ICELAND: Island of Fire & Ice

Aboard the New Expedition Cruise Ship VEGA
August 8 - 18, 2024

With DOUGLAS P. NOWACEK P’25 P’27,
Randolph K. Repass and Sally-Christine Rodgers
Professor of Marine Conservation Technology
Dear Duke Travelers,

Land of volcanoes. Land of glaciers. Stomping ground of 9th-century Vikings. Setting of countless legends and Norse sagas. Home to some of the most extraordinary geology on the planet. Iceland is all of these things and more.

On a circumnavigation of this endlessly fascinating island, sail into magnificent fjords, walk through volcanic landscapes of lava fields and hot springs, and witness magnificent waterfalls and ice-capped mountains. Encounter the fishermen of Ísafjörður and Grímsey and the artists and artisans of Seyðisfjörður. Marvel at the abundance of birdlife everywhere, but especially on the islands of Grímsey and Heimaey. Experience the almost unearthly geothermal displays at Lake Mývatn and at Krýsuvík. Hear tales of the Norsemen who discovered and settled here, and see how they lived as you explore the marvelous Viking Museum in Njarðvík.

Accompanying you throughout the voyage will be Dr. Doug Nowacek P’25, P’27, Randolph K. Repass and Sally-Christine Rodgers Professor of Marine Conservation Technology at Duke, who will share his experience and expertise on topics in a series of lectures and discussions. Complementing Dr. Nowacek’s lectures will be talks from a team of naturalists and onboard experts.

Your vessel for this cruise will be the Swan Hellenic VEGA, a state-of-the-art, new-generation expedition cruise ship built in Finland and launched in 2022. Accommodating only 152 guests in superb staterooms and balcony suites, Vega features elegant common areas and the most modern mechanical and environmentally conscious technology.

We hope you will join Dr. Nowacek and fellow Duke Travelers on this expedition to the land of fire and ice.

Forever Duke,

Beth Ray-Schroeder ‘83
Senior Director, Duke Travels
Duke Alumni Engagement and Development

What past travelers have to say...

“The quality of the excursions and the ship were superior.” John & Karen Magerlein ’80, guests on “Passage from Ireland to Iceland 2023” aboard SH VEGA
THE NEW 152-GUEST EXPEDITION CRUISE SHIP VEGA

Built in Finland and launched in July 2022, Swan Hellenic's Vega is a new-generation expedition cruise ship. Although at 10,250 tons the ship is large enough to accommodate more than 250 passengers, Vega will accommodate a maximum of 152 guests in 76 spacious staterooms and balcony suites. The low guest density results in one of the most generous indoor and outdoor space-to-guest ratios among cruise ships.

Featuring the latest advances in technology and engineering, Vega is among the world’s first environmentally responsible ships. Equipped with hybrid engines and a unique water filtration system, Vega leaves a minimal footprint. For cruising in Polar regions, the ship meets the stringent requirements of the new Polar Code with its high PCS Category A ice-strengthened hull and other advanced features. A computer-controlled Dynamic Positioning System allows the ship to maintain position without anchoring. Operated by a complement of 120 experienced European officers and international crew members, Vega will carry a fleet of Zodiacs, versatile landing boats, and kayaks. Powerful stabilizers provide a smooth ride.

Vega's interior spaces exude sophisticated elegance, with most rooms opening to panoramic views of the sea. All staterooms and suites face outside and are equipped with private facilities, climate control, TV, Wi-Fi and USB connections, and other amenities. Of the ship’s 76 staterooms, 60 have balconies. Public areas include a spacious observation lounge equipped with state-of-the-art facilities for lectures and presentations; a club lounge; a restaurant that accommodates all guests at one seating; an outdoor café/bar that surrounds the heated swimming pool; a wellness area with gym, spa, and sauna with an adjoining outdoor jacuzzi; library; beauty salon; and an infirmary that is attended by a full-time doctor and nurse. The ship also features expansive open-deck areas. Two elevators connect all decks. Attentive service is provided on a 24-hour basis. The outstanding cuisine is complemented by fine wines at lunch and dinner.

