



The REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE

Issue 7 × 2013

June 7 - 20

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THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO LIFE, TRAVEL & ENTERTAINMENT IN ICELAND



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bartender turned
Singapore Slinger



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LET'S GET OUR DRINK ON! THE GRAPEVINE IS 10 YEARS OLD



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cool events

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TRACK PLAYLIST OF THE ISSUE



THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL!!!

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HOLY FUCKING SHIT YOU GUYS! WE ARE TEN! TEN FUCKING YEARS OLD! WOOOOOOO! YEAH! OMG! WE LOVE YOU! WE LOVE MUSIC! LET'S FUCKING PARTAAAAAYYYYYY!!! YOU GO TO INTERNET AND DOWNLOAD NOW.

(For a more coherent explanation, see page 36.)

FUN TRIVIA QUESTION

Taken from the educational trivia game *Instant Iceland*

Q: Brennivín is the national Icelandic liquor, a potent schnapps whose delicious taste is not easily forgotten. But What ingredient gives Brennivín its unique flavor?

- A** Caraway seeds
- B** Monosodium Glutamate
- C** Blueberries

Turn to page 40 for the answer!



FROM THE EDITORS

Issue 1 – 2003

“...If it is some serious drinking you’re after, however, we can point you in the right direction in the pubs and clubs section. Be warned that alcohol here is very expensive, especially at the restaurants. This in no way deters the local population from consuming it in large quantities, it merely means that people drink a lot at home before heading out. So if you don’t want to feel awkward by showing up sober at a bar, it is advisable to take the precaution of going to the local liquor store. These are few and far between, but the one in the centre is located at Austurstræti 10a. They are open on weekdays to 18.00, on Fridays to 19.00, on Saturdays to 14.00, and closed on Sundays.

For the aforementioned reasons, people usually go out late, so most places usually don’t pick up until after midnight on weekends. Bars are open until 01.00 on weekdays, and until whenever on weekends. The locals might seem a bit cold to begin with, but I’m

sure you’ll find them a lot more open and amicable after a few drinks. Now, if it’s a warm Icelandic day of your own to hold on the endless summer nights, we can’t help you there, except to say our classified section might be a place to start.

We would like to point out, though, that Icelandic women are tiring somewhat of foreign men lured here because of a certain reputation being suggested in some quarters.

This should be all you need to know about surviving in Reykjavík, if not, don’t hesitate to call (see letters, p.) So, skál í botn (bot-toms up), enjoy your stay and sorry about the weather.”

This is from the very first editorial in Issue 1, 2003. Basically, nothing has changed. Turn to our Bar Guide on page 20 for more drinking and nightlife tips...

Editorial | Anna Andersen

SOME THINGS JUST DON'T CHANGE

Anna’s 26th Editorial



The day this paper hits the streets, it will be ten years since the first one did on Friday, June the 13th, 2003. Apparently the young twenty-something-year-old guys, who

decided fresh out of high school to go into the publishing business, weren’t afraid of a little superstition.

This past weekend, as I read through old Grapevine issues, it was interesting to see that some things about the magazine and its beat haven’t changed much since then.

Of course, it has grown up in many ways, but in issue after issue from those formative years there seems to be some discussion

of, or anecdote about, wasted Icelanders on weekend nights and the significant role this played in finding somebody to shack up with—the Icelandic substitute to dating. There was even a resident Grapevine columnist called “Beerman” who wrote about his trials and tribulations of picking up girls at the bars.

The more I read, the more appropriate it seemed that we were printing our annual Bar Guide (see page 20) in this issue celebrating our magazine’s tenth anniversary. Given all the drinking and partying that went on, it’s remarkable that we got here. But not only did we get here, we’ve also had a pretty good ride.

This issue’s cover—which features 10 significant people who have graced our

covers over the last ten years—is a testament to that ‘work hard, play hard’ ethic (turn to page 6 to read more) instilled in us all those years ago.

To celebrate this feat, we cordially invite you to our 10-year birthday party on June 13 (details inside). When the free beer runs out it’ll be sold at 500 ISK, which is what it cost in 2003 when the gang would emerge from their basement on Blómvallagata and proceed to drink themselves into a stupor after sending yet another issue to the printers.

In a couple of hours we’ll be doing the same. Except we’ll be stumbling down from the third floor of Hafnarstræti 15, which is where we now spend our sleepless nights. Like our editorial staff and the staff before them.



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



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www.baldurkristjans.is

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Special thanks:
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reminds us of good old Iceland



GEYSIR

THE ICELANDIC HAMBURGER FACTORY



BE SQUARE AND BE THERE

Gullfoss and Geysir are surely a must-see in Iceland, but neither is something you eat. That's why we have 15 brilliant and creative hamburgers at the Hamburger Factory.

Located on the groundfloor of the highest tower of Reykjavík, and on the groundfloor of the historic Hotel Kea in Akureyri, the Hamburger Factory has been packed with burger-craving customers since it's opening in april 2010. Among the regulars is Iceland's best known fisherman, Eric Clapton.

Attention: Our hamburger buns are not round. They are square. Does it taste better? You tell us.

THE HAMBURGER FACTORY HAS TWO RESTAURANTS IN ICELAND.



The Hamburger Factory Reykjavík Höfðatorg Tower. Groundfloor.



The Hamburger Factory Akureyri Kea Hotel. Groundfloor.

HOW TO GET THERE

SOME TIPS ON HOW TO GET TO US WHILE LOOKING COOL AND LOCAL

This is what you say to the taxi driver or when asking locals for directions:

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(„The Icelandic Hamburger Factory, please“)

When you arrive you tell the waiter:

“Sælar! Hvað er að fréttá”
(Hello! What's up)

“Ég er þokkalega svangur, get ég fengið hamborgara”
(I'm quite hungry, can I get a hamburger)

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2010

Sour grapes & stuff

STILL NOT FOOLING US!

Waiting for your urgent response.

With due respect to your person and much sincerity of purpose I make this contact with you as I believe that you can be of great assistance to me. My name is Mr.Mike Ouedrago, from Ouagadougou Republic of BURKINA FASO, West Africa.

Presently i work in the Bank as telex manager. I have been searching for your contact since you left our country some years ago .I do not know whether this is your correct email address or not because I only used your name initials to search for your contact in the internet .In case you are not the person I am supposed to contact , please see this as a confidential message and do not reveal it to another person but if you are not the intended receiver, do let me know whether you can be of assistance regarding my proposal below because it is top secret.

I am about to retire from active Bank service to start a new life but I am sceptical to reveal this particular secret to a stranger. You must assure me that everything will be handled confidentially because we are not going to suffer again in life.

It has been 10 years now that most of the greedy African Politicians used our bank to launder money overseas through the help of their Political advisers. Most of the funds which they transferred out of the shores of Africa was gold and oil money that was supposed to have been used to develop the continent

Their Political advisers always inflated the amounts before transfer to foreign accounts so I also used the opportunity to divert part of the funds hence I am aware that there is no official trace of how much was transferred as all the accounts used for such transfers were being closed after transfer.

I acted as the Bank Officer to most of the politicians and when I discovered that they were using me to succeed in their greedy act, I also cleaned some of their banking records from the Bank files and no one cared to ask me because the money was too much for them to control. They laundered over \$300,000,000,00(Three hundred million) united states Dollars during the process .As I am sending this message to you, I was able to divert more than Ten million five hundred thousand Dollars (\$10.5m) to an escrow account be-

longing to no one in the bank. The bank is anxious now to know who is the beneficiary to the funds because they have made a lot of profits with the funds.

It is more than Eight years now and most of the politicians are no longer using our bank to transfer funds overseas. The Ten Million five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$10.5m) has been laying waste but I don't want to retire from the bank without transferring the funds to a foreign account to enable me share the proceeds with the receiver. The money will be shared 60% for me and 40% for you. There is no one coming to ask you about the funds because I secured everything. I only want you to assist me by providing a bank account where the funds can be transferred. You are not to face any difficulties or legal implications as I am going to handle the transfer personally. If you are capable of receiving the funds, do let me know immediately to enable me give you a detailed information on what to do.

For me, I have not stolen the money from anyone because the other people that took the whole money did not face any problems. This is my chance also to grab my own but you must keep the details of the funds secret to avoid leakages as no one in the bank knows about the funds.

Please supply me the following:
Your current contact address and Telephone Numbers..

I shall intimate you on what to do when I get your confirmation and acceptance.

If you are capable of being my trusted associate, do declare your consent to me.

Waiting for your urgent response.
TO my email address

Yours Faithfully,
Mr.Mike Ouedrago
--

Grapevine Issue 4, July 25, 2003:

Dear Friend,

I, on behalf of my colleagues from different Federal Government of Nigeria owned parastatals decided to solicit your assistance as regards transfer of US\$41,500,000.00 into your bank account.

These funds emanated from unclaimed contractual proceeds of foreign contracting firms who could not meet their financial obligations to their

creditors.

We, as holders of sensitive positions in our various parastatals, were mandated by the Federal Government to scrutinise all payments made to certain foreign contractors and we discovered that some of the contractors have not been paid their contractual entitlement which collectively left the sum of US\$46,500,000.00 lying in a suspended Account.

However, from our investigations, we discovered that the foreign beneficiary companies have since been liquidated, and to all intents and purposes no longer exist in Nigeria, thus providing us with this opportunity, provided that we have a capable partner, to execute a transaction of this nature.

We agreed that the said amount would be transferred into an overseas Bank Account to be provided by a reliable foreign associate. This is because as serving Government workers the Civil Service Code does not allow us to operate foreign Account. We require a partner that is capable of rendering assistance and cooperation in executing this matter. We therefore offer the amount of 20% of the entire sum in return for services/assistance rendered in successfully carrying out this project. We trust that you appreciate the sensitive nature of this matter and the need for initial caution on our part.

Please treat with the strictest confidentiality and expediency

Yours faithfully,
Dr.Sam Obi

Dear sirs,

Let us tell you both again what we told you on this matter TEN YEARS AGO:

We refer all international money launderers/drug traffickers/arms smugglers to our advertising department. We accept cash, opiates and/or weapons grade plutonium as payment.

Love,
The Reykjavík Grapevine

PS. Thanks for your loyal readership, Dr.Sam Obi and Mr.Mike Ouedrago, if those are your real names!!!

MOST AWESOME LETTER FREE ICELANDIC GOURMET FEAST!

