

FAMILY TRAVEL GUIDE

48 HOURS IN ICELAND

PLAYDATES AROUND THE WORLD

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WELCOME

ICELAND STOP OVER FAMILY TRAVEL GUIDE

Hi, I'm Britt,
The mom behind Passport Playdate.

I have taken my daughter all around 26 countries and almost half the US states.

This guide is all **the things I wish I knew before our** first trip using the **ICELAND (using the stop over program)** and some tips and tricks with kids in hopes to make your next trip a little easier. In this guide you will find:

- [A quick rundown of Iceland + the Stopover Program](#)
- [My Full Two day itinerary](#)
- [Quick Tips](#)
- [What you need to know about Iceland](#)
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Note:

If you visit and have more tips and tricks please let me know so I can add it to our guide to help the community of traveling families.

I'm so happy you're here lets make your next trip incredible.

♡ Britt

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WHAT IS THE ICELANDAIR STOP OVER PROGRAM?

If you're flying **Icelandair** **between North America and Europe**, you can add a **free stop** in Iceland for up to 7 days no extra airfare required

Why it's great for families:

- Break up a long-haul flight with a few days of adventure.
- Kid-friendly pace let little ones adjust timezones before continuing to Europe.
- Two trips in one explore Iceland without needing a separate vacation.

And honestly, **ICELAND IS MAGICAL** the views are out of this world!

TRAVELING ICELANDAIR?



- **Kids (2-11) tickets are 20% off adult fares** - saving you money, we booked one way tickets for under \$200 from Pittsburgh → Iceland → London [\$187 for me and \$149 for my 4 yo]
- **Meals are not included**, they do sell food for purchase on board, but *children are given a complimentary drink and snack*. My daughter got a yogurt smoothie pouch and a pizza roll as well as a little box of toys.
- **Baggage and seats are additional costs**. Children (2-11) have free seats but to "assign" an adult next to them you need to pay.
- **Activity Kits** are given to little kids: Coloring books or small toys.
- **Seatback Entertainment** included, but content in English was limited.

HOW TO BOOK WITH ICELAND AIR

1. Go to <https://www.icelandair.com/>
2. Use the “**Book a Flight**”
3. Choose “**Stopover in Iceland**” (its under the tab with one way, round trip)
4. **Pick your stopover length**
5. You can stay anywhere from **1–7 days in Iceland** without increasing your airfare.
6. The stopover is **built right into your ticket** it won't show as two separate trips so you will have ONE confirmation number

Note: kids under 11 are 20% off the adult fare so this can definitely save you some \$\$ travel from the US to Europe.

You can also book the stop over on the way there OR home.



WHEN TO GO?

1. Summer = long days, waterfalls & road trips, & PUFFINS!
2. Winter = Northern Lights + hot springs

48 hours in Iceland WITH KIDS

RENTAL CAR PICK UP

Picking up your rental car at Keflavik is a breeze. the counters are right inside the terminal, and the cars are parked just outside in the airport lot. No shuttle, no juggling bags + kids.

STOP1



STOP4

BRÚARFOSS WATERFALL (LOCATION).

A quick hike that's easy with kids and perfect for amazing photos.

STOP2 REYKJAVIK

Get your breakfast from **Braud & Co** (location) (menu) You need to try the cinnamon rolls they are some of the best I ever had

Stroll over to Skólavörðustígur aka **Rainbow Street** for some colorful photos (location)



TIP Stop at the grocery store to get road trip snacks & water

GEOTHERMAL BREAD-BAKING EXPERIENCE

Watch fresh rye bread get dug up from the hot black sand, then taste it warm with Icelandic butter and local smoked fish. Tours run daily an take 30–40 min.

&

POOL & SAUNA

Stay for a swim in their geothermal pools. It was perfect for kids because of the shallow areas. You can even take a dip in the cold plunge if you are brave. Towels are available for rent.

They also have a cafe for snacks, lunch and drinks.

STOP3 Laugarvatn Fontana (LOCATION).



