EXPLORING ICELAND

September 20-30, 2018

A Special Small Group Tour for Alumni and Friends of MSU

Featuring Dr. Michael Gottfried, Associate Professor of Earth and Environmental Studies at MSU

11 days for 5,497 total price from Detroit
($5,095 air & land inclusive plus $402 airline taxes and fees)

This tour is provided by Odysseys Unlimited, six-time honoree Travel & Leisure's World's Best Tour Operators award.
Dear MSU Alumni and Friends,

The MSU Alumni Association invites you to travel with us on a special 11-day small group tour to explore the unique country of Iceland, a land of astonishing natural beauty and diverse wildlife. We are pleased to have Dr. Michael Gottfried, Associate Professor of Earth and Environmental Studies at MSU, accompany the tour as Faculty Host.

A journey to the land of fire and ice brings you face-to-face with the wondrous forces of nature. Travel to Lake Myvatn, one of the world’s natural wonders, and stand on the edge of Europe’s largest and most powerful waterfall, Dettifoss. Experience Hljodaklettar’s remarkable basaltic rock columns, caves, and twisting towers then gaze into a long canyon created by enormous glacial floods at Asbyrgi. See the site of the country’s historic parliament founded in 930 CE in Thingvellir National Park. Learn about traditional Icelandic life in South Iceland’s Skogar Folk Museum and visit the region where one of Iceland’s beloved medieval sagas was set. Conclude your journey in lively, cosmopolitan Reykjavik.

We are pleased to share this departure with alumni from the University of Mississippi. Space is limited to 24 guests in total from both schools, and will fill quickly. Please call today to reserve your place!

Go Green!

Regina Cross
Director of Alumni Travel
MSU Alumni Association

THE MSU RESERVATION FORM: EXPLORING ICELAND

Enclosed is my/our deposit for $______($500 per person) for ____ person(s) on Exploring Iceland departing September 20, 2018. I/We understand the final payment is due at least 95 days prior to departure. Payment may be made by American Express, Discover, MasterCard, VISA, or by personal check. Please make check payable to Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. and send, with completed reservation form, to: Odysseys Unlimited, Inc., Attn: Special Interest Groups, One Newton Place, 275 Washington Street, Suite 300, Newton, MA 02458. Or, you may call Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. toll-free at 888-370-6765. You may also call the MSU Alumni Association toll-free at 888-697-2863 for more information.

Full Passport Name ____________________________________________________________ Date of Birth _______________ Gender ______

Full Passport Name ____________________________________________________________ Date of Birth _______________ Gender ______

Address ___________________________________________________________________________________________

City _________________________________________ State __________________ ZIP __________________________

Home Phone (______)____________________________  Cell Phone (______)_________________________________

E-mail(s) ________________________________________ Badge Name(s) ____________________________________

Please book my/our air from ____________________________________ I/We request a Business Class upgrade ❑

I will share a room with _____________________________________ I request a single room (limited availability) ❑

Please Note: The undersigned has read the schedule of activities for Exploring Iceland, September 20-30, 2018, and agrees that their signature below represents their acceptance of the General Terms and Conditions.

Signature(s) ________________________________________________________________ Date________________

Method of Payment ❑ Check ❑ American Express ❑ Discover ❑ MasterCard ❑ VISA

Account # __________________________________________ Security Code _________ Exp. Date _______________

Name of Cardholder ________________________________________________________________________________

Signature __________________________________________________________________________________________

Final invoicing will be sent by our tour operator, Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. The balance of the program price must be paid to Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. Final payment is due 95 days prior to departure and is payable by check or credit card.
EXPLORING
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Day 1: Depart U.S. for Reykjavik, Iceland

Day 2: Arrive Reykjavik/Borgarbyggo

Upon our early morning arrival in Iceland’s capital, we meet our Odysseys Unlimited Tour Director and enjoy a scenic drive north, stopping for breakfast along the way. Then we take an excursion to the thermal areas of Deildartunguhver, site of the country’s largest thermal spring, and Hraunfossar Falls, beautiful and unusual cold springs that well up through the lava landscape. We also visit the Settlement Center, an interactive museum detailing the story of Iceland’s earliest settlers, including that of famed 10th-century Viking Egil Skallagrimsson. After reaching our hotel mid-afternoon, we have time to relax before this evening’s briefing on the journey ahead followed by a welcome dinner. B,D

Day 3: Borgarbyggo/Snaefellsnes Peninsula

Today we encounter the stupendous scenery of the Snaefellsnes Peninsula. We begin with a walk along the shell sand beach at the abandoned fishing village of Budir, surrounded by a vast lava field. We also explore the caves and bizarre rock formations along the rugged shore at Arnarstapi, site of thousands of nesting cliff birds. After stopping for lunch – a traditional fresh seafood soup – at a rustic oceanfront restaurant, we visit Djupalonssandur where we see the haunting remains of abandoned coastal farms. B,L,D

