

Iceland

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After two days at sea from Aberdeen via the Shetlands and Faroes, the Jones family and trusty Land Rover landed on the east coast of Iceland at the small port of Seydisfjordur, destined to visit some of the country's famous geological features.

First stop was several hours along the northern ring road, around the town and lake named Myvatn, an area of mountains, lava fields, solfatara fields, deserts and moraines. The Namaskard solfatara fields show high temperature steam, hydrogen sulphide and other gases vented, and pools of boiling mud; while close by lay Krafla and its geothermal power station – still experimental but actively pursued. Around Myvatn a huge area of "Ropey Lava", formed by eruptions in 1724-1729, could be seen around the village and camp site. Slides showed pseudo-craters in Lake Myvatn and the diatomite factory by the lake shores.

The trip continued across the "Sprengisandur Desert" road, a four-wheel-drive only track, some 160 miles through to the southern coast. On the way a stop was made at Landmannalaugar to swim in the warm river heated by water percolating through near obsidian-like lava flows. A visit was made to the "Fire Fissure", Eldgja; together with the waterfall, Ofaerufoss, cascading over the western wall of the SW/NE aligned explosion fissure.

The next port of call was Geysir. Here the local outdoor swimming pool was beautifully warm to bathe in, and tropical fruits grew in hot-houses. The original geysir of that name is no longer active, but its nearby counterpart still erupts, every ten minutes or so, to a height of 160 feet.

Reykjavik, a truly cosmopolitan capital, came next. Of the total population of around 240,000, some 160,000 live in this area. About 30 miles away lay the "Blue Pool", supposed by many to

help ease or cure a range of various skin ailments. This area also provides much of the supply of heating for the residents of Reykjavik and its under-road heating system.

On the southern coast road eastwards the route passed the largest icecap in Europe, Vatnajokull. At the National Park of Skaftafell, great areas were made available for visitors to walk and enjoy. Final shots were of the fjord coastline of the south east of the island on the return to Seydisfjordur to catch the ferry home.

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