

Special Issue

 *The*
REYKJAVÍK
GRAPEVINE

Summer Edition



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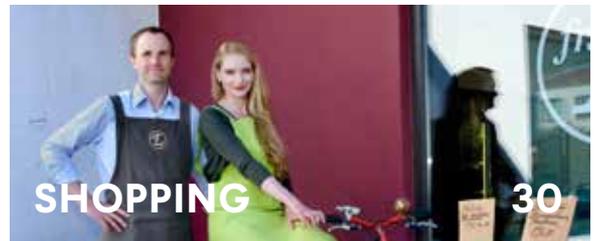
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AN INTRODUCTION:

The Best Of Reykjavík 2016

The Reykjavík Grapevine is proud to present: The Best Of Reykjavík 2016! Starting this summer, we're publishing our Best Of magazines to help you, our beloved readers, find the very best places this little city has to offer. You can use the info to plan your schedule, or even as a fun experiment to see how your tastes align with ours.

The issue you're now holding is geared toward the summer months, and features guides to help you make the most of Reykjavík's long, and occasionally sunny, summer days. There'll be a new Best of Reykjavík magazine to accompany each season, with our next one coming out in the fall. Don't laugh—there are more than two seasons in Iceland, even if it feels like there's only "awful winter" and "construction season."

We recommend perusing this

issue and making a list of your own must-sees, must-tries and must-tastes. Perhaps where you're staying is closer to one of our Runners Up, or a promising Newcomer. Map it out—we don't intend for you to be running all over just to try our favourite burger or art museum. Make a note of the names of places that jump out at you as you read, on the off chance that you might pass by one of them on your travels.

The list is our gift to you, but we value your feedback. If you find you disagree with one of our suggestions or you find a hidden gem of your own, shoot us an email at bestof@grapevine.is.

Thanks for your attention—and if this is the first publication of ours you've seen, be sure to pick up a copy of our magazine around town; The Reykjavík Grapevine, or check us out online at www.grapevine.is.

BEST OF REYKJAVÍK 2016

Summer Edition

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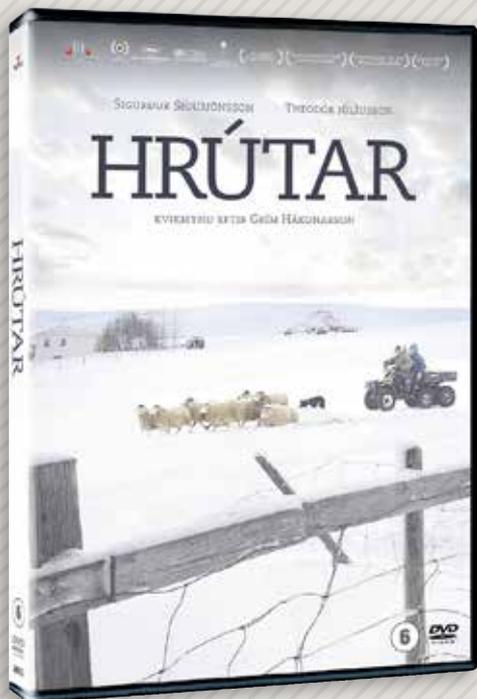
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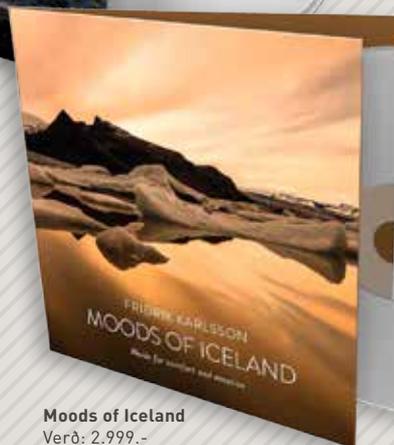
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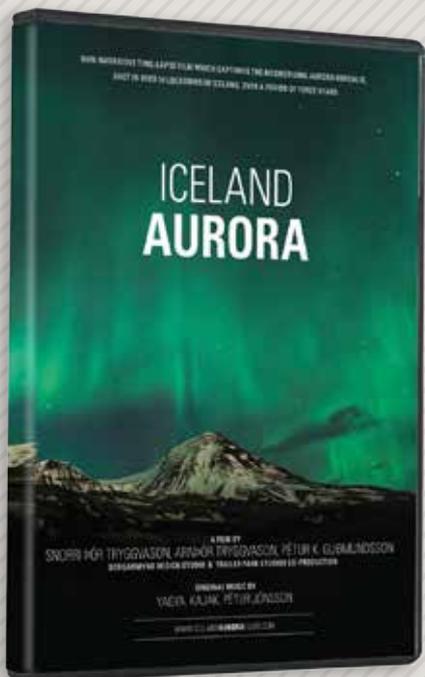
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How We Picked the Winners

The word "conclusion" is a little strong in this case. We have argued, fought and, in one case, slammed our head against the wall. We interviewed panels, tried blind taste-tests, and, in another case, consulted what we believe to be an oracle. This was not an easy or accurate endeavour.

The best comparison is Glíma, or Icelandic wrestling. It's not flashy or well produced like WWE. It's not exactly graceful like olympic wrestling, especially greco-roman. It's two people in weird leather underwear, staring into each other's eyes and trying to hip-check each other while simultaneously attempting an atomic wedge.

We'll be honest. Some of the winners are just outright winners, but some are a matter of debate and controversy. Like any other country, there are cliques or special interest groups. The bar most liked by a 22-year-old noise music fanatic might seem a little off-putting to a bespectacled jazz enthusiast. We're not saying those two groups can't overlap. Maybe they can. Jazz people are good at improvising and noise music definitely needs more fans.

The thing is this is a guide. It's a work in progress. It's an attempt at letting people know where we think they should go. We didn't all agree on

everything, so the Runners Up could end up being more palatable to you and the winners could be your third favourite. Yikes.

If this lack of certainty is too much for you. Imagine being the original tourist to Iceland. A wandering tax-evader from Norway who decides to settle on a rock almost uninhabitable to animal life. A land that occasionally explodes and Geysir's that burst scalding sulphur scented water from the ground like a cannon ball at Satan's pool party. It's the kind of place where people would invent Glíma. -YU

THE GUIDE-GUIDE

How To Spot The Winners

Look out for these stickers of recommendation, which we've handed out to this year's winners. They indicate your best option, whether you're looking for shopping, dining, drinking or partying in Reykjavik. We at the Grapevine know what's best!

Also, these are the stickers from our previous "Best of" selections, given to winners from prior years. -HBS





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Dining

Delicious even if you can't pronounce it

One of the most asked questions by visitors to Iceland is "Where do we eat?" That is a tough question to answer and it seems like restaurants are always rising and falling in popularity. However, we've tried to stay semi-aware of what's going on. That, some last minute research and the help of self-proclaimed experts we've been able to piece together something that gives you a pretty good idea of what's here and what to expect. I'm sure you know a cute little place in your home town that does it better, but we haven't been there. This is our attempt to help you. Don't be so snarky. You remember the line about biting the hand that feeds you, right?

Best Burger



Búllan

Geirsgata 1

Búllan wins this category for being the best burger at the best price. It's fast, reliable, and does exactly what it's supposed to. In the past year there have been a lot of burger places popping up, but Búllan has consistently proved itself to be Reykjavík's burger joint—it's perfect for lunch, on-the-go dinner, or a late evening pick-me-up. For a fancier gourmet burger, check out Kex Hostel or Grill Market, but if you want a classic burger and fries, Búllan always has you covered.

Runners-up:



Block Burger Skólavörðustígur 8

Block Burger is an office favourite. You can see their white paper to-go bags stacked on writers' desks, accompanied by empty Fizzy Lizzy soda bottles. Modelled heavily on the American chain Shake Shack in presentation, Block is reasonably priced (for Reykjavík) and has quick service.

Dirty Burger & Ribs Austurstræti 18

Dirty Burger & Ribs is the other office favourite. Actually, the division between Block Burger and Dirty Burger has resulted in feuds worthy of the sagas. Though none have led to mass fratricide, yet, you'll have to taste for yourself to see what side you are on.

Previous Winners:

- 2015: Búllan
- 2014: Kex Hostel
- 2013: Vitabar
- 2012: Grillmarket
- 2011: Hamborgarabúlla Tómasar

Best Veggie Burger



Kaffihús Vesturbæjar

Melhagi 20

Kaffihús Vesturbæjar, also known as Kafi Vest, is nestled in the 107 postcode, and has become a hip spot for Reykjavík's west-side movers and shakers. Choosing the best veggie burger was, surprisingly, one of the most heated debates this time around for our Best Of magazine. Kaffi Vest wins by having not just one, but two great choices. Of these, our favourite is a bean-based burger in crunchy breadcrumbs, served with rosemary potato wedges and an avocado-based mayo-style dip. It's plain delicious, whether you're vegan or not.

Runner Up

Block Burger Skólavörðustígur 8

Block Burger makes the top three once again. Their soy-based vegetarian burger with cheese is the type of veggie burger even carnivores will love. It's full of earthy, meaty flavour, and feels like comfort food. Order this with delicious crispy fries and you'll devour it like you never gave up meat.

Newcomer



Bike Cave Einarsnes 36

Bike Cave is the hippest new place on the block. It's been described as the best place to get a "messy vegan burger." This means you get to feel all the comfort and tactile pleasure of a pulled pork sandwich without the shameful joy of murder.

Previous Winners:

- 2015: Brooklyn Bar
- 2014: Hamborgarabúlla Tómasar
- 2013: Hamborgarabúlla Tómasar
- 2012: Hamborgarabúlla Tómasar
- 2011: Hamborgarabúlla Tómasar

Best Pizza



Hverfisgata 12

Hverfisgata 12

Hverfisgata 12 is not only the best pizza, but has topping combinations that'll leave you scratching your head at first, but rubbing your belly later. It's located, conveniently, at Hverfisgata 12, sharing a building with other fancy places like Dill and Mikkeller & Friends. Their comfort food-style potato-topped pizza, as well as the beetroot pizza with walnuts and arugula, are crowd-pleasers that manage to be rich, light, sweet and savoury.

Runners Up



Gamla Smiðjan Lækjargata 8

Gamla Smiðjan is an Icelandic anomaly: the pizza is pretty good here. Is it the numerous combinations? Is it the Icelandic cheese? Some argue it's the pure Icelandic water that makes the dough taste unique, alongside the brick oven baking technique. We're not sure, but we know we like it.



Ugly Smiðjuvegur 2

Ugly, where the pizzas are everything but ugly. This place is quite new, but has quickly made a name for itself. Their "Super Sundays" offer two large pizzas, garlic bread, ice cream and a bag of candy for a little over 4,000 ISK. That, my friend, is a bargain.

Previous Winners:

- 2015: Hverfisgata 12
- 2014: Hverfisgata 12
- 2013: Gamla Smiðjan
- 2012: La Luna trattoria-pizzeria
- 2011: Gamla Smiðjan



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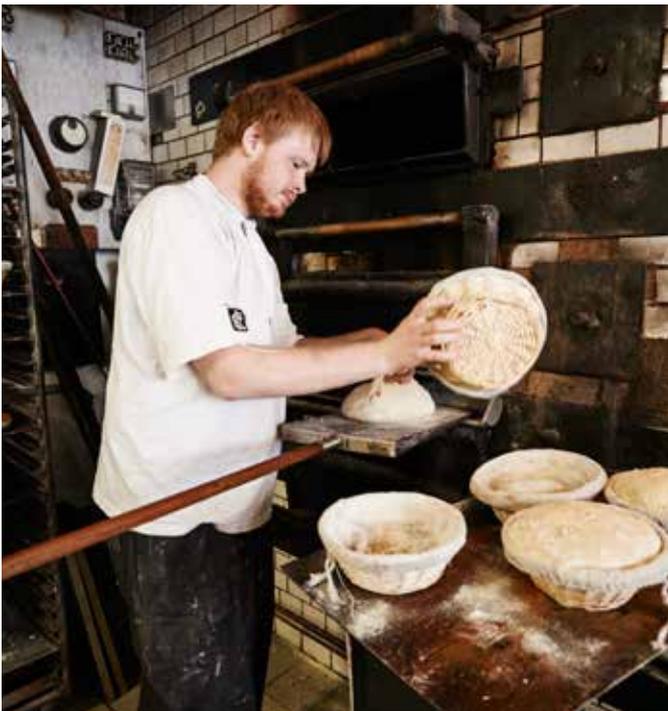
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BEST OF REYKJAVÍK 2016

Dining

It's not expensive for Norway

Best bakery



Sandholt

Laugavegur 36

Sandholt wins this spot again, but not for lack of competition. This is simply a bakery that always delivers. The pastries are flaky and not overly sweet, and the sourdough bread is, quite right, famous. If you're staying in a hotel, or more likely an Air BnB, grab one of their delicious loaves and keep it for snacks. If the weather magically cooperates, have a picnic in the park.

Runner Up



Mossfellsbakarí

Háholt 13, Mossfellsbær

Mossfellsbakarí should be incorporated into any day trip outside of the capital area. It's the perfect pastry or sandwich stop—pick up your lunch before driving the Golden Circle or visiting the Halldor Laxness museum.

Newcomer

Brauð & Co. Frakkastígur 16

Brauð & Co. has burst onto the bakery scene in downtown Reykjavík, looking to give Sandholt a run for its money. It regularly sells out, and looks poised to become a mainstay in downtown Reykjavík food culture. This could be the beginning of an all-out gluten-powered war.

Previous Winners:

2015: Sandholt
2014: Sandholt
2013: Sandholt
2012: Mossfellsbakarí
2011: Sandholt

Best indian



Austur-Indíafélagið

Hverfisgata 56

Austur-Indíafélagið is an institution. An authentic fine-dining Indian restaurant with all the high-quality spices, recipes and techniques you'd expect to find in a much larger European capital. The menu takes many of the classic recipes of Indian cuisine, and serves them with a creative twist and consistently sky-high quality. It's amongst the very best restaurants in Iceland—and priced as such. Make sure to call ahead and make a reservation, because it's very popular.