STOP5

GULLFOSS FALLS (LOCATION).

Think Niagara falls of Iceland. Easily accessible with kids so you can experience the power and view the mist and rainbows up close.



STOP6

EFSTIDALUR II

(LOCATION)



Ice cream or a snack

Make a stop at Efstidalur II, a family farm that's perfect with kids. There's a playground outside, cows you can watch up close from the barn, and homemade ice cream that's a must-try. They also have a restaurant serving farm-fresh meals if you want to sit down for lunch.



STOP7

BRU HORSE FARM

(LOCATION)

Feed Icelandic Horses "Candy"

Grab a cup or 5 of "horse vitamins" and meet a few of the 35 beautiful horses on the farm. You can get up-close photos, and honestly, it was such a highlight of the trip.

STOP8

FARMERS BISTRO

(LOCATION)

Dinner

A cozy farm-to-table spot on a mushroom farm. Even though mushrooms are their specialty (they supply 85% of mushrooms in Iceland), you'll find plenty of other fresh veggies, and they'll happily adjust your order.

There's a kids' menu and a little playset outside, so you can enjoy your food while the kids play win-win! You will also be greeted by the CUTEST pup.



REST

Located in the town of Hella, this is the perfect base for families. They offer spacious family rooms, comfortable beds, and a game area that keeps kids entertained. They also offer a breakfast buffet which is perfect to start day 2.

Outside, you'll find hot tubs and a sauna for relaxing after a day of exploring. You may even see the northern lights since the hot tubs are open until midnight!

Plus, its location makes it an ideal stop for launching into your Day 2 adventures.

STOP9

STRACTA HOTEL

(LOCATION)



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DAY TWO

48 hours in Iceland WITH KIDS



STOP 10

SKÓGAFOSS
(LOCATION)

At 200 feet tall, Skógafoss creates a giant mist cloud (hello rainbows!)

There's a big flat area at the base, so it's stroller-friendly, and for adventurous families you can climb the staircase to see the falls from above.



If little legs can't handle the stairs, the view from the bottom is just as magical OR bring a baby carrier its a lot of steps!

STOP 11

FREYA CAFE
(LOCATION)

A cozy little café near Skógafoss that's perfect for warming up after the waterfall spray.

This is one of the best lattes I've had. They serve fresh coffee, pastries, soups, and light meals with a some kid-friendly options, too.

It's relaxed, and not too busy so its a nice escape from the crowds and a good place to warm up. Plus its absolutely adorable inside!

Next door (inside the same building), you'll find a small gift shop where kids can pick out a postcard and even mail it home with an Icelandic stamp. There's also the Skógar Folk Museum and an aviation museum nearby if you want to stretch the stop into a mini adventure.



STOP 12

**REYNISFJARA BEACH
(BLACK SAND BEACH)**
(LOCATION)

This world-famous black sand beach is straight out of a movie scene, with dramatic basalt columns, sea caves, and towering sea stacks called Reynisdrangar just offshore. Kids will love climbing around the rock formations and feeling the volcanic sand between their fingers.

⚠️ Safety Tip for Families: The waves here are powerful and unpredictable ("sneaker waves"), so keep little ones well back from the waterline. Treat it like a sightseeing stop, not a play beach.

BONUS

(LOCATION).
ICEWEAR

If you suddenly realize your raincoat isn't cutting it or the kids need something warmer, Iceland is the perfect place to gear up. Icewear is my favorite. Their jackets are compact, warm, and built for Iceland's wild weather.

My mom bought me an Icewear jacket 10 years ago and it's still going strong. I even had a friend bring one back for my daughter when she visited. Now that we're here again, I treated myself to a new one, and honestly, it's the best travel layer I own. Theres a flagship store in Vik right by the black sand beach.



There is a grocery store in this shopping area!

WATERFALL



SECRET WATERFALL

The easiest walk with kids! Seljalandsfoss lets you walk behind the curtain of water for a 360° view. The path can be slippery but it's short, and the thrill of standing inside the mist is unforgettable. We did not get soaked but it was nice that my daughter was in rain gear!

