

THE



REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE

Special Issue

Winter 2023



Best Of Reykjavík

THE REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE CITY AWARDS • **DINING:** Sate your appetite at these certified Best™ eateries
• **DRINKING:** Quench your thirst, party hearty and dance the night away • **ACTIVITIES:** Do as we say and as we do — we know how to have fun • **SHOPPING:** Spend your krónur wisely at Reykjavík's top shops



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BEST OF REYKJAVÍK



BEST SPA



AN INTRODUCTION

Best of Reykjavík:



DINING

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+ Reflecting on the staying power of Skál!

P:18

'Tis The Season For All Things Best

If you're reading this, you decided it was a good idea to travel to Reykjavik in the dead of winter. I'm not saying you made a bad choice, just a curious one. Surely there were other destinations with better weather within your reach.

But you're here now and Iceland is happy to have you. It's been a strange autumn, with the ground starting to shake again on the Reykjanes peninsula, as it had before the 2021, 2022 and July 2023 eruptions. Only, this time all the action was right underneath the town of Grindavik and near the Blue Lagoon. With infrastructure affected, a whole lot of sensational headlines began circulating about all of Iceland being on the verge of erupting. But 99% of the country has been entirely safe and open for locals and visitors alike to travel and enjoy.

While the restaurants, bars, shops and activities certified Best™ in this magazine are all in the capital area, we wish you safe and happy travels if your adventure takes you further afield.

Speaking of the Best™ things to eat, drink, buy or do in Reykjavik, our definitive lists across myriad categories are yours to discover in the pages that follow.

If you're looking to partake in some inventive and oh so delicious food from

one of our Best™ restaurants in our Best™ food hall, you'll want to first read Shruthi Basappa's article on Skál! on Page 18. If scarfing down quick bites while running from one activity to another is more your speed, then read about a few of our favourite places for a fast feast on Page 28.

Since you never really know what the weather is going to be like at any given moment during Icelandic winter, we've added a handy guide to things to do when you'd rather spend your time indoors — check that out on Page 32. And since we know you're an eco-friendly traveller, you'll appreciate our guide to travelling without making a big impact on Page 38.

Finally, if you've still got some people to cross off your holiday shopping list — or you're just looking to treat yourself to some local goodies — check out our Best Of Reykjavik shopping bag on Page 46.

Give it a read, give it some thought and try out our recommendations. Maybe some of our Bests™ will become some of your new favourites. Bundle up, be safe and have a holly jolly time in Reykjavik. 🍷

Catharine Fulton
Editor in Chief



DRINKING & NIGHTLIFE

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+ Need fuel to run around the city? Eat this.

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+ How to have big adventure with a small footprint.

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+ The Best holiday shopping bag in all the land.

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Farmers Market

ICELAND

OUR STORES IN REYKJAVÍK: FARMERS & FRIENDS

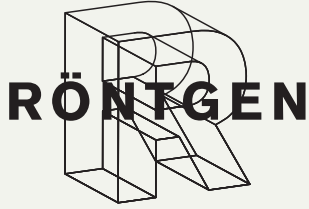


Laugavegur 37



Hólmastóð 2 / Grandi

WWW.FARMERSMARKET.IS



Hverfisgata 12



Happy hour / 4–7pm
Beer / Wine / Cocktails



Foreword From A Hater

The annual Best Of Reykjavik magazine is once again upon us. We waited patiently while the Icelandic culture gods debated, argued and fought until they finally came to a consensus. Now, they are ready to bless us with their conclusions.

You might get lucky and see them throughout the streets of Reykjavik, plastering their iconic Best Of Reykjavik stickers on this year's crop of worthy establishments. As their power grew through the years, so did the stickers. What started as cute badges of encouragement have ballooned to multiple square metre crests that you shall never dare take down. Business owners have described a nirvana-like experience of achieving the ultimate goal of covering their windows entirely. They call it "The Blackout." Some were not able to handle it and barricaded themselves inside, refusing to let anybody in, such was the burden.

Let's go back in time. The humble beginnings of the Reykjavik Grapevine's nominations were treated lightly, even with amusement. It was fun. Locals flipped through the pages. "This is cute," they said, with a smirk on their face. "But who are they to tell me anything?"

Fast forward to Iceland becoming the must-visit travel destination. Move over Paris and London, you're old news. Screw off Pyramids. We have Geysir coming through — oh and who is that cool cat with the sunglasses in the backseat? Well it's just little old Blue Lagoon, of course.

The streets of Reykjavik flooded with travellers searching for something

to do. Lost souls looking for something to eat and drink. Maybe even buy a traditional Icelandic garment. But where should they go?

Thus began the rise of Grapevine's influence.

Not only were they the sole outlet recommending how to spend your time and money in Reykjavik, but they were telling you what the absolute "best" was. They took the power nobody else dared claim. They became the official judge of Icelandic culture. Why them and not some food blogger with the same sense of self confidence?

The answer is twofold. No one challenged the Grapevine. No one questioned their evaluation process. Has there been progress from the early days? While I imagine the staff and various local legends once sat down over a beer and had some fun making a list of things they like, I assume the process is much more sophisticated today. With the weight these awards carry, surely it is. Right?

But let us not forget the part that the people receiving the awards play in this saga. They could have refused to acknowledge the Grapevine as the new rulers of Icelandic taste making. But there is a sinister correlation between the success of a business and being mentioned in this magazine, thus creating a silent agreement between all parties.

But no more, my friends. The revolution has started. Yes, I will be spat on by people on the streets. Yes, I will have to isolate myself from my family to protect them. Am I a martyr, you ask? Your words, not mine.

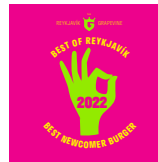
But if I can get you to open your eyes and read and enjoy this magazine for what it really is — a lovely and well executed recommendation pamphlet and nothing more — then I have achieved my goal. 🍷

Pavel Ermolinski
Basketballer, Martyr
@pavelinok15

THE GUIDE-GUIDE

How To Spot The Winners

Establishments deemed "best" can be identified by the Grapevine's iconic (Pavel's words, not ours) Best Of Reykjavik stickers, which we distribute in a very tasteful standard size. 🍷



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Dining

Remember when everyone became a home baker? Yeah, they didn't make the list

Reykjavík's dining scene has never been more vibrant. Breakfast might prove to be too early for Reykjavík, but get down to local bakeries like Deig or if you are feeling fancy to Tides, and see what a difference a spot of warm grub in the wee hours can do. Lunch offers abound and dinner is ripe for experimentation — be it sampling Pueblan tacos at La Poblana, rediscovering Mat Bar, experiencing Nordic fine-dining at Dill, or tucking into tapas inspired plates at weeks old Skreið or blistering pizzas at BakaBaka. Whatever you fancy, dear gourmards, whatever your proclivities or budgets, our esteemed panel has done the hard work to bring you the best of Reykjavík. Skál!

Best Bakery



Sandholt

Laugavegur 36

Amidst the Scandi fever that has firmly gripped Reykjavík bakeries, Sandholt stands tall with its Parisian vibes. Beautiful marble counters piled high with freshly baked goods are a sight to behold, even for the gluten intolerant. Even the less-than-perfect service doesn't seem to dim its popularity, "what can I say? I'm a die-hard loyalist," one panellist confessed. There is hardly a place in town that could hold a candle to Sandholt's croissants, vinarbrauð or legendary sourdough. A current favourite are the new born baby sized, olive oil drung, warm focaccia — if you're not careful, you could easily eat the whole in one sitting.

Runners-up



Brauð & Co. Multiple locations

"They source the best, ethical raw ingredients," notes one panellist privy to the supply chain of Brauð og Co., "and it shows in their bakes." That care and sensitivity shines through the city-wide Danish-style bakery chain and over the past two years they have noticeably addressed their once inconsistent QC concerns. Sure, the cinnamon snúður rules the roost, but make room for the granola version, their often warm jammy hjónabandssæla — there are few who make this better — and their weekend special croissants. Other must-do's include the bronzed pretzel croissants and the dense, seeded rye.



Hygge Coffee & Microbakery Seljavegur 2

Sandholt alumni Þórey Lóvísa's palette skews sweet for some panellists, but it cannot be said enough that she is making some of the prettiest pastries and bakes in the city. Seasonal tarts constructed with house-made jams, frangipane and other fillings are a treat and the pistachio croissant and vegan blueberry danish are set to become classics in their own right.

Previous Winners

2022: Sandholt and Deig
2021: Sandholt and Deig
2020: Sandholt

Best Burger



Le Kock

Tryggvagata 14

Le Kock's gourmet tuck-shop burgers aren't too sloppy, nor are they so fine to the point where they're try-hard. No ma'am, these are obscenely tasty burgers that elicit sighs of pleasure and guilt in equal measure. Here is an ode to the OG cheeseburger with crisp toasted buns, perfectly melty cheddar, a juicy patty cooked just right, and pickles and slaw adding fresh crunch. The Trump tower, on the other hand, is an unapologetic double-patty American smash with yellow mustard, a shockingly balanced truffle ketchup and perfectly smashed patties.



2 Guys

Hlemmur Square

2 Guys have got us between the bun and patty, and how! Last year's newbies and this year's one of two top dogs, this homage to hip-hop and sweaty burgers are a panel favourite. Each burger is assembled with such precision that it never slides or falls apart. What is particularly striking is that the chef lets the burger truly shine, without the weight of unnecessary frou-frou. A rule they break with aplomb with the candied jalapeno and crushed Dorito studded 2Pac that feels like a levelled up midnight munchie.

Newcomer



Beef & Buns Bildshöfði 9

"You guys should venture out to suburbia more," quipped one of our panellists cheekily, before making a case for newcomer Beef & Buns. American smashed burgers continue to reign supreme in popularity and this outpost too pays homage to the lace edged, singed fringed burger. It's a tough world out here for burgers and we fervently wish for this one's continued success.

Previous Winners

2022: Le Kock
2021: Yuzu
2020: Le Kock & Hamborgara Bullan

Best Coffeehouse



Reykjavík Roasters

Brautarholt 2

As you'd expect from the name, RR roasts their own beans and makes a mean cup of joe. Roasters have hit upon that perfect balance of Scandi cool vibe without being pretentious, even if their baristas refuse to engage in banter — an expectation oddly reserved for baristas and bartenders. Perhaps it's Scandinavian pain. Despite the absence of small chat, the coffee is third-wave loyal, the teas are brewed to temperature and time perfection, the hot chocolate isn't hot cocoa, the wi-fi is strong for some solitary work or small meetings, and the space large enough for parent-child outings — all of which make for excellent people-watching.

Runners-up:



Kaffi Ó-le Hafnarstræti 11

Nostalgically named after a genX cool kids only spot, Kaffi Ó-le in its current avatar firmly looks forward. With its pastel chic interiors that connect to both the 101 Radisson hotel lobby and the streetfront, this urban cafe focuses on precisely roasted and brewed beans (from Kaffibrugg húsið), poured to exacting standards. Several on the panel shared their love for the "city's best matcha latte" as well.



Kaktus Espressoobar Vitastigur 12

This cute-as-a-button cafe is the perfect spot to meet a friend for a chilled catch up, or settle in with your laptop for a productive work session. Adorned with cacti (but of course) and plants in the many nooks and crannies, Kaktus feels like a twee urban oasis. The cafe's goal seems to be to please everyone, thus making it one of the few places a coffee snob and a vegan sweet tooth can hang.

Previous Winners

2022: Reykjavík Roasters
2021: Reykjavík Roasters
2020: Reykjavík Roasters

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The Westman Islands. An exhilarating ferry ride to the picturesque harbour, awe-inspiring seafront cliffs lined with puffin nests, the serene sight of grazing sheep, and the rugged volcanic landscape with its dramatic colours – this place exudes magic. If you crave off-the-beaten-path adventure, you need to visit the Westman Islands.



BEST OF REYKJAVÍK 2023

Dining

Iceland's not cheap, so it had better be good

Best Goddamn Restaurant

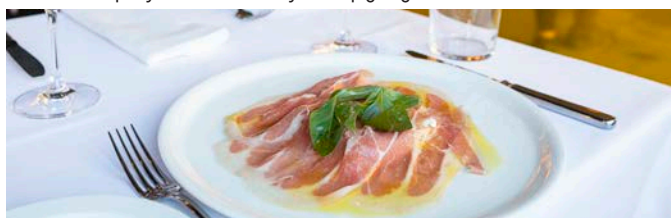
Joint winners



Austur-Indíafjelagið

Hverfisgata 56

It doesn't matter if you are new to Indian cuisine or a seasoned consumer of curries, this place welcomes you with its warm embrace of Indian teak coffered ceilings, antique bronze and vermilion hued artwork on the walls. While we've shared our love of their tandoori meats, old-timers know that it is the hariyali salmon that is the dark horse. And if you haven't yet experienced the joy of a biryani, render that to the past. This is a restaurant where there is more to discover with each visit, and the exemplary service ensures you keep going back.



La Primavera

Grandagarður 20

It's no surprise that the best goddamn restaurants in town would be the stalwarts of Reykjavík. With views overlooking the bustling old harbour and Harpa in the distance, La Primavera is a sly old creature that is always delightful. No matter what time of day or year you dine here, you're sure to have peak season ingredients, handled with the devotion of someone who deeply understands that good produce needs so little. So whether it's rare legumes like roveja from northern Italy, is-it-a-rose or salad conundrum of pink radicchio or the many pasta dishes, Primavera's food is only matched by its service.



Skál

Hlemmur Mathöll, Laugavegur 107

With a revamped menu and a drinks programme to match, Skál continues to be the small place with a big heart; its food hall location is no deterrent for their die-hard patrons. This year we've enjoyed their ice-cold scallops, served sliced, in their shell. Sometimes, thin slices of rutabaga are tucked between them, others there is crimson granita of tart berries. Always refreshing. Then there are the fried shrimp heads with a punchy aioli. The steadfast beets, and butter bathed trout. A crisp glass of mineral natural wine alongside and you've got yourself a banger of a meal each and every time.

Best Place for a Fancy Meal

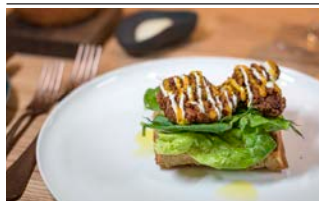


Dill

Laugavegur 59

Now with a green star in addition to their Michelin star, Dill has steadfastly steered the country's culinary ship towards a future firmly rooted in its traditions. Chef Gunnar Karl's dedication to sustainable kitchen practices is more than laudable generally, but even more so in the context of fine dining. Utilising vegetables and protein in their entirety, the menu is a celebration of the whole, eschewing dining diktats that no two proteins are repeated in one meal. For a true taste of Icelandic hospitality, Dill is where you need to be, special occasion or not.