There's prize for all your **MOST AWESOME LETTERS**. And it's a scorcher! No, really! It's a goddamn scorcher is what it is! Whoever sends us **THE MOST AWESOME LETTER** this issue will receive **A FRIGGIN GOURMET FEAST FOR TWO** at **TAPAS BARINN**.Did you hear that? Write in and complain about something (in an admirable way), win a gourmet feast at one of Reykjavík's Pnest? **THIS IS THE DEAL OF THE CENTURY IS WHAT IT IS!** What's in a 'lobster feast'? Well, one has to assume that it has lobster-a-plenty. Is there more? Probably, but still... Gourmet feast? Wow! **DON'T PANIC** if your letter wasn't picked **AWESOME LETTER**. There's always next month!
Now, if you're in the market for free goodies next month, write us some sort of letter. Give us your worst: letters@grapevine.is



Le Château des Dix Gouttes

The Ten Drops
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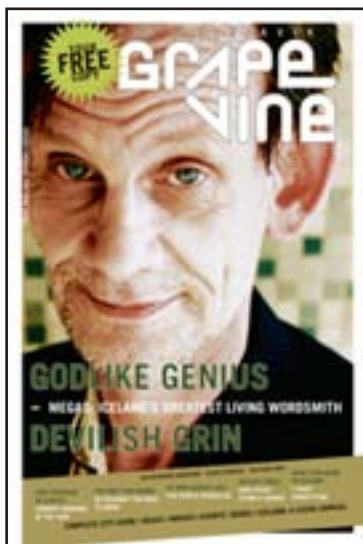
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WELL**

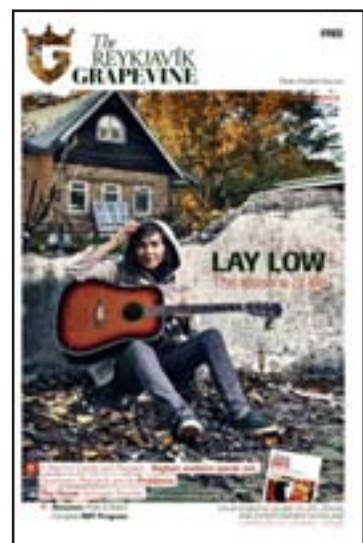
THE GRAPEVINE TURNS 10!

On the cover this issue are 10 people who have appeared on the cover of a past Grapevine issue in each of the last 10 years. They are significant for one reason or the other, and we are pretty proud to have them all on the cover once more, this time together, celebrating our tenth birthday! Read on to learn more about the cover stars and why they are there...



GV 4, 2003

This was the fourth issue of Grapevine, our first cover interview and in some ways the first issue that we were truly happy with. Despite his influence on his sometime collaborator Björk and pretty much everyone else in Icelandic music, Megas is largely unknown abroad, which perhaps goes with being a brilliant lyricist in one of the world's smallest languages. During the interview, we talked about pretty much everything except his career, and it was very interesting to get the Megas world view. And nice to leave your hero holding an even higher opinion of him.
 ☞ – Valur Gunnarsson



GV 15, 2008

We did a great interview with Lay Low for this issue and we wanted to put her on the cover. She was just about to release her second album, and we not only liked the album, but also loved the fact that a female country and blues artist from Iceland was making waves. This is the first of many covers Baldur Kristján would do for The Grapevine. We really liked the way he managed to capture the tender, delicate person that appeared in the interview.
 ☞ – Sveinn Birkir Björnsson



GV 2, 2004

We had no idea what we were getting into when we asked Sheba to model for our cover. A recent immigrant working as a barista at Segafredo at the time, she made her way into Icelandic cultural history after our cover caused a furore and was subsequently shown in art exhibitions, taught at the university and spoofed in cartoons and comic shows. Most people applauded the vision she represented of a more heterogeneous future for Iceland on its 60th anniversary, but there was a dark side. Both she and I would soon receive threats by ultra-nationalists, which is probably more than she signed up for. Her bravery in some ways did change the country.
 ☞ – Valur Gunnarsson



GV 3, 2009

As protests still raged at Austurvöllur, we accompanied composer Ólafur Arnalds and the bands Hjaltaín and Retro Stefson to Oslo's annual By:larm music festival. All three acts had much going for them at the time, critically acclaimed albums and positive post-Airwaves write-ups abound. A lot had been brewing in Reykjavík's much-hyped music scene; it felt like it had reached a bursting point, that it was time for someone to break out. Wanting to capture that fleeting moment, we tagged along for the showcase ride and documented the artists strutting their stuff for the Norwegians.

Meanwhile, Icelanders were busy being indignant about the lavish lifestyles their financial elites had enjoyed (a turn from aspiring to/celebrating them). SHOCK! reports on lavish gold-eating, coke snorting private jet parties filled the media. This amused us, so we played with that theme on the cover, setting the musicians up as hubristic banksters partying it up in the most 2007 setting we could imagine. Designer Jói Kjartans then brought the idea of setting it up tabloid style, modelling the cover on an issue of HELLO!
 ☞ – Haukur SM



GV 14, 2005

Mammút were on the cover of our first Airwaves tie-in. They were so young when we took this photo. I thought it was so expressive—and it matched the optimism that we had when we approached this festival. When I took over the year I wanted to get away from the superficial, hype-and-stereotype writing that the Icelandic and foreign media were doing on the festival. I felt if we could just send reporters out to write honestly about every band, it'd be a huge departure from anything we'd seen before in festival coverage. What still stuns me about the whole Airwaves project is that we're the only magazine I've come across to make any effort to do something like this: to actually report on music instead of message press releases.
 ☞ – Bart Cameron



GV 15, 2010

When you see a political figure (such as Hannef Hólmsteinn Gissurarson) on our cover, this is not in any way an endorsement—rather it is our understanding that they at that time have things to say that are relevant to readers' interests. This was certainly the case with our Steingrímur J. Sigfússon cover, the only time an active minister has graced our front page.

As minister of finance, which was in 2010 one of the most important posts one could hold in Iceland (due to some events of a couple of years earlier, we forget exactly what). After hearing some disturbing stories regarding “the true state” of Iceland's finances, and also because we had the hardest time understanding what exactly was happening, we reached out to the notoriously busy Steingrímur. To our surprise, he picked up and granted us an interview and cover shoot. In the story, he talks a lot about “cleaning up the mess”—this provided a theme for our cover, which was shot by Baldur Kristján.
 ☞ – Haukur SM



GV 8, 2006

This was Singapore Sling in Stoke on Trent, on tour with the Brian Jonestown Massacre. They gave me all access. We were a little short-staffed, and so I had worked 48 hours straight before flying to London to catch up with the band. The experience was like ‘Almost Famous’ if it were directed by David Lynch. The music of Singapore Sling and BJM is fantastic, but the divide between the lifestyle and meaning was jarring. I watched these fantastic concerts with fans who were decent people, made by bands who were surprisingly open and friendly, and the result would be, well, Henrik from Singapore Sling summed it up: “A fan in Norway took me to his house and told me my music was great, it made him want to commit suicide.” The on-edge brilliance butted up with supernatural banality. I should also admit that I had a very high fever for most of this trip, and the photographer ended up evacuating me to his house. When I flew home to Iceland, next to a prominent politician, I looked like I was coming off a heroin addiction.
 ☞ – Bart Cameron



GV 11, 2011

I was filling in for Haukur this issue while he drove around Iceland in one of those Happy Campers campervans. I thought it went pretty well although Haukur had prepped most of it before he left and Sveinn Birkir came in to help too. I have since learned that making Grapevine issues is a lot more work than it was for me this first time. In Grapevine's ninth year, this certainly wasn't the first time the annual Gay Pride celebration featured in an August issue, but we thought an interview with Hörður Torfason made for a nice twist. Not only is he Iceland's first openly gay man, but he also played a large role in the story of Iceland's ‘Pots & Pans revolution,’ which the world had been watching so closely.
 ☞ – Anna Andersen



GV 3, 2007

So... GusGus. I don't really remember much about this cover, other than we were having difficulties coming up with a concept. Then we found out GusGus had just done a photo shoot to promote their upcoming album. The band was one of the original music success stories out of Iceland, and this was their first album in five years. So we got to use some photos from that shoot for the cover and did a last minute interview with GusGus member Biggi Veira to go with it. It worked out great in the end. The visuals were really strong, but usually, the material dictates the cover, not the other way around.
 ☞ – Sveinn Birkir Björnsson



GV 12, 2012

This issue features an amusing article by Hallgrímur Helgason in which he ponders Iceland's tradition of building ugly houses. It was originally written as a speech, which he gave at the Louisiana Art Museum in Humlebæk, Denmark, but we thought it made for great reading and he gave us permission to print it. For the cover, Hrefna Sigurðardóttir illustrated an angry looking Hallgrímur Helgason surrounded by a bunch of sad looking architectural sites around Reykjavík, including his cleverly dubbed “Indian Tent” and “NASA Mobile Launch Platform That Accidentally Fell on the Ground After Liftoff of the Space Shuttle and Then Was Painted White.”
 ☞ – Anna Andersen

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“ I have never been anywhere underground that matches the grandeur and impact of this place.

- Sunday Times

“ Standing inside a volcano is a strangely emotional experience.

- The Guardian

“ One of twenty places in the world you must see before you die.

- CNN

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10 YEARS AGO

...From Issue 1, 2003

Hooray! It's our tenth birthday, we're having a party and we'll cry if we want to, damn it! For a humble street rag like Grapevine, turning ten is a pretty big deal—we barely expected to make it to ten issues (and, indeed, all of our contemporaries Reykjavík's street rag market have long since bid farewell... miss u, Undirtónar!). To celebrate our decade of existence, we thought we'd get a little introspective. You can see evidence of that on our cover, where we are getting choice cover stars from every year to pose together, and elsewhere in this issue, where we look at some fun stats and the history of the paper.

Also, we thought it would be a fun idea in our anniversary year to reprint some choice articles from the past that are for some reason significant, accompanied by commentary and even updates. Call it a "blast from the past" or "a look into the dark cauldron of time" if you want to—we call it fun. Thus, for the next ten issues expect a page dedicated to a year of Grapevine's existence, starting RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW, with a look back into magical 2003.

Keep coming back for more. And see you at our party (there is information elsewhere about this...)



