Iceland

Scandinavian Knitting & Textile Crafts in the Land of Fjords, Vikings, Trolls & the Midnight Sun

May 30 – June 4, 2017
6 Days

Featuring a 4 Day Knitting Workshop

With an optional 3 Day extension to Iceland’s Golden Circle and South Coast
June 4 – 6
See Page 13 for details

This Trip May be Enjoyed as an Stand-Alone Tour or as an Extension to our Norway Itinerary May 16-30, 2017
Welcome to Iceland...

One of the most dramatic natural landscapes on the planet

and sheep, sheep and more sheep!

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Meet Our Icelandic Fiber Artist Mentors…

Ragnheiður Jóhannsdóttir “Ragga” is a knitting expert, designer, author and entrepreneur with over 40 years of experience. She is also skilled in herbal dyeing spinning yarn and basically everything that has to do with wool. Ragga specializes in how wool and its processing has evolved over the years and has focused on the history of Icelandic lopapeysa sweater design. What she enjoys most is to teach new skills and to show how you can use your knowledge for further development. She is very excited to share her knitting knowledge with you and loves to work with Icelandic wool. Ragga will introduce us to the Icelandic knitting techniques and traditions and there will be a choice of various items to knit: socks, gloves, hats, shawls or the traditional Icelandic “lopapeysa” sweater!

Guðrún Bjarnadóttir
is a botanist, teacher and sperm analyst at the Icelandic Bull Centre. She teaches botany at the Agricultural University of Iceland at Hvanneyri. Guðrún spends most of her spare time collecting plants and dyeing wool, creating her own yarn from the Icelandic wool. Plants, knitting and Icelandic nature are her favorite things and she says she is very grateful to be able to combine this all in her work. In her home in Borgarfjörður she has an open workshop where she shows traditional methods of dyeing yarn from Icelandic plants or lichens and many other things. We will have the opportunity to spend a morning with Guðrún participating in a workshop to learn about her process.

Ríta Freyja Bach
Ríta and Páll live in Grenigerði, a small organic farm 3 km outside of Borgarnes. In addition to selling plants, they also work with wool and the horns of animals like reindeers, sheep and goats. From the horns, they make all kinds of useful things, particularly jewelry. Their handcraft is for sale in Ullarselið at Hvanneyri (www.ull.is) and some handicraft shops in Reykjavík. They also have a gallery at their farm. Ríta teaches students at the Agricultural University of Iceland to spin the wool and she has also taught many courses in wool craft elsewhere. We are lucky enough to visit their farm to learn more about Icelandic goat wool, see their beautiful art and taste some pancakes made from goat’s milk. We also have the chance to learn the art of spinning with Ríta one day while at our hotel.
Tuesday, May 30      Arrive Reykjavik—Handknitting Association of Iceland

Today you fly to Reykjavik, Iceland from either your home or from Bergen if you are traveling with us in Norway. We will be happy to offer suggestions for your air arrangements. Upon arrival, you will transfer on your own to Reykjavik. Depending on your arrival time, the day is at your leisure to wander this interesting city. Shopping in Reykjavik is legendary and is a city filled with fashion, books, vintage stores, flea markets, boutiques, outlets, antique shops, gourmet food, Icelandic design, outdoor clothing, souvenir and gift shops. There are also a variety of interesting museums and an old harbour. (If you would like to have more time to explore Reykjavik, we would be happy to help you to arrange extra days here). In the early evening, we have a treat in store. In the evening, we’ll gather to have a private “after hours” visit to the Handknitters Association of Iceland.

Knitting in Iceland is iconic. For many centuries, Icelandic people have depended on their sheep to provide the marvelous wool for their warm garments; a necessity for the long and cold winters. Historically, many women have also used their craft to supplement their family’s income. In 1977, several Icelandic women joined forces to establish an organization that could better market their work. Thus the Handknitting Association was founded. Their next step was to open a store to sell their woolen goods. Today, the Handknitting Association is well known for its quality and offers one of the widest selection of traditional hand knitted Icelandic sweaters in Iceland. It is also considered to be one of the main sources of Icelandic wool, patterns and supplies in Reykjavik. We’ll linger here immersing ourselves in the woolly magic.