Runners-up



Tides

The Reykjavík Edition, Austurbakki 2
The Edition has managed to lure the exclusive Reykjavíking into its fold, proving to be the 'it' spot. The gorgeously designed restaurant is more than mere luxury. "The fat was rendered so skilfully in the Iberian ham, and so well cooked, I could taste it long after the meal," cooed a very satisfied panellist. The mocktails are as good as their cocktails and while the wine menu is priced fairly steep, you're bound to find a number you wouldn't elsewhere.



Sumac Grill + Drinks

Laugavegur 28
Walking into Sumac recalls being on food streets in warmer places elsewhere around the world. The open grill lends its smokiness to more than just the food and the buzz of happy guests make for a vibrant evening out that is both fancy yet curiously laid-back. Especially popular with big groups, it's best to approach the food here as a meze and order a little bit of everything. The flatbreads are the one sore spot in their otherwise flavour-some menu.

Previous Winners

- 2022: Dill
- 2021: Dill
- 2020: Grillið

Best Value for Money

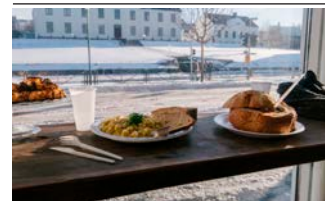


Deig

Tryggvagata 18

Deig's "poor man's offer" has been the offer to beat for some time. They recently upped their price to 1500 ISK for a toasted and filled bagel of your choice, plus a doughnut and drink. Available only on weekdays from 10am onwards, the price rise hasn't affected the quality on offer. While the offer alone is tempting, the panel urges you to try one of their special bagels for the princely sum of 1700 ISK. It's a steal on this rocky, windy, expensive as heck island.

Runners-up



Icelandic Street Food

Lækjargata 8
A family-run business built on their amma's recipes, this establishment has been meeting that "taste of Iceland" craving that many travellers have. Unlimited refills of soups — both of the fish and lamb variety are on offer — and that sweet deal is best topped off with a slice of their "happy marriage cake." Our astute panel does note that seasoning is not always their forte, but a quick sprinkling of salt usually does the trick.



Flatus

Skúlagata 28
It's undeniable that Reykjavík is expensive. But if you dig a little deeper you'll find attractive deals like the beer and pizza lunch at Flatus for 2000 ISK. A 10" pizza, frosty beer, views over Esja. What's not to like?

Previous Winners

- 2022: Deig
- 2021: Sægreifinn
- 2020: Icelandic Street Food



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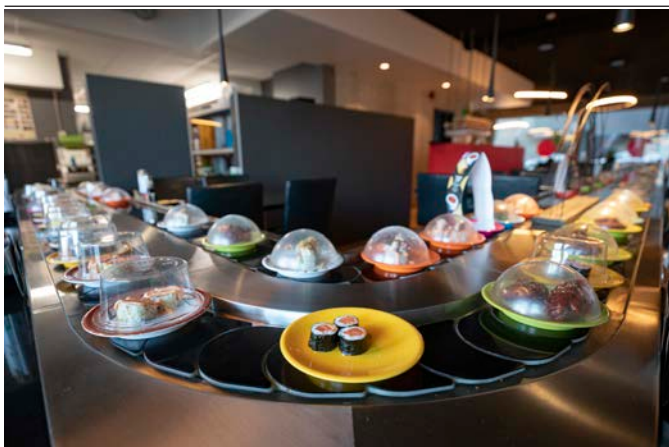
Icelandic lamb has acquired the PDO label, the highest level of geographical indication in Europe, placing it in the company of the world's best-known and most sought-after quality products.



Dining

It's not all shark and sheephead

Best Family Restaurant



Osushi

Tryggvagata 13

Like many curious things about Iceland, sushi has managed to become a common culinary love easily shared between generations. A firm panel favourite, what makes Osushi tick is that it is “perfect for the younger kids who love sushi, to the teen who still likes going out with the parents.” The sushi is freshly rolled before being sent out on the conveyor belt, which means there is zero waiting time before everyone can tuck into their favourite bite. The staff is attentive and is happy to entertain their young guests’ many requests, be it wanting mochi ice cream before dinner, or sending out those mango hosomaki stat.

Runners-up



Hornið Hafnarstræti 15

Hornið has been around so long now that chances are you went there as a child and you’re taking your own kids there now. One of the first to introduce Italian food to Icelanders, this restaurant knows that pasta is a secret comfort food and they cater to this nostalgia with unabashed pleasure. Think Italy by way of Iceland. And the pizzas are an ode to simplicity. Sure, rings of raw onion may sometimes mysteriously appear on a pie, and the service can sometimes seem harried, but Hornið remains ideal for when nothing but the comfort of familiarity will do.



Jómfrúin Lækjargata 4

“You wouldn’t think that a Danish smorrebrauð place would be super child friendly, but Jómfrúin not only is, but is also accommodating of picky eaters,” mused a panellist. “I’ve been a regular for over six years now,” added another, “and from my 70-something grandmother, to my teenagers, there is something for everyone. But the attentive service and genuine consideration for kids is what makes this a hidden gem for families.” How can we argue with testimonies like that?

Previous Winners

2022: Kaffi Lækur
2021: Osushi
2020: Hamborgarafabrikan

Best Vegan Meal

Joint winners



Hnoss

Harpa, Austurbakki 2

While chef Fanny Dora’s legendary smoked carrot dish inspired copycats everywhere, she herself has moved onto focussing her attention to showcasing vegetables and legumes front and centre at her Harpa restaurant, Hnoss. This is one of a handful of restaurants that borrow from non-European cuisines, successfully marrying them with Icelandic produce. Take the grilled miso rutabaga, for instance. Hefty chunks of this often overlooked vegetable is marinated with savoury Japanese miso, then branded on the grill; the smokiness a lovely foil to the spicy peanut-sesame-chilli based sauce at once recalling both West African stews and South Indian chutneys. The Omnom praline cake is perhaps “the most sumptuous dessert in town right now,” gushed our panellist dreamily. This is food both vegans and non-vegans can enjoy heartily.



Fönix

Bíldshöfði 12

Long before the city caught up to vegan dishes, let alone full-fledged menus, Fönix was the first to have a menu dedicated entirely to vegan classics at their industrious industrial outpost, a secret many kept to themselves and with good reason. The vegan mapo tofu overshadows the original, the darkly sweet braised eggplant arrives blistering hot, their velvety slinkiness perfect to scoop over rice. The dumplings are hand-pleated parcels of love, stuffed with glass noodles and chewy wood ears and shiitake, a wonderful juxtaposition of texture and flavour. Don’t sleep on Fönix. Here you’ll find no battered cauliflowers pretending to be chicken in sight.

Previous Winners

2022: Sono Matseljur
2021: Sono Matseljur
2020: Veganæs (RIP)

Best Brunch



Brút

Pósthússtræti 2

The brunch at Brút is so of-the-moment chic that makes it worth waking up early-ish on a weekend. Brút shakes things up by leaning into that fresh, good for you energy without any of the crystal healing vibe. There is a salad for every preference, a couple of warm dishes, often an excellently prepared fish, plenty of fruit juices, mimosas and cocktails, and always something thoughtful for the vegan too. It’s at the dessert table that Brút loses their mind and there are whole cakes running the gamut from cheesecakes and pies to tarts and macarons.

Runner-up



Hnoss Harpa, Austurbakki 2

Hnoss channels generosity of spirit, transforming into a laid-back yet elegant family-friendly brunch over the weekend with long rows of fresh salads, steamy soup, fried to order eggs and a house-made dessert table often surrounded by eager kids and adults alike. What sets Hnoss apart from the other brunches besides the usual suspects is their love for Icelandic classics.

Newcomer



The Roof Bryggjugata 6

If a decadent location is non-negotiable for your brunch pals, then The Roof is certain to please. With a large wrap-around terrace, floor to ceiling windows and breathtaking views, this is a place that impresses even before the food arrives. “Perfect for a hangover,” the menu is very American — there are crispy waffles, stacked with fried chicken and eggs, avocado toast and mac and cheese. The boozy milkshakes are “slightly strange at first, but mad delicious once you try them.” This isn’t a hurried affair but a fashionable brunch lightened with the playful menu.

Previous Winners

2022: Coccoo’s Nest (RIP)
2021: Coccoo’s Nest (RIP)
2020: The Coccoo’s Nest (RIP)



Hafnartorg
Gallery

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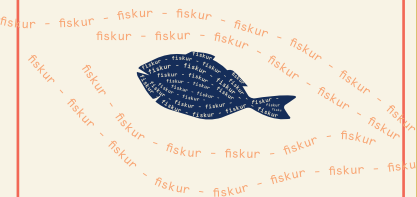
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Food and Wine

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BEST OF REYKJAVÍK 2023

Dining

Fun fact: Iceland derives its name from our love of ice cream

Best ice cream



Skúbb

Laugarásvegur 1

When asked for their top choice for best ice cream, panels old and current have been unanimous in their love for Skúbb's creamy treats. "I'm in love with their espresso — nice, clean flavours," said one. Is it simply the deliciousness of their ice creams, or the straightforward simplicity of flavours, or their commitment to values that shines through that have made them a consistent winner? It's all of the above and consistency. Skúbb's scoops haven't succumbed to cutting corners in the run up to popularity. They use BioBu's milk for all their dairy-based scoops, and whatever on offer is bound to knock your socks off. The sorbets are bursts of pure fruit and the vegan flavours give stiff competition to their dairy-based brethren. Skúbb, we love you.

Runners-up



Gæta Gelato
Aðalstræti 6

From the moment they opened their doors, Gæta quickly became the name on everyone's lips for authentic Italian gelato. Our astute panel did note that their gelato has in recent times become sweeter than it used to be. But that shouldn't deter one from the excellent gelato here. Nut forward flavours rule the roost, although store attendants do confess that the local palate skews sweet (perhaps that is what they are addressing?) with their soft spot for salted caramel and Oreo cookie flavours. Seasonal flavours are aplenty at Gæta, so when mango season strikes, that is the one to try. Recently they've taken to offering cannoli and twee krikri gelato cones as well.



Ísbúð Vesturbæjar
Hagamel 67

Chocolate dipper, blitzer of candy streaked bragðarefur and the one-stop shop for all the essentials needed for a good ol' ísbíltur is local haunt, and neighbourhood jaunt Ísbúð Vesturbæjar. If you really want a sneak peek into the Icelandic psyche, the ice cream shop is where it's at — a childhood treat of simple vanilla soft serve, swirled into that papery cone becomes the vehicle for a veritable spread of dippings and toppings. For a true taste of the local, hit up this institution.

Previous Winners

2022: Skúbb
2021: Skúbb
2020: Skúbb

Best Seafood

Joint winners



Fish Company

Vesturgata 2a

For over a decade now, Fiskfélagið has been delighting diners with their fresh-off-the-boat, bonkers good seafood. Whether it is the shrimp-langoustine salad that has gained cult status amongst lunch goers, or their elegant sushi, or the achingly good cod and ling prepared in a multitude of ways, Fiskfélagið always delivers. "I can't remember ever having a bad meal there," echoed many of our panellists. And with good reason, too. This restaurant seems to attract the very best talent and it has managed to stand tall in a sea of restaurants all peddling similar fare.



Brút

Pósthússtræti 2

In their small yet mighty menu, Brút showcases the best seafood that Iceland has to offer. Just the sheer variety — from char to cod, monkfish to haddock, scallops to sea snails — is a celebration of the bounty of the sea. No matter what you choose, each dish is carefully prepared in a thoughtful fashion that effortlessly converts even the stoic seafood reluctant. Even skate haters turn into skate lovers — and if that isn't high praise, then it's time you go see what the fuss is about for yourself. The award-winning wine list spans the globe.

Runner-up



Fiskmarkaðurinn
Aðalstræti 12

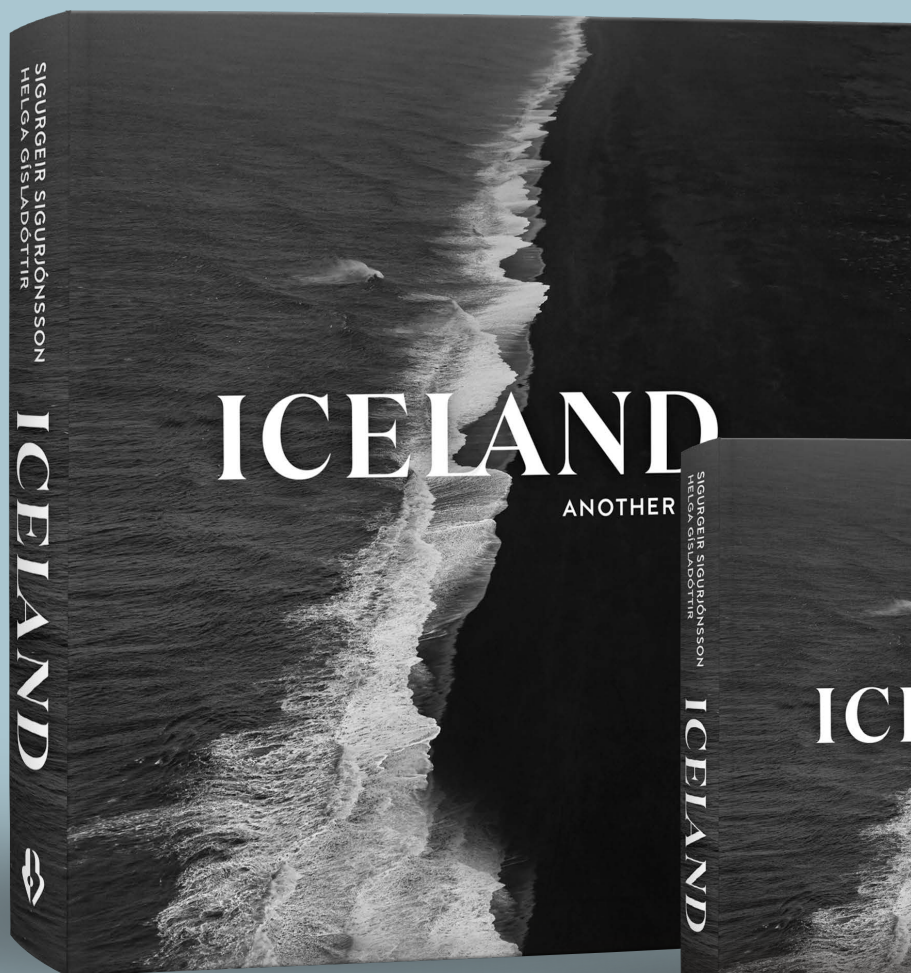
Fiskmarkaðurinn may have undergone several changes to their menu over the years, but what remains steadfast is the presence of the lightly salted cod with apples and their robata grilled salmon. The portions here aren't dainty like their sushi. Instead, these are hearty cuts of high quality fish that truly reflect local seafaring traditions.

