



Visit spectacular Goðafoss Falls

A Cruise In the Wake of the Vikings

The History, Landscapes
and Wildlife of Iceland

17 – 26 April 2024



Jon Baines
tours



Visit Seyðisfjörður in the Eastfjords

Led by our experienced and popular tour leading team, Prof John Richardson and Susi Richardson, and accompanied by expert JBT speakers, Declan Taggart and Irene García Losquiño, this Fred Olsen cruise takes you from Newcastle to the stunning landscapes of Iceland.

Iceland is a magical island humming with energy and natural phenomena. Its beauty comes from a vast volcanic landscape where mighty forces shape the earth: geysers and glooping mudflats, rumbling volcanoes swathed in ice and glaciers grinding their way through mountains. Its rich cultural life encompasses a literary legacy that stretches from medieval sagas to contemporary thrillers by way of Nobel Prize winners, as well as life, music and Nordic style.

This cruise will include a number of shore excursions and talks by the tour leaders,

our dedicated JBT speakers - who are both experts on Norse history and culture and will connect the history of the Vikings and the settlement of Iceland with the present day (see overleaf) – as well as the ship's speakers. You will be well looked after by our caring tour leaders, with plenty of time at leisure to enjoy the ship's facilities and fascinating lectures.

Reykjavík



Tour Leaders: John and Susi Richardson

Prof John Richardson is an Emeritus Professor of Primary Care and General Practice. He also worked for three years as an occupational physician in Northern Ireland. He has led study tours worldwide and was a medical escort to parties of war widows and veterans on journeys of remembrance for the Royal British Legion. He has also run many history of medicine battlefield tours. He has visited more than 80 countries and worked in 41 of them as a doctor. He has also given lectures on cruises.

Susi Richardson has travelled widely across the world with John either as an expedition nurse, or as a nurse on war grave pilgrimages for the Royal British Legion, or as co-tour leader for Jon Baines Tours.



John and Susi have previously led tours for Jon Baines Tours to China, Central Asia, India, Turkey, Central America, Ecuador and the Galapagos, Namibia, Ethiopia, Vietnam, Cambodia, Burma, Egypt, Libya, Shetland and Orkney and on cruises.

Speakers

Irene García Losquiño is a María Zambrano Research Fellow at the University of Santiago de Compostela. She received her PhD on runology from University of Aberdeen in 2013 and, since then, she has worked in institutions in Sweden, Scotland and Spain, including a postdoctoral Bernadotte Fellowship at the Onomastics Department at the University of Uppsala. She has written an award-winning book *The Early Runic Inscriptions: Their Western Features* and many academic articles on the viking southern diaspora. She has also featured in the documentary series *Real Vikings*, has been interviewed on many podcasts, has written for magazines like *History National Geographic* and is an experienced international public speaker and writer.

Declan Taggart is a researcher at the University of Iceland working on morality, religion and social structure in early Iceland and Scandinavia. He has published an award-winning book on the god Thor called *How Thor*



Lost His Thunder, many articles related to Old Norse religion and literature, and been invited to lecture to academic audiences across Europe about his work. Beyond academia, Declan has contributed extensively to popular discussions of the Viking Age. He has given talks for schools on the early North and created artistic performances about its literature. He recently published a choose-your-own-adventure game about the settlement of Iceland called *Choice of the Viking*.



Day 1: Newcastle (Wed, 17 April) **D**

Pm: Board the ship and depart late afternoon.
Eve: Welcome dinner with the group.

Day 2: At Sea (Thurs, 18 April) **B L D**

Am: Hear lectures onboard:
The Viking Age – a general introduction to the Vikings, who they were, where they came from and how they influenced history - **DT**
Folklore, Belief Systems and Old Norse Religion – understanding morality, religion and social structure in early Iceland and Scandinavia - **DT**
Pm: At leisure to relax and enjoy the programme of events on the ship. Captain's welcome drinks.

Day 3: At Sea (Fri, 19 April) **B L D**

Am: Hear lectures onboard:
The Brendan Voyage - JR
The Settlement of Iceland and the Viking Age in Iceland - JR
Pm: At leisure. Late afternoon private drinks and canapes with the group.

Day 4: Reykjavík (Sat, 20 April) **B L D**

Excursion 3 hours (half a mile walking)

Am: Explore Reykjavik, the world's most northerly capital city, on a private shore excursion. Drive through the Laugardalur Valley past geothermal pools and cross the Elliðaá River to the Álftanes Peninsula. Visit Perlan for a panoramic view of the city and then see Hallgrímskirkja, the church that dominates the city skyline. Explore the old quarter including Laugavegur, the oldest road in the country, trendy Hlemmur and the old harbour front.
Pm: Return to the ship for lunch or at leisure to visit one of the excellent museums in the city.