When the first issue of the Reykjavík Grapevine came out in June 2003, there were still more locals than tourists in Iceland in the summer, the spectacular and far-sighted transformation of the economy with aluminium smelters and private banks was just taking off, and the Independence and Pro-

gressive Parties had just been elected into office with promises of lower taxes for everyone. A decade later the paper is still here, but everything else has changed, not least the political discourse, as this article by Filippa Guðmundsdóttir from our first ever issue demonstrates. It is printed below, exactly as it was printed then.

— Former Editor Valur Gunnarsson



got over thirty percent of the votes and became the second largest party. Even the leader of the Left Green Party felt victorious because they had lost less than expected.

At the same time, the leaders of the incumbent coalition happily announced that they would govern this country for four more years. They shed no tears over losing the trust of the people and 7% of their vote in four years. Thanks to a surprisingly good performance from their junior coalition partners the progressives they had the numbers for a third term and that, of course, is what matters at the end of the day.

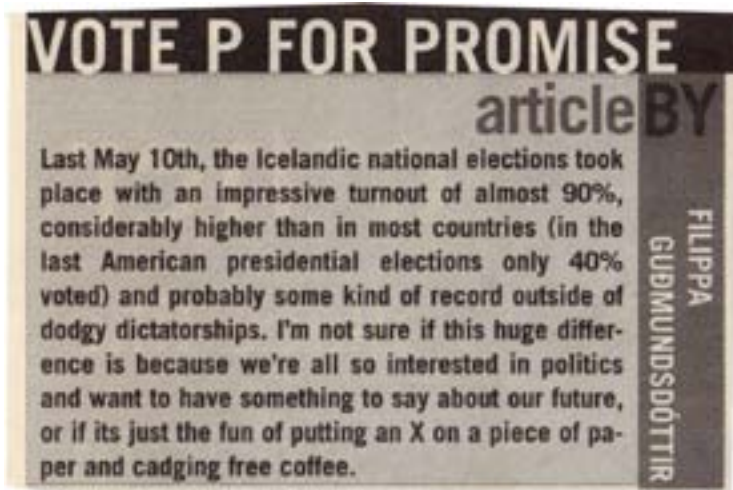
Personality wise election 2003 saw the making and breaking of two of Iceland's premier political figures. Late last year, Halldór Ásgrímsson the leader of the Progressive Party, became a laughing stock when he admitted that he had the dream of becoming prime minister. Being one of the least popular politicians and joked about for never changing his facial expression or tone of voice, he was simply dismissed as delusional. At this time The Alliance party came forward with their candidate for prime minister, the mayor of Reykjavík, Ingibjörg Sólrún. Very popular and successful in leading the city for 8 years, she now became the leader of the opposition. On the back of her heavy weight personality the Alliance soared to undreamed of heights in the polls surpassing their bitter rivals the independence party for the first time in history. Poor Halldór, on the other hand, didn't even look like he would make it back into parliament. But, as they say in Westminster, even a week is a long time in politics never mind a few months. The alliance made that classic and unfortunate mistake of peaking too early and Halldór made the most impressive return from the dead since Lazarus.

Now, no one is quite sure how it hap-

pened, but on Election Day, the Progressive Party got an impressive 17% of the votes, after having gone as low as 8% in the polls. Since the Independence Party and the Alliance Party are sworn enemies and the other party's were too small, a new government would again have to include the Progressive Party, and Halldór would get to choose who went in with him.

The morning after the elections, The Alliance party, desperate to form a new government, offered Halldór his dream job as prime minister. With that offer, he then went to the Independence party, and accepted their offer to continue their coalition, with Halldór taking over as prime minister from David Oddsen within two years, something no one would have believed a few weeks ago. The man regarded by many as the doormat of the government, finally got his revenge. As for Ingibjörg Sólrún, well political fall from grace does not come much harder. Having quit her top job as mayor to run for prime minister, become briefly the most popular person in the country and the darling of the left, the cold political light of Sunday morning saw her miss even election to parliament by a handful of votes.

Now, only few weeks later with high political drama already a fading memory, all the promises are forgotten, the fake smiles have been removed, and most people can't even remember who got elected. Here's to four more years of blissful ignorance before we all become experts on politics again.



In the weeks before, the Party's launched their campaigns in the traditional way, with huge pictures of smiling politicians on every billboard, over phrases like "vote for freedom" or "vote for justice", and so on. Of course, nobody cared and when the pictures of our elected liars and thieves with fake smiles were starting to get on peoples nerves, the tone suddenly changed and the parties tried a different approach

After years of silence on the matter, taxes suddenly became the hottest campaign issue. The right wing incumbent Independence party started the pissing contest by promising 22 billion krónur worth of tax cuts. Of course the mildly left Alliance party quickly pointed out that most of that money would go to the rich and instead proposed a modest 16 billion tax cut benefiting the poorest. The Progressive Party, the junior government partner, at the time facing political oblivion according to the polls, joined the game with their own 17 billion pledge

Feeling some resentment from the voters and with the growing gap between rich and poor being a sore spot, the Independence Party raised their promise to

37 billion, making sure that everybody would benefit more from their suggestion. Stunned by this, none of the other parties dared to outbid them.

The list of other campaign promises ran long and included reducing tariffs on food, higher real estate loans and lower interest rates. In fact, the Independence Party was just an inch away from promising to send everyone bundles of cash in the mail though in the end all they could manage was coffee. A lot of people found it funny, how when elections were in the air, there was suddenly plenty of money to lower taxes by several percent while at the same time, the police numbers were being reduced to stay on an ever tightening budget, and with a healthcare system groaning under the weight of severe government cut backs

When the votes were cast and counted, at first, everybody seemed to have won.

After the election night, the leaders of the minority each went on television to announce that their party was the real winner of this election. The leader of the Liberal Party proudly announced that his party doubled its number of parliamentarians, jumping from 2 to 4, while The Alliance Party



by
Jón Trausti Sigurðarson
Oddur Óskar Kjartansson
Valur Gunnarsson
Haukur S. Magnússon

First summer

The first issue was published on June 13, 2003. As the reader should know by now, we publish on Fridays, so the first issue went onto the streets on Friday the 13th. The thought crossed our mind that it might be bad luck, but we are still here and still going strong; knock on wood.

First office



Separate your personal life from your work life, they say. But what about when the work you do is what you are? When you are passionate enough about something, you spend all your waking hours working on it. There is no personal life. The waking hours reached long into the night that first year, and from time to time, some of us literally lived in the office, a tiny cellar on Blómvallagata in 101 Reykjavík. There was no going home; the Grapevine was home. The first office had some strange features. There was no phone line, hence no office phone, and we got our internet connection via the electrical lines, something that Reykjavík Energy was pushing at the time but has since stopped offering. Also, the ceiling was strangely low, at only two metres. This caused some literal headaches, as during many a stressful or exciting moment the need to jump up and down was felt and acted upon while the ceiling had other plans. Other features were the round windows reminiscent of the Titanic, the dim lights and the scent of sleep deprived, chain-smoking, coffee-drinking magazine people. Those were the days.

First backstage pass

After having published three issues, we decided we needed a short break and the whole staff went to a small village near Borgarnes to chill out and drink excessively. Nearby, the most popular band in Iceland since the 1970s, Stuðmenn, were playing a show. By this time we had worked up the guts to call up famous people and did just that. We asked for free tickets to the show, and to our surprise, tickets were granted. Fur-

Continues over



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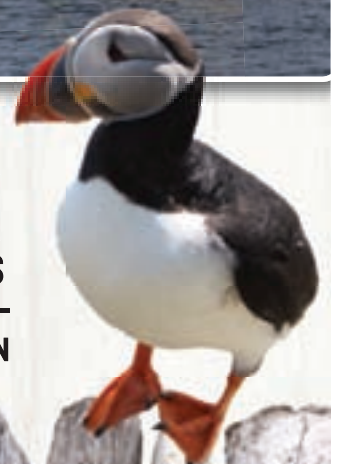
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Top Hits At Grapevine.is

...in the last four years, that is

by Anna Andersen

The following are the most viewed stories at grapevine.is since we started keeping track in 2009. It's clear. Our readers want Björk, eruptions, and a mixed bag of quirky "only in Iceland" kind of news. But this isn't your typical list of fluffy stories. Quite the contrary, these stories involve serious topics like aluminium smelters, the truth about Iceland's revolution, our part in the international horsemeat scandal and, well, cat parties too.



Illustration: Lóa Hjálmtýsdóttir

1

Grand Old Aunt Björk

By Haukur S. Magnússon, 2010

Björk is clearly our biggest hit, interviewed here in our most-read story and the author of three other stories in the top 10. In this feature interview, Haukur talks to Björk about the whole Magma Energy/HS Orka thing, what it was like to be at the forefront of that campaign, her call to public service, being in the spotlight, celebrity martyrs, a few projects that she was working on at the time, including making music for the Moomins, and all kinds of other things.

2 Björk Answers Ross Beaty: We Shouldn't Complete This Deal

By Björk Guðmundsdóttir, 2010

Björk was at the forefront of the campaign against the sale of HS Orka to Magma Energy. This is part of a series of exchanges between Björk and Magma Energy CEO Ross Beaty. Here's a snippet of Björk's letter: "...please don't insult our intelligence by playing the great benefactor. We know very well that the value of all our natural resources will increase dramatically over the next few decades. and so do you – that's why you're here. you wish to expand and thereby destroy some of our

beautiful nature, like krýsuvík and kerlingarfjöll, some of the most beloved natural pearls in Iceland."

3 Surprising Twist in Horse Meat Scandal

By Catharine Fulton, 2013

Leave it to Iceland to top the international horsemeat scandals that ripped through Europe and North America at the beginning of his year. While everyone was up in arms about horsemeat being mislabelled as beef, it turns out that a particular Icelandic company wasn't selling horsemeat in the disguise of beef pies; it was selling beef pies with no beef in them or any meat at all for that matter. Our online news editor Catharine thought this was pretty unbelievable, and the world thought so too.

4 Police Break Up Cat Party

By Paul Fontaine, 2012

This is one of those quirky Icelandic stories that people love to read. Our online news editor at the time, Paul Fontaine, wrote a story about police in Reykjavík being called to an abandoned home to evict a party of cats. It took off like wild fire. Pee-

wee Herman even shared it! That's right, Pee-wee Herman!

5 Amazing New Eruption Pics!

By Julia Staples, 2010

Two years post-collapse, the Eyjafjallajökull eruption put Iceland back into the spotlight. Grapevine drove into the ash cloud and photographer Julia Staples took some sweet photos of it all. The large majority of these viewers were clearly captivated, returning for another glance or two.