Previous Winners

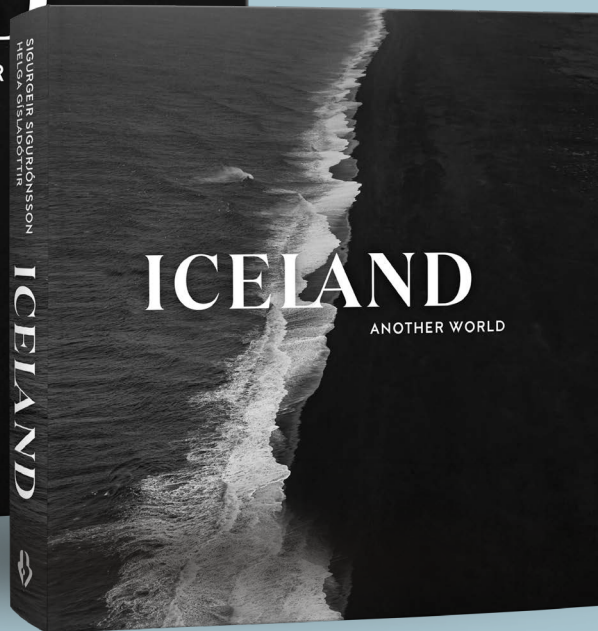
2022: Fiskfélagið
2021: Fiskfélagið
2020: Fiskfélagið



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BEST OF REYKJAVÍK 2023

Dining

At this point we're just waiting for a viking-themed foodhall. Working title: Foodhalla

Best Food Hall

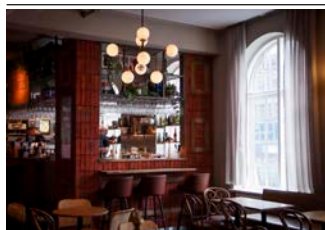


Hlemmur Mathöll

Laugavegur 107

What Hlemmur Mathöll lacks in size, it makes up for in the quality of its establishments. The OG, it is precisely its size and careful curation of cuisines on offer that underlines its cool-beyond-trends vibe. While other mathölls are dealing with deafening decibels and toe-tripping crowding, Hlemmur is still a comfortable haunt. From uber cool Skál to truly Danish smorrebrauð at Tivoli, to the champagne selection at Króst, hearty Vietnamese pho or some Napoli pizza by Flatey, this is the best place to sample a cross-section of Icelandic restaurant fare without having to worry about reservations and wait lists. We still miss the fresh produce stand, if that could be brought back, it'd be golden, baby.

Newcomers



Pósthús Mathöll Pósthússtræti 5

The cross stitch art on the wall says "Sorry, this is yet another food hall" — but that brash declaration belies the selection on offer at Pósthús. "Cannot get enough of the heritage details of this place," cooed our panellist. Reykjavík's youngest mathöll is perhaps the prettiest, too. Once a post office, now a refurbished food hall, the room by room layout allows guests to meander and discover for themselves the broad selection on offer. Moving beyond the now tired formula of the usual suspects offering the trifecta of sameness — burger, pizza and some insipid "Asian," Pósthús gives one hope that perhaps ambition in the F&B industry isn't dead yet. There is fresh pasta at Enoteca, fun drinks at Drykk, fresh sushi and poke bowls at Djúsi Sushi and Indian food via Scandinavia at Funky Bhangra.



Hafnartorg Gallery Geirsgata 17

The design of this mathöll left our panel split between "cushy comfy" to "sport bar vibe" to "airport lounge" — it's a good thing we are the food panel and not the design panel. The aesthetics aside, what seemed to win the panel over was the selection of food on offer, proximity to ample parking and the comfortable seating. Hrefna Sætran's behind La Trattoria, an Italian restaurant, there is Brand, by the same team as Bál, Mexican tacos at Fuego, NY style slices, and a poke bar.

Previous Winners

- 2022: Borg 29
- 2021: Hlemmur Mathöll

Best Late Night Bite



Arabian Taste

Laugavegur 87

"The service is so friendly!" seems to be the common refrain one hears about Arabian Taste. The Syrian family-run restaurant has been channelling their pain into joy for us on their plates of torpedo lookalike kibbeh — pounded bulghur wheat stuffed with spiced minced meat, deep fried to crusty goodness — smokey lamb kebabs, spectacular baba ghanoush and fresh tabbouleh. We strongly recommend getting a side of pickles, and some extra spicy sauce alongside your falafel wrap. Late nights don't translate to a grift here; the family is all smiles no matter the time of day.

Runner-up



Devitos Laugavegur 126

Even bad pizza is good pizza and Devitos is better than bad, it's good. Another staple of the Icelandic late night bites for over 25 years, this place is sure to sort you out at the end of a long shift at the hotel or a long line at the bar bathroom. Now stop your yapping and grab a slice with pepperoni, pineapple and cream cheese like a real native.

Previous Winners

Renewed category

Best Newcomer



Óx

Laugavegur 55

After a few years as a speakeasy restaurant tucked away inside another restaurant, Óx has grown wings and leaves its old nest behind, with a newly minted Michelin star in tow, and has moved to a new location further up the high street. The sense of arrival is intact as a non-descript graffitied wall spares no hints as to the gastronomic delights awaiting diners inside. A speakeasy bar, named in honour of chef Þráinn Freyr's grandmother, Ammadon, is the sort of welcome that is a sign of all good things that are yet to come. Now seating 16, the new space is ambitious and the food just as memorable. Reykjavík fine dining has arrived, and how.

Runners-up



Fröken Reykjavík Kitchen & Bar Lækjargata 12

"Didn't expect anything and was pleasantly surprised," has been the consistent feedback about Fröken, Reykjavík's newest restaurant. Housed in the new Íslandshotel, the art deco flourishes carry on from the lobby to the restaurant. Perhaps it is a sign of a booming economy, or the post-pandemic longing for beauty, but restaurant decor has firmly moved away from industrial grunge-chic to plush velours and gilded accents. The menu may sound like usual suspects, but the delivery is near-perfect.



Funky Bhangra Pósthússtræti 5

Indian-ish burgers? That's exactly what Yesmine Olsson's Funky Bhangra does. Inspired by India by way of Sweden, this mathöll restaurant sets its sights firmly on Northern Indian cuisine and is loosely based on chaat flavours. The popular burgers are lamb or vegetarian, served with a mint chutney, fried papads and raita. The grilled skewers of meat are rather delicious too.

Previous Winners

- 2022: Brut
- 2021: Dragon Dimsum
- 2020: Makake (RIP)

Dining

The Grapevine Recommends

Hungry for some more best of the best? We got you.

We've done something a little different in this edition of Best Of Reykjavik, morphing some of our dining categories into these quick and snappy Grapevine Recommends lists. It's a quick and easy way to see what's Best™.

The Reykjavik Grapevine heartily recommends these hot spots, as determined by our expert dining panel. Go try them all back-to-back-to-back (to back-to-back-to-back) for the most delicious day of your life.

Best Vegan Burger



Kröst

Hlemmur Mathöll

Runners-up

Yuzu, Multiple locations
Le Kock, Tryggvagata 14

Previous Winners

2022: Yuzu
2021: Junkyard
2020: Bio Borgari (RIP)

Best Pizza



BakaBaka

Bankastræti 2

Runner-up

Flatey, Multiple locations

Newcomer

Pizza Popolare, Pósthússtræti 5

Previous Winners

2022: Flatey
2021: Flatey
2020: Flatey

Best Indian



Austur-Indíafjelagið

Hverfisgata 56

Runners-up

Gandhi, Bergstaðastræti 13
Hraðlestin, Multiple locations

Previous Winners

2022: Austur-Indíafjelagið
2021: Austur-Indíafjelagið
2020: Austur-Indíafjelagið

Best Thai



Ban Thai

Laugavegur 130

Runners-up

Krua Thai, Skólavörðustígur 21
Mai Thai, Laugavegur 118

Previous Winners

2022: Ban Thai
2021: Ban Thai
2020: Ban Thai

Best Chinese



Fine

Rauðarárstígur 33

Runners-up

Fönix, Bildshöfði 12
Fine Take-Away, Helluhraun 22, Hafnarfjörður

Previous Winners

2022: Fine
2021: Fine
2020: Fine

Best Sushi



Umami Sushi + Bar

Borgartún 29

Runners-up

Sushi Social, Þingholtsstræti 5
Fiskmarkaðurinn, Aðalstræti 12

Previous Winners

2022: Fishmarket
2021: Sushi Social
2020: Sushi Social & Osushi



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FOOD

Sup, Sip and Skál!

From foraged craft cocktails to shrimp heads, this Icelandic gastro-pub exemplifies joy in brevity

Words: **Shruthi Basappa** Photo: **Art Bicnick**

If one were to say that the success of Hlemmur Mathöll has centred on Skál!, they wouldn't be wrong. From day one of their operations, Skál! has managed to exceed expectations and defy easy categorisation, with the food and drinks maintaining an enviously high standard in terms of sheer deliciousness and affordability.

Icelandic gastro fare

While we are often late to global trends here, a group of ingenious entrepreneurs expanded the definition of a gastropub while redefining casual dining in an extremely challenging market. Björn Steinar and Gísli Grímsson from Saltverk, Iceland's best

known sea salt, and chef Gísli Matthías Auðunsson from Slippurinn were the stellar team behind Skál! that started it all.

Did Skál! set out to be a gastropub, or has it ever called itself one? Not at all. But given the equal focus on brews and braises – you could pop in for a glass of minerally natural wine, craft cocktails, or beers from local and guest breweries, and pair it with plate after plate of carefully concocted dishes – the gastropub moniker comes naturally.

Things are slightly different today at Skál!. Gísli has moved on to focus on his Vestmannaeyjar-based projects and Danish chef Thomas Lorentzen has ably taken over the reins at the beloved spot.

Even from his early days, one could sense that the legacy dishes of Skál! would prove to be limiting for a chef of his calibre. Boasting head chef stints at a smattering of respected Danish establishments, including Restaurant Kadeau, Thomas has been bold with his additions to the Skál! menu.

It isn't always easy to step into the shoes of someone like Gísli. It is here at Skál! that we had our first taste of cod wings. It is also here that we saw the humble beet elevated to more than its earthy roots, prompting repeat orders through the evening. It is also where Fanney Dóra, when she was the head chef, debuted her smoked carrot dish, silken ribbons of carrots cured in soy and söl, at once smoky, salty and reminiscent of smoked fish, prompting fall-short copycats across town.

Of sesame oil cocktails and shrimp heads

Skál! has always redefined trends. Before anyone had heard about natural wines, barring the handful of Copenhagen transplants (who'd proudly point out the lack of availability), Skál! in-

troduced us to that zippy, bubbly, sometimes fickle world. They experimented with and executed a cocktail with soy and sesame oil (a damn good one at that!) before craft cocktails became commonplace. Small plates found new meaning and expression here, then with their cauliflowerer la buffalo wings, with the nicest pickled celery, and now with their deep-fried spot prawn heads that are a crackling delight of texture and heady flavours, one whose return I fervently await.

It has been heartening to see a dedicated test kitchen at Skál! The kitchen regularly posts its exploits on Instagram, prompting loyal diners to grab a bite of whatever it is the kitchen is working out. Quite popular in Europe, but rarely seen on menus here, a dish of retired dairy cow was on a recent lunch menu, which I regretfully missed. The skirt steak (3550 ISK), despite its popularity, has never been my favourite; the meat is too often too stringy and remains nondescript despite the tasty accompaniments.

The lamb (2950 ISK) however, consistently delivers big flavours on what otherwise looks like a very simple composition:

here is a pink roundel with a thin black ring around (medium rare cooked lamb fillet dusted in leek ash), one pristinely creamy quenelle of sunchokes spaced slightly apart from its darker black garlic counterpart, the respite of green in the pureed parsley. It is a beautifully composed dish both on the plate and the palate, proving once again that small plates aren't simply code for lazy tapa portions.

Beyond seasonal sustainability

Buying local has been championed for so long in Iceland that it is easy to forget that quality often doesn't configure in that equation. Restaurants, however, have long been the silent champions of local, seasonal, high quality produce one doesn't always see on store shelves. Skál! has been persistent in this regard. Be it the goat meat "shepherd's pie," foraged pineapple weed and angelica, or the hand-dived scallops, dining here has that rooted-in-Iceland feeling to it. The menu rotates often and reflects the seasons in a thought-provok-

ing fashion, moving beyond fads. Take those aforementioned scallops for instance. Around their debut they used to be Faroese, with little squirts of rhubarb studded through. Then Thomas' duet with the Westfjörd scallops, with slices of the meat, layered between paper thin discs of turnip, and a milky cucumber sauce, served alongside an open toast of smoked scallop roe is now in its most pristine avatar — served ice-cold, in the shell, with a tinglingly refreshing red currant granita and hazelnut oil (2750 ISK). The horseradish provides the kick necessary to jolt through the creamy bites and all the temperatures and textures elevate it to a memorable spoonful. This dedication to work and rework ingredients and dishes into versions that keep getting better when you thought they simply were perfect as is, is really the reason many continue to return to Skál!