Day 4: Borgarbyggo/Akureyri

We travel today through varying landscapes towards the northeast corner of Iceland, and to Akureyri, Iceland’s northern capital, strikingly set at the head of a fjord. Along the way we stop at Grabok Crater for scenic views, and at a Gaukmyri farm featuring famed Icelandic horses – small, hardy, and with long manes. We also tour Glaumbaer, a folk museum featuring authentic turf houses. Upon arrival in Akureyri, we take a guided coach and walking tour of this urban gem, visiting the botanical garden and Akureyjararkirkja church, with its unusual interior, before checking in at our hotel. B,D

Cover photo: On Day 7 we visit the beautiful – and popular – Gullfoss waterfall.
Day 5: Akureyri/Lake Myvatn  Today we travel to beautiful Lake Myvatn. One of the world’s natural wonders, Lake Myvatn and its environs of bubbling mud flats, lava fields, and lunar-like volcanic craters comprise a stunningly beautiful national park. Our explorations begin with a walk up to the fascinating Hverfjall crater, a local landmark. Later we see the region’s unique “pseudo craters,” the boiling mud pots at Namaskard, the bizarre lava formations at Dimmuborgir, and the flat volcano system at Krafla. Our last stop is the incredible Glacial River Canyon National Park, yet another of Iceland’s natural wonders, where we walk to jaw-dropping Dettifoss, Europe’s most powerful waterfall and Iceland’s “Niagara.” After this day of stunning scenery, we return to our hotel in time for dinner on our own tonight.  B,L

Day 6: Akureyri/Jökulsárgljúfur National Park  This morning we visit Hljodaklettar Echo Cliffs where we explore the labyrinth of “echoing rocks” created by the spiral basalt formations of arches and canyons here. We travel next to Asbyrgi, a huge canyon enveloped by towering walls; in the middle of the partially wooded canyon sits a huge hoof-shaped rock called “The Island.” Then en route back to Akureyri, we stop at Godafoss, the “waterfall of the gods” named for the carvings of Norse gods discarded here when the country was declared Christian a thousand years ago. B,D

Day 7: Akureyri/Reykjavik/Selfoss  This morning we fly to Reykjavik; upon arrival we coach to Thingvellir National Park, known both for its historic import and as the place where the fissure between the geological plates of North America and Europe is most evident. It’s also a gem of nature, with canyons, caves, waterfalls, and ponds surrounded by snow-capped mountains. We learn about the historic parliament founded here in 930 CE, and walk along a gorge into the rift valley itself. After a lunch of wild freshwater trout at a lakeside hotel, we depart for famed Great Geysir and Gullfoss, Iceland’s immensely popular “golden” waterfall with its spectacular two-tiered cataract. Then we drive down to the southern coast to the beautiful agricultural area of Selfoss. B,L

Iceland’s hot spring geysers are famous natural attractions.
Day 8: Selfoss/Vik This morning we walk along the black-sand beach at Reynisfjara, lined with columnar basalt-filled caves. Next we visit picturesque Seljalandsfoss, Iceland’s most visited waterfall, followed by a stop at the Skogar Folk Museum, which depicts traditional life in Iceland. From here we walk to nearby Skogafoss, one of Iceland’s most popular waterfalls, known for its rainbows on sunny days. After lunch on our own at the museum, we continue on to lovely Vik, Iceland’s southernmost village surrounded by green hills, a massive icecap, the sea, and Katla, a notorious volcano. Here we’re free to explore on our own and to shop for items of locally produced wool. En route to our hotel, we stop by the stunning Solheimajokull “sliding” glacier, so named for its rapid advance in the 1990s. B,D

Day 9: Selfoss/Reykjavik Heading back to Reykjavik today we travel through “saga” country, the setting of one of the country’s famous medieval stories. We stop along the way to see the geothermal exhibit at the Hellisheiði Power Plant, Iceland’s largest. Upon arrival in Reykjavik, we have lunch at a local restaurant then embark on a city tour of the Icelandic capital. Home to more than half of Iceland’s population, Reykjavik ranks as one of the world’s safest and cleanest cities. Later, we check in at our well-located hotel in the city center. Dinner tonight is on our own in this stylish city. B,D

Day 10: Reykjavik Today is at leisure to explore and enjoy Reykjavik as we please; those who wish can join in an optional tour to the Blue Lagoon for a soothing bath in geothermal waters rich with silica, sulfur, and other minerals. The city is a sophisticated European urban center with museums and galleries; theater, symphony, and dance; boutiques and restaurants. Tonight we celebrate our adventure over a farewell dinner. B,D

Day 11: Depart for U.S. This morning is free, perhaps for some last-minute shopping. Early this afternoon we depart for the airport and our return flights to the U.S. B

Your Tour Price Includes

- Round-trip air transportation from listed cities; flight within itinerary
- 9 nights’ accommodations in First Class hotels
- 20 meals: 10 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 6 dinners
- Extensive sightseeing as described, including all entrance fees
- Services of an Odysseys Unlimited Tour Director
- Private motorcoach transportation throughout your trip
- Luggage handling for one bag per person
- Gratuities for local guides, dining room servers, airport and hotel porters, and all drivers

Tour Departs: September 20, 2018
Prices include int’l airfare and all taxes, surcharges, and fees.

