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Haukur's 9th Editorial!

Not THE BEST editorial, but still alright



We finally got around to making our BEST OF REYKJAVÍK edition. In fact, it is the one you're browsing through at this very moment. This issue is therefore different from pretty much every issue we've done in our six years of being a magazine. For once, it's almost all positive! All peppy ramblings about the stuff we like, love and/or adore. And isn't that nice for a change? We all could do with some of that, I feel.

Oh, it's still similar in a lot of ways. As per usual, it's made of paper and it has pretty pictures and a bunch of text. There's the usual music reviews, a couple of steady columns, travel articles and some minor ranting here and there. But for the most part, it's devoted to the cause of sharing our thoughts on what we appreciate about the good city of Reykjavík.

We explain how we reached these conclusions elsewhere in the issue, but

let me assert that it was by no means an easy task. There is a lot of stuff out we love in Reykjavík, and there is a lot of stuff we feel you should know about and try for yourself if you haven't already. Of course, we couldn't fit it all in, and of course we didn't agree on everything. But it's still a pretty good list, we are proud of it and we hope it truly reflects some of the very best Reykjavík has to offer in this day and age.

So go out, enjoy. Life is pretty good. And write us lots of letters if you disagree. We love all your letters.

PS – have any of you guys checked out the new hidden "heart square" behind Laugavegur, by the old Hljómaland lot? It's awesome.

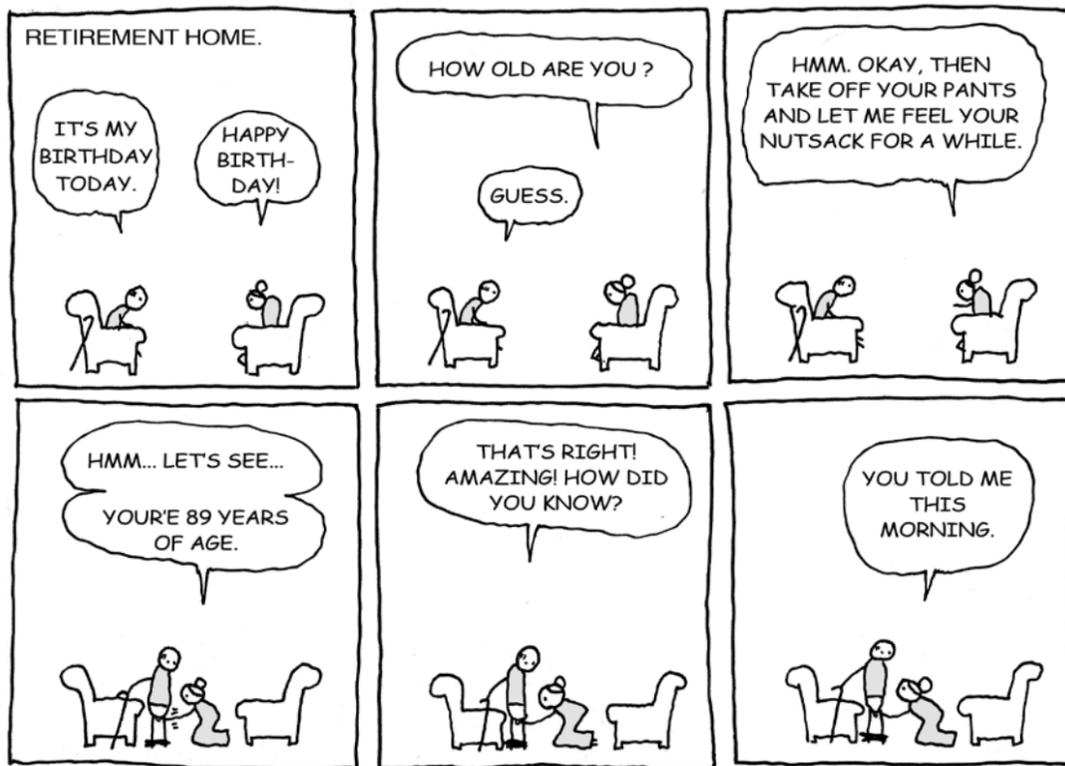
More comix! Yes, there's more comix in this issue! Check out page 32 for another instalment of *Nicelanders*.

Comic strips

– by Lóa Hjálmtýsdóttir



– by Hugleikur Dagsson



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You may not like it, but at least it's not sponsored. (No articles in the Reykjavík Grapevine are pay-for articles. The opinions expressed are the writers' own, not the advertisers'.)



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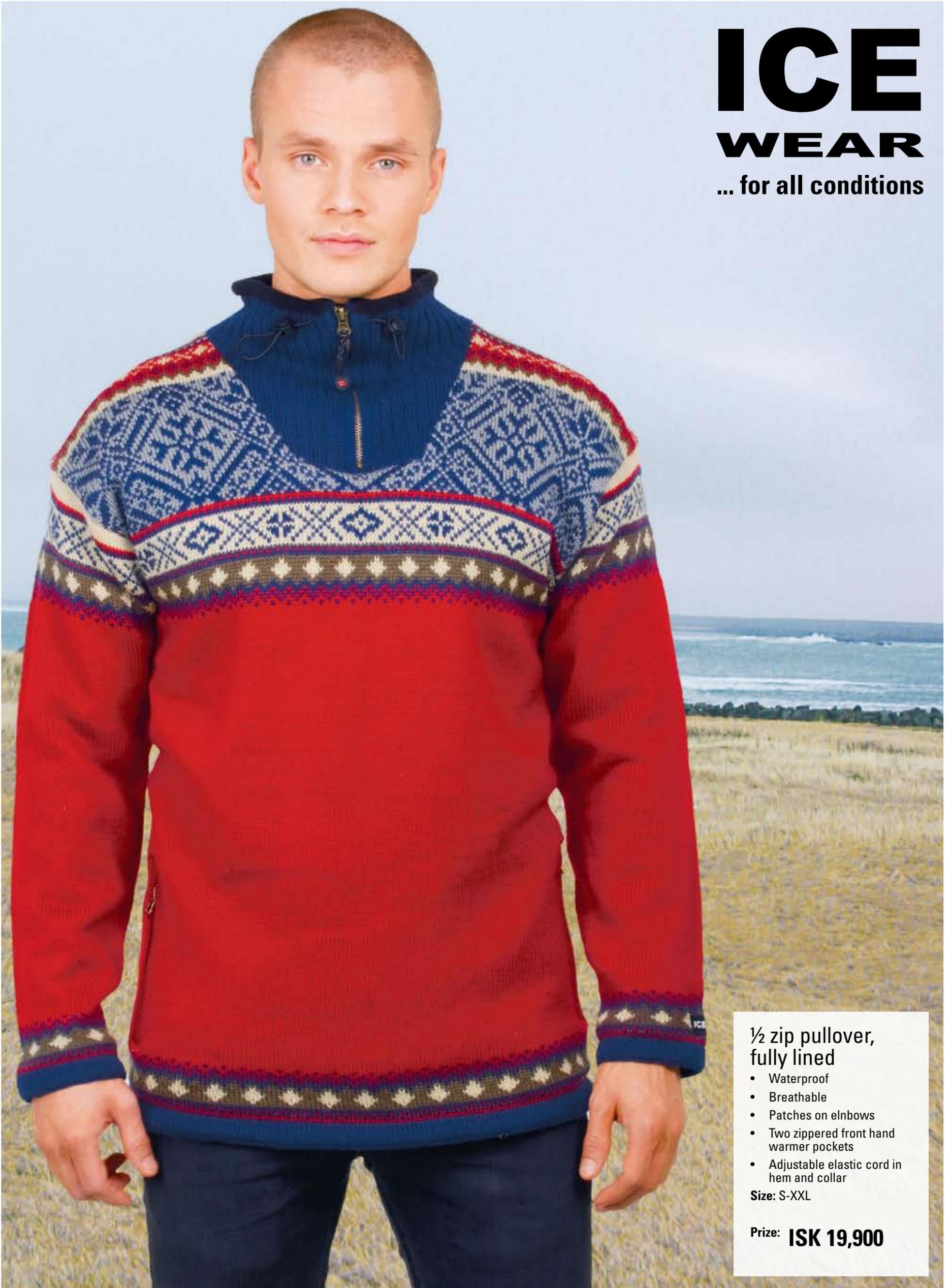
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Sour grapes and stuff

Say your piece, voice your opinion, send your letters to letters@grapevine.is

4 Letters

Iceland has become a poor wild courageous island for the diehards. Most of foreign residents are gone, some Icelanders are too, or planning to be next fall. Of course, the tourists now occupy Iceland. I am wondering how an Icelandic airline company in crisis can actually offer such promotional flights to come to Iceland. Oh! I see... they decrease prices for foreign customers but increase massively the cost of plane tickets for Iceland residents. That's why I am stuck here now. Not that I want to leave... I could use a bit of a foreign holiday sunray on my white skin that's all. Anyway, tourists are invading the countries, are bringing tons of foreign currencies in their luggage and are buying, buying, buying. All sorts of stuff. Tourism generates a new life to some of the companies being out of breath after the financial crisis. Which is good. Money flowing. Well, as an employee and not an employer, I can just enjoy this fact and go back to bed crying because what is happening to ME is different. What is happening to US is different. We end up paying more taxes to make the government able to fill the national budget gap and pay back our friends from the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. We end up waiting forever for a well-deserved pay rise. We end up paying more and more for imported products. Our buying power is decreasing every single day.

Well, I would feel better if I knew that Iceland is definitely refusing the payment loans that the Netherlands and the United Kingdom grant to Iceland. These unrealistic payment plans are made to be failed. Clearly, if the Dutch and the British wanted their money back, they would do everything in their power to make it happen. Well, they don't. They aim simply our failure. Why? Because in case of non-payment, the UK and the Netherlands are entitled to take over assets held by the Icelandic state.

Anything else? Yes, in fact there is something else. Not to mention the people is broke and the country is being owned by foreign forces, the nation is about to lose itself in the deep swamp of The European Union. The poor and desperate (but rich and attractive in resources!) nation of Iceland begging for a membership to one of the biggest super-powers in the world? What a bargain for Europe! So here I am, asking. What are you becoming Iceland? PS: By the way, our puffins are dying... Bangsi

Dear Bangsi,

thank you for your thoughtful, rambling letter.

I do agree, the current situation Iceland is now facing sucks very hard, on all sorts of levels. But let's not dwell on it, right? We don't need no stinkin' money to have a good time. We have one another, our friends, family, all that crazy, beautiful nature. And the weather's actually been kinda nice these past couple of days.

Oh, I know there's a lot of cause for concern.

Sour grape of the month

A case of POLAR BEER for your thoughts.

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Now, since we're real pleasant and giving folks here at the Grapevine, we thought we'd share some of that wonderful POLAR BEER with you, our readers. Henceforth, until the end of days (or our Polar Beer- sponsorship program, whichever comes first), we will reward one MOST EXCELLENT LETTER with a case of the Polar Beer. You read right. A full case of beer. At your disposal.

Give us your worst: letters@grapevine.is



MOST AWESOME LETTER:

Hello you all people from the Grapevine and not, from here or there, well Iceland is a small place, so it occurred to me to write a message here, maybe word of mouth would help me get my beloved bicycle back.

I am absolutely GUTTED. Saturday the 27th at 5.20 as I was in the Vinbud, somebody went off with MY bicycle. I still can't believe it. It's surreal. Sure, it's my "fault", I should have locked it. But this is ICELAND for Christ's sake! You don't lock your bike when you go into the freaking vinbud for 5 minutes! It's the country where people leave their babies in their prams outside shops whilst they have a coffee, sjit man!

I'm still hoping this is all a mistake, because the other (shitty) also red bicycle, which is too big for me and has no front brakes was parked not far from mine and also unlocked, so he may have taken mine inadvertently. Only if he who took it has half a brain, he will have noticed pretty soon that suddenly he could reach the pedals much better... so the more time goes by, the less I believe in that.

Yet it would comfort me to know that Iceland is not going to the dogs, like all these other freaking countries where you have to watch your stuff wherever you go.

So if you hear a funny story about a guy who took a bike for his in front of vinbud, let me know.

And if YOU, who took it, don't want to go to hell and/or be cursed, you and your descendants over the next 10 generations (at least), and lose a big fat load of good karma, just bring it back!!!! I want it back NOW, rather desperately.

Emma - cdgl2005-gl@yahoo.fr

Dear Emma,

you know, people don't really like stealing babies in Iceland. But bikes are a whole different ballpark. After having a bunch of bikes stolen from me over the past decade (one was even stolen twice - beat that!) I have learned that you simply do not leave it unlocked or attended never ever. Ever.

So I agree with you, your bike being stolen was your fault. But this will all be for the best. In the immortal words of Alanis Morissette: "You live, you learn, etc." Hope the free beer helps you accept your loss. At least you won't have to go to Vínubúð this weekend.

Let's do something about it, and let's enjoy a constructive summer. We're gonna build something this summer.

22. June
Flókadalur
Skagafjörður

To whom it may concern,

I read an article in your last issue about the band Dátar, taken from the book 'Eru ekki allir í stuði' by Dr. Gunní. Dr. of what? It sure as shit ain't journalism pal.

I myself, being a drummer, am used to being boycotted in photos and reviews but at least Mr. Gunní mentioned that Stefán, drummer of Dátar, fell victim to cancer in 1992. That's the only thing he had to say about one of Iceland's most treasured drummer?

Yesterday I went to Siglufjörður, Stefán's old stomping ground, for research and to this day he is still held a hero there. A big photo of him hangs on the wall of the only local pool parlor. I find it very amateurish of Mr. Gunní to fail to mention in his book, maybe it's there but at least it's not in the draft you printed in the magazine, that Stefán, the drummer of Dátar, is the father of Björn Stefánsson, the drummer of Mínus and according to Metal Hammer magazine voted the fourth best drummer in the world in 2004, if I remember the year correctly.

To this day Björn uses his fathers drum kit. I find that fact in it's own has plenty of journalistic romanticism. To me, Mr. Gunní's

failure is another fine example of the dry rot of journalism as we know it. Other examples being for instance the hordes of unqualified photographers many of fine magazines (yours included) send to concerts for documentation. I've seen the fuckers enter a concert, go to the front, lift up their camera and shoot blindly for a minute before leaving the premises.

Where is the passion, where are the guts, where did journalistic integrity go, for fucks sake? This would definitely not have happened had Arnar Eggert Thoroddsen (our very own Lester Bangs) written the book.

I recommend Mr. Gunní shapes up his act or goes back to the drawing board and writes a follow up to his most succesful hit 'The fart song'.

Sincerely, Dr. Frosti Jón Runólfsson

Dr Gunní Responds:

I thank Mr. Frosti for his fine epilogue to my tiny Dátar article. Had I written a 732-word article about The Beatles, I'm sure Mr. Frosti would have written in to tell me about my horrible failure in not mentioning Zach Starkey. I of course second Mr. Frosti's opinion that Mr. Arnar Eggert is a fine journalist. As a consumers watchdog, I strongly suggest people pick up his Herculean tome on pop band manager Einar Bárðarson, Öll trixin í bókinni. It is widely available these days under the title Svínahnakki - 90% af sláttur við kassa.

Reykjavík June 2009,
Dr. Gunní



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On Michael Jackson... | The Grapevine pays respect

Remembering The King of Pop: "Rest In Peace, Icarus!"

Compiled by
Haukur S. Magnússon

Illustration
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www.breidholt.com

SINDRI ELDON

MUSICIAN, GRAPEVINE MUSIC SCRIBE

clears throat "The saddest thing about all this is of course the fact that Jackson had to die so people could remember his 25 years as a musical genius and forget his 15 years of reclusive lunacy and scandal. It is a telling statement on the media's morbid fascination with character assassination, and I sincerely hope a lesson can be learned from it."

SVEINBJÖRN PÁLSSON

TERRORDISCO, MUSICIAN, DJ

The first CD I bought was Bad by Michael Jackson. From the Facebook statuses flying around right now, a couple of hours after TMZ broke the news that he'd died, this is common with my generation. I was 8 or 9 years old, and I was about to move home from Sweden. After I moved to Iceland I went to school at Breiðholtsskóli. The school was in the middle of a shitty neighborhood, the kids were angry and mean. They liked Prince. I remember seeing a seven year old kid, going to school probably for the first time, with a proud glow on his face over his brand new Michael Jackson backpack. A group of boys my age spotted the backpack, surrounded him and started pushing him around. I decided that I wasn't gonna share my affinity for the King of Pop with anyone around. I went out and bought Prince's Batman soundtrack. It sucked, like most Prince albums. A few weeks later mom got a job in a village in the Westfjords. Bye bye Prince. There were no boys my age in there, so I mostly hung out by myself, listening to Bad, trying to

He was a genius that employed the help of many other geniuses to perfect his art. He is the black Elvis. He is one of the most famous entertainers on Earth, and will become immortal now

read German pop magazines (for some reason, no English pop magazines were sold in Ísafjörður but plenty of German ones). After the winter we moved back and that fall MJ released Dangerous, Michael's first album after he stopped working with Quincy Jones. It was terrible. Soon I discovered Nirvana, KLF and Rave music.

I'd been an aspiring DJ since the age of 13. I started playing out at 20, and I soon rediscovered Michael. Many of his songs worked dancefloor wonders. His music fit into almost any kind of set. His dancefloor magnum opus was Billie Jean. For the first two years I played in bars, there was rarely a night that I didn't drop Billie into the set. It was just too tempting. Even after I'd tired of it, I'd put it on just to watch the shock of excitement it sent through the room, or to lift up my set if it hit a low point. It's the perfect dancefloor song. I've never found anything like it. Instantly accessible, yet completely free of any cheesy elements. Not one inessential flourish in the whole damn thing.

In the 90s, Mike's self destructive tendencies spiraled out of control. His legion of fans, most of my generation, mostly dealt with this in the same way. We let him go, wrote him off. So the news of his demise came as little shock. The most shocking thing was probably how little it shocked me. We'd been waiting for the other shoe to drop. He'd been looking frail and old for years. For his loved ones, the loss must feel huge and immediate. For most of his fans, we'd lost him years ago. There was always a glimmer of hope that he'd get his act together and his health, mental and physical, back. That hope is gone, and it is incredibly sad.

However, and this might sound

callous to say, but his legacy has been freed from his living spectre. His music is no longer the tainted works of a creepy suspected paedophile. Now his catalog of songs can be attributed to a fallen genius, cut down in his prime by a mixture of ill health, ill medical advice and "personal demons." For that, we are all much the richer.

you take with you, it's what you leave behind.

MUGISON
MUSICIAN

Michael Jackson influenced me greatly both as a songwriter and a singer. When I was eleven years old in Breiðholt, my friend Svenni and I listened a lot to Bad. Svenni was attending dance school at the time, to learn how to dance like Michael – my parent's didn't have money to pay for a class for me, but it didn't matter. Svenni just taught me. My dad had a nice HiFi unit and we'd blast the music and dance for one another.

A few years back, I acquired a special edition of Thriller that featured a bunch of bonus materials and some interviews with Quincy Jones. Quincy said that Michael would record himself beatboxing and humming his songs, and they would then get session players to play after that. That struck me as an awesome method of writing music, and I subsequently started using it.

BIRKIR FJALAR VÍÐARSSON
MUSICIAN

I am a metalhead. I've been a metalhead since I was 8 months old. I was at war with weak ass pop music, all my childhood. I would crush any pop artist, save for Michael Jackson. The Thriller video had enough metal in it to win me over. Bad had hard moments and he looked pretty metal on the cover, so I listened to that record. Listened hard. Dirty Diana rules.

The production values from Bad and on are incredible. Listen to all these records with your best headphones on. It will blow your mind. It's wild. When thinking about his career and what I enjoy the most I reached a surprising conclusion. What I like most are studio report interviews with the guy and behind the scene type of stuff where one can see him try out different ideas for his records. The shit he came up with is a mindfuck of the tallest order. And when

CONTINUES ON PAGE 34



RAGNAR KJARTANSSON
MUSICIAN, ARTIST

Michael Jackson flew too close to the sun. He sacrificed everything for his art, audience, and fans. His music is human creativity bordering on divinity, it is beyond taste. Those who don't like it don't understand art. He flew too close to the sun. If an artist sacrifices everything for his art, that is no joke. He didn't leave a part of himself for himself. The people were bound to reject him. Michael Jackson had the heart of an overgrown child but the creative gift of fire, brimstone and heavenly bliss. His beats! He inspires most of the pop music we hear today from Radiohead to Rihanna. His beats!

Down in Venice, I now play Mozart's Requiem over and over on an old gramophone for a great man. The pure creativity that died when the world refused its golden boy.

This story is so complicated, the darkness and the questions so many. Michael Jackson's story is one of the most epic and tragic in musical history. All those drug addicts, self-loathing teens and hard living artists who died before their time from totally mediocre causes. Their tragedy becomes mundane when we think of the prodigy, The King of Pop. Who was he? What happened?

An Albanian friend of mine, the artist Anri Sala, told me a story from his childhood under communism that emphasizes Michael's importance. Back then, all pop music was banned in Albania. A young couple was hanged for possessing Beatles records, so nobody played pop just for fun. But the echo of Michael's shining talent was strong enough so that one of Anri's classmates managed to acquire a copy of a copy of a smuggled Thriller on cassette. The whole class went to my friend's home where they soundproofed the apartment with mattresses and pillows in front of doors, windows and all cracks so the neighbours would not notice the crime. They all sat in silence and darkness, grouped around a small cassette player. Suddenly, the bass line of Billy Jean filled the room with exploding sounds of divinity, sex and future.

Rest in peace Icarus.



BJÖRGVIN HALLDÓRSSON,
MUSICIAN, LEGEND

He was a genius that employed the help of many other geniuses to perfect his art. He is the black Elvis. He is one of the most famous entertainers on Earth, and will become immortal now after his death. He was an artist that got trapped in his image and battled the ghosts of fame. We will live on in his art that he now leaves us. It does not matter what

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On why there are so many cats in downtown Reykjavík



In 2003, acclaimed Japanese author Haruki Murakami attended The Reykjavík International Literary Festival. The following year, he published an article about his visit in the local newspaper Morgunblaðið. He writes about puffins, how few people make up the Icelandic population, the northern lights, the vastness of the country; i.e. all the usual things. But Murakami, being a writer, also observes the little things. Walking around Reykjavík's city centre he cannot help but notice the staggering number of cats around. He also remarks on how well mannered they seem, coming when called and not being in the least afraid of strangers. And he is right, of course. 101 Reykjavík is crawling with cats. So we asked: why?

Cats vs. dogs

Everyone has heard of dog people and cat people. Supposedly, there is a debate. Supposedly, you need to pick a side and then stick to it. But what exactly are the traits of a dog person or a cat person? If you hear someone talk about how sneaky, self-centred and unreliable cats are, then that is probably a dog person (although a situation where one would need to rely upon a cat is far fetched). And if you hear another complaining about how dependent and subservient dogs are, that is most likely a cat person speaking. But is there a material difference between dog and cat persons? Well, dog persons, having to walk the dog frequently, are probably fonder of the outdoors than cat persons. And haven't you heard the saying that getting a puppy is the closest thing to having a baby? And cats are more independent, and require less attention. Cats also require a lot less space than big dogs. Dogs are also probably more expensive to keep. Plus, if you have a dog you probably want to take it places (with it being so dependent and all) and as they are not allowed on buses, you rather need to have a car.

So, to sum it up: a cat person probably does not want to be very bound by his/her pet, does not like the outdoors too much, does not have a lot of money, probably doesn't have a car and lives in a small apartment. Those familiar with the residents of 101 Reykjavík might recognise one or two of those traits.

The law-abiding citizens of the centre

Maybe the people of 101 are simply more law abiding than the rest, as keeping dogs is in fact illegal in the city of Reykjavík. Instead of applying for dog permits, people apply for exemption from the law. The good city of Reykjavík has just under 200,000 citizens, and according to Örn Sigurðsson, the head of the city's Environmental and Transportation division, there are currently 1,964 exempt dogs living in Reykjavík, plus a few permits pending. The statistics on dogs per neighbourhood are sadly unavailable at present time, but delving into those numbers would surely be an interesting study.

Cats are also supposed to be registered and given a 1984-style microchip under the skin, but unfortunately no record is kept of the number of registrations. Örn remarked that although there are indeed lots of cats in the downtown area, very few of them are strays. "Stray cats tend to live in the Elliðarádalur valley or the cemeteries. It's easier for them to find something to eat there." So most of the cats Murakami saw were not stray cats, as he, having the keen eye of the writer, did not fail to notice. He writes: "All of them have collars around their neck where their names are written. There is no doubt as to where they live".

When asked for his thoughts on why there were so many cats in the city centre, Örn answered: "I guess people in the centre just like cats more than dogs".

It's as simple as that. 🐾

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"No. You don't have your card number?"

"The card number is on the card in my wallet."

"... and you don't have it?"

"My fucking wallet was stolen, yo! Just cancel it now so whoever has it in their possession can't spend my remaining 20 and I can maybe buy some phone credit when this is all done with to make up for the time I'm wasting talking with you!"

To quell the nerves of my parents who raised me beautifully and instilled in me a respectful phone etiquette and generally stellar set of manners, I will clarify that the last line of that conversation was only screamed loudly inside my head. What made it audibly through my clenched teeth and the receiver to the infuriatingly daft Finnish banking representative was a polite Canadian "no, I'm sorry, I don't."

It wasn't just one card and it wasn't just one call made between the hours of 12 and 2 a.m. on the morning of Friday June 26th. However, the three Canadian banks I contacted swiftly cancelled my cards with an apologetic "oh, I'm so sorry for your loss," similar to what one would expect to hear following the death of a loved one. Appropriate, since I have loved each and every one of those credit and debit cards at one point or another, especially when they were tied to accounts that actually had balances in the double (or triple!) digits. Oh Visa, I'll never forget all the wonderful times we've shared over the years. Your cash advances will always have a place in my heart. My broke, moneyless heart.

Back to the matter at hand. I was robbed, people!