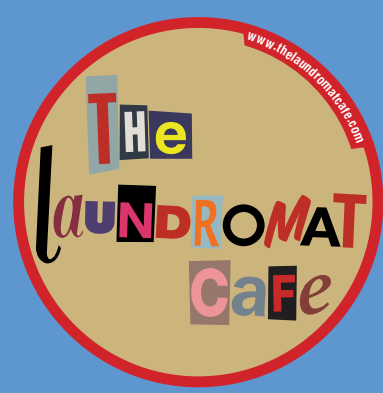
Vegetarians and vegans need not fret. Sure the beet dish has been struck off this new menu (gasp and horror!), but I admire that Thomas has eased us into the transition with a smoky,

charred zucchini (2150 ISK) that really is a delight. The beverage flight is as dedicated to its craft as the food. Natural wines are plentiful by the glass, and chances are they will have your favourite open by the bottle, like the very affordable and pleasing Succes cuca de llum. Mæja Sif Danielsdóttir will happily walk you through this exciting landscape if you are a newcomer. I recently had a glass of expressive zippy, floral leaning Gruner Veltliner from Claus Presinger that made for a great night-cap. Turning foraging for the masses into a whole new experience are the cocktails and drinks. Urban and rural lines blur with ingredients like pineapple weed, angelica and lovage central to the libations. Helmed by acclaimed bartender Keli Ingi, whose work I have been earnestly following since his Nostra days. Here he marries the Skál! principle of local with his chef-like approach to ingredients. He also mixes mocktails with as much care and complexity as he does his cocktails. Instead of too-sweet ginger beer tumblers, expect

herby, bitter, fruity and smoky. The three citrus gimlet (2950 ISK) is seemingly simple but, like many of his drinks, hides a depth of technique and time working with ingredients. The seasonal lemonades are homages to summers past with rhubarb beating others in popularity. What Skál! does with aplomb is deliver on that sweet spot of creative fine dining that doesn't break the bank. It doesn't preach its principles about food; instead, it is a lively, joyous celebration of flavour. Their continued ambition and dedication to technique and quality puts Skál! notches above stand-alone restaurants professing to do the same, but delivering none of the chutzpah or originality seen here. Whether it is for a simple snack with wine, an intimate dinner with a friend, or a rambunctious group seeking something electric, Skál! has you covered. 🍷



NOT TO BRAG BUT :)



Drinking

Some people drink to forget, we drink to remember. Remember what? We forget

The crème de la crème. The cherry on top. It's the best of drinking and nightlife. Carefully imbibe every word you read on these pages as the gospel itself. Bask in its glory. Please do not send unsolicited criticism to grapevine@grapevine.is. We beg you.

Having sat down with a panel of expert beer drinkers, wine connoisseurs and all-around people in the know, we've compiled the absolute greats of contemporary Reykjavík watering holes. Do the Grapevine special and try them all in one night, only to wake up with a hangover that'll last you until next season's Best Of.

Best Goddamn Bar



Röntgen

Hverfisgata 12

For the second year in a row, Röntgen claims the prize of the Grapevine's Best Goddamn Bar. A unanimous choice by the panel, there's simply nothing else that competes with Röntgen's comprehensive atmosphere. Whether you're looking for a relaxing weekday drink or a full-on weekend party, Röntgen has it all. "There's some kind of a magnet that draws me to it," one panellist said. "They also attract a good mixture of locals and tourists, which makes for an interesting atmosphere," said another panellist. Röntgen's all-encompassing glory continues to dominate the Reykjavík bar scene.

Runners-Up



Lemmy Austurstræti 20

Ian Kilmister, in memoriam. This irreverent theme bar, known for its DJ/drummer combo nights earned a special nod from the panel. "I love this bar because they are so accommodating and ambitious," said a panellist. "In the summertime, there's a backyard stage, Freddi Arcade has moved in there and they even have an aquarium. It's a no-pressure environment," said another. "They always have something going on. There's a real consistency."



12 Tónar Skólavörðustígur 15

Record store-gone-café, 12 Tónar's owners Einar and Lárus will make you feel like a regular, even if it's only your first time. "It's absolutely my favourite place in town," chimed one panellist. With a good selection of beer on tap, they also host regular DJ nights and a summer concert series. "The outdoor patio is fantastic when the sun's up," chimed one panellist.

Previous Winners

2022: Röntgen
2021: Kaffibarinn
2020: Kaffibarinn

Best Wine Bar



Vinstúkan Tíu Sopar

Laugavegur 27

Tucked away in the cellar of Laugavegur 27 is Vinstúkan 10 Sopar. Vinstúkan has a wide selection of natural wines, as well as lavish French vintages. Offering not only great wine but greater customer service, Vinstúkan 10 Sopar claims the prize again as the best wine bar. If you're not sure what you like, go ahead and ask the owner and head bartender Steinar for a recommendation. "I feel like I'm in safe hands whenever I'm there," confessed a panellist. You can even snag a great deal on a full bottle, as Vinstúkan imports their own.

Runners-up:



Aperó Vinbar Laugavegur 20b

A Grapevine favourite, Aperó is a French-inspired wine bar, utilising the latest in wine technology to offer its patrons an exquisite experience. "It's so cool what they do there. Each wine is stored in a specific closet, with a specific temperature," one panellist reports. If you're hungry, they also offer food that pairs well with your drink of choice. If you're missing that continental European feel, go to Aperó.



Bodega Týsgata 9

Claiming the spot as the best bar for outdoor drinking, Bodega is tucked away from the hustle and bustle of Laugavegur partying. "It's a serious wine place," a panellist said. And serious it is. Serving wine from all over the globe, Bodega is also a fantastic place for outdoor drinking, as per the panel's deliberation. Don't forget to have a little snack with your drink while you're there.

Previous Winners

2022: Vinstúkan Tíu sopar
2021: Vinstúkan Tíu sopar
2020: Port 9

Best Craft Bar



Session Craft Bar

Bankastræti 14

Catering to seasoned craft beer veterans as well as lightweights who only want a Coors Light, Session is the place to be. "Session is an accessible place to visit as a group. If I'm in the mood, I can treat myself to a nice craft beer. But they also have good lagers," said one panellist. Its colourful selection of beers offers a good overview of the breweries around Reykjavík, as well as the Danish brewery Mikkeller. "It's good for beer nerds, but also people who just want to take it easy and play board games," said another panellist.

Runners-up



Microbar Nýbýlavegur 8 (Kópavogur)

The panel didn't confine itself to the drinking scene in downtown Reykjavík — Microbar is also located in Kópavogur. "Microbar has very nice vibes. Comfortable lighting and a great range of beers," a panellist said. The first craft bar in Reykjavík, Microbar offers beers from all over the world, with a special focus on the owner's brewery, Gæðingur. If you want a mix of both international and local craft beers, Microbar's got you covered.



Skúli Craft Bar Aðalstræti 9

Near Alþingi, on Fógetartorg — sheriff's square — is Skúli, with its entrance tucked quietly away in a small alley. Named after the OG Icelandic entrepreneur, Skúli fógæti, whose centre of operations was on Aðalstræti, it's a fantastic spot for craft beers. Having been one of the vanguards of the Icelandic craft beer culture, Skúli serves both local and international brews. It's certainly a spot you mustn't miss on your craft beer quest.

Previous Winners

2022: Session Craft Bar
2021: Session Craft Bar
2020: BrewDog

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Hlemmur Mathöll

BEST OF REYKJAVÍK 2023

Drinking

Why have just one happy hour when you can have nine?

Best Sports Bar



Reykjavík Sportbar

Hverfisgata 40

As far as sports bars go, the panel all agreed that this bar was the perfect spot. You can watch the game with the lads, have a drink with the lads, and even brush up on your pool skills with the lads. “When I visit a sports bar, I want screens, I want a pool table. I want a sports bar to have a specific atmosphere, and this place delivers,” a panellist said. With their selection of various activities — think pool, foosball, darts and the like — Reykjavík Sportbar caters to sports enthusiasts and non-fans alike.

Runners-up



Just Wingin' It Snorrabraut 56

Starting out in Garðabær, Just Wingin' It has branched out to Snorrabraut. Although technically a restaurant, the place is great for a main dish of beer with a side of wings. And sports? Well, they got that. “There are screens everywhere. At one point I was watching the NBA, NFL and the Premier League all at the same time,” said one panellist. “There was a crazy amount of energy.”



American Bar Austurstræti 8

The bar of the free, and the bar of the brave. Don't let the giant statue of Uncle Sam scare you away — he's just there to recruit you into day drinking. American Bar screens all manner of sports, offers a good selection of draft and bottled beer, and features Reykjavík partygoers' favourite pastime, the Wheel of Fortune. With its overall atmosphere and focus on sports, American Bar deserves a mention.

Previous Winners

2022: American Bar
2021: American Bar
2020: American Bar

Best Bar to Start the Night



12 Tónar

Skólavörðustígur 15

12 Tónar brings the concept of the duality of man to the Reykjavík nightlife scene. One part of you wants to chill out and drink beer with some good friends. The other needs a place to pregame before going all out. “You can sort of choose whether you go partying or take it easier,” said one panellist. “You're sent straight to the middle of the atmosphere and get all riled up,” contrasted another. As mentioned previously, this record store-cum-bar hosts all manner of music events, ramping up its claim for the best bar to start the night.

Runners-up



Bió Paradís Hverfisgata 54

Is it strange to call a cinema a bar? It doesn't need to be, as Bió Paradís was one of the first cinemas in Iceland to start serving alcohol in its concession. You don't even need to see a movie. “Going there for drinks is a very romantic idea,” said a panellist. “It's an extremely vibey place. What's better than popcorn and beer?” asked another. We can't think of anything.



Veður Klapparstígur 33

Veður is a nice middle-ground for all sorts of people to come together at the start of the night. There always seems to be enough space, as Veður also has downstairs seating, accessible by a wheelchair lift. They offer exquisite cocktails and if you're there during happy hour (19:00-21:00), be prepared to down a few before you start your partying, or just enjoy your company, chatting the night away.

Previous Winners

2022: Jungle Cocktail Bar
2021: Kaldi
2020: Veður

Drinking

Pro-tip: Try the drinks!

Best Place for Cocktails



Jungle Cocktail Bar

Austurstræti 9

Although they don't have the smash hit "Welcome to the Jungle" by Guns 'n' Roses on repeat, Jungle makes up for it with their complex, innovative and all-around great-tasting cocktails — the best in town, according to the panel. "There's nothing that competes with Jungle. They're constantly innovating, and they employ award-winning bartenders. What they're doing, no one else is doing in Iceland," said one panellist. Along with the work they put into their drinks, they also put a lot of effort into their names. Menu monikers like "Michael Scotch" and "Chamomile High Club" are sure to please your taste buds as well as your humour.

Runners-up



Kokteílbarinn Klapparstígur 28

When walking into Monkeys on Klapparstígur, you are given two choices. Either continue in to the restaurant, business as usual, or turn into Kokteílbarinn and have a seat in their train — destination: cocktail town. "At Monkeys, there's a side bar. When you walk into it, suddenly you're sitting in a train, drinking tasty cocktails," reported one panellist. Serving award-winning cocktails by award-winning bartenders, Kokteílbarinn offers a serious experience for the initiated and the newbies alike.



Uppi Aðalstræti 12

This grandiose restaurant/bar on Aðalstræti has shown it's a force to be reckoned with. Focusing on wine and lavish dining within its carefully curated interior, Uppi has also demonstrated its quality cocktails. Uppi also hosts all manner of events, from wine presentations to bingo nights. When you're looking for that feeling of luxury, it's a bar you must check out.

Previous Winners

2022: Jungle Cocktail Bar & Veður
2021: Jungle Cocktail Bar
2020: Miami (RIP)

Best Bar for Live Music



KEX

Skúlagata 28

A biscuit factory-cum-hostel, KEX Hostel (colloquially known as just KEX) has been an important presence for the live music scene in Reykjavík. With the ever-changing landscape of Reykjavík venues, KEX has ventured further than other live clubs in their ambition. Regularly hosting smaller shows, KEX also put on the annual Kexport festival which sees both underground and more known acts hitting the stage. In addition to their festival, KEX is diligent in their concert scheduling. It's a place both for emerging acts can start out as well as established artists. Don't forget to order a pizza while you're there.

Runners-up



Gaukurinn Tryggvagata 22

A true legend of a place that has stood the test of time, Gaukurinn has a jam-packed schedule every month. Concerts, stand-ups, drag shows and karaoke nights all have their place at Gaukurinn. It's shown they're open to almost anything and their policy of inclusivity deserves a mention. The bar has long since implemented gender-neutral bathrooms, delivering a "No Bullshit" policy towards bigots, and is known for its willingness to accommodate everyone.



12 Tónar Skólavörðustígur 15

Having claimed their spot as the best bar to start the night, the panel couldn't get away without giving 12 Tónar a nod towards their efforts to support the live music scene. Owners Lárus and Einar have a knack for booking exciting bands and DJs at their store. Although the space isn't built for live music, the collaborations 12 Tónar undertakes with musicians makes it feel like an extraordinary venue.

Previous Winners

2022: Gaukurinn
2021: Gaukurinn
2020: Gaukurinn

Treasures of European Film Culture

Places of a symbolic nature for European cinema, places of historical value that need to be maintained and protected not just now but also for generations to come.



"Kaffibarinn has been "Serving thirsty people since 1993". A cozy café during the day, it turns into a cool party place with an impressive DJ line-up and the crowds spilling out into the courtyard until early morning."



HVAMM

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REYKJAVÍK  GRAPEVINE

BEST OF REYKJAVÍK

 2023

BEST SPA



MSVÍK

PRINGS



THE #1 BEST THING
TO DO IN THE WORLD
-Time Out Magazine



BEST OF REYKJAVÍK 2023

Drinking

What's better than an honest pint with the lads?

Best Happy Hour



Prikid

Bankastræti 12

What have we done to deserve this? Prikid's too-good-to-be-true happy hour serves thirsty and thrifty patrons beer for no more than 700 ISK. "You can't fight with a 700 ISK beer. When does happy hour start? I'm thinking of going now," joked a panellist. (It's 16:00-20:00 every day — sometimes even longer.) Prikid works in mysterious ways. Who are we to speculate how they do it? We are but lowly slaves to the golden gods. Prikid's patio is a gift on nice days, for when you want the cheapest beer in town and a good selfie for the socials.

Runners-up



Veður Klapparstigur 33

When Prikid's happy hour is past and you've drunk more than enough beer, you might crave something slightly richer than fermented yeast. That's when you head over to Veður. Why, might you ask? Because Veður offers a late cocktail happy hour. That's right, from 19:00-21:00, a wide array of cocktails can be purchased for a measly 1800 ISK. "That late happy hour is the GOAT," quipped one panellist.



Loft Hostel Bankastræti 7

On the topic of day drinking on a good day, Loft's patio will make you never want to leave. Offering a picturesque view over the city centre, Loft does its absolute best to keep you inebriated. From 16:00-20:00, the beer runs for just 750 ISK, leaving the rest of your hard-earned money free for tipping the bartender. Wait, that isn't a thing here. Unless you want to, of course.

