

SPECIAL PROMOTION

RESTAURANTS



*A mini-guide
to some of
the best
restaurants in
Iceland.*



CULINARY CRUSH

Eat your way around Iceland.

Icelandic restaurateurs are constantly upping their standards. Making the most of fresh Icelandic seafood, lamb, dairy, vegetables and other local ingredients, they create innovative dishes and serve them to enthusiastic locals and hungry travelers in the country's many eateries. Feasting on culinary creations of Icelandic tradition, in New Nordic style or under the influence of international cuisine, dinner guests are left full and satisfied.

While most restaurants and cafés are located in Reykjavík, more and more places outside the capital region are offering ambitious lunches, dinners and sweet treats—a welcome break from the usual gas station menus. Some of these restaurants are so popular that they have become a destination for the gourmet traveler looking for a taste of something delicious, unique and authentically Icelandic.

Bon appétit!

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R · E · S · T · A · U · R · A · N · T · S

Dining Out in Reykjavík**HAUST RESTAURANT**

Centrally located on the ground floor of Fosshotel Reykjavík, Haust Restaurant offers a culinary experience not to be missed. Chef Jónas Oddur Björnsson brings years of experience at Michelin-starred restaurants to the table, and, together with his quality team, he has created a menu characterized by good taste, art and innovation. A man who spends 30 days preparing his favorite spice, black garlic, can be trusted to excel. The focus is on quality local ingredients, original preparation and elegant presentation, including meat, fish and vegetarian options. For the most dedicated gourmets, Haust offers four and seven course set menus, to be paired with the perfect wines. Open for breakfast, lunch and dinner, Haust, meaning Autumn, awaits you with a refreshing approach to concocting a feast from every harvest. Þórunnartún 1, 105 Reykjavík. 531-9020. haustrestaurant.is

**KITCHEN & WINE**

Kitchen & Wine, located at 101 Hotel in downtown Reykjavík, specializes in simple elegance, bistro-style. Chef Hákon Örvarsson has earned numerous international awards, and his dishes are as much of a delight to the eye as the palate. Here, even burgers and sandwiches are classy—in addition to the fish, lobster and steak. Enjoy a simple, elegant meal, made from seasonal ingredients, in a relaxed atmosphere. The bartenders excel at making cocktails and offer a wide selection of wines and spirits. Our private banquet room is perfect for private parties. Not surprisingly, this place is a magnet for the locals.

Hverfisgata 10, 101 Reykjavík. 580-0103. kitchenandwine.is

**KOL**

Kol is a restaurant and cocktail bar in the heart of Reykjavík, combining sizzling style with a refreshingly down-to-earth and welcoming atmosphere. In typical Reykjavík style, the restaurant, which owners describe as “casual fine dining,” is also a trendy cocktail bar with, we might add, at least two cocktails *on tap!* The name Kol is a direct tribute to the kitchen centerpiece: a charcoal oven which gives food an aromatic smoky flavor. The oven is used for steaks and luxury burgers, while Kol also specializes in fish dishes and a wide variety of other innovative cuisine. The owners have previously worked in some of the top eateries in London, and you can really taste it. At the same time, the place itself—with its distinctive wooden floor and huge falcon mural—is very much Icelandic in feel. Kol can be found at Skólavörðustígur 40, 101 Reykjavík. 517-7474. kolrestaurant.is

R · E · S · T · A · U · R · A · N · T · S

Dining Out in Reykjavík**AALTO BISTRO**

The elegant AALTO Bistro, inside Reykjavík's Nordic House, is known for its true New Nordic style. Its renowned head chef, Sveinn Kjartansson, creates inventive dishes with fresh, local and seasonal ingredients, as diverse as a divine rhubarb-glazed cod with Shitake mushrooms in a herb white wine sauce; rack of lamb with crispy Parma ham, smoked garlic and apple cranberry salad; and succulent duck breast salad with roasted almonds and pomegranates, served with delicate fig vinaigrette.