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<th>Destination</th>
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<td>Boston, New York, Washington, DC</td>
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Please call if your city is not listed. Prices are per person based on double occupancy and include airline taxes, surcharges, and fees of $402, which are subject to change until final payment is made. Single travelers please add $1,395. All tour prices above (excluding airline taxes, surcharges, and fees) are guaranteed.

Business Class upgrade on round-trip international flight per person in addition to the costs above: $1,495 from Boston, New York, Newark, Washington, DC (Dulles); $2,195 from Chicago, Minneapolis; $2,395 from Denver, Seattle (upgrade is subject to availability and pricing is subject to change).

Please note: This trip involves considerable walking on uneven terrain in a natural environment. You should be in good physical condition to enjoy this tour to the fullest.

For reservations and information, please call Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. toll-free at 888-370-6765
Monday–Friday, 9:00 AM–7:00 PM, Eastern Time Or call the MSU Alumni Association toll-free at 888-697-2863

MSU Faculty Host
Mike Gottfried is an Associate Professor of Earth and Environmental Sciences at Michigan State University (MSU) and Curator of Paleontology at the MSU Museum. He has organized and led geological expeditions exploring for fossils in the Rift Valley of Tanzania, and conducted field research in Madagascar, New Zealand, across much of the western USA, and most recently in the Canadian Arctic and Antarctica. Mike’s research focuses primarily on the evolutionary response to the break-up of the ancient Southern Hemisphere supercontinent of Gondwana, and includes studying newly discovered fossils that are a key part of that story. Mike currently teaches Glacial Geology and Climate Change and Paleontology at MSU, and he has led several MSU Study Abroad programs, and geology alums, on recent trips to Iceland – a spectacular destination that fully merits the title of the ‘Land of Fire and Ice.’

– Icelandic Proverb

You will reach your destination even though you travel slowly.

Mike Gottfried is an Associate Professor of Earth and Environmental Sciences at Michigan State University (MSU) and Curator of Paleontology at the MSU Museum. He has organized and led geological expeditions exploring for fossils in the Rift Valley of Tanzania, and conducted field research in Madagascar, New Zealand, across much of the western USA, and most recently in the Canadian Arctic and Antarctica. Mike’s research focuses primarily on the evolutionary response to the break-up of the ancient Southern Hemisphere supercontinent of Gondwana, and includes studying newly discovered fossils that are a key part of that story. Mike currently teaches Glacial Geology and Climate Change and Paleontology at MSU, and he has led several MSU Study Abroad programs, and geology alums, on recent trips to Iceland – a spectacular destination that fully merits the title of the ‘Land of Fire and Ice.’
We regret that we cannot offer individual assistance; in such cases you must be accompanied by a companion who will assist you. Please note that many of our tour itineraries, for reasons beyond our control, do not accommodate wheelchairs. Please call or e-mail us to inquire and we will do our best to answer any questions you may have. We reserve the right to remove anyone whose physical or mental condition, in our judgment, poses a threat to the health or safety of other participants or to the operation of the tour. Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. and the MSU Alumni Association assume no financial responsibility for any unused portion of the tour.

Air Transportation – Important Information

Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. includes in its tour package round trip economy air from designated gateway cities as shown, and contracts with those airlines the company feels provide the level of service, routings, and value necessary for your entire trip. While another airline may offer a more direct connection, it may be at a price unavailable at the lower group rates. You will receive your preliminary air schedule approximately 2½ months prior to departure. Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. is unable to guarantee any seat assignments.

Other restrictions apply, including, but not limited to, frequent flyer mileage accrual, stopovers, alternate travel dates, upgrades, and airline taxes and fees. If you prefer to make your own travel arrangements, Land Only is available on most tours. Since international air transportation is non-refundable if you change your plans, we strongly encourage you to purchase travel insurance. If you choose to make your own air arrangements, Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. shall not have any liability for any acts resulting from cancellation of this tour or changes in this tour.

Health and Medical Issues

Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. and the MSU Alumni Association request that you be in good health to participate in this tour. There is a significant amount of walking and being active, so you must be able to get on and off motorcoaches and boats on your own. We recommend that you purchase personal medications such as insulin, medications for heart, blood pressure, and diabetes, prescription medications, not to exceed a 90-day supply, if required. Non-prescription medications may be purchased in the U.S. (if available) and you should have a prescription for any prescription medications you will need on your trip. If you have any questions about your medications, please call or e-mail us to inquire and we will do our best to answer any questions you may have. You will have a choice of private hotel rooms or single accommodations if you prefer. Please note that Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. and the MSU Alumni Association do not accept responsibility for medications that are lost in the possession of the MSU Alumni Association.

Travel Insurance

We strongly suggest purchasing travel insurance. Travel insurance information will be sent to you with your confirmation letter from the MSU Alumni Association.