Previous Winners

- 2022: Bravó
- 2021: Bravó
- 2020: Kaffibrenslan

Best Newcomer



Bingó Drinkery

Skólavörðustígur 8

From the same folks who brought us the best cocktail bar, Jungle, is best newcomer Bingó. The bar scored a full bingo by the panel, as it demonstrates good potential for an established drinking hole. "It has great potential. They make their own drinks as well as host events. It'll be interesting to see how it develops," said a panellist. Located behind Skólavörðustígur, on Bergstaðastræti, its inconspicuous location makes it a good place for when you need to impress the most knowledgeable of pub crawlers.

Runners-up



Uppi Aðalstræti 12

Relatively new in the Reykjavík bar game, Uppi has eluded many a seasoned connoisseur. Offering a brand-new, high-end experience just above Fish Market on Aðalstræti ("uppi" translates to "upstairs"), Uppi is the place to visit when you seriously want to impress someone. It's an intriguing bar, landing itself a spot as the runner-up for best newcomer — one we'll keep our eyes peeled on in the future.



Aperó Vinbar Laugavegur 20b

This French-inspired wine bar has earned its claim to fame by bringing a mixture of new and old-world oenology — that's fancy-speak for the study of wine — to the world's northernmost capital. Located on the second floor overlooking Laugavegur and Klapparstigur, it's nary a stone's throw from the bustle of the rest of Reykjavík nightlife. Aperó prides itself in offering quality wine from smaller producers, adding more diversity to Reykjavík's wine scene.

Previous Winners

- 2022: Húrra
- 2021: Skuggabaldur (RIP)
- 2020: Röntgen

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BANKASTRÆTI 2
101 REYKJAVÍK
@BAKABAKA.IS

Drinking

All hail Bakkus!

Best Outdoor Drinking (Summer)



Bodega

Týsgata 9

When thinking of a good place to drink outside in Iceland, the first thing that comes to mind is the question: "Is that possible?" Move over rooftop bars and sheltered yards that keep the North-Atlantic breeze away, Bodega on Óðinstorg is the place to be. In the summer, Óðinstorg square is decked out with tables and chairs, perfect for a sunny day of al fresco drinking. "If you're going outdoor drinking, Bodega takes it," said a panellist. "The sun lasts very long at Óðinstorg and, if you want, you can move over to the steps. It's a nice spot for an international feel."

Runners-up



Petersen Svítan Ingólfsstræti 2a, 3rd floor, 101 Reykjavík

You can't go drinking outdoors in Reykjavík without mentioning Petersen Svítan. Be prepared that like-minded people will probably have the same idea as you. Fortunately, there's lots of space, as Petersen has not one, but two outdoor patios. The second one, albeit a bit smaller, is located above the main balcony. "You can even order your drinks at the table and have them served," said a panellist.



Loft Hostel Bankastræti 7, 101 Reykjavík

The second runner-up, Loft, has been a wildly popular place for good reason. Its outdoor area is one of the best in town. "They've also installed outdoor heaters," raved one panellist. "Game-changing." The view up there is also worth acknowledging, as you have a good vantage point over downtown. Use that powerful perch to spy on your neighbours, or just enjoy the beautiful cityscape while you drink a cold one.

Previous Winners

Renewed category

Best Date Place



Kaffibrennslan

Laugavegur 21, 101 Reykjavík

The panel decided that Kaffibrennslan is the best place for a date. Being both familiar to locals, and inviting enough for newcomers, Kaffibrennslan makes for a perfect neutral ground for a first date. If you're worried about running into someone you know and want to avoid potential awkwardness, the second floor is a foolproof spot. "You can start with coffee, and if you find things going well, you can move over to beer or wine and take it from there," said a panellist. "It's an accessible date place, especially if you don't want to assume your date is drinking," said another.

Runners-up



Vinstúkan Tíu sopar Laugavegur 27, 101 Reykjavík

Alternatively, as a date night with your significant other, Vinstúkan hits the sweet spot between intimate and fancy. "It's a slightly higher investment, but a great spot if you want to treat yourself and try something new," said one panellist who is clearly knowledgeable on the dating scene. "It's a solid backup if you want to someplace slightly more romantic," said another.



Skor Kolagata 1, 101 Reykjavík

For those who want to be doing something productive, instead of yammering on about the past, present and future, Skor has demonstrated its potential as a date bar. While perfecting your darts high score, you can impress your date with your tireless practice. "If you want an activity date, you can book a table at Skor. You don't have to just sit and chat," said a panellist.

Previous Winners

2022: Port 9
2021: Port 9
2020: Hlemmur Mathöll

Best Bar to End the Night



Kiki Queer Bar

Laugavegur 22

No need to debate this one. Kiki received a unanimous vote on the best bar to end the night. Being the go-to queer club in Reykjavík, everyone is welcome for a drink and a dance. The only ask is that you're respectful of the space. Kiki has multiple levels for when you need to dance the night away or sit down for a soul bearing chat with someone. "There's nothing but happiness at Kiki," a panellist chimes in, reminiscing about last Saturday night. As another panellist added: "It's hands down the best place to end the night. You dance the alcohol away!"

Runners-up



Ölstofan Vegamótastigur

Ah, Ölstofan, the introvert's drinking hole. If you're ever in town late at night and aren't in the mood for a full-on dance extravaganza, Ölstofan is the place to be. It's the perfect place if you want some time away from all the ruckus and need a nice, long chat with a good friend. "It's the only place where you can sit and talk until 5:00," said a panellist.



Paloma Nlaustin

Known for its rave-style night outs, Paloma has seen a resurgence of a new generation of partygoers. A popular place amongst the old-school rave heads and people in general looking for a good time — isn't that what life's really about? — Paloma is sure to show you what you're looking for. There are even strategically placed joists in the rafters to place your drink there while you dance your heart out.

Previous Winners

2022: Kaffibarinn
2021: Kiki Queer Bar
2020: Prikid



ON THE GO

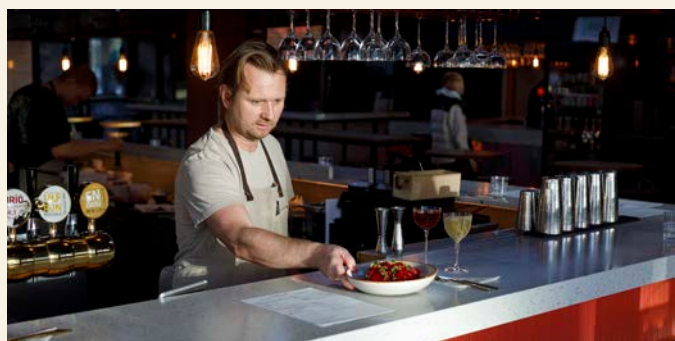
Fast Fuel For Body And Soul

The Grapevine's picks for staying fed while running around town

Words: **The Reykjavik Grapevine**
Photos: **Art Bicnick**

Let's set the scene. It's winter and you have just a couple days in Reykjavik — a non-branded stopover if you will — on your way to somewhere else. Hopefully, for your sake, that "somewhere else" has a more promising forecast than the Icelandic capital in December. You're whipping around town, shopping and museum-hopping and generally having a great time. You need sustenance to fuel the feverish pace of your fly-by — the last thing you want is a grumbling tummy distracting you from making the most of your city break.

We put together this definitive guide to staying fed and fueled while running around Reykjavik.



Feeling the Buzz Of Hlemmur Mathöll Laugavegur 107

Hlemmur holds a special place in the hearts of Reykjavikings and the first food hall in the city. It was such a novelty to walk into a place with so much hustle and bustle, and where everyone in your party could order from a different stall and then sit down together to nosh and drink and

carry on. Another food hall seems to have opened every month since then, but Hlemmur remains the grand dame, with the seriously great cornerstone Skál! keeping the old bus station classy and creative. Whether you're in the mood for fresh fish, bánh mì, Neapolitan pizza or Icelandic lamb, you'll be sated at Hlemmur.

REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE



BEST FOODHALL

“...it is precisely its size and careful curation of cuisines on offer that underlines its cool-beyond-trends vibe.”

— Reykjavik Grapevine

HLEMMUR
FOODHALL





Pierogi Power at Kemuri
Hverfisgata 82

It's cold out and you want something hearty. Nothing fits the bill better than the humble pierogi. Luckily, there's a brand-new spot in town serving up these scrumptious dumplings to the masses – or the handful of people able to fit at any one time within its dichroic glass walls. Lest you fear that loading up on carbs will drag you down, Kemuri also serves up sick beats, so you'll keep the party going while you nosh.



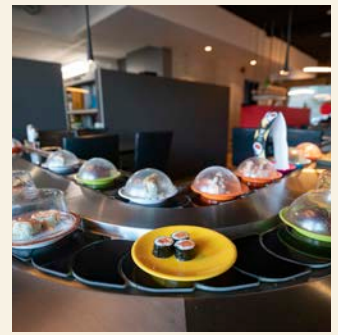
The Humble Hotdog at Bæjarins Beztu
Tryggvagata 1

There is a reason there is always – and we mean always – a line at the hotdog stand. It's consistent. You know what you're going to get and you know it's not going to set you back too much money. It also won't take a long time to chow down if you're just grabbing a quick bite to tide you over between museums.



Legitimately Good Eats at Arabian Taste
Laugavegur 87

"The service is so friendly!" seems to be the common refrain one hears about Arabian Taste. The Syrian family-run restaurant has been serving joy to hungry Reykjavikings through plates of torpedo lookalike kibbeh — pounded bulghur wheat stuffed with spiced minced meat, deep fried to crusty goodness — smokey lamb kebabs, chopped baba ghanoush and fresh tabbouleh. We strongly recommend getting a side of pickles, and some extra spicy sauce alongside your falafel wrap. Late nights don't translate to a grift here; the family is all smiles no matter the time of day.



Catching the Train at Osushi
Tryggvagata 13

One of the reasons this sushi joint is consistently named one of the best family-friendly joints in town is also a good reason to consider it good culture-hopping food: you don't have to wait to be served. Walk in, take a seat (it's polite to acknowledge the staff and be told to take a seat), and take your pick of the plates of sushi making their way around the moving track. Just a little peckish? A couple plates will do ya. Monstrously hungry? Stack those plates as high as the eye can see! And do it all on your time. Huzzah. 🍣



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Activities

Stop doom-scrolling and go hill-strolling!

Get out of the city and into the sunshine! Or stay inside, we're not the boss of you. Whatever you're in the mood for, here are some of our suggested favourite places to catch the latest movies, have a soak or break an ankle hiking up a hill in a level 5 storm. It's really up to you! (But seriously, don't go hiking in a storm.)

Best Pool



Lágafellslaug

Lækjarhlíð 1a (Mosfellsbær)

The panel this year skewed towards the over-30 bracket, so the criteria for selecting the best municipal swimming pools had to take into account the needs of kids and their world-weary handlers. Lágafellslaug might not be the best spot for actual swimming but instead you get a triple-whammy water slide (one that ends in warm water, not the usual polar bear challenge) and a sauna with a glass window, which means you can watch the kids while you try to unclench that sciatica and buy yourself 10 minutes of uninterrupted adult-time.

Runners-up



Árbæjarlaug Fylkisvegur 9

Here's another one that's a fair bit outside of downtown Reykjavík but well worth a visit. Árbæjarlaug combines a lived-in 90s charm with facilities that seem better suited to Icelandic weather than most pools. First of all, you have a sauna in the changing room, which means you could forego pee-walking on frozen cement in your tankini and just hang out there. If you choose to brave the cold, then the first hot tub is strategically located right by the changing room exit. This is very much a family-friendly pool, though, so beware if you are looking for a quiet place to sweat out a hangover.



Sundhöll Reykjavíkur Barónsstígur 45a

Finally, one for the childfree people! The original hot tubs (on the 2nd floor) are a classic of the genre: large, aquamarine, hot, outside and without sharp angles. It's not one of the biggest pools, however, and the sauna is best described as 'good for two people who don't mind touching knees or for three people who don't mind human Tetris in the buff. Bonus points go to Sundhöll for regularly hosting cultural activities, like swim-in movie screenings.

Previous Winners

2022: Sky Lagoon
2021: Vesturbæjarlaug
2020: Vesturbæjarlaug

Best Spa



Hvammsvík

Kjósarhreppur (Mosfellsbær)

As many of the best spas are located outside of Reykjavík, we decided to include some that fell within a one-hour radius of Reykjavík City proper. A quick 45 minute drive delivers you to this picturesque spa in Hvalfjörður. The area served as a thoroughfare between the capital and Akureyri but after the opening of the Hvalfjörður tunnel, you can drive along this scenic route without seeing a soul (except for the occasional seal). The spa itself has an open design, which beautifully integrates into the surroundings. The hot tubs on the beach will even "disappear" to water level during high tide. It's the selection of hot tubs and saunas to fit every taste that makes Hvammsvík a great all-rounder!

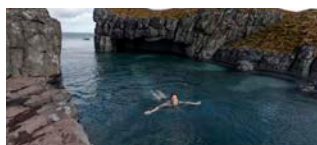
Runners-up



Blue Lagoon

Norðurljósavegur 9 (Grindavík)

What can you say about the Blue Lagoon that hasn't already been said. It's blue, it's a lagoon, it's technically run-off from a geothermal power plant, and it's a pioneer in the modern Icelandic spa culture. If you don't want to rub noses (and other body parts) with the hoi polloi in the main pool, then the recently added ultra-fancy (and pricy) Retreat at Blue Lagoon offers a more exclusive lagoon experience, with tiered wellness rituals and celebrity-sightings.



Sky Lagoon

Vesturvör 44-48 (Kópavogur)

The verdict here was pretty unanimous for a panel of infrequent spa-goers: "I thought I would hate it, but was surprised at how much I loved it". A beautiful spa, nestled in an industrial part of Kópavogur, which offers killer views of the Reykjanes peninsula and any volcanoes that might be erupting there.

Previous Winners

New category

Best Gallery



Gallery Port

Laugavegur 32,

This year we considered how the art scene has sought out new ways of promoting and introducing art to potential buyers. Gone are the days of clear divides between the "sell-outs" and the heroically broke "real artists". As recently as 10 years ago, this wouldn't have been the case, but most of today's artists and gallerists are able to deftly maneuver the balance of creative focus and making a livelihood. There were many worthy contenders but the artist-run downtown gallery Gallery Port, captained by local dynamo Árni Már Erlingsson, has constantly made brave choices that represent the local scene and have helped shape the refreshingly straight-forward approach to communicating the artist's vision and finding that art a new home.