FOR RESERVATIONS AND INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT DUKE TRAVELS AT (919) 684-2988 or duketravels@duke.edu
Thursday, August 8, 2024
DEPART THE UNITED STATES

Friday, August 9
REYKJAVÍK, Iceland
Arrive in Reykjavík and transfer to the Hotel Hilton Reykjavík Nordica (or similar), for overnight. Gather this evening with fellow travelers for a welcome dinner. (D)

Saturday, August 10
REYKJAVÍK/EMBARK
After breakfast at the hotel, begin the day with a drive through lava formations of all shapes and sizes to the geothermal fields of Krýsuvík, where powerful jets of steam escaping from deep below the Earth’s crust share the landscape with multicolored pools of boiling mud. Continue to Njarðvík, on the northern coast of the Reykjanes Peninsula, to visit the superb Viking Museum, housing a fully seaworthy replica of a typical Viking ship. Return to Reykjavík for lunch and embarkation on Vega. (B,L,D)

Sunday, August 11
ARNARFJÖRÐUR/DYNJANDI WATERFALL
A short hike inland from Arnarfjörður brings you to the Dynjandi Waterfall, the largest in the Westfjords region, and, according to local residents, the prettiest in all of Iceland. The falls, which is actually a series of seven cascades, resembles the tiers of a wedding cake, the highest of which drops over 300 feet off the edge of a mountain. Despite its remoteness, it is one of the most photographed sights in Iceland. Later in the afternoon, Vega calls in Patreksfjörður, home to Europe’s largest bird cliff, the perfect place to spot the iconic puffin, since the species is protected here and has little to fear from humans. (B,L,D)

Monday, August 12
ÍSAFJÖRÐUR/VIGUR ISLAND
This morning, call at the tiny fishing village of Ísafjörður, built at the foot of a high volcanic plateau, where even in the center of the town, nature predominates. Picturesque houses of contrasting colors, the oldest dating from the 17th-century, fill the historic district. The Westfjords Heritage Museum, which we will visit, is housed in one of these, and tells the story of the discovery and settlement of the town. In the afternoon, we sail to the small island of Vigur, known as the “Pearl of the Western Fjords.” Vigur is a significant seabird sanctuary that includes colonies of Arctic terns, puffins, Black guillemots, and Eider ducks. (B,L,D)

Tuesday, August 13
GRÍMSEY
Grímsey is the northernmost island of Iceland, jutting out of the ocean, the Arctic Circle running through its center. Grímseyjarhreppur, the only town, is home to some 100 people, most of them intrepid fishermen who work the rich banks that surround the island. Grímsey is one of the best places in Iceland for watching cliff-nesting birds like Black-legged kittiwake, Northern fulmar, Atlantic puffin, razorbill, Black guillemot, and murre. The island also has one of Iceland’s largest tern nesting sites and one of the largest puffin colonies in the world. (B,L,D)

Wednesday, August 14
AKUREYRI/LAKE MÝVATN/AKUREYRI
A full-day excursion takes you to Lake Mývatn, where a protected nesting area to its northwest is home to tens of thousands of birds. But it is the stunning variety of geological phenomena here that many visitors find most intriguing: a geothermal field full of mud pots, steam vents, sulfur deposits, boiling springs, and fumaroles; a wondrously surreal landscape of columns and arches left behind when a massive

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lava lake collapsed into the marshes below; and the extraordinary number of pseudo-craters in the town of Skútustaðir, where you pause for lunch. On the way back to the ship, stop at Goðafoss (“Waterfall of the Gods”), where legend has it that in the year 1000, Thorgeir, Lawspeaker of the ancient parliament, signaled his decision to adopt Christianity by destroying his statues of the pagan gods. (B,L,D)

Thursday, August 15

SEYÐISFJÖRÐUR

Seyðisfjörður is regarded by many as Iceland’s most picturesque town, not only due to its impressive surroundings, but also because nowhere else in Iceland has a community of old wooden buildings been preserved as well as here. Enjoy an easy walk around the old town with a local guide, including a visit to the beautiful Blue Church, an arts and crafts market, Skaftfell cultural center, and the Technical Museum which houses the oldest mechanic shop and the first telegraph station in Iceland. (B,L,D)