Day 5: Ísafjörður (Sun, 21 April) **B L D**

Excursion 3 hours (half a mile walking)

Am: Located on the peninsula of the Westfjords, with a backdrop of steep mountains, Ísafjörður has been one of Iceland's most important fishing and trading centres for over two centuries. Take part in an excursion offering an insight into the life and culture of the remote Westfjords. Drive out to Bolungarvik and visit the Ósvör Maritime Museum, a museum housed in a series of stone and turf buildings chronicling the local history, and visit the local church. Continue on to the lovely Tungudalur Valley to see the waterfall and on to Isafjörður and the maritime museum. Enjoy a snack of dried fish or shark with schnapps.
Pm: Cruise past Hornbjarg, renowned for its spectacular natural beauty combining vast tundra, sheer cliffs and flowering fields.
Eve: Cruise past Drangaskörð's pinnacles jutting out of the sea, often referred to as the 'mountain of teeth'. Some believe that the unusual natural phenomena look like the points on a dragon's tail.

Day 6: Akureyri (Mon, 22 April) **B L D**

Am: Arrive in Akureyri and take part in a shore excursion. Drive along the coastline of Eyjafjörður to the breath-taking 'Waterfall of the Gods', Goðafoss Waterfall. Continue

across farmland to Lake Mývatn, home to thousands of birds. Continue to Námaskarð a geothermal field full of mud pots, steam vents, boiling springs, sulphur deposits and fumaroles. Return to Akureyri.

Pm: Cruise past magnificent Eyjafjörður, the longest fjord in Iceland, which lies on the migratory routes of many species of whales and birds. Puffins are often seen here and the waters of Eyjafjörður attract blue whales, dolphins and porpoises.

Eve: Cruise past Hrísey Island, Iceland's second largest island, with just 200 people living alongside more than 40 bird species. Cruise past Grímsey Island, Iceland's northernmost inhabited territory, home to over a hundred people, over a million seabirds of varying species – including the largest colony of puffins in the world - which perch themselves on the island's stunning cliff faces.

Day 7: Borgarfjörður Eystri (Tues, 23 April)

B L D

Am: Early morning arrival at Borgarfjörður Eystri, believed by many locals to be the home of the Elf Queen, due to a boulder known as an Álfaborg (Elf Rock or Elf Castle), and one of the best places to see puffins. Continue to Seyðisfjörður, in the Eastfjords of Iceland, regarded as one of Iceland's most picturesque towns. Skálanes Nature Reserve is situated on the south side of the town and many

seabirds, such as puffins or the black tailed godwit, and cetaceans – including seal and porpoise, can be found here. At leisure in the small, easily walkable town. **Optional Excursion:** Drive over the mountain pass to Fjarðarheiði and drive along a deep, glacier-filled valley to Snaefellsstofa, an impressive building and the former home of Gunnar Gunnarsson, one of Iceland's greatest writers. Pass the 13th century estate of Fljótisdalur. Pass through the forest of Hallormstaðaskógur and visit the village of Egilsstaðir.

Day 8: At Sea (Wed, 24 April)

B L D

Am: Hear lectures onboard:
Viking Culture, Law and Society – connecting the historic Vikings with Iceland today - **IL**
The Warriors - campaigning, death, afterlife, runes and archaeology of the Norse - **IL**

Pm: Day at leisure with an Open Forum discussion led by John Richardson. Enjoy a sumptuous afternoon tea.

Day 9: At Sea (Thurs, 25 April)

B L D

Am: Hear lectures onboard:
The Viking Diaspora and Their Maritime History - **IL**

Pm: Captain's farewell party in the evening.

Day 10: Newcastle (Fri, 26 April)

B

Am: Arrive Newcastle early morning.

The breathtaking landscapes of Iceland





Balmoral at dock in Seyðisfjörður

Your Fred Olsen cruise ship – MS Balmoral

Fred Olsen's flagship MS Balmoral offers a warm, refined atmosphere with comfortable accommodation, stylish restaurants and plenty of open-deck space. It is a wonderful ship on which to spend days at sea, with its many daily classes, activities and entertainment options, a spa and two swimming pools, as well as excellent restaurants, cafes and bars – including one in the style of a traditional English pub. The largest in the Fred Olsen fleet, it is still

small enough to navigate smaller, more picturesque waterways and offer a personal cruising experience. It is renowned for its outstanding onboard service and its friendly, intimate atmosphere.