Runners Up



Hraðlestin Hverfisgata 64

Hraðlestin is a takeaway joint that offers a tasty spin on Indian street food, with naan rolls, Indian-style pizzas, samosas, pakosas, soups, and all kinds of great Indian comfort foods that'll really hit the spot if you wanna put your feet up and eat at home. They have four locations and lunch and dinner menus. Call ahead with your order for convenience.



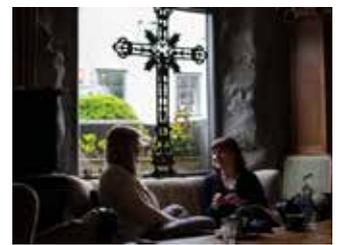
Gandhi Pósthússtræti 17

Gandhi is a comfy little basement restaurant by Austurvöllur. As our former food editor concluded in his review of the place: "It's partly Kerala cuisine. Think Indian meets Indonesian, with coconut, fish, coriander, and lamb. More piquant than simply spicy."

Previous Winners:

2015: Gandhi
2014: Gandhi
2013: Austurlandahraðlestin
2012: Ghandi
2011: Austurlandahraðlestin

Best coffeehouse



Stofan

Vesturgata 3

If you know anything about the latte-drinking 101 crowd, winning 'Best coffeehouse' is a major achievement. Stofan wins for being a great all-around coffeehouse, and for having what Icelanders call "stemning," which means atmosphere or vibe. With two floors, charming antique furniture, and seating that's a good distance from the noise of the espresso machine, the stemning is perfect, and you'll see locals and tourists alike reading books, playing chess, and discussing the social construction we all live in.

Runners Up



Kaffihús Vesturbæjar Melhagi 20

Kaffihús Vesturbæjar was the clear winner in the eyes of our panel's west-side Vesturbæjar-ites, but it's top quality coffee, French-style macaroons and tasteful decor weren't quite enough to convince the 101 rats on our panel. But for those out west, the location, menu and feel of this place make it a perfect neighbourhood cafe.



Reykjavík Roasters Karástígur 1

Roasters has made some changes that didn't sit well with the judges, such as the removal of wi-fi, free refills, and much of the more comfortable furniture. Nobody would deny that they have the best coffee, with the beans roasted in-house—but the café experience on offer has, sadly, gone downhill.

Previous Winners:

2015: Kaffihús Vesturbæjar
2014: Reykjavík Roasters
2013: Kaffismiðjan
2012: Kaffismiðjan
2011: Kaffismiðjan

Best sushi



Fiskmarkaðurinn

Aðalstræti 12

Fiskmarkaðurinn (also known as Fish Market) is an upscale restaurant with a small bar specifically for sushi. The mixed sashimi plates and maki rolls with Arctic char or soft-shell crab are second-to-none. With bar seating, Fish Market has the best dining experience for people who enjoy chatting with the sushi chefs as they work and getting tips for the best fish to order on any given day. They also have an amazing wasabi cocktail to complement your meal.

Runners Up



SuZushii Kringlan, Stjornutorgi

SuZushi is rumoured to be the place the Japanese Embassy orders sushi. It's done exceptionally well and never disappoints. The downside? It's in the food court of a mall. Not the best atmosphere to eat raw fish.



Sushi Samba Þingholtsstræti 5

Sushi Samba serves the South American spin on sushi, adding lots of lime flavours, chilli and sauces. The lighting is low and the seating is intimate, so we recommend it for a date night. Not that anyone in Iceland actually goes on dates.

Previous Winners:

- 2015: SuZushii
- 2014: Sushisamba
- 2013: Sakebarinn
- 2012: SuZushii
- 2011: SuZushii

Best vegetarian



Kaffi Vínyl

Hverfisgata 76

Kaffi Vínyl has wedged itself into the growing vegetarian scene in 101, becoming not only the best vegetarian place, but also the best vegan place, with a completely vegan menu. Kaffi Vínyl sticks to its guns when it comes to coffee, too—try their oat milk latte and cappuccino. We didn't know oats could be milked, but wherever that elusive oat-tea was hidden, we're glad they found it.

Runner Up



Gló - Laugavegur 20

Gló is so popular they serve it on Icelandic flights. The menu varies from night to night between vegetarian dishes, raw foods, and the occasional chicken dish. It's the place you go on Monday at lunch, when you still have the energy to believe you are going to turn over a new leaf and eat healthy.

Newcomer



Bike Cave Einarsnes 36

Bike Cave is on the list again. It's definitely gaining traction in the dining scene downtown. Try it out. If it lasts, you'll be one of the firsts. If it doesn't, you can say to everyone, "You should have been there, man."

Previous Winners:

- 2015: Teni
- 2014: Gló
- 2013: Gló
- 2012: Gló
- 2011: Gló

Best gastropub



Public House

Laugavegur 24

Public House has a wide-variety of small, interesting dishes and finger-foods, and a good variety of beer. It keeps the right conversation-friendly tone by not having TV screens or other distractions. It's the perfect place to fill up on tasty small plates before a night on the town. The menu features lots of traditional Icelandic ingredients, including the cute and oh-so-delicious puffin. Also—try the langoustine dumplings. You're welcome.

Runner Up



Frederiksen Ale House Hafnarstræti 5

Fredriksen has a wall of doors when you first enter that would give Hellen Keller nightmares. They serve perfect pub-food combinations such as sliders and meaty finger-food platters on planks, and the happy hour is two-for-one. You can also drink out of a boot. So that's fun.

Newcomer



Sæti Svínið Hafnarstræti 1

Sæta Svínið has taken over a corner house by Ingólfstorg, and delivers three floors of gastropub dining. You can snack on smoked pig ears or adventure into horse carpaccio. They even have Foie Gras as a topping choice for your burger. Go nuts.

Best place for a fancy meal



Dill

Hverfisgata 12

Dill is a very special restaurant. It's the must try place for the foodie. You'll need a reservation, and come prepared for a culinary journey that gives you a taste of Icelandic staples vaulted to the finest dining in Reykjavik. You can attempt to order the five course set menu, but everyone ends up upgrading to the seven course version after the first bite. On top of their stellar menu, the wine and beer pairing has been crafted by their in-house sommelier. If you are planning one fancy dinner in Reykjavik, this should be it.

Runners Up



Matur Og Drykkur Grandagarður 2

Matur Og Drykkur has become the talk of the town lately. It has tasting menus of new spins on traditional Icelandic food, as well as seafood and vegetarian options. Cod head might sound like an odd choice, but trust us, it's a must-try—you won't regret it.



Gallery Restaurant Bergstaðastræti 37

Gallery Restaurant at Hotel Holt has a classic fine dining feel to it: dark wood, red upholstery and walls adorned with great paintings. You can smell truffles the moment you walk in. You'll feel like you should have a jacket and tie on.

Previous Winners:

- 2015: Dill
- 2014: Dill
- 2013: Gallery at Hótel Holt
- 2012: Grill Market
- 2011: Dill

BEST OF REYKJAVÍK 2016

Dining

Not everything is shark and sheep head

Best thai food



Ban Thai

Laugavegur 130

Ban Thai has won this section for over half a decade. It's another rare thing in Iceland: a specialty food place that manages to keep quality despite the difficulty in obtaining high quality ingredients. Their spicy dishes manage to give the fresh, piquant flavour of southeast Asia. It's also the only restaurant Russell Crowe visited while in Iceland. What does that mean? Try it and find out.

Runners Up

NaNa Thai Skeifunni 4

Nana Thai is a worker's lunch spot in Skeifan. Do not be fooled by this location. Yes, it's lost in a sea of stores and parking lots. The decoration style might be called, generously, "minimal." If you find yourself in the area, it's a tasty meal.



Pad Thai Álfheimar 2

Pad Thai is a four-seater restaurant that only makes pad thai in three variations: vegetables, chicken and shrimp. It's greasy. It's comforting. It's the best sit-by-yourself-and-think-about-your-future restaurant, and one of our guilty pleasures.

Previous Winners:

2015: Ban Thai
2014: Ban Thai
2013: Yummi Yummi
2012: Ban Thai
2011: Ban Thai

Best family meal



Laundromat

Austurstræti 9

Laundromat is probably the most visited restaurant on this list. The reason is simple: it caters to families, with a kids area in the basement. It also has a laundromat in the basement, with tokens available at the bar. It has a great selection of bottled beers, and a simple, appealing menu of soups, sandwiches, burgers and steaks.

Runners Up



Hornið Hafnarstræti 15

Hornið is an institution in Reykjavík. It's a family restaurant offering classic, simple comfort food. Whether you're ordering a pizza to share with grandma and grandpa or devouring a bowl of pasta to carb-load before your 5k Colour Run, Hornið makes going out simple and tasty. If you took your family out to the big indoor market, Kolaportið, it's just across the street. Walk over and chat about your new sunglasses or camouflage t-shirt.

KEX Hostel Skúlagata 28

KEX won best family restaurant last year. It has a kids' area and it closes early. It's the type of place parents like to go because it doesn't scream "family restaurant." You can have your Pale Ale served to you by some bearded bohemian while taking turns sneaking out for a cigarette or checking on your toddler.

Previous Winners:

2015: KEX
2014: Laundromat
2013: Laundromat
2012: Laundromat
2011: Laundromat

Best goddamn restaurant



Snaps

Þórsgrata 1

Snaps is an atmospheric bistro beloved by Icelanders. It's where locals have birthdays, anniversaries, ninth dates and family dinners. The food is constantly getting better, with arguably the best gin & tonic menu on this whole island, and a stellar espresso martini. The bacalao is the consistent champion of the menu, but the french onion soup can make you forget about the wind and the rain, and their lamb steak with crispy fries and homemade bearnaise is maybe the best in town. Pro tip: the English-language menu is on the back, so just flip it over when you sit down.

Runners Up



Apótek Austurstræti 16

Apótek makes beautifully prepared meals in a great setting. You won't be disappointed. On Thursdays, they fly in fresh oysters and put them on special. This is a place worthy of visiting parents or dignitaries. The macaroons are a delicious to-go treat.

Previous Winners:

2015: Snaps
2014: Snaps
2013: Snaps
2012: Snaps
2011: Ban Thai



Matur Og Drykkur Grandagarður 2

Matur Og Drykkur? Again? Yes, it's just that good. You need to try this place. Did we mention the cocktail menu? It manages to be adventurous but palatable to even the pickiest drinkers. We love it!



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Dining

It's the water here that makes it special

Best cheap meal



Noodle Station

Laugavegur 86

If you, like the martians in Bill and Ted's Bogus Journey, have only the word "station" in your vocabulary, you are halfway to naming the best cheap meal in Reykjavík: Noodle Station. Yes, there is still a noodle war going on here in Reykjavík, with ardent supporters behind various places, but there can be only one... And Noodle Station is it. You can smell the coriander for metres around this place, and whenever the temperature drops you can see the condens-soup-sation on the windows. The veggie option comes in under 1000 ISK. Enter hungry, and leave with change in your pocket.

Runners Up

Bærjarins Beztu

Bærjarins Beztu is a hot dog stand. It might just be the greatest hot dog stand on earth. Yes, it has been visited by Presidents (you can order a "Clinton") and celebrities. Yes, it will be the thing you miss most about Iceland. Sometimes the lines are long, and one hot dog isn't enough and two is too many. Life is so hard.

10/11 Various locations

10/11 is a more expensive grocery store than Bónus or Krónan, but it's open 24 hours, so you'll end up going there anyway. We could suggest cheaper places, but that won't matter. You will go here. They sell sandwiches, and a super-cheap soup and bread option.

Previous Winners:

2015: K-Bar
2014: 10-11 after 14:00
2013: "Sub of the month" at Subway
2012: Íslenski barinn
2011: Noodle Station

Best brunch



Coocoo's Nest

Grandagarður 23

Do not fly by or over this great spot located in the Grandi harbour area. It has a selection of vegetarian and vegan options and the brunch is one of the must-try meals in Reykjavík. Brunch is served Friday to Sunday from 11:00 until 16:00. We recommend getting there early and making a day out of the up and coming Grandi area. It has a picturesque old harbour, and the walk will help with your hangover.

Runners Up

Hverfisgata 12 Hverfisgata 12

Hverfisgata 12 is a nice looking place. Half of any good brunch is in the location, and this place delivers. The other half is eggs, bread and fruit. Hverfisgata 12 does it all, and very well. The plating is Instagram gold. You'll be happy you went here, and so will your followers.

Snaps Þórsgrata 1

Snaps has eggs Benedict, Bloody Marys and a gin and tonic menu. It also has cava for under 1000 ISK. When someone from Chicago or Toronto says, "Let's go for brunch," this is the kind of place they mean—a comfortable Sunday recovery spot.

Previous Winners:

2015: Slippbarinn
2014: Coocoo's Nest
2013: Vox
2012: Vox
2011: Vox

Best seafood



Fiskfélagið

Vesturgata 2a

Fiskfélagið (also known as The Fish Company) answers the most common question asked when people arrive here: "Where can I get some fresh Icelandic fish?" You've undoubtedly heard of the lengths to which Iceland went to have the best fresh fish in world—the years of fighting and lives lost in the Cod Wars. Yet, even against the former imperial powerhouse of Great Britain, Icelandic lawyers and fishing companies prevailed. That victory is yours to savour, and there's no better place to celebrate.

Runner Up



Ostabúðin Skólavörðustígur 8

Ostabúðin (translated: "Cheese Shop") has a great fish menu. It's a runner up, because it's a lunch spot only, but you won't be disappointed here. It's not complicated. It's just delicious, full stop.

Newcomer



Messinn Lækjargata 6b

Messinn is only a few weeks old, but it makes simple fish into a theatrical culinary adventure. You get your dinner served hot in the pan. What do you get? Fish, potatoes and vegetables. Try the Steinbítur.