The menu also offers vegan options, as well as decadent desserts like skyr cake with vanilla, white chocolate and raspberry-rhubarb sauce. Dine at this architecturally significant building, designed by Finn Alvar Aalto, and sample the best of Icelandic cuisine.

The Nordic House, Sturlugata 5, 101 Reykjavík 551 0200. aalto.is

**SAKEBARINN**

Takebarinn specializes in serving fresh, delicious and affordable food in the heart of downtown Reykjavík. Guests can find classic sushi rolls like California and spicy tuna, as well as imaginative rolls like surf n' turf that includes soft-shell crab, garlic and avocado, topped with beef, coriander and ginger aioli.

The restaurant carries the country's largest selection of sake, including its own fruit sake in three flavors that can be enjoyed on its own, or as part of a yummy cocktail.

Takebarinn also offers a range of starters, grilled sticks, sashimi and desserts to please every palate. There are options for vegetarians, vegans and those with a gluten intolerance. There's something for everyone at Takebarinn!

Laugavegur 2, 101 Reykjavík, 777-3311. sakebarinn.is

**ICELANDIC FISH & CHIPS**

The humble cod just got trendy. Icelandic Fish & Chips, a self-styled 'organic bistro' by Reykjavík's harbor, has garnered a loyal following since it opened in 2006. It's obvious what this simple eatery, with both eat-in and take-away service, features on its menu. But it's the details that make it so popular. The fish itself, not just cod but catfish, haddock, plaice or whatever the fisherman has just hauled in, is battered in spelt and barley flour and cooked in canola oil, rich in Omega 3 fatty acids. The chips are Maldon-salted wedges of baked potatoes, cooked in olive oil and herbs. And instead of fat-laden tartar sauce, patrons can choose from a variety of skyronnaises—creamy dips made from Icelandic skyr. Those interested in a larger meal will enjoy both whatever rich soup of the day is on offer (served with spelt bread and hummus), and the whipped skyr and berry dessert, served in a champagne flute. This is healthy, tasty food at a good price in a charming environment. Tryggvagata 11, 101 Reykjavík. 511-1118. fishandchips.is

R · E · S · T · A · U · R · A · N · T · S

Dining Out in Reykjavík**PERLAN**

Perlan (“The Pearl”) restaurant offers a unique dining experience. The 25-meter-high restaurant features panoramic views of Reykjavík, with the restaurant floor slowly rotating, making a full turn every two hours. The food, however, is the main event. The chefs take great care to buy fresh and local food and make everything from scratch. Guests can expect scrumptious seasonal vegetables, tender local lamb and fresh fish, including cod, ling, monkfish, flounder, salmon and trout. One of Perlan’s specialties is its tasty langoustine soup, which is not to be missed. Visit Perlan for quality food, a relaxed atmosphere and a dynamite view of Reykjavík. Located on Öskjuhlíð, 105 Reykjavík. 562-0200. perlan.is

**REYKJAVÍK FISH RESTAURANT**

After a stroll around the lively Reykjavík harbor, what better way to harbor the atmosphere than to feast on fresh Icelandic fish, served simply and deliciously? The ocean-related photos and kitsch give the family-friendly and fairly-priced Reykjavík Fish Restaurant the feel of an old fisherman’s home. Its name is straightforward and so is the food—as an old fisherman would have it—no fuss, no frills, just good fish. Its trademark is fish and chips, freshly-caught cod in batter or breadcrumbs, with three types of fries and five different sauces, all equally tasty. You can also order other seafood dishes—and in the case of someone in your company not liking fish—chicken or salad. Reykjavík Fish Restaurant is located in the harbor area at Tryggvagata 8, 101 Reykjavík. 578-5656. reykjavikfish.is

**LEBOWSKI BAR**

Yes, the clue’s in the name. This is a bar devoted to the 1998 cult movie, *The Big Lebowski*. Strange to base a bar on a box office disappointment, you might say—but that would be missing the point. Like the movie, the Lebowski bar has found a place in people’s hearts and become a true cult classic.