There I was, minding my own business, looking all fine and shit; my head swathed in a crisp white bandana in recognition of the Retrön listening party I was attending at Karamba. My wallet had just been in my hands, as I returned the Finnish bankcard that would later be the cause of much contention to its rightful place among its plastic friends. I then slid the finely crafted leather portefeuille into my purse, which hung on the side of my chair, safely between my boyfriend and

I, and enjoyed the final sips of my beer before retiring at a reasonable hour on account of my dedication to the publication you are currently enjoying.

A short walk down the road – where a post-drink food stop was being made – I found myself frantically rummaging through my cluttered purse, but no wallet was to be found.

Back to Karamba. Nothing.

I didn't want to leap to conclusions – I like to maintain at least a modicum of trust in mankind – but a phone call to my credit card company in Canada informing me of sizeable charges made to my Visa at Zimsen minutes prior to that call launched me directly into the unmistakable zone of conclusions. This city is full of untrustworthy thieves and assholes, and possibly people that fall under the hybrid category of asshole-thieves. The person in possession of my wallet falls under that third category. They also most likely kick puppies, ejaculate prematurely and beat up their own mom. Just for shits.

I'm bitter, people. I spent most of Friday pouting to myself and cursing the douche who has done god-knows-what with all the prized possessions of my wallet – it's not just money; it's my driver's licence, my birth certificate, the prayer card from my grandmother's funeral – that are either impossible or hell hard to replace, especially from abroad.

So remember my story and heed my warning: while this city is not actually full of thieves and assholes, it does have some conscienceless people who wrongly feel they are entitled to the earnings and possessions of others, and most likely don't have souls; they are lurking about and they will not hesitate to steal your shit. They are such pathetic excuses for human beings that they would probably steal a blind man's dog or an elderly woman's cane. One day karma will swing around and hit them with the great misfortune that they have worked so hard to bring upon themselves. But in the meanwhile, the rest of us would do well to keep a closer eye on our belongings. 🐾

"This city is full of untrustworthy thieves and assholes, and possibly people that fall under the hybrid category of asshole-thieves."

No More Blues Animals are awesome!



Fjölskyldu- og húsdýragarðurinn Hafrafelli v/Engjaveg, 104 Reykjavík

Opened in 1990, Fjölskyldu- og húsdýragarðurinn is a family escape open year round, giving kids (and city folk) the chance to get up close and personal with a variety of animals native to Iceland. The animal park houses 150 specimens of 19 species – including horses, cattle, pigs, sheep, goats, foxes, minks, reindeers, seals, hens, chickens, turkey, pigeons, rabbits, guinea pigs, geese, ducks, dogs and cats – for viewing, plus a handful of wild birds and other species undergoing rehabilitation before being released back into the wild. Lions, giraffes and zebras are overrated. Goats are where it's at.

Fjölskyldu- og húsdýragarðurinn introduced an aquarium in late 2004 to showcase species from the North Atlantic ocean. There are well over 20 species of fish alongside other natives of the sea like molluscs and crabs. More recently, Science World opened to allow visitors to take a hands on approach to science through their exhibits. Are you a screamer? You can measure just how loud your scream is at Science World.

In addition to all the animals, fish and science, Fjölskyldu- og húsdýragarðurinn has a family park with some attractions for parents and kids, like boat rides and horseback rides. There's also a cafeteria when you've had too much excitement and need to regenerate and refuel. Studies have shown that being around animals can make us happier people so head out to Fjölskyldu- og húsdýragarðurinn and be happier, damn it. 🐾

🐾 CATHARINE FULTON
🐾 HÖRÐUR SVEINSSON

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Things They Like About Reykjavík

Words

Haukur S Magnússon

Photography

Gúndi

While compiling our BEST OF REYKJAVÍK list, we consulted with a large group of people from all around town. Some of them were very detailed in their preferences, and some of what they like about our fair city is very likely some of what you'll like about it, once you try it out for yourself.

In that spirit, here are some excellent folks and their excellent thoughts on Reykjavík.

MARGRÉT ERLA MAACK

RADIO DJ, BELLY DANCING INSTRUCTOR



Being heartbroken, on a date, feeling sober and hung-over

» Best place to go if you're heartbroken:

Ísbúð Vesturbæjar. The name is basic. The ice cream is divine. If you're extra heartbroken go for the creamier type. Maybe you'll run into people there that are struggling with the same problem.

» Best place for a first date:

The new swimming pool in Álftanes. No makeup, no tricks, but the largest waterslide in Iceland. And if the person you go with doesn't go for a ride, then they're obviously not your type. Girls, don't take too much time doing your hair afterwards, there's a guy waiting for you outside. And all cell phones have a stop watch.

» Best newcomer restaurant:

Fiskfélagið. You would think there are too many Asian/Icelandic/out of nowhere fusion restaurants on one block in Reykjavík with Sjávarkjallarinn and Fiskimarkaðurinn... but no. The menu sounds bizarre, and so would the food if I'd try and describe it. My sister couldn't speak while we ate there. So do take your friend there who you think talks too much and complains you never have time for her.

» Best place to feel gorgeous/sober:

Bar 11 at 5 o'clock in the morning. Could also qualify as best place to get laid if you lower your standards a bit.

» Best hang over meal:

Pig sandwich at Búllan. Fries and béarnaise. Chocolate milk shake. Done.



BEN FROST

MUSICIAN



Grounding oneself in the real Iceland

I love Breiðholt. It arguably represents the real Iceland in a way, because it doesn't have the cute wooden houses or any of that stuff you'll find downtown – it's the true, Icelandic style, former Soviet Bloc looking buildings all over. Also, there are no hipsters there, which is important. It represents the old Iceland well, and also the new Iceland.

If you live in Iceland for long enough you kind of miss a sort of variety in people you encounter.. especially if you're in 101 Reykjavík. Everyone's a fucking... artist or musician or dancer – and that's all fine and good, but sometimes it's nice to just be part of normal suburban life, with people that do actual work for a living. First and foremost, Breiðholt is a very grounding place; it has a very nice feel to it once you get to know it.

LÓA HJÁLMTÝSDÓTTIR

MUSICIAN, ARTIST



Chilling out, walking for food and munching on chocolate

» The best place to chill out

There are lots of options, of course. Probably my favourite is going to Klambatrún, buying a small bottle of white wine at Kjarvalsstaðir and sitting in the grassy field. It's simple, yet alluring.

» A novel way to dine out

This is a favourite of mine. You start off by going to Sushibarinn on Laugavegur and get some of that salmon stuff they have. You then walk down to O-Sushi at Iða and get the chicken pieces and finish off at Sægreifinn for some lobster soup. This is the best fish trio in town. Except it's not all fish. But it's still great.

EGILL HELGASON

JOURNALIST



Together, friendly, going for a swim

I feel the city has even improved post-economic collapse. There's less arrogance and hubris in the air. People seem to have more time. They converse more, are more open and one senses a greater level of empathy. Maybe this won't go on for long, but this is how I am experiencing it now [note, this was written on February 12]. It's a like a shared experience has brought everyone together

Even though downtown itself isn't especially pretty, the old neighbourhoods that surround it are fun and friendly. Þingholt, Skólavörðuholt, the old Vesturbær and Tjarnargata.

Another benefit of downtown is that it has two large bookstores that are both open until ten PM.

And then there are always the pools...

ATLI FANNAR

BJARKASON

EDITOR OF MONITOR MAGAZINE



People watching, poker

Sægreifinn is the best and greatest restaurant in the country. I think few people realize that their lobster soup complimented with one of their fish-spears and a bottle of coke is a great hangover meal. And it doesn't cost shit in light of the quality – 2,500 krónur or something.

Gullöldin in Grafarvogur is a great bar. Poker every night in an atmosphere. The place doesn't charge anything, so it's all clean and legal. Their beer is also nice, and so are the pizzas.

Austurvöllur is great for human and cultural investigations of a boiling pot of different cultures and at the same time a running competition over who owns the

coolest sunglasses. Whether you enjoy watching the drunks, the arty types, the groups of hnakki or the teens, you'll always have a good time. In the summer that is. Austurvöllur sucks in wintertime.

BRYNDÍS JAKOBSDÓTTIR

MUSICIAN



I love the water in Reykjavík. The water in Denmark is not good. The hot water is very expensive, and you have to turn off the shower while you soap up to save the warm water. This is something you don't give much thought to back home. Also, taking a bath here seems impossible. No one has a bathtub, because filling them with warm water is so expensive.

In the winter, most of the apartments are cold as ice, because keeping the radiator on is too expensive. This is something you take for granted in Iceland, the warm water. And the cold water that's fresh and invigorating.

I also miss the mountains. Moments such as driving down Frakkastígur and being faced with Mt. Esja in all its glory. Going out on weekends and staying out 'till six in the AM without people thinking you're on drugs... and how close everything is.

Kærlig hilsen from København

MUGISON

MUSICIAN



Walking, biking, sliding

I enjoy walking in Reykjavík, from the airport on. Doing the whole coastal line, along the shore, there's a damn good path to follow that's also nice to bike – all the way to Breiðholt, if you're in the mood. You can stop for coffee at Kaffivagninn on Grandi or enjoy a burger at Búllan. Now, continue along Sæbraut heading for Breiðholt, up to Dúfnahólar 10 where you view the city. Then wander to the movies

in Smáralind or Mjódd or – of you're riding a bike – slide right back into town.

ÓLAFUR ARNALDS

MUSICIAN



The smallness, the closeness

I like how small the city feels, and how easy it is to find your own kinda "social corner" of the city. I like taking my computer out to a café and doing my work there instead of at home. 90% of the time, I'll meet someone I know and can keep me company while I reply to tiring music-management emails. I also like how close the city is to "nowhere".

Last weekend I went with my friend to her summerhouse positioned in a mountainside, right by a beautiful lake. It was a spontaneous decision, taken late on a Friday night after quite a few tequila runs (the act of running to a random bar just to take one tequila shot and then run back to wherever you were. Singing the tequila song is crucial while doing this), so we took a taxi. It took 15 minutes to get there and cost less than taking a cab to Mosfellsbær. ☺

I like how small the city feels, and how easy it is to find your own kinda "social corner" of the city. I like taking my computer out to a café and doing my work there instead of at home. 90% of the time, I'll meet someone I know and can keep me company

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Reykjavík Grand Excursion ☀ All Year 13-15:30

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Get to know the capital with an expert by your side. We take you around Reykjavík with a guide and show you the highlights of the city. The tour ends at the National museum of Iceland where you can see Icelandic culture at its best.

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RE-81 - 09:00
Take a Walk on the Ice Side ☀ All Year 09-19

SUN MON WED FRI SAT

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RE-17 - 08:00
The Wonders of Snæfellsjökull ☀ Summer 08-19:30

SUN MON WED FRI

A tour for nature lovers: lush valleys, lava fields with soft moss, abundant birdlife, diverse flora, craters and salmon rivers. Snæfellsjökull glacier is where "The Journey to the Centre of the Earth" begins - a world famous story by Jules Verne.

Price **17300 ISK** [Book now on www.re.is](#)

Special Internet Offer*
Online discount code: **GV03709**

RE-08 - 09:00
Saga Circle ☀ All Year 09-18

SAT

This tour is perfect for all Saga enthusiasts. On this tour we take you around the area where one of the Icelandic Sagas took place - along with enjoying spectacular landscape. Come and follow in the footsteps of the Vikings with us.

Price **14000 ISK**
~~Price -17500 ISK~~ [Book now on www.re.is](#)

Special Internet Offer*
Online discount code: **GV05709**

RE-06 - 09:00
Blue Diamond Circle ☀ All Year 09-16

TUE THU FRI

Nature is one of the main attractions when visiting Iceland. Take a tour through rough and mossy lava fields with breathtaking views, spectacularly breaking surf and colonies of thriving birds nesting in the summer.

Price **9900 ISK**
~~Price -12500 ISK~~ [Book now on www.re.is](#)

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* Special internet offers on this page can be booked through 31 July 2009.

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Celebrating A Downtown Institution

Show the staff of Mál og menning some love...



DOWNTOWN INSTITUTION
BEST OF REYKJAVÍK 2009

Bókabúð Mál og menning Laugavegi 18, 101 Reykjavík

If you are literate and have walked the length of Laugavegur it is likely that you have ventured into Bókabúð Mál og Menning. With tables of touristy books stacked on tables out front, and hoards of people bustling in and out endlessly during these summer months, it is hard to miss or resist. Thus it has been since 1961, when the shop first opened its doors at Laugavegur 18.

On the local institution status of the shop, long-time employee Dagmar Sigurðardóttir points out "it has been here for a long time. A lot of people have never experienced it not being here. Everything has been changing a lot through the years and this is a place that has never changed. It's always the same. Nothing has changed, not even the shelves or the stairs or anything."

It's not surprising that a bookstore is one of the few unchanged things on Laugavegur considering Iceland's propensity for the written word. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs boasts that Iceland publishes more titles per capita than anywhere else, and that's pretty impressive. Books have played a massive

role in the nation's culture since the days of the Sagas and, as Dagmar notes, many Icelanders today talk about books as a main form of entertainment like other people talk about TV or movies and participate in book clubs. Her own must-reads are Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte and Halldór Laxness' Independent People – so maybe check those out the next time you're browsing the shelves of Bókabúð Mál og Menning.

"But what makes this place the best joint in town for all my literary needs, you ask? Aside from its stellar location, Dagmar lists a number of reasons why Bókabúð Mál og Menning is top-notch. "It's the best place to buy books because we help our customers to really find what they like and everyone who works here is really, really good and knows a lot about our products," she says. "Plus, we have a big variety. We have almost everything that's available and we try to sell English language books as much as we can and we can order them in specially."

Sadly, the friendly staff of Bókabúð Mál og Menning, many of whom have worked there for years, will be let go soon when the bookstore as we know it will be closing its doors. This sad story

gets complicated when you factor in that the history of ownership. You see, the company that owned the shop until six years ago is going to open a bookstore called Mál og Menning in the same location, but with different staff. The current owners will re-open a bookstore elsewhere (though probably not also named Mál og Menning) presumably with the same staff working at the current Bókabúð Mál og Menning, who are employees of the company that owns the Eymundsson bookstores. There's also a publisher/owner involved in there somewhere. Dagmar wasn't kidding when she likened the entire ordeal to the complicated situation of the economic collapse. It's hard to explain.

Regardless of all that, the Mál og Menning bookstore is a veritable downtown institution, due in no small part to the excellent staff that has served the store's customers with an unprecedented passion for a long, long time (and most of the current staff have worked there for years, if not decades). Pay those great people a visit and honour this 101 staple while you still can.

CATHARINE FULTONI
HÖRÐUR SVEINSSON

Best Place To Look At Statues

The Einar Jónsson Museum is a 101 haven



BEST ART MUSEUM
BEST OF REYKJAVÍK 2009

The Einar Jónsson Museum Eiríksgrata, 101 Reykjavík

In 1909, Iceland's first sculptor, Einar Jónsson, offered his works as a gift to the nation in exchange for a building to house them (and him). Fast forward five years when the government came to its senses and accepted the gift, and you've got the Listasafn Einaris Jónssonar, a wicked building designed by the sculptor himself in collaboration with architect Guðjón Samúelsson.

The museum, and the penthouse apartment therein that Einar shared with his wife, are definitely worth checking out. Not only is the architecture of the building and the vibrant colours of the interior stunning to explore and appreciate, but the nearly 300 pieces of art created throughout the iconic sculptor's life are surprising and impressive in their intricacy and, in some cases, their monumental scale.

The gem of the location, however, is the lush green garden to the rear of the house in which 26 bronze casts of the artist's work are on display for the viewing pleasure of the general

public. Walking through the gates on Freyjugata onto the manicured lawn is like entering a sanctuary of sorts. The imposing trees, with limbs spreading out to create a canopy over the central walking path of the space, transports visitors out of the generally tree-less Iceland and into the Jardin Luxembourg, sans all the homeless people lurking about.

Admission to the sculpture garden is absolutely free, so it is a popular spot for tranquil picnic lunches or just to lie on the grass in the shade to enjoy a good book. Don't spend all your time with your nose in a book though, as the detail of Einar's art is so stunning that you will surely want to get up close and examine it at length. The garden is open around the clock so if you ever find yourself with a hankering for a late-night sculpture fix you know where to go.

CATHARINE FULTONI
HÖRÐUR SVEINSSON

NORRÆNA HÚSIÐ

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SUN 5TH JULY 4pm:

Sunday cinema:
Kikujiro from 1999 by Takeshi Kitano.
Nominated for the Golden Palm at Cannes in 1999.

FRI 10TH JULY 5pm
SAT 11TH & SUN 12TH 2pm:

Workshop: Tea ceremony
Kanako Hatanaka, master of Japanese tea ceremonies and 11 assistants from Japan will introduce Chado – the way of tea.

THU 9TH JULY 8pm:

Thursday lecture 3: Architecture
Japan's influence on Alvar Aalto and Nordic architecture. Leif Högfjeld Hansen, architect and lector at the Aarhus School of Architecture in Denmark, lectures on the influence of traditional Japanese architecture on Alvar Aalto's work.

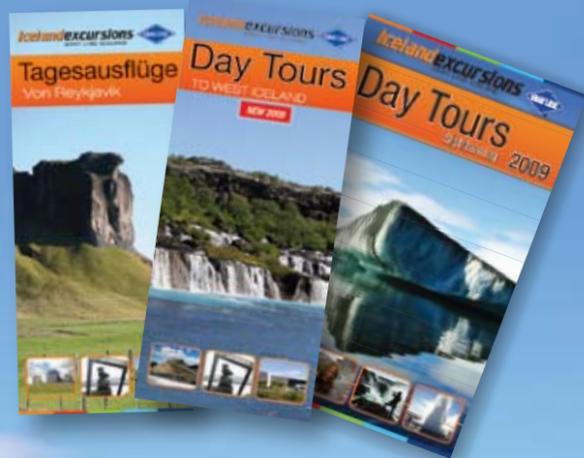
SUN 12TH JULY 4pm:

Sunday cinema:
Always: Sunset on Third Street from 2005 by Takashi Yamazaki. Won Best Film Award at the Japanese Academy.

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New Day Tours 2009				
Tour Code	Tour Name	Rack Rate	Special Offer	ISK Rate
AH 61	The Saga Trail	80 €	75 €	12.000 kr
AH 62	The Highland Road - Glaciers, waterfalls and hot springs	95 €	90 €	14.400 kr
AH 63	The Silver Circle	140 €	125 €	20.000 kr
AH 64	The Highland Route & Golden Circle Evening Tour	130 €	115 €	18.400 kr
AH 65	The Blue Lagoon Direct to Keflavik airport	175 €	160 €	25.600 kr

Tours guided in German 2009				
Tour Code	Tour Name	Rack Rate	Special Offer	ISK Rate
AH 217	Besuch eines isländischen Bauernhofs / Visit to an Icelandic farm	79 €	60 €	9.200 kr
AH 35	Südküste und Jökulsárlón Gletscher Lagune / South Coast and Jökulsárlón	189 €	140 €	22.400 kr
AH 10	Stadtrundfahrt / Greater Area Reykjavik Sightseeing	39 €	30 €	4.500 kr
AH 225	Stadtrundfahrt und Blaue Lagune / City Sightseeing and The Blue Lagoon Direct	69 €	40 €	6.500 kr
AH 61	Die Saga Route / The Saga Trail	80 €	75 €	12.000 kr
AH 62	Die Hochland Route - Gletscher, Wasserfälle und heiße Quellen / The Highland Road Glaciers, waterfalls and hot springs	95 €	90 €	14.400 kr
AH 63	Der Silberne Kreis / The Silver Circle	140 €	125 €	20.000 kr
AH 75	Walbeobachtung / Whale Watching	49 €	45 €	7.500 kr
AH 234	Perlen der Südküste / South Coast & Waterfalls	129 €	90 €	14.200 kr
AH 212	Der Goldene Kreis / The Golden Circle Classic	79 €	60 €	9.200 kr
AH 30	Südküste und Thorsmörk / Thorsmörk and The South Coast	129 €	90 €	14.200 kr

Rates in EUR and ISK, valid from June 2009				
Tour Code	Tour Name	Rack Rate	Special Offer	ISK Rate
AH 10	Greater Area Reykjavik Sightseeing	39 €	30 €	4.500 kr
AH 11	Gullfoss & Geysir Express	69 €	50 €	7.600 kr
AH 12	The Golden Circle Classic	79 €	60 €	9.200 kr
AH 13	Golden Circle Evening Tour	79 €	60 €	9.200 kr
AH 15	Iceland from Below	79 €	60 €	9.200 kr
AH 18	The Blue Lagoon Direct to Keflavik airport	33 €	20 €	3.400 kr
AH 19	The Reykjanes Peninsula	59 €	45 €	7.000 kr
AH 21	Iceland from Below & Blue Lagoon direct	100 €	80 €	12.500 kr
AH 22	Reykjanes Peninsula and Gullfoss & Geysir	129 €	95 €	15.000 kr
AH 23	City sightseeing and Gullfoss & Geysir	99 €	70 €	11.000 kr
AH 24	The Blue Lagoon and Gullfoss & Geysir	99 €	70 €	11.000 kr
AH 25	City sightseeing & Blue Lagoon	69 €	40 €	6.500 kr
AH 27	The Viking Horse Riding tour and Gullfoss & Geysir	119 €	85 €	13.500 kr
AH 28	The Blue Lagoon Direct from Keflavik airport	33 €	20 €	3.400 kr
AH 29	The Blue Lagoon Direct	33 €	20 €	3.400 kr
AH 30	Thorsmörk and South Coast	129 €	90 €	14.200 kr
AH 31	The Viking Horse Riding Tour & Blue Lagoon Direct	89 €	60 €	9.500 kr
AH 32	Landmannalaugar by bus	139 €	95 €	15.300 kr
AH 35	South Coast & Jökulsárlón - available from May 17	189 €	140 €	22.400 kr
AH 38	Snaefellsnes National Park	149 €	105 €	17.000 kr
AH 39	Cruise at Breiðafjörður Bay	189 €	140 €	22.400 kr
AH 70	DPV Scooter Diving	260 €	220 €	35.000 kr
AH 71	Magnificent fissure diving	230 €	210 €	33.000 kr
AH 72	Magnificent fissure snorkelling	140 €	120 €	19.400 kr
AH 74	Whale Watching and Gullfoss & Geysir	118 €	100 €	15.500 kr
AH 75	Whale Watching	49 €	45 €	7.500 kr
AH 78	Whale Watching & The Blue Lagoon to Keflavik Airport	82 €	65 €	10.300 kr
AH 79	Whale Watching & The Blue Lagoon Direct	82 €	65 €	10.300 kr
AH 88	ATV Blue Lagoon Direct to Keflavik Airport	125 €	85 €	13.500 kr
AH 89	ATV Blue Lagoon Direct	125 €	85 €	13.500 kr
AH 140	Golden Circle Super Jeep Tour	249 €	220 €	35.000 kr
AH 142	4X4 Iceland Adventure	149 €	130 €	21.000 kr

Icelandexcursions
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*According to the Dear Visitor study done by Tourism Research and Consulting in the summer of 2008, Iceland Excursions had a significant lead compared to competitors in satisfaction and quality.

Brynja, We Love You!



Brynja
Laugavegur 29, 101 Reykjavík

If you need screws you have to go to Brynja, that big red storefront on Laugavegur that has occupied that same spot since 1929. Not only does this place have everything you need and then some – have you ever heard of a ‘miracle cloth’? Because I bought one – the staff is knowledgeable and friendly and the place reeks of Reykjavík history and charm.

Of Brynja being the best place in town to buy screws, owner Brynjólfur H. Björnsson says, “good people have been working here, we have good reliable tools and good things to sell. We’ve been providing good service and people like that, especially if they can trust the goods we are selling.”

Brynja feels like the type of mom and pop store where you would expect to walk in the front door and be greeted warmly by your first name. Considering how long they have been in business – Brynja celebrates their 90th birthday this year – they very well may know their repeat customers by name. Then again, Brynja’s repeat customers are numerous and aren’t only located in

Reykjavík. “People know our firm around the country,” says Brynjólfur. “We sell a lot to people outside of the city, out in different parts of the country because they can depend on us.”

Brynjólfur has been working at the shop for over 40 years, initially working under his father, who took over the shop in 1944. When his father passed away in 1993, Brynjólfur began running the shop himself, with a team of knowledgeable and friendly staff. When asked if his own children have worked in the shop or plan on taking it over for him when he is set to retire Brynjólfur exclaimed with a chuckle, “I have three daughters!” While one daughter has worked briefly at Brynja, the owner didn’t seem to be counting on his girls being interested in running a hardware shop.

Check this place out for screws, of course, but also if you need pretty much anything else for your DIY projects or bigger handy-man-esque jobs. There is a reason Brynja has outlasted the competition for 90-years, so go check it out! 🍷

✍️ CATHARINE FULTONI
📷 HÖRÐUR SVEINSSON

WE APOLOGISE

In the last issue of the Grapevine, an article entitled “AIDS in Iceland” contained an erroneous statement alluding to the health care available for HIV and AIDS patients in Iceland being insufficient. We extend our apologies to anyone who was offended by the fallacious statement. It is in fact of the highest quality.

HIV and AIDS are serious issues, and it was not the intention of the author or this publication to disparage HIV/AIDS patients or diminish the good work of those providing health care in Iceland.

Expect in-depth coverage on the important topic of HIV/AIDS and how the Icelandic health care system is supporting those afflicted in future issues of the Grapevine.



Grapevine’s taxi driver

Tales from the Cab Side



A full moon, star speckled Friday night throbbing with weekend Dionysian vice whilst spiked with lunatic animosity and irate inebriation. Sirens rend the air asunder: sporadically at first and then continuously as the wee hours see aggression increasingly erupt in assault and battery.

On Klapparstígur, outside the now defunct 7-9-13 bar (AKA “The Empty Bar”), bitches are brawling as blackamores spectate. A cruiser – or perhaps middleweight – eyesore of a wench swings intently away at a delectable choice cut featherweight to the merriment of the assembled masses.