6 A Deconstruction of "Iceland's On-going Revolution"

By Anna Andersen, 2011

This article was written in response to 'Shock Doctrine' author Naomi Klein tweeting this: "#Iceland is proving that it is possible to resist the Shock Doctrine, and refuse to pay for the bankers' crisis" with a link to an article called, "Iceland's On-going Revolution," by Deena Stryker. This article was full of factual errors, so we tweeted back: "@NaomiAKlein We are fans of yours, but we are sad to say that your tweet and the article it cites are both dead wrong. #Iceland" She replied: "@rvkgrapevine tell me and i'll correct." And so we did.

7 Björk To Ross Beaty: You Totally Miss My Point

By Björk Guðmundsdóttir, 2010

Ross Beaty tried to give Björk shares in his company. She responded with this short and sweet letter:

dear ross

noticed your message for me
you offering me shares in hs orka shows that you totally miss my point
i feel this company should not be privatized, it should be given back to the people.
therefore i am not interested in shares.
but if i would get the same deal as you, a 70% bulletloan from icelanders to buy usage of their own resources, i might reconsider, who wouldn't?
you didn't really put your money where your mouth is, did you?
good bye

björk

P.s. I also saw in financial times when you asked me, personally, to pop over to your office and you would lower how long

magma's usage of our resources is going to be. This only reveals how willing you are to cut deals outside law and order

www.orkuauflindir.is

8 Woman Takes Part In Search For Herself

By Paul Fontaine, 2012

This story by Paul was wonderful. It made all kinds of international media. It was so wonderful that we created an award called "Tourist of the Year" with her in mind. That award will now be given out annually. So far this year we think the tourists who had to be rescued from their picnic on a small iceberg are pretty good candidates. But go nominate somebody (or yourself) at www.touristoftheyear.is and he/she (you) could win a trip to Iceland.

9 Björk On Magma Energy

By Björk Guðmundsdóttir, 2010

There's nothing like reading letters between other people, especially when one of them is Björk and she's talking about something really important. This is the first in a series, a few of which appear above:

Dear friends,

I can no longer remain silent on the very pressing subject that is the selling off of Iceland's nature.

I hereby challenge the government of Iceland to do everything in its power to revoke the contracts with Magma Energy that entitle the Canadian firm complete ownership of HS Orka. These are abhorable deals, and they create a dangerous precedent for the future. They directly go against necessary and oft-repeated attempts to create a new policy in the energy- and resource management of this nation.

Warmly,

Björk Guðmundsdóttir

10 Volcano Erupts Under Eyjafjallajökull

By Haukur S. Magnússon, 2010

Not long after Eyjafjallajökull erupted, a huge ash cloud made its way to mainland Europe, shutting down airspace and stranding people at airports for days. This was a big deal. FUN FACT: This story was written on a borrowed laptop, at a party, under the influence of several beers, en route to a Peaches show at NASA, a club that no longer exists.



Continued

thermore, keyboard player Jakob Frimann offered us to join the band backstage after the gig. Thus, we got our first backstage passes, and had a swell time drinking with the grand old men (and woman) of Icelandic pop, while listening to not-fit-to-print stories about being in a popular band in Iceland in the '70s and '80s. Many a backstage pass has been acquired since, as it is apparently a part of the job, but there is no time like the first.

First full year

We started publishing again in May 2004 after hibernating for the winter of '03-'04. The time off was well deserved and other things needed to be attended to, but getting back to business was even better. We haven't stopped since—in 2004, we printed 11 issues and in 2005, the grand total reached 16. From 2006 onwards The Reykjavík Grapevine has been published 18 times per year.

First "paycheck"

It was all fun and games (and long, sleepless nights) the first summer, but the financial means were limited, to say the least. With a freshly polished business plan we started work again, this time with the potential prospect of a paycheck on the horizon. After a month of labour we got the check sent in the mail, and it was glorious, even though the amount of zeros was a disappointment, both for us and the taxman.

First "fame"



Although The Reykjavík Grapevine got the odd mention by other media during its first few months, it was in mid June 2004 that everyone in Iceland was made aware of the magazine's existence. This was due to the cover of the second issue that year, which featured a black woman dressed in Iceland's national costume, and the fact that a local organisation refused to lend the magazine a national costume because of our intention to have it worn by the aforementioned woman. We didn't see that one coming, and for a few days The Reykjavík Grapevine and this particular cover photo was discussed on radio, TV and in all the printed newspapers during the 60th anniversary of the Republic. We even got covered by NPR. The 21st Century Lady of the Mountain had received international attention.

Continues over

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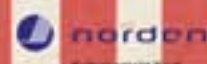
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Magnús Þór Who?

Googling your way to Grapevine

by Anna Andersen

It's perhaps not surprising that the top 12 keyword searches leading people to our website are variations of "The Reykjavík Grapevine." That includes "grapewine" of course, which is almost guaranteed to be the work of Icelanders or foreigners misinformed by Icelanders who, after ten years, still think we're called "The Reykjavík Grapewine." Will this poor nation ever learn to differentiate their 'v' from their 'double v's'? Probably not, but that's all right because we own the domain www.grapewine.is too.

Barring more direct searches for Grapevine or Grapewine, the following is a list of the next ten most popular searches leading people to the site since we started using analytics in 2009. We're not sure what to make of it all, but it's semi-interesting anyway...

1 For some reason, "magnús þór þorbergsson," is the 13th most popular search leading to Grapevine. He must be a very mysterious teacher at the Iceland Academy of the Arts and/or the article that we must have written about him must be loaded with SEO.

2 Skipping over "reykjavik news," which is a rather boring search, "iceland porn" is the 15th most popular keyword search. News that Iceland was trying to ban porn must have really made a splash. A similar search for "Icelandic porn" is the 26th most popular one, but perhaps these people are actually looking for Icelandic porn. Who knows...

3 Skipping past a few more boring searches, "iceland revolution" is the 21st most popular one. This isn't surprising given how much attention Iceland got for letting the banks fail, banging on pots and pans, ousting its government, bringing in a new one and last but not least, jailing its bankers. Some of that is myth, by the way.

4 And, skipping past a few more, there are searches for venues like "c is for cookie reykjavik" in 24th and "bakkus reykjavik" in 25th place. The former is a pretty nice coffee shop and the latter is one of the many bars in Reykjavik that no longer exists.

5 Then there's "seljvallalaug" in 27th place. That's the name of a pretty cool swimming pool in south Iceland. It's tucked away at the foot of a mountain, a bit off the beaten path behind a newer pool, which is not nearly as much fun as the old one.

6 Skipping past "reykjavik grapevine," because that's just ridiculous, there's "icelandic sweaters made in china." I'd want to know if my super expensive handmade Icelandic wool sweater were really made in China, too.

7 Then comes "hemmi og valdi" and "hemmi & valdi" in the 30 and 31st place. We used to throw a concert series there called Grapevine grassroots. It's a pretty cosy café.

8 After that comes "hugleikur dagsson" in 32nd. If you don't know him, you should Google him and check out a bunch of the comics he has made for us through the years.

9 We know everyone loves Sigur Rós, but it's apparently thanks to the band's keyboard that fans are organically finding their way to us. Indeed, "sigur ros casio keyboard" is the 33rd most popular search.

10 Finally, skipping over "Iceland newspaper," there's "sigurður kjartan," a former intern and current contributor. Now, I'm sure we can all agree that it's okay to Google ourselves every once in a while, but THIS MANY TIMES, Siggí? Out of 204,443 unique searches, your name is the 35th most popular one. No wonder the guy's so busy all the time!

Still pretty high on the list after these are searches for "sex in Iceland" and "Iceland sex," for which we should probably thank Oprah Winfrey, the marketing department at Icelandair, Roosh Vörek and Quentin Tarantino. The latter spoke highly of "Icelandic women," which is another popular search (incidentally tied with "Icelandic coffee"). Finally, a few more after that include "troll stumble," which maybe goes to show that dyslexic people like Brian Pilkington books, "huang nubo," who desperately wants to own land in Iceland and "tom cruise Iceland," which probably has something to do with the fact that TomKat recently split while he sojourned here.

Who knows how much of this has to do with our content, other people's interests, or the ways of Google Panda and now Penguin, but it's certainly some combination of the three.

I HATE THE REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE



Haukur S. Magnússon is your friendly neighborhood ~~greek~~ Editor-in-chief

So. We are ten. Free street rag Reykjavík Grapevine is ten. WTF.

I remember the first time I heard about The Reykjavík Grapevine. It was the spring of 2003. I was drinking coffee in Ísafjörður, and a friend of the publishers-to-be told me about their plans to publish a free English-language street magazine and asked if I wanted to write for them. I, a young, spiteful and dumb Ísafjörður fish-gutter, scoffed at the idea. "It will never work," I thought, while on the inside my heart raged with jealousy for not having thought of such a brilliant idea.

I found their third issue lying around in Ísafjörður later that summer. "Boy I am so glad I didn't involve my noble self with this fly-by-night bullshit idea," I thought. "It's ugly and horrible and it will never work." I was still jealous, of course.

Over the next couple of years, I ceremoniously ignored Reykjavík Grapevine. Or, I tried to. I wanted to hate it, I really did. I wanted them to fail. They were stupid and ugly and they were not me. Eventually, my small town insecurities faded and I got more settled in Reykjavík. I attended concerts and went to bars. I made friends. I explored.

Slowly, I started falling in love with the city; the spirit, the shape, the geography; its batshit crazy nightlife and its mostly wonderful music scene—all the creative, imaginative, impulsive, damaged, thoughtful and outstanding young people who make it up.

Simply put, the Reykjavík I fell in love with was the Reykjavík depicted in the Grapevine, by the outcasts and the expats. The one that took its music seriously enough to discuss its negative aspects. The one that hadn't grown up with Icelandic nature and was thus fascinated by it in a way that my peers and I couldn't fathom. The one that wasn't afraid to offend. The one that was of Iceland, but always slightly out of sync from the mainstream, perhaps due to its target market of visitors. As a terminal outsider, an eternal disagreeer of the world as depicted by mainstream media and pop culture, I felt I had finally found a medium that at times reflected my feelings and opinions.

