornbjarg are amongst the biggest bird cliffs in the North-Atlantic, the islands Vigur and Grimsey are puffin colonies without comparison. The list goes on and on. How about a small competition? Which family member sees the most types of birds during your stay in the Westfjords? The winner gets the window seat on the flight back home!



MUSEUMS
Boring, boring, boring, right? Absolutely – except for the museums in the Westfjords! Here we have all the museums that the scholars and adventurers of the future could possibly want to see: Learn about the king of birds at the White-Tailed Eagle Centre in Króksfjarðarnes (near Reykhólar), go to Hnjóttur Museum (near Látrabjarg) to learn about the amazing rescue operation that saved a crew from a stranded ship under the severe cliffs of Látrabjarg, or go to the Sea Monster Museum in Bíldudalur to learn about the strange creatures that have been following you for the past few days. Aspiring artists should not miss Samuel Jónsson's sculptures in Selárdalur, while the future engineers might prefer at the Old Mechanic Workshop in Pingeyri. The Ósvör Museum in Bolungarvík and the Maritime Museum in Ísafjörður offer a rare insight into the lives of the fishermen of earlier centuries. You can get up close and personal with the arctic fox at the Arctic Fox Museum in Súðavík and learn some true stories about magic at the Museum of Icelandic Sorcery and Witchcraft in Hólmavík. These are just a few examples, there are many more museums in the area so if you are fortunate enough to experience one of those rare rainy days in the Westfjords, use it wisely and visit as many museums as you possibly can.

HÓTEL

LAUGARHÓLL

laugarholl.is

Hótel Laugarhóll is a family-run country hotel in the remote and peaceful part of the Westfjords. It is located in the green and sparsely populated valley Bjarnarfjörður, midway between Reykjavík and Ísafjörður.

Next to the hotel you will find a naturally warm geothermal outdoor swimming pool (32-35°C) and adjacent natural hot pool (41°C), perfect for relaxing after a long day on the road or hiking in the wilderness.

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ACTIVITIES



ENJOY LOCAL PRODUCE
If you like tasting local food while travelling we have some foodie hints for you.

The Westfjords were built up around fishing and the seafood industry, make sure you don't leave the region before trying some of our fresh delicious fish. The Westfjordians are also very proud of their lamb, some say it has a hint of ocean taste due to its pastures being so close to the sea. And if you would like to add some more taste, try salting your food with some of the locally harvested sea salt flakes. Both Norðursalt and Saltverk use the geothermal heat in the region to harvest salt flakes from the ocean, they also offer a range of flavoured salt, for example liquorice salt – definitely a must try!

More recent additions to our local cuisine are the mouth-watering chocolate, Sætt og Salt, made in Súðavík and Westfjords local brews from Dokkan bruggiús.



BREATH
Park your car in one of the many stopping places along the road, please don't stop or park on the side of the road. We know the surroundings are scenic and views to die for, but we prefer you don't! Parking on the side of the road is very dangerous, both for you and others driving along the winding scenic roads.

Now, back to the breathing. Park your car in a safe place, walk a couple of hundred meters away from the car, sit down on a rock and breathe. Take in the noise of nothing. Just you, chirping birds and prickling fresh streams. Fill up your water bottle from the nearest stream and listen carefully, if lucky you might catch the sound of a spouting whale or the call of an Arctic fox.

HOW TO GET TO THE WESTFJORDS

Detailed updated information is available on www.westfjords.is or via phone +354 450 8060.

By plane
The quickest way to get to the Westfjords is by air. The flight from Reykjavík only takes around 40-50 minutes, depending on which of the three airports you are travelling to: **Ísafjörður:** The flight is operated by Icelandair. Please visit icelandair.is for further information. **Bíldadalur:** The flight is operated by Norlandair. Please visit norlandair.is for further information. **Gjögur:** The flight is operated by Norlandair. Please visit norlandair.is for further information.

By car:
The Westfjords are within an easy driving distance from the capital area: **Reykjavík-Hólmavík:** 233 km (roads no 1, 60 and 61: Reykjavík-Hvalfjörður tunnel-Borgarnes-Bifröst-Búðardalur-Hólmavík) all asphalt roads. **Reykjavík-Reykholár:** 228 km (roads no 1, 60 and 607: Reykjavík-Hvalfjörður tunnel-Borgarnes-Bifröst-Búðardalur-Reykholár) all asphalt roads. **Reykjavík-Patreksfjörður:** 392 km (roads no 1, 60 and 62: Reykjavík-Hvalfjörður tunnel-Borgarnes-Bifröst-Búðardalur-Reykholár-Flókalundur-Patreksfjörður) asphalt roads 365 km, gravel roads 24 km. **Reykjavík-Ísafjörður (via Hólmavík):** 455 km (roads no 1, 60 and 61: Reykjavík-Hvalfjörður tunnel-Borgarnes-Bifröst-Búðardalur-Hólmavík-Ísafjörður) all asphalt roads **Reykjavík-Ísafjörður (via Dynjandi):** 420 km (roads 1, 60: Reykjavík-Hvalfjörður tunnel-Borgarnes-Bifröst-Búðardalur-Flókalundur-Dynjandi-Ísafjörður) asphalt roads 363 km, gravel roads 57 km.