In the Grafarvogur suburbs I fetch a trio of inconsiderate, unruly young’n’s who throw jabs each other’s way and unleash upper cuts at the ceiling while wailing like rabid banshees. Rid of their presence a bum fight explodes in the war zone that is the triangle of Kaffi Amsterdam, Dubliners and..., meanwhile up at Prikíð, their wall to Laugavegur is being scaled by a festive gentleman with a contempt for queuing.

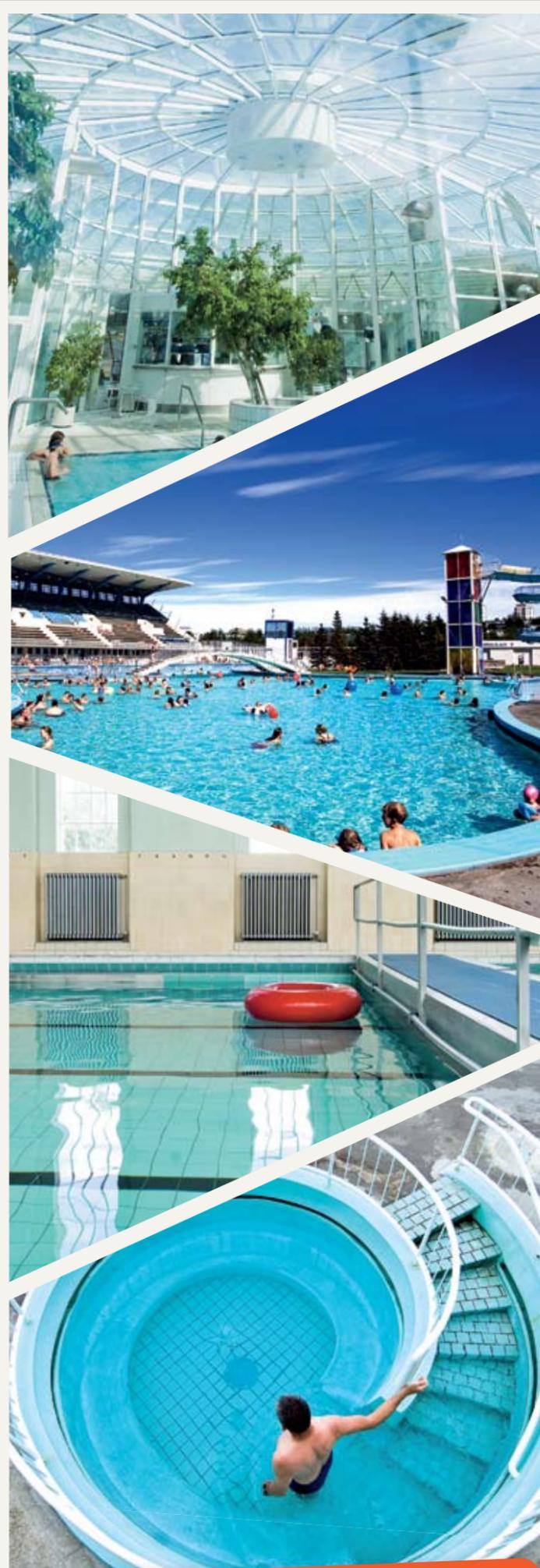
Back at Klapparstígur, the fisticuffs have progressed up the Laugavegur corner and the ogre is hefting a different slim opponent like a bag of waste and physically flinging her against the Kaffi Hljómálmind wall. And still the pigs fail to materialise for an arrest.

I turn the corner and witness an eastern block threesome yanking a drunkenly staggering dude into an open hallway and kicking his floored body until my horn honking hastens them to retreat. Farther down across the street from the inexplicably popular B5 a guy – assumedly a perpetrator of assault – is pinned down to the street and sat on by an over weight middle aged man whilst two bouncers hover and the blinking blue lights ascend from up the street.

In Eskihlíð, a spousal altercation escalates to the point of forced ejection from the vehicle and my last nerve is strained minutes later as wasted pedestrians inattentive to the purpose of traffic lights start kicking the doors of my cab. The night then culminates in my hunting down a fare-bouncing customer and at daybreak delivering a non-responsive blacked out Lithuanian to the police station.

Unwinding with a beer and a hand-rolled seems entirely justified and Fight Club takes another spin on my home entertainment system.

🍷 – “TRAVIS BICKLE”



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*From the Hávamál, 1300 AD



blaidur@gmail.com / photo: AJS



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For more information:

www.hff.is

Borgartúni 21, 105 Reykjavík
Tel : 569 6900 / 800 6969



Housing Financing Fund

A letter from Iceland, pt. 2

by HERMANN STEFÁNSSON

I resume my pleading to your institute in my own noble and dignified way, using up my very precious time, while history unfolds, carrying with it an offer from your country, a deal, according to which I must pay an obviously impossible sum for the crimes of a few of my countrymen who usurped loopholes in international laws to exploit your rather credulous and ill-informed public. Thus I am forced to think in many temporal dimensions, given that I shall have to pay and pay till kingdom come, in a far distant future, and that other writers before me have found themselves under parallel circumstances before. I - a writer, a poet - am in a somewhat similar situation to Egill Skallagrímsson, the viking poet I mentioned in a previous part of my letter. Our politicians, earlier preparing to sue your government, now want to close a big deal and send the IceSave bill to me. You might not consider our politicians to be very bright or even very sympathetic. You might even have noticed a rather silly Icelandic campaign with rather dubious white supremacist undertones on the website www.indefence.is, a campaign called "We are not terrorists, Mister Brown". But can you blame me for any of this?

A crime is still a crime, even if some of its victims are stupid creeps. Just because some of my countrymen are morons does not mean that the crème-de-la-crème of Icelandic cultural life are to blame. I refer, rather than to myself, to the sacred concept of literature, so dear to you and me, reaching beyond all borders. Call me eccentric but I'm not stupid. But I grant you the benefit of doubt. Strictly between you and me, dear Sir or Madam, most of our politicians are complete morons with no appreciation of progressive literature at all. But then again so are yours, I presume. In a speech our

president declared his intention to sue the British government for the illegal use of terrorist laws that have (with the aid of Icelandic millionaires and politicians) ruined Iceland's economy as well as its good reputation abroad. In this he is right, I believe, although he himself has been called a cheerleader of Icelandic businessmen, and although the Icelandic government was also responsible. I should add that the pots-and-pans kitchen rioting is rather peaceful and would possibly look silly in the eyes of the Greeks. Even so, the old Viking nature of the Icelanders seems to be resurfacing again, perhaps due to being declared terrorists.



I should remind you that the ancient Vikings used sharper things than were used in this kitchen revolution.

Be that as it may, a certain peculiar linguistic turn has taken place in recent months regarding a specific word in the Icelandic language. I refer to the word "útrásarvíkingur". This recent Icelandic word is rather difficult in translation, but it has been used to refer to Icelandic business tycoons that have made big investments abroad. It includes a certain misuse of the Icelandic Viking

tradition, although surely many of the ancient Vikings were plain criminals. Literally it would translate as: Vikings of outvasion (instead of invasion).

In other words, it refers to the 30 individuals who, with the aid of incompetent politicians, fucked our nation and a large portion of the English population to the point where there is now rioting in the streets. This word has lost its meaning by now, as all these Vikings are now fucked themselves, along with the Icelandic currency, the króna, now worthless and waiting to be replaced by the Euro (I shall address the subject in more detail later on). Strange how words can come full circle. Now the talk here in Iceland is that writers are the new útrásarvíkingur. In a sense the word has regained its original meaning: a poet who saves his life abroad by means of literature.

I am one of those Vikings, the word is my sword.

You will perhaps, at this point, be asking yourself how literature can exist with only one reader, as in the case of Egill Skallagrímsson and the King in York. Must not literature reach a wide audience to be considered literature? Is literature not a social act, in its own fashion? Certainly this view can be defended but I maintain that every piece of literature, including my own and Skallagrímsson's, is directed to only one reader. Every novel has what literary theory calls an implicit reader, or an ideal reader, as James Joyce named it. Every novel, every poem, every short story, is in a way a personal (but yet

official) letter to this ideal reader. And given that you are a specialized reader, representing a respected institution, and given the present international circumstances, it is in no way ridiculous to presume that you, Sir or Madam, are this ideal reader. Indeed, if you have not lost your patience and called me "boring" and a "loser" or "completely mad" or even "a greedy, presumptuous opportunist" as, sad to say, some of my envious and less successful colleagues have done in the past (I will spare you the sordid details), you are participating in the birth of a literary text, making it become real, making it literature.

You will by now have grasped that I am asking for a grant for a work of literature. And you will ask yourself: what kind of work is this? The answer will possibly, by now, have become gradually clear to you: this is the work. This letter is the very work of literature for which I am requesting a grant. There is nothing more to it; I pay dearly for every word in this letter, with my heart and my soul, my reputation abroad and my creative strain.

I rest my case and believe strongly that the aesthetic experience of reading my letter has been satisfying on many levels. It has certainly required a vital effort on my behalf. I cannot believe that you and your institute will show me the disrespect (politically, historically, metaphysically and aesthetically) of denying my request. I have contacted my lawyer and we are fully prepared to take legal action against your institute in the unlikely event that you should deny this. I have also contacted a

professional hitman in Russia and he is willing to take on a project, should he be given one. Those are normal procedures for a writer who has been declared a terrorist, perhaps correctly so.

Furthermore, I am determined to take the following and more poetic steps: I will chop off my fingers one by one with an axe and mail them to you in an envelope.

One finger at a time.

Each finger will remove corresponding letters from the alphabet on my keyboard. Each finger will be accompanied by a letter, the same as this one, with the appropriate letters removed. Until, if nothing is done, there will be no letters left, only blank pages and literary silence.

In this way you would be responsible for silencing the words of a poet by very bloody means, and I must insist that I am fully serious in my intention of doing this. I am not driven by greed, only by artistic and political passion and a sincere longing for peace, justice, harmony and understanding to reign among nations and literature to flourish.

I await your prompt reply, axe in hand.

My bill is as follows:

Working hours: 18 days (10 hours per day, 59.90 EUR per hour):10782 £
 Paper, pencils and other material, plus computer maintenance:..... 500 £
 Research expenses:
723 £
 Aesthetic strain bonus
10 £
 Alcoholic beverages (i.e. construction material): 27 litres:647 £
 Risk bonus (i.e. intellectual risk + risk of reputation loss):5 £
 Restaurant expenses:
 455.90 £
 Danger of physical damage
100000 £
 Total:
113122.90 £

Respectfully,
 Skallagrímur Daðason
 Writer
 Iceland
 £

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We love the great city of Reykjavík. We really do. In fact, we love it so much, we named our paper after it – and most of us choose to live here for extended periods at a time. It really is an excellent little city, all things considered. Of course it's lacking in many things a city will need. Decent public transport, actual neighbourhoods, a variety of ethnic eateries, clubs for late night partying on weekdays and about a million people, to name but a few. But we still swear by it, and if you're reading this, chances are you do too.

This past winter, as we replied to the millionth enquiry about this thing or the other to do with Reykjavík-life (people really like asking us for advice), we got to thinking: we should just make up standard answers for everything. We should compile a list of THE BEST OF REYKJAVÍK – hell, we should make an issue devoted to it.

And here you have it. We've been working hard for the past few months, compiling our list for you folks to read, verify, distrust, totally disagree with, argue over, send in angry rants about and generally enjoy. It's totally unscientific and heavily contestable and should be read as such: for entertainment purposes only. We still hope it serves as some sort of guideline in enjoying the fair city.

Here's how we did it: In April, we advertised an e-mail addy – bestof@grapevine.is – that accepted our readers' thoughts on the matter. Using your suggestions and arguments (and some of our own, and our friends') for guidance, we then assembled a large panel of tasteful folks that represent pretty much every gender, income bracket and affiliation to discuss. Below are the results. Enjoy, and remember to send us your suggestions at bestof@grapevine.is for consideration in our 2010 edition.

Best Burger:

Hamborgarabúlla Tómasar

Hamborgarabúlla Tómasar – Búllan – was pretty uncontested when we asked our team to judge the best burgers. “The burgers are juicy and meaty,” “the place has character” and “Reykjavík's most authentic burger experience” were some of the phrases uttered in our discussion. See also on our restaurant pages.

Runners-up: Drekkinn (“not so excellent, but dirt cheap”), American Style (“consistently high quality”).

Best veggie burger:

Drekkinn

The vegetarians in our panel argued about this one for a long time before finally settling on Drekkinn, saying “they're mighty tasty, and the cheapest ones on offer”.

Best blue cheese burger:

Vitabar

Plenty of Reykjavík restaurants offer up blue cheese burgers, but none of them even come close to matching Vitabar's classic “Forget-me-not” burger, a local favourite for many, many years. Loaded with blue cheese and garlic, delightfully complimented by a glass of house draft, the “Forget-me-not” is a Reykjavík must-try for serious burger aficionados. See also page 20.

Best slice:

Deli

Getting a good slice of pizza on the go can be an utter ordeal. If you're not careful, you'll frequently wind up paying good money for a cardboard wafers that has been sitting in a heater box for a week. Not at Deli, however. Their slices are consistently awesome and fresh, the topping selection is intriguing and tasteful and, best of all, they're really cheap.



Deli is also Reykjavík's Best-kept pizza secret. While “Best kept pizza secret” isn't your standard category, we felt obliged to invent it and slap it on Deli. Everyday after 15:00 their tasty take-out pizzas drop dramatically in price – you can enjoy a gourmet pizza dinner at home for practically nothing. This information should be shared with the universe.

Best drunken slice:

Devitos Pizza

Yes, we have a category for drunken slice. Yes, Devitos Pizza really kick ass at that category, and have consistently done so since the oldest of us started drinking. Look no further for your drunken slice of greasy Shangri-la. See also page 20.

Runner-up: Pizza King came a pretty close second to Devitos in this category. Both offer pretty much the same pizza for the same price, but Devitos have been doing it longer, are more consistent in quality.

Best Pizza

Choosing best the best all-round pizza for Reykjavík was a hard task. We love

our pizza, and we feel really strongly about it one way or the other. The obvious contender for the throne was Eldsmiðjan – Reykjavík's most celebrated pizza joint – and we had actually gone ahead and ordered our photographer to photograph it. But as we discussed the topic, us panellists slowly came to the conclusion that while, yes, Eldsmiðjan serves some pretty awesome pizza and features some pretty novel toppings, they just haven't been very consistent as of late. Most of those present had in the past few months gotten a cold or otherwise unsatisfactory pie from Eldsmiðjan, and this is unacceptable when you're paying the hefty Eldsmiðjan price for it.

So in the end, we went with Devitos on this one, too. The reasoning? “It's always damn good. And cheap. If I order a pizza with my choice of toppings from Devitos, I can count on it being awesome, every time.” So consistency wins, this time around.

Best place to go for ice cream:

Ísbúð Vesturbæjar



No contest on Ísbúð Vesturbæjar for this category; even if there are a bunch of swell places selling ice cream in the Reykjavík area, Ísbúð Vesturbæjar is Reykjavík's most beloved for a good reason. And has the long lines to prove it. See also page 20.

Best bakery:

Mosfellsbakari



Icelanders tend to take special pride in their baked goods, and most visitors will agree that they are pretty awesome (the snúður in particular). That said, choosing the right bakery to fit your needs can be a gruelling task. Our panel threw around a bunch of names of adequate to awesome bakeries, before finally settling for Mosfellsbakari, deeming it “ambitious, using only the best materials, yet they're modestly priced.” Their selection and inventiveness is also admirable.

Runners-up: Sandholt (“good, but too expensive”), Bakaramestiarinn Suðurveri.

Best Indian food:

Austur-Índía félagið

As verified once again in Sari Peltonen's review a couple of issues back, Austur-Índía félagið is the place to go in Reykjavík for Indian food if you can afford it (not that there are many to choose from). This is due to their consistency in quality, great service and darn tasty food.

Best Thai food:

Ban Thai

You can actually find a lot of great Thai food in Reykjavík, but out of all the decent-to-awesome restaurants at hand, Ban Thai must surely score the title this year. Even though the service at Ban Thai may get a little flaky, the food is always to die for and the place also offers a very pleasant dining atmosphere that puts you right in a comfortable Thai sorta mood. It's really Reykjavík's only “fancy” Thai restaurant. Ban Thai has remained a true Reykjavík treasure for the longest time, and is truly one that should be celebrated.

Runners-up: Krúa Thai (“Excellent food”), Núðluhúsið (“Often good, always really cheap”).

Best coffeehouse:

Kaffismiðjan

Kaffismiðjan is a delightful addition to Reykjavík's ever-growing collection of coffeehouses, and its steadily growing flock of regulars is even hesitant to tell others about it, in fear of losing their precious seats. Indeed, one of our team begged us not to put Kaffismiðjan in the best of, saying, “it's crowded enough as is!”

Best coffee and cake:

Tíu dropar

When it comes to Best of Reykjavík, basement hangout Tíu dropar on Laugavegur actually deserves to win several categories and even have some made up in their honour. They offer a unique atmosphere, are priced modestly and are absolutely the best establishment in town to hang out with your kids if you have them (they are very tolerant of children). The classic interior style, friendly service and delicious foodstuffs on offer (not only cake, they also do sandwiches and soups) all add up to win Tíu dropar a permanent place in local hearts.

Best coffee to-go:

Kaffifélagið

Kaffifélagið has been a Grapevine favourite since they opened on Skólavörðustígur a couple of years back. The small coffeehouse always delivers an excellent cup of Italian-style coffee, and downtown regulars can spring for a clip-off coffee card to save on each purchase.

Best sushi:

Sushismiðjan

By the harbour, Sushismiðjan offers sushi that is well on a par with – or better than – other sushi places in town. It is in the price department that they truly excel, imploring one panellist to proclaim: “For a quick take-out, or a short lunch, you can't beat Sushismiðjan.”

Runners-up: Fiskmarkaðurinn has some really good lunch deals on their excellent sushi, and the sushi train at O-sushi is a formidable contender in the taste department, although the quality lacks in consistency.

Best vegetarian:

Á Næstu Grósum

Choices are sadly very limited for vegetarians, and even worse for vegans, in Reykjavík. Most restaurants do provide one or two courses, but mostly as an afterthought, or what's even more common: something from the kids' menu. Á Næstu Grósum is an all vegetarian restaurant right in the city centre that features a friendly atmosphere and fair prices. There is always at least one vegan soup on offer and the daily special portions are big and always satisfying. There is even some organic wine on offer.

Runners-up: Krúa Thai (“veggie selection is too small, but you can get tofu in everything”), Garðurinn (“the cakes are great”).

Best hangover meal:

Truck at Grái Kötturinn

This was a very heated topic amongst our crew, in fact our jury wound up hopelessly deadlocked. OJ trial-style. People take their hangover meals very seriously in this town (after all, Iceland is a nation of not-so borderline alcoholics) and feel very passionately about their favourites. In the end, most votes went to the fabled “truck” at Grái kötturinn, a hefty plate of bacon, eggs, pancakes, syrup and the like, all fried to perfection. “Greasy enough to make the most vicious hangover seem like an afterthought,” one patron noted as we took another sip from our beers.

Runners-up: Prikið was pretty much a vote away from getting the prize; their “truck” is just as greasy and probably a bit cheaper. They also offer the “Bruce Willis”, a hangover milkshake to end all hangover milkshakes.

Best soup:

Lobster soup at Sægreifinn

The lobster soup at Sægreifinn is without doubt a firm Reykjavík classic. Cheap, plentiful and creamy, this budget lobster meal delivers in every department. Sægreifinn's quaint charm and enticing harbour location enhance the experience greatly.

Best place for a fancy meal:

Gallery Restaurant at Hótel Holt

There are actually lots of formidable fancy restaurants in Reykjavík, places to dine when you've just got paid and haven't a care in the world. It is with pride that we proclaim: Reykjavík is a great place for fine dining. However, in this category, Gallery Restaurant reigns supreme due to their interior, service, consistence and ever-present high standards – “I've yet to be let down by Gallery,” proclaimed one panellist. Go there if you can afford to.

Runners-up: Fiskmarkaðurinn offers a unique spin on Icelandic seafood that is usually of the highest order. Dill came in very strong this winter but suffer for their pricing policy and La Primavera has been the place for high-end Italian dining for ages.

Best place to go for a date:

Ítalía

The romantically inclined could do well to invite the object of their affection for a night at Ítalía. During

The REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE **INFO**



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Issue 9 2009

www.grapevine.is

Eistnaflug



METALHEADS, MUSIC-LOVERS: GO TO EISTNAFLUG

Iceland's most testacular Eistnaflug (it literally translates as "Flight of the testes." Really) will go down once again in the small, East fjords town of Neskaupstaður on July 9-12. Featuring most of Iceland's most beloved rock and metal acts (including Mínus and the legendary HAM) in a truly unusual location, Eistnaflug has grown stronger by the year since its inception in 2005. Further info, detailed line-up and assorted niceties at www.eistnaflug.is

Indie & Hardcore



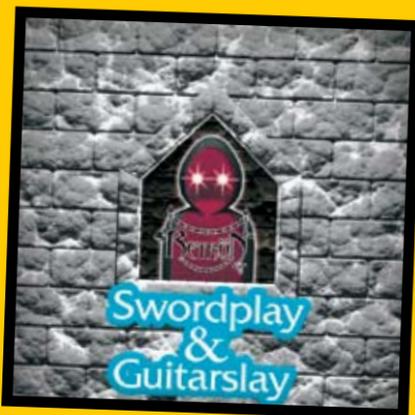
HJALTALÍN / Sleepdrunk Seasons

★★★★★ / The Guardian



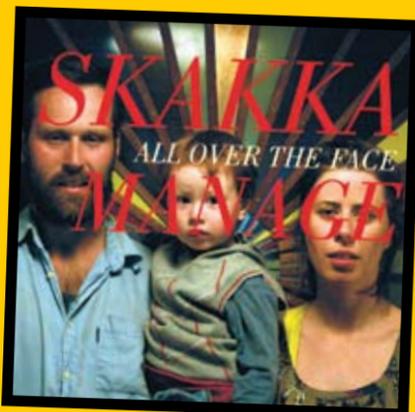
<3 SVANHVÍT / Partí á Íslandi

BRAK06 - Just released!



RETRÖN / Swordplay & Guitarslay

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SKAKKAMANAGE / All Over The Face

★★★★★ / Morgunblaðið



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Venues are listed alphabetically by day.
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3 FRI

- B5**
23:00 DJ Funky Fleivur.
- Celtic Cross**
01:00 Live Music.
- Cultura**
20:00 House DJs.
- Dubliner**
22:30 Live Music.
- English Pub**
22:00 Live Music.
- Grand Rokk**
22:00 Metal Night feat. Beneath + Bastard + Svartíðauði + Wistaria.
- Hemmi og Valdi**
23:00 50's and 60's Swing and Twist Night with DJs.
- Hressó**
22:00 Dalton + DJ Maggi
- Jacobsen**
00:00 Michael Jackson Night, feat. Axfjörð/Cuellar, Gísli Galdur, Sammi Jagúar.
- Kaffibarinn**
23:45 DJ Casanova.
- Kaffi Zimsen**
22:00 DJ Kári.
- London/Reykjavík**
00:00 Plugg'd (Live and DJ Set).
- Prikið**
22:30 MJ Helgi with Húsbandinu followed by Danni Deluxx.
- Q-Bar**
23:00 Mixed Night.
- Rósenberg**
21:00 Langi Seli and Skuggarnir.

4 SAT

- B5**
23:00 DJ Jay Oh!
- Celtic Cross**
01:00 Live Music.
- Cultura**
22:00 House DJs.
- Dillon Rockbar**
21:00 Sleeping Giant, Cliff Clavin, Brain Police and Plastic Gods. Entrance: 500 ISK.
- Dubliner**
22:30 Live Music.
- English Pub**
22:00 Live Music.
- Hemmi og Valdi**
23:00 DJ D-Unit.
- Hressó**
22:00 Eypór and Arnar + DJ Maggi.
- Jacobsen**
00:00 DJ Kári.
- Kaffibarinn**
23:45 Kerowack & DJ Ívar E.
- Kaffi Zimsen**
00:00 Ultra Mega Technoband Stefán. Entrance: 500 ISK.
- London/Reykjavík**
00:00. Frigore.
- NASA**
23:00 Gay-Pride warm up party.
- Prikið**
22:30 Michael Jackson Night with DJ Moonshine.
- Q-Bar**
23:00 DJ Funky Fleivur.
- Rósenberg**
21:00 Gunní Pé and Ragnheiður Gröndal.

5 SUN

- Dubliner**
22:30 Live Music.
- Gjúfasteinn/Laxness Museum (Mosfellsbær)**
16:00 Violinist Sif Tulinus and pianist Steinunn Birna Ragnarsdóttir perform. Entrance: 500 ISK.
- Kaffi Hjómálind**
16:00 Samba.
- Hallgrímskirkja**
17:00 International Organ Summer, feat. Finland's Pétur Sakari. Entrance: 1500 ISK.
- Prikið**
22:00 Hangover Cinema with FREE POPCORN.
- Q-Bar**
23:00 Open Decks.
- Rósenberg**
21:00 Andrea Gyfa.

6 MON

- Dubliner**
22:30 Live Music.
- Kaffi Hjómálind**
20:00 Audiobook Night.
- Kaffi Zimsen**
21:00 2 for 1 BEER!

- Prikið**
22:30 Live DJs.
- Rósenberg**
21:00 Live Music TBC.

7 TUE

- Dubliner**
22:30 Live Music.
- Prikið**
22:30 Beatdown Night.
- Q-Bar**
23:00 You Tube Night with Unnur Andrea.
- Rósenberg**
21:00 K-Trío and Reimm Firra.

8 WED

- B5**
23:00 Live performance from Ljósvaki, followed by a DJ.
- Dubliner**
22:30 Live Music.
- Jacobsen**
00:00 Late Hour Night, feat DJ Thor.
- Kaffibarinn**
21:00 Bedroom Community Night.
- Kaffi Hjómálind**
18:00 Ghetto Yoga.
- Hallgrímskirkja**
12:00 Lunchtime Concert, Feat. Chamber choir Schola Cantorum Reykjavicensis. Entrance: 1000 ISK.
- Prikið**
22:30 Live Music.
- Q-Bar**
23:00 Pub Quiz.
- Rósenberg**
21:00 South River Band.