I started looking up to the writers and editors and photographers and comic artists (and I still do). I had found kindred spirits, in a tourist magazine of all places. Every day of publication I would grab a

copy at the Austurstræti ÁTVR along with my weekly sixpack of student-grade beer and read it over the weekend's first pint. It became a bit of a ritual. I often disagreed, I sometimes was enraged, but I always recognized the content as coming from an honest place, that I had more to agree on with the writers than not.

Eventually, I found myself working as a staff journalist for the Grapevine (I have no idea how this happened), and a little later I was suddenly the magazine's editor (I'm still going "WTF"). It is the hardest, most taxing job I have ever undertaken. Yet, getting to stand on the shoulder of giants, working with enthusiastic writers and photographers and designers and illustrators (and getting to ask important questions in a time when such questions desperately needed asking)—nothing compares.

The average reader probably doesn't know the sheer amount of work and dedication it takes to create single issue of the Grapevine. Of the freelancer sweating all night in her apartment over an overdue interview that just needs a little more work to get right. The designer who works 48 hours straight to make sure it is presentable. The photographer on a last-minute drive to Hafnarfjörður. It is always a labour of love, and of passion, and it continues to show.

Anything that so many people pour their hearts and minds and souls into has to have some value. Of that I am sure.

For a humble street rag such as The Reykjavík Grapevine, turning ten is an incredible feat, a remarkable testament to the undying love and tireless work its founders, contributors and employees have put into keeping it alive and well. For a humble street rag such as The Reykjavík Grapevine, turning ten also presents a considerable challenge. One could reasonably argue that any medium that reaches such a milestone has become de facto institutionalized through sheer persistence. Instead of countering the norm, it might, even in its continued opposition, become an integral part of it—just another outlet that tells you who to be and what to think, rather than a venue to express or reflect on who you are and what you think.

Fortunately, I don't see this happening any time soon. We are well staffed. We are aware. It was never Grapevine's idea to write the rules: the whole thing was about providing a venue to challenge them.

Happy birthday, The Reykjavík Grapevine. You're an asshole, but I love you.



Continued

First death threat

Our first taste of fame was followed by the first death threats to members of The Grapevine's staff. Most of these came from American Neo-Nazis, but local Neo-Nazis from the town of Grindavík soon joined the party. They did not seem pleased about the idea of a black woman wearing the national costume. Getting such threats in the middle of the night via phone calls and text messages is no laughing matter, but we still felt these indicated that we had, well, done something right. Thankfully, none of these threats materialized. Later threats have been more civil. Mostly.

First "gourmet" coffee machine



As you may have noticed, coffee is a huge part of our lives. It's not as if we are coffee connoisseurs, we just like the feeling of caffeine rushing through our veins. In 2004, we struck a deal with a coffee machine vendor. This machine has it all, it grinds beans for each cup, you can make lattes and cappuccinos (well, you could at some point, today it just makes regular coffee). The coffee machine receives an honourable mention as it is considered among the oldest staff members of the Grapevine.

First world famous people on the cover

The second summer of publication also saw the first world famous people on the cover of the magazine. First came Björk, of course, and for the first time we used a photo not taken by one of our own photographers for the cover. Next up was Gerard Butler, who was in Iceland in late summer 2004 shooting the movie *Beowulf & Grendel*. Mr. Butler however, didn't really achieve world fame until a few years later, more due to his abs as portrayed in the movie '300' than his Icelandic venture, which was, in all honesty, a bit of a flop.

First election coverage

Iceland held elections in 2004, and as would become customary, we felt it was our duty to cover the elections and interview all the candidates. The cover featured a man dressed for the part of president of Iceland, and who just happened to be father to one of the staff. The

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			14:00	14:00	14:00				
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So What's This State-Run Liquor Store I Keep Hearing About?

by Kári Tulinius



The Icelandic government, like governments in most of the Nordic countries, several US states and some other countries around the world, runs a chain of liquor stores. It has a monopoly on the sale of alcoholic beverages with more than 2.25% alcohol content. The liquor stores have limited opening hours, none being open past eight in the evening, some in the countryside only open for an hour on weekdays, and all of them closed on Sundays.

But I need my Sunday morning hair of the dog! This is brutal oppression!

You are not alone in feeling this way. Recently the leader of the Reykjavík youth organisation of the right-wing Independence Party caused a stir when she said that people should have the right to buy white wine to have with their Sunday lobster.

You've got to hand it to right-wingers; they never lack that common touch.

This caused a predictable enough online bilestorm, with some going too far because the internet ruins everything, even the simple fun of mocking rich people. The right wing, especially the youth organisation, has long been obsessed with ending the Icelandic state's monopoly on alcohol retail. In fact, it can be argued, rather tentatively though, that this obsession triggered the 2009 protests that toppled the government then in power.

This is my dubious face.

The protests started on January 20, 2009, when the Icelandic parliament returned to session after its Christmas break. This was during the depths of the financial crisis and people were looking for any kind of action from parliament that might give them reason to hope. Into that situation stepped youthful Independence Party MP Sigurður Kári Kristjánsson with a bill to allow grocery stores to sell alcoholic beverages less than 22% alcohol by volume, offering the kind of hope you get from an affordable glass of wine.

There is no better companion to have in a dark pit of despair than a large bottle of cheap booze.

While that is true, Icelanders reacted like a cartoon snob who had ordered Chateau Le Fancy and been served Maison de Pisse. They banged their cutlery on the nearest saucepan and demanded the head of the person in charge. The bill that the young MP proposed could not have been more symbolically inapt. To be fair to him, this was just the latest iteration of a series of proposed bills that neoliberal MPs had tried to get passed since the mid-90s.

The freedom to booze is the foundational principle of the two great isms today's youth flock to, neoliberalism and alcoholism.

Quite. The problem in January 2009 was that nobody was flocking to the banner of market deregulation, except perhaps to rip the banner from its pole, set it on fire and then douse it with Maison de Pisse. Neoliberalism was widely considered to blame for the financial crash and that parliament was spending its time on a neoliberal hobbyhorse did little to soothe the post-crash anger felt by most.

They should've gone for a little bit of neoliberalism, after all nothing soothes a hangover like a shot of vodka.

I think you may have a problem. In many ways it is a bit surprising that the neoliberal right-wing never fulfilled their ambition given that they generally had few problems

with other changes they wanted to make during their 18 years in power. One possible explanation is that temperance has been a fairly popular movement in Iceland. It was the people that voted for prohibition in 1915 through a national referendum.

Of course sober voters win a referendum, you can hardly expect drunk people to tick a tiny box with a blunt pencil.

Being too drunk to vote is a problem. Prohibition was only lifted in 1923 because Spain, a major purchaser of Icelandic fish, made it a condition of a trade agreement that Iceland would import Spanish wines. Icelandic parliament decided that if they needed to go against the wishes of the majority of the population, it would be unseemly that private enterprise would make money from it.

What a strange decision!

Well, no one rioted over that one. Over the course of the 20th Century, alcohol sales were liberalised in stages, starting with hard liquors and ending with beer, which was banned in Iceland until 1989. Nevertheless, Icelanders have never stopped thinking of alcohol as a forbidden fruit. Sure, it is considered okay to get smashed every weekend, but should you have a glass of wine with your Wednesday dinner, be it lobster or haddock, you are considered to be well on your way to rehab.



Continued

feature article discussed the need to have a president of Iceland. At the time, the position of the president was highly debated as he had just refused to sign the "media bill" into law. This legislation was intended to limit the influence shareholders could have on the editorial content of the media they owned. Despite the controversy, Mr. Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson won the elections. He is still the president of Iceland and has since then used his presidential right to not to sign stuff on more than one occasion.

First cover featuring nature and Kárahnjúkar

Icelandic nature is close to our hearts. We featured the farmer Guðmundur Ármannsson on the cover and entered the discussion about the hydro-electric project and the aluminium smelter in Reyðarfjörður. The Kárahnjúkar dam debate was raging and many wanted it stopped. The article discusses the sandstorms caused by the construction, reminiscent of the ones Steinbeck writes about in *The Grapes of Wrath*. The Kárahnjúkar dam is a fact today and sandstorms are feared this summer in the area of Hálslón, while the Lagarfjót lake seems to be dying.

First editor change


After having edited the first 19 issues of *The Reykjavík Grapevine*, Valur Gunnarsson decided to call it a day in March 2005 and was replaced by American born expat Bart Cameron, who had previously worked as a journalist for *Iceland Review*. Bart Cameron served as editor for the next year and a half. Both editors still contribute material to this publication on occasion. One of the founders, Jón Trausti Sigurðarson, also served as co-editor during the first summer. The *Reykjavík Grapevine* has seen six editors in its ten years. The longest serving editors were Sveinn Birgir Björnsson, from 2006 till 2008 and Haukur S. Magnússon from 2009 till 2012. Haukur still serves as editor-in-chief. The current editor is Anna Andersen, who became editor in early 2012 and is also *The Grapevine's* first female editor.

First daily publication



Iceland Airwaves has been held annually since 1999. In 2005, *The Reykjavík Grapevine* decided, in cooperation with the festival and its

Continues over



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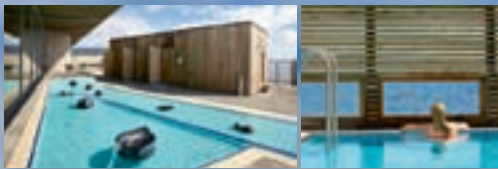
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Iceland | Gambling

Money For Nothing

Addiction gambling in Iceland

by Thomas L. Moir



Photos: Simon Steel

An unsteady, elderly man spends the better part of a minute dismounting from his stool. He hobbles over to the counter, props his walking stick up against the desk and pulls a crumpled 5,000 ISK note from his pocket. He is unshaven, unwashed and clasps a half empty beer bottle in his stick-less hand.

The desk is unattended, and the man grows more impatient by the second. Finally, from behind the bulletproof glass, a disinterested staff member emerges, still chewing down his lunch. He takes the elderly man's note and methodically changes it for coins. The old man collects his coins and his stick wordlessly and begins the journey back across the crusty carpet, through the muted-gold lights, past row upon row of slot machines of clashing tempos until he makes it to his preferred spot.

Ask any staff member. On any day at any Háspenna slot machine venue in the capital city, the scene couldn't be more familiar. And it is only midday.

Although gambling is illegal in Iceland, the government has made exceptions to allow the University of Iceland to run a national lottery and Íslandsspil to run slot machines with funds going to ICE-SAR, the Icelandic Association for Search and Rescue; the Icelandic Red Cross; and SÁÁ, Iceland's National Center of Addiction Medicine.