Previous Winners:

2015: Fiskfélagið
2014: Fiskfélagið
2013: Fiskfélagið
2012: Fiskfélagið
2011: Við Tjörnina

Best must-try dining experience



Matur og Drykkur

Grandagarður 2

Matur og Drykkur has become the place we tell friends to try when they're visiting. They take classic Icelandic ingredients and bring them up-to-date. The most dramatic, and dare-we-say, must-try item on their menu is the cod head. It's cooked in chicken stock and then glazed. For some, the idea of a cod head seems a little too experimental, but trust us, it's delicious. Start with the cheeks and then just keep eating until it's no longer looking at you.

Runners Up



Sægreifinn Geirsgata 8

Sægreifinn (Sea Baron) became famous for its "Moby Dick on a stick" grilled whale kebab, and its incredibly hearty lobster soup, from a secret recipe. If you're looking to taste the ethically questionable minke whale, this is the place to do it. Right on the harbour, with a view of the whale-watching boats.



Bærjarins Beztu By Tryggvagata

Bærjarins Beztu is a hotdog stand. It's amazing. Kim Kardashian made sure to stop here, but only had ketchup on her hotdog—like a complete amateur. Order the "one with everything"—and no, this isn't the beginning of a buddhist hot dog vendor joke.

Previous Winners:

2015: Shrimp pyramid at Jómfrúin
2014: Food section at Kolaportið
2013: Icelandic food at Kaffi Loki
2012: Ícel. Home-food, Mamma Steina
2011: The svið at Fljótt og Gott, BSÍ

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Best lunch place



Ostabúðin

Skólavörðustígur 8

Ostabúðin was previously named as a contender for the best seafood joint in Reykjavík. However, where it really shines is at lunchtime. It makes great fish of the day and a delicious fish soup. It's the place where downtown professionals grab a no-bullshit lunch with a side of still-warm bread. It's been open for over a decade, which, in Reykjavík, is about as consistent as anything has ever been. There is also a gourmet grocery shop on the main floor, so grab something to take home as well.

Runners Up



Bergsson Mathús Templarásund 3

Bergsson Mathús makes a great lunch with wonderful accompanying salads. Jamie Oliver stopped by there when he visited Reykjavík with his family. With two locations—one downtown and the other in the Grandi harbour area—it's never too far away.



Jómfrúin Lækjargata 4

Jómfrúin makes classic Danish and Scandinavian dishes. You eat your open faced sandwiches while taking sips of aquavit. The shrimp pyramid has become a popular dish, but, recently after the Euro Cup, so has the salty "Portuguese" dish.

Previous Winners:

2015: Ostabúðin
2014: Bergsson Mathús
2013: Ostabúðin

Best late night bite



Fish And Chips Truck

By Geirsgata

Fish And Chips Truck brings comfort and quality to the quagmire that is Lækjargata late at night. Whether you need something to do while waiting for the taxi, or you just remembered you forgot to eat before heading out on the town, this food truck offers the best of British cuisine, enhanced by the use of Icelandic fish. Ignore the fighting couples and dead-eyed public urinators. Grab your food and dig in. You'll thank us in the morning.

Runners Up



The Deli Bankastræti 14

Deli is not just a place to grab a slice of pizza. It is one of the main relationship-causing venues in Reykjavík. People have met their future partner there. It usually doesn't last, but they might get a couple of kids out of the deal.



Lobster Soup Truck By Ægisgarður

Sometimes you need piping hot soup in the middle of the night. Downing a half pint of cream at three in the morning is always a good idea—especially salty, fishy cream. It can also keep your hands warm while you wait for a cab.

Previous Winners:

2015: Chicken wings at Dirty Burger & Ribs
2014: Nonnabiti
2013: Nonnabiti

Best place to go with a group of friends



Tapas barinn

Vesturgata 3b

Tapas barinn makes group dining fun, easy and intimate. You can choose from a wide selection of small dishes, including some Icelandic standard fare, served tapas style. It's the perfect place for mixing locals and tourists in one big group. Locals have tried all the usual stuff and want something exciting; tourists want to try Icelandic classic dishes like puffin, whale and langoustine. Call ahead to make sure they have a table for you and your crew.

Runner Up

Stofan Vesturgata 3

Stofan won best coffeeshop, and is a pretty common place to meet with friends. If you can grab a seat on the couches right under the stairs on the bottom floor, you'll be the coolest cats in the place. There's also a rumour going around town that they make a pretty spectacular bowl of soup.

Newcomer



Oddsson Hringbraut 121

Oddsson is the new kid in vesturbær. It's large, retro and has a private karaoke booth that fits over 20 people. You can grab a burger and a beer and, surrounded by their signature decor of blue furniture, enjoy the view of the ocean. You'll feel like you're in a time machine, while your parents will think they're having flashbacks.

Previous Winners:

2015: Tapasbarinn
2014: KEX
2013: KEX
2012: Tapas Bar
2011: Tapas Bar

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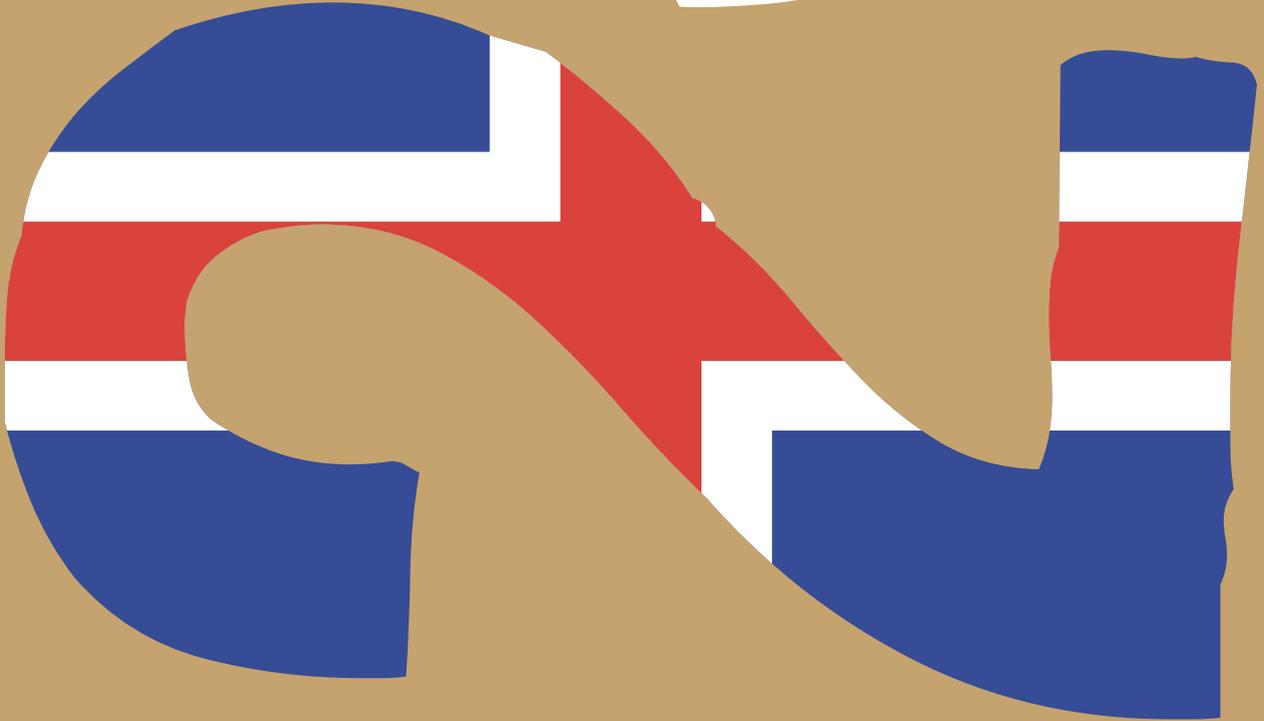
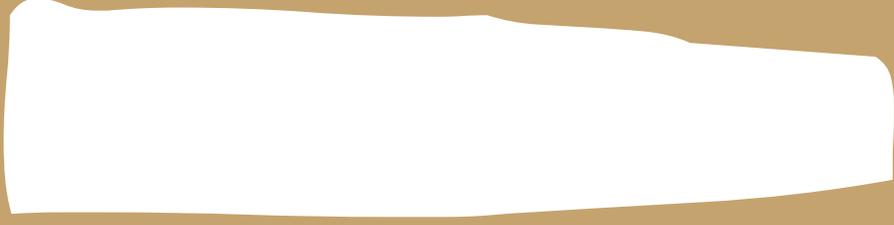
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Only served for the whole table.





THE SÓLEY GUIDE TO BEING

A Vegetarian In Iceland

Words By **SÓLEY**
Photo By **ART BICKICK**

I've been an on-and-off vegetarian/pescatarian for ten years, but last year I finally took the next step, and am now trying to live the vegan lifestyle as much as possible. To save you from hungrily wandering the streets of Reykjavík, I'm gonna guide you around my favourite places!

Coffee and breakfast

To start the day, I go to **Reykjavík Roasters** in Brautarholt for coffee (so strong and tasty!) and croissants, cakes or sourdough bread with avocado or hummus.

I also like to go to a nice little place called **C is for Cookie**. They offer grilled sandwiches with different toppings. If you're vegan, make sure to ask about the vegan cheese, and vegan carrot cake.

Kaffitár has few cafés around Reykjavík, and they serve good bread with hummus with optional olives.

Lunch and Dinner

There are actually a lot of good places to choose from these days, so I'm going to have to name a few.

If you're in the mood for a falafel, I recommend **Mandi** by Ingólfstorg. I had them make vegan Syrian food for my wedding party last year, and people went crazy for it!

If you're into noodles like me, I advise you to enjoy a bowl at **Núðluskálin**. Their fare is yummy, spicy (if that's your thing) and filling, too. Indian places work well for vegans: try **Austur-Indíafélagið** and **Hraðlestin**, both on Hverfisgata. The first one is a little fancier, and a lot more expensive, but both are great.

If you like sushi, check out **Sakebarinn/Sushibarinn**. The vegan mix is almost to die for. I mean, I wouldn't die for sushi but I'd like... almost die.

There's a good vegan burger at **Kaffi Vest** up in Vesturbær, a short walk from downtown. It's close to Vesturbæjarlaug, so you have a dip then a burger.

Garðurinn on Klapparstígur

is 100% vegetarian, and has a hippie atmosphere—like you'd imagine a vegetarian place to be! Nearby restaurant **Gló**, owned by vegan/raw chef Sólveig Eiríksdóttir, aka Solla, always has a vegetarian dish and a raw option.

The cherry on top is **VÍNYL**. It's on Hverfisgata, one street down from Laugavegur—which is losing its charm because of the puffin stores. **VÍNYL** is a fully vegan restaurant, and it's so fucking good. When you've finished your plate (my grandpa always said: "Take what you want, but eat what you take!") I'm also going to allow you to have a cupcake. They're amazing.

Also, try the **Joylato** Ice cream shop on the corner of Njálsgata and Klapparstígur. They make the ice cream right in front of you. You can get an ice cream that's not for calves, but for humans! The salt caramel coconut milk option with homemade cinnamon biscuit is delicious.

As for beer... apparently **Einstök** is vegan! I don't know (yet) what non-vegan things you'd

put in your beer, but **Einstök** is a nice one. I've heard that Borg beers are also vegan.

Grocery Shopping

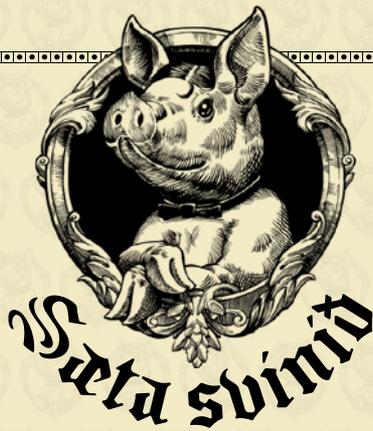
Heilsuhúsið on Laugavegur has a great veggie selection, and **Krambúðin** on Skólavörðustígur sells Veggyness vegan products, made from Seitan (not at all the same thing as Satan).

There are also two things you should find at most stores and gas stations—a veggie avocado sandwich, and a wrap with hummus.

To assist you in your search for vegan food in Reykjavík, download the app that's called **'Happy Cow'**. It's like **YELP**, but only for vegetarian/vegan food.

I don't know why I should thank you, but I feel like I have to say thank you for making these food choices, and not supporting the meat industry. It's cruel, and it's ruining the earth!

So! I really hope all this helps you a little bit if you're feeling lost and "hangry" (hungry & angry)... because I'm that person all the time when I'm travelling.



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BEST OF REYKJAVÍK 2016

Drinking

Tipsy or wasted, the choice is yours.

You want to get hammered. Or you want to meet a friend for a quiet drink. Maybe you just landed and you wanna sit down for a pint with your laptop. Wouldn't you want a select team of experts guiding you through the next hour of your life? Maybe not. But here they are anyway, ready to tell you what to do and where to go, where to dance, sit stand, lounge, play pool... It's all a bit much, really. Let's just sit down and have a drink.

Best place to start the night



KEX Hostel

Skúlagata 28

KEX is a hostel bar and gastropub with a beautifully designed interior and a large patio that catches the sun on a clear day. There's always something going on, whether it's a free concert, a beer festival, or KEXmas. The bar hosts weekly jazz nights, and you can also book a trip into the countryside via the KEXLAND tour company. It's quiet by day but bustling at night, serves great food, and has a wide selection of Icelandic beer on the taps. "You always bump into someone you haven't seen in a while at KEX," noted the panel.

Runners-up:



**Bar Ananas
Klapparstígur 38**

Melting the country's often frosty surface, Bar Ananas is a tropically-themed bar filled with delicious cocktails, friendly bartenders and sultry tunes. It's divided into separate spaces so it's easy to find the perfect spot. "You constantly have to wait in line for the toilet though," the panel pointed out.

**Bravó
Laugavegur 22**

Bravó is run by the same owner as Húrra, another one of our favourite bars, but feels more like a pub than a party place. Even though there's a weekly roster of DJs, it's almost always a sit-down crowd and a mellow atmosphere. Anyone can walk in into Bravó and feel perfectly at home, and it's right in the heart of downtown.