If you follow the path to the left, you'll discover more hidden waterfalls tucked into the cliffs. One of the best is Gljúfrabúi, a "secret" fall inside a cave that feels like stepping into another world.

This area is mostly stroller friendly. I brought ours and left it at the entrance to Gljúfrabúi and then its only a 2 minute hike into the "cave".

There's a small food stand and bathrooms right by the parking area which is super nice for a snack break!

STOP 13

Seljalandsfoss & Gljúfrabúi (LOCATION).



STOP 14

HOTEL SELFLOSS (LOCATION).

This riverside hotel makes a perfect home base for families exploring South Iceland. The onsite restaurant overlooks the river, so you can enjoy dinner with a view while the kids wind down from the day's adventures.

Perfect Location: Selfoss sits right between the Golden Circle and the route to Vík, making it ideal for whichever direction your stopover takes you, OR the airport the next day like us.

Town Vibes: The town itself is adorable and an easy to walk around, with cozy cafés, little shops, and a riverside path for stretching legs before or after dinner. They also have an amazing spa so if you're looking to unwind its an easy pick!

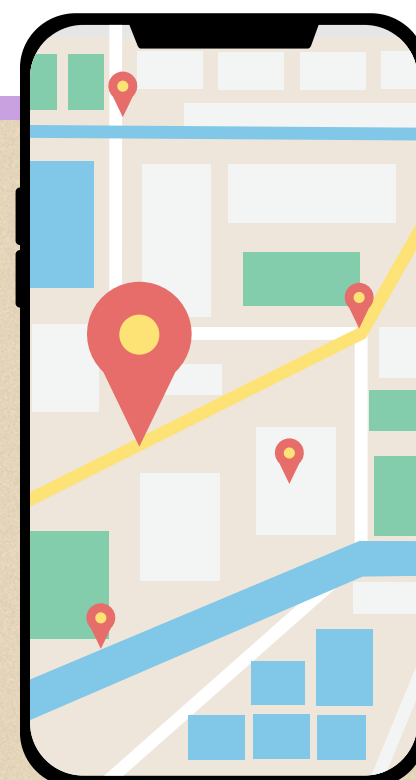
Family Note: Staying here keeps driving times shorter and lets you soak in a bit of everyday Icelandic life, not just the tourist stops.

This map includes all of my favorite waterfalls, hot springs, playgrounds, restaurants, and hidden gems around Iceland including ones I bookmarked but did not have time for.

You can easily add it to your own Google Maps and pull it up while traveling no more scrambling to look up stops on the go.

There are over 20 places saved here, with plenty of kid-friendly stops.

GET THE PASSPORT PLAYDATE MAP



WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT ICELAND

Iceland was named the safest country in the world by BBC in 2025 which makes it an easy stop for families especially as a solo parent.