Maybe it’s the American diner-like décor with all the clever attention to detail. Maybe it’s that there’s plenty of space (a bit of a rarity in Reykjavík bars). Perhaps it’s the real bowling alley. Or the regular events, including karaoke, open mic, quiz and more. It’s most likely all of the above.

You don’t need to have seen the movie to appreciate a very cool establishment with an extensive, good value and tasty menu and an inexhaustible selection of milkshakes, cocktails and white Russian variants. But if you do happen to love the movie, you’ll love the Lebowski Bar even more. Located at Laugavegur 20a, 101 Reykjavík. 552-2300. lebowski.is

R · E · S · T · A · U · R · A · N · T · S

Dining Out in Reykjavík**APOTEK**

Brewing an Icelandic/Euro/Argentinian storm, the new Apotek Kitchen+Bar is proving a big hit on the Reykjavík food scene. *Apótek* is the Icelandic word for ‘pharmacy’; the late-19th-century restaurant building was for decades the headquarters of the nation’s pharmacy and state pharmacist. Apotek highlights fresh fish and local ingredients—fish of the day is a rewarding choice, likewise the charcoal-grilled salmon with beech mushrooms and a smoky broth—while free-range lamb is also available. If you’re feeling adventurous, go for the special six-course gourmet menu, including one of Apotek’s very own pastry chef’s inspired desserts. Don’t forget to have a drink at Apotek’s lively bar, where award-winning ‘pharmacists’ mix exquisite cocktails to suit every mood.

Austurstræti 16, 101 Reykjavík . 551-0011. apotekrestaurant.is

**TAPAS BARINN**

A place bursting with the delicious smells and flavors of both the traditional Spanish and the best of Icelandic tapas, Tapas Barinn is a ray of sunshine in downtown Reykjavík. The restaurant’s extensive menu contains over 50 dishes to suit all tastes. A must-try is the Icelandic gourmet feast, which starts with a shot of the infamous national spirit, *brennivín*, and is followed by six delicious Icelandic tapas, such as puffin with blueberry and *brennivín* sauce and minke whale with cranberry and malt sauce. Other popular dishes include Icelandic lamb, sea trout and lobster tails, and no feast is complete without a delicious dessert; go for the white chocolate skyr mousse with passion fruit.

Vesturgötu 3b, 101 Reykjavík. 551-2344. tapas.is

**JÓMFRÚIN**

If Gallup were to poll Reykjavíkians about their favorite Danish open-face sandwich restaurant, Jómfrúin would win hands down. Walk down Lækjargata at lunchtime, peek through Jómfrúin’s windows and see for yourself: the restaurant that is a little touch of Denmark is packed. “It’s popular because of Iceland’s relationship to Denmark,” says Jakob E. Jakobsson, the restaurant’s owner, referring to Iceland’s former status as a Danish colony. “We have quick service, great food, and the location is good.” Don’t take Jakob’s word for it. Try it yourself, but make sure to order the H.C. Andersen: rye bread with crisp bacon, liver pâté, port aspic, horseradish and the ubiquitous butter, spread across most of Jómfrúin’s open-face sandwiches.

Lækjargata 4, 101 Reykjavík. 551-0100. jomfruin.is

R · E · S · T · A · U · R · A · N · T · S

Dining Out in Hafnarfjörður and Reykjanes**VOCAL RESTAURANT & BAR**

Located inside Park Inn by Radisson in Keflavík, Vocal is a first-class restaurant and stylish hotel bar. Boasting excellent service and offering a variety of dishes from the finest, freshest ingredients in sophisticated surroundings, Vocal is an ideal lunch or dinner venue for both hotel guests, other visitors and locals. The relaxing lounge on the ground floor serves coffee, snacks and light meals throughout the day. The breakfast buffet includes favorites like Belgian waffles and early bird options for those with morning flights. Offering quality wines and a selection of local and international beers and spirits, the inviting hotel bar is the perfect place to relax and enjoy a drink after a long day. Opening hours: À-la-carte: 11:30- 21:30; lounge: 11:30-23:00; breakfast buffet: 5:00-10:00; happy hour 17:00-19:00. Hafnargata 57, 230 Reykjanesbær. 421-5222. parkinn.com/airport-hotel-keflavik