Dinner is on your own tonight so that you can choose one of Reykjavik’s many wonderful restaurants. Overnight in Reykjavik. (No meals included)
Wednesday, May 31  To the Icelandic Countryside with Ragga

In the morning, we set off for our adventure deeper into Western Iceland often referred to Sagaland for its rich Viking history. We travel by private van to our boutique accommodations at Hotel Glymur. Along the way we will be in the small village Mosfellsbær, where we stop by a very interesting wool center, Álafoss. Established in the late 19th century, it is believed that the center marked the true beginning of Iceland’s wool industry. Here you can choose the materials for our knitting project with Ragga. There is a good selection of almost any wool product you can think of. We’ll also experience Iceland’s industrial history by viewing an exhibition of old knitting machinery and photographs from the early days. We’ll have plenty of time here to peruse the wonderful wool and enjoy lunch in their café. Depending on our timing, we may also stop at a farm on the way to our hotel for light refreshments in the late afternoon.

Tonight we enjoy a welcoming dinner in the evening at our accommodation with our guide and knitting instructor, Ragnheiður “Ragga” Jóhannsdóttir (see her bio on Page 2). Uniquely situated high on a mountainside, Hotel Glymur is considered one of Iceland’s finest country hotels and overlooks the scenic Hvalfjörður, the Whales Fjord. At the end of this fjord is Glymur, one of the highest waterfalls in Europe.

Hotel Glymur has a beautiful restaurant and twenty-two well-appointed and comfortable rooms with fantastic views. Mountainside hot tubs, with geothermal heated water, are located just outside the hotel where one soak and take in the breathtaking panoramic view. The whole hotel is one big gallery. The owners have collected objects from all over the world, both new and old. There are over 100 photographs and paintings that adorn the walls of the hotel. We will have a group dinner tonight at the hotel. Overnight at Hotel Glymur. (B,L,D)

Thursday, June 1
Natural Dyeing Workshop ~ Wool Centre ~ Saga Settlement Centre

After breakfast we take off to Hvanneyri village, where we visit botanist and dyer Guðrún Bjarnadóttir at her shop Hespuhúsið (see her bio on Page 3). We learn about the coloring of yarn with dye made of Icelandic plants and lichens during a workshop that takes the whole morning.

Next we visit Ullarselíð Wool Centre which is a workshop and store set where the traditional methods of handling wool are used, especially techniques of processing the wool by hand. The emphasis is on a variety of hand-made items which include articles that have been combed, spun, knitted, matted, woven, and check-woven. We’ll have lunch at this interesting stop.

In the afternoon, we can wander around the town Borgarnes before we head to the Settlement Centre, which is housed in two of the oldest buildings in the town of Borgarnes, Pakkhúsið and Búðarklettur. This folk museum offers a deep background into Iceland’s history and flora and fauna giving our visit to Iceland strong context. Here we learn what it was like for the first settlers of Iceland to set out across the wilds of the North Atlantic to their new home. Iceland’s most famous Viking and first poet, Egill Skallagrimsson, is highlighted. In the evening, we can work on the knitting project we started yesterday. Dinner is on your own tonight in the hotel restaurant. Overnight at Hotel Glymer. (B,L)
Friday, June 2
Trolls, Caves & Waterfalls ~ Goats ~ Farmer’s Market

Today we continue knitting along the way with Ragga while we take a sightseeing day tour in the area. We drive into Reykholtsdalur, visiting Reykholt, a village in the valley of the river Reykjadalsá. In the Middle Ages, one of the most important individuals in Icelandic history lived here. Snorri Sturluson was a famous poet and scholar. His records of the Old Norse language and mythology are one of the most valuable resources for modern scholars. During this era, Reykholt was one of the most important intellectual centers of Iceland. Archeologists are still discovering medieval remains in the vicinity.

We carry on to visit a local goat farm where we enjoy coffee and Icelandic pancakes made from goat milk and learn a bit about the goat wool. Before returning to our hotel, we visit the Ljómalind farmers market, where local handicrafts are offered and we have the opportunity to taste some products from local farmers. We will also visit Borg á Mýrum, an ancient farm and church estate with a history that dates back to the settlement of Iceland. A church was first built here around 1000 AD. A small church built in 1880 can still be seen today. Dinner is on your own. Overnight at Hotel Glymur. (B,L)
Today we have more or less a whole day of knitting and relaxing at the hotel. Rita from the farm Grenigerði, will be with us today for a spinning workshop, for those who are interested. In the afternoon we can continue working on our knitting projects with Ragga (or alternatively have a workshop/introduction to another craft, e.g. felting or fish leather). In the evening, we’ll enjoy a group dinner at the hotel. Overnight at Hotel Glymur. (B,L,D)

