

Inaugural Season - Wild & Secret Iceland

From **5/8/2020**
to **12/8/2020**

Ship: **LE BELLOT**

From **Reykjavík**
to **Reykjavík**



Be among the first to sail aboard *Le Bellot*, one of the latest additions to the PONANT fleet, and discover **Iceland's** secret and authentic landscapes during a **brand-new 8-day expedition cruise**.

On **the edge of the Arctic**, between vast glaciers, vertiginous fjords, volcanoes and boiling geysers, **Iceland** offers a kaleidoscope of wild and romantic landscapes. On the peninsula of the **Snæfellsjökull National Park**, you will sail close to the rugged coastline of basaltic rocks, overlooked by the magnificent **Snæfel** volcano.

In the fjords of the north-west, you will be able to hike through the heart of the **Hornstrandir Nature Reserve**. This completely isolated region will unveil its sublime landscapes to you, from sandy beaches and turquoise waters to vertiginous cliffs and natural warm water pools.

In the north of Iceland, you will cross the **Arctic Circle** and will have the opportunity to observe the **whales, orcas, seals and Atlantic puffins** that live in this remote region. You will explore the **East Fjords**, one of the wildest regions of Iceland where the diversity of landscapes is a constant source of wonder. You will cruise along deep fjords surrounded by sheer cliffs, discover a jagged coastline with beaches of black sand set against a mountainous backdrop, and of course hot springs and waterfalls. The unique and grandiose scenery will also enchant bird lovers.

To the south, in the heart of Iceland's largest ice cap, the glaciers of the **Vatnajökull National Park** calve **icebergs** that the currents carry away to run aground on the beach. The contrast between these blue icebergs and the black volcanic beaches is strikingly beautiful.

We are privileged guests in these remote lands where we are at the mercy of weather, ice, tidal and current conditions. Landings on certain sites and the observation of certain wildlife cannot be guaranteed. They vary from day to day, making each PONANT cruise a unique experience. The Captain and the Expedition Leader will make every effort to ensure that your experience is as rich as possible, while complying with the safety rules and instructions imposed by the AECO.



The information in this document is valid as of 11/8/2020

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YOUR STOPOVERS :

REYKJAVÍK

Embarkation 5/8/2020 from 16h00 to 17h00

Departure 5/8/2020 at 18h00

Iceland's capital stretches along the edge of a vast bay in the west of the country. **Perlan**, the "Pearl of Reykjavík", a museum located on 'Oskjuhlíð hill, offers a panoramic view of the lush, green landscapes. A little further, one can easily spot the signpost showing the way to the evangelical **Hallgrímskirkja** church, and to the historical centre where one can stroll along the Skólavörðustígur and the Laugavegur, two lively streets with charming small shops. For some relaxation just outside of the city, visitors have the opportunity to visit the Reykjanes peninsula and its famous thermal lagoons of the **Blue Lagoon**.

SNAEFELLSJÖKULL NATIONAL PARK

Arrival 6/8/2020

Departure 6/8/2020

Snæfellsjökull National Park is located on the **Snæfellsnes** Peninsula in the far west of Iceland. **Snæfellsjökull** is a **stratovolcano**, born of several successive volcanic eruptions, whose lava flows have shaped the surrounding landscape and coastline. Its majestic silhouette, covered by an ice cap, culminates at 1446 meters. Jules Verne located its summit at the entrance to the centre of the Earth in his "Journey to the Centre of the Earth". You will sail as close as possible to the cliffs of **Londrangar** and will land on black pebble beaches formed between lava flows. In this natural sanctuary, the landscapes shaped by volcanic activity host a rich biodiversity as well as an infinite source of wonder.

HORNSTRANDIR NATURE RESERVE

Arrival 7/8/2020

Departure 7/8/2020

Located in the northernmost part of the Western Fjords, **Hornstrandir Nature Reserve** is one of the most remote areas in Iceland. Uninhabited since the 1950s, it is accessible only by sea. The relief of this coast sculpted by the elements promises wonderful walks in the heart of an exceptional nature: **sandy beaches with turquoise waters, dizzying basalt cliffs** and **natural pools** of warm water. Here, nature is king and many species, such as **birds, arctic foxes or seals**, multiply in peace and quiet. You will be dazzled by the vast and beautiful landscapes of this wild and virgin setting.

GRÍMSEY

Arrival 8/8/2020
Departure 8/8/2020

Grimsey is the northernmost island of Iceland surging from the Arctic ocean, with the Arctic circle running through the island. Its contrasted contours are surprising. From **Grimseyjarhreppur**, the island's only town located on the west coast, then heading due south, you can take in the beauty of the hillsides, lushly carpeted with moss and grass. On the rest of the coastline, imposing **basalt cliffs** inhabited by sea birds stand proud.

EASTFJORDS

Arrival 9/8/2020
Departure 9/8/2020

EastFjords are part of the wildest and most unspoiled areas of Iceland. Here, various glaciations have carved out the **volcanic plateaus** that have eroded over the millennia, carving valleys and creating long, majestic **fjords** into which the sea intrudes. This slow metamorphosis has created sublime landscapes that you will be able to observe in all their diversity: **basalt cliffs** plunging into the sea, **waterfalls** with crystal clear waters, **black sand volcanic beaches**, **alpine reliefs**, **hot springs**. In this remote area, birds such as puffins have found refuge in a rich ecosystem. Here, nature is written in capital letters.

VATNAJÖKULL NATIONAL PARK

Arrival 10/8/2020
Departure 10/8/2020

In the south of Iceland, **Vatnajökull National Park** lies at the heart of Iceland's largest ice cap. Classified as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**, it is the **largest national park in Europe**. Here you will discover the combined work of rivers, ice, volcanic and geothermal activity that has given rise to rich and varied landscapes such as lava fields, waterfalls, craters, basaltic organs and glaciers. On the glacial lagoon of **Jökulsárlón**, the glaciers calve **icebergs** that the currents carry towards the ocean through a small channel and run aground on the beach. You can admire the beauty of these **blue icebergs** on the **black volcanic beaches**, the contrast of which calls for intense amazement.

VESTMANNAEYJAR

Arrival 11/8/2020
Departure 11/8/2020

The Westman Islands were formed from a succession of underwater eruptions and consist of 15 islands and around 30 islets. As you will discover, Heimaey has a rich history and captivating landscapes. Dominated by the Eldfjall, it's the only island in the chain that is inhabited. This exceptional site has a very pronounced relief taking in vertiginous cliffs, reefs, sea caves, and surf. Raise your eyes and you will be able to admire the spectacular dives of the Gannets.

REYKJAVÍK

Arrival 12/8/2020 early morning
Disembarkation 12/8/2020 at 06h30

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