**LAVA RESTAURANT**

Built into a lava plateau on the banks of the Blue Lagoon, Lava is an extraordinary setting to experience the sensational delights of New Nordic cuisine. À-la-carte offerings include starters, such as torched Arctic char, Icelandic taco trio and langoustine soup. Main courses include rack of lamb, cod and grilled beef ribeye. On Lava's lunch menu you'll find beer-cooked blue mussels from Reykjanes peninsula, plaice and king crab, grilled beef tenderloin and fish of the day from the harbor at Grindavík—a town just 4 km (2.5 miles) from the Blue Lagoon. Whether you seek the full spectrum of the Blue Lagoon's enchantments, or simply a fantastic meal in the heart of a breathtaking landscape, Lava Restaurant is unforgettable.

Svartsengi, 240 Grindavík. 420-8800.

bluelagoon.com/lava-restaurant

**FJÖRUKRÁIN**

Visit Hafnarfjörður and you can't miss the Viking Village and its beautiful old-style wooden buildings which house a hotel and two restaurants. The restaurants Fjörugarðurinn and Valhalla are interconnected and can seat up to 500 guests. Both offer à la carte menus and set menus for groups. The menu has a Viking flair and includes Iceland's famous sheep head and *þorramatur* (often pickled or putrefied winter 'delicacies'). Luckily the Vikings were also famous for their steaks, and the menu includes fish dishes, pasta and more. Fjörugarðurinn is decorated with wood carvings, stuffed birds, fish tanks and hide-covered seats, while Valhalla is smaller and cozier, with space for about 40 guests. The kitchen is open daily from 6 pm to 10 pm and there's usually live entertainment, with hordes of Vikings and Valkyries jaunting about, singing. Groups love being 'victims' of Viking raids, but they have to book, unlike a thousand years ago...

Vikingastræti 1-3, 220 Hafnarfirði. 565-1213. fjorukrain.is

R · E · S · T · A · U · R · A · N · T · S

Dining Out in the West**RJÚKANDI**

In rural West Iceland, you'll find a culinary surprise at the sustainable and eco-friendly Rjúkandi Hotel and Restaurant. Re-opening as a family business in 2013, a restaurant has been operated on the premises for 70 years. Rjúkandi serves homemade bread and cakes, hearty lunches and delicious dinners with seasonal local ingredients and a Mediterranean twist. The fish of the day varies: cod, salmon, catfish, trout... whatever catch is freshest. The blue mussels are cultivated in Breiðafjörður bay and the meat comes from neighboring farms. Also the greens are locally-grown. A welcome break from the usual roadside diners, Rjúkandi café is open daily from 10 am-6 pm and at the restaurant from 6 pm-9:30 pm. The opening hours change during the off-season.

Rjúkandi, Vegamót, Snæfellsnes. 788-9100. rjukandi.com

**THE SETTLEMENT CENTER**

The Borgarnes Settlement Center (Landnámssetur Íslands) is not only home to a fun, informative and interactive museum, but also a bright and spacious restaurant that serves some of the best food in Borgarnes, West Iceland. The family-friendly restaurant offers a relaxed environment with friendly staff, high-quality food, reasonable prices and a menu that has something for everyone. Guests can choose from a range of traditional Icelandic dishes, like *plokkfiskur* (a creamy mashed fish stew), lamb, fresh fish, mussels and lobster. The menu also includes pasta dishes and hamburgers, light refreshments, homemade cakes and vegetarian options—not to mention a popular lunch buffet that features fresh soups and salads, as well as homemade bread.