**Sunday, June 4**

**Return to Reykjavik for Flights Home**

Today we return to Reykjavik for our flights home. Please be sure that your flight does not leave until late afternoon at the earliest. (B)

**Or South to Iceland’s Golden Circle…**

See Page 13 for details (keep scrolling - 4 pages ahead)…

**We Strive to Support the Local Communities!**

In addition to providing participants with one-on-one experiences with local textile artists, we also strive to be responsible stewards of the money entrusted to us through participation in our trips. Our tours offer aid in sustaining worldwide textile populations by funneling a significant amount of this money and support back into the local communities through our tours. We feel that interaction with local textile artists, local fiber producers, farms, neighborhood fiber art shops and other outlets for traditional products is an essential part of the experience. We will always strive to offer the opportunity to shop locally for a variety of products and to offer the opportunity for authentic contribution to the local community.
Won’t you join us in this magical land?
Your Icelandic Knitting Project with Ragga

Handcrafts have a long history in Iceland with a long-established knitting tradition. You will choose a knitting project prior to your arrival in Borgarnes and we can have everything you need ready in a kit for you upon arrival. If you like we can include knitting needles or you can bring your own with you.

**Price examples:**
- Knitting socks, mittens, gloves or a hat approx. ISK 3.000 (USD $25 USD or 20 EUR,-*)
- Knitting a lopapeysa wool sweater or a lace shawl approx. ISK 8.000 - 10.000, or USD $70-85 USD, or 50-65 EUR*

*These prices include a Knitting book, lopi wool yarn, pattern and knitting needles if needed.

Please choose your color(s) and if you are planning to knit a lopapeysa you can choose from patterns on this web site: www.istex.is – We’ll be happy to advise you with the choice of your project.

** The workshops are included in the price of the tour, but the material is not included. A kit can be ordered prior to arrival and is available during the activity for approx. ISK 1000 or $9 USD per person/workshop.

As with all true adventures, this itinerary is subject to change without notice based on a variety of factors. Although Loom Dancer Weaving Odysseys will do our best to adhere to the scheduled itinerary, we are all at the mercy of Mother Nature and varying weather conditions. This itinerary should be considered an approximation of activities only. The itinerary or accommodations may be changed subject to unexpected and worthwhile opportunities, weather, group desires, and circumstances beyond our control, etc. Loom Dancer Weaving Odysseys and its guides reserve the right to alter the itinerary without prior notice. Also please be aware that any voluntary changes on your part to your itinerary while in Iceland will be made at your own expense.

There is no refund for any unused portion of the itinerary including hotels, activities, etc.
Land Costs Include:

- 5 Night’s accommodations based on double occupancy. Single accommodations available at additional cost.
- Private tours
- Various Workshops/Special Events including 4 Days of an exclusive knitting, spinning and dyeing workshop in Borgarnes
- Private van and local expert guide
- Breakfast daily, 5 lunches and 2 dinners
- Private visits and demonstrations with talented knitters, weavers, spinners, jewelers and textile designers
- Entrance fees

Land Costs Exclude:

- All air transportation
- Airport transfers
- Meals not designated on the itinerary
- Knitting materials (see page 9 for details)
- Any activities such as golf, horseback riding, fishing and any others not specifically included in the itinerary are at an additional cost.
- Any item not specifically included in your program including all snacks, extra personal beverages & bottled water, etc. other than during designated meals, alcoholic beverages
- Excess baggage fees, laundry, phone calls, internet and any other items of a personal nature not specifically indicated
- Tips for your guide, drivers, hotel porters and other service staff
- Additional insurance of any kind

Cost: $3,575 Per Person Based on Double Occupancy (based on a minimum of 8 participants)  
$3,995 Per Person Based on Double Occupancy (based on a minimum of 6 participants)

For those wishing single accommodations, there is a $500 Single Supplement

Activities such as golf, horseback riding, fishing and any other activity not included in the itinerary are at an additional cost. We will be happy to help with the arrangements.