Previous Winners:

- 2015: Loft Hostel
- 2014: Kaldi
- 2013: Slippbarinn
- 2012: Kex
- 2011: Hemmi & Valdi (RIP)

Best place to end the night



Húrra

Tryggvagata 22

The one and only Húrra (translation: "Hooray") is a spacious two story bar. It hosts many of Reykjavík's most interesting concerts and is famous for its dance-till-dawn vibe. "It's the likeliest place to find a good after-party," said the panel. The walls are painted dark and filled with interesting artwork. They have a nice happy hour, plenty of seating, and many restroom stalls. Make sure not to miss their Monday night jazz or as they call it "Monjazz."

Runners-up:

Kiki

Laugavegur 22

Kiki is a queer-friendly bar noticeable by its gay pride-themed rainbow exterior. The DJs play straight-up pop hits, and there's a kind of unrestrained happiness on the busy dance floor.



**Paloma basement
Naustin 1-3**

The basement of Paloma is a good place to end your night. It's dark, the music is loud and you can easily lose yourself in dancing. Paloma was controversial within the panel, but after careful consideration, the group agreed that it was good for those last minutes of happy dancing.

Previous Winners:

- 2015: Paloma Basement
- 2014: Paloma
- 2013: Harlem (RIP)

Best all-around bar



Prikioð

Bankastræti 12

This was a tight contest between Húrra and Prikioð. "Húrra has it all, including more female toilets, but Prikioð has more soul and a food menu," one panellist said, continuing: "Prikioð is like a family, and Geoff [the owner] is the dad." It has hearty breakfasts in the morning, burgers at night, an outdoor smoking area and a small dance floor. After careful consideration, we've decided it's the winner. The panel agrees, sort of.

Runners-up:



Húrra - Tryggvagata 22

This place will quickly win you over, as you can tell from our glowing recommendation in the "best bar for live music" category. Subdued by day, Húrra has a great vibe by night, and always has something going on. "Húrra has everything," said the panel, "pub quizzes, concerts, cheap beer and parties on weekends."



**Kaffibarinn
Bergstaðastræti 1**

Kaffibarinn is a downtown institution that has become more popular over the years. Once it was the go-to place for Reykjavík's in-the-know party people, but these days the secret is out. Now you'll find yourself rubbing shoulders with a wide range of international visitors and every kind of Reykjavík local, chilling by day or dancing to the pulse of house music by night.

Previous Winners:

- 2015: KEX
- 2014: Boston
- 2013: Dolly
- 2012: Faktorý (RIP)



COCKTAIL HOUR WITH

Reykjavíkurdætur

Words & Photo: HREFNA BJÖRG GYLFAÐÓTTIR

It wasn't until 1989 that the beer ban in Iceland was lifted and it became legal to consume beer. Therefore Icelanders have learned a lot about hard alcohol

consumption, especially in the form of cocktails.

We met with rappers **Jóhanna Rakel** and **Salka** from the hip hop group **Reykjavíkurdæ-**

tur to discuss the importance of cocktails. It was the day after they came back from performing at the **Roskilde Festival** in Denmark. They were hung over from their tour across Europe, having become even more experienced than before when it comes to drinking cocktails.

We asked them about their personal favourites, and they told us how to mix a special-Reykjavíkurdætur cocktail.

Jóhanna Rakel's Cocktail: Moscow Mule

Ingredients: Lime vodka, lemon juice, and ginger beer.

Jóhanna: "I grew up in Moscow where I learned that the Moscow Mule is the only decent way to drink vodka, apart from dry. It's simply unethical to mix vodka with anything else."

Review: "It sure is a tall drink of water. Easy to drink, just like me. I could drink this at a Singapore Sling concert as well as a Bubbi Morthens concert. It goes everywhere, again, just like me."

Salka's Cocktail: Whiskey Sour
Ingredients: Honey flavoured whiskey, lime juice, chilli and

Sriracha sauce.

Salka: "I am a whiskey kind of gal. It's my favourite liquor. I drink a lot of it—too much. I also love chilli. I put it in everything to spice things up, whether it's a cocktail or a coffee drink."

Review: "I would say this drink resembles me walking into a room. There is something tough about it but with a cute element too. It's not the most inviting drink ever but once all the elements come together, they complement each other."

Reykjavíkurdætur Cocktail: Long Island

Ice Tea plus Sólbert Beer

Ingredients: Tequila, Vodka, Light Rum, Triple Sec, Gin, and a splash of cola, along with Icelandic-made Sólbert Beer.

Salka: "The Runaways' 'Dirty Sink' is the inspiration for this drink. It's a mix of everything. There is a rebellious adolescent vibe to it."

Jóhanna: "There is a lot happening here."

Salka: "It's empowering, to say the least—a bit like Reykjavíkurdætur."

Stofan
1881
Café

Vesturgata 3 | Reykjavík

BEST OF REYKJAVÍK 2016

Drinking

“Bars that sell their beer for 800 ISK aren’t offering a happy hour, they’re offering a sad hour”

Best bar to go dancing



Kiki

Laugavegur 22

Kiki Queer Bar takes this award for the third-year running, and for good reason. Their pop ‘n’ classics policy is perfect for those who like to sing along to every track they hear. Being the city’s only queer club, Kiki is also the place where people really let loose. “Everyone at Kiki dances like someone just released a confetti bomb,” one of our panelists noted. The atmosphere at Kiki is inclusive, so whether you’re in the mood or not, you’ll probably end up joining the party.

Runners-up:



B5 Bankastræti 5

B5 is the closest thing to a Miami nightclub you’ll find in Reykjavík (okay, it’s not that close). This place is made for grinding. You’ll find all the hits here, from today’s top 40 to occasional tracks from the last millennium.

Prikið Bankastræti 12

Classic café by day, Reykjavík go-to hip hop bar by night, Prikið will throw a little sexual bravado into your evening (‘cause everyone knows the best way to make people feel sexy is some hip hop and R’n’B). Come in and start bouncing!

Previous Winners:

- 2015: Kiki Queer Bar
- 2014: Kiki Queer Bar
- 2013: Harlem
- 2012: Bakkus

Best newcomer bar

Bryggjan Brugghús

Grandagarður 8

In the up-and-coming Grandi neighbourhood just west of downtown, Bryggjan Brugghús is quickly becoming everyone’s favourite brewpub. This place is huge, so it’s great for big groups of people and parties. “Bryggjan isn’t really a bar, but it’s a good place with delicious food, good beer and a solid view,” according to one of our panelists. Bonus points for being able to watch the beer being brewed on site.

Runners-up:

Tívolí Hafnarstræti 4

This new downtown bar fills the hole left by Dolly, one of Reykjavík’s grittier establishments. It’s quickly becoming a favourite among some Reykjavíkingar for its nice decor, and there are rumours of reasonably priced (and reasonably good!) cocktails.

Kaffi Vinyl Hverfisgata 76

This recent arrival fills a welcome spot in the Reykjavík bar scene, offering a selection of good vegan food, a chilled-out atmosphere, and the crackle of vinyl records playing on the speakers.

Previous Winners:

- 2015: Mikkeller & Friends
- 2014: Húrra
- 2013: Kaldi
- 2012: Slippbarinn, Hótel Marína
- 2011: Faktorý (RIP)

Best place to watch sports over a beer



American Bar

Austurstræti 8

This is a great bar for watching sports due to its many seats and large screens. It offers good ol’ American food from Dirty Burger and Ribs, which is located in the bar, as well as a wide selection of beers and cocktails, and an outside smoking area. It has regular troubadours and DJs, and hosts a happy hour from 16:00-19:00. The bar runs all major sports games, and it’s perfect for enjoying a burger and a beer while rooting for your team.

Runners-up:

Bjarni Fel Austurstræti 20

This place must have almost as many TVs as seats, which makes it ideal for that surround-sound, on-the-field experience, or if you want to keep an eye on multiple games (or sports) at once. It’s a little small, but what it lacks in size, it makes up for with its engrossing feel. There are no distractions—everyone here is glued to the onscreen action.

Ölver - Sportbar Álfheimar 74

Ölver’s been running since 1984 so it’s been around for quite some time. It’s one of those classic bars that’s never going out of business. Not only does it show sports games, it also offers great food and has the largest selection of karaoke songs in the country.

Previous Winners:

- 2015: Bjarni Fel
- 2014: Bjarni Fel
- 2013: Bjarni Fel
- 2012: Úrilla Górrillan (RIP)
- 2011: Hvíta Perlan (RIP)



Best beer selection



Mikkeller & Friends

Hverfisgata 12

Despite the high blood pressure-inducing Icelandic prices, Mikkeller wins easily this category for its mouth-watering beer list. Twenty taps feature a rotating menu of beers brewed by Mikkeller and their favourite fellow micro-breweries (the “Friends” in the bar’s name). They vary from super-sour lambic ales to intense IPAs and deep, chocolatey stouts. “It’s a cool brand, and a beautifully decorated bar room.” Bonus points for being located above a great pizza place.

Runners-up:

Skúli Craft Bar Aðalstræti 9

This place is set up to be both friendly to beer nuts and accessible to the rest of us. Skúli has a crazy beer list, and you’ll be able to read about all 130 of their bottled beer offerings on their extensive menu. The ambience is also pretty hip, with brick walls, wooden furniture and dim lighting.

Björgarðurinn Þórunnartún 1

Björgarðurinn may have a pretty great beer selection and a nice atmosphere to enjoy a pint or two, but it lost points for its location (you have to cross Snorrabraut to get there). “Björgarðurinn is for business people,” one of our panellists said. “It’s called ‘beer garden,’ but it’s placed on cement.”

Previous Winners:

2015: Skúli Craft Bar
2014: Micro Bar
2013: Micro Bar
2012: Micro Bar

Best place for cocktails



Apótek

Austurstræti 16

Apótek is a beautifully decorated restaurant in the heart of downtown. It’s actually styled as a pharmacy, hence the name Apótek. They refer to their bartenders as pharmacists and offer a great selection of cocktails, or as they call them painkillers, stimulants and tranquilizers. The restaurant is famous for its exquisite menu, wide selection of wine and beautifully crafted desserts. However, their cocktails are also otherworldly.

Runners-up:

Slippbarinn Mýrgata 2

Slippbarinn has for quite a while been the go-to-place for drinking cocktails. The panel said, “Slippbarinn has crazy good cocktails. They’re not cheap but they are talked-about good.” The restaurant is stylish and offers a weekly jazz concert as well as regular DJs. The panel continued, “They have the classics, something new and something with a twist.”

Hverfisgata 12 Hverfisgata 12

Hverfisgata 12 is known for its amazing selection of unique and delicious pizzas. However, their cocktails are also quite something. With their signature blumosa (blueberry syrup and bubbles) they were quick to snag a place as runners-up in this category.

Previous Winners:

2015: Apótek
2014: Slippbarinn
2013: Borg, Hotel Borg
2012: Kolabrautin

Best bar for live music



Húrra

Tryggvagata 22

Everyone we consulted showered Húrra in praise. Factors for this win include the sound system, which can handle anything from acoustic to ambient to techno to noise; the lighting, which is dynamic and atmospheric; and a great programme of touring bands, album parties, DJ nights and the best local acts. Húrra attracts a young, fashionable (if mostly drunk) crowd. It also has a great bar selection. Maybe the only place in Reykjavík that stocks Club Maté.

Runners-up:

MENGI Óðinsgata 2

More of an arts space than a bar, it has a formal, attentive atmosphere, not somewhere you’d go for a casual drink. MENGI offers a programme gleaned from the more creative end of the musical spectrum, encouraging performers to play collaborative and experimental sets for the rapt, seated audience.

Gaukurinn Tryggvagata 22

This music venue and watering hole is in the “bermuda triangle” of bars with Húrra and Frederiksen. Reinvented many times over the years, it still bears the hallmarks of its rock scene roots. It has a big sound system, good stage lighting, and just the right kind of dinginess for live guitar music of all flavours.

Previous Winners:

2015: Húrra
2014: Cafe Rosenberg
2013: Volta (RIP)

Best happy hour



Kaffibarinn

Bergstaðastræti 1

Ah, Kaffibarinn, the perennial favourite. It’s perhaps one of the best places to go for a drink at any hour, but the best time to drop by is hands down for happy hour. “Kaffibarinn has the longest happy hour and offers good beers like Kaldi and Einstök,” one of our panellists noted. You’ll be able to find these discounted offerings from 15:00 to 20:00 every day, with beers priced at 650 ISK—a steal of a deal, and five hours of happiness!

Runners-up:

Loft Hostel Bankastræti 7a

Our panellists judged that the happy hour at Loft Hostel is perfect for day drinking, especially in the summer. Their stellar patio is perfect for sipping a beer in the sun. Drop by Loft from 16:00 to 19:00 every day for beers priced at 600 ISK.

Frederiksen Ale House Hafnarstræti 5

Frederiksen has nine different types of beer on draft. Their happy hour is from 16:00 to 19:00 and they offer a two for one deal so you can actually get a beer for only 450 ISK. They also have great food so it’s the perfect place to catch a drink and a good meal after work.

Previous Winners:

2015: Foréttbarinn



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SKÓLAVÖRDUSTÍGUR 23 • 101 REYKJAVÍK



CLUB-HOPPING WITH PARTY ANIMAL

Kött Grá Pjé

Words & Photo By **HREFNA BJÖRG GYLFAÐÓTTIR**

When we asked Kött Grá Pjé, one of Iceland's most beloved rappers, if he would show us his party routine, he responded saying, "Yes, I look forward to it. Meet me at Loft Hostel; day-drinking in an international environment is a matter close to my heart."

When you hear the rapper discuss club-hopping in his own poetic way, it's obvious he knows his way around Reykjavík's party scene. Even so, he is humble about his expertise: "I could say something profound about clubbing, but to be honest I'm simply a drunkard who loves to party."