Friday, August 16

DJÚPÍVOGUR

Djúpivogur, in southeastern Iceland, is a small town on a peninsula near the mouth of Berufjörður fjord, with an awe-inspiring pyramid-shaped mountain as its backdrop. It serves your gateway to Vatnajökull National Park, Europe's largest, covering 14% of Iceland, including ice caps, waterfalls, glaciers, canyons, craters and volcanoes. (B,L,D)

Saturday, August 17

HEIMAÉY

Heimaey is the largest of the Westman Islands Archipelago off the southern coast of Iceland, and is the summer home to millions of seabirds—puffin, fulmar, guillemot, and others. Our panoramic tour of this rugged island includes a stop at the nesting grounds and takes us through a valley framed by two volcanoes—the 5000-year-old Helgafell (“Holy Mountain”) and the considerably younger Eldfell (“Fire Mountain”), which erupted in 1973, forcing an evacuation of the entire population. The story of that heroic evacuation is documented in the recently opened Eldheimar Museum, where the excavated remains of a house buried for 40 years in ash are on display. (B,L,D)

Sunday, August 18

REYKJAVÍK/DISEMBARK

After breakfast aboard, transfer to the airport for flights homeward. (B)
All accommodations aboard Vega are spacious staterooms and balcony suites. They are elegantly decorated, face outside, affording sea views, and include a queen-size bed that can be arranged as two twin beds, a spacious bathroom, mini-refrigerator, safe, ample closet space, climate control, telephone, TV, Wi-Fi, and USB connections, as well as other amenities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>RATES PER PERSON / DOUBLE OCCUPANCY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Oceanview staterooms with two large oval windows. 206 sq. ft. Deck 4. Staterooms 401–404.</td>
<td>$8,990</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Oceanview staterooms with two large oval windows. 206 sq. ft. Deck 4. Staterooms 405–416.</td>
<td>$9,390</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Suites with balcony &amp; living room area. 300 sq. ft. Deck 5. Suites 501–504, 530–533.</td>
<td>$10,390</td>
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<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>Suites with large balcony, separate bedroom &amp; living room. 440 sq. ft. Decks 5 &amp; 6. Suites 515, 516, 615 &amp; 616.</td>
<td>$13,390</td>
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**LOYALTY REWARD PROGRAM**

Travel on this cruise program and enjoy savings of $400 to $900 per person on your next voyage with DUKE TRAVELS and THALASSA JOURNEYS aboard a Swan Hellenic ship. Savings is determined by the stateroom category booked and is applicable when you reserve your trip within 30 days of the completion date of ICELAND: ISLAND OF FIRE & ICE.

This saving cannot be combined with other offers and is subject to change.

**FOR SOLO TRAVELERS**

A limited number of cabins are available for single occupancy in categories D to B at no additional charge. Additional single cabins are available at a supplement of 50% of the per person double occupancy rate, instead of the normal 70% supplement.
PROGRAM INCLUSIONS
The rates are all-inclusive. There are no hidden costs and no additional charges such as shore excursions or embarkation and port charges. Other than the international airfare and expenses of a personal nature, all else is included. Specifically, the rates include:

- One night at Hotel Hilton Reykjavik Nordica (or similar).
- Welcome dinner in Reykjavik, and lunch on the day of embarkation.
- Cruise aboard the Swan Hellenic Vega, as described in the itinerary.
- Airport/hotel/pier transfers and luggage handling on the program arrival and departure dates.
- Program of lectures and discussions with Duke Professor Doug Nowacek.
- Additional presentations from our onboard team of naturalists.
- Complete program of shore excursions, led by professional local guides.
- All meals aboard the ship, with a selection of wines, beer and soft drinks during lunch and dinner.
- Welcome and farewell cocktail receptions aboard the ship hosted by the captain.
- Open bar with select alcoholic beverages.
- Coffee, including espresso and cappuccino, tea and soft drinks throughout the day and night aboard ship.
- 24-hour room service aboard ship.
- Gratuities to the ship’s crew, guides, porters and drivers.
- Basic Wi-Fi aboard the ship.
- The services of an experienced Thalassa Journeys trip director.
- All local taxes and service charges, including port and embarkation taxes.
- Complete pre-departure material.

NOT INCLUDED: International airfare; travel insurance; expenses of a personal nature; any items not mentioned in the itinerary or the above inclusions.

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Atlantic puffins, Grimsey Island

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