Runners-up



Listval Austurbakki 2

Selling art in Harpan and in Grandi, as well as through their online shop, they have been, as one of our panelists phrased it "Unafraid to try new things and run a gallery more like an art shop." But it's not just their approachability that sets them apart but a keen eye for highlighting up-and-coming local artists.



Pula Gallery Hjartatorg

Pula is a tiny gallery that has brightened the much-maligned Hjartatorg (a hotel courtyard, built on the remains of a local, grassroots art and activity space). 2022 saw them presenting a string of fascinating exhibits, including Auður Lóa, Rákel McMahon, Melanie Ubaldo and Lilja Birgisdóttir. Watch this space.

Previous Winners

2022: Gallery Port
2021: Gallery Port
2020: Kling og Bang

Best Theater



Tjarnarbió

Tjarnargata 12

This one really is a no-brainer. It's smack in the middle of downtown Reykjavik, it has regular performances in English, and it caters to an incredibly diverse range of performers and performances. Despite the recent attempts of the grand dames of theater, Reykjavik City Theater and the National Theater, to branch out into new avenues, Tjarnarbió manages to highlight how staid they are in comparison. Tjarnarbió is an incredibly busy theater with seemingly 1-2 premiers a week, everything from dramas dealing with burning social issues to interactive shows for babies. All while retaining a doggedly independent spirit.

Runner-up



Gaflaraleikhúsið Víkingastræti 2 (Hafnarfjörður)

A truly local theater, tucked away in an alley by the Hafnarfjörður viking village. This 220-seater has, since 2011, managed to put on a series of successful productions, appealing to a wide age range, and providing an avenue for new talent and seasoned pros alike. While it may be more geared towards lighter fare and less concerned with nude thespians flagellating themselves through Beckett, it's a rare and refreshing treat to see a true independent flourishing outside the system.

Previous Winners

New category

Best Cinema



Bíó Paradís

Hverfingisgata 54

What? The street magazine chose the only cinematheque in Reykjavik? Well, that took everyone by surprise. As much as we love many of our other theaters for a no-holds-barred blockbuster experience, there is simply no contender for the top spot. This is a theater that incorporates their customers' needs through a lively dialogue with its community on what to show and what kind of events to stage. They are also the only theater consistently serving the international community in Iceland and a center for many of the film festivals, openings and awards in Iceland.

Runners-up



Laugarásbió Laugarás

In the 80s and 90s, Laugarásbió was a haven for cult action movies and B-horror (think Bloodsport and Critters). Today it's more respectable but it retains that renegade vibe somehow. Sure it could use some freshening up but they've kept up with the latest in sound systems and screening technology and you'll get much the same blast of Hollywood mayhem as you would with the bigger chains.



Kringlubió (Lúxus) Kringlan 4-12

The Lúxus screen in Kringlubió recently introduced their "date seats" which are two-person leather recliners, where you can snuggle up to your partner with a blanket and a bucket of popcorn. It's like 90% of the way towards replicating what it was like bingeing romcoms in Covid except outfitted with a Dolby Atmos sound system, brand-new movies and a big ol' screen.

Previous Winners

2022: Bíó Paradís
2021: Bíó Paradís
2020: Smárabíó

Best Art Museum



Gerðarsafn

Hamraborg 4 (Kópavogur)

Gerðarsafn is often unfairly neglected when discussing the best that the Greater Reykjavik Area has to offer, despite being only a quick 10 minute drive from downtown. The museum has shown incredible ambition in recent years, putting on a staggering number of events and exhibitions which often serves to transport the conversations taking place outside the museum walls into the exhibition space — such as immigration and gender issues.

Runners-up



The Living Art Museum Grandagarður 20

The Living Art Museum (Nýlistasafnið) is a modern art museum located at a nexus of an artist-owned gallery, non-profit artist run space and an artist's studio (oh, and there's an Italian restaurant on the first floor). Similar to Gerðarsafn, Nýló is willing to engage with social issues, while skewing slightly more avant-garde in their displays. The Marshall House building and the surrounding area is also an excellent example of the renewal that has happened in Grandi and the result makes for a charming date spot.



The Reykjavik Art Museum Tryggvagata 17

The list wouldn't be complete without a mention of the Reykjavik Art Museum. While the past year has not been a particular stand-out for the museum, its Hafnarhús location is still one of the main conduits bringing big name international, contemporary artists into the country. Besides, it's the perfect place to dip in on a windy day for a coffee and some merch to give your friend who has everything.

Previous Winners

2022: Reykjavik Art Museum
2021: Reykjavik Art Museum
2020: Kjarvalsstaðir

2023 #1

"BEST BURGER IN REYKJAVIK 2023"



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Laugavegur 105
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GUIDE

The Grapevine Guide To Spending A Stormy Day

They're frequent enough, so may as well have a plan to get through them

Words: **Catharine Fulton** Photos: **Art Bicnick**

Winter in Reykjavik. What a time to be alive. You never know how long the sun will be out before disappearing behind clouds spewing freezing rain, hail, sleet or snow. Will the wind blow you right over? It's anyone's guess.

Luckily, we at the Grapevine have a sure-fire plan to making the most of bad weather days. In addition to seeking refuge in our certified Best™ museums and galleries, here are some other things you can do.

Take a stroll through denial

Pretend the weather isn't bad. It's just any other day of the year for which you have zero expectations of clear skies or warm temperatures. Once you've thoroughly convinced yourself of your existence outside of time and seasons, button up your thermal, wind- and water-proof coat and get out in nature for a stroll. Find a wooded area, like Öskjuhlíð or

the area around Álafoss and wander the paths. The surrounding trees will serve double duty of blocking much of the wind and providing you with all those good endorphins that supposedly come with being out in nature.

Channel your anger

Get all that anger at the weather gods out of your system by doing a wholesome indoor activity like smashing a bunch of stuff with a baseball bat or sledge hammer. Scream curses at the clouds lurking over Reykjavik while destroying household objects at the Útrásin rage room in Grafarvogur. It might even get your blood pumping a little faster and see you breaking the sweat you most definitely won't be doing on account of the weather.

Soak in your regret

Whether you've chosen to be in Reykjavik right now or the state of the economy has you stretched too thin to jet off to somewhere the sun reaches, the local pool is

a fine place to stew in your feelings. Lay out in the kiddie pool at Sundhöllin to feel the cool rain or snow pattering on your face while your body enjoys the warm embrace of geothermal waters. Or force yourself to spend a couple minutes in the cold pot to fool your body into believing the outside air isn't so cold after all.

Distract yourself with culture

When you've tired of your outerwear soaking up the constant rain, there are few better things to do than soaking up some culture at a gallery or museum. Play a rousing game of eye spy at the Erró exhibition at Hafnarhús, or cocoon yourself in the vibrant strands of Shoplifter's Chromo Sapiens installation at Höfuðstöðin. The latter also boasts a café overlooking Elliðaárdalur where you can psych yourself up with warm drinks before bundling up for that aforementioned stroll through denial. 🍷



Buy bus tickets and plan your trips

Klappið is the official app for public buses in the Reykjavik capital area.

➔ Search for "Klappid" in the App Store or Google Play.

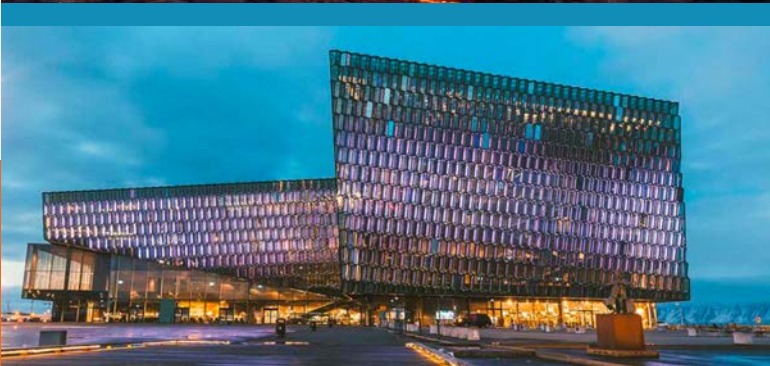


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Activities

Doing stuff is great!

Best Museum



The National Museum

Suðurgata

The National Museum (Þjóðminjasafn Íslands) picks up the first place yet again, but not simply due to its institutional status. What our panel felt made it such a successful museum in its category was how the curation offers the exact right scope to view Icelandic history — it's condensed, but not too condensed. The past year saw them explore new angles from which to view the Icelandic national identity, including an exhibit on inheritance that highlighted the stark poverty of Icelanders prior to the 20th century, as they left their children the trifles of daily life upon their passing (down to a pair of underwear with a hole in it). The National Museum has also entered into successful partnerships with contemporary artists and designers to find new ways to explore Icelandic history in the making.

Runners-up



Einar Jónsson Museum Hallgrímstorg 3

Once an imposing castle structure perched alone atop a barren hill, this building inspired by basalt hexagons is unmissable to anyone passing by Hallgrímskirkja church. A former home to one of Iceland's foremost sculptors, Einar Jónsson, it now houses his works and the charming sculpture garden, which plays home to Einar's unmissable fascination with Norse mythology.



The Settlement Exhibition Reykjavík 871±2

Aðalstræti 16
Most of the time, you won't find anything more interesting in the basement of a hotel than a laundry room or the occasional haunting. But underneath the Hotel Reykjavík Centrum you will find the 871±2 settlement exhibition. This exhibition explores the remains of a viking longhouse from the settlement age, which was excavated right on that spot in 2001 and remains one of the oldest man-made structures found in Iceland (from circa 871, hence the name). What better place to build an archeological museum but right in the spot where you found the damn thing, amirite?

Previous Winners

2022: The National Museum
2021: The National Museum
2020: The National Museum

Best Place to Take the Kids



Fjölskylduland

Dugguvogur 4, 104 Reykjavík

Described as Iceland's "first holistic Indoor Playground and Family Center in Iceland," this one is sort of like a private members club for toddlers. Fjölskylduland is somewhat like a large indoor playground, full of stimulating activities for children 0-6 years old. If the playhouse isn't enough to keep their attention, you can enroll them in gymnastics, or baby yoga. Because you're never too young to align your chakras!

Runner-up



The Salvation Army Suðurlandsbraut 72, 108 Reykjavík

This one took us by surprise, as it's not openly geared towards children, but several panelists mentioned how well this space served the family folk of the 108 area. The distinctive red building was designed by Teiknistofan Tröð and opened in 2021 as the new HQ for the Salvation Army. While the overt Christian themes may be off putting to some, there is no denying the appeal of the affordable and spacious café, generous play area and arts and crafts workshops.

Newcomer



Höfuðstöðin Rafstöðvarvegur

Set in the beautiful Elliðaárdalur public park, this permanent installation by artist Hrafnhildur Arnardóttir (aka Shoplifter) is not, strictly-speaking, geared towards children but our panelists said their kids find so much to love in the vibrant colours and soft textures. Plus, you can chalk that up to a culturally edifying activity, as it's technically an art installation.

Previous Winners

2022: Húsdýragarðurinn
2021: The Maritime Museum
2020: Húsdýragarðurinn

Best Place to Spend a Rainy Day



Spilavinir

Suðurlandsbraut 48, 108 Reykjavík

The panellists were responsive with this one, as most residents of Iceland will have a few of these havens at the ready. Board game café Spilavinir got a couple of mentions and for good reason. Along with the Nexus comic book store, it's one of the best places to get to know the latest in board gaming — everything from 10 kilo box sets of baroque Euro-style games to something you can pick up in five minutes and probably involves some variation on the Werewolf game. Be aware that Spilavinir is more accurately described as being in the Skeifan shopping area, even though its address is Suðurlandsbraut.

Runner-up



FlyOver Iceland Fiskislóð 43, 101 Reykjavík

An interactive special-effects "ride" with a 20 metre spherical screen, accented by water mist and scents to engage all the senses. A bit like the Sky Lagoon, several panellists had judged it beforehand as a bit corny, but it's surprisingly good fun. If it's too crappy outside to see Icelandic nature with your own two eyes, then this is the perfect substitute. As a bonus for Icelanders that spent all their travel savings on that all-inclusive in Tenerife, FlyOver Iceland also runs tours over Canada and the U.S. on the regular. Yeehaw, eh.

Previous Winners

New category

Activities

Doing stuff is great!

Best Day Trip



The Reykjanes Route

Reykjanes Peninsula

This sample platter of Iceland's offerings got kicked up a notch with recent volcanic activity around Fagradalsfjall in 2021, 2022 and July 2023. This quick drive takes you on a route along the sweeping blue lake of Kleifarvatn. It takes you past charming ruins, geothermal hot springs, beautiful rock formations, snowy peaks and, if there's an eruption, the occasional jets of spurting magma. NOTE: An Alert Phase is in effect for the area around the Blue Lagoon, Svartsengi Power Plant and Grindavik. Respect road closures and heed advice and warnings from local authorities.

Runners-up



Sólheimajökull

At only 100 miles (160 km) from Reykjavik, this is one of the two glaciers closest to our bustling metropolis and a favorite among the locals. An imposing sight, Sólheimajökull's popularity is helped by it being one of the most accessible glaciers, as it's both fairly easy to find and to scale the side. That being said, we recommend that you go with experienced guides to avoid being put in cold storage in a glacial crevice until Katla finally erupts through the ice cover, sending you flying back to Reykjavik.



Hellisgerði

Hellisgata 3 (Hafnarfjörður)

This tiny enchanted rock garden 20 minutes from downtown Reykjavik is the perfect place to zen out on a sunny day. With a café, small pond and moss-covered lava rocks, they have taken care not to curtail the savage charm of Hafnarfjörður's lava fields. And it's probably for the best, since the rocks there are said to be home to the hidden people (known as elves to the normos).

Previous Winners

2022: Geldingadalir Volcano (RIP)
2021: Geldingadalir Volcano (RIP)
2020: Reykjanes

Best Summer Hike



Glymur Waterfall

Hvalfjörður

After a scenic drive to the end of Hvalfjörður, you arrive at the foot of Iceland's second-highest waterfall, with its nearly 200 meter drop. Not only is the hiking route easily accessible, but it takes you up a varied landscape, darting through shrubbery, along cliff sides, through a small cave, and you can even cross the river right above the drop on the return (if you are not afraid of meeting Óðinn a little early). Overall, it's a relatively easy hike but with a couple of spots that hoist it up to moderate difficulty.

