

Festivals and Events in Reykjavik

Winter Lights Festival: 5th - 8th February 2015

This festival aims to lift spirits and brighten the winter darkness with a collection of dazzling events. Over the weekend a number of quality light-art installations will be exhibited throughout the city centre, illuminating some of the most prominent buildings and public spaces. Other core events of this festival are Museum Night and Pool Night, during which the city's museums and pools stay open late and offer free admission. www.winterlightsfestival.is

Food and Fun: 25th February - 1st March 2015

Blending local and international culinary talent with fresh natural ingredients, the Food and Fun festival is a recipe for fun! Collaborating with Reykjavik's finest restaurants, world-acclaimed chefs prepare special menus consisting of only Icelandic ingredients. These menus are available to the public at the participating restaurants during the festival, and diners may get a chance to meet the chefs themselves. www.foodandfun.is

Reykjavik Fashion Festival: 12th - 15th March 2015

Inspired by elements of nature, Icelandic fashion has taken the world by storm with its unique blend of traditional craftsmanship and cutting edge design. You can see the masterpieces of Iceland's top fashion talent and young breakout designers on display at the annual Reykjavik Fashion Festival along with live performances by the hottest bands from the Icelandic music scene. www.rff.is

Reykjavik Art Festival: 13th May - 7th June 2015

Established in 1970, Iceland's premier cultural festival showcases the best of local and international theatre, dance, visual art and music. Besides the emphasis on Icelandic culture, both past and present, the festival also hosts distinguished artists and performers from around the world. The festival spans several days at the end of May with programs to suit all ages and interests. www.artfest.is

Iceland National Day: 17th June 2015

Commemorating Iceland's independence from Denmark on June 17, 1944, National Day is one of Iceland's most popular events of the summer. In Reykjavik, the festivities include something for all ages and interests with a colourful parade, street performances, games for kids and free outdoor music concerts lasting late into the evening. www.17juni.is

Innipúkinn Festival: 31st July - 3rd August 2015

Innipúkinn is a small annual music festival, held in downtown Reykjavik over Iceland's bank holiday weekend. Past performers have included Cat Power, Blonde Redhead, Mugison, Raveonnettes, Hjalmar, Trabant, Seabear, Jonathan Ritchman, Mínus, Dikta, FM Belfast and many others. Along with the music program, this event also features a music market, pop quiz, BBQs and more. www.facebook.com/Innipukinnfestival

Reykjavik Gay Pride: 7th - 9th August 2015

This colourful festival draws tens of thousands of people into Reykjavik every year to show solidarity with the GLBT community and celebrate Iceland's progressive position on human rights. Along with the opening ceremony party, numerous concerts and dances and other small events throughout the program, the main attraction by far is the energetic, family-friendly parade through the city centre on Saturday afternoon, complete with lots of rainbows and glitter. www.gaypride.is

Reykjavik Marathon: 22nd August 2015

Started in 1983, this annual event now attracts over 10,000 participants from Iceland and abroad, with 1 km and 3 km "fun runs" for children and adults, a 10 km race, a half marathon, a 42.2 km team relay and the granddaddy of the event—the full marathon. The program starts early in the morning and races start and finish at Lækjargata in the centre of Reykjavik. Runners also gain free admittance to all of Reykjavik's thermal baths and swimming pools after the races. There is no registration on the morning of the event – runners must pre-register online or at the event expo the day before. www.marathon.is

Reykjavik Culture Night: 22nd August 2015

As soon as the marathon runners have cleared the course, the streets of downtown Reykjavik fill up with tens of thousands of others for Culture Night, a celebration of Iceland's diverse cultural scene. There are plenty of free events throughout the day, including outdoor concerts, film screenings, art and photography exhibitions, street performances and an impressive fireworks show by the harbour to end the night. The city's museums also stay open late for this occasion. If you want to celebrate like a true Reykjavik local, look for the signs that say "vöflur" for a free waffle and coffee at the homes of local residents! www.menningarnott.is

Reykjavik International Film Festival (RIFF): 24th September - 4th October 2015

Founded in 2004, RIFF has grown into one of the best-kept secrets of the international film festival circuit, drawing over 25,000 guests annually. Along with film workshops, director talks and discussion panels, this multi-day event offers a number of screening venues in downtown Reykjavik to showcase a variety of documentaries, full-length features, shorts, animations and other notable films from Iceland and abroad, including world premieres and award winners from other festivals. The winner of RIFF's competition is awarded the Golden Puffin at the end of the festival. Tickets can be purchased at screenings or in advance online. www.riff.is

Iceland Airwaves Music Festival: 4th - 8th November 2015

In 1999, the first Iceland Airwaves was held in an airplane hangar, as a showcase for local DJs. Since then, this annual festival has exploded onto the international music scene, attracting some of the hottest new bands from the USA, Europe and Iceland to play at various venues in Reykjavik. Called the "hippest long weekend on the annual music-festival calendar" by Rolling Stone magazine, Iceland Airwaves draws thousands of international visitors to sample the sounds of the fresh musical talent, both foreign and domestic, while offering an opportunity for other adventures in Iceland. Ticket sell out early and quickly for this event, but there are always some free off-venue shows to catch at bars and cafes around the city. www.icelandairwaves.is

New Year's Eve: 31st December 2015

Icelanders are known for going a bit overboard on this holiday! Shops are generally open until 1 PM while most bars, clubs and music venues are open to the crowds of merry-makers late into the night. While Icelanders traditionally dine with family on this day, visitors can enjoy dinner at one of Reykjavik's fine restaurants (RSVP highly recommended) before joining in the evening celebrations, including huge neighbourhood bonfires held across the city. As midnight rolls around, everyone heads outside to a good viewing spot, champagne and sparklers in hand, to watch the unbelievable amount of fireworks set off to welcome the New Year. Afterwards, the partying continues into the wee hours of the morning. Not surprisingly, the 1st of January tends to be a quiet day. To make the most of this holiday, see our [Iceland New Year's tour packages](#).