We followed the cat-loving hip-hop artist around town while he showed us his favourite spots and told us a bit about them.

Day drinking: **Loft Hostel**

I live quite close to **Loft Hostel** and used to work down at Ingólfstorg, so I've been coming here after work for some years. I like the murmur of the place and sitting outside on the balcony when the weather is good. I like drinking one beer in the afternoon while writing on my phone. The staff here is quite understanding of weird people alone, drinking. I never feel judged.

Pre-drinks: **Nora Magasin**

I'm not a big fan of sweet drinks, which are popular at **Nora Magasin**. I usually only drink neat rum, which you can get almost everywhere. However, I like hanging out at Nora Magasin, especially because of their bar food. Their potato wedges with

chilli sauce and their edamame beans—woah, they're amazing. It's also a very cozy place with seats outside for when the weather is good.

Partying: **Húrra**

Húrra, no doubt. If I'm partying, there's a 75% chance I'm at **Húrra**. I spend a lot of time there. It has become my band's home venue, because we perform there a lot. The size is perfect for us and the floor is sticky, making it harder for the audience to get away. I get sentimental about Húrra. It's home.

Dance til dawn: **Kiki**

When I was studying history at the university, my friends and I partied a lot at **Kiki**, or **Barbara**, as it was called back then. Our friend worked at the bar and we

all liked partying there. Those times were great. Of course, I'm almost middle-aged now and don't go out dancing that much anymore, but I would go to Kiki if I were really in the mood.

Pick-me-up and hangover meal: **Prikið**

I get really hung-over. I lie on the living room floor and feel sorry for myself. I start by drinking Ribena mixed with two Treó tablets and then I head to **Prikið**. I tried their **Bruce Willis** shake, which has bourbon, for the first time earlier this year and thought to myself, "Why haven't I been drinking this since I was 20?" Omfg. This is too good!

Make sure to catch Kött Grá Pjé gallivanting around town and take his advice for an unforgettable night on the town.

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6PM - 9PM

HAIRRA

NAUSTIN
101 REYKJAVIK





12 HOURS IN REYKJAVÍK

The Sunny Day Guide

Words by **JOHN ROGERS**

Collage by **SVEINBJÖRN** Based on photo by **JULIA STAPLES**

The sun is out, the sky is blue, and Reykjavík is your oyster. While the downtown area is more than compact enough for you to wander the streets and discover some great spots on your own, we thought those on a weekend break might like a shortcut to some of our favourite stuff to do.



A hearty brunch at Prikíð (Bankastræti 12)

After meandering around the downtown shops, there are few spots better for people-watching in Reykjavík than Prikíð, the oldest café in the city. If you get a seat downstairs, you'll see half the city wandering down Laugavegur, but upstairs the windows look right across the bay to Mount Esja. The breakfasts are massive and will set you up nicely for the day ahead.

Hire bikes and go to Perlan and Nauthólsvík

Time to blow off the cobwebs. You can hire bikes at Borgarhóll on Hverfisgata (4.200 ISK for

the day or 2.600 ISK for 4 hours), and soon be rocketing off to Perlan, a hilltop visitor centre that offers amazing views over the city and the surrounding area. Nearby you'll find Nauthólsvík, a geothermal beach area where you can jump into a hotpot and swim in a heated section of the sea.



Bask in the hotpots at Vesturbæjarlaug (Hofsvallagata) If you didn't fancy a swim at the beach, we recommend a trip to Vesturbæjarlaug. This recently refurbished pool is one of the nicest in Reykjavík. Locals of all ages go for a soak in the hotpots on a daily basis, chatting about politics, life, and the price of fish (quite literally, sometimes).



Lunch at Kaffihús Vesturbæjar, or a picnic from Melabúðin (Hofsvallagata)

After basking in the spacious steam room of Vesturbæjarlaug, you might be hungry. Treat yourself to a pylsur (an Icelandic-style hot dog with

raw onions, cronions and three types of sauces) from the kiosk outside the pool. If you feel like a more substantial lunch, you could pop into Kaffihús Vesturbæjar across the street. If the weather is really nice, you could pick up something at the Melabúðin deli & grocery store and sit outside for a picnic.



Contemporary art at i8 (Tryggvagata 16)

It's culture time! The modestly-sized, free-entry i8 Gallery offers a monthly programme from a stable of top contemporary Icelandic and overseas artists. If you have the time and inclination, just across the street is Hafnarhúsið, a museum that boasts a large collection of Icelandic art and hosts regular contemporary art exhibitions by international guests.



Gourmet afternoon coffee at Reykjavík Roasters (Kárástígur 1)

As well as a nice downtown location, a mellow atmosphere, and a sweet vinyl collection, the

good folks at Reykjavík Roasters also roast the coffee beans right there in front of you. If you go mid-afternoon, you'll have probably missed the lunchtime rush, and you can get a seat and watch the world go by with a pastry and a delicious oat milk latté.

A happy-hour cocktail

There are various good happy hours to have a bargain beer and enjoy the sun. Visit the sun terraces at Loft Hostel or Kex, find a perch at one of the cafés lining Austurvöllur square, head to the Pedersen Suite balcony bar above Gamla Bió, or download our Appy Hour app and go exploring."



Kaffibarinn / bar-hopping around downtown

Kaffibarinn is a classic hub of Reykjavík nightlife, with an ever-intriguing crowd of locals and newcomers, a small-but-solid selection of local beers, and local DJs every night from 22:00. If you fancy checking out more places to party, you can always hop around to Bravó, Kex, Kaldi and Húrra, or the more recently opened craft bars, such as Skúli and Mikkel & Friends.

Tommi's
Burger Joint



**LONDON - BERLIN - SELFOSS CITY - REYKJAVÍK
COPENHAGEN - ROME - OSLO - MALMÖ**

Words by **HREFNA BJÖRG SIGURDARDÓTTIR**

Photo by **NANNA DÍ**



A GUIDE TO

Fashionable Reykjavík



Kaffifélagið Skólavörðustígur 10

A real fashion guru can't function without a double Cap'. Grab yours to go at Kaffifélagið.



JÖR - Laugavegur 89

Named after its founder Guðmundur Jörundsson, Kourtney Kardashian recently purchased a silk dress here. Cutting-edge designs by JÖR and select international labels, for both men and women.



Kiosk - Laugavegur 65

This one's filled with goods by Icelandic designers like Hildur Yeoman and Milla Snorrason. Shopping here is always a pleasure, often the designers themselves can help you find your dream garment.



Snaps - Þórgata 1

Give your legs a rest and make a reservation at Snaps. Here you can order a fresh mimosa and a tasty brunch. This lively restaurant is filled with plants and the cool cats of Reykjavík.



Aurum - Bankastræti 4

Aurum is a colourful concept store on one side and a gorgeous jewellery shop on the other. You'll find gift merchandise, clothing and nature-inspired jewelry by Guðbjörg Kristín Ingvarsdóttir.



Gallery Gallera Laugavegur 33

A must for any art or fashion lover. It's filled with interesting artwork, books and clothing by designers and artists such as Lóa and Hugleikur Dagsson.



Hafnarhúsið - Tryggvagata 17

Make sure to get your daily dose of art and culture at the Reykjavík Art Museum's Hafnarhúsið branch. You can check out exhibitions by Erró and Arnfinnur Amazeen, and there's a wonderful gift shop in the lobby.



Farmer's Market - Hólmaslóð 2

If there's still time for shopping, make sure to visit Farmer's Market, known for wonderful woolen sweaters, shawls and more Iceland-inspired clothing. Farmer's Market makes it much easier to dress to impress in the cold Icelandic weather.



Kolbrautin at Harpan

The perfect way to end a fashionable day is with dinner and a cocktail at the stylish restaurant on the fourth floor of Harpa. Put on your fresh new outfit because this building was made for selfies.



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09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00	09:00
		10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00	10:00		
		13:00	13:00	13:00	13:00	13:00	13:00	13:00
		14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00	14:00		
		17:00*	17:00	17:00	17:00	17:00*		
		21:00**	21:00					

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	08:30	08:30	08:30*
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12:30	12:30	12:30	12:30*
14:30	14:30	14:30	14:30*
	16:00	16:00	16:00*

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MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP
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SPECIAL TOURS

BEST OF REYKJAVÍK 2016

Shopping

It's all about product.

By the time you've started reading this you've passed your eighth Puffin store, correct? You've purchased your Viking Helmet, your Polar Bear t-shirt and your whale bone necklace? First off, we can't make fun of the viking helmet—we wear them at football matches—and, secondly, it's illegal to carry whale bones to most countries. Here we give you a guide of where to go shopping for things you won't throw out as soon as you get home. These are some of the best places Iceland has to offer. Also, we tell you where to get groceries.

Best grocery store



Bónus

Hallveigarstígur 1 and other locations

Bónus wins for a number of reasons: location, price and logo. If it were up to some of our writers, it would also win for “best lunch” and “cheapest meal.” You can grab enough food to fill your AirBnB fridge, which you'll be living out of eventually, when you finally comprehend the exchange rate on day three of your visit. Bónus also gets a few bonus points for managing to have the least rotten avocados and a healthy supply of celery root. What can you do with celery root? There must be something.

Runners-up:



Krónan
Skarfagarðar 2 and other locations

Krónan might be indistinguishable from Bónus to the untrained eye, but after careful inspection you will realize they have different logos. With a name like Krónan, you would also assume it would be like a “dollar store” in North America. It's not.



Víðir
Sólvallagata 79

Víðir has a green logo. This might have meant it had more healthy food inside, but that's not necessarily true. It sometimes has more luxurious vegetables like daikon or still-firm cucumber. But sometimes it doesn't have either.

Best shop to pick up local design



Kraum

Bankastræti 7a

Kraum is a perennial favourite of tourists and locals alike. Opened in 2007 as a collaboration between two dozen local designers, Kraum has always defined the cutting edge of trends in Icelandic design. Now, the shop sells work by over 100 local artists and designers. You'll find everything here from unique souvenirs to an Icelandic take on everyday items like stationary, handbags, raincoats and jewellery.

Runners Up



Aurum
Bankastræti 4

Aurum has two faces: it's a colourful concept store on one side, and sells gorgeous jewellery on the other. Join the class of fashionable Reykvíkingar after picking up some clothing and nature-inspired jewellery by Guðbjörg Kristín Ingvarsdóttir, and some gifts and souvenirs for back home.



Hrímm
Laugavegur 25

It's amazing what a difference a little piece of design can make for your apartment. Starting from blank walls and a tatty sofa, you can add one soft, striped throw rug, an angle-poise lamp, a strange poster, a fancy little cushion, suddenly you have “tasteful minimalism.” You feel great about your place, and, by extension, your life. Wow! It's like magic!

Previous Winners:

- 2015: Spark Design Space
- 2014: Kraum
- 2013: Kraum
- 2012: Kraum
- 2011: Kraum

Best shop to pick up local fashion



KIOSK

Laugavegur 65

KIOSK has a filtered selection of clothing by the best local designers. The cash register is manned by a rotation of the designers themselves. They'll not only know where the inspiration for the clothing originated—chances are, they designed some of it. KIOSK is the rite-of-passage boutique for 101 fashionistas. If you're a person who likes to take home something unique when you travel, this is the place. You'll get a garment, a story and probably a Facebook friend.

Runners Up



Jör
Laugavegur 89

Jör is one of the most popular design stores in Iceland. Their clothing can be seen on the streets of Reykjavík or the red carpets of Hollywood. It's a must-visit for fashionistas and fans of fine clothing. You'll get compliments on anything you buy.



Steinunn
Grandagarður 17

STEINUNN boutique is tucked away on Grandi, next door to Valdís ice cream store. It's owner, Steinunn Sigurðardóttir, is a renowned designer who takes inspiration for her line of unique and stylish womenswear from nature. Here you're sure to find a one-of-a-kind piece of distinctively Icelandic fashion.

Previous Winners:

- 2015: Kiosk
- 2014: Kiosk
- 2013: Kiosk
- 2012: Kiosk
- 2011: Kiosk



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Best bookshop**Eymundsson**

Austurstræti Branch - Austurstræti 18

Eymundsson Austurstræti has the best selection of Icelandic and world literature in not only English, but also German, French and Danish. You can pick up a copy of the Icelandic Sagas or the newest novel from Icelandic author Sjórn. With a comfortable coffee shop on the third floor and free gift wrapping, this bookstore has everything for the local, the tourist or the last minute gift buyer. It's also interesting for North American travellers who want to get a copy of their favourite book, but with the European cover. Make sure to check out the back window sill for what's on sale.

Runners Up

**Bókin
Klapparstígur 25-27**

Bókin is the kind of place you'd imagine an eccentric genius spends his afternoons, which is why it was frequented by the famous chess player Bobby Fischer. They have a great selection of used books and rare Icelandic publications.

**Sjónarlind
Bergstaðastræti 7**

Sjónarlind offers a lovely and well-curated selection of primarily non-fiction books, almost exclusively in English. You'll find a range of subject matters, from biography to gastronomy to fashion to photography. Sjónarlind is the only independent bookstore in town that curates new and unusual titles.

Previous Winners:

2015: Sjónarlind
2014: Nexus
2013: Eymundsson, Bankastræti
2012: Mál og Menning
2011: Eymundsson, Austurstræti

Best secondhand shop**Kolaportið**

Tryggvagata 19

Kolaportið is a huge indoor flea market that takes place on weekends. It's filled with stalls selling bric-a-brac, second-hand clothes, unusual foods, antique postcards, lópapeysur, smoking accessories, and the occasional religious booth filled with literature and pamphlets. You could end up leaving this place with some sour whale blubber under one arm of your newly purchased fur coat, while limping in your slightly-too-big knock-off Timberlands. It's a deal-scavenger's heaven, and a germophobe's worst nightmare.

Runners Up

**Spúútnik
Laugavegur 28**

Spúútnik is a vintage clothing store, so don't expect normal used clothing prices. It's the equivalent of raiding your grandparents' closet or attempting to make awkward photos of yourself as a 1990s teenager. It's a dream come true for downtown's waiflike normcore kids.