Save Your Spot!  
Please call our office for details or questions!  
800-369-3033
Most other tours are only day trips to the Golden Circle and beyond. That’s not for us! We’ll immerse ourselves in the majesty and diversity of this dynamic landscape for several days. From black sand beaches to powerful geysers; spectacular waterfalls to frigid ice caves, we’ll explore it all.

Highlights
- Gullfoss, the Golden Waterfall
- Unique black beach Reynisfjara near Vik
- The mysteries of Pingvellir, a UNESCO World Heritage Site
- A natural ice cave (time permitting)
- Stunning glaciers, rugged lava fields and mysterious volcanoes and geysers
- Geysir geothermal area
- South Coast waterfalls: Seljalandsfoss & Skógafoss
Extension Land Costs Include:

- 2 Nights accommodations based on double occupancy. Single accommodations available at additional cost.
- Private van and local expert guide
- Full breakfast daily, some lunches & dinners

Extension Land Costs Exclude:

- Any air transportation
- Airport transfers
- Meals not designated on the itinerary
- Any item not specifically included in your program including all snacks, extra personal beverages & bottled water, etc. other than during designated meals, alcoholic beverages
- Excess baggage fees, laundry, phone calls, internet and any other items of a personal nature not specifically indicated
- Tips for your guide, drivers, hotel porters and other service staff
- Additional insurance of any kind

Extension Cost:

$995 Per Person Based on Double Occupancy (based on a minimum of 8 participants)
For those wishing single accommodations, there is a $150 Single Supplement
About Other Activities in Iceland

All our trips are designed to offer something for everyone and Iceland is no exception. Our itinerary is created to accommodate a variety of interests for our fiber enthusiasts as well as their non-fiber traveling companions. The knitting workshops included in the itinerary are suitable for any ability of level of interest. Even if you are a non-knitter, or not necessarily a fiber fiend, there are a myriad of activities to enjoy while the textile lovers indulge their passion. For those not participating in the workshops, you can explore on your own or engage in any of the activities below that Iceland is so famous for.

Horseback Riding
Being on horseback is the ideal way to experience the ancient nature of Iceland relatively untouched for 100, or even 1,000 years. Considered the world’s purest breed, Icelandic Horses were brought by Viking ships to serve as the sole source of transportation over Iceland’s rough terrain. Isolated by law, nature gifted these horses with no natural predators, but in turn challenged them with sparse forage and a harsh climate. This natural selection process produced the calm, sure-footed Icelandic horse and has made it an integral part of the country’s culture. (Adapted from http://www.icelandichorses.com/horses.php) Read more about the history of the Icelandic Horse at http://www.icelandichorses.com/history.php

These friendly, sure-footed horses have a unique and rhythmic gait known as the 4-beat tölt which is famous for an incredibly smooth and seemingly floating ride over Iceland’s rugged landscape. There are many riding experiences available for all levels of ability. Choose from a couple of hours in the saddle to all day rides through the magnificent scenery of Iceland.

Fishing
Fishing for salmon, lake and sea trout, and Arctic char under the midnight sun is an experience no angler will ever forget. Iceland, the land of fire and ice, is home to some of the best Atlantic salmon and game fishing in the world. With crystal-clear, well-managed rivers and breathtaking scenery, it is no surprise that for generations, anglers have come to (and subsequently fallen in love with) Iceland. Fishing for salmon, sea trout, trout and Arctic char under the midnight sun is an experience no angler will ever forget. http://www.fishpal.com/Norse/Iceland/index.asp?dom=Iceland

Hiking
Hiking and walking in Iceland is enormously popular with many short and easy hikes to full day adventures. In fact, it might even be considered a hiker’s paradise with opportunities that are virtually endless. With its magnificent scenery, wild landscapes and well-designed trails, Iceland will not disappoint the walker. Early June marks the beginning of the hiking season.

Photography
Iceland’s remarkable natural beauty is an incredible muse for any photographer. Choose from a variety of photography workshops, or venture out on your own for that once-in-a-lifetime shot.

World Class Golf
“Playing golf in Iceland is an adventure you’ll remember for a lifetime. Midnight golf is available in the summer due to Iceland’s northerly location, and one-tenth of Iceland’s surface is adorned with lava. Sweeping mountains and majestic ocean views characterize Icelandic golf courses, which follow the contours of the naturally dramatic landscape. Their design pays tribute to the first golf courses in Scotland - the home of golf.” ~ according to Golficeland.org