

2026 Iceland: In the Wake of the Vikings

with Dr. Jennifer Verdolin

July 26-August 3, 2026



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From \$10,995

double occupancy, per person



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Land of volcanoes. Land of glaciers. Stomping ground of Vikings. Setting of countless legends and Norse sagas. These are some of the things that attract inquisitive travelers to this island nation in the North Atlantic, and this voyage has them all, but with something even more exceptional. You'll be joined by Professor Jennifer Verdolin, an animal behavior scientist, author, speaker, and conservationist, whose deep knowledge and dedication to the preservation of Iceland's natural beauty will transform the way you see every landscape.

Along your route you will encounter the fishermen of Isafjordur and Grimsey. You'll marvel at the abundance of birdlife everywhere, especially on Grimsey and Heimaey, explore Goðafoss and Dynjandi waterfalls, walk through lava caves at Vatnshellir, and witness the lingering power of the 1973 Mt. Eldfell eruption. But more than a standard voyage, this will be enriched by on-board lectures and on-the-ground insight from Prof. Verdolin, bringing deeper context to what you see through the lens of science as well as history. You'll explore Skálinn Viking Center in Thingeyri not just as a visitor, but as a student of myth and history. It's all here on this extraordinary voyage to the land of fire and ice.

Your Journey Expert



Dr. Jennifer Verdolin is an Associate Professor at the University of Arizona and an animal behavior scientist, author, speaker, and conservationist, in addition to being a former Fulbright Scholar. She's developed a passionate interest in the heritage and wild beauty of Iceland, pursuing independent research into Iceland, including its language, land, cultures, and animals. Professor Verdolin earned a PhD in Ecology and Evolution from Stony Brook University. Her writing and research on animal and human behavior have appeared in *The Washington Post*, *Scientific American*, and *National Geographic*. She is also the author of the popular nonfiction books *Wild Connection* and *Raised by Animals*, and she has contributed to multiple podcasts, radio shows, and wildlife documentaries. For The Great Courses, she taught *The Great Tours: Iceland* and the Audible Original *Reconnect with Nature: Lessons from the Natural World*.

Highlights

- Travel with your expert and uncover the deeper meaning of Iceland's myths and legends, hearing Norse sagas brought to life both on board and at historic sites.
- Enjoy lectures in our state-of-the-art onboard theatre by Professor Jennifer Verdolin and why Iceland connects storytelling with science—a place of fire and ice, plants and animals, mythology and history.
- Marvel at Iceland's breathtaking natural wonders, from the thunderous cascades of Goðafoss and Dynjandi to the dramatic volcanic landscapes of the Snæfellsjökull Peninsula.
- Explore the Viking heritage of Thingeyri at the Skálinn Viking Center, where hands-on exhibits reveal the daily lives, clothing, and craftsmanship of Norse settlers.
- Encounter Iceland's incredible wildlife, from puffins nesting on the cliffs of Grimsey and Heimaey to the vast colonies of seabirds that thrive along the coast.
- Experience Iceland through cultural encounters, from Reykjavik's museums and storytelling traditions to local history that reveals how myth, nature, and daily life intertwine.



Questions? Call 1-855-476-5080

[Discover More](#)

Iceland: In the Wake of the Vikings

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Itinerary



Day 1: Arrival in Reykjavik

Arrive in Reykjavik Keflavik International Airport (KEF), Reykjavik, Iceland, where you will be met by your driver and transferred to the Radisson RED Hotel (or similar) for overnight. This evening, join your fellow travelers and your Great Courses Journeys Expert for a welcome cocktail reception. Dinner will be at your leisure.

Included Meal: Reception

Accommodation: Radisson RED Hotel



Day 2: From Shore to Ship in Reykjavik

After breakfast, set out with your expert and a local guide to explore Reykjavík's dynamic blend of history and innovation. At the National Museum of Iceland, trace the nation's evolution from the Viking Age to today through engaging exhibitions and artifacts. Continue to Perlan, where interactive displays reveal Iceland's natural wonders, from glaciers to the northern lights, and enjoy panoramic views of the city. Lunch will be at your leisure, and then visit Árbær Open Air Museum, where preserved houses and exhibits bring early Reykjavík life to vivid reality before you embark on your ship, *Le Lapérouse*.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodations: *Le Lapérouse*



Day 3: Sailing in the Westman Islands

The Westman Islands, located off Iceland's southern coast, are home to one of the world's largest seasonal puffin colonies and countless other seabirds, making them an unparalleled site for observing avian ecology. Cruise along the dramatic cliffs to witness this abundance before arriving at Heimaey, the archipelago's largest island. Here, walk across the lava field formed during the 1973 eruption of Mt. Eldfell, which reshaped the island and forced a complete evacuation of its residents. At the Eldheimar Museum, interactive exhibits chronicle a deeper understanding of volcanic processes and the remarkable story of the community's survival and rebuilding.