**Nytjamarkaðurinn ABC
Víkurbær 2**

Nytjamarkaðurinn ABC is a large second-hand market in the suburb of Kópavogur. The store has a wide selection of used clothes, shoes, household equipment and furniture, all for a very cheap price. All sales profit goes to the ABC children's aid, which makes shopping there a great alternative to buying new.

Previous Winners:

2015: Hertex
2014: Spúútnik
2013: Spúútnik
2012: Fatamarkaðurinn

Best record store**Reykjavík
Record Shop**

Klapparstígur 35

Reykjavík Record Shop is capitalising on the current boom in vinyl sales. With a focus on new releases, indie-rock and alternative music, it's frequented by hipsters and old-timers with an eye on up-and-coming acts. You can spend an hour thumbing through the catalogue or just pop in to grab something for an upcoming party. It's amazing, given the state of the music industry, that these places are still making a go of it. So if you love vinyl, get out there and support your local indie store!

Runners Up

**Lucky Records
Rauðarárstígur 10**

Lucky Records is a previous winner in this category, and for good reason. With a wide selection that includes a lot of funk and soul, it's one of those stores that regulars will defend to the hilt. It also hosts the occasional live show, making it kind of like a Rough Trade Reykjavík.

**12 Tónar
Skólavörðustígur 15**

12 Tónar is an iconic Reykjavík record store, specialising in Icelandic music, old and new. It's also a record label that releases some of the best bands on the Icelandic scene. If you swing by, the staff will sound out your taste, then sit you down with a coffee, some headphones, and a listening pile. You won't leave empty handed.

Previous Winners:

2015: Reykjavík Record Shop
2014: Lucky Records
2013: Lucky Records

Best place to shop organic**Frú Lauga**

Laugalækur 6

Frú Lauga is one of the only places in Reykjavík where you can shop local and organic. It is located in Laugardalur, a little bit outside of downtown, with a greenhouse for growing fresh produce right on the spot. You can find a wide variety of enticing and delicious organic products, such as tomatoes, salad greens, garlic, milk, cream, meat, and olives. It doesn't get more greenhouse-to-table than this.

Heilsuhúsið - Lágmulí 9 and more

Heilsuhúsið sells a variety of health products, cosmetics, toiletries, natural foods and vitamins. The store's goal is to nurture the body and soul by helping you maintain a healthy, eco-friendly lifestyle. The store has grown and is now located in five different locations, all of which have a juice bar. We recommend trying a shot of ginger or wheatgrass while you shop.

Previous Winners:

2015: Frú Lauga
2014: Frú Lauga
2013: Frú Lauga
2012: Frú Lauga
2011: Frú Lauga

Best barber**Barber**

Laugavegur 66

Barber is the best barber. This isn't a tautology, for all you philosophy buffs out there. It's a great shop nestled inside the Alda hotel. You can grab a cocktail or a coffee and laugh through your entire appointment with the hilarious antics of the barbers. It's THE spot for getting your haircut, and there are walk-ins available after 15:00. Just don't have too much fun, or you might come stumbling out with the impromptu tramlines that seemed like such a great idea.

Runners Up

Stjúri - Laugavegur 59

Stjúri is a one man hair-cutting machine. Wherever he is, great haircuts follow. He's a local hero, saving relationships, and self-confidence, one snip at a time. If you get the chance, get your hair cut and be a part of Reykjavík history.

Barbarella - Suðurgata 7

This is a fun hair salon with awesome products and great service. It's located next to a cemetery, so depending on your mood you can get your hair done and then take an existential stroll. It's not true that your hair keeps growing after you die.

Previous Winners:

2015: Barber

Best goddamn store



Geysir

Skólavörðustígur 7 & 16

Geysir is a store where regular Icelanders window shop, and rich tourists go crazy buying stuff. You can find fashionable clothes from great brands, with a focus on Icelandic style, and you can rely on the quality of the clothes. Geysir is so popular that they opened another location recently, just across the street from their flagship store. When you shop there, you can be sure you're going to come out dressed in some contemporary neo-Scandi chic (we're not sure that's an actually thing, but it's obscure enough to sound like we're fashionistas).

Runners Up

Fjallakofinn Kringlan 7

Fjallakofinn has to be on the list. It's been a godsend for many travellers who are adventuring out into the wilderness and need to grab some extra gear, gloves or a carabiner or two. It's also a place for Icelanders to get slap on some Gore-Tex and dress up in what they call "tourist-core."

Herrafataverzlun Kormáks & Skjaldar Laugavegur 59

Herrafataverzlun Kormáks & Skjaldar is a gentlemen's clothing store packed with high-end brands. You could walk in dressed in jeans and a t-shirt and walk out looking like someone about to attend a party at Jay Gatsby's residence—this is, just you just won the lottery.

Previous Winners:

2015: Geysir

Best place to buy a wool sweater

Handprjóna- sambandið

Skólavörðustígur 19

Handprjónasambandið is the Hand Knitting Society of Iceland. It's stock

comes from dozens of contributors from around the country, who make traditional knitted clothing for locals and tourists alike. It's hard to walk into this place and not stay for a long time. There are so many choices. It's stocked wall to wall with knitted sweaters and garments in all the colours and patterns you could imagine. The best tactic is to treat it like the wand shop in Harry Potter and let the sweater choose you.

Runners Up

Kolaportið Trayggvagata 19

Kolaportið has a wide selection of used wool sweaters at a price you'll appreciate. You need to really search, and talk to the sellers. It may take a few tries but they'll find you something you're happy with.

Rauða Krossinn Laugavegur 12 & Skólavörðustígur 12

The Icelandic branch of the Red Cross always holds a surprise. You could walk in one day and find everything you're looking for. However, sometimes you won't find anything. It's as much about the journey as the destination.

Previous Winners:

2015: Red Cross

2014: Handprjónasambandið

2013: Handprjónasambandið

ICELAND'S MOST POPULAR SKATE SHOP HAS A SECRET 300 SQ.M. BASEMENT WHICH IS FULL TO THE "BRIM" OF BOARD FASHION HEAVEN.

BE SURE
TO CHECK OUT
THE FOOTWEAR



LAUGAVEGUR 71

Words by HREFNA BJÖRG
SIGURDARDÓTTIR



12 HOURS IN REYKJAVÍK

The Music Nerd's Guide

Reykjavík Roasters

Kárástígur 1 / Brautarholt 2

Start the day off with a cup of “Kaffismiðjan” and a croissant at Reykjavík Roasters. Pick a record to play and make your own latte art. You will be energized and ready for the day.



Reykjavík Record Shop Klapparstígur 35

Stop by the small but homey Reykjavík Record Shop on Klapparstígur. After admiring their collection of old and new vinyl, and perhaps finding the perfect album to take home, continue the walk down Skólavörðustígur.



12 Tónar Skólavörðustígur 15

Next stop is at the classic music shop 12 Tónar. You'll always find something to your liking, and if you're having trouble, 12 Tónar's super nice staff are always willing to give advice.



Kaffi Vínýl

Hverfisgata 76

Pick a record to play while enjoying a cup of coffee. Or order something good to eat from Kaffi Vínýl's mouth-watering vegan menu. Grab a copy of The Reykjavík Grapevine (shameless plug) and check out tonight's concert listings.



Lucky Records Rauðarárstígur 10

If you're still in the mood for record shopping after pigging out on Kaffi Vínýl's vegan desserts, Lucky Records has the goods. It's easy to lose track of time while going through the racks in this vinyl candy store.

Slippbarinn

Mýrargata 2

We recommend walking to the Grandi area near the harbor and stopping for a late dinner at Slippbarinn. A band performs wonderful jazzy tunes on Wednesdays while the bartenders mix their famous drinks.



Valdís Grandagarður 212

Hungry for something sweet? Walk on over to Valdís for ice cream. Choose from their wonderful selection of tropical and tasty flavours (the coconut is to die for). If it's not freezing outside, head over to the harbour and eat your ice cream while enjoying a beautiful view of the city. Note: this is Reykjavík's most popular date activity.

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12 HOURS IN REYKJAVÍK -

The Parent's Guide

Words by **JÓHANNA PÉTURSDÓTTIR**

Main photo by **ART BICNICK**

Reykjavík is full of family-friendly activities if you know where to look. So you can avoid asking random parents pushing their vintage strollers for advice, here's a list to guide you through the day.



Swimming pools

You can start your day by going to one of our wonderful pools. It's not only a great way to have fun with your kids, it also cleans them really well. Most pools open at 6:30 in the morning on weekdays, so it's a perfect post-breakfast activity for early-birds. Insider's note: Icelandic parents sometimes take their kids to the pool right after dinner and dress them in

their pajamas after swimming. Then they drive home and put the kids straight to bed.

Where to take kids for lunch

Any Icelander will tell you that you are never as hungry as you will be after a trip to the swimming pool. This is why almost every pool in Reykjavík has a hot dog stand nearby. But parents usually opt for a more healthy meal for the kids—often while enjoying some coffee for themselves. Where you go depends on your kid's age.



Babies and Toddlers: Bergsson Mathús

The calm atmosphere at Bergsson Mathús is extremely child-friendly and their weekend brunch is one of the best in town. It's not uncommon to see toddlers playing on the floor at the restaurant and the sheer volume of

prams parked outside should be recommendation enough.



Preschoolers: Laundromat Café

In the basement at the Laundromat is a large room filled with toys, books, and pillows. It's great fun for the kids to hang out and play down there, while parents have a real conversation upstairs. The Laundromat is reasonably priced and is also well stocked with board games for older children and adults.



Schoolkids: Café Babalú

Café Babalú is a charming establishment on Skólavörðustígur, filled with gorgeous artifacts that look like they were found in a grandparent's attic. In addition to serving many great small dishes, they have—speaking from experience—the best Nutella cheesecake in town.

Tjörninn

After a nice lunch, and perhaps a stroll around downtown, it's perfect to walk down to Tjörninn (which means the Pond) and enjoy the birdlife. Remember that even though some people still feed the birds, the city of Reykjavík has asked that people don't, because bread is not good for the birds and it attracts massive numbers of seagulls.

Hljómskálagarðurur

If you cross the bridge that cuts Tjörninn in half, you enter one of Reykjavík's most fun parks, Hljómskálagarðurinn. Tucked away in the southeast corner of the park there are all kinds of different outdoor toys for kids—everything from swing sets for toddlers to huge rope structures for bigger kids (and adults!) to climb on. The park also boasts a huge barbecue and a great seating area.



Reykjavík Zoo & Botanical Gardens

The Reykjavík Zoo isn't your regular zoo with lions and tigers, but a domestic animal zoo with sheep, chicks, and ducks. There is a small aquarium, and connected to the Zoo is a small park with rides. While the rides are not pricey, many of them bear signs of corporate sponsorship, which might bother some people. The coffee isn't all that great either, and many opt to skip the Zoo altogether and go to the Botanical Gardens, where they do have great coffee, at Café Flora, and a wonderful outdoor picnic area.

Reykjavík City Library

If the weather isn't in your favour, a great way to spend an afternoon is to hang out in the children's department at the Reykjavík City Library. Take the elevator to the second floor and immerse yourself in books and educational toys. or the toddlers, there is a huge playpen with all kinds of toys, so children of all ages can find something to enjoy.



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BEST OF REYKJAVÍK 2016

Activities

All kinds of fun. Fun, natural fun.

Reykjavík is a relatively small city, but even so, sometimes you need a bit of local advice to find what you're looking for, whether it's a good people-watching spot, somewhere to see some contemporary art, or the best place to catch an Icelandic movie. Don't worry, friend—we've got you covered. Here are some of our favourite spots in Reykjavík, for all kinds of super-fun days and nights out.

Best pool



Neslaug

Suðurströnd 9, Seltjarnarnes

The Reykjavík municipality's "big three" pools of Vesturbæjarlaug, Laugardalslaug, and Sundhöllin, great as they are, lost a little shine this year due to overcrowding, and Sundhöllin being closed for renovation. So our panel decided the award for 2016 should go to Neslaug, a tucked-away pool on the Seltjarnarnes peninsula, that last won in 2011. They agreed that at Neslaug: "It feels like people are moving in slow motion—time slows down. There's always space in the big jacuzzi, and the pool is filled with salt water so you feel buoyant when you do laps." Perhaps the best thing is that there's some space, so you're not always avoiding other swimmers.

Runners-up:



Vesturbæjarlaug Hofsvallagata

"It might be very busy, but there's a reason for that," said the panel. Vesturbæjarlaug is just a great all-round pool, with traditional hotpots, a nice steam bath, and a big, recently installed communal hot pot. It's a lovely spot for a sunny day, and a classic Reykjavík pool.

Lágafellslaug Lækjarhlíð 1a

This pool is on the very outskirts of greater Reykjavík. "It's perfect for the start or the end of a road-trip, or for a little outing in itself," said the panel. It has a coal-fired sauna, a steam room with a view over the mountain of Úlfarsfell, and spacious, modern ceramic-tiled hotpots.

Previous winners

- 2015: Vesturbæjarlaug
- 2014: Vesturbæjarlaug
- 2013: Laugardalslaug
- 2012: Laugardalslaug
- 2011: Neslaug

Best gallery



i8

Tryggvagata 16

The i8 gallery goes from strength to strength with their stable of top-notch Icelandic artists, as well as some renowned international players. i8 was the first Icelandic art gallery to start becoming involved in art fairs, so they've had a hand in bringing the cream of Iceland's art scene to the international market. It is also the gallery that represents Ragnar Kjartansson, the playful multi-media artist who's basically the spirit animal of the Icelandic arts scene.

Runners up



The Nordic House Sturlugata 5

The Nordic House is an art and culture building located just across Tjörnin, near the University. It recently hosted a Nordic culture and fashion design themed show called "The Weather Diaries," which won the hearts and minds of pretty much everyone who got a chance to see it. After the spectacular success of that show, we can't wait to see what's coming up next.



