



ICELAND : HORSE ROUND UP – SKRAPATUNGURÉTT - 2011

YOUR ITINERARY

Imagine free and spirited horses rushing down from their highland summer pastures to be returned to their owners. Mares and their foals, young horses and geldings make their way through rough territory, not really willing to give up their freedom yet before winter returns once again.

Join the farmers in this great autumn adventure driving the herd, sorting the horses and celebrating the successful return of horses and men. The varied terrain includes the highland moors, green valleys just turning into their autumn colours of burning red and yellow, deep blue lakes and rivers. The ancient tradition of rounding up horses is only kept alive in the north of Iceland. This departure rounds up horses into the round-up pen at Skrapatungurétt. The locals celebrate the successful round-ups with a ball “réttardansleikur” in the adjacent community hall, where farmers and friends celebrate by singing and dancing the night away.

DAY 1 – WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 14: ARRIVAL IN ICELAND

Transfer from Keflavík Airport to the riding center. Make sure your flight arrives not later than 16:00 to be able to participate in an introductory riding tour towards Mt. Helgafell Volcano. (Riders arriving earlier that day are picked up upon arrival, driven to the hotel and picked up at the hotel again in time for the ride.) After the ride we enjoy a traditional Icelandic soup and receive details of the following tour before the day ends at your accommodation in a hotel in Reykjavík. (10 km)

DAY 2 - THURSDAY: REYKJAVÍK – HVAMMUR – VATNSDALUR – STÓRA-GILJÁ

Transfer by bus from Reykjavík to Hvammur Farm, where we meet horses and guides. On our way to the north we visit a factory outlet for woolen goods. We start our ride in Vatnsdalur valley. This beautiful valley is the setting of the Vatnsdæla-Saga. We ride on the eastern side of Vatnsdalur valley, past Hvammsfoss waterfall, surrounded by impressive basalt columns. The horses rest close to Stóra - Giljá Farm and we return to Hvammur Farm, home of our hosts Sonja and Haukur, for our overnight stay. (20 km)

DAY 3 - FRIDAY: STÓRA-GILJÁ – BJÖRNSÓLFSSTAÐIR – HVAMMUR

After rejoining our horses we start our ride along the shore of Lake Húnavatn, follow the expensive salmon fishing river Laxá á Ásum and continue to Blönduós village. Here we cross the glacier fed river Blanda on a bridge and continue to Björnsólfsstaðir Farm in Langadalur valley. This farm belongs to Haukur's grandfather who is known for his storytelling and warm personality. Overnight stay at Hvammur Farm. (30 km)

DAY 4 - SATURDAY: LAXÁRDALUR – SKRAPATUNGURÉTT

We meet up with our horses again at Farm Strjúgsstaðir. Today we meet the farmers coming down from the mountains where they already spent some time gathering the horses in their summer pastures. Hundreds of horses are coming down from the highlands and we participate in herding them to the round up place Skrapatungurétt. During this long riding day join in the singing of the farmers, celebrating this great event of the fall. (45 km)



Optional (not included in the tour price):

"Stóðréttardansleikur" dance at Blönduós, where everybody relaxes after the excitement of the day and celebrates yet another successful round up.

DAY 5 - SUNDAY: SORTING OF THE HORSES AND DRIVING THE HERDS TO THEIR HOME PASTURES

Our day starts at the round up place Skrapatungurétt where horses are sorted out. Experience the excitement and view beautiful horses while joining in this great event. When the horses are sorted we participate in returning some of them to their meadows at their home farms.

Dinner at Hvammur Farm and time to share our personal experience on this riding adventure with our fellow riders. (25 km)

DAY 6 - MONDAY: REYKJAVÍK

Departure from the North and return to Reykjavík. Approx. arrival at the hotel at 14:00.

DAY 7 - TUESDAY: DEPARTURE FROM ICELAND

Transfer to Reykjavik Airport in time for the return flight home.

ENJOY YOUR TRAIL !