Taking a gamble on treatment

Approaching the reception desk at SÁÁ, I ask for Ási, the gentleman I'm due to meet. The woman manning the desk smiles back at me sympathetically before asking for my full name. I give it to her. She then requests my social security number.

I look back at her curiously. She meets my stare and after a few seconds says, "Never mind. Well that'll be 2,000 ISK then." Further confused, I ask her why I need to pay. She looks amused, but still sympathetic, and replies simply, "You know, to seek treatment, you need to pay."

At this point I tell her I'm just here to chat with Ási, not to 'chat' with Ási.

When she finally understands, she starts laughing, turns to her colleague and explains the misunderstanding to her, who also breaks into laughter while I steal a glance at my reflection in the glass di-

“The youngest one I've ever talked to was 14-years-old... He was so ashamed that he was losing so much money gambling that he told his parents he was using drugs.”

vider to check just how shabby I look.

Resurfacing from the laughter, she finally turns back and says, "Sorry I thought you needed treatment." I thank her for her flattery and proceed through the door to meet Ási, a former alcoholic who has been an alcohol and chemical dependency counsellor with SÁÁ for more than 15 years.

He offers me a coffee—a permitted vice here—before we settle into a pair of comfortable chairs in one corner of his office. Sporting a beard and well-worn sweater, Ási comes across as a wise man. I get the feeling he treats all he meets with an equally understanding, calm

Continues over

Continued

main sponsor Icelandair to publish daily coverage of the festival. Foreign music journalists and a herd of photographers were flown in and we managed to put out three 24-page issues in three days. By the end of the festival, three foreign music journalists and three Grapevine staffers had matching tattoos, due to a lost bet involving a hot dog eating contest.

First time we lost our s**t



The Grapevine has always been a small operation. Currently we have about seven people on our staff, along with a rather extensive number of freelance contributors and interns. There once was a time, though, when we thought we'd up our game, as was the style at the time. Yup, in 2006 we kinda lost sight of things, and that is an understatement. We moved into a huge office with two bathrooms, a cafeteria, a meeting room and as many as five large, separate offices and a huge open space (we now work out of "a room").

During the following summer we had as many as fourteen people on staff, and countless other paid contributors. We even had a receptionist (that was nice, though). In short, we lost the plot. Why, and how, this didn't bankrupt Grapevine is complicated, but to say the least, there are people out there, some of whom still work at this publication, that saved it from sudden death in the following years by working very hard, for very little pay.

First global recession

The global recession hit the world in 2008, and as the Grapevine is part of said world, it was also hit. But with some restructuring (which involved moving to a smaller office and reducing the editorial staff to basically one person), good faith and a whole lot of patience, we seem to be pulling through OK. The króna lost its value but now tourists flock to Iceland giving us valuable foreign currency. There is always a silver lining somewhere.

First non-English language pages

Iceland after the collapse—and through some odd misunderstanding (we're looking at you, Deena Stryker)—started inspiring people all over the globe to fight the power, say no to austerity and jail bankers

Continues over

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Continued



Continues from page 16

manner. Not long into our chat, I realise I shouldn't have taken offence at the lady's mistake.

Approximately 4,000 to 7,000 people in Iceland between the ages of 18 and 70—or about 2.5% of the population—suffer from gambling addiction, according to a study conducted by the University of Iceland. “And they come from every stage and layer in our society,” Ási says of the problem gamblers who come in for treatment.

Soon after SÁÁ was founded, staff started to notice that there were Icelanders not able to take care of their addiction to gambling and started offering treatment. “But we did not invent the problem,” Ási says. “The problem was always here.”

Ási tells me that about 50% of those he helps are also struggling with other issues. “They have different problems, but they are connected. Sometimes when people try to stop drinking, they start gambling instead.”

At SÁÁ, the problems are treated separately. If the gambler cannot stop gambling, he or she is signed up for a motivational group that meets once a week and encourages addicts to rebuild their lives with day-to-day plans. “And if they cannot do that, if they cannot stop gambling, then we send them to Vogur, our rehabilitation centre,” Ási says.

Cashing in your chips

When I call the gamblers anonymous helpline, Svava answers the phone quietly. A former gambling addict for almost 40 years, she tells me she didn't realise that she had a problem until she tried to take her own life. “Only then did I realise that I was in a bad place,” she says.

She tells me at first she did it for the money, but it intensified and soon became more about the release. “I just wanted to be alone in my place where I was gambling,” she says dejectedly.

She pauses and takes a deep breath before saying quietly, “I was financially ruined when I quit.”

Svava is much better off than others though. Weekly, she speaks with people who are gambling with their houses, their cars, their whole lives.

Although now sober for two and a half years, Svava doesn't believe her addiction has improved much since she quit. “I went to a place with a slot machine the other day and I got a real...” she hesitates for a moment before continuing, “It wasn't a good feeling. It was like the slot machine hit me back. Then I understood I was just the same distance from my addiction as the day I quit.”

So what's different now?

“I have a family around me to help, and gamblers anonymous,” she replies contentedly.

The science of slot machines

Ási bemoans that gambling addiction is too often talked about the way alcoholism was talked about 30 years ago. “People ask gamblers, ‘Why don't you just stop gambling?’ It is easier to understand why it's hard to stop drinking. But it's a similar thing going on in their heads. Their brain releases these...” Ási leans back and strokes his beard, stuck on the word. “The brain releases these [endorphins], then you get drunk. The gambler's brain can do this through the eyes and ears and the thought of getting a big win soon.”

My attention is directed to a diagram showing two almost identical images

of a human brain, with the same small spot glowing yellow on each. I am told the one on the left is of a cocaine addict being exposed to cocaine use, while the one on the right is of a gambling addict being exposed to gambling.

“You have heard of Pavlov's dogs?” Ási asks me. “Where he rings the bell and gives them something to eat, and then they connect the food to the bell. That's part of what happens,” he says. “The gambler sees things and connects it to money.”

Svava can relate to the experience.

“I was just watching a film the other day with my husband and it was set in a casino. I heard the noise of slot machines in the background; he didn't. I noticed the slot machines; he didn't—he just saw the people.” Her voice drops an octave. “That's how the sickness is, you never get over it, but you have to control it.”

I ask whether she still feels the temptation to gamble.

“I have thought about it, not every day, but at least three or four times a week. I'm always just one step from the slot machines, the same as I was two and a half years ago.”

Recognising symbols

Back at SÁÁ, I am invited to wheel myself over to Ási's desk for a science lesson. He pulls out a sheet of paper, and starts explaining the process of gambling addiction.

“You see, in the beginning when a gambler starts, he's just having fun. He

“
Then I understood I was just the same distance from my addiction as the day I quit.”

might start by putting 100 ISK in and just walking away. But then one day the machine gives him 1,000 ISK, and he starts to see the machine more often, and to put more money in. And the purpose of the machine is to tell you that you had something to do with this game.”

Ási draws some symbols on the page representing the icons on the slot machine. “Slowly the gambler starts to recognise things. Say there are three ‘X's in a row like this,” he says scribbling, “and then the fourth one is a ‘0'. The gambler sees this as a near win. So he starts to think he's doing something right, that he's close. But the reality is he lost.”

Part of the treatment at SÁÁ involves

educating the gamblers about why they're addicted to gambling. “They are usually very defensive in the beginning, but when they understand that I am on their side, it's easy to talk to them,” he says.

While most in treatment grasp the concept very quickly, less are successful in completely quitting on their first attempt. Ási says for the gambler to continue gambling they need to have something to hold on to.

“Some start to get hooked on numbers, special numbers, special dates. Some amounts of winnings. On the bus going downtown, they might see a car with the license number RE213, and they are maybe reminded of winning 213 ISK, and think ‘we should gamble now,’” he explains. “We call it magical thinking.”

Over the phone, Svava tells me for many years she thought she was the only one in Iceland who had a problem. “Then when I went to rehab I learnt that this thinking was a sickness.”

Switching off the machines

Even though SÁÁ receives much of its funding from Íslandsspil, one of the largest gaming groups in Iceland, Ási would still ban all gambling in Iceland if it were up to him.

“In my opinion they are engineered for the gambling addicts. The machine wants the gambler to gamble,” he says.

In recent years SÁÁ has seen the problem moving from the slot machines to the internet, which Ási says is a desired environment for the gambler, to be able to gamble alone in the comfort of his or her own home.

Last year, then Minister of the Interior Ógmundur Jónasson announced his intention to submit a bill to parliament that would, among other things, place a ban on internet gambling in Iceland.

Part of the problem with internet gambling in Ási's opinion is the easy access it allows young people who, due to age restrictions, are not able to operate slot machines. Year after year, he says he sees younger and younger people coming in for treatment.

“The youngest one I've ever talked to was 14-years-old, and he'd had this problem for some time. He was so ashamed that he was losing so much money gambling that he told his parents he was using drugs. He wasn't, but it was easier for him to be able to explain where all the money went.”

Svava says she receives more calls from young people each year and believes that since Iceland's economic collapse things have worsened.

The first thing Svava tells such gamblers when they call is not to think about what they have done, but instead about what they want to do. “You can't get back what you have put into the slot machine, but you can live on,” she says.

“But first they have to admit to themselves they're a gambler and that they want help. It's not enough that I want to help them. They also have to help themselves.”

(just like we had supposedly done. Ehrm). The idea that Iceland was a beacon of democracy and common sense was especially popular in Spain for some reason (Spain was and is going through some of the same stuff we did, albeit on a much larger, more serious scale). One of the results of Iceland's newfound popularity in the region (we can only guess) was that during the summer of 2011 Grapevine all of the sudden found itself employing not one, not two, but THREE interns from Spain simultaneously; the very wonderful Félix, Marta and José.

They were eager and enthusiastic interns, ready and willing to do whatever it took. However, it soon became apparent that their English language skills left a lot to be desired and we found ourselves lacking in tasks to assign them. But hey, it was summer, we had plenty of pages to spare—why not go ahead and just print a Spanish language section every now and again? It made more sense than hiring non-English speaking interns at an English language magazine anyway. So for a brief period in the summer of 2011 we were a bilingual publication.

First bar guide - first mobile app

Why it took us eight years to finally get to making a complete Bar Guide for Reykjavík is a mystery, but we eventually got around to it. Having a list of every happy hour in town (of which there were few at the time) also seemed quite useful in the mind of borderline alcoholics on journalist salaries.