Runners-up



Reykjadalur Hveragerði

This is the one you've no doubt caught on Instagram. People bathing in a geothermal river in the Icelandic wilderness. Of course, what's missing is all the other people snapping up pictures, but the 2-3 hour round trip and 347 metre elevation does deter some tourists, so the crowding doesn't get too bad outside of peak tourist season. Even if you forgot to pack a bathing suit (or feel some kind of way about changing behind a simple wooden divider), the views and fresh air are still well worth the hike.



Esjan Kjalarnes

This is Reykjavik's mountain, more or less. It's the one we see when we cycle to work, when we ditch school, when we drive to that out-of-town wedding, when we hit rock bottom arguing with a cormorant at the marina. It's always there in the distance like...well...a rock. It's also one of the most popular hiking routes in the country for good reason and barely needs mentioning.

Previous Winners

2022: Volcano lava field
2021: Akrafjall
2020: Esjan

BEST ICE CREAM

6 YEARS IN A ROW



LAUGARÁSVEGUR 1
104, REYKJAVÍK



SNAPS

BISTRO - BAR

PÓRSGATA 1,
101 REYKJAVÍK



Dine
with
locals



BOOK A TABLE
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BEST OF REYKJAVÍK 2023

Activities

Doing stuff is great!

Best Place to Watch the Sunset



Gróttu Lighthouse

Seltjarnarnes

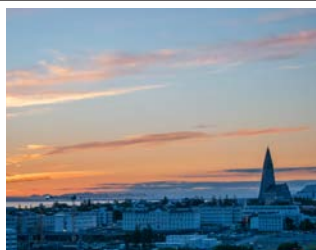
Seeking sunlight in Iceland is a bit like being married to a fisherman — you either get none at all or you get all of it at once. But we have earned it, damnit, so we're going to sit here at Gróttuviti and watch it go down. And it's going to be romantic, Pétur, and then you're heading back out because all you do is shout at the handball and eat kótilettur. When the conditions are just right, there really is no better place to catch Iceland's magical summer skies.

Runner-up



Víðey Ferry Terminal

By the big rock there's a tiny yellow beach, which (until now) has been a well-kept secret spot for sunset watching. In fact the whole Laugarnestangi area and the area around the Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum is one of the best spots you'll find in Reykjavík. And since the view is not blocked in any direction, you can walk along the path and get a full widescreen vista of the summer solstice fireworks for the whole duration.



Perlan

For those looking to see the skyline of Reykjavík as the sun sets, Perlan is the place to be. With a huge wrap-around balcony, as well as fancy wrap-around scopes to zoom in, it's a fantastic locale to see the orange sun shine off the houses of Reykjavík. Here for New Years? Get a spot here to watch some mad fireworks in all their glory.

Previous Winners

Renewed category

Best Place to See Northern Lights



In your backyard

Iceland

Now this may seem like a cop-out, but bear with us. It's probably due to something terrible like the impending climate catastrophe, but the view from the average Reykjavík backyard has been ludicrously good over the past couple of years. Of course it's always better to escape the light pollution and venture beyond the city limits, but given what a crapshoot these northern lights tours can be, it's worth recommending just looking up regularly between 9 and midnight on a winter's eve — your odds aren't bad these days.

Runners-Up



Lake Hvaleyrrarvatn Hafnarfjörður

A few minutes outside the town of Hafnarfjörður, past the horse stables, you can make a sharp right turn that will take you to a popular hiking route for the strange clan of people called "Hafnfirðingar." If the stars align just right, you can catch a green ribbon of northern lights reflected in the frozen lake surrounded by snowy hills and a small pine forest. It's enough to knock the breath out of you in tiny puffs of water vapour.



Gróttu

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. Now, to find the Northern Lights, it's rather complicated. Basically, you stand on this picturesque beach, open your eyes and look up. There you go. Pure happiness.

Previous Winners

Renewed category

Breathtaking Experience

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LAVA
TUNNEL

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- » Every hour on the hour
- » Easy access winter and summer



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GUIDE

Treading Lightly Around Iceland

How to travel without a massive impact

Words: Catharine Fulton Photo: Art Bienick

Is any travel technically eco-friendly? Nearly every aspect of our daily lives has an impact on the surrounding environment. That impact is multiplied when engaging in carbon-intensive transport

through travel hubs that seem to be fuelled by single-use plastics and mass consumerism. In fact, it's estimated that 8% of total global carbon emissions are the result of the travel and tourism industry.

But you're coming to Iceland because you love and respect nature, right? Of course. Don't consider the country's geothermal reputation as a get-out-of-jail free card for making an eco-friendly effort. Here are some tips for seeing the country sustainably.

Don't buy bottled water

It's absolutely disgusting to see grocery and convenience stores shilling "pure Icelandic glacial water" in plastic bottles. You know who buys that? Tourists who don't realise it's

the same calibre of liquid that springs forth from every tap in the country. The hot water may stink like eggy farts, but the cold water is as clean, crisp and pure as it gets. Bring a refillable water bottle to fill up as you travel. Access to drinking water is considered a right, so restaurants and cafes are kind of obliged to give you a free glass of H₂O (or refill your bottle) if you ask.

Buy local souvenirs

Want to bring home a memory of your trip aside from all those photos you snapped? Buy local when you shop for souvenirs.

**BOARD
GAMES**
Beer
COFFEE
*an amazing selection
of delicious teas*



Check out our English friendly events.





ramen
—
momo



The vast majority of the junk – erm, sorry, keep-sakes – in the so-called “puffin shops” (you know, the places emblazoned with imagery of puffins, Vikings, polar bears and trolls) are mass produced in factories far, far away from Iceland, upping their carbon footprint. That includes many of the wool sweaters, gloves, hats and blankets many of those shops stock.

Pay attention to where things are actually made. Check the tags. “Designed in Iceland” is usually code for “not made in Iceland.”

Skip the mass-produced trinkets and opt for things like woollen goods from the Hand-knitting Association, sea salt from the Westfjords, or a piece from a local artist to hang on your wall back home.

Research before booking a tour

Is the day trip you’re booking going to transport you on a massive coach to the same, heavily-visited waterfall/beach/hotspring that everybody else stops at while in Iceland. We get that you want to get a snap for the ‘Gram from behind Sel-

jalandsfoss, but think about the environmental impact of so many people visiting so few spots. It takes a toll on the vegetation, with the constant foot traffic giving the local environment zero time to rebound. That’s especially the case now that Iceland is a year-round destination, inviting countless pairs of boots to trod all over nature at times of year when the ground should be repairing itself after the winter thaw.

Instead, go with small, local tour operators that have knowledge specific to their town or region and are taking travellers to areas less visited by the big bus companies.

Wherever you go, though, stick to the marked paths, tread lightly and leave nothing behind.

Eat local and sustainable

A lot of the food for sale in Iceland has made a long journey over the Atlantic ocean to reach the grocery store shelves and your plate. But not all of it. Fruits and vegetables grown in Iceland are typically marked in grocery stores with a distinct

“Íslensk” sticker with the colours of the Icelandic flag.

You can ask about the origin of the food being served in the restaurants you visit, as well. Some menu items you should know to avoid, even if they are locally sourced. The Atlantic puffin population is in steep decline in Iceland, so ordering puffin for dinner is not a sustainable choice. The same goes for ordering whale. Not only is it not a traditionally Icelandic protein, the positive environmental impact whales have on the world’s oceans is such that it’s ecologically irresponsible to be hunting them for a novelty bite.

You should similarly ask about the origin of the salmon you’re ordering. A growing number of Icelandic restaurants are sourcing their fish only from land-based fish farms, on account of the documented risk to wild fish stocks open-pen sea cage aquaculture poses.

We only have one planet. Be mindful of how you go about exploring it. 🍄



Tryggvagata 16
101 Reykjavík

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www.ramenmomo.is



Proud to be crowned!

We are thrilled to receive Grapevine's 2023 Best of Reykjavík Shopping awards for our discount grocery stores.

First place: Krónan, Skeifan

Second place: Krónan, Hallveigarstígur

Stop by our stores for low priced groceries! You'll find them in various locations in Reykjavík and the capital area, and also on your journey around Iceland.

Krónan offers a great selection of top-quality, fresh products, including a wide selection of vegetarian and vegan options.



26 stores across Reykjavík and Iceland with low prices!

Shopping

Money can be a burden — give it to us

Is there anything better than accumulating a whole bunch of stuff? Yes, and it's accumulating a few amazing items from the best of the best shops that Reykjavik has to offer. Whether you're on the hunt for a new book to lose yourself in, a cosy wool sweater to wrap yourself in, or some jewellery with which to adorn yourself, our shopping picks won't steer you wrong.

Best Goddamn Store



KIOSK

Grandagarður 35, 101 Reykjavík

Owned by a quintet of designers, Kiosk has been putting the work of Icelandic fashion brands front and centre for years — even before establishing their storefront in Grandi. It is the place to go, whether you're shopping for some seriously stylish everyday looks or that perfect outfit for a special event. "What's best is that it's an all female designer run space focusing on small batch, sustainably made pieces," one panellist said. "It's a store where one walks in and feels seen, realising that at long last they found their designer."

Runners-up



Fischersund Fischersund 3, 101 Reykjavík

What can be said about Fischer that the Grapevine hasn't already raved about. It's more of an extrasensory experience than a standard shop. Walking in to the historic house on the laneway from which the shop borrows its name requires your eyes to first adjust to the low light, then your ears will pick up the soundscape curated specifically for the space, your olfactory senses will be brought to life by the herbaceous and earthy scents wafting through the air. Luckily, Fischer is a shop, so you can select perfumes, candles, beauty products, art and even an album to try and recreate that experience in your own home.



Góði hirðirinn Köllunarklettsvegur 1

"Inexpensive, sustainable, humanitarian aid and a treasure hunt all in one," is how one panellist summed up beloved second-hand store Góði hirðirinn. It's a place where you can find anything you could imagine and a whole bunch of other things you didn't even know you needed. It's an adrenaline rush in a shopping trip and it's all fuelled by Sorpa. We're standing by (and saving up) while they relocate to their new and bigger location.

Previous Winners

2022: Yeoman
2021: Kiosk
2020: Fischer

Best Design Store

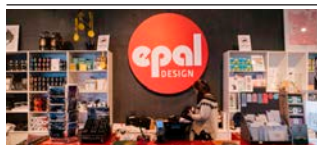


Rammagerðin

Skólavörðustigur 12, Harpa, Kringlan

Rammagerðin truly celebrates Icelandic design. Whether you're in the market for a vibrantly-coloured wool blanket, striking ceramics, one-of-a-kind candle holders or artisanal beauty products infused with plants foraged in Icelandic nature, you'll find it at Rammagerðin. What's more, Rammagerðin doesn't simply stock Icelandic design, they support and work with designers on collaborative products and special releases.

Runners-up



Epal

Laugavegur 7, Skeifan 6, Kringlan
If you're looking to capture that Scandi aesthetic in your home, look no further than Epal. This design mecca, with locations on Laugavegur and in Skeifan and Kringlan, has all the timeless classics from Nordic masters and the hottest pieces from Icelandic designers. "The range of what Epal carries is really what sets it apart," one panellist said. "I can buy a kid's water bottle (a very nice one) and a 200.000 kr. dining chair in the same trip." As for those prices, another panellist recommends keeping an eye out for Epal's very worthwhile sales events.



Mikado Kolagata, Hafnartorg

Bear with us here, because Mikado isn't currently a brick and mortar shop for you to visit. They're between digs, but their webshop is wide open for local and international shoppers to benefit from Mikado's impeccable curation. Whereas the other shops on the list are Scandi, Mikado is Japandi, stocking wares of Japanese and Scandinavian aesthetics that highlight just how beautifully the two sensibilities complement each other. Plus, they have some truly whimsical items for sale. Do we need a knife shaped like a whale? No. Are we getting one? Yes.

Previous Winners

2022: Rammagerðin
2021: Rammagerðin
2020: Akkurat (RIP)

Best Fashion Boutique



KIOSK

Grandagarður 35, 101 Reykjavík

Our Best Goddamn Store also takes the cake as Best Fashion Boutique. We'd wear nothing but the designs they stock if we had it our way, but on our Grapevine salary we'll settle for working a few pieces into our wardrobe here and there. The Icelandic designs at KIOSK are all so unique and special, you'll be making a statement in them no matter the occasion. Plus, it's not unlikely that the person in the store looking after you is the same person who designed the silk pant set you've been ogling for months and are finally buying.

Runners-up



Andrá

Laugavegur 16
Andrá was a breath of fresh air when it landed on Laugavegur a few years ago. "All the pieces are so beautifully curated, it feels like having a personal shopper," said one panellist. Whether you're shopping for an every day (though elevated) t-shirt and jeans look or something to make a splash on a night out, you'll find that special something at Andrá.

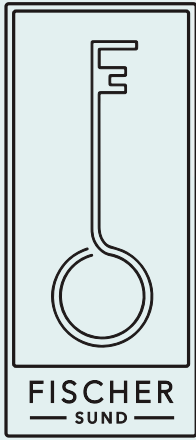


Yeoman Laugavegur 7

The patron saint of Icelandic fashion, Hildur Yeoman is known for her dreamy patterns, lush textures, spacey body-cons, and beautiful tailoring. Walking into her Laugavegur storefront feels like walking into an art gallery, with every suspended dress the masterpiece of a great artist. Buying a Yeoman creation is an investment in your closet's longevity — it just never goes out of style.

Previous Winners

2022: Andrá
2021: Yeoman
2020: Kvartýra No49 (RIP)



BEST OF REYKJAVÍK 2023

Shopping

Stop spending money on crypto and buy some real shit

Best Men's Clothing



Kormákur & Skjöldur

Laugavegur 59

This men's clothing mecca is the place for the discerning gentleman to outfit himself. The tailor and haberdashery in the basement below Bonus has a wide selection of button downs, blazers, suits, slacks, accessories and more — basically everything you need to be the best dressed in any room. It's all impeccably high-quality, so you'll have these pieces in your closet and in rotation for years to come.

Runners-up



ORG

Laugavegur 46

Once upon a time, Org was downtown. Then it was in the Kringlan shopping mall. But now, in addition to Kringlan, it's back downtown in a beautiful space and serving looks for men and women. "It's the go to for my husband's clothing needs," said one panellist. "When in doubt for a gift for him I always end up there, be it for pants, men's under garments, cozy socks, fragrances. All sustainably made, and a wonderful staff to boot."



