

ICELAND WILL IMPRESS YOU

By [Guest Contributor](#) - Jun 16, 2021

Travel advisor Sandy L. talks about her recent adventure hiking around Iceland. From navigating the country's current travel restrictions and feeling safe around the island to planning the perfect outdoor adventure and feeling the exhilaration of driving on her own (even on narrow mountain roads with no guardrails!), Sandy shares



the highlights of her unforgettable trip.

Iceland has done an amazing job of setting up protocols to safely welcome back visitors to its country. It probably helps that the country's entire population is just 360,000 people, of which two-thirds live in the region around the capital city of Reykjavík.

You will be welcomed to Iceland if you can provide a United States passport valid for at least 6 months beyond your dates of travel, have proof of a COVID vaccination and have completed an online registration. As rules are subject to change, it is important to verify current regulations before traveling to Iceland. Upon arrival at the airport, a traveler shows their papers and is provided with a complimentary COVID test. The traveler is expected to self-quarantine until test results are received via text and email. Our results were received within seven hours of being tested. With negative results in hand, you are free to roam the beautiful country of Iceland. It is also important to keep in mind that you must plan to have another COVID test within 72 hours of your return flight to the United States.

When I was in Iceland in May 2021, I found that people were wearing masks to enter restaurants and until they were seated. We enjoyed breakfast buffets several mornings. All guests would don their masks when at the buffet area. It seemed to be a common expectation as no one was monitoring the situation.



The Icelandic Horse is one of the purest and oldest breeds in the world.

With that said, I loved every moment of my time in Iceland. With the exception of restaurants or entering accommodations, my time there was spent in the outdoors and without restrictions. My traveling companion and I had agreed that our focus was on hiking, and so every day we stopped several times to take short or long hikes.

I recommend that travelers to Iceland consider going with a small tour group or private guide. Traveling with a tour and a guide is far more

efficient when it comes to precious vacation time. They do not make wrong turns, they know the roads on which you should or should not drive, and when a road is closed a guide will know the alternate route.

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Driving around Iceland in a rental car is a great way to see the countryside.

If you wish to be your own guide and driver, I recommend that you have an itinerary and stick to it. Be sure to have accommodations reserved for every evening. You will not find chain hotels in the countryside of Iceland. Rent a reliable vehicle. I felt comfortable in our 4-wheel drive Dacia Duster with manual transmission. Study up on driving in Iceland. Know the rules of driving through a long tunnel with just one lane. By the way, you will not see guardrails even on cliffs overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. On one of our days in May, we drove through mountainous terrain on narrow gravel roads with snow blowing hard and no guardrail. This was probably a drive that should have been saved for a day in July!

Iceland is beautiful. The people are friendly. The language is difficult and not a day went by when I didn't thank the education system in Iceland for teaching their young people English.