It was a rough birth—there were a lot more bars around than we had anticipated, but we pulled through like we mostly always do. A year later we debuted our fancy APPY HOUR GUIDE APP (“the app that fucks you up”—we are eternally subtle), which was based on all that, hic, research we did and is by now essential for any self respecting Reykjavík drinker. Turn to the centre spread to read our 2013 bar guide—it's right here!

First decade



By the time you read this, it has been a whole decade of The Reykjavík Grapevine. An English language magazine distributed for free to anyone willing to read it. It was hard to pitch this idea to potential advertisers a decade ago, but now we are part of the life in Reykjavík and in Iceland. I wonder what ideas kids are pitching to potential sponsors these days, probably something involving some i-gadget or the interwebs. But we expect to still be here after another decade has passed.



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1919 (Radisson)

Pósthússtræti 2

★★★★★☆☆

This elegant hotel bar boasts classic black Chesterfield armchairs and a scattering of chic cowhide footstools, but the best reason to visit is the fact that they serve Stella Artois on tap. The staff are warm and welcoming and bring your drinks on a tray. For the first time in an Icelandic bar, I felt special.

1000 1200 1150

Oh-so-cool and aloof Bossa nova.

Older (40+).

Older tourists with money, men in their late 20s and 30s who buy their clothes at (new Icelandic designer label) JÖR.

Free peanuts and waiters who actually seem happy to have you.

Come here if you want to be treated like you're rich and famous. ☹ – PP

Austur

Austurstræti 7

★★★★★☆☆

Austur is the jock mecca of Reykjavík. You will find more sweaty muscles there than at the gym after Christmas. That said the place doesn't really try to be anything else and what it does it does fairly well. The atmosphere is trashy and slick like something you would find in a high production porno. The drink selection is great and for the right amount of money you can treat yourself to a private lounge filled with your heart's desires.

1000 1500 1250

Euro Trash.

Young (20-30s).

Buffed up dudes, women with lots of makeup.

One of the few bars that will provide you with a VIP lounge.

It's sterile and shiny like a LA porn set. ☹ – RJH

B5

Bankastræti 5

★★★☆☆☆☆

B5 is a modern/minimalistic lounge bar in a hall-like space lined with comfortable high benches and lit by two epic lampshades. It's quiet by day, but packed out the door by night with the dress code (smart-casual) creating a see-and-be-seen vibe. Add pumping pop music and a "magic carpet ride" energy-drink cocktail for 1000 ISK, and you've got yourself a haven for Reykjavík's yuppies and those who want to hang out with Reykjavík's yuppies.

900 800 900

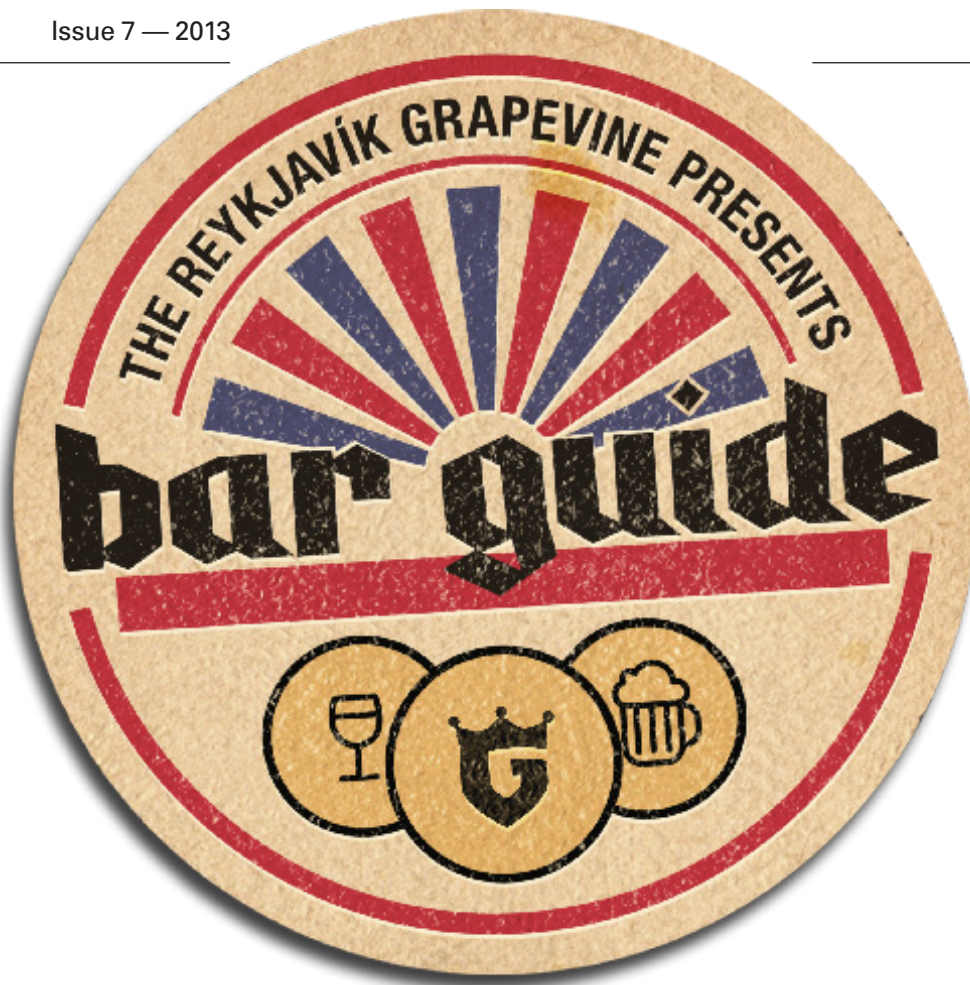
Commercial pop, R&B, house, chart music, disco.

Young (20s-30s).

Suits, body builders, dancing queens, orange girls, older business types, townies, startup guys.

B5 is a hangout for a species closely resembling regular Icelanders. The younger males often exhibit broader shoulders and thicker limbs than their human counterparts, almost bursting out of their shirts due to their swollen size. The older males are perhaps their overlords: finely dressed, and showing particular interest in the young females of the species, who must spend extended periods on sunbeds in order to survive, rendering them bright orange in colour. This also appears to make them invulnerable to the Northern climes, and they cavort freely in the arctic wind.

This is a popular hangout for the city's young professionals. ☹ – JR



THE GRAPEVINE'S BIG-ASS BAR GUIDE 2013

After having loads of fun making a Bar Guide for the past two years (we really love drinking), we decided once again to review and rate every single bar in 101 Reykjavík (yes, we really love drinking). And our research reveals that there are around sixty bars in town this year.

Perhaps you're thinking that we could have simply updated last year's guide. Well, first of all, that wouldn't have been as much fun (less drinking), and a lot has changed in the last year. A bunch of bars have closed, and then opened under a new name, and then perhaps returned to their old name. A bar or two may even have opened or closed by the time this issue goes to print. That's the nature of the game. So we ganged together a bunch of fun-and-drink-loving writers, divided the bars between them, and sent them off to work. Of course you may not agree with everything we've written as our tastes may differ greatly from yours or we may just be wrong (you can write us an angry letter about that), but ultimately this guide is for entertainment and informational purposes, and it is meant to incite discourse more than anything. And if it helps you find a new bar you love, then that's all the better.

There was at least some method to our madness, which you can read below.

REVIEWER INSTRUCTIONS:

These are the instructions we gave to our reviewers before they embarked upon their mission.

DEFINE: BAR

A bar is an establishment that has 'the sale and consumption of alcohol' as its main purpose and goal. It can sell food, but emphasis must be placed on, again, the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages.

METHOD

Each reviewer was instructed to drink one beer at each bar reviewed. To ensure that all bars were reviewed under similar circumstances, they were asked to go there between the hours of 23:00 and 1:00 on a djamm ("party") night. These are typically Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

At the bar, they were instructed to take notes in their fancy notebook, which they did not forget to bring (because forgetting that would be horrible). They noted the following:

Prices
The cheapest price of a beer, glass of wine, and 'single + mixer'.

Music
Type (DJ, playlist, live music) plus genre?

Clientele
Who hangs out there?

Special features

What does this bar have that separates it from the bunch, if anything?

In a nutshell

One brief sentence to sum up the bar.

Rating

On a scale of 1 to 5, 5 being the highest.

BEER

SINGLE + MIXER

WINE

Music / Genre

Age

Clientele

Special feature

☀ Troubadour Alert

Our Review Team:

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Bar 11

Hverfisgata 18

★★★★☆☆☆

Bar 11 is one of the few places in Reykjavík where a rockabilly hipster can truly feel at home. It caters to the small percentage of people who do not like the standard club theme of electro and house and prefer a more rocked out haze fuelled by shots and beers. At the time of visit, the place was like a zoo filled with various young animals shaking their feathers at the watering hole to the beat of classic rock anthems. If you have at least one sailor tattoo, or just want an alternative to the more mainstream club music, this is the place for you.

800 1200 1150

Rockabilly and classic rock.

Bar 7

Frakkastígur 7

★★★★☆☆☆

Over the last year, Bar 7 has become a pretty solid place for people who just want to sit in a hole and drink. This is a dive, and that's not faux-dive for people who think it's charming. But it actually is charming too, and remarkably clean. Don't bother getting mixers or wine here though; you're safer sticking to basics (beer).

550 1000 1000

Usually the bartender's iPod playlist, which is often really great indie rock oriented music (Band of Horses, Interpol, The Antlers). Music is never too loud to hold a conversation and if asked nicely, they'll usually

change it if you hate the song, or crank it up.

Older (50+)

The tired, the poor, the huddled masses yearning to drink for (almost) free—every age group is found here, ranging from 18 to 80.

A gigantic collection of matchbooks from various bars, hotels, clubs, sports arenas and other places, all framed, covering every wall. It's actually kind of amazing, and it's really fun to look until you find one from some random place you've been to in another country.

Come happy, leave depressed; come depressed, leave comforted. ☹ – RL

Young (under 20).

Tattooed rockers, young kids

All their glasses are made of plastic.

Booze and tattoos. ☹ – RJH

Bjarni Fel

Austurstræti 20

★★★★☆☆☆

Named after one of Iceland's most famous sports commentators, Bjarni Fel is an adequately equipped sports bar conveniently located at the bottom of Austurstræti. The bar offers multiple strategically placed flat screen TVs that feature a wide variety of sports events daily. The bar itself though is lacking a bit in character and the selection of booze is mediocre. But if all other bars have filled up during important matches, Bjarni Fel is a sure bet for getting a nice seat with a good view.