Including Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodations: *Le Lapérouse*



Day 4: Volcanic Wonders

Today's excursion provides an in-depth look at the volcanic forces that shaped the Snæfellsjökull Peninsula, a region steeped in both natural history and legend. Begin with a climb to the rim of Saxhóll Crater, where panoramic views showcase the Snæfellsjökull Glacier, a stratovolcano capped by ice that has long inspired myth and literature. As you hike among smaller craters and lava fields, gain insight into the peninsula's dramatic geologic evolution before reaching Dritvik, a pebble beach that once supported a thriving fishing community. The day culminates in a descent into Vatnshellir Cave, a 7,000-year-old lava tube whose eerie passageways highlight Iceland's volcanic origins and sparked Jules Verne's classic tale *Journey to the Center of the Earth*.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodations: *Le Lapérouse*



Day 5: Life in the Far North

Grimsey—Iceland’s northernmost inhabited island—is uniquely marked by the Arctic Circle, which runs directly through its center. With a small community of about 100 residents, largely sustained by fishing the rich North Atlantic waters, Grimsey offers a compelling example of human resilience in a remote environment. The island is equally renowned for its ecological importance, providing critical nesting grounds for seabirds. Visitors can observe species such as the Black-legged Kittiwake, Northern Fulmar, Razorbill, and Black Guillemot, along with one of Iceland’s largest colonies of Atlantic Puffins. Grimsey also hosts extensive Arctic Tern nesting sites, highlighting its significance for avian biodiversity and conservation.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodations: *Le Lapérouse*

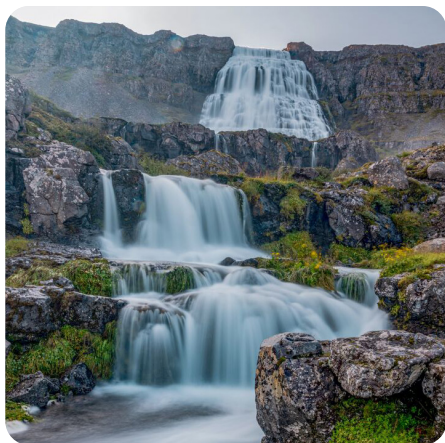


Day 6: Turning Points in Icelandic History

Your local guide will provide an overview of Akureyri, the cultural and economic hub of northern Iceland, whose harbor has long connected the region to global trade. From there, travel inland to Goðafoss, the famed “Waterfall of the Gods.” Beyond its dramatic cascade, this site holds profound historical importance: It was here in the year 1000 that Iceland officially converted to Christianity, marking a turning point in the nation’s cultural identity. Returning to town, visit the Laufás Folk Museum, a preserved turf farm that offers insight into rural domestic life of the 19th century. Conclude at the Akureyri Botanical Garden, where more than 7,000 species flourish under subarctic conditions, showcasing human ingenuity in adapting to extreme environments.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodations: *Le Lapérouse*



Day 7: Thingeyri’s Viking Past

Today’s program highlights Iceland’s Viking heritage with a visit to the Skálinn Viking Center in Thingeyri. Here, examine reconstructions of clothing, handicrafts, and weaponry that illuminate everyday life during the Norse settlement of the 9th and 10th centuries. Hands-on exhibits provide a deeper appreciation of the skills required for survival in this harsh environment, from textile production to shipbuilding. You may also view a replica Viking ship moored in the harbor, underscoring the seafaring expertise that enabled exploration and settlement across the North Atlantic. On the return to Ísafjörður, pause at the spectacular Dynjandi Waterfall, where cascading tiers of water demonstrate Iceland’s powerful glacial and tectonic forces.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodations: *Le Lapérouse*





Day 8: Where Continents Collide

On your final day, journey inland across Iceland's dramatic rift valley, where the North American and Eurasian tectonic plates visibly diverge, offering a living lesson in geology. Continue to Friðheimar Horse Farm and Greenhouse, where you will learn how Icelanders harness geothermal energy and advanced horticultural methods to grow fresh produce year-round in a challenging climate. The visit illustrates both agricultural innovation and the cultural importance of the Icelandic horse. Conclude your experience at the nearby Laugarás Lagoon a newly developed, mineral-rich two-story oasis where bathing traditions highlight the enduring connection between natural resources and daily life and enjoy lunch here.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodations: *Le Lapérouse*

Day 9: Departure

After breakfast, disembark and transfer to the Reykjavik Keflavik International Airport (KEF), Reykjavik, Iceland, for flights homeward.