Brákarbraut 13-15, 310 Borgarnes. 437-1600. landnam.is

**SJÁVARPAKKHÚSIÐ**

Sjávarpakkhúsið, inside an over-100-year-old former warehouse down by the Stykkishólmur docks, serves fresh local seafood with an authentic fishing town atmosphere on the side. The menu includes blue mussels from Breiðafjörður bay, and pan-fried fish of the day, which varies depending on the catch brought in by local fishermen, right outside the restaurant's windows. The menu ranges from traditional Icelandic everyday dishes, such as *plokkfiskur*, a fish-and-potato stew with a twist, to Italian-inspired seafood pasta, and from the casual fish burger with a special herb mayonnaise, to the fine-dining option of plaice. The menu also includes vegetarian alternatives, as well as tempting starters—the cured cod is a must-try—and sweet treats for dessert.

Hafnargata 2, 340 Stykkishólmur. 438-1800. sjavarpakkhusid.is

R · E · S · T · A · U · R · A · N · T · S

Dining Out in the South**FJÖRUBORÐIÐ**

Lobster. That's what the dining experience at Fjöruborðið ('The Seashore') is all about, where Icelandic lobster, or langoustine, is served delicately grilled and drizzled with melted herb butter and a spritz of lemon. As a starter, its flavor infuses the delicate creaminess of the lobster soup, the self-proclaimed 'Best in the Republic of Iceland.' Although you can also find a tender lamb filet and crispy vegetable tarte on the main course menu, lobster is what makes this cozy eatery in the seaside village of Stokkseyri, 60 km (37 miles) from Reykjavík, so popular with locals and visitors alike.

Eyrarybraut 3a, 825 Stokkseyri. 483-1550. fjorubordid.is

**RAUÐA HÚSIÐ**

Step back in time and enjoy modern Icelandic and international cuisine in a setting rich in history. Rauða Húsið ('The Red House') is countryside fine dining at its best. Located in a historical house in the 19th century trading hub of Eyrbakkí on the south coast, it's a stop not to be missed on your tour of the Golden Circle or south coast. We specialize in seafood delivered directly from the fishermen, including the finest langoustine in Iceland, although our varied menu also includes Icelandic lamb, other meat and vegetarian dishes, sumptuous desserts and coffee drinks. Top off your lunch or dinner with a stroll down the seaside path just across the street from the restaurant.

Búðarstígur 4, 820 Eyrbakkí. 483-3330. raudahusid.is

**HUMARHÖFNIN**

When you dine by the docks of Iceland's lobster-fishing capital, you know you're in for a treat. The charming seafood restaurant Humarhöfnin is situated in a historical building, which used to be the co-op for farmers and fishermen in Höfn, a Southeast Iceland fishing village with the breathtaking backdrop of Vatnajökull glacier. Open year-round, the restaurant specializes in langoustine (as the lobster caught off Iceland is called), which has a unique sweet taste. Grilled in butter and garlic, Humarhöfnin's lobster is to die for. The seafood, potatoes and herbs all come from the Hornafjörður area, and lamb from East Iceland and farmed Arctic char from the South also feature on the menu. Humarhöfnin vows to make every meal a beautiful experience you will not soon forget.

Hafnarbraut 4, 780 Höfn. 478-1200 humarhofnin.is

Dining Out in the East**HILDIBRAND HOTEL**

With a view of Norðfjörður fjord and mountain Hellisfjarðarmúli on the other side, Hildibrand is the latest addition to atmospheric East Iceland fishing town Neskaupstaður's cultural life. The beautiful boutique apartment hotel is located in the town's old co-op store and to honor its legacy the in-house restaurant, Kaupfélagsbarinn, is named and themed after it. The menu, highlighting ingredients from the East Fjords, offers everything from light bistro meals, to mouthwatering sushi, fresh fish dishes and juicy hamburgers and steaks; not to forget sinfully tempting desserts made from skyr, chocolate and ice cream. Respecting tradition, older locals function as consultants at Mjólkurstöðin, the hotel's food workshop, which doubles as a gourmet store. Staff love playing around with food—and guests are welcome to join them.