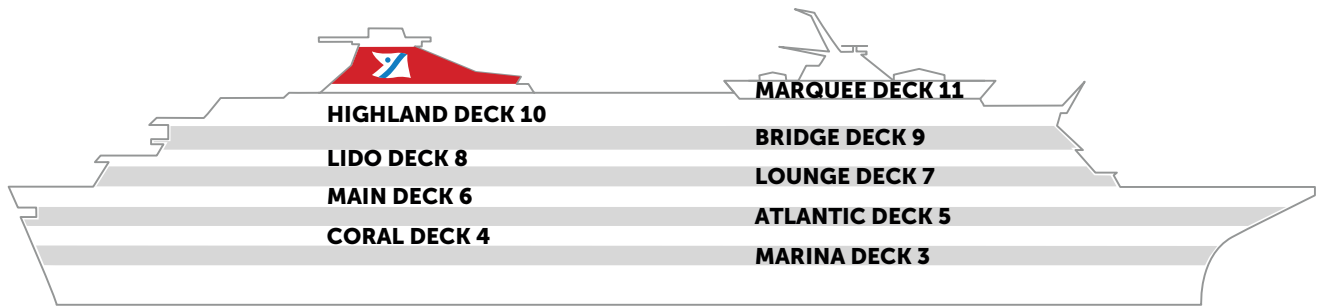
Named after the Scottish residence of the British Royal Family, Balmoral features just 710 guest cabins and retains the warm and friendly atmosphere that the Fred Olsen fleet is renowned for. There are special social gatherings and afternoon teas, several of which are included in your itinerary.



Visit the thermal landscapes of Mývatn

Guests on board have plenty of space to relax in, with elegant and comfortable lounges, bars and public areas, including two speciality dining restaurants, the Marquee Bar with comfortable rattan sofas, a beautiful open promenade, two separate swimming pool decks, a well-equipped gym and an attractive spa.

The Spey and Avon restaurants offer spectacular views out to sea while you dine, and the elegant and sophisticated Observatory Lounge is right at the front of the upper deck, offering wonderful views of the sea from three sides, with a magical colour-changing ceiling.



Clockwise from top: The ship deck plan; A superior balcony cabin; Balmoral at sea; Reception area; Deck space on board



The cost per person with a cabin to yourself

N Grade, Inside Cabin, Deck 3 and 6, 130 sq ft, No Window	\$4,508
M Grade, Superior Inside Cabin, Deck 9, 160 sq ft, No Window	\$4,704
K Grade, Ocean-View Cabin, Deck 4 and 8, 165 sq ft, Picture Window	\$5,382

The cost per person sharing a cabin

I Grade, Inside Cabin, Deck 3, 4 and 5, 160 sq ft, No Window	\$3,192
H Grade, Inside Cabin, Deck 5 and 6, 160 sq ft, No Window	\$3,427
D Grade, Ocean-View Cabin, Deck 4 and 5, 165 sq ft, Picture Window	\$3,909
CO Grade, Superior Ocean-View Cabin, Deck 8, 165 sq ft, Fully Restricted View*	\$4,150
B Grade, Superior Ocean-View Cabin, Deck 6 and 8, 165 sq ft, Picture Window	\$4,396
BA Grade, Balcony Cabin, Deck 8 and 9, 248-260 sq ft, Private Balcony	\$5,572
SS Grade, Superior Suite, Deck 9 and 10, 341 sq ft, Private Balcony	\$6,062

*CO can have obstructed view.

Please contact us for a deck plan and full specific cabin details.

A street in Akureyri

The cost includes:

- 9 nights' accommodation with private facilities on MS Balmoral
- All meals on the cruise ship and iced water, standard tea and coffee with all meals and juice for breakfast
- Tea and coffee making facilities in cabins
- Tour leaders (John and Susi Richardson) and speakers (Irene García Losquiño and Declan Taggart)
- Comprehensive briefing notes
- Private specialist lecture programme
- All on-board entertainment
- Private escorted shore visits as per the itinerary
- Admission fees where applicable
- Services of local English-speaking guides
- Cabin portorage and all tips
- Two Captain's cocktail parties, one welcome and one farewell drinks party and one private ship party, with drinks and canapés

The cost excludes:

- International flights and transfers
- All personal extras e.g. laundry, vaccinations
- All optional excursions, tours and visits and drinks not mentioned
- Travel insurance and visas (if required)



About Us

To travel with us is to dig below the surface, revealing the deeper destination. Of course, you will visit the great historical sites; marvel at the wonders of architecture and engineering; be moved by the riches of culture and art; and experience the most spectacular landscapes in the world. What we also do is make sure that you see the country as it is today, giving you privileged access that independent travel and other tour companies rarely get close to. We give you a variety of experiences, from the sublime to the humble, in the company of intelligent, curious, like-minded people. And while we can be worthy, we also make sure that you have a lot of fun.

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Icelandic ponies (top); Akureyri; Puffins;
Typical Westfjords architecture (above)