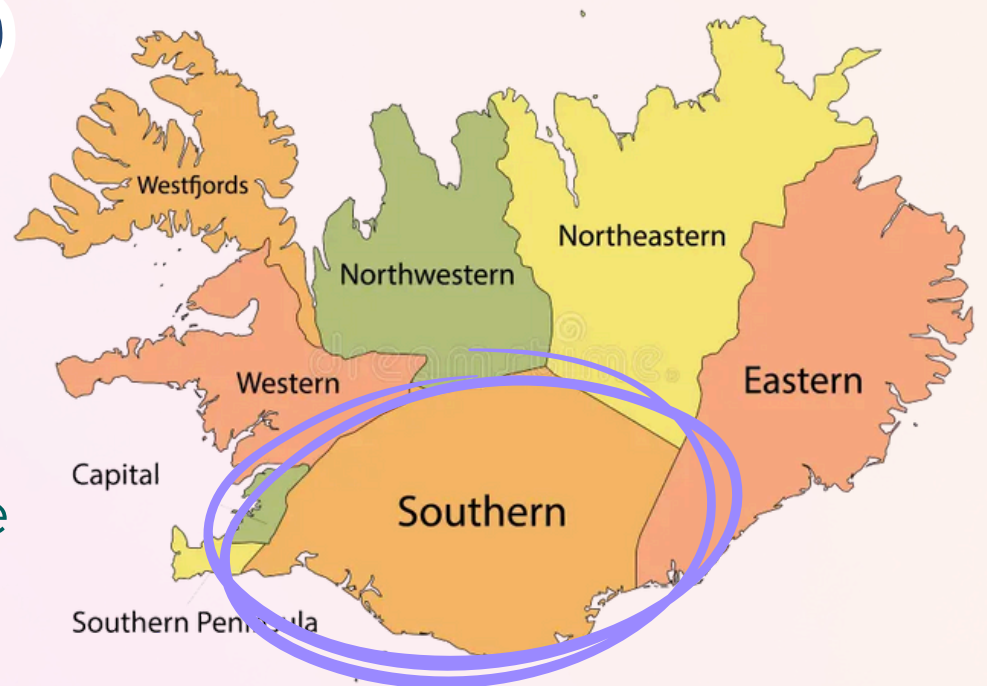
Things you may want to know:

- English is widely spoken
- You drive on the same side of the road as the United States
- Food can be pricey so stopping at grocery stores can help you budget
- You cannot travel as a solo parent without a travel content form. They asked me upon arrival and when we were leaving immigration.

WHICH REGION?

SHOULD I VISIT

Iceland is divided into 8 regions, each with its own unique landscape and charm.



The Southern Region which is what we chose.

It's the most visited part of Iceland and for good reason: waterfalls you can walk behind, black sand beaches, bubbling geysers, and easy day trips all within driving distance from Reykjavík.

QUICK TIPS



Leave time for Jet Lag

Most flights are overnight meaning the sleep you get on the plane is it. If you know you need better sleep before adventuring add an extra day. Or consider the “Nap and Go” program where you can stay at hotel room for a few hours after your flight. You can learn more [here](#).

Book a rental Car

The best way to see Iceland with kids is on your own schedule. No waiting on buses or keeping pace with tour groups just pull over for waterfalls, playgrounds, or horses whenever you feel like it.



Tap to Pay

Not once did I use cash, everything is efficient on tap to pay.



Pack Swimsuits

Every town has a local pool and the hot springs are amazing!

Check out the Playgrounds

Honestly, they were some of our favorite stops. Where else do you find massive bubble trampolines in the middle of town? Bonus it burns off Road-Trip wiggles.



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APPS/LINKS

- I used [South.is](#) local tourism board for planning their maps and routes made it so much easier. They also have lists of activities and restaurants to visit.
- If you're flying alone with your child, bring a travel consent form. Iceland asked for ours at both entry and exit. If you need one, you can find it [\[here\]](#)
- Many popular sites charge for parking. Download the [Parka Iceland](#) app before you go, you can pay with your phone.
- Stay connected with an e-SIM card – Download before you go so you can connect as soon as you land. I have used [Nomad](#) for years (use this code: BRITWVBNMU for \$5 off your first plan)
- Family-Friendly Luggage & Gear – I typically travel carry-on only with HB, and my go-to stroller for this trip is [\[here\]](#). I opted for a full stroller because I knew we would be all over and wanted something better for terrain.
- Looking for toys and other gear browse my [Amazon Travel must haves](#) for more ideas.
- I always text myself flight information before your trip and you can find the gates and baggage claim: [\[how to here\]](#)
- Download Google Translate – Handy for menus, signs, and even chatting with locals. [\[Apple Download\]](#) | [\[Google Play Download\]](#)
- Currency Converter Trick for iPhone: If you open your iPhone Calculator → click the calculator in the bottom right corner → click convert and change the currency.
- For luggage, I love [MiaMily], and my favorite personal item bag is the [TOBIQ 30L](#) use code [PASSPORT for 15% off]
- If you have any questions feel free to send me a message me on [_instagram!](#)
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