Ekkisens Bergstaðastræti 25b

This DIY art space is housed in a former basement apartment, and still bears the marks of its former use. It's a lively gallery with a programme that gives a platform to recently graduating and emerging Icelandic artists. This is where you can see what's happening at the grassroots of Iceland's art community.

Previous winners

- 2015: i8
- 2014: Kling og Bang
- 2013: National Museum
- 2012: National Museum
- 2011: National Museum

Best art museum



Hafnarhúsið

Tryggvagata 17

The Reykjavík Art Museum has three locations: the beautifully designed Ásmundarsafn sculpture garden and museum, the rotating collection of paintings and contemporary shows at Kjarvalstaðir, and Hafnarhúsið, which is Iceland's largest contemporary art institution—think Tate Reykjavík. Each has its own character, but if you only have time for one, Hafnarhúsið is right in the heart of downtown, and often has three or more exhibitions running concurrently, so you're bound to find something you like. There's a great cafe and book shop, too.

Runners up



Einar Jónsson Museum Eiríksgata

This sculpture museum is right by Hallgrímskirkja, enclosed in a beautiful walled, garden. You can take in the dramatic figurative works of Einar Jónsson at your own pace. The main building houses more of his oeuvre. "He also lived there," said the panel, "and you can visit his apartment, preserved just as it was back then."



National Gallery of Iceland Frikirkjuvegur 7

This warren-like space holds a large collection of Icelandic paintings in its lofty halls, also offering a regular programme of contemporary exhibitions on the ground floor and basement. For those on foot, it's conveniently located right downtown, on the street by Tjörnin.

Previous winners

- 2015: Reykjavík Art Museum
- 2014: Reykjavík Art Museum
- 2013: Reykjavík Art Museum
- 2012: Reykjavík Art Museum
- 2011: Einar Jónsson

Best museum



Árþæjarsafn

Kistuhylur 4

This living history museum invites visitors to stroll through the past of Iceland, experiencing turf houses and living conditions from previous centuries. The tour guides dress up in period costumes, creating a vivid vision of how Icelanders used to live. It's a drive out of the city centre, or quite a long bus ride, but it's worth it. "It goes over very well with first-time visitors to Iceland," said the panel. "There are all sorts of fun facts about how people lived here in the past."

Runners up



The National Museum of Iceland

Suðurgata 41
This sprawling collection of Iceland's history covers all manner of artefacts, from jewellery to weapons, tools, costumes, textiles and more. You could easily spend an entire afternoon here, learning about the history of the country.



The Settlement Exhibition

Aðalstræti 16
This underground museum, located right downtown on Aðalstræti, offers a look into the beginning of Iceland's history as an inhabited country. "It has the remains of a turf house from the 870s," said the panel, "from the original Reykjavík settlement era."

Previous winners

- 2015: Árþæjarsafnið
- 2014: National Museum of Iceland
- 2013: National Museum of Iceland
- 2012: National Museum of Iceland
- 2011: National Museum of Iceland

Best place for a romantic sunset



Gróttu

Seltjarnarnes peninsula

The area of Gróttu is something of a hidden gem. At the end of the Seltjarnarnes peninsula, not far from the centre of Reykjavík, there's a lonely, windblown, red-topped lighthouse, with a walkable causeway that's only accessible at certain times, depending on the tide. There's a black beach, a miniature hot pot, and a nature reserve. On a clear evening, you can see the silhouette of the Snæfellsjökull glacier against the pink sky. What could be more romantic?

Runners up



Old Harbour

Ægisgarður
Reykjavík's old harbour area is perfect for a seaside sunset stroll. You can watch the boats coming in and out, visit the little lighthouses behind Harpa, or follow the painted lines to a bustling district of cafes and restaurants, perhaps finishing with a cocktail at Slippbarinn.



Laugarnes

For something a bit more secluded, take a walk along Sæbraut, past the Sun Voyager sculpture, and keep going to an outcropping of land known as Laugarnes. There's a sculpture garden there, and some tucked away benches with views across the sea to Viðey Island and Mount Esja.

Previous winners

- 2015: Öskjuhlíð
- 2014: Gróttu
- 2013: Gróttu
- 2012: Gróttu
- 2011: Grasagarðurinn

Best place to take the kids



Hljómskálagarðurinn

Fríkirkjuvegur

For something fun and active, there's nowhere better to take the kids than Hljómskálagarðurinn. There are some rope pyramids for climbing, outdoor barbecues to grill food, and things to do for all different age groups—a sandbox for toddlers, a big playing field for sports and games, and a trampoline. As well as being wholesome fun, it's free, and there are no queues to worry about.

Runners up



Húsdýragarðurinn.

Múlavegur 2
Another firm favourite is Húsdýragarðurinn, which translates to "farm animal zoo." It's a petting zoo with sheep, horses, goats, pigs, and some wild animals like foxes and reindeer. There's a walking bridge that takes you to the Fjölskyldugarðurinn, (e. Family Garden), which has fairground rides and a boating lake.



Nauthólsvík

The fact that Reykjavík has a beach is amusing to some—the sand was brought there specifically to make the beach, and the cold seawater is mixed with geothermally heated groundwater to make it bearable for swimming. There's a hot pot and a snack stand, and on a sunny day, it can be a blissful place to go.

Previous winners

- 2015: Húsdýragarðurinn
- 2014: Húsdýragarðurinn
- 2013: Fjölskyldugarðurinn
- 2012: Lynghagaróló Playground

Best hike



Móskaðshnjúkar

This beautiful hike lies a little way off the beaten track of the Esja hike. You need a good car to get there, but it's worth it. "It's a slightly more exotic route, walking over rhyolite—the same material found in the Andes," said the panel. "The path isn't always clear, and it's a little wild, so you'll see way fewer people here than on any of the other trails. It's a good choice for getting away from the crowds."

Runners up



Helgafell

Driving to Helgafell, just outside Hafnarfjörður, really feels like getting into the wilds despite its proximity to the city. It's a nice light walk across a lava field and then up a gentle slope to a 300 metre peak that offers a nice view over the Reykjanes peninsula.



Esja

This is a classic hike up the distinctive mountain that towers over the Faxaflói bay across from Reykjavík. You can get to the start of the track by taking the bus, which makes this hike super convenient. You can either hike up to the base camp level, or continue all the way up the rough path to the top.

Previous winners

No previous winners.

Activities

Keeping it light, alright?

Best day trip from Reykjavík



Hvalfjörður

This used to be part of the ring road, but is now off the beaten track because of the Hvalfjarðargöng tunnel. There's a great hike to Glymur, the highest waterfall in Iceland. There's also a cafe at the Kjós campground. There are some old roadside gas stations, which are all but abandoned and weird and exciting to visit. There's an old whaling station, and a sign marking where Winston Churchill came to see submarines. And as if that wasn't enough, you can learn also about a wizard who turned into a whale at the Borganes settlement centre. The nearby area of Reykhólt is home to one of the most famous authors of the Icelandic saga, who had one of very first hot tubs. And finally, the town of Akranes has a great beach, some good hikes, and a beautiful lighthouse.

Runners up



Reykjanes

Although it is the location of the famous Blue Lagoon, the Reykjanes peninsula is often overlooked as people head for the more well known south coast or the Golden Circle. But it's a treasure trove of nature: visit the Krýsuvík geothermal park, the eerie lake of Kleifarvatn, and the scenic coastal spot of Reykjanesviti, and be back in time for dinner, since it's all not that far away.



Snæfellsnes

Last year's winner, Snæfellsnes, makes for an amazing road trip. On the way, you can see lava fields, huge green and yellow hills, lighthouses, black beaches, and the Snæfellsjökull glacier. But be prepared for a long lot of driving—it's approximately an eight hour round trip.

Previous winners

2015: Snæfellsnes
2014: Snæfellsnes
2013: Reykjadalur
2012: Mosfellsbær and Esja

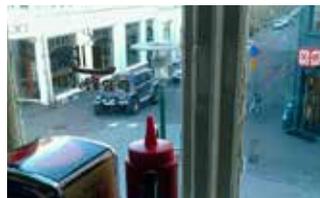
Best people-watching spot



Grandi

This concrete-heavy fishing harbour area has been up-and-coming of late, evolving into a bustling neighbourhood of musician's practice rooms, startup offices, cafes, shops and galleries. You can mill around, taking in the scenery of the harbour; get an ice-cream at Valdís, have a delicious meal at Matur og Drykkur or Cooco's Nest, visit the Steinunn boutique, or walk out to the man-made land artwork at the end of the docks. And you'll see a lot of street life while you're at it.

Runners up



Prikið Bankastræti 12

The oldest diner in Reykjavík is a perfect place to enjoy a beer or coffee, order one of their trademark burgers, and engage in an entertaining bout of people watching. Whether you're lucky and get a downstairs booth, or you get a window seat upstairs, pretty much every one passes by here sooner or later.



Austurvöllur

The scene of the famous Panama Papers protests earlier this year, Austurvöllur is Reykjavík's parliament square. Whether you decide to perch on a bench, sit outside at one of the many cafe-bars lining the square, or have a picnic, you'll see pretty much all of Icelandic society passing by.

Previous winners

2015: Austurvöllur
2014: Second Floor Window Seats, Eymundsson on Austurstræti
2013: Booths at Hressó

Best place to see a movie



Bíó Paradís

Hverfisgata 54

This independent cinema on Hverfisgata is a palace for indie-film fans. They run a great programme of arthouse cinema from all around the world, as well as showing Icelandic films on rotation during the summer, with English subtitles. They sometimes show retro sci-fi and horror movies, whether cult B-movies or well-known classics. There's an art gallery, a cafe, and some comfy sofas to hang out and drink coffee. Bíó Paradís, you're doin' it right: we salute you.

Runners up



VIP Theaters Sambíó, Álfabakki 8 Smárbíó, Smáralind

If you wanna see a blockbuster popcorn movie (and let's face it, who doesn't from time to time) then the VIP Theater has got you covered. You can sit in a la-z-boy, and there's a bottomless vat of popcorn to dip into. Perf.



Háskólabíó

As lot of visitors to Reykjavík are probably on foot, or using public transport, a handy option to see the latest Hollywood product is Háskólabíó. It's located in the university complex just across Tjörnin, and so walkable from downtown, and it's always showing whatever has just come out.

Previous winners

2015: VIP Theater
2014: Bíó Paradís

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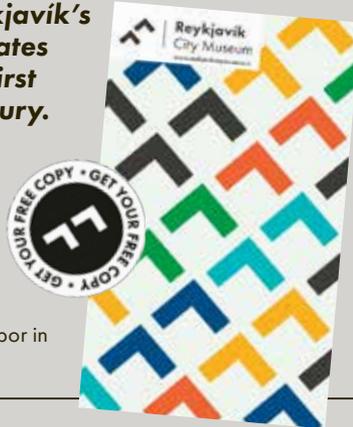
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Experience the history of Reykjavík in a lively and engaging way at the Reykjavík City Museum. Comprising five individual sites, the City Museum was founded to uphold and preserve Reykjavík's cultural heritage, which dates back to the arrival of the first settlers in the late 9th century.

Four of the museums are within walking distance of downtown Reykjavík, while the Árbær Open Air Museum is only a fifteen-minute-drive from the city center. The ferry to Viðey Island leaves from the Old Harbor in downtown Reykjavík.



Árbær Open Air Museum



The Settlement Exhibition



Reykjavík Maritime Museum



Viðey Island



Reykjavík Museum of Photography

www.reykjavikcitymuseum.is

 Reykjavík City Museum



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HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF REYKJAVÍK

Seeing The City

Words by **JOHN ROGERS**

Main photo by **ART BICNICK**

Many people's first encounter with Iceland is brief. Some come to visit for a weekend music festival, or make a short stopover, having just a day or two in Reykjavik before travelling onwards. So, for those who trying to make the most of a limited amount of time, here are some quick 'n' dirty tips for covering a lot of ground by bike, boat, bus, tuk tuk or helicopter.



Tuk Of The Town

You'll probably see these slick-looking little vehicles, tuk tuks, buzzing around the city centre like motorised passenger bees. A fairly recent addition to the bustling street life

of downtown Reykjavik, they're an ideal way to see a lot of the city centre quickly. The tours on offer vary from a straight-up taxi ride to a specific place you have in mind, to zipping around some of the most noteworthy sights that the city centre has to offer, with added information from your driver. You can pick up a ride at **Harpa**, or look for a parked Tuk Tuk around town.



Hopping Around

If you'd like a little more freedom with your schedule, **City Sightseeing** runs hop on-hop off bus tours that go all around Reykjavik. You can get a day pass that will allow you to jump out if you want to go for a soak at Laugardalslaug, or get a meal in the

revolving restaurant at the top of Perlan. There are plenty of these buses doing the rounds, so you shouldn't have to wait for long.



Keep It Real: Take The Bus

Another way to zip around town quickly is the Reykjavik city bus system, **Strætó**. The bright yellow Strætó buses cover all areas of greater Reykjavik, even going as far as the base of the Mount Esja hiking trail. The buses are great for people watching, too. Get the **Strætó app** to pay for tickets from your phone and look up timetables and route maps.



Let Your Feet Leave The Ground

Slightly more fancy (and a touch more heavy on the wallet) are air tours, by helicopter

or plane. **Norðurflug** helicopters leave from Reykjavik's domestic airport, located next to Perlan, several times a day. Trips vary from a short hop to the top of Mount Esja, to longer tours that stop at wild geothermal hotspots or even on top of a glacier. You could also take a plane tour with **Eagle Air**. Both are great ways to see the magnificent Icelandic wilderness from a bird's eye perspective.



The Life Aquatic

There are many boat trips from the city, most of them leaving from the old harbour area. The **Reykjavik By Boat** trip started out as a puffin-watching tour exploring the islands of the Faxaflói fjord, but has now evolved into a more general pleasure cruise that shows off Reykjavik's coastline and cityscape from the sea. You can also go whale watching, either on a cruiser, or a speedboat. Even if you don't see any whales, it's fun to get out onto the water, especially on a clear day.