Included Meals: Breakfast

What's Included:

- Comprehensive 7-night cruise aboard the deluxe *Le Lapérouse*
- One pre-night at the Radisson RED Hotel (or similar) in Reykjavik, Iceland, with welcome reception (dinner on own) on July 26, 2026
- One PONANT EXPLORATIONS Tour Director dedicated to The Great Courses Journeys from the Pre-Night on July 26, 2026, through the end of the voyage/disembarkation on August 3, 2026
- Half day of touring in Reykjavik, lunch on own, with transfer to pier for embarkation on July 27, 2026
- One exclusive The Great Courses Journeys onboard hosted cocktail reception
- 2-3 onboard lectures given by The Great Courses Journeys Expert
- One shore excursion exclusively custom for The Great Courses Journeys at each port of call led by expert guides
- Captain's gala dinners and cocktail receptions aboard ship
- All meals aboard ship including early riser's coffee and pastry, breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea, dinner
- Open bar aboard ship excluding premium alcohol, including select wines with lunch and dinner
- 24-hour complimentary room service
- Comprehensive pre-departure materials
- Unlimited WiFi (as available via satellite)
- Airport/hotel/pier transfers and handling of luggage on official arrival and departure days, July 26, 2026 and August 3, 2026, respectively
- Port taxes and charges
- Gratuities to shipboard personnel, porters, guides, and drivers on tours



Accommodations



Luxury Ship *Le Lapérouse*

The five-star *Le Lapérouse*, part of the PONANT Explorers expedition yacht series, features 92 cabins accommodating 184 guests. Designed with advanced eco-friendly technology, its “Clean Ship” certification highlights energy efficiency and marine protection. Compact yet luxurious, it navigates shallow bays and sensitive environments while offering safe, comfortable voyages with custom stabilizers. **(7 nights)**

Iceland Radisson RED

Reykjavik, Iceland

The 203-room Radisson RED Reykjavik, will be a newly built property that provides travelers with an ideal base from which to explore the city and beyond. Located in the city center, with easy pedestrian access to the main retail street, leisure areas and financial district, the 17-storey hotel will be an ocean front property offering guests panoramic views of the ocean, city, and the surrounding mountain ridge. **(1 night)**



SPA



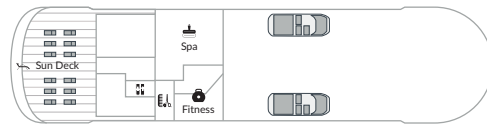
RESTAURANT



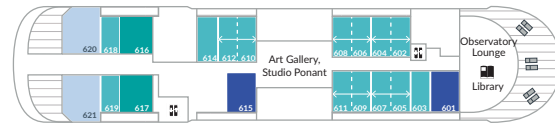
OWNER'S SUITE

Le Lapérouse Deck Plan & Pricing

DECK 7



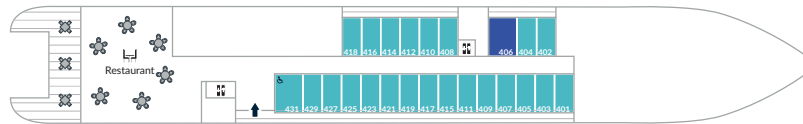
DECK 6



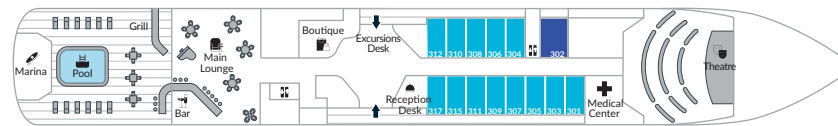
DECK 5



DECK 4



DECK 3



DECK 0 / The Blue Eye underwater lounge

- Deluxe Stateroom Deck 3
- Prestige Stateroom Decks 4-5-6
- Deluxe Suite Decks 3-4-5-6
- Prestige Suite Decks 5-6
- Privilege Suite Decks 5-6
- Grand Deluxe Suite Deck 6
- Owner's Suite Deck 5

Suites 431 and 527 are designated for guests with reduced mobility.

CATEGORY	DOUBLE OCCUPANCY <i>per person</i>	SINGLE OCCUPANCY <i>per person</i>
Deluxe Stateroom - Deck 3	\$10,995	\$12,090
Prestige Stateroom - Deck 4	\$11,890	\$12,780
Prestige Stateroom - Deck 5	\$12,230	\$13,120
Prestige Stateroom - Deck 6	\$12,640	\$13,530
Deluxe Suite - Decks 3, 4, 5, 6	\$15,670	\$16,560
Prestige Suite - Deck 5	\$19,450	\$20,340
Prestige Suite - Deck 6	\$20,200	\$21,090
Privilege Suite - Decks 5, 6	\$20,960	\$21,850
Grand Deluxe Suite - Deck 6	\$22,540	\$23,430
Owner's Suite - Deck 5	\$34,320	\$65,520

Departure: Iceland: In the Wake of the Vikings
July 26-August 3, 2026 | Deposit: 25% of Tour Fare

You will be allocated a cabin within The Great Courses Journey's allotment, specific cabin requests based on availability.

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