9 THU

- B5**
21:00 Live performance from Þrjár Raddir.
- Dubliner**
22:30 Live Music.
- Cultura**
22:30 Live DJs.
- English Pub**
22:00 Live Music.
- Hressó**
22:00 Tenta.
- Jacobsen**
00:00 Coxbuter Night.
- Kaffibarinn**
22:00 Alfons X.
- Kaffi Hjómálind**
17:30 Ghetto Yoga with Siggý.
- Kaffi Zimsen**
22:00 Acoustic performance by Klukk.
- NASA**
23:00 TBC.
- Prikið**
23:00 DJ moofó.
- Q-Bar**
23:00 Circus Night with Thor.
- Reykjavík Cathedral**
12:15 Lunchtime concert in Reykjavík Cathedral, feat. Jörg Sonderrmann, organ & Halla Dröfn Jónsdóttir, soprano. Hosted by the Society of Icelandic Organists. Entrance: 1000 ISK.
- Rósenberg**
21:00 Geirfluglarnir.

10 FRI

- B5**
23:00 DJ Simon GorillaFunk.
- Café Paris**
22:00 Cocktail Night.
- Celtic Cross**
01:00 Live Music.
- Cultura**
22:00 Live DJs.

- Dubliner**
22:30 Live Music.
- English Pub**
22:00 Live music.
- Grand Rokk**
21:00 Grapevine Concert.
- Hemmi og Valdi**
23:00 DJ Arnþjófur.
- Hressó**
22:00 Live Music + DJ Elli.
- Jacobsen**
00:00 Danni Deluxx, Dubstep, Ewok, Kalli Breakbeat.
- Kaffibarinn**
21:00 Kimi Records and Bedroom Community Night, followed by DJ Maggi Lego.
- Kaffi Zimsen**
00:00 DJ Dramatic.
- London/Reykjavík**
00:00 Either Jón Gestur or Paul Moritz.
- Prikið**
22:30 Intro and 7 Berg.
- Q-Bar**
23:00 DJ Manny.
- Rósenberg**
21:00 Live Music TBC.
- Sódóma Reykjavík**
22:00 Bloodgroup.

11 SAT

- B5**
23:00 DJ Funky Fleivur.
- Celtic Cross**
01:00 Live Music.
- Cultura**
22:00 Live DJs.
- Dubliner**
22:30 Live Music.
- English Pub**
22:00 Live Music.
- Græna Hattinum (Akureyri)**
21:00 Árstíðir.
- Hemmi og Valdi**
23:00 DJ Gault.
- Hressó**
22:00 Menn Ársins + DJ Elli.
- Jacobsen**
00:00 Reykveek Night.
- Kaffibarinn**
23:45 Gísli Galdur.
- Kaffi Zimsen**
23:00 Live DJ.
- London/Reykjavík**
00:00 Danni Bigroom.
- Prikið**
22:30 DJ Danni Deluxx.
- Q-Bar**
23:00 Rockabilly Night with Langi Seli, Skuggarnir and DJ Curver.
- Rósenberg**
21:00 Hjaltalín.

12 SUN

- Dubliner**
22:30 Live Music.
- Kaffi Hjómálind**
16:00 Samba.
- Hallgrímskirkja**
17:00 International Organ Summer, Feat. Germany's Christof Pülsch. Entrance: 1500 ISK.
- Prikið**
22:30 Hangover Cinema with FREE POPCORN.
- Q-Bar**
23:00 Open Decks.
- Rósenberg**
21:00 Árstíðir.

13 MON

- Dubliner**
22:30 Live Music.
- Kaffi Hjómálind**

Music & Entertainment | Venue finder

Amsterdam Hafnarstræti 5 D3	Dubliner Hafnarstræti 4 D3	Nýlenduvörurverzlun Hemma & Valda Laugavegur 21 F5
Apótek Austurstræti 16 E3	English Pub Austurstræti 12 E3	Næsti Bar Ingólfstræti 1A E5
B5 Bankastræti 5 E4	Glaumar Tryggvagata 20 D3	Óliver Laugavegur 20A F5
Babalú Skólavörðustígur 22 F5	Grand Rokk Smíðjustígur E5	Ölstofan Vegamótastígur F5
Batteri Hafnarstræti 1-3 D3	Highlander Lækjargata 10 F3	Prikið Bankastræti F5
Bar 11 Laugavegur 11 E5	Hressó Austurstræti 20 E4	Q-Bar Ingólfstræti 3 F4
Barbara Laugavegur 22 F6	Hverfisbarinn Hverfisgata 20 E5	Rósenberg Klapparstígur 25 F6
Bjarni Fel Austurstræti 20 E4	Jacobsen Austurstræti 9 E3	Sódóma Reykjavík Tryggvagata 22 D3
Boston Laugavegur 28b F6	Kaffi Hjómálind Laugavegur 23 F6	Sólón Bankastræti 7A E4
Café Cultura Hverfisgata 18 E5	Kaffi Zimsen Hafnarstræti 18 E4	Thorvaldsen Austurstræti 8 E3
Café Paris Austurstræti 14 E3	Kaffibarinn Bergstræðastræti 1 F5	Vegamót Vegamótastígur 4 F5
Balthazar Hafnarstræti 1-3 D3	Karamba Laugavegur 22 F6	
Celtic Cross Hverfisgata 26 E5	London/Reykjavík Tryggvagata 22 D3	
Dillon Laugavegur 30 F6	NASA Þorvaldsenstræti 2 E3	

20:00 Audiobook Night.
Kaffi Zimsen
 21:00 2 for 1 BEER!
Prikið
 22:30 Live Music.
Rósenberg
 21:00 Reyryn and Band.

14 TUE

Dubliner
 22:30 Live Music.
Kaffi Hljómálinn
 16:00 Samba.
Prikið
 22:30 DJ Addi.
Rósenberg
 21:00 Jagúar.

15 WED

Dubliner
 22:30 Live Music.
Kaffi Hljómálinn
 18:00 Ghetto Yoga.
Hallgrímskirkja
 12:00 Lunchtime Concert, feat. Chamber choir **Schola Cantorum Reykjavicensis**. Entrance: 1000 ISK.
Jacobsen
 00:00 Late Hour Night, feat **Danni Deluxx**.
Prikið
 22:30 Live Music.
Q-Bar
 23:00 Pub Quiz.
Rósenberg
 21:00 Live Music TBC.

16 THU

B5
 23:00 DJ **Simon GorillaFunk**.
Dubliner
 22:30 Live Music.
Cultura
 22:00 House DJs.
English Pub
 22:00 Live Music.
Hressó
 22:00 **Jobvan and Vigni + DJ Maggi**.
Kaffi Hljómálinn
 17:30 Ghetto Yoga with Siggý.
Kaffibarinn
 22:00 **KNHNDMSM** DJs.
Jacobsen
 00:00 Weircore Night.
Prikið
 22:30 DJ **Gauti**.
Q-Bar
 23:00 DJ **Kári**.
Reykjavík Cathedral
 12:15 Lunchtime concert in Reykjavík Cathedral, feat. **Douglas Brotchie**, organ & **Einar Clause**, tenor. Hosted by the Society of Icelandic Organists. Entrance: 1000 ISK.
Rósenberg
 21:00 **Melchior**.



3 July
Swing Night
Hemmi og Valdi
 Laugavegur 21 ☺ 23:00

Come on you cool cats and baby dolls, it's time to jive to the greatest swing tunes in town! Hemmi and Valdi deem to be the hippest joint around on July. There they will be holding a 50's and 60's twist night for your dancing shoes and tipsy toes. Guys, style your pompadour high, gals get your pencil skirts on. Drink until you're twisted and boogie to the likes of Glenn Miller, Gene Krupa and Chick Webb. Nice and dandy! **JB**



Teach Us How to Roar Like a Monster
 By **Sari Peltonen**

Bad hair day, spin the bottle, beat on a pregnant woman and forge an unbreakable connection.

Erna Ómarsdóttir's "Teach Us How To Outgrow Our Madness" premiered at the National Theatre on June 19 to a full house of fans and a who's who of Reykjavík – a well deserved celebration of one of Iceland's most individual and accomplished artists.

The date was also Icelandic women's rights day, an appropriate choice for a performance that explores the intense relationships between middle aged women. A performance in which the characters' movements are defined by a secret shared amidst the rivalry, cruelty and bonds of their deep connections.

Combining dance, storytelling and theatre with heavy electronic beats and live singing, Ómarsdóttir continues to walk an unaffected path of her own through the sometimes spurious world of the arts. Once again employing collaboration to help blaze the individualistic trail, Teach Us to Outgrow Our Madness was conceived and performed together with previous cohorts Sissel Merete Bjorkli, Riina Huhtanen, Sigríður Soffía Nielsdóttir and Margrét Sara Guðjónsdóttir (with music by Reykjavík's Valdimar Jóhannsson and musician Lieven Dousselaere).

Assuredly confronting taboos, the challenging performance also provided the perfect occasion to observe some awkward squirming from a fair proportion of the well-turned out National Theatre audience.

With her profoundly, and at times disturbingly, dynamic movement, the diminutive Ómarsdóttir stands out even when surrounded by statuesque Nordic blondes lassoing jump-ropes in a deep trance. Indeed, the only shame was that the nature of the piece required this aspect of her work to be dialled down. At least for a female viewer the pull-no-punches themes hit hard, cutting wisdom and knife-sharp honesty in the performance, mixing with a refreshingly wild streak of humour. Building to the dancers' full blooded expressions of hysteria and insanity, the journey was at times shockingly powerful.

But hitting hardest of all was the sheer force of Ms. Ómarsdóttir's vocals. Her repertoire ranges from childlike utterings to aggressive expulsions of the lungs in sync with the movement and a full-blown heavy-metal roar that is impossible to escape, engulfing the listener and irresistibly driving them in her direction. Or in less poetic terms, a fucking awesome noise.

"My hobby is screaming" she says after the show, "but it causes trouble with the neighbours."



Art Mania in the East fjords

lunga.is
 Fly to LungA with Air Iceland

The Annual LungA Fête (abbreviation for the Youth Art Festival in the East) takes place between the 13th and 19th of July this summer and the celebration sure will be grand 'cause they're throwing it for the tenth time! The small town of Seyðisfjörður, best known for its herring culture will host the event, as always, so the number of inhabitants (usually around 700) will be increased substantially over the week as between four or five thousand attendants are expected. One of the festival's main goals is to arouse interest in culture and arts but also obliterate wrongful prejudice against the word itself: art. Several workshops will be operated but some of Iceland's most famed artists will share their wisdom, e.g. Hugleikur Dagsson and Mugison. This year's high roller is definitely Henrik Vibskov, the Danish design wonder. He'll be hosting an installment workshop that bears the name "Blindness Performance."

If you're not so keen on participating in artsy workshops however, you could do as bulk of the festival's guests, that is, enjoy the fine concerts on their schedule (includes the notorious KIMI tour), drink some beer and enjoy the incredible surroundings in Seyðisfjörður. **SKK**

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Live Music

FRIDAY 3 JULY
 >> Beneath
 >> Bastard
 >> Svartidauði
 >> Wistaria

FRIDAY 10 JULY
 >> Grapevine Concert

FRIDAY 17 JULY
 >> Troubadour Night

SATURDAY 18 AUGUST
 >> Bob
 >> Catapillar
 ... and others

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MUSIC

JULY

- continued -

OUTSIDE REYKJAVÍK

Ísafjörður Kaffi Edinborg

- July 3 Súpergrúppan**
11pm - 03am
Admission: 2000
- July 10 Appolo with Eybór**
11pm - 03am
Admission: 1000 ISK
- July 16 Jagúar**
9.30pm - 01am
Admission: 1500 ISK

Akureyri Græni Hatturinn

- July 3 Ljótu Hálfvitarnir**
8.30 pm - ?
Admission: 1500 ISK
- July 4 Ljótu Hálfvitarnir**
8.30 pm - ?
Admission: 1500 ISK
- July 8 Leaves**
9pm - 01am
Admission TBA
- July 9 Deep Purple Tribute**
9pm - 01am
Admission: TBA
- July 10 Langi Sell og Skuggarnir**
9pm - ?
Admission: TBA
- July 11 "Hver á sér fegra föðurland"
Svavar Knútur
Árstöðir
Helgi Valur**
9pm-?
Admission TBA

- Lögmanshlíðakirkja**
July 6 Petrea Óskarsdóttir (Flute)
Lára Sóley Jóhannsdóttir (Violin)
Eydís S. Úlfarsdóttir (Viola) & Ásdís Arnardóttir (cello)
play Mozart's Flute Quartet
8.30pm - ?
Admission: 1000 ISK

- Ketilhúsið**
July 9 Ingvi Kvartett
9.30pm - ?
Admission: TBA

- Húsavík**
Gamli Baukur
July 4 DJ Unnur
11pm - 03am
Admission: 500ISK
- July 7 Hver á sér fegra föðurland
-Svavar Knútur
-Árstöðir
-Helgi Valur**
8pm - 11.30pm
Admission: TBA
- July 18 Lírúkkassinn
-Björn Jörundur
-Valli Sport**
10pm-03am
Admission: 1500ISK

Egilsstaðir

- Skjálfti**
July 4 Disel
11pm - 03am
Admission: TBA
- Valaskjálft**
July 11 Sálín
11pm - 03am
Admission: TBA

- Selfoss**
800 Bar
July 3 Mónó
11pm - 03.30am
Admission: 1500 ISK
- July 4 Sirkuz (A dance for 13-16 years old)**
10.30pm - 01.30am
Admission 1500 ISK
- July 9 DJ Sólón**
10pm - 01am
Free Admission
- July 11 Gunní Óla & Hebbi Viðars**
11pm - 03.30am
Admission: 500 ISK

Grapevine events July

- 10 Grand Rokk**
☺ 10 pm
gogoyoko Presents:
Grapevine Grand Rock
Borko
Sin Fang Bous
Hildur Guðnadóttir
Adda
1.000 ISK



10 July

Bloodgroup

Sódoma Reykjavík Tryggvagötu 22

Local electro favourites Bloodgroup will be donating their musical cells to you personally on the July 10 at Sódoma Reykjavík. Since the release of their debut album Sticky Situation, the band have been making a name for themselves throughout Iceland and overseas, critics even proclaiming it as "one of the best albums of the year." Bloodgroup's explicitly catchy electro dance pop is guaranteed to get any of the moodiest characters on the floor or dancing swiftly across the bar. **JB**



4 July

**Plastic Gods
Brain Police
Cliff Clavin
Sleeping Giant**

Dillon Rockbar Laugavegi 30 ☺ 21pm

How else would you celebrate American Independence Day than with some good old Icelandic doom? Dillon Rock bar on Laugavegur dons its robes for Reykjavík's very own grim beasts Plastic Gods. Fusing together the slow metal drones of Sunn o))), and the dark riffage of Black Sabbath, The Evil Inquisition said they brought an 'all round sense of apocalypse and catastrophe,' so expect to write your will before you leave the house. Also on the bill are Sleeping Giant, Cliff Clavin and Brain Police for your stoned pleasures. **JB**



5 July
12 July

The International Organ Summer Concert Series

Hallgrímskirkja Skólavörðuholt ☺ 17pm

Reykjavík's Landmark Cathedral Hallgrímskirkja is proud to present the International Organ Summer Concert Series over the months of July and August. The series established itself as a worldwide hotspot for organ music since the inauguration of the spectacular Kalis organ in 1992. For this year's festival, the main focus is based on works by the German composer Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, celebrating the 200th anniversary of his birth. Finnish organist Pétur Sakari will be performing on the 5th July and the German born Christof Pülsch on the 12th July - prices are 1500ISK and both start at 17:00. The Arts Society of Hallgrímskirkja warmly welcomes your arrival! **JB**

Art | Venue finder

- 101 Gallery**
Hverfisgata 18A | **F6**
Thu-Sat 14-17 and by appointment
www.101hotel.is/101hotel/101gallery/
- Artótek**
Tryggvagata 15 | **D5**
Mon 10-21, Tue-Thu 10-19, Fri 11-19, Sat and Sun 13-17
www.sim.is/Index/Islenka/Artotek
- ASÍ Art Museum**
Freygata 41 | **G10**
Tue-Sun 13-17
- Árbæjarsafn**
Kistuhylur 4
- The Culture House**
Hverfisgata 15 | **F6**
Open daily 11-17
www.thjodmenning.is
- Dwarf Gallery**
Grundarstígur 21 | **H8**
Opening Hours: Fri and Sat 18-20
www.this.is/birta
- The Einar Jónsson Museum**
Eiriksgata | **G9**
Tue-Sun 14-17
www.skulptur.is
- Fótógrafi**
Skólavörðustígur 4a | **F7**
www.fotografi.is
- Gallery 100°**
Bæjarháls 1
www.or.is/Forsida/Gallery100/
Open weekdays from 08:30-16:00
- Gallery Auga fyrir Auga**
Hverfisgata 35 | **G7**
- Gallery StartArt**
Laugavegur 12B | **G7**
Tue-Sat 1-17
www.startart.is
- Gallery Ágúst**
Baldursgata 12 | **F9**
Wed-Sat 12-17
www.galleriagust.is
- Gallery Fold**
Rauðarástígur 14-16 | **J9**
Mon-Fri 10-18 / Sat 11-16 / Sun 14-16
www.myndlist.is
- Gallery Kling & Bang**
Hverfisgata 42 | **G7**
Thurs-Sun from 14-18
this.is/klingogbang/
- Gallery Turpentine**
Ingólfstræti 5 | **F7**
Tue-Fri 12-18 / Sat 11-16
www.turpentine.is
- Gerðuberg Cultural Centre**
Gerðuberg 3-5
Mon-Thu 11-17 / Wed 11-21 / Thu-Fri 11-17 / Sat-Sun 13-16
www.gerduberg.is
- Hitt Húsið - Gallery Tukt**
Pósthússtræti 3-5 | **E6**
www.hithusid.is
- i8 Gallery**
Klapparstígur 33 | **G7**
Tue-Fri 11-17 / Sat 13-17 and by appointment. www.i8.is
- Living Art Museum**
Vatnsstígur 3 - **G7**
Wed, Fri-Sun 13-17 / Thu 13-22. www.nylo.is
- Lost Horse Gallery**
Skólastræti 1 | **F6**
Weekends from 13-19 and by appointment on weekdays.
- Hafnarborg**
Strandgötu 34,
Hafnarfjörður
- The National Gallery of Iceland**
Frikirkjuvegur 7 | **E8**
- Tue-Sun 11-17
www listasafn.is
- The National Museum**
Suðurgata 41 | **C9**
Open daily 10-17
natmus.is/
- The Nordic House**
Sturlugata 5 | **C11**
Tue-Sun 12-17
www.nordice.is/
- The Numismatic Museum**
Einholt 4 | **K9**
Open Mon-Fri 13:30-15:30.
- Reykjavík 871+/-2**
Aðalstræti 17 | **D6**
Open daily 10-17
- Reykjavík Art Gallery**
Skúlagata 28 | **H6**
Tuesday through Sunday 14-18
- Reykjavík Art Museum**
Open daily 10-16
www listasafnreykjavikur.is
- Ásmundur Sveinsson Sculpture Museum**
Sigtún Hafnarhúis
Tryggvagata 17 | **E5**
- Kjarvalsstaðir**
Flókagata | **K11**
- Reykjavík City Theatre**
Listabraut 3
- Reykjavík Maritime Museum**
Grandagarður 8 | **C3**
- Reykjavík Museum of Photography**
Tryggvagata 16 | **D5**
Weekdays 12-19 / Sat-Sun 13-17
www.ljosmyndasafnreykjavikur.is
- Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum**
Laugarnestangi 70



ÞJÓDMINJASAFN ÍSLANDS
National Museum of Iceland



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National Museum of Iceland

OPENING HOURS:

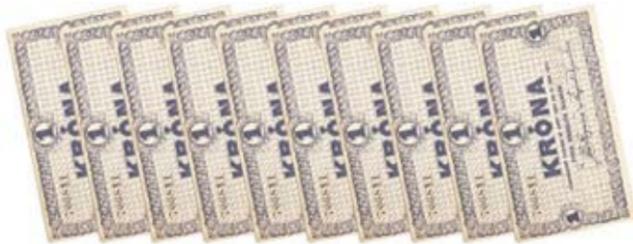
Summer
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Daily 10-17

Winter
(September 16th - April 30th)
Daily except Mondays 11-17



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Numismatic Museum



The Central Bank and National Museum of Iceland jointly operate a numismatic collection that consists of Icelandic notes and coins, foreign money from earlier times, especially if mentioned in Icelandic sources, and more recent currency from Iceland's main trading partner countries. A selection from the numismatic collection is on display in showcases on the ground floor of the Central Bank's main building.

Situated in the Central Bank's main building in Kalkofnsvegur 1, Reykjavík. Open Mon.-Fri. 13:30-15:30. Free admittance.



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ART

GALLERIES & MUSEUMS

COCKTAIL PLEASURES AND VISUAL STIMULATION

How to use the listings
Venues are listed alphabetically by day. For complete listings and detailed information on venues visit www.grapevine.is

OPENING

JULY

4 4pm
Gallery Agust Sharp

Artist Andrea Maack introduces her third perfume, Sharp, in an exhibition that explores aspects of the fashion industry while still connecting to the art world.

10 5pm
Living Art Museum Beauty Camp

Snorri Asmundsson presents his work addressing vanity from the 10th to the 12th.

11 11am
National Gallery of Iceland Hidden Treasure: Treasures in Public Possession?

Works from the three Icelandic state-owned banks' collections, along with some works from the National Gallery.

ONGOING

Akureyri Art Museum (Akureyri)

Current exhibitions:
May 06- July 05
Hulda Hákon - Two Men, One Woman and a Monster From The Sea.

ASÍ Art Museum

Current exhibitions:
June 27 - Aug. 23
Summer Exhibition - Works from the collection
Chosen paintings from Jón Stefáns-son, Jóhannes Sveinsson Kjarval, and Svavar Guðnason.

The Culture House

Permanent exhibitions:
Medieval Manuscripts
March 28- Jan 10 2010

ICELAND::FILM

This exhibition traces for the first time the development of Icelandic filmmaking from its origins around 1904 to the year 2008.

The Library Room.

Current exhibitions:
June 05- August 07
Nordic Book Binding

This exhibition features 89 hand-crafted bindings by 91 bookbinders, as two are made in collaboration. All

participants bound the book 'Northern Wind,' with poems by 18 contemporary Nordic poets and graphic drawings by Icelandic artists.

Sheepskin, Saffian and Shirting
A related exhibition to **Nordic Book Binding**, it shows the tools and equipment used in book binding.

Exhibition Series:
Paintings by Hulda Viljálmsdóttir.

The Einar Jónsson Museum
Permanent exhibition: **The work of sculptor Einar Jónsson.**

Gerðarsafn Art Museum (Kópavogur)
June 27 - Aug 31

The Kópavogur Art Museum Summer Exhibition

Gerðuberg Cultural Centre Boginn Gallery: The Land in Colour
Popular artist Guðráður Jóhannesson exhibition of landscape paintings.

Gljúfrasteinn Laxness Museum
Gljúfrasteinn was the home and workplace of Halldór Laxness (winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1955) and his family for more than half a century. It has now been opened to the public as a museum, unchanged from when Laxness lived there.

Hafnarborg Centre of Culture and Fine Art (Hafnarfjörður)

Current Exhibitions:

June 24 - August 3

Collectors' Collections

An exhibition celebrating the 100th anniversary of Dr. Sveirir Magnússon, founder of Hafnarborg. On this occasion selected art works from the original collection at the Centre will be displayed along side the art of other leading collectors.

is Gallery

Current Exhibition:

June 19 - July 31

Anthony McCall and Finnogi Pétursson

The artists present their installation works.

Living Art Museum

Throughout June - Exhibitions from Runo Lagomarsino, Yiva Westerlund and Olivia Plender.

Lost Horse Gallery

June 17 - July 5

FoolsGold Iceland.

An exhibition featuring works from artists Shanan Campanaro, Lana Crooks, Maria Kozak, Meg McGreevy and Alexander Zaklynsky in collaboration with A.S.E.A. (Artists Supporting Environmental Awareness).

The National Museum

Permanent exhibition:

The Making of a Nation

Heritage and History in Iceland is intended to provide insight into the history of the Icelandic nation from the Settlement to the present day.

Jan 31 - Nov 30.

Encounters.

Archaeological excavations at many locations around Iceland have been funded by Kristnihátíðarsjóður (the Millennium Fund). Finds from some of these excavations are on display in an exhibition suitable for the whole family.

The Numismatic Museum

Permanent exhibition:

The Central Bank of Iceland and the National Museum of Iceland jointly operate a numismatic collection consisting of Icelandic notes and coins.

The Nordic House



Stefán Steinn

Exhibition "Natural Beauty"

Reykjavik Museum of Photography, Tryggvagötu 15, 101 Reykjavik

Ongoing July 2nd to August 25th

Sometimes art gets a little mind boggling. When this happens, it is best to return to the roots. Photographer Stefán Steinn has done just this, with regards to the representation of nature in art. In his exhibition "Natural Beauty," Stefán's photos depict nature in its simple forms. However, simple doesn't mean "ugly." The artist leaves the viewer to imagine the pieces of nature in his photographs as a part of a grander environment that they create. And though it may seem far out, it strikingly works. Turns out, less is more. **JG**



Life isn't just a game

— it's also a bed of roses...