Cycle City

Reykjavik is a very bike-friendly town, and there are rentals dotted all over the 101 postcode, including at the main tourist information centre on Bankastræti. There are bike lanes throughout the city, and there's a great longer ride you can take around the Seltjarnarnes peninsula, which encompasses the viewing platforms of Perlan, the Nauthólsvík beach, an optional dip in Vesturbæjarlaug, and the Gróttá nature reserve and lighthouse.

24 HOURS IN REYKJAVÍK



The All Day Drinking Guide

Words by **YORK UNDERWOOD**

Summer is finally here, with temperatures consistently breaking ten degrees Celsius and nearly no darkness. A certain manic fervor is taking control of our overlit minds and giving us the energy to sip heartily from the cup of life... or any cup, for that matter.

So why not enjoy a Saturday with drinks, friends, and witty conversation? I have devised a guide to give you a day worth remembering, even if you don't.

11:30 — Snaps Bistro, Þórsgrata 1

Brunch is what early risers call an “early lunch” and normal, sane people call breakfast. There are two classic cocktails for morning libations: the Mimosa (semi-sweet) or the **Bloody Mary** (salty). If you stayed in on Friday night, feel free to start off with **Eggs Benedict** (1,890 ISK) and a **Mimosa** (1,300 ISK). The semi-sweet Mimosa complements the creamy Hollandaise sauce, keeping anything from being too rich or too sweet. The small portions also keep you from being bloated early in the day. For those still recovering, or still going, it's time for **Croque-Madame** (2,600 ISK) and a **Bloody Mary** (1,900 ISK). The **Bloody Mary** is a good electrolyte restorative and the heaviness of a **Croque Madame** gets you back on track for the day. Feel free to mix up the combina-



tions based on your own current mood or well-being. **PRO TIP: Pancakes don't go with Blood Marys.**

13:00 — Loft Hostel, Bankastræti 7a or Prikíð (Upstairs), Bankast. 12

The next step is about slowly waking up, allowing your surroundings to build up your energy and for conversation to quicken and increase over the next couple of drinks. There is no need to force the day. It's coming. The two choices are based on weather: **Loft Hostel** in the sun or **Prikíð** in the rain. At **Loft Hostel**, there are standard beers on tap and some special bottled varieties. I would not recommend going to beer yet, though. It's too much

fluid too early. **Loft Hostel** has one of the best prices on a bottle of Prosecco in town at 4,500 ISK and a wonderful rooftop balcony for smoking, chatting, and seeing the rooftops of Reykjavík. The bottle will get two people about three drinks each—brightening up your day with some bubbly without filling your gut. **Prikíð** upstairs is the perfect rainy-day afternoon spot. It's cosy, warm, and you can get a cup of coffee (290 ISK) and **Baileys** (800 ISK). **PRO TIP: No more than two coffees and Baileys.**

15:00 — Take A Walk or Go to the National Gallery, 101 Reykjavík

Again, this is weather-dependent. The big pond, Tjörnin,

connects to a beautiful park and a nice stroll is the perfect way to enjoy the mid-afternoon buzz. It also helps pace the conversation. No doubt that by your third glass of Prosecco, the energy was up. This gives you a chance to level out again and use the rapport built on Prosecco to delve into deeper, more meaningful matters. Or it's a great way to get the other person to shut up for a bit while you enjoy your buzz. Sit next to poet **Tómas Guðmundsson** (1901-1983) on a bench at the south of the pond. It's a great place for a cigar, cigarette, or whatever the kids are smoking these days. **The National Gallery** (admission 1,000 ISK) is a great indoor place to pace the conversation, with occasional grappling insights into the art being curated. **PRO TIP: You can also stroll the pond in the rain and see the National Gallery while it's sunny. I'm just organizing my thoughts logistically. You are the master of your own destiny.**

17:00 — Kaffibarinn, Bergstaðastræti 1

This should be your first beer of the day. **Kaffibarinn** won't be loud, and it's a great place to bring the energy back up—either post-walk or post-gallery. Grab a seat in the front bar, grab a pretzel and order either a **Kaldi Blonde Lager** or a **Brewdog Punk IPA** depending on whether you took a stroll (**Kaldi**) or were checking out the gallery (IPA). Also, conveniently, the bathrooms are large and nice (at this time of day). Reykjavík has strange public bathrooms and their usefulness declines rapidly throughout the night. **PRO TIP: Poo now (in case you didn't get the hint).**

19:00 — The Pizza Place With No Name, Hverfisgata 12

This will be an adventure. Drinking and pizza go together, but the **Pizza Place With No Name** amplifies your pizza experience to a more epicurean standard. I wouldn't recommend getting a pizza each. It's much better to decide on a pizza and share the experience together (obviously, groups larger than two can follow a different rule). You'll be eating again later, so don't eat too much—especially considering the

calorie content of the drinks you've ingested. Order the **Beetroot Pizza** (2,450 ISK) and an **Old Fashioned** (1,900 ISK) for the perfect sit-down nibble and sip.

20:00 — Mikkeller and Friends, Hverfisgata 12

After your pizza, head upstairs to what is arguably the best craft bar in Reykjavík, with 20 beers on tap, and a flavour palette ranging from hoppy to sour to sweet. A beer here can act as a digestive after your meal or a dessert. The prices on the beer range from about 1,000 ISK upwards. This is the type of place where you need to ask the bartender about the beer. Let your taste buds guide you. It's nice because beer is a conversation starter. With the rise of craft beer around the world, it's nice to be a beer snob for a few minutes. Don't worry, you'll fit right in. **PRO TIP: Try a sour beer. They are perfect after a rich meal like the Beetroot Pizza.**

21:00 — Concert at Húrra, Naustin

Húrra, as I often describe it, is a hip nightclub. The music varies greatly weekend by weekend, but it's important to immerse yourself into whatever is going on. Húrra is the home of the enthusiast. Whatever is playing there, the fans are out in full force. Admission at the door varies, but it's never much more than 1,500 ISK. Grab a beer and settle into the show. This is a good time to start dancing if you can and shake off some of your day's drinks. The smoking section is one of the more social in town and, for some reason, it stays in your mind: the orange, the prison bars, and the Orwellian graffiti. If you get hungry, head over to **Bæjarins Beztu** for a quick hot dog. **PRO TIP: Don't drink too quickly here. The show is to occupy your time and pace your consumption. You still have a lot of night to get through.**

00:00 — Paloma Basement, Naustin 1-3

Paloma's basement is downtown's grungy little secret. Filled with art students and the fringes of society, but never a dull moment. It's the perfect place after a concert at Húrra. Its strange and peculiar vibe has been known to



really knock people off balance. Fit in or fuck off is my general attitude to social awkwardness and I suggest you follow that here. Grab a beer, dance, and talk about the concert. You'll feel your inner diablo rising with each sip. Legend has it that a group of **Harvard Business** graduates ended up there one night, burgundy-topped and khaki-bottomed. They got so uncomfortable they started singing the American national anthem and quickly left—probably to **English Pub** or **Hressó**. **PRO TIP: This is your last beer of the night.**

01:00 — Paloma Upstairs, or Prikið

You have a choice to make: open dance floor or tight spaces and

swinging lights. Paloma is definitely a dance bar, but if your energy is waning, it can be a bit deflating. Paloma is better for a bigger group, or a determined duo. Prikið has the almost mystical ability to pick up your energy as soon as you get in. The tight fit along with the almost **Gatsby**-like hedonism of swinging lights and dancing on tables gets even the most motivationally weak person back in action. Your drink is Gin and Tonic. I would recommend a double. You sip slower and it's not as cumbersome as a pint of beer in the tight quarters. **PRO TIP: Order one drink downstairs and one drink upstairs. This increases your chance of running into friends and unconsciously slows your drinking to a reasonable rate.**

02:30 — Kaffibarinn (again!)

It's time to see what everyone else is doing. This is the great cap to the end of the night. The smoking section is filled with friends, enemies, and Icelandic celebrities—even British ones inquiring about the bar's ties to Blur. This place is an institution. This is where your night ends. There's a super tall and good-looking bouncer to greet you on your way out. **PRO TIP: Go in the smoking section even if you don't smoke. There's always someone or something to see. If you do smoke, don't be aggravated by the ashtray near the door: no one can find the hole in that thing after 1am.**

04:30 — Home, pizza, hot dogs, or after party

Home is the best idea at this point. You've done it. If you're a little too drunk, grab a slice of pizza or another hot dog or a waffle or a hamburger... it's up to you, but I don't recommend it. If you have some diablo left, and have friends who can stand more of you, head out to an afterparty. Just remember that Snaps has Bloody Marys (1,900 ISK) and Croque Madame (2,650 ISK) waiting for you in the morning.

Words by **KELLEY REES**



A DAY IN REYKJAVÍK -

The Penny-Pincher's Guide

So you want to see a bit of Iceland but also be able to afford your ticket back home? We got u. Here's our guide for what to do in Reykjavík that won't break the bank.

servation tower for a gorgeous 360-degree view over the city. (Tower admission is 900 ISK.)



Einar Jónsson's Sculpture Garden (Eiríksgata 3)

What better way to start your day than with the early 20th-century Icelandic sculptor Einar Jónsson? Stroll through his sculpture garden and admire the 26 bronze casts of Einar's monumental work at no cost.



Hallgrímskirkja

Upon exiting the garden, you'll be right next to Hallgrímskirkja, arguably Reykjavík's most recognizable landmark. Take a moment to walk inside Iceland's largest church—you can even take the elevator up to the ob-



Ekkisens (Bergstaðastræti 25B) or Harbinger Art Gallery (Freyjugata 1)

If you're feeling particularly artistic, make your way to the Ekkisens or Harbinger art galleries. These artist-run spaces mainly showcase up-and-comers in the art world and the exhibitions are free!



Bæjarins Beztu Pylsur (Tryggvagata)

You need sustenance for your Icelandic odyssey, and just because you can't drop stacks on stacks doesn't mean you have to starve. Grab lunch at this Icelandic staple. Listen, if their hot dogs are good enough for Bill Clinton and Kim Kardashian, they're good enough for you.



Tjörnin

With hot dog in hand, walk past **Parliament** (and potentially some Icelandic protesters) on your way to Tjörnin, the pond at the city's center. Enjoy the classic Icelandic homes and buildings that surround the pond (but try not to wonder about their price tags—just thinking such thoughts will make money disappear from your wallet)



Nauthólsvík Beach

If you fancy a swim, hop on the bus to Nauthólsvík (350 isk). It's a quick fifteen-minute ride to the geothermal sand beach, which boasts hot tubs looking out onto the water and a lagoon in which hot geothermal water combines with the cool sea waves, creating pleasant ocean temperatures. Swimming is free, you can pay for changing rooms & showers.



Appy Hour

Doesn't a nice glass of something sound divine right about now? Use The Grapevine's very own Appy Hour app to track down the best deals for Happy Hour and get your drink on.



Dinner Options

Depending how much you want to spend and how good a job you've done at saving throughout the day, we've got a few options for you.

Mandi (Veltusund 3B) is great to snag a quick and relatively (this is the operative word in Iceland) cheap kebab on the go.

Lemon (Laugavegur 56) is best option for inexpensive, healthy food and smoothies. Just because we're trying to pinch our pennies doesn't mean we have to be heathens here, people!

Café Loki (Lokastígur 28) gives you good portions of classic Icelandic dishes, allowing you to sample the local cuisine.



Gróttalighthouse and Geothermal Foot Bath (Seltjarnarnes)

Use the last bit of sunlight to walk along the coast to the Gróttalighthouse. Then take a selfie with the fantastic sunset while soaking your feet in the small geothermal pool on the coast. Is there any better way to end a day?



The Reykjavik Grapevine Apps

CRAVING

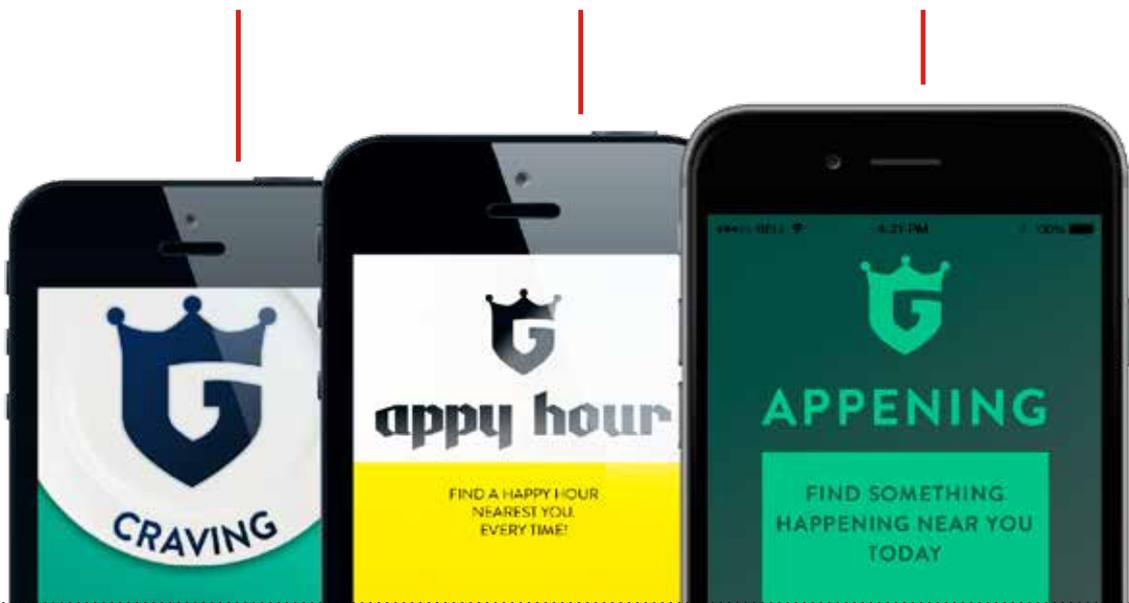
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