Húrra Reykjavík Hverfisgata 18a

If Reykjavík street-style is catching your eye, it's very likely pieces picked up at Húrra Reykjavík. It has all the trendy and minimalist casual and athliesure wear you need to fit right in with the cool kids, plus Crocs. Because Crocs are a thing.

Previous Winners

2022: N/A
2021: Húrra Reykjavík
2020: Geysir (RIP)

Best Second Hand Store

Joint Winners



Verzlanahöllin

Laugavegur 26, 101 Reykjavík

Verzlanahöllin is such a treat for second-hand shoppers, browsing addicts and Marie Kondo late adopters. If you're looking to sell some of your lightly-loved clothes and small items, the premise is simple: book a booth for the timespan of your choosing, set up said booth and then walk away while your items find new bodies to adorn or homes to occupy. The premise is even simpler if you're a shopper — just go and find something amazing. It's the eco-friendly way to shop.

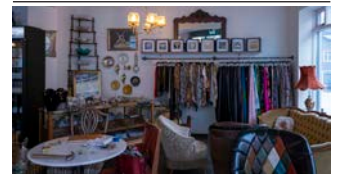


Hringekjan

Pórunnartún 2, 105 Reykjavík

Just like Verzlanahöllin, Hringekjan functions on a model of individuals booking space in the storefront (for up to four weeks at a time), and then standing back and waiting for the money to flow in. What the panel loves about Hringekjan specifically is the likeliness of finding something truly chic. Plus, their catalogue of merch online makes it easy to browse before making the trip to Pórunnartún.

Runner-up



Lóla Flórens Garðastræti 6, 101 Reykjavík

Why make second-hand shopping a hurried, singular affair, when you can combine it with a luxe lounge moment? You don't have to choose between the two at Lóla Flórens. "After you've sipped a glass of pink champagne you can wander downstairs and find some amazingly curated nuggets," one panellist shares. "Best of all though is the selection of vintage children's clothing."

Previous Winners

2022: Hringekjan
2021: Wasteland
2020: Extraloppán



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Our store is located at
FISCHERSUND 3, 101 REYKJAVÍK

Shopping

Fill that void in your soul and that space on your shelves

Best Record Store



Lucky Records

Rauðarárstígur 10

You don't have to have particularly good fortune to make a great find at Lucky Records. This Reykjavik staple is huge and packed with records new and old. Whether you're looking for the latest release from an Icelandic musician or international superstar, the soundtrack to Jesus Christ Superstar, or the release of some one hit wonders who you firmly believe should have been superstars, you'll find it among the crates at Lucky. Can't find what you're looking for or not entirely sure what you're looking for? Just ask the incredibly knowledgeable staff on hand. They'll steer you right.

Runners-up



Space Ódyssey Skólavörðustígur 22b

We're way past 2001, but we can still experience a Space Ódyssey on Skólavörðustígur. Run by the creative minds behind the long-running Extreme Chill festival, Space Ódyssey is where you can expect to find some rare gems from the electronic and ambient scene. You might even catch a live performance, we they have a running lineup of soundsmiths appearing in house.



Smekkleysa Hverfisgata 32

Icelandophiles and audiophiles will both find their happy place at the Smekkleysa record store on Hjartatorg. The shop iteration of the record label and art collective founded by Icelandic icons, including Einar Örn Benediktsson, Sigtryggur Baldursson and Björk Guðmundsdóttir. It's a great place to browse a carefully-curated collection of Icelandic and international indie albums

Previous Winners

- 2022: Lucky Records
- 2021: Lucky Records
- 2020: Lucky Records

Best Bookstore

Joint Winners



Bóksala Stúdentanna

Sæmundargata 4

After years of little movement in the bookstore category, we were surprised by the vim with which the panel backed this shop at the University of Iceland. "Bóksala Stúdentanna is of course the best one," one panellist exclaimed. "It has good coffee and the best variety. Öttarr Proppé from the band HAM is in charge of the buying and he's pretty on point." Even if your student days are behind you, Bóksala Stúdentanna is the best place to peruse Icelandic and international titles and buy a few more to add to that "to read" stack.



Eymundsson Austurstræti

Austurstræti 18

There's something special about visiting the Austurstræti location of Eymundsson. Tourists will find a wide selection of photo books and illustrated guides to the sagas, while readers of all ages and interests will find the latest Icelandic and international releases, and a wall of magazines for taking home and flipping through. One panellist drew particular attention to Eymundsson's third floor cafe. "Just get there before 16:00 on a summer day if you want to catch the sun on the terrace."



Hús máls og menningar

Laugavegur 18

The smell of this place will really win you over. That classic aroma of used bookstore that just feels cosy and inviting. Elevating Mál of Menning from run of the mill used bookstore to "best" status is its efforts to position itself at an intersection of bookstore and bar, with regular live readings and musical performances to boot. So order a Pastis, pick a book of the shelf and settle in for a magical time.

Multi-award winning **Tattoo & Piercing Shop**

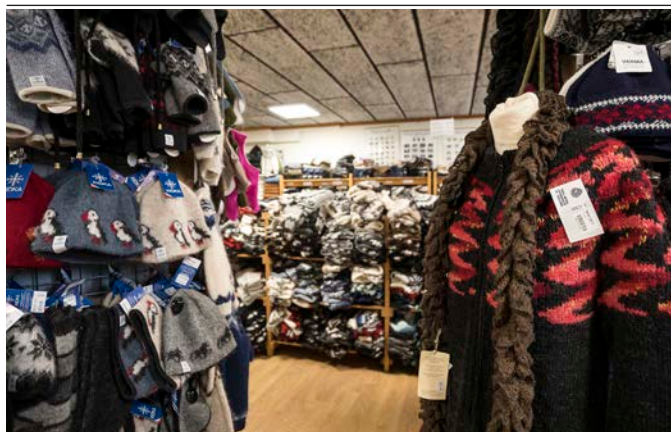


BEST OF REYKJAVÍK 2023

Shopping

Inflation can't get you if you've spent all your dough

Best Place To Buy A Wool Sweater



Handprjónasamband Íslands

Skólavörðustígur 19

Let's be honest, the only real competition in this category is between the runners up. There's simply no better place in Reykjavík to buy a wool sweater than Handprjónasamband Íslands, or the Handknitting Association. Walking into their store on Skólavörðustígur is like walking into a warm hug. The shelves are piled high with plush Icelandic lopapeysa in a seemingly infinite number of colour and pattern combinations, and the walls are adorned with displays of woollen mittens and hats to keep you cosy and warm. Plus, as the association's name implies, it's all knitted by hand right here in Iceland.

Runners-up



KIOSK Grandagarður 35

Among the Icelandic designers that KIOSK stocks, you just know at least one of them works in wool — it is Iceland, after all. Our go-to choices for a wool sweater that is warm, cosy and stylistically on point has to be BAHNS. By now, the coded raised pattern on BAHNS' signature knitwear — interpretations of the symbols flashed by bouys for north, east, west and south — are as iconic among Reykjavík's fashionable residents as the yoke of a lopapeysa.



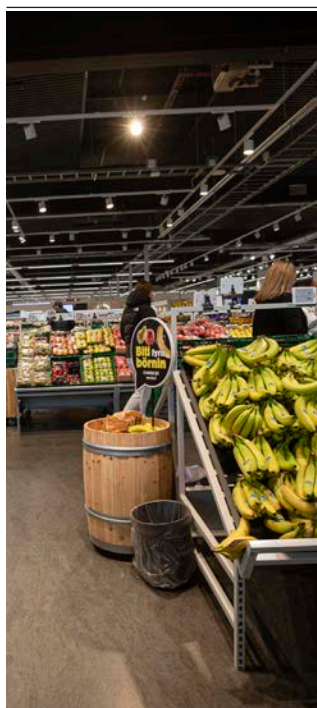
Farmer's Market Laugavegi 37 and Hólmaslóð 2

If you want the look of a lopapeysa, but with a more modern cut and less bulk, then the wool sweaters at Farmer's Market will tick all your boxes. They Farmers & Friends storefronts stock sweaters with updated interpretations of classic lopapeysa yokes, as well as chunky cable knits to keep you in style all winter (and autumn and spring ... and sometimes summer) long.

Previous Winners

2022: Handprjónasambandið
2021: Handprjónasambandið
2020: Handprjónasambandið

Best Grocery Store



Krónan

Skeifan 19, Fiskislóð 15-21 and Hallveigarstígur 1

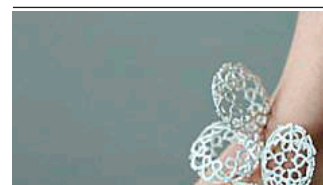
So here's the thing. The panel could not decide between three locations of the same store to crown "Best", so we're just going to go ahead and give it to the Skeifan, Grandi and downtown outposts of beloved grocery chain Krónan. That yellow winking coin makes us happy. What also makes us happy is Krónan's app that allows us to scan and bag our items as we walk around the store, pay right on our phone and then book it without waiting in line or wrestling with the self check-out machines.

Grandi's the biggest of the three and therefore has its wealth of options tipping the scales in its favour. The downtown location is, well, downtown, so it's perfect for popping in on the walk home for those last bits and pieces to make your dinner sing. As for the perks of the Skeifan location, one panellist explained: "Do your usual shopping, grab lunch at Tokyo Sushi in the back of the store and then realise that you're in Skeifan, so you can go get all the other shit done you've been meaning to do."

Previous Winners

2022: Krónan Hallveigarstígur
2021: Krónan Hallveigarstígur
2020: Krónan Grandi

Best Jewellery Store

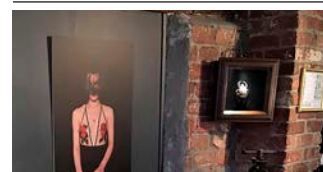


Aurum

Bankastræti 4

Aurum has consistently been crafting unique and inventive jewellery collections for decades and we are fans. Inspired by Icelandic nature, Aurum's creations have such range that you can find pieces to suit the exact mood you're trying to evoke. "The blend of subtle goth and raw nature is all one needs to get that boost of edginess for a night out," one panellist said. The breadth of each collection manages to capture the very essence of the animal or natural setting after which it's named. The cherry on top is that Aurum uses only recycled metals and ethical lab-grown diamonds, and their truly stunning packaging is crafted from sustainable mulberry paper.

Runners-up



Orrifinn Skólavörðustígur 43

Orrifinn has earned a loyal following for its raw and delicate jewellery. From their classic anchor design to their braided metal creations, Orrifinn sets its wearer apart as someone with on point accessories that transcend occasion. We also love that all Orrifinn jewellery is marketed as unisex, so everyone can mix and match and swap and look fabulous



Hildur Hafstein Klapparstígur 40

Hildur's Klapparstígur storefront is a vibe we want to envelop ourselves in. Luckily it's very much the same bohemian and eclectic feeling of her jewellery, so we can adorn ourselves with her earrings, necklaces and bracelets instead. Working with natural semi-precious stones and bronze, silver and gold, Hildur makes pieces that are eye-catching and fun. They're also great for layering to create a unique statement look.

Previous Winners

2022: Orrifinn
2021: Orrifinn
2020: Orrifinn

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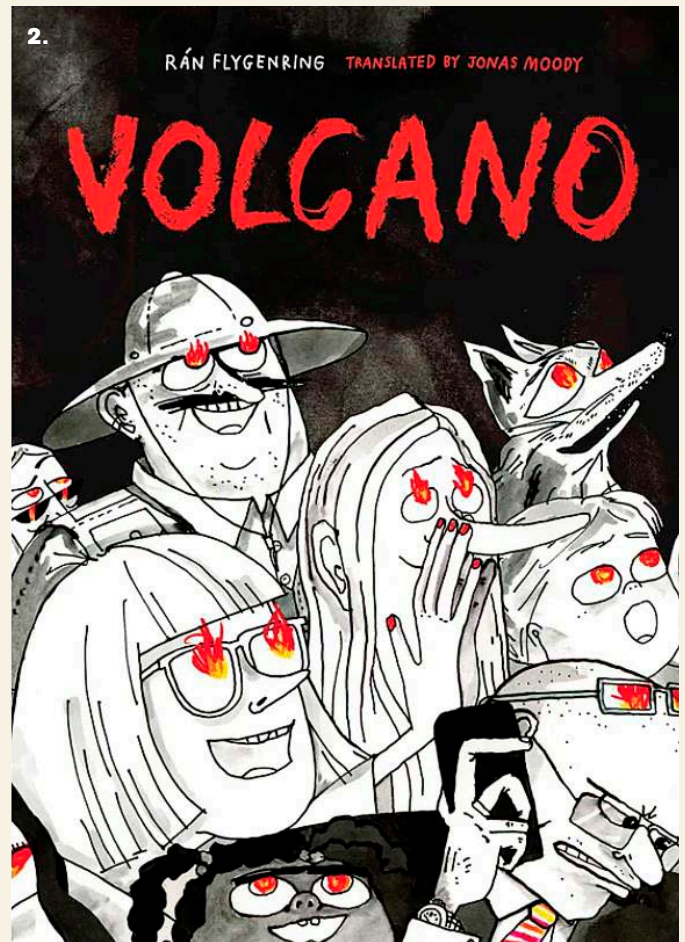
The Reykjavík Grapevine's Best Of Shopping Bag

Here's your Christmas shopping sorted ... especially if you're shopping for me

Words: **Catharine Fulton** Photos: **The Internet**

Can you believe the holidays are just around the corner? I'm usually pretty good at getting my shopping done and dusted well in advance, but this year I'm admittedly way behind. Luckily, there's always inspiration to be found on the pages of this very magazine.

We've scoured the shelves of our certified Best™ places to shop in Reykjavík and put together this shopping bag that's a little for us, a little for loved ones and a lot for your own shopping inspo. Spend wisely, friends.



1. Rammagerðin's 2023 Jólaköturinn — Designed by Björn Steinar Blumenstein at Studio Björn Steinar — **6.990 ISK** — Available from Rammagerðin, Skólavörðustigur 12

2. "Volcano" by Rán Flygenring, translated by Jonas Moody — **4.296 ISK** — Available from Bóksala Studenta, Sæmundargata 4

3. Belmio Coffee Advent Calendar — **1.890 ISK** — Available from Krónan.is

4. Colorful Standard Merino Wool Toque — **5.600 ISK** — Available from ORG, Laugavegur 46

5. Andvari Scarf — **14.900 ISK** — Available from Andrá, Laugavegur 16



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