16. May - 29. August 2009

LJÓSMYNDASAFN REYKJAVÍKUR
Reykjavik Museum of Photography

Tryggvagata 15, 6th floor · 101 Reykjavik ·
Tel: 411 6390 · www.photomuseum.is
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Franz Kafka: Die Verwandlung – Umskiptin

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THE ENGLISH PUB

at Austurstræti 12



MAP

Places We Like

1 Kaffibarinn

Bergstaðastræti 1

f kaffibarinn

Weekends are somewhat overrated at Kaffibarinn if you ask me. Don't get me wrong, they can be brilliant if you're completely pissed, the DJ is fresh and the crowd is full-blooded, still the weekdays are better. It doesn't matter when you pop in, you're always treated like a pal rather than a customer, and you should always expect get caught in some shenanigan, whether it's a crazy Monday bender or a wacko Tuesday... well... bender. SKK

2 Grái Kötturinn

Hverfisgata 16a

Super relaxed and cozy diner/café below street level. This place makes the best hangover breakfast ever (the truck!) and any-other-day breakfast as well. It's a nice and relaxing place to eat and increase your caffeine intake and chill with friends or with some reading material. CF

3 Hemmi og Valdi

Laugavegi 21

The "colonial store" Hemmi and Valdi was probably 2008's most surprising crowd pleaser. The cosy hangout advanced from being a toasty retreat, where you could get cheap beer and have a quiet chat, into being a chock-full concert venue and an all-night party place. And believe me, the new atmosphere is brilliant. SKK

4 Segurmo

Laugavegi 28b

This place was something we all needed, a cheap and scrumptious bistro, right inside one of our favourite bars: Boston. The cuisine really is Icelandic, because of their cornerstones: the meat soup and the fish stew, but the rest varies between weeks, so their menu could even pass as international. So, if you don't like the current meat dish, you might in a week. SKK

5 Tíu Dropar

Laugavegi 27

If you're sick of all the arty cafés, filled with Sigur Rós wannabes and their Macs, browsing Facebook— go to Tíu Dropar. It's a back-to-basics Icelandic café that hasn't changed their interior since the 60s. Really proves the saying 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it.' Plus, the coffee's great. SKK

6 Jacobsen

Austurstræti 9

A fairly new venue in town, Jacobsen is owned by some nouveau riche Swedes, and has been providing a non-stop party over the last few months. Besides its importing foreign big-shot DJs and other niceties, it is probably most appreciated for its loooong hours; it doesn't matter if you stop partying at 2AM or way-too-much AM, Jacobsen is always forking out shots and cocktails. SKK



7 Pizza King

Hafnarstræti 18

To be honest, this isn't the best pizza up for grabs, but it's cheap, not pre-heated (like at various other pizza places downtown), and the guys are rather cool. Their pizzas are always bulletproof, and they offer various great offers on top of it, which you should definitely check out. SKK

8 Kolaportið

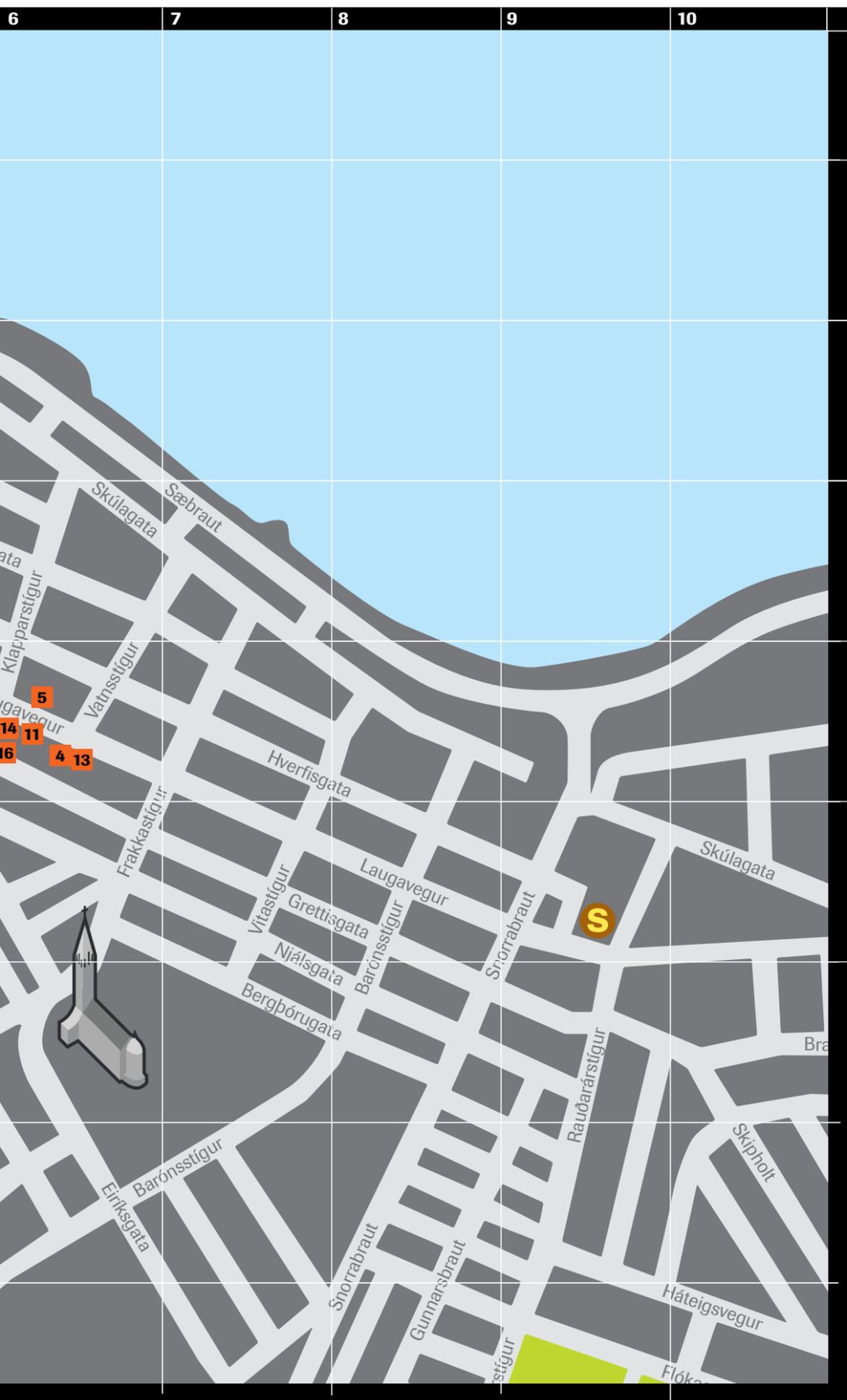
Tryggvagata 19

Reykjavík's massive flea market is a wonderful place to get lost for a few hours, rummaging through stall upon stall of potential treasures. There are heaps of used clothing, knitwear and other yard-sale type goods from decades of yore, and a large food section with fish, meats and baked goods. Check out the vintage post cards and prints at the table near the army surplus. CF

9 Hressó

Austurstræti 20

You know, Hressó is basically the only place I go for coffee. Why? Their coffee is decent to excellent, but their forte is surely their wonderful patio, where you can enjoy the spring breeze in the sun, wrap yourself in a blanket beneath an electric heater in January and at all times: smoke. They boast of quite the prolific menu, but I'd reconsider the playlists to tell you the truth, too much of Nickelback really hurts. SKK



10 Grand Rokk

Smíðjustíg 6
The only 'real' bar in town, no doubt. In downtown Reykjavik it's hard to rumble into a pub not crowded by musicians or artsy folks, but this one is an exception. Whether it's 4AM on a Friday or 5PM on a Monday you'll see the same flock of John Does, taking a break from their daily routines, enjoying a shot 'n' a brew. If you want to witness an earnest Icelandic 'Cheers' or a 'Moe's' - this is the place. Oh, and on weekends, they play host to some awesome concerts, too. SKK

11 Santa Maria

Laugavegi 22a
On Laugavegur, Santa Maria offers a fairly extensive menu of Mexican dishes and drinks at a really reasonable price - possibly some of the best in the city. The décor is colourful and welcoming, the portions are generous and the service is fast and friendly. Recommended. CF

12 Nonnabiti

Hafnarstræti 9
Delicious and relatively cheap considering how massive and filling their sandwiches are. The Luxury Sub, with salty pork, veggies, sauce and pineapple is a brilliant combination of flavours for late-night munchies. It's just as satisfying and filling during more civilized hours as well. And the service is fast if you're in a rush. CF

13 Boston

Laugavegi 28b
Like an older sibling to the fabled (now deceased) Sirkús, Boston is a warm and mellow second-floor bar on Laugavegur that plays host to the arty party crowd. The baroque wall dressings and deep, rich coloured décor make this bar feel pretty swank, but Boston also serves up some reasonably priced food earlier in the evening, so it's not too swank. CF

14 Karamba

Laugavegi 22
New hotspot in town Karamba is a colourful and eclectic bar on Laugavegur with a comfortable atmosphere, typically great music and a chill crowd. This is a good place to relax or to do some serious drinking or to relax. Plus, their decors are done strictly by Grapevine-friendly artists, such as Lóa (who does our comics), Hugleikur Dagsson (who illustrates the monster column) and Bobby Breiðholt (who's done a lot of nice illustrations for us); they are truly a sight to behold. CF

15 Sushismiðjan

Geirsgötu 3
This is a seriously great place to grab a quick and quality sushi lunch. Pre-prepared boxes of maki and nigiri are reasonable priced and really well made, amply filled with deliciously fresh ingredients. The indoor seating area is limited to some stools and outward-facing wall-mounted tabletops but there are a couple of tables and chairs set up outside the front door for those wanting to watch the ships and tourists in the harbour while they eat. CF

16 Barbara

Laugavegi 22
At Laugavegur 22, above Karamba, Barbara serves up a lively atmosphere for Reykjavik's gay community and anybody else who just wants to dance and have a good time. The first level is made for dancing and is often packed with sweaty bodies, while the second level of the bar offers a place to sit, drink and chat and another in which to smoke. CF

17 Habibi

Hafnarstræti 18
This small restaurant offers up a concise menu of delicious Arabic cuisine, from shawarma to kebabs and falafels. The staff is really friendly and accommodating of requests to kick up the spiciness or tone it down if the customer so desires. Habibi seriously hits the spot after hours of partying (or any other time of day) so it's convenient that the place is open until 6 a.m. Friday and Saturday. CF

18 Q-Bar

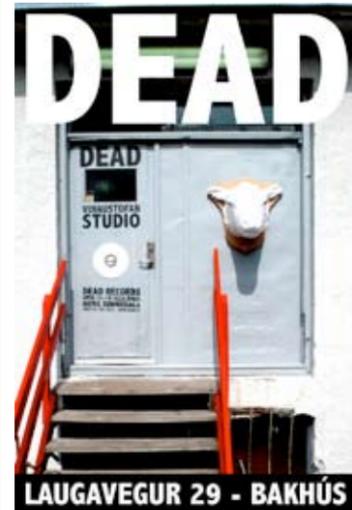
Ingólfsstræti 3
Situated on Ingólfsstræti, Q-Bar provides a warm welcome to you with rainbow colours and open arms. A roomy venue with more than enough to swing a cat around or to swing yourself whilst boogeying the night away to some of the finest DJs in Iceland. We especially enjoy large beers for the merry price of 350ISK every Sunday. JB



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ART GALLERIES

— continued —

June 13-July 13
101 Tokyo
July 5: **Sunday cinema : Kikujiro** 4pm
July 9: **Lecture 3: Architecture** 8pm
July 10: **Tea Ceremony Workshop** 5pm
July 11: **Tea Ceremony Workshop** 2pm
July 12: **Tea Ceremony Workshop** 2pm
July 12: **Sunday cinema: Always: Sunset on Third Street** 4pm

Reykjavík 871 +/- 2
Permanent exhibition:
The Settlement Exhibition

Reykjavík Arts Festival
May 16- August 02
Stray Beacons
Ásdís Sif Gunnarsdóttir, Curver Thoroddsen, Icelandic Love Corporation and Unnar Örn exhibits their works in lighthouses around Iceland. See artfest.is for more info.

Reykjavík Art Museum Asmundarsafn
May 2- April 30 2010
Rhyme - Works by Ásmundur Sveinsson and contemporary artists
This exhibition showcases contemporary artists that tackle similar issues as Ásmundur did in his time, but in the context of a new age.

Reykjavík Art Museum Hafnarhús
May 28- August 23.
Possibilities
Works by 10 Guðmunda Kristinsdóttir Art Prize winners.

May 28- August 29 2010
Erró - Portrett-
A dedication to Erró.

Reykjavík Art Museum Kjarvalsstaðir
May 15- August 30
The House of Una And West 8th Street

The life of Icelandic artists Louisa Matthíasdóttir and Nina Tryggvadóttir and their connection with artists from Iceland and New York.
May 09- August 30
Kjarval and Animals
An exhibition focusing on Kjarval's depictions of animals.

May 15- August 30
Icelandic design, furniture, architecture and product design.
Reykjavík Maritime Museum
Current Exhibitions:
Living Museum by the Sea; Arterial for Country and City; From Poverty to Abundance; The Shark - Light and Life Energy; Hidden Craftsman.

The Reykjavík Museum of Photography
Current Exhibitions:
May 16 - Aug 30
Life is not just a game- it's a bed of roses...
Show curated by Guðmundur Oddur Magnússon and Guðfinna Mjöll Magnúsdóttir.

July 2 - Aug. 25
Natural Beauty
Photographer Stéfan Steinn displays his photographs of nature in its simplest forms.

Ásmundur Sveinsson Sculpture Museum
Permanent Exhibition:
The Shape of Line.

A new retrospective of works by Ásmundur Sveinsson. The exhibition focuses on abstract works from 1945 onwards.

May 01- April 30 2010
RHYTHM- Ásmundur and Our Age
This exhibition showcases contemporary artists that tackle similar issues as Ásmundur did in his time, but in a context of a new age.

OUTSIDE REYKJAVÍK

Hafnarfjörður

Hafnarborg
June 24 - August 3
Exhibition "Collectors" works by various artists

Borgarnes

The Icelandic Settlement Centre
Permanent exhibitions:
The Settlement of Iceland; The Saga of Egill Skalla-Grímsson.
Current theatre productions:
Brák - a monologue by Brynhildur Guðjónsdóttir
Mr. Skallagrímsson - a monologue by Benedikt Erlingsson
Storms and Wars - a monologue by Einar Káráson

Stykkishólmur

Library of Water
Permanent Exhibition:
Roni Horn installation. The artist has replaced stacks of books with glass columns containing water gathered from Iceland's glaciers and glacial rivers.

Akureyri

Kunstraum Wohnraum
April 4 - June 21
Exhibition by Huginn Þór Arason.

Seyðisfjörður

Skafthell
June 20 - August 31
Exhibition by Kristján Steingrímur Jónsson.

June 21 - August 31
An exhibition by Kristján Steingrímur Jónsson.

Hveragerði

LÁ Art
May 2 - June 28
"Flashes in the moment of Danger"
An exhibition of works by 8 artists.

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Andrea Maack

Opening of her exhibition,
SHARP

Gallery Agust, Baldursgötu
12, 101 Reykjavík

☺ July 4, 4 p.m.

The fashion industry doesn't always get the best reputation. High-paid models and designers, party going, and seasonal over-the-top runway shows can often be a subject of either jealousy or loathing. Artist Andrea Maack has her own take on the industry, and tries to connect it with the art world in her exhibition SHARP. SHARP is also the name of the perfume (her third scent) that has been released. Her art deals with vanity, society, beauty and just about any subject pertaining to the modern fashion industry. She collaborated with designers to come up with this original exhibition. She also offers her name for mass consumption, just like those fresh styles hitting the pavement each season. **JG**



Collectors' Collection

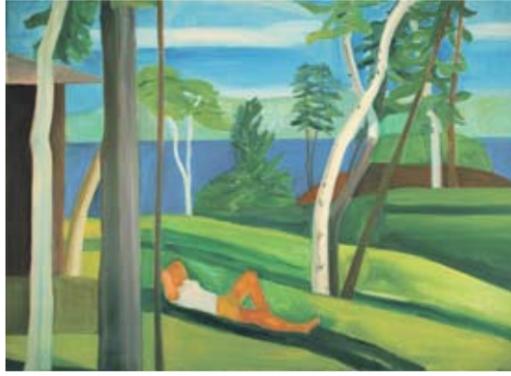
Hafnarborg, Strandgata 34, 220
Hafnarfjörður

☺ Now until August 3rd

☺ 11:00 – 17:00 Everyday

This exhibition is to mark the 100th anniversary of Sverrir Magnússon, the founder of Hafnarborg. The exhibition's ideology is to compare and answer questions on what drives collectors to buy art and what are the values of these collections? Selected contemporary art works from original private collectors Gunnar Dungal, Þórdís Alda Sigurðardóttir, Bragi Guðlaugsson, Ingunn Wernersdóttir and Sverrir Kristinsson will be on display for the first time to mark the occasion. The show is open from now until the 3rd of August, available everyday between 11:00 – 17:00. **JB**

Listasafn Reykjavíkur
Reykjavik Art Museum



Kjarvalsstaðir From Unuhús to West 8th Street 15 May – 30 August 2009

Louisa Matthíasdóttir.

Kjarvalsstaðir
Flókagata, open daily 10–17

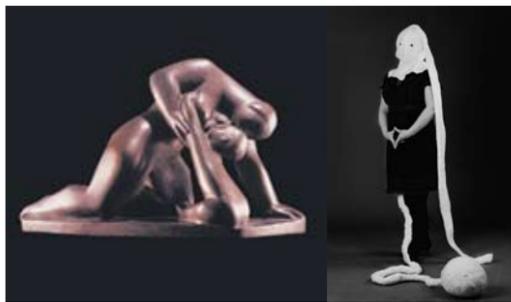
Free guided tours in English
every Thursday at 11 a.m.

Hafnarhús Erró – Portraits 28 May 2009 – 13 August 2010

Hafnarhús
Tryggvagata, open daily 10–17
Thursdays 10–22



Erró.



Ásmundarsafn Rhyme 1 May 2009 – 30 April 2010

Ásmundur Sveinsson.
Eirún Sigurðardóttir.

The Ásmundur Sveinsson
Sculpture Museum
Sigtún, open daily 10–16



Nordic Bookbinding

The Library Room, part of The Culture House, Hverfisgata 15

☺ June 5 – August 7

Collaboration of bookbinders

Books are vessels of the words in between the pages. Yet, there is a big appeal in seeing a book that just looks good. In the Library Room at The Culture House, the exhibition Nordic Bookbinding explores this art as they showcase 89 different bindings. The works were done by artists competing in a manual bookbinding contest. To really show the different takes on bookbinding as an art form, all bindings are of the same book, entitled "Northern Wind," which includes poems from Nordic writers. However, you may surprisingly find yourself more interested in the cover than the words. **JG**

Outside Reykjavík | Venue finder

Akureyri
Populus Tremula
poprem.blogspot.com/
Kaupvangsstræti 12

Græni Hatturinn
myspace.com/grænihattur
Hafnarstræti 96
461 4646

Kunstraum Wohnraum
Ásabyggð 2

Borgarnes
The Icelandic Settlement Centre
www.landnam.is
Brákarbraut 13-15
437-1600

Egilsstaðir
Sláturhúsið
Lyngási 5
470 0692

Valaskjálfi
valaskjalf.is
Skógarlöndum
470 9700

Hafnarfjörður
Hafnarborg
www.hafnarborg.is
Strandgata 34
585-5790

Hveragerði
LÁ Art
www.listasafnamesinga.is
Austurmörk 21
483-1727

Keflavík
Suðsúðvestur
www.sudsudvestur.is
Hafnargata 22
421-2225

Ísafjörður
Kaffi Edinborg
kaffiedinborg.is/
Aðalstræti 7
456 4400

Stykkishólmur
Vatnasafnið / Library of Water
libraryofwater.is
Bókhöðustigur 17

Mývatn
Mývatnsstofa
visitmyvatn.is
Hraunvegi 8
464 4390

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Prices from:
EUR 240,- **

Northern route



Duration: 2 days/1 night *
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F O O D

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REVIEWS



Hamborgarabúlla Tómasar

Geirsgata 1
http://www.bullan.is/

What we think:
If you want to eat a burger in Reykjavik, this is the place.

Búllan

The burger of the century

Hamburgers may not be traditional Icelandic fare, but when it comes down to it, it is no surprise that the fast food obsessed island hosts a brilliant burger joint. A sweet little hut by the harbour, Búllan is no secret – everyone knows that this is the best place for beef in a bun.

Búllan has loosened the tongue muscles and purple prose of the Grapevine editorial team several times over the years. “Mysteriously good burgers,” say the current editorial team, who practically live off of them during layout. “Ideal American burger,” wrote editor Bart Cameron in 2006. “At Hamborgarabúllan, the good times never stop,” wrote Eliza Reid, the resident food critic in 2005. In 2004, Padraig Mara was “nearly moved to tears.”

But Búllan’s burger is no gimmicky attention seeker. Not as innovative as the Keflavik Villiburger “hot-dog burger.” Not as large as the trucks of downtown eateries. The beauty of Búllan’s treasure lies in its simplicity: a white bread bun, slices of lettuce, tomato, cheese and 120 g of local beef patty—cooked so still slightly pink and topped with the holy condiment trinity of mayo, ketchup and mustard. A sinful meaty heaven,

bite after bite. Yet you don’t have to ask a vegetarian twice to join either, as their vegetarian burger is crunchy, fresh, half-organic and tasty as a teacher’s apple.

Go for the offer of the century (ISK 1190) for soda with refill, fries and a burger. Add the coffee shake (ISK 550) too, you won’t regret it. The prices aren’t the lowest in town, but they are not outrageous either, considering the quality. As for service—how many other fast-food joints regularly ask if you enjoyed the food as you walk out the door?

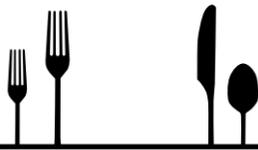
Owner Tommi Tómasson has said that one should never eat at a grill restaurant if the chairs match and Búllan—with its Christmas lights, Sopranos posters and “Be nice or leave” sign posts—is definitely laid back. I have also been told that, when in residence, the dancing Scooby Doo on the counter is a sight to behold.

The best burgers in town are grilled up by the same man who brought the dish to Iceland back in 1981. In honour of this burger king, locals may call the Búllan burgers Tommburgers to try and confuse you, but now you know better.

✉ -SARI PELTONEN

Food & Drink | Venue finder

3 Frakkar Baldursgata 14 F9	Brons Pósthússtræti 9 E6	Grillhúsið Tryggvagata 20 E5/ E6	Kaffitár Hafnarstræti 8 F6	Pizza King Hafnarstræti 18 E6	Sushibarinn Laugavegur 2 F7
Aktu Taktu Skúlugata 15 K8	Café Cultura Hverfisgata 18 G6	Habibi Hafnarstræti 20 D5	Kaffivagninn Grandagarður 10 D1	Pizza Pronto Vallarstræti 4 D6	Svarta Kaffi Laugavegur 54 H8
American Style Tryggvagata 26 E5	Café Loki Lokastígur 28 G9	Hamborgarabúlla Tómasar Geirsgata 1 D5	Kebabhúsið Austurstræti 2 E6	Pizzaverksmiðjan Lækjargötu 8 E6	Sægreifinn Verbuð 8, Geirsgata D5
Argentina Steakhouse Barónstígur I8	Café Paris Austurstræti 14 E6	Hilölla Batar Ingólfstorg D6	Kofi Tómasar Frænda Laugavegur 2 F7	Prikið Bankastræti 12 F6	Tapas Vesturgata 3B D5
Austurlanda-hraðlestin Hverfisgata 64A H7	Café Roma Rauðarárstígur 8 J9	Hótel Holt Bergstaðarstræti 37 F7	Krua Thai Tryggvagata 14 D5	Ráðhúskaffi Tjarnargata 11 D7	Thorvaldsen Austurstræti 8 E6
Á Næstu Grösom Laugavegur 20B G7	Domo Dingholtstræti 5 F7	Humarshúsið Ammatmanstígur 1 E7	La Primavera Lækjarstræti 9 E6	Santa María Laugavegur 22A, F7	Tiu Dropar Laugavegur 27 G7
B5 Bankastræti 5 F6	Einar Ben Veltusundi E6	Hressó Austurstræti 20 E6	Lystin Laugavegur 73 H7	Segafredo Lækjartorg E6	Tívoli Laugavegur 3 F7
Basil & Lime Klappargstíg 38 G7	Eldsmiðjan Bragagata 38A G9	Icelandic Fish & Chips Tryggvagata 8 E5	Mokka Skólavörðustígur 3A F7	Serrano Hringbraut 12 I3	Vegamót Vegamótastígur 4 G7
Babalú Skólavörðustígur 22A G8	Fiskmarkaðurinn Aðalstræti 12 D6	Jómfrúin Lækjargata 4 E6	Nonnabiti Hafnarstræti 9 E6	Silfur Pósthússtræti 11 E6	Við Tjörnina Templarásund 3 E7
Balthazar Hafnarstræti 1-3 D6/E6	Geysir Bar/Bistro Aðalstræti 2 D6	Kaffi Hjómalið Laugavegur 21 G7	O Sushi Lækjargata 2A E6	Sjávarkjallarinn Aðalstræti 2 D6	Vitabar Bergþórugata 21 H9
Bæjarins Beztu Tryggvagata E6	Garðurinn Klappargstígur 37 G7		Pisa Lækjargötu 6b E6	Sólón Bankastræti 7a F6	
	Gletan book café Laugavegur 19 F5				
	Grái Kötturinn Hverfisgata 16A G7				



Segurmo

Grapevine's favourite restaurant of 2009

Segurmo at Boston

Laugavegur 28

What we think:

Consistently good food at bargain prices – a gem.

A couple of months before Segurmo opened in Boston (the bar, not the city), sous chef Sigurdur "Siggi Shaker" Magnús Finnsson of the rock band Singapore Sling explained to the daily paper: "I've never cooked before. I am currently learning to cut onions and I can report that it is going very well."

Perhaps thankfully, there is another chef boiling the Boston broth, as Finnsson's onion cutting skills are gently cultivated by head chef Númi Thomasson, previously responsible for keeping Björk in bread while on tour.