Hafnarbraut 2, 740 Neskaupstaður. 477-1950. hildibrand.com

**MÓÐIR JÖRÐ ORGANIC FARM SHOP & RESTAURANT**

Móðir Jörð is an organic farm that produces premium Icelandic vegetarian food at Vallanes in East Iceland, between Egilsstaðir and Hallormsstaður. The farm is known for its barley and wide range of vegetables, offered to restaurants across Iceland. The new Móðir Jörð farm shop and restaurant is located in a new cottage built with wood from the farm. The menu offers healthy meals using the farm's wholegrain for breakfast and lunch with fresh seasonal ingredients harvested from the surrounding fields. Móðir Jörð is open for organic breakfast and snacks from 8 am to 6 pm, Monday to Saturday, May to October (closed for the winter). The farm is the perfect destination for people seeking a variety of fresh, organic produce and wholesome specialty food products.

Vallanes, 701 Egilsstaðir. 471-1747. vallanes.is

**L'ABRI**

In the friendly fishing village of Fáskrúðsfjörður, you'll find L'Abri, an exquisite restaurant serving fresh local fish, game and other Icelandic dishes with a French twist. L'Abri (meaning 'shelter' in French) is the restaurant for Fosshotel Eastfjords, located inside a beautifully-renovated building; originally a hospital for French fishermen dating back to 1904. A museum about the French fishermen—now inside the hotel—was originally established by local Albert Eiríksson, where he served his homemade rhubarb pie. He gave his recipe to L'Abri, where the pie remains a big hit. The hotel's private pier is an ideal place to have lunch—or cake and coffee—on a sunny day, whereas the cozy lounge with a fireplace and panel wall from the old hospital tempts as winter falls.

Hafnargata 11-14, 750 Fáskrúðsfjörður. 470-4070. fosshotel.is

R · E · S · T · A · U · R · A · N · T · S

Dining Out in the North**RUB 23**

In the heart of Akureyri, North Iceland, lies the unique restaurant Rub23, owned and operated by one of Iceland's most renowned chefs, Einar Geirsson. Specializing in seafood, the menu offers a wide variety of fish and sushi dishes, as well as juicy steaks and delicious desserts. What makes the restaurant unique is the homemade spice mixtures customers can choose from, so-called rubs, which are either sprinkled on or rubbed into the food. The customer first chooses a particular ingredient, fish or meat, and then a rub. The menu also includes the chef's favorite combinations. Funky, fresh and full of flavor, make sure to dine at Rub23 the next time you're in Akureyri.

Kaupvangsstræti 6, 600 Akureyri. 462-2223. rub23.is

**HANNES BOY**

Hannes Boy Café is a restaurant down by the marina in Siglufjörður, North Iceland. The restaurant is popular with locals and tourists alike due to its splendid view of both the surrounding mountains and the harbor where fishermen routinely haul in the catch of the day. Open during the summer months, Hannes Boy provides patrons with a cozy and romantic atmosphere and offers them a unique glimpse into the herring era of Icelandic history. Guests dine in an old renovated fishery, while sitting on chairs crafted out of antique barrels. Eating at Hannes Boy is an authentic and unforgettable Icelandic experience.

Gránugata 23, 580 Siglufjörður. 467-1550. hannesboy.is

**MÚLABERG BISTRO & BAR**

Located at the historical Hótel Kea in downtown Akureyri, Múlberg is a welcome addition to the North Iceland capital's restaurant scene; not least for its spacious outdoor seating area and daily happy hour at the bar. Open 11 am to 10 pm, Múlberg serves as a bistro, as well as accommodating fine diners, with a diverse and tempting menu. Inspired by French, Italian and Danish cuisine, Múlberg highlights Icelandic ingredients, offering everything from the fish of the day and juicy steaks to sandwiches with a special twist, cooked up by head chef Haukur Gröndal. The idea is to mix luxury and—whenever possible—local ingredients, with everyday food, such as the Galloway hamburger with truffle mayonnaise, Tindur cheese and apple ketchup. The combination is surprising and absolutely delicious.

Austurstræti 16, 600 Akureyri. 460-2020. mulaberg.is