



Small town, big fun

Whale Watching in Húsavík

While many Icelanders prefer to see their whale at the business end of a fork, perhaps lightly seasoned with pepper, visitors usually prefer them in their natural habitat.

There is probably no better place for whale watching in Iceland than the town of Húsavík, a half hour drive from Akureyri. A tour of Skjálfandi Bay will likely reveal some of the best of nature's largest mammals, frolicking in the sea.

Back on land, use your ticket to access the whale watching museum and by the end of the day you'll be an expert on this creature.

[Húsavík Whale Centre & Museum, Hafnarstræti Húsavík. ISK 500. Open in summer](#)



We're outta here

Spotlight on Icelandic Emigration

Life in 19th century Iceland was no walk in the park. Plagues, volcanic eruptions, harsh winters and famine tend to take their toll after a while, and by 1914 about 20% of all Icelanders had packed up and left the nation for North America.

The Icelandic Emigration Centre in tiny Hofsfós chronicles the lives of these enterprising individuals through photographs and special exhibits.

Check out the guestbook for names of those who are undoubtedly returning to the Old Country to find their roots. We think Wayne Björnsson probably enjoyed the visit.

[Vesturfarasetrið, The Icelandic Emigration Centre, Hofsfós](#)



Don't tell your mother

At the Institute of Phallogy, size does matter

Whales are the world's biggest mammals. They therefore also qualify for a key place in Húsavík's other main attraction: the Icelandic Institute of Phallogy – that means a Penis Museum to you and me.

Browse through a collection of over one hundred and fifty members from almost all the land and sea animals found in Iceland. No homo sapiens yet, although one has been promised when the donor is finished with it.

And you thought Iceland was just about fire and ice.

[Institute of Phallogy; Open only in summer, ISK 500; Héðinsbraut 3a, Húsavík](#)



Attention to detail

False teeth were never displayed so lovingly

If people tease you for being a collector of useless things, this is the museum for you. Just a short drive from Akureyri, the Museum of Small Things is the result of decades of collection by Sverrir Hermannsson, a native of the area.

Sverrir has displayed every mundane piece of anything conceivable – false teeth, doorknobs, nails, and hundreds upon hundreds of pencil ends – it's all here and on display in cabinets and cases Sverrir designed specifically for this purpose.

An example of meticulousness beyond your wildest dreams, and surprisingly more fascinating that you would think staring at old shoes could be.

[Museum of Small Things, open in summer only; Sólgarður, Eyjafjarðarsveit](#)



Bubble, bubble, toil and trouble

Icelandic nature at its one-of-a-kind best

When you're cruising east along the Ring Road, and the eggy sulphur fumes become almost too much to bear just past Reykjahlíð, park your car and get out.

You've just reached the Námaskarð mountain ridge, where geo-thermal activity is so strong that bubbling mud and water boils from holes in the ground like a witch's cauldron.

There are good spots for hiking here, but don't step off the trails unless you want to sink your feet into very hot, soft sulphur-smelling earth. Consider yourself warned.

[Námaskarð Mountain Ridge – off the Ring Road near Reykjahlíð](#)



Feed Willy

If you're tired of whale watching, check out the sharks at the Reykir Folk Museum

If you have an interest in scary sea creatures you may want to drop by the Reykir Folk Museum in Hrótafjörður, North-West Iceland, and pick up on all the latest gossip about the shark hunting industry in Iceland.

They don't actually have any live sharks but you can take a look at the rather huge 19th century shark-fishing vessel and learn about the poor woman who gave birth onboard.

Of course there are also other folk-type displays at the museum, but we all know sharks are the coolest.

Oh, and one more thing: no matter what the folks at the museum tell you, visitors are *not* required to eat rotten shark meat.

Reykir Folk Museum, Hrótafjörður, just off the Ring Road (only open in the summer)