Today, a bit less than a year after opening, Segurmo is the eatery among 101 hipsters. An example to illustrate: when I recently accompanied a birthday horde of 10 diners, several of the group voiced mild disappointment to see the weekly menu had not yet been updated—most had already sampled everything on it.

And why wouldn't they have: Segurmo serves good, healthy lunch and dinner, consistently better in quality than the price tag would suggest (everything

on the menu is below ISK 2.000), in a relaxed setting with moody lights, golden wallpaper, a handful of it-people and a well-stocked bar. And as the bar fills up with other members of the Reykjavik chic it also doubles as a convenient, tres-cool venue for after dinner drinks.

The simple and straight-forward menu includes the weekly portions, one each of fish, meat or vegetarian, alongside permanent offerings of meat soup (soft, hearty, not at all too salty) and plockfiskur, the Icelandic fish stew, which comes in a portion the size of a small child's head, accompanied—as it should be—by sweet rye bread and butter (the plockfiskur, not the child's head). Skip the tourist traps for Icelandic classics and try them in the urban wilderness instead.

When it comes to the consistently good weekly portions, one still hears the occasional sigh of nostalgia from the regulars for such occasional stars as risotto alla Milanese with saffron and quiche.

All in all, the choice of the street-credible team Thomasson-Finnsson to focus on good, simple food with Icelandic ingredients and influences is one worth blowing horns for.

Segurmo is like a cool school canteen for the grown up 101'ers. Only the food is better, the drinks stronger and you always sit at the cool kid's table. ☺ -SARI PELTONEN

Chef's Choice

There are several restaurants in town that serve food as good as it gets. The level is high and the prices, in relation to fine dining elsewhere in the world (not to mention the mid-range Reykjavik eateries) so low that it is almost cheap to eat expensively in Iceland. If you choose to splash out, here are the recommendations from the best in their game:

Ólafur Örn Ólafsson and Gunnar Karl Gislason

"We have been so busy recently that we haven't had time to go out for dinner." Gunnar Karl: "Fiskifélagið for being new and fresh"

Ólafur: "Humarhúsið is always a favourite because of the romantic atmosphere. With a group of friends, Fishmarket; for fast food, Ali Baba. And VOX is always good."

Ólafur Örn Ólafsson and Gunnar Karl Gislason opened DILL Restaurant earlier this year, after having worked extensively both in Iceland and abroad, most recently in VOX. Dill serves new Nordic lunch and dinner in the suitable setting of the Nordic house.

Ólafsson is also the president of the local sommelier association, while Gislason is a member of the Icelandic national culinary team.

Jóhannes Steinn Jóhannesson

"Dill and Grill. Dill Restaurant of the Nordic house and Grillið of Hotel Saga for food and talented chefs. Dill especially because of the concept (Dill serves New Nordic Food made of best local ingredients, surrounded by the Nordic design and architecture) and for the use of top quality ingredients."

Iceland's Chef of the Year and the executive chef at Vox, Jóhannes Jóhannesson, has also cooked at Silfur, Holt and Salt.

Bjarni Gunnar Kristinsson

"The best places are the ones by my friends in the national culinary team: Gunni Karl's Dill, Hrefna's Fishmarket, Tóti's Orange and Jói's VOX. They have been doing a great job and it is really hard to choose between them. Instead of just one place, I'll say all these four."

Bjarni Gunnar Kristinsson has been the head chef of Grillið since 2000 and before that he worked in a Michelin-star restaurant Commis de Cuisine in France. Kristinsson is a master of modern French cuisine with a deep respect for his ingredients.

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our debate on the subject of romantic restaurant, our panellists pointed out that “while they’re not the best nor the cheapest, Ítalia has a distinctly cosy feel that’s especially suited for a date,” adding that “you’re very unlikely to be disturbed by encounters with friends or family at Ítalia.” As we settled on the choice, one added as an afterthought: “Italian food gets you in the mood”

Best place to go for fries:

Hressó

The fries at Hressó are tasty and dirt cheap – and the portions are huuuuuge – making the place an ideal site for some casual, everyday French fry eating. If you’re in the mood, you can also get food to accompany those fries that’s pretty solid and fairly priced.

Best newcomer restaurant:

Saffran

We’ve written a bunch about Saffran in our latest issues. Frankly, we’re kinda obsessed by the place. Cheap, healthy food that actually tastes pretty darn awesome has already garnered Saffran a lot of success, at this point we’re crossing our fingers that they’ll open up a downtown franchise soon. Restaurateurs should note Saffran’s

success (and Santa María and Segurno’s similar momentum last year) and get the clue already: if you open a cheap restaurant that offers good food, people will love you. Open it and they will come. Kudos, Saffran.

Best goddamn restaurant of 2009:

Segurno at Boston

This restaurant has become a firm downtown favourite in the relatively short time it’s been up and running. In fact, the way some people swear by it, you’d think they were practically raised there. But it’s all for a good reason. Segurno head chef Númi Thomasson really knows his stuff, concocting a fresh, brand new menu every week that will mainly consist of modestly newfangled takes on Icelandic classics. Their vegetarian dishes are also of the highest order. Best of all, the food is priced to fit the budgets of even the most lowly student or freelance worker. So we went: cheap + tasty + varied + fresh + novel + accessible = our best goddamn restaurant for 2009. More in our restaurant pages.

Best family restaurant:

Hornið

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top-notch Italian dining since the late seventies, Hornið is the Grapevine’s choice for bringing the whole family out for dinner. They offer delicious dishes that are fit for everyone’s taste, whether it be grandma, the spoiled teen sibling or your average kindergartener. And the atmosphere invites for cosy conversation and extended sitting.

Best place to grab a bite:

Santa María

Santa María – Reykjavík’s only Mexican restaurant – was a revelation when it opened its doors a year and a half ago, and they show no sign of letting up. Put simply, Santa María’s take on Mexican food is authentic and delicious, and the prices remain absurdly cheap (even though they’ve slightly raised them). This leads us to infer that there is absolutely no better place for a cheap, tasty sit-down meal.

Best brunch buffet:

Vox

The brunch buffet at Vox comes for a price, but it is the most extravagant, tasty and awesome one up for offer in the whole of Iceland. Treat yourself to it, won’tcha?

Best restaurant chain:

Serrano

Chain restaurants in Iceland are mostly imported from the US (in fact, Iceland’s KFC is way better than any KFC you’ll get abroad – promise), so it might come as a surprise that the absolute best restaurant chain in Reykjavík is 100% local (even though the food is international). The good people of Serrano specialize in huge and tasty burritos that come in all sorts of flavours and supposedly rather healthy, too. Our folks were pretty much in agreement that Serrano is king of Reykjavík’s restaurant chains, their argument boiling down to this: “Serrano rules.”

Best all-day hangout:

Hressó

Hressó is one of those places that have long since earned an undefined “Best of” status in our hearts. We go there almost daily, the coffee is always good, the staff is nice and it’s an excellent place to hang out. Hressó is a true 101 Reykjavík haven, doubly so if you’re unlucky enough to be a smoker, in which case their heated patio rules very profoundly.

Best restaurant to take your kids:

Lauga-ás

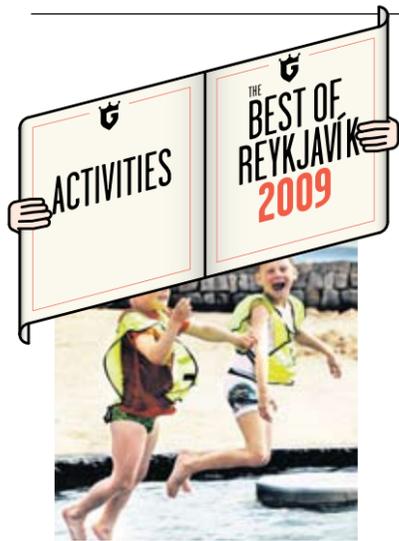
There were a couple of contenders for the title of best kid-friendly restaurant, but Lauga-ás ultimately won the prize due to the fact that they have both an excellent kid-menu and play area, and their food and service is also well fitted for the most discerning adult. In fact, they’re one of Reykjavík’s oldest running restaurants, and have won lots of acclaim and respect through the years. Recommended, not just for kids.

Runners-up: Potturinn og Pannan (“very kid friendly”), Tíu dropar (“for lunch, this is the absolute best place to take your children”).

Best must-try dining experience:

Bæjarins Bestu

This really goes without saying. If you’re visiting Reykjavík, and you’re not a vegetarian, getting one with everything at Reykjavík’s most beloved and established establishment, Bæjarins Bestu (“The town’s best”), is imperative.



Located on top of Skólavörðuholt, next to Hallgrímskirkja, The Einar Jónsson museum and sculpture garden is one of Reykjavík’s true gems. Whether you venture inside to view a selection of Jónsson’s magical sculptures (and his penthouse apartment) or just hang out in the garden, by some more of those awesome sculptures, a visit to the Einar Jónsson museum does not betray. It’s also a great place for midnight picnics. More on page 12

Runner-up: Listasafn Reykjavíkur, Hafnarhús, offers a permanent Erró exhibit, as well as hosting nicely curated shows by top of the line local and international artists from time to time. A must see for any artsy visitor to Reykjavík.

Best gallery:

Gallery Kling og Bang

There are a lot of fun galleries making the rounds in Reykjavík these days (well, actually a lot less than a couple of years ago), but after careful examination we decided that the shows Kling og Bang have offered lately, and the loose and fun ways they tend to run their gallery, really warrants them the title of Best gallery for 2009.

Runner-up: i8 has a ready stable of great artists on hand, and Gallerí Ágúst have been hosting some really accomplished and interesting shows this year.

Best place to spend a rainy day:

Borgarbókasafnið

Borgarbókasafnið is unparalleled as a rainy-day hangout. You can spend (days, even) browsing through their huuuuuge selection of books, comics, DVDs and music that is yours to enjoy at the premises (or take home, if you spring for a library card). If you get bored of all the cultural artefacts (which you won’t), you can even venture to the top floor to enjoy the always-amusing Reykjavík Museum of Photography.

Best place to rent DVDs:

Laugarásvideó

Laugarásvideó’s selection of DVDs is so good that it’s almost a problem. Probably the best video store in Europe, if not the whole world. We state this very seriously.

Best biking tour:

Grandi-Nauthólsvík

Ride your bike around Reykjavík. It’s really fun, if the weather delivers, and it’s sorta healthy, too. Our experts recommend this course of action: start off in the general Grandi area of Vesturbær, cycle your way along the

coastline. You will eventually wind up at the Nauthólsvík geothermal beach, but not before running into plenty of interesting stuff to look at and take in, stopping for a breather every here and there and generally enjoying your day immensely. For optimal results: wear a helmet and pack a picnic in your backpack to be consumed in Nauthólsvík.

Best place to go for a walk:

Laugardalur

Laugardalur just smells all sorts of lovely, and walking through there will make you feel really lovely, too. This is can in part be traced to all the trees and plants they’ve got growing there, especially in the local botanical garden. It’s also a beautiful area, and if you get bored of walking, there are plenty of distractions to distract you.

Best romantic walk:

Óskjuhlíð

For romantic walks, nothing really beats Óskjuhlíð. It’s beautiful and serene, it smells nice, and it’s got woods with plenty of secluded groves if you suddenly feel like making out. You’ll enjoy the company of rabbits, birds, trees and scores of elderly couples out for romantic walks of their own.

Runner-up: If the weather’s right and the sun colours the sky, walking alongside the shore at Sæbraut can be truly magical.

Best place to go for a jog:

Ellidaárdalur

This beautiful valley/natural haven in Reykjavík is the best place for a lot of things (in fact, Grapevine’s old editor deemed it “Best place to get married” not so long ago). If you’re looking to jog and have some time on your hands, Ellidaárdalur is without a doubt the place to go.

Best gym:

World Class, Laugum

Our experts agreed that World Class Laugar offered the best all-round gym going experience at affordable prices. Equipment is plentiful and diverse, they offer spa treatments and specialist saunas (for a price) and you get access to the Laugardalslaug pool. It might feel like a gigantic hamsterwheel at times, but it’s still our favourite.

Best place to play basketball:

Klambratún

There’s nothing like shooting some hoops in the summertime, and the courts at Klambratún (or Miklatún, as some call it) are an excellent venue

to do just that. Our team agreed that it was indeed the best place to shoot in the summertime: it’s central, you’ll often find a formidable opponent waiting to be challenged and there’s not a great chance of disturbing any neighbours.

Best place to go fishing:

Ellidaárdalur

For fishing within Reykjavík’s limits, it’s pretty much either Ellidaá in Ellidaárdalur or sneaking a pole down to the old harbour. And, frankly, Ellidaárdalur offers a beautiful, peaceful location and you can catch salmon if you’re lucky. The permits are affordable, too.

Best place to enjoy a Zen moment:

Grasagarðurinn Laugardal

There’s really nothing more to it. Go there, open your nostrils and enjoy sweet moments of Zen.

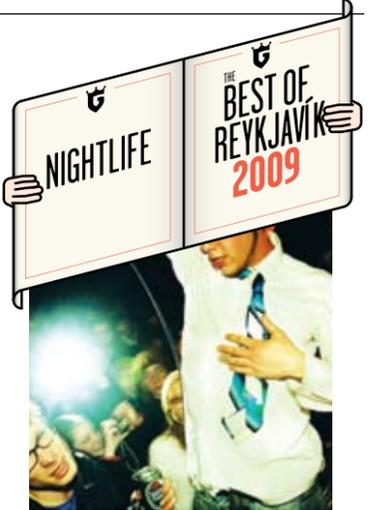
Best place to cheer up:

Húsdýragarðurinn



Some people like revelling in their misery when The Blues attacks. That is fine all fine and well, and gives ample opportunity to enjoy some good old depressing music. Sometimes, though, you’ll wish for a speedy recovery so you can get back into the happy rhythm of life, and what better place to do so than at Húsdýragarðurinn – Reykjavík’s very own petting zoo. Animals are awesome, and funny.

If the baby seals don’t cheer you up, and the piglets don’t cheer you up, and he sheep don’t cheer you up, and none of the other animals do.... you probably don’t stand a chance.



Best place to drink like a pro:

Grand rokk

Not only is Grand rokk one of the city’s most beloved (and longest running) live venues; it is also the perfect bar for grabbing a stool and drinking all your senses away. Life got you down? Not interested in conversation? Just want to forget it all? Grand rokk’s the place for you, as it has been for all of us during some point or the other.

Runner-up: Live Pub is an excellent place to lose one’s head, but suffers from the fact that “at any moment, a group of your friends might drop in to partake in some karaoke.”

Best bar for a wild night:

Kaffibarinn

You want it. Most of the time, Kaffibarinn has it. Enjoy.

Best cheap bar:

Nýlenduvöruverzlun Hemma & Valda

The unassuming grey wooden house on Laugavegur by day, where cappuccinos are sipped and children sit alongside their parents, assumes a completely different character in the evenings when it plays host to raucous musical events with patrons young and old spilling out onto the sidewalks and carrying on in merriment. It’s a good scene. Plus, at Hemmi & Valdi the prices are right for a wonderful night. Yes, that rhymes.

Runner-up: Kaffi Zimzen has some seriously appealing drink specials going almost every night of the week, but their patronage can get kinda scary. Always a bride’s maid...

Best all-round bar:

Karamba

The new kid on the block, Karamba

Best pool (all-round):

Laugardalslaug

Going to the pool is a popular Icelandic past time, and pretty much anyone you’ll ask in Reykjavík has a particular swimming pool they cherish. Our team debated this one for a while, before settling on Laugardalslaug as the best all-round Reykjavík pool experience. The reasoning was that while Vesturbæjarlaug is charming and fun, and Árbæjarlaug offers an excellent view, Laugardalslaug offers the best facilities for your all-round pool needs: a wide variety of hot tubs, a sauna, a kiddie pool and even a slide (unfortunately, temporarily out of order).

Runners-up: Vesturbæjarlaug, Árbæjarlaug.

Best pool (for hot tubbing, lounging):

Sundhöll Reykjavíkur



Downtown Reykjavík’s very own palace of pools, Sundhöll Reykjavíkur, stands out in the local pool landscape. Sundhöll is the only local indoor swimming pool, but it’s the outdoor hot tubs, excellent architecture and novel dressing booths that earn it a special place in poolgoers hearts. Unfortunately, they’re closed for renovations ‘til August. But go there then. More on page 22.

Best art museum:

Einars Jónsson museum and sculpture garden

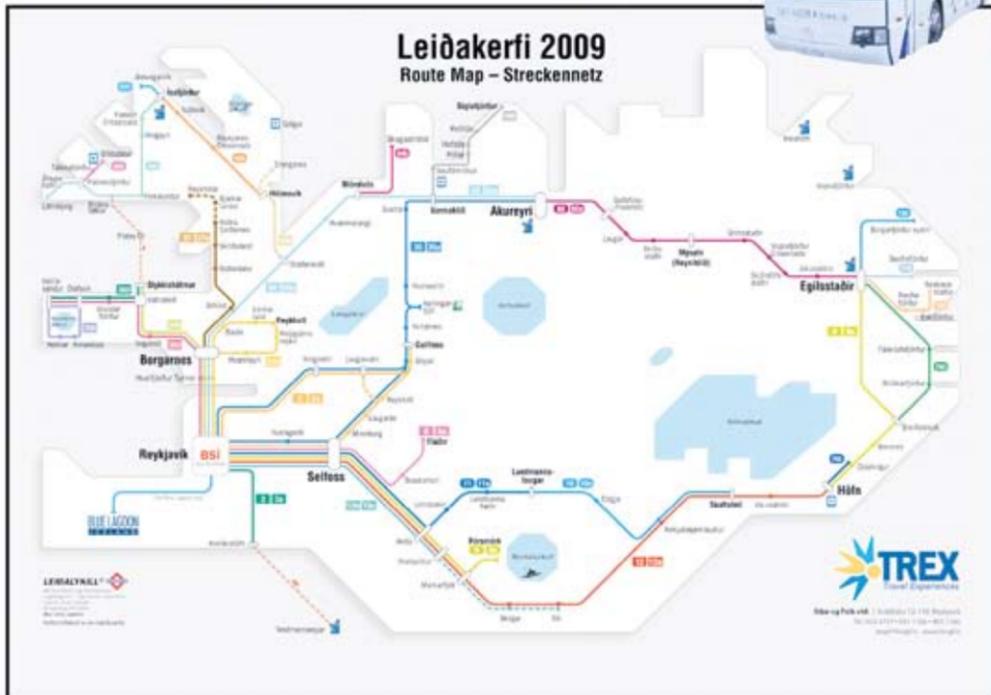
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Ísbuð Vesturbæjar
 Hagamel 67, 107 Reykjavík

Ísbuð Vesturbæjar is quite a walk out of the city centre. And when you are finally getting near, with an ever-growing cavernous hole in your stomach begging to be filled with soft-serve, you have to squint to see the neon "Ísbuð" in the window of the storefront nestled between two other shops in the same miniature strip-mall with much more visible signage. Of course, you'll most likely know you've arrived when you lay eyes on the line of customers out the door with a shared goal of filling equally cavernous holes in their respective stomachs. Don't be discouraged. It's worth the wait.

For those non-Icelanders accustomed to having to painstakingly choose from thirty-one flavours with each visit to their local ice cream shop, a visit to Ísbuð Vesturbæjar is blissfully uncomplicated. New or old. It seems that most people in the know go for the old, a water-based but still luxuriously thick vanilla soft-serve. While the flavours are essentially two variations on the same thing, the means at your disposal for jazzing up the is are plenty. Dip in chocolate sauce, caramel sauce, or a scandalously sweet combination of the two. Make a sundae topped with your favourite candies and chocolates. Blend it up with those same candies and chocolates to disperse their flavour throughout the ice cream and you've got bragðarefur (taste-fox? trickster? delicious?). Blend it even more and you've got an awesome shake. Whatever option you choose, you know it's going to be incredible and satisfying and you're going to love it.

Word to the wise: the medium bragðarefur is massive so take care that your eyes aren't bigger than your stomach. Or bring a friend to pull you ashore.

There's a reason people have been going out to Vesturbær for the goods since they were kids. This is seriously the best ice cream in town.

✍ CATHARINE FULTONI
 📷 HÖRÐUR SVEINSSON

Best Place for a Blue Cheese Burger



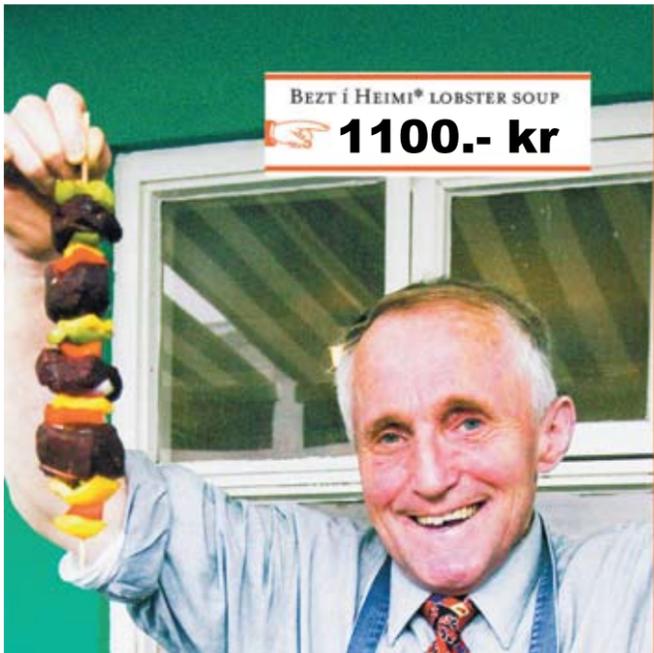
Vitabar
 Bergþórugata 21, 101 Reykjavík

Have you ever eaten something particularly tasty and noticed a few hours down the road that you were still tasting it? Magnify that experience. Imagine still tasting that meal the next day. Such is the experience of indulging in the aptly named Gleym-mér-ey (forget-me-not) burger at Vitabar. Caring deeply about the scent of Reykjavík's breath, the good folks at Vitabar serve up the best, most delicious - and most detrimental for those planning on conversing with potential mates - blue cheese burger there is.

This is the real deal. When the plate of fries and a sizeable burger with 200g of beef, oozing with garlic and melted blue cheese, is put on the table in front of you and the unmistakably pungent scent assaults your nostrils it sends your brain on a rampage of questions - do I have any gum in my purse? Do I plan on making out with anybody in the next couple of days? Will I spontaneously combust from extreme flavour overload? - all of which are valid and should be considered prior to digging in to the Gleym-mér-ey. This burger is so packed with sharp blue cheese and garlic flavour that it will have nowhere to go but to escape back out through your pours. You will smell. There is no avoiding it. But it is so worth it.

And hey, if you're going to eat something so epically stinky, what better place than a totally chill and non-pretentious joint like Vitabar? The location is unassuming, the interior is lack-lustre, and the regulars are not your young, overly trendy types. But the service is fast and friendly, the price is right and, my god, the blue cheese burger is damned near perfection.

✍ CATHARINE FULTONI
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Best Place For A Drunken Slice

Devito's Pizza
 Laugavegur 126, 101 Reykjavík

Anybody who has ventured out to 105 in the wee hours of the morning knows that Devito's is the place to be once the drunken charm of the other places in town has run its course, especially if you're in the mood for a big'ole slice of pizza. The allure of Devito's is grounded in the complex and irresistible combination of greasy pepperoni, garlic oil, chilli and parmesan cheese. This mixture is such an epic flavour sensation that the staff at Devito's could hardly hide their excitement upon describing it to me.

These people are adamant that they make some killer pizza. It would seem that the 500 people that stumble through

their door on Laugavegur on the average weekend would agree. This place gets packed with people queuing for and merrily devouring their slices - which go for the bargain basement price of 450 ISK. For those with a heartier appetite, Devito's claims to have the cheapest margarita pizza in town... and if it's not the cheapest, they maintain that it's certainly the tastiest. You know a place is good when the people behind the counter seem to care about what they're selling and totally dig it themselves.

This is definitely the best place to go if you're in the mood for a drunken slice in the late-night - they're open 10.30 to 6.00 (Friday/Saturday) and 12.00 to 6.00 (Saturday/Sunday).

✍ CATHARINE FULTONI
 📷 HÖRÐUR SVEINSSON

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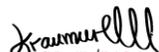


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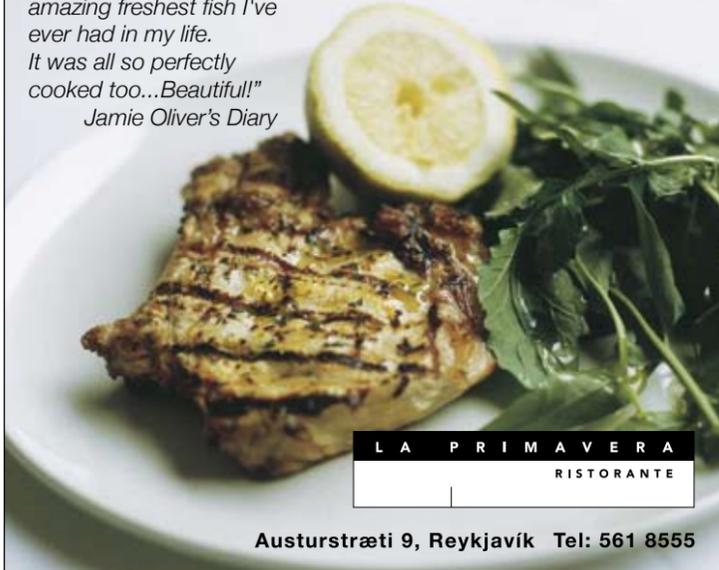
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Jamie Oliver's Diary



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Karamba is coming on strong...



Karamba

Laugavegur 22, 101 Reykjavík

Karamba is a uniquely awesome place on Laugavegur: colourful, fun and completely free of pretensions. They've been keeping the good folks of Reykjavík entertained for a few months now, having opened its doors on Friday the 13th of March, a date Árni Rúnar, bar-manager extraordinaire of this kicky little hot-spot and pop-icon of FM Belfast fame, noted as being not very unlucky after all.