Road Administration Information Line, tel.: (+354) 1777 **Road Administration Information Webpage:** www.road.is **Important:** This information is valid for summer only, as some roads are closed during other seasons. If driving to the Westfjords during autumn, winter or spring, always contact the Road Administration for information on open roads and road conditions. **Emergency number:** 112

By bus:
Reykjavík-Hólmavík: Strætó (www.bus.is). **Reykjavík-Stykkishólmur (connection to ferry Baldur)** Strætó (www.bus.is). **Buses within the Westfjords area:** See www.westfjords.is. **By ferry:**
The car ferry Baldur operates between Stykkishólmur and Brjánslækur via Flatey. For schedule, prices and other information please see www.seatours.is.

Westfjords

The Official Tourist Map

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Westfjords

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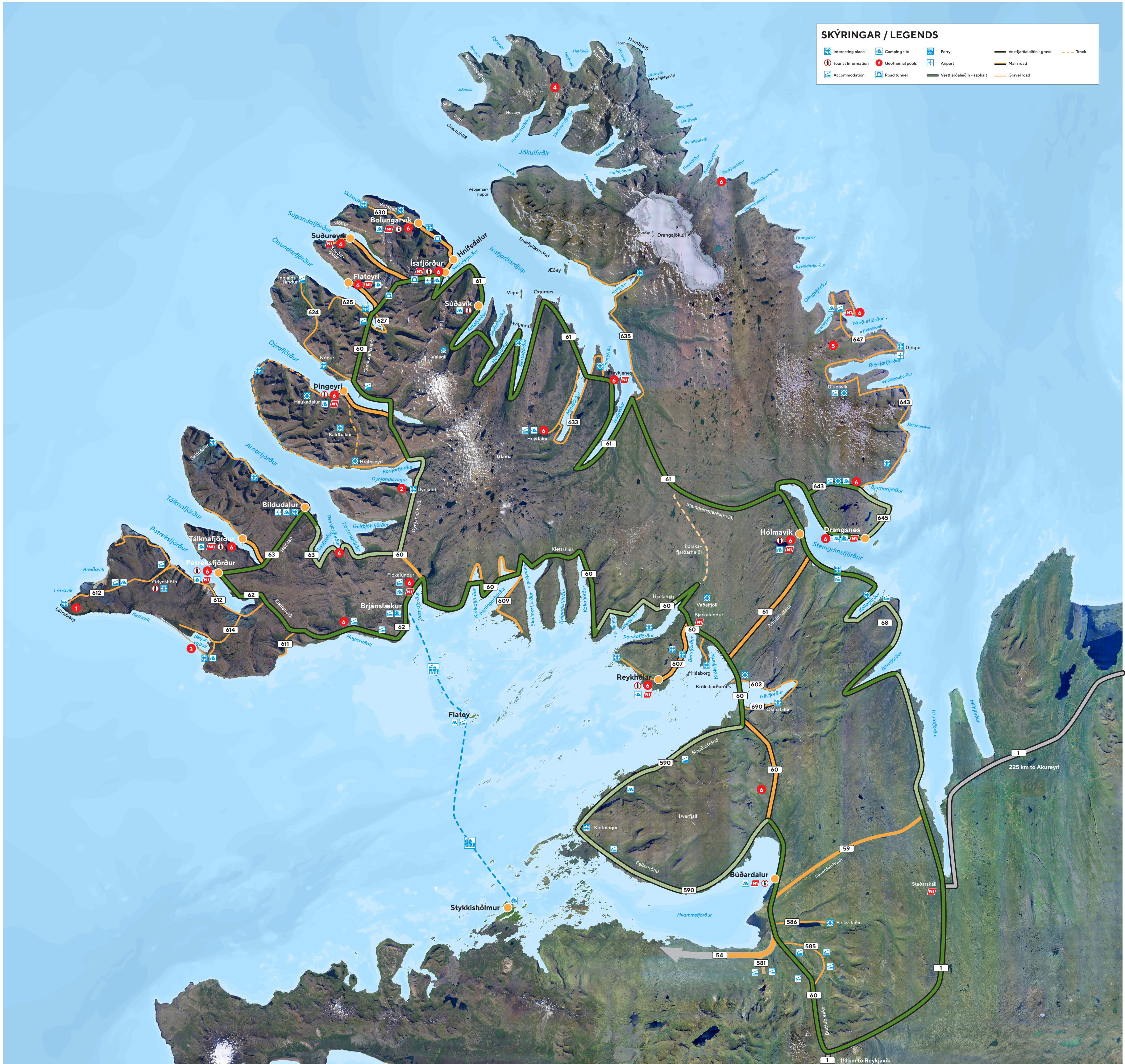
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