The eclectic bar was opened by the sister of Árni Rúnar's girlfriend – FM Belfast band mate Lóa – and her husband, who had been successfully running neighbouring Santa Maria for over a year. "They thought this would be a good idea and it turned out to be a very good idea," explains Árni Rúnar, "they asked me to manage the place after it had been open like two weeks." This is despite the musician's complete lack of experience working in a bar, let alone running one. Still, with years of experience as a customer at numerous bars under his belt, Árni Rúnar knew he wanted to give Karamba's patrons "a place that's fun to go to, like somewhere you can be happy being there. Not very serious or cool, more jumping and dancing."

Karamba fills their quota of jumping and dancing by hosting as many live bands and as diverse an assortment of DJ's as possible. One event that Árni Rúnar noted as a high-point in Karamba's short history was one Saturday, after playing some shows for the Reykjavík Arts Festival, Haukur – valiant editor of this fine publication and Reykjavík! rock star – popped into the bar explaining that he had some German's to keep entertained and asking if FM Belfast could drop by and play at the rehearsal studio the next day.

"I didn't want to play at the rehearsal space for, like, five people. It

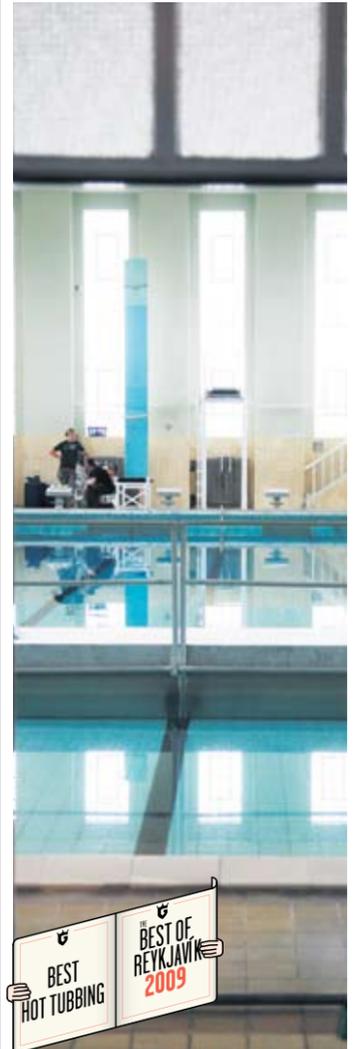
would be horrible," said Árni Rúnar. "So I said 'let's just do it at Karamba! Let's make a concert for tomorrow!'"

So around 2 a.m. it was decided that Retro Stefson, FM Belfast, Reykjavík!, Agent Fresco and Mammút would put on a concert at 8 PM "This is the great thing about having this place because we don't have any tight rules, we can do whatever," the bar manager explained. "We can do these spontaneous things. It was amazing and it was one of the best concerts I've ever played. The atmosphere was really, really good and there were a lot of people in here – too many people!"

While they'll continue giving live music to the people (both planned and spontaneous) Karamba will also start selling music in their future. "We're going to have a record store in here, so we're going to display the records in the window and sell them at the bar. A lot of the staff here are in bands or music and we have our record label here [World Champion Records] so we wanted to sell the music here."

Running a bar isn't all fun and games and record stores, granted, and Árni Rúnar likens Karamba to an old shoe in how quickly it degrades and how often it needs mending. And that's just the building. "Also, all the glasses that break, it's amazing!" he exclaimed. "Around 100 and something glasses every week disappear and break, but this is all positive because I know people are enjoying it." ☺

Sundhöll Reykjavíkur



Sundhöll Reykjavíkur

Barónsstíg, 101 Reykjavík

Stunning and unforgettable – the primary way to describe Sundhöll Reykjavíkur on Barónsstígur, Reykjavík's longest running (and only) indoor swimming pool. Opened in March 1937, constructed for 650,000 ISK, it was designed by Guðjón Samúelsson, the state architect of Iceland, after his first proposal got dismissed due to it's so called 'theatrical nature'. Construction eventually commenced on a subsequent design in 1929. Guðjón's other noticeable postcard scenarios include the National Theatre of Iceland and the church Hallgrímskirkja, also commissioned in 1937.

Apparently inspired by the natural geology of Iceland – explicitly the basalt columns of Svartifoss – the blank art deco Lego block structure is beautifully depressing. The changing rooms make you feel like you're lost inside a labyrinth of lockers and white tiles. Constant reshape in the doorways and walls form simple melancholy softness.

The inside pool is substantial and welcoming with two high diving boards to polish off your acrobatic skills for the 2012 Olympics. The open-air hot tubes bring a sense of warmth and community amongst your fellow pool dwellers, maybe read a book, catch some rays or just drift off gawking into the arctic yonder.

Prices are extremely reasonable, costing 360ISK for adults and 110ISK for children, with year passes at 24,000ISK per adult and 10,000ISK for minors. Brilliantly, Sundhöll caters for those of a forgetful nature and the odd tourist unclear of the vast swimming culture Reykjavík boasts with an offer of a swimsuit, towel and entrance for only 750ISK.

Open between 06:30 and 21:30 on weekdays, 08:00 and 19:00 on weekends, there is no reason to miss out. ☺ -JONATHAN BAKER ESQ.

CATHARINE FULTON
HÖRÐUR SVEINSSON

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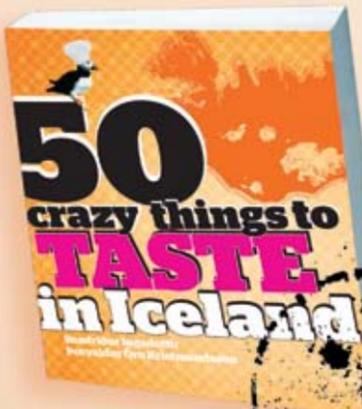
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The Kids Are Doing It For Themselves...



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A revival has occurred in artist run spaces after the closing of many exciting galleries such as the Dwarf Gallery, Bananananas and 101 Gallery. Many independent artist-led galleries seemed to have faded and disappeared. It seemed like no one dared to resurrect the old or had the gumption to create something new. However, now that the established Icelandic art scene has encountered difficulties, with less money to invest in shows and limiting their exhibition spectrum to fewer artists – which was noticeable in this year's Reykjavík Art Festival – young artists, writers, poets and musicians seem to have little else other than to create their own environments once again.

Crymogæa Gallery

Þorgerður Ólafsdóttir and Sólveig Pálsdóttir were frustrated by the art scene and the lack of opportunities available for young people. "Our aim was to create a scene for young artists to take their first steps," says Þorgerður, who happens to be living the basement apartment of the gallery. "You have to make things happen for yourself and there are no galleries going to jump on you."

With over 30 active members to the gallery, the women have organised an ambitious summer schedule: flea

markets, weekly exhibitions, a small designer shop and even a fashion show – all within the petite confines of a small house. The gallery's size has not deterred the curators, who intend to cover every wall with art for sale. The weekly exhibitions will commence every Friday night and last till the following Friday: one upstairs in the attic (which needs a bit of flexibility and manoeuvring to get to) and another in the living area as you enter past the small shop.

Openings Every Friday

This Friday will feature an extravaganza of poetry, music and two separate artist exhibitions. At 8 PM, there will be a site specific installation piece by Gunnar Helgi Guðjónsson, who aims to create works of art in and around the living room space, whilst in the attic Kristen Sigurðardóttir will question the role of drawing and painting by developing her art under the watchful eyes of an audience. Followed this at 9 PM, the Gum Poets will perform a poetry slam. The poets have announced that their style has never been brought to Iceland before, so it should either be an intense exploration of new territory in poetry embedding itself into the history books or some hilarious tomfoolery on a rooftop. ☞ - RICHARD P. FOLEY

The Dark Twins



It is always healthy for a society to go through a period of introspection and self-doubt, whatever the cause may be. The

Germans did after World War Two, and decided to become a nation of pacifist nature lovers. The Americans did after Vietnam and Watergate and made some of the best movies known to man, until Reagan came along and dulled everyone again to the roaring chants of "USA, USA." It's their turn again now. The South Africans had their Truth and Reconciliation committee, to find out what really happened during apartheid. The Russians never quite did question themselves systematically after the collapse of the USSR, which is why their political life remains decidedly unhealthy to this day.

Iceland's contribution to recent world history might not have quite the same body count, but it remains disastrous. This is our moment of doubt and pain. Future generations of Icelanders will probably never quite understand how almost the entire nation marched so eagerly off an arctic cliff. The usual suspects – the dark twins, Greed and Stupidity – are there to be found. But they don't quite answer the question.

Iceland's Ancien Regime

The problem in dealing with historical epochs is: How far do you go back to find the original cause of later effect, in this case an original sin of osrts. The one counter-argument one was always met with when criticizing the Boom was this: "So, do you want to go back to the old system?" No one did.

In the old system, party affiliation was everything. If you wanted to open up a business, get a loan, or even get a job, you had to belong to the right party. The Independence Party took care of theirs, so did the Progressives and to a lesser extent the Social Democrats. If you were a Socialist, you were pretty much screwed. Small wonder then that most people opted for the largest party, the one in the best position to dispense favours, however detrimental this might be to society as a whole.

Sure, Icelanders had equal rights to education. But once you got out of school and started paying back your loans, your education didn't really matter. You had to know someone. In a small country, this usually meant a close relative. Iceland was only egalitarian on the outside.

Mare's piss and gold risotto

As in most postcolonial societies, Icelanders in a position of power saw this as a means to dispense patronage to

friends and relatives.

In 1994, Örnólfur Arnason wrote Bankabókin (The Bank Book), which tells of a familiar scenario: a group of Icelandic bankers sit around at London's most exclusive gentleman's club. One of them is spotted drinking the second most expensive champagne. "Why are you drinking that mare's piss?" asks his colleague, holding a glass of the better type while buying all the working girls a round. The first banker, of course, upgrades.

If the disease won't kill you, the cure will...

All this was expensed to the Icelandic public. One of the main rationales for privatisation was that privately owned banks would not be as wasteful of funds and positions would no longer be filled according to party lines. We all know how that went. The banks were given over to a handful of individuals, who moved from mare's piss to gold drizzled risotto. Yet again, the public foots the bill.

As heroin was to morphine, privatisation turned out to be more deadly cure than the original disease. We would do best to be rid of both. It seems that Icelanders abroad always have to throw money in every direction to prove that they are no worse than the big city folk. If we really want to win their respect, we will have to change our habits. ☞

Kling & Bang: Intriguing



Kling og Bang Gallery

Hverfisgata 42, 101 Reykjavík

What happens when ten artists come together with a common goal of bringing contemporary Icelandic and international artists to Reykjavík? Kling og Bang.

This cool little gallery on Hverfisgata, with the bright yellow façade, has been bringing a lot of really unique exhibits to Reykjavík over the years, most recently transforming their gallery into a labyrinth for Within Reach, by a team of Norwegian and Icelandic artists: Carle Lange, Kristján Björn Þórðarsson, Dóra Ísleifsdóttir, Páll Einarsson, Reinert Mithassel, Tinna Lúðvíksdóttir, Þorvaldur Þorsteinsson and Úlfur Eldjárn. Prior to that was a display of neon 'Open' signs and still earlier this year was the mixed-medium work of stunning artist Sara Riel, who transferred her feelings upon ending her period of living in China onto the gallery visitors with her mixed-media work.

This place is eclectic.

What's more is that Kling og Bang is not just a blank gallery space in which artists can exhibit their work. The curators at Kling og Bang often co-produce the works being displayed and employ a hands-on approach to participating in the creation of the artworks. This place really cares about nurturing the art scene in Reykjavík. Case in point is the 5000 square metre Klink and Bank art space they provided for the daily use of 137 artists in 2004 and 2005. ☞

CATHARINE FULTONI
HÖRÐUR SVEINSSON

"Where else can you work on your laptop at 10 p.m. beside people casually drinking a glass of wine, sipping a cappuccino or strumming a guitar while the kids are using crayons to sketch? This is a cosy bar — though I use the term loosely — with card games and crayons scattered about and decorated with second-hand furniture that's all for sale. Once I settled in, I didn't want to leave."

Hemmi&Valdi
Nýlenduverzlun

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Benjamin Dove

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It is June, and I'm eating lunch on a large slab of ice with my axe sticking out of a slight incline nearby. In an alternate universe, say, my summers past, I would be contemplating the strength of SPF I should use on a trip to the beach, not wielding a sharp tool while crossing a frozen landscape. I had willingly chosen, however, to enter in to this sort of personal twilight zone.

I left the newly comfortable surroundings of Reykjavik to head out east in pursuit of some glacial adventures. Turns out, I was about to be a part of another new venture as well. One of the owners of Glacier Guides, an excursion/hiking company based out of Skaftafell, picked me up, and we quickly made a stop to trade the customary van for a freshly painted yellow school bus. Won on eBay and shipped by boat from the United States, this golden reminder of my shining years of youth was the latest addition to the three week-old company.

» Bionic ice travellers

Pulling in to Skaftafell, the bus was greeted with huge smiles as the other guides checked out the new set of wheels. They took a break from the construction of their eco-friendly headquarters to hop on and also retrieve some much needed supplies. As Einar Ísfeld, one of the owners had told me, "This company is 10 percent planning and 90 percent action." It certainly looked that way, as the guides had the foundation down after only a couple days of hard manual labour. Before I knew it, this all-action attitude had grabbed a hold of me, and I was immediately sent to do a short glacial hike.

We drove over to the Virkisjökull glacier, where we hiked a little over rocky black earth, which slightly resembled a not so beautiful wasteland. As Jökull Bergmann, our guide (also an owner of Glacier Guides), informed us, this land was typical of glacier surroundings. We strapped on our cramp-ons before reach-



ing the ice – they are basically large metal talons that make the average human a bionic ice traveller. From there we explored the easily traversable glacier that slowly extended in to the dark outer edges of the land. We stopped to throw things in to the deep crevasses running throughout the glacier, and it came to an end; it was an easy introduction to my ice adventures to come, and left me itching for some more exploration.

One of the following days, I got the opportunity to strap on those bionic ice feet again and take my glacier travels up a notch. After picking up six others, we headed to the Fjallsjökull glacier lagoon. Again, we hiked over the fine black rock towards our destination, the glacier formations across the water. As we did so, a tremendous cracking sound filled the air. We ran towards the banks of the lagoon, and witnessed a large (very large)

chunk of blue-infused ice break off from the main glacier: the main glacier that we were soon to be hiking on. Everyone laughed a little nervously as our guide assured us we were not hiking near the location of the ice breakage.

» A boat with wheels?

We then took a boat across the lagoon towards the large maze of ice pinnacles. With our cramp-ons and ice axes, and some instructions on the correct way to walk up and down the ice, we were off. The crevasses we witnessed were extremely deep, and the views of the mountain landscape were more stunning than any I had ever seen. The unsoiled ice formations growing up on either side of me and the deafening silence made for an almost bizarre, maybe even spiritual experience.



One of the following days, I got the opportunity to strap on those bionic ice feet again and take my glacier travels up a notch

After lunch, the hike turned back, and we climbed up and down the glaciers looking for an exit spot. Sometimes we reached unexpected dead ends, but our guide would skilfully navigate us out. On the short boat ride back, we once again rode through the waters that were teeming with icebergs and more extremely blue formations. Our guide then drove us to Jökulsárlón, where we took a longer ride in a larger boat with wheels, through a lagoon of icebergs similar to those we had seen before.

During this last boat trip, I started contemplating. These Glacier Guides

had the coolest job. Ever. Not that they didn't work their asses off. I mean, a three week-old company was building a house by hand, painting a school bus and, to top it off, taking people on some killer glacier areas all day. They were clearly action junkies, and I was happy to be in for the ride, even if it brought me away from the lazy warm beach days I had come to know as my normal summers. I would choose a picnic on the ice of the Fjallsjökull glacier over a little bit of warm sand any day.

JOYCE GUZOWSKI



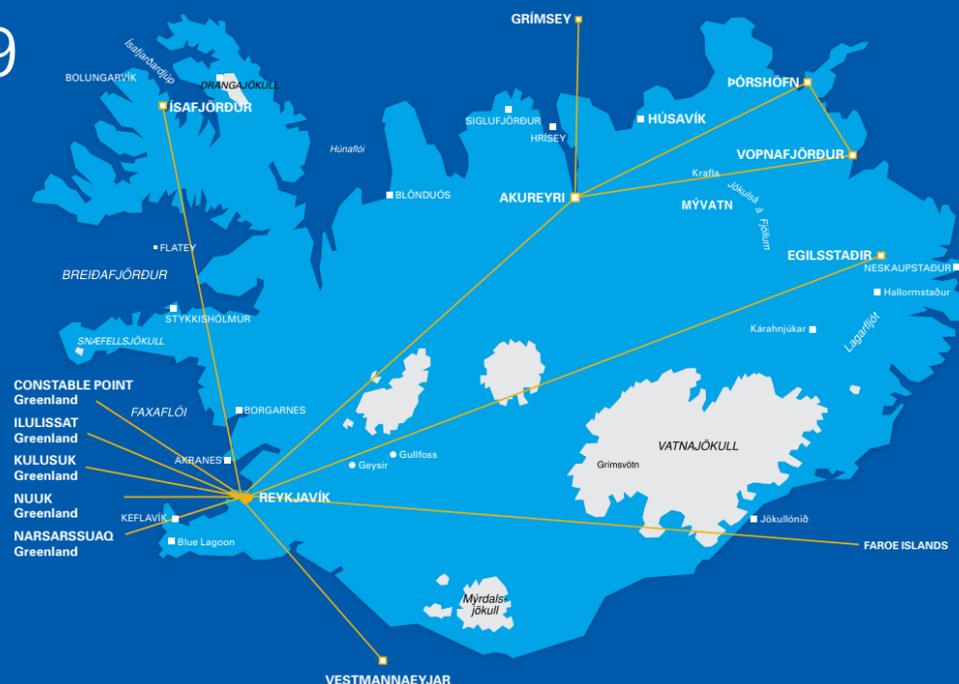
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Seljavallalaug Swimming Pool

Take a long, hard look at the accompanying photo. You'll want to be there. And for good reason. Seljavallalaug is just as beautiful, calming, transcendent and awe-inspiring as it looks. It's accessible, too. Located just a couple of hours away from Reykjavík, you'll have to venture South on Route 1, past Selfoss and Hvals-völlur and make sure to slow down once you're nearing Skógarfoss.

Make a turn at the farm Seljavellir (clearly marked), drive as far as the road takes you, park your car and walk for ten minutes or so. Bask in your surroundings. Thank your stars. Ponder life.

Remember to bring a towel. And should you eventually grow bored of pondering life in a pool, the surrounding area offers lots of opportunities for general enjoyment, given that you're not averse to nature.

✍ HAUKUR S MAGNÚSSON
📷 JULIA STAPLES



Note that the Seljavallalaug swimming pool is not regularly maintained, it has no showering facilities (and very modest changing booths) and it'll often have a bunch of algae in it. It was built in 1924 and re-done in 1998 by locals. You venture there of your own accord, and on your own responsibility. Be respectful of the locals, the pool itself and of nature in general. And bring a towel.



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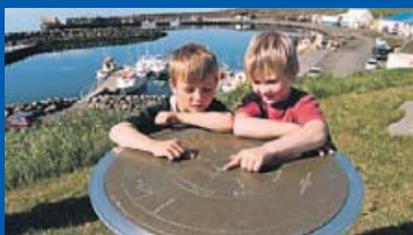
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has been serving up the good times and giving the kids a place to jump and dance along with some wicked live music and DJ's for only a few months now, but it has cemented a place in our hearts. If you've been there you've most likely developed a soft spot for the colourful little space and über friendly staff. If you haven't been there, you just don't know yet how much you love it. But you do. More on page 22.

Best club:

Jacobsen

Things are saucier in the dark. Jacobsen is pretty dark. So logic would dictate that Jacobsen is pretty saucy. If you're looking to hook up while enjoying the tunes of some consistently wicked DJ's, head over to Jacobsen. Also, their smoking area is seriously chill. It makes going outside to smoke significantly less of a pain in the ass.

Best place to hook up:
Vegamót (6-10) /Hressó (solid 5) / Dubliners (0-4)

OK, this is kind of a sketchy category, but our panellists did discuss the subject at length, so we thought we'd include the results for fun and/or pleasure. Note that our panel featured both men and women of varied ages, and that the findings are meant to work regardless of gender.

As one of our people remarked, Vegamót is "the place where conventionally attractive people that put a lot of effort into their appearance go to hook up. They're ready for action, but you have to look the part, too.

For your average hooker-upper, Hressó was generally considered the best place to find love. "At night, Hressó has a good, honest, often surprisingly attractive clientele, and most of them are looking for some good, honest hook-ups."

If you're really determined to get some action, why not try Dubliners. "The late-late night patrons of

Dubliners usually don't have a lot of standards, which will pay off if you don't either."

Best place to get physically assaulted:

Hafnarstræti

If you want to get your ass kicked and possibly risk your life, look no further than Hafnarstræti. Violent assaults and brutal beatings are for some common at Hafnarstræti, which makes us geeky pacifists dread walking there past a certain hour. STOP THE VIOLENCE! Unless you like it. If you do, go inflict some on yourself and leave the rest of us alone.

Best place to watch sports over a beer:

Bjarni Fel

Sports bar Bjarni Fel shows all the major matches, they've got beer, comfortable seats and the bar is named after Iceland's very own Football Legend. What more do you need?



Best downtown institution:

Mál og menning

Mál og menning's contribution to downtown Reykjavík culture and atmosphere is truly a great one, so much that it has long since gained status as an institution of 101 Reykjavík. The bookstore that also sells you coffee, and also gives you tourist information (if the staff is in a good mood - which it usually is), and also allows you to loiter and browse for as long as you like, and also stays open until ten every night, well, that's a bookstore we love. More on page 12.

Best place to buy screws:

Brynja

Hardware store Brynja has been serving denizens of 101 Reykjavík for ninety years now, and is yet to fail us. Their friendly, knowledgeable staff makes shopping for hardware of all sorts a joyous experience, and the fact that they sell most items "by the piece" (as opposed to forcing you to buy a whole bag of screws if you just need the one) solidifies its status as Reykjavík's top hardware store. More on page 14.

Best place to shop for touristy stuff:

Handprjónasambandið

No tourist need leave this island without an authentic hand-knit Icelandic sweater thanks to the dedicated members of Handprjónasambandið. Not into sweaters? Beautifully crafted gloves, hats, and blankets make some great souvenirs too - way better than the kitschy figurine collecting dust on your mantle since your last vacation. Seriously, what were you thinking?

Best place to get a trendy haircut:

Rauðhetta & úlfurinn

Our panel agreed that Rauðhetta & úlfurinn is the best place going for a trendy unisex cut, even though it comes with a price.

Best place to get a cheap haircut:

Rakarastofan Vesturgötu

Dudes that require a gentleman's cut for a modest price need look no further. This establishment has been serving the local community for ages; they're classy, they're old-school, they rule if you want that particular style.

Best place to shop organic:

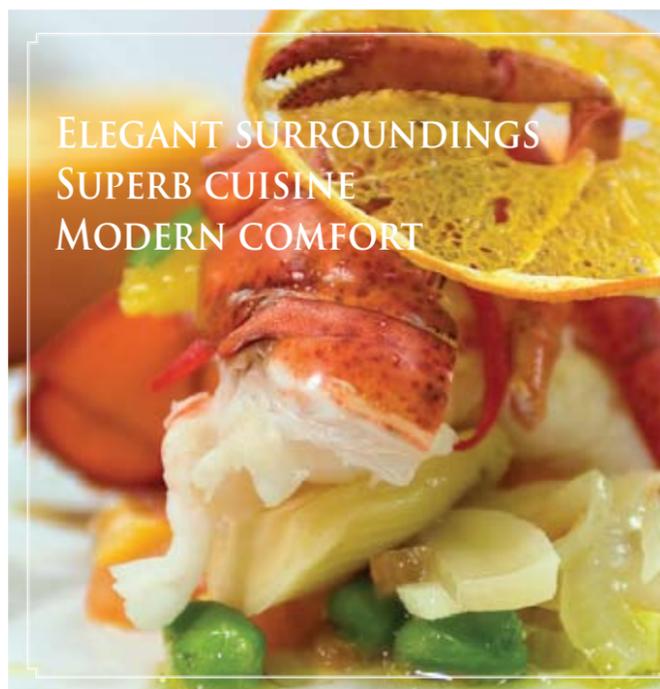
Yggdrasil

So you've been thinking of living a healthier life. Yggdrasil will help you go organic. This small shop on Skólavörðustígur has health-conscious alternatives to nearly every ingredient of every food you consume on a daily basis. Need some almond flour? There ya go! Running low on wheat germ? They'll top you up! Craving some soy whipped cream on your gluten-free, fig tart? Check out their cooler section for a good time!

Best place to get ingredients for ethnic foods:

Mai Thai

Mai Thai is to ethnic foodies what Dutch coffee shops are to potheads. Heaven. If that pan-Asian recipe you're toying with calls for some ingredients that you've never seen on the shelves of Bónus, or maybe never even heard of, chances are you'll find it at Mai Thai. Editor's tip: the Japanese seaweed snacks are like a less-evil crack. Get yourself a habit.



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Poetry | Eiríkur Örn Norðdahl

Award this!



A few years ago the Icelandic poetry world was rocked by a tectonic scandal that nobody noticed for weeks (and by now, everyone's forgotten about). The country's most prestigious poetry award, Ljóðstafur Jóns úr Vör, was given to the wrong poet. A young man from one of Reykjavík's neighbouring towns was called up and told that he had been chosen by a panel of experts and that his poem had been handpicked as the best of the lot. He could now bask in the glory of literary prestige, he who had not even published a book – nor even a single poem, anywhere – he was the king of the crop, top of the pops, best of the land, tonk of the lawn.

This young poet laureate to-be came to the award ceremony with his family. He sat through speeches, music and recitals – and eventually the panel judge came up on stage to present the award. His poem was read and he turned white as the driven snow. This was not what he had written. Not one of the dozen or so poems he'd submitted. Traumatized he went up on stage anyway, not knowing what else to do. He was there, his grandmother was probably watching with tears in her eyes. You don't let your grandmother down if you can help it.

The ceremony drew to a close and the cocktail after-party started. With a drink in him (or so) the young poet approached the panel judge and admitted the truth. He had never even heard the award-winning poem – let alone written it. There had been some misunderstanding.

A cloud of bureaucrats dispersed in a whiff of smoke – back to the filing cabinets, the calculators, and where did I put my Excel? The mistake was quickly corrected – the young poet had submitted his poetry under the same pseudonym as another (experienced, well-known and respected) poet. The older poet was called in immediately and the prize quickly transferred to him.

But not even in the land of the Eddic and Skaldic poetry does the mainstream care very much about poetry or its awards. Not a single

reporter was on site to tell about "the most prestigious poetry award in the country". And so the story traversed the grapevine (not the paper you are holding) for weeks and months before reaching the disinterested ears of a journalist – whose ears swashed and buckled forthrightly, catching the news and pasting it frontpage.

This disinterest has not plagued all poetry awards. A few years back, around the time of the aforementioned scandal, I founded and organised the "Icelandic Championship in Awful Poetry". As all good things it was born in the blogosphere and quickly grew out of proportion. The media can always be trusted to reinforce your idea of reality. Poetry is boring, therefore we don't cover it, but awful-poetry is funny (and reinforces the idea of poetry being awful to begin with) and therefore we cover it. The week before the announcement of the prize, Morgunblaðið (Iceland's biggest newspaper) ran three interestingly bad poems at a time, with comments from the panel of judges, and the top three prizes were handed out on prime-time TV's Kastljós.

(I'm by the way not entirely sure the media was completely wrong, since the best awful poems were indeed much more interesting than a lot of the award-orientated drivel being published these days).

I will leave you with the last verse of the victorious poem by Eyrún Edda Hjörleifsdóttir (in my own translation):

A pile of ringworms eddies in a bath of remoulade – mine and the Choco-beast's, a single unblossomed and trembling late-summer night in May.

My toenail splits and bleeds, the road up the way and the hour of my most yellow band-aid has sunk in a pool of pus. 🍷

Best July Activity



From the deep Westfjords of Iceland to the craggy high cliffs of the Faeroes

Leaving Ísafjörður on July 17, the Aurora, a 60-foot sloop yacht that has travelled around the world four times in competition, will embark on a true Viking journey of natural discovery. Soaring the majestic northern bays around Aðalvík and Hlöðuvík, and on to Húsavík, the Aurora, captained by the seasoned Sigurður Jónsson, is hosted by Rúnar Karlsson, a true renaissance adventurer – mountaineer, paraglider, explorer and raconteur. On the way, the soft shores of Ísafjarðardjúp boast some of the wildest untouched nature – eiders, puffins and other sea birds nest here in the thousands. The Aurora will sail along the craggy rising bluffs of Húnaflói, then into Skjálfandi bay and Húsavík, where some of Iceland's largest whale populations can be sighted.

From Húsavík, she will continue her journey to the naturally sheltered harbour of Seyðisfjörður, then sail the Atlantic for 300 nautical miles until reaching Djúpin Sound within the Faeroe Islands. After staying overnight at the capital, Torshavn, Rúnar and his guests will sail to Göta to catch up with the swinging G! Music Festival. International acts, such as Martin and the Revelators, Sweden's angry The Haunted, and the Faeroes own Lena Anderssen are heading up the bill. After the festival, the Aurora will sail around the Kirkjubønes headland and on to Iceland's wondrous Westman Islands, where puffins are more populous than people; then to Reykjavík, home of the Grapevine, and along the coast to the Snæfellsnes peninsula, where Jules Verne began his descent into the centre of the Earth, touching the coasts along Europe's most westerly cliffs, Látrabjarg, until reaching Ísafjörður again.

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Reykjavík



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Seeing this is the BEST OF REYKJAVÍK issue, the free track on offer is rather fitting. Local rapper 7berg is one of the city's most celebrated spitters, and his forthcoming solo debut, *Of góður dagur til að borga reikninga* ("Too good a day to pay bills") has been raising excitement amongst Reykjavík's hip-hop community for ages. Listening to the track on offer, one can easily understand why. Entitled *Reykjavík*, it is a moving ode to the rappers hometown. Those who understand the lyrics will certainly recognise, others can nod along to the groovy production.



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Grapevine Grassroots #5

Elin Ey, Lydia Grétarsdóttir, Pascal Pinon, Adda

Friday 26th July

Hemmi and Valdi
Laugavegur 21

HOT. The only word that needs to be used in order to fully describe the atmosphere when my colleague and I walked into Hemmi and Valdi. The place felt like a sauna, minus the oak covered walls, pleasant tree sap aroma and the odd hairy dude wrapped in small towel. A cold drink was certainly in order.

The queue for the bar was huge, getting me boiled up even further – thankfully the sweet tones of Adda helped me to cool off just a little. Prepped with guitar in hand, she smiled to the audience of which the majority were in her support. Her voice was delicate; in fact so delicate that certain people were too busy discussing the latest Football results overseas than giving her the silence she depended on.

Having said that, the abundance of onlookers seemed to enjoy her performance, eventually leading up

to an extremely long applause – one of those long applauds that began to become really awkward after a while. For her well-deserved encore Adda was joined by her female companion, to pay homage to the recently departed King Of Pop – fumbling through a delectable version of *Man In The Mirror*.

After standing behind a bloody pillar for the previous twenty minutes, some space ultimately became available from the hordes of people trying not to suffocate. This was a good job for me though, seeing that Pascal Pinon started setting up on stage.

First off, I must comment on not how 'cool' they look, but more to do with the endearing aesthetical charm they provided. With all of them still at high school ages, Pascal Pinon were certainly amongst the youngest inside the crammed Hemmi and Valdi.

Normally 'sketchy performances' would be a no go at most shows unless you want to be labelled as 'fucking shite' – musical inexperience and technical difficulties certainly didn't hinder these lasses one bit, if anything it added to the band's appeal. It's sure pleasant to see these young ladies captivating a room; they're that freaking adorable.

Lydia Grétarsdóttir was another hot young lady to perform in a room full of hot ladies – remember it's not a sexist remark; just extraordinarily warm. Unfortunately due to technical difficulties, Lydia's subtle blend of carefree melodies and frolicking granulated-background bleeps had to be postponed until next time. She is stunning though, trust me.

Whilst I scrambled past a maze of folks spewed in front of the downstairs toilet, Elin Ey played her first note.

Expecting to see a middle aged rock chick with Rolling Stones tattoos on her forearms and cigarette burns. I was pleasantly surprised at her baby faced looks, her beautifully crafted voice and 12 bar blues guitar references, both of which showed a level of maturity beyond her image.

Highlight of the night includes the wasted British guy in the corner, shouting various comments in a slurred manor. The funniest being "sounds like fackin' Dolly Parton" during Elin Ey's floorless set. Good work gals, not so much guys.

✂ - JONATHAN BAKER ESQ.

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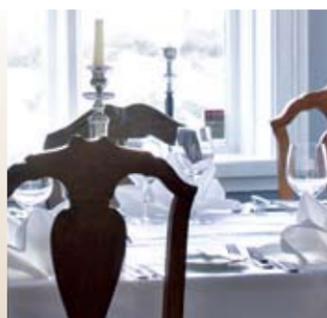
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Album Review

Dr. Zühlke
and Mr. Eldon

Two men.
One album.
Lots of dissent.



Although it occasionally shows glimpses of intimacy and honesty, All Over The Face is for the most part too bland, too hesitant and too shy to make much of an impact. Skakkamange play and write songs like they've read about it in books, segueing from one chord to another with minimal enthusiasm. The album is uneventful as a whole, and the production neither hi-fi enough to be textured, nor rough enough to be gripping, coming across as a carefully recorded demo. Usually, I don't regard this as a bad thing, and in fact it sounds great on closing track Go Home. But Skakkamange just don't push the envelope enough, and their dreamy melancholia, better suited to far superior sound quality, just makes the low production value seem cheap and lazy. All this is, of course, irrelevant; a good song stands out, no matter what the production sounds like, and it just doesn't happen here.

—SINDRI ELDON



Skakkamange

All Over The Face (2009)

skakkamange

» Could do with a hit off the crackpipe.

Quiet, warm tunes for private occasions.



Skakkamange recently toured Germany with For A Minor Reflection, where they did quite a good job contrasting FamR's post-rock with a melodic but noisy garage sound that definitely provoked some dancing. Hearing All over the Face is quite a surprise after witnessing the band play live. A bit like Bruce Springsteen overdubbing The Stars. The nine songs (except from a few rock ventures that are good though) spread a very calm atmosphere across the room, which is underlined by comforting, clear vocals. Often there is just singing plus guitar, no trace of energetic outbursts. You can hear that the band still is at their beginnings in some ways – the English isn't very Oxford, the singing sometimes sounds a little too exerted. All over the Face definitely is not a record for all occasions. However, apart from that these guys are talented and have a good sense for laid-back guitar music and rare rock-freakouts. Waiting for more to come!

—FLORIAN ZÜHLKE



Hermigervill

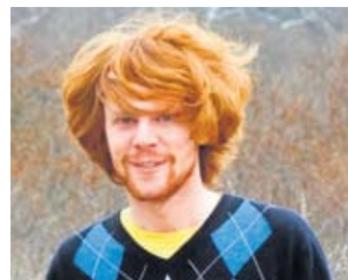
Leikur vinsæl íslenzk lög (2009)

hermigervill

Brilliant, summer-y album

The album is a collection of mostly instrumental cover versions culled from Icelandic pop music history. The selection is not your obvious pop standards, rather the cult hits that every generation rediscovers and makes their own.

Sveinbjörn, as Hermigervill's mother calls him, is a multi-instrumentalist and plays every instrument on the album. The soundscape is mostly electronic, with classic analogue synths such as the Moog at the forefront, but he widens the sound with violin, guitar, background vocals and even the occasional curveball, such as his amazing Theremin rendition of Sveitin milli sanda.



A lot of the pleasure of listening to this album comes from the nostalgia of listening to these songs that have bubbled under the national consciousness for years, and the surprises that his take on the songs sometimes bring. That being said, I can imagine that this collection could delight people hearing these songs for the first time; this is after all a collection of some of Iceland's best-written pop classics. This is my favourite album of the summer, so far.

—SVEINBJÖRN PÁLSSON



Audio Improvement

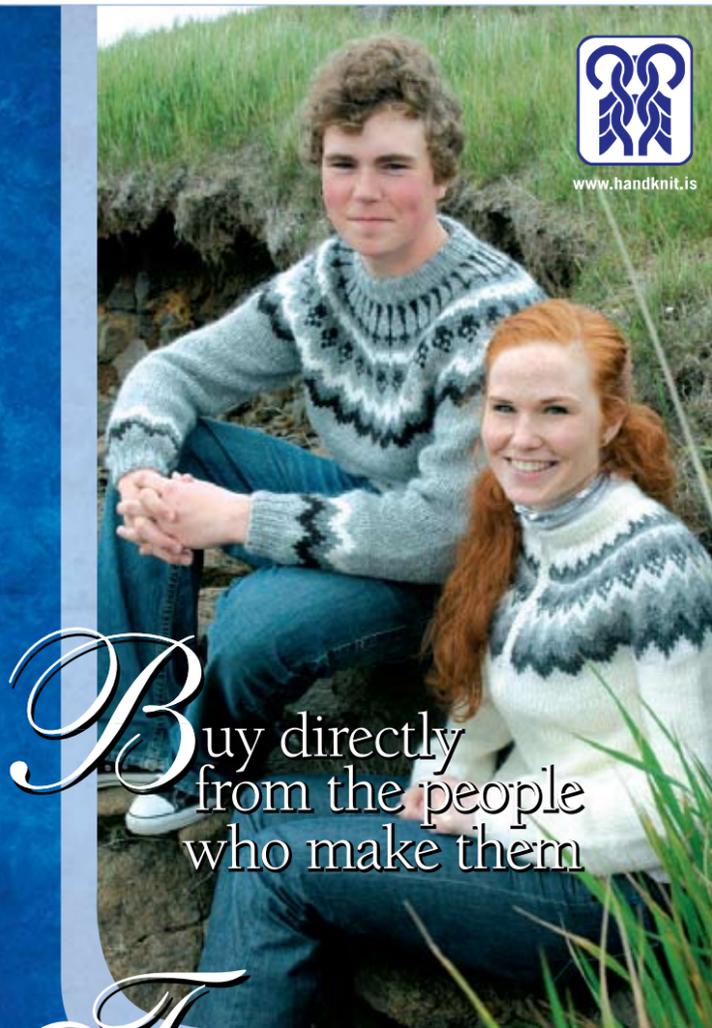
Story Fragments (2009)

audioimprovement

Whatever.

Heavily accented and poorly flowing rap accompanies predictable lo-fi instrumentation on this largely forgettable half-hour of music. There are no outstanding faults in play here, just ho-hum mediocrity and clichéd philosophizing on subjects as tepid as the nature of the universe, the pursuit of music as a passion and its effect on one's social life, the fact that people present a different nature and personality to others than the one they only show to themselves, and being drained and listless. There's some nice audioscaping here and there, but that's about as interesting as it gets, really.

—SINDRI ELDON



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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

he was telling the interviewers what some song sounded like, he would break into some killer beatboxing that was even better than the recorded version. YouTube that shit and be blown away.

Michael Jackson was a giant – one of a kind. Too bad his life was so tragic. I often wanted him to just come visit, relax and eat vöflur with me. I'd tell him, "Hey, big guy. You've done amazing things and enriched people's lives. It's time to let go off the game and just chill because as we speak, your work is busy being legendary and no one can take that away. Let's watch the Wire and kick back for a while".

In next life, brother.

SIGTRYGGUR BALDURSSON
MUSICIAN

Michael Jackson was one of the only American musicians I liked back in 1982, after I had immediately and rather stubbornly switched my alliances over the Atlantic to primarily listen to the so called British new wave with their Joy Divisions and other darker fare.

One must not forget what sort of lineage Michael Jackson comes from. I don't mean his immediate family, but his extended Motown family. Think Stevie Wonder, think Earth Wind and Fire, and you might start to see something coming together. We must not forget that before him came people that made truly fantastic soul music but did not receive quite his status, maybe it just took them white folks such a long time to turn on to it. But Michael had something extra as well, like being a fantastic dancer at the start of video as a medium for MTV and others. Seriously, we never had that sort of access to other performers.

But he seems also in a way to be a classic victim of fame. It's sad that he morphed into such a seminal freak as a human being at the same time as being such an unusually gifted performer. Especially those late 70s early 80s records like *Off the Wall*, *Thriller* and *Bad*, that super 3 album run that was enough to cement his status as one of the more influential performers on the planet. As far as I'm concerned, it all went a bit down the hill from there. He seemed rather sad and confused for the last 15 years or so. But as he himself said, he was bad.

Too bad.

VALUR GUNNARSSON
MUSICIAN, WRITER

In the same way that Morrison, Hendrix,

It's sad that he morphed into such a seminal freak as a human being at the same time as being such an unusually gifted performer. Especially those late 70s early 80s records like Off the Wall, Thriller and Bad, that super 3 album run that was enough to cement his status as one of the more influential performers on the planet.

even Elvis fell victim to the excesses of the 60s and 70s, Michael Jackson was a victim of the 80s. For pop stars, looks have always been of prime importance, but in the age of MTV, they became everything. Small wonder then that its biggest star became a victim of plastic surgeons, whereas stars of an earlier age succumbed to their drug dealers.

Although there are people more deserving of sympathy than millionaire superstars, Jackson still deserves some of our tears. For one thing, he never applied for the job. Just like Beethoven, he had his talents beaten into him by his father. Stardom and the striving for it was all he ever knew or was allowed to know.

Pop stars are always larger than life. They do, and are in some ways supposed to, reflect the best and the worst. In the past decade, when the paedophile became the scourge of civilisation, Michael Jackson became tainted with accusations. Whether these are true or not, we'll never know, but it seems more than likely that he was unable to bond with adults who could only understand relationships in terms of sexuality and therefore sought the company of kids. Jackson may be best remembered for his music, but perhaps his legacy will mostly be a testament to, and condemnation of, an inhumane star system that we see replicated almost daily on shows with the words "idol" and "talent" in the title. He had plenty of the latter, but this fell in the shadow of the former.

NICO MUHLY
COMPOSER

I heard the news that Michael Jackson died when I was sitting in bed in Saint Petersburg, Russia, desperately piling my luggage in front of the windows to keep the midnight sun out of my eyes. Since then, I relived the two pivotal music video releases of my childhood — *Black or White* (1991) and *Remember the Time* (1992) There is nothing more exciting to me, still, than the dance break about halfway through *Remember the Time* — the music stops save for offbeat snapping, and over the clicks, we hear, "do you remember girl?" and a decidedly old-school snare and kick starts in and we pan up to see an entire harem doing a very complicated, jagged, Pétrouchka-meets-James Brown synchronized routine. The song re-assembles itself,

introducing bass, synthesizers, and backup vocals at each cycle. It's one of my most exciting musical & visual memories.

STEED LORD
MUSICIANS

Michael Jackson counts among the greatest geniuses that have walked this earth. All these masterpieces that him and Quincy Jones managed to magically put together on these groundbreaking records — *Off The Wall*, *Thriller* and *Bad* are the reasons why we're making music today.

We all grew up listening to MJ and would daily try and mimic his routines and style when we were younger, like so many others.

No other musician has touched our hearts like Michael Jackson. He was walking definition of the word "cool" and no matter what people have to say about him, he will ALWAYS be our idol and the greatest performer of our generation.

Rest in peace MJ, we love you.

KRUMMI BJÖRGVINSSON
MUSICIAN

He was God's prototype!
Too special to live!
Too special to die!
My most powerful inspiration, and the most important companion of my life. He opened me through his art, and for that, I am ETERNALLY GRATEFUL. He watered the soul's flower, and cured the earth while he lived. He will continue to do so in our memories of him. That will touch untold generations. He created the better angels of our nature. You will be sorely missed! And! Hey! Mike! I stood up for you whenever they wanted to knock you down. 🍷

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"My mom made the menu!" Santa Maria owner Ernesto explained with a chuckle, going on to muse about a tiff that broke out between his mother and a trained chef as to the order in which onions and garlic should be added to a pan. Onions first. His mother won. Real Mexican home cooking is the essence of Santa Maria. Cheap and real, actually. When eating out with his wife and two children in Reykjavík, Ernesto was always shocked by how expensive everything was and noted that the closest thing to Mexican food was Tex-Mex, which just didn't cut it. "I wanted to open a place that would be accessible to everyone, and make food just as my mother makes back in Mexico."

Open for nearly a year and a half now, Santa Maria serves up authentic Mexican dishes – the biggest crowd pleasers being the quesadilla's, enchiladas with mole sauce, tacos and flautas – made of only the freshest ingredients. "We don't have any place in the restaurant to store food or to

freeze things so we make everything brand new and fresh every day," says Ernesto, likening this approach to a real home kitchen.

Using exclusively fresh ingredients is the reason why Santa Maria has recently had to raise their prices, up 200 ISK from the universal 990 ISK. "We could offer everything at such a low price for the first year without losing money but, with the prices of fresh foods what they are, we had to charge a little more," the owner explained. Still, even with the increased prices patrons can eat and drink for 1.700 ISK, a huge draw for the 150-200 people who dine at Santa Maria daily.

Great prices and an expansive menu of fresh and authentic Mexican fare – with a bunch of new editions to check out – make Santa Maria one of the best places to grab a cheap bite in this city. 🍷 -CATHARINE FULTON

As one wave arises,
another is sure to follow
Nær ein alda rís er önnur vís

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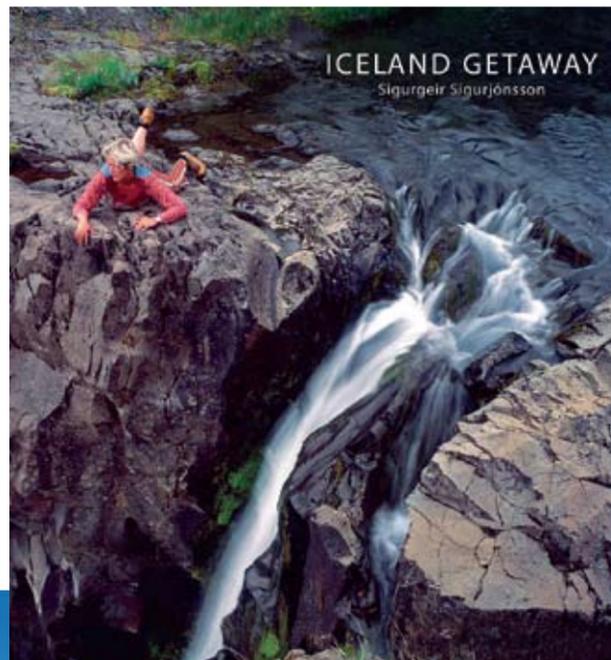
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PAGE 18

Laugarásvídeó's selection of DVDs is so good that it's almost a problem. Probably the best video store in Europe, if not the whole world. We state this very seriously.

Grapevine has BEST OF FEVER! Isn't it nice to see us being all positive for a change?

PAGE 8

This city is full of untrustworthy thieves and assholes, and possibly people that fall under the hybrid category of asshole-thieves. The person in possession of my wallet falls under that third category. They also most likely kick puppies, ejaculate prematurely and beat up their own mom. Just for shits.

Catharine Fulton's wallet was stolen. She's not happy about it

PAGE 16

A crime is still a crime, even if some of its victims are stupid creeps. Just because some of my countrymen are morons does not mean that the crème-de-la-crème of Icelandic cultural life are to blame.

Author Hermann Stefánsson continues pleading Iceland's case

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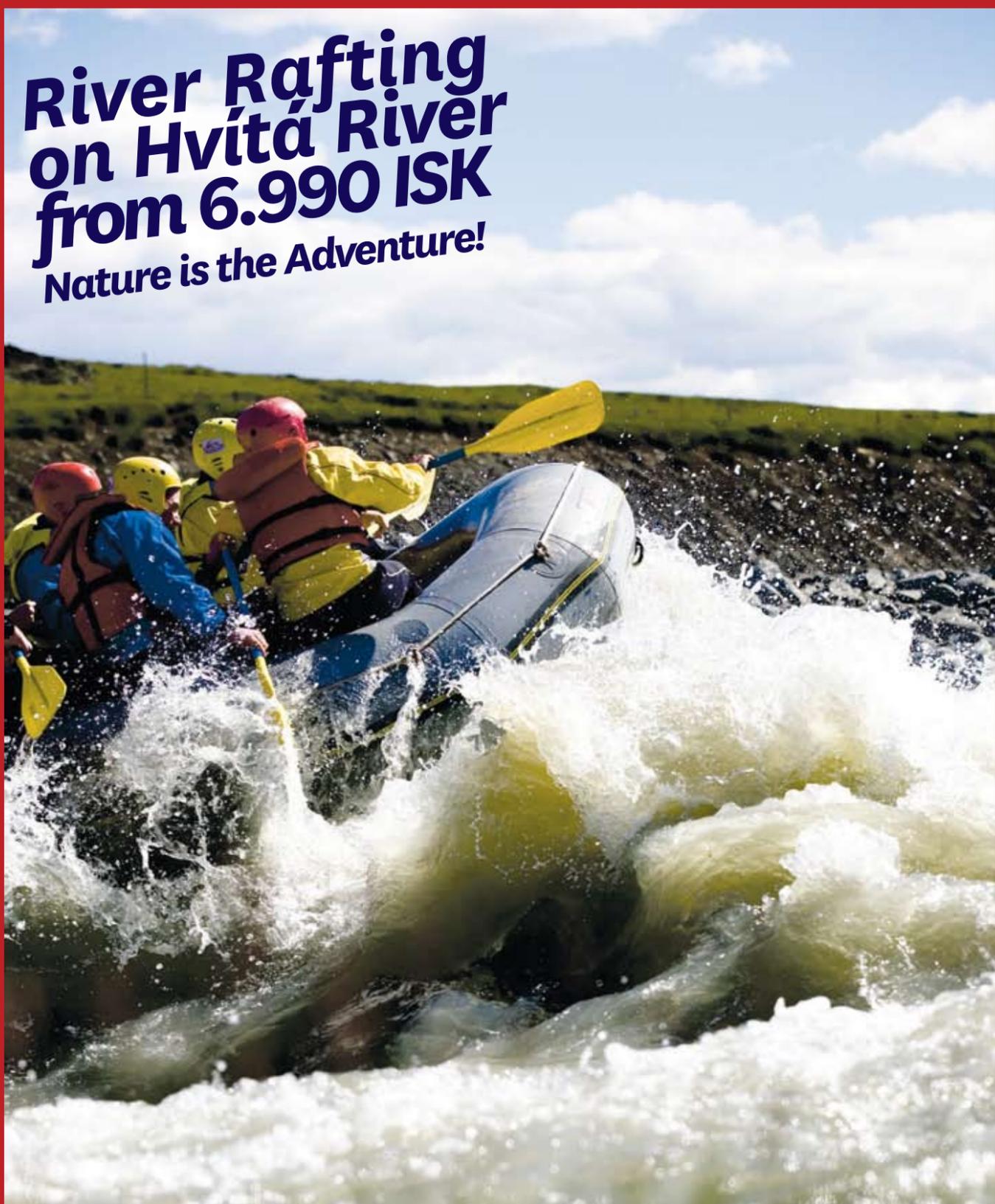
This young poet laureate to-be came to the award ceremony with his family. He sat through speeches, music and recitals – and eventually the panel judge came up on stage to present the award. His poem was read and he turned white as the driven snow. This was not what he had written.

Eiríkur Örn Norðdahl's poetry column keeps getting better

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No contest on Ísbúð Vesturbæjar for best ice cream; even if there are a bunch of swell places selling ice cream in the Reykjavík area, they are Reykjavík's most beloved for a good reason. And has the long, long lines to prove it.

Our panel of experts agrees: Ice cream rules!



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