890 1100 1090

Music is not a priority and during games and events you will hear live commentary.

Young (20s-30s).

Sports hungry Icelanders of all ages, the occasional lost tourist.

They have an excellent covered patio that makes for one of the best semi-indoor smoking areas in the city when the weather gets bad.

The ball hits the net on a television set. ☹ – RJH

Boston

Laugavegur 28b

★★★★☆☆☆

Boston is the heir to many of the late Sirkus regulars (that bar closed in 2008). The décor is more grown-up—sort of dark, trashy, gothic chic—and the guests aren't exactly kittens anymore. At times, the atmosphere can feel a bit sketchy due to overwhelming drunkenness and other sorts of intoxication.

900 1300 900

The music depends on the DJ. Most of them are of the electronic/house variety. They rock DJs like KGB and DJ Kári stops through every now and again on weekends.

Young (20s-30s).

Washed-up artists, friendly drug dealers, fashionistas, bohemians, writers, grungy rock types, party animals, aging party animals, people with drinking problems.

Boston has a really nice backdoor patio and an expensive homoerotic photograph framed in bulletproof glass and is allegedly owned by Björk.

The right kind of sketchy. ☹ – AB

Bunk Bar

Laugavegur 28

★★★★☆☆☆

It's like a cheap version of KEX with a more Patrick Bateman-y vibe. As it is attached to a hostel, the overtly patriotic touch is understandable. It's a bit cramped and noisy and it's hard to get to the bathrooms. The staff is nice though—friendly, efficient and courteous.

900 1000 900

Music is neither here nor there. There's nothing distinct and obtrusive about it. It's probably an iPod playlist with some mainstream '80s music and dickish saxophone music.

Young (20s-30s).

Yuppies with expensive beanie caps and fancy shirts, sporty looking tourists, general "cool" types.

It has a nice selection of bottled

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beers and beautiful glass beer steins that make you want to slam them down on the solid wood tables.

Forced yuppie-ism and old school patriotism. ☹ – RL

Café Amsterdam ☀
Hafnarstræti 5



★★★☆☆☆

Amsterdam is a dive bar, pure and simple—neon lights, the smell of stale beer, worn wooden tables, high bar stools, slot machines, chipped paintwork, and the vague suspicion that anything you touch might be sticky or give you a splinter. On a drunken night out at Airwaves, this place can be raucous, ear-splitting fun. At 22:00 on the Saturday night Grapevine dropped by, the barman was chatting to his mate—the only other person in the bar—and the atmosphere would best be described as "funereal."

🍺 950 🍷 1500 🍸 1200

🎵 They play classic rock and americana (Bob Dylan, Steppenwolf, Rolling Stones). There's a stage and a sound system for live music.

🕒 20-30 Young (20s-30s).

👤 Rockers, punks, crimson-cheeked career drinkers and slightly less crimson-cheeked future career drinkers, stray tourists, rough lads/hardcases, and (apparently) bikers—although we didn't see any, or anyone else at all, for that matter.

★ The slot machines seemed interesting, but after we'd emptied our pockets of change and walked over, it became apparent that the slots in question were in fact credit-card slots, and instead of dispensing change, the machines spit out a receipt that is then swapped for the winnings at the bar. Way too much effort.

On certain nights, Amsterdam can provide a decent party, but this visit was a grim experience. ☹ – JR

Café Paris
Austurstræti 14

★★★★☆☆

This place is better known as a daytime café than a bar although it offers an impressive choice of cocktails. It offers excellent outdoor seating, good service and an open kitchen till 23:00. People here seem extremely well mannered, (maybe it's the high percentage of tourists?) and the place is far from rowdy. It's not really the place for a crazy night out but can make for a good place to warm up.

🍺 950 🍷 1100 🍸 950

🎵 Café Paris have variable playlists consisting mainly of soft and easy pop music and oldies.

🕒 20-30 Older(40+).

👤 Tourists, poets, journalists, out-of-towners.

★ Café Paris has great outdoor seating in one of the best locations in town, offering a view in three directions in the heart of Reykjavík.

A basic, cosy café that offers a good selection of beers and cocktails. ☹ – HH

Café Rosenberg
Klapparstígur 25



★★★★★☆☆

Rosenberg is a wooden haven for jazz and blues, sophistication and goodness. Instruments adorn the walls and bands are on every night. I feel like I should wear gloves and a bowler hat, or make some sort of statement of sophistication. I resort to saying "darling" every five seconds.

🍺 800 🍷 1150 🍸 900

🎵 Live jazz, blues, and other bands who play instruments generally made of wood. It often costs to get in, but it is more often than not worth it.

🕒 20-30 Older (40+).

👤 People over thirty, music lovers, Icelanders.

★ The toilets are always clean. There is always enough toilet paper. And there are lots of clean mirrors. There is a nice, sheltered smoking area in the front of the place, although it might be a bit annoying for non-smokers walking in (but you could hold your breath and run for it).

A beacon of warmth and sophistication, peppered with the best of Icelandic music. ☹ – AG

Celtic Cross ☀
Hverfisgata 26



★★★☆☆☆

Maybe if I had come later, I wouldn't have to endure this troubadour. I can see why people around me are getting sloppy. It's the only thing to do when confronted by such painful caterwauling. It's still really early, but people aren't wasting any time to get as obnoxious as possible. When the first beer glass whizzes through the air, that's when it's time to go.

🍺 900 🍷 1000 🍸 1000

🎵 "I wanna knoooooove you ever seen the rain?"

🕒 20-30 Older(40+).

👤 Middle-aged people desperately clinging to their partying youth, drunken tourists who like Irish bars, British people, singers from local metal bands, sad dads, cougar moms, nondescript drinkers.

★ Tucked away to the right of the bar is a funeral parlour, which can be somewhat seen from Hverfisgata as "Finnegan's Funeral Home." It's like something out of a Tim Burton movie.

In the words of Kent Brockman: "All this drinking, violence, destruction of property. Are these the things we think of when we think of the Irish?" ☹ – RL

Center Hotel - Plaza
Aðalstræti 4

★★★☆☆☆

The bar at Center Hotel Plaza is your typical hotel bar only without any characteristics. It seems to exist solely to fulfil a hotel's requirement to boast a bar.

🍺 900 🍷 1200 🍸 1100

🎵 A subtle set of Icelandic background music, Sigur Rós, Of Monsters and Men and Emiliana Torrini. You can expect something Icelandic that has made it onto the Billboard.

🕒 20-30 Young (20s-30s)

👤 Tourists.

★ It's a standard bar, nothing more, nothing less. As their demography is pretty wide, being a hotel and all, they seem to want to please everybody and it's that need that renders this bar dull.

It's hard to deduce whether it's a lobby or a bar. ☹ – SKK

Den Danske Kro ☀
Ingólfsstræti 3



★★★★☆☆

The Danish bar is packed during happy hour all days of the week, not in small part due to a spacious patio out front. It's a great spot for afternoon drinking in the sun; however this also means that people get quite drunk quite early. It was pouring this Friday, which made it a bit more crowded inside and that may have amplified the feeling that somebody would be leaving soon in the back of a police car with a smashed guitar round their neck.

🍺 950 🍷 1300 🍸 1000

🎵 This is the prime venue to catch troubadours, acoustic renditions of Eurovision songs. College rock and Bowie and Beatles classics can be heard nearly every night—much to their neighbours' dismay.

🕒 20-30 Older (40+).

👤 People with drinking problems, journalists and media people, tourists, the odd poet, Danes, office workers on their way home.

★ You can play darts if space allows.

Happy hour is great, but the evenings are harder to swallow. ☹ – AB

Dillon Whiskey Bar
Laugavegur 30



★★★★☆☆

Grubby and grungy, but harmless and friendly. Dillon is a shelter for

rockers and metalheads. It's kind of gross, but not to the point of the toilets in 'Trainspotting.' The staff give off a familial vibe and the patrons are seemingly all regulars.

🍺 900 🍷 1000 🍸 1000

🎵 Rock, metal, punk, "TNT" by ACDC.

🕒 20-30 Young (20s-30s).

👤 Metalheads, Krummi Björgvins, Atli Stones, Amma Rock, punks, nerds, dweebs, doofuses, sweethearts, lost souls.

★ There is a huge selection of whiskey on the bar and a long and detailed menu poster up on the wall. Also, the second floor smoking balconies usually get more crowded than indoors, even on rainy nights.

Cause it's TNT! It's dy-no-mite! ☹ – RL

Dolly
Hafnarstræti 4

★★★★☆☆

Dolly was in full blown party gear when we arrived at the scene. The place was packed with young people dancing around to insanely loud electronic music and the line outside stretched the length of the bar. The bar offers a very normal drinks selection but the beer tasted a little stale and off. I would definitely go for a bottled beer at this particular venue. But Dolly has recently gone through a change in atmosphere as the place has been filling up with large heavy set men and their makeup smeared girlfriends. This is a change we would not like to see taken further and hope that Dolly is returned to its original younger and slightly more innocent crowd.

🍺 850 🍷 1200 🍸 1000

🎵 Great electric music and good DJs on weekends.

🕒 20-30 Young (20s-30s).

👤 The young crowd, but recently the place has been filling up with beefy jock types.

★ They have great music during the weekends.

Young, but rapidly losing its innocence. ☹ – RJH

Dubliner ☀
Hafnarstræti 1-3

★★★★☆☆

Dubliner is a classic Irish Pub. The atmosphere is laid back and easy going and the interior is actually pretty tasteful. The clientele usually comprised of older Icelandic drinkers of both genders and also foreign enthusiasts of Irish pub culture. They serve a nice selection of beers on tap, although they are quite pricey, and have an old dartboard that actually sees use. That said, the place kind of falls apart when you realize that every night, and I mean EVERY night, the place offers live music in the form of a troubadour. But if you like this kind of atmosphere and this kind of music, you will find the Dubliner to be a very agreeable bar.

🍺 1000 🍷 1290 🍸 1300

🎵 Troubadours

🕒 20-30 Older (40+)

👤 Older Icelanders and Irish pub enthusiasts

★ A man in a fedora singing "Wonderwall."

I'll have another pint of plain and listen to the guitars as I gently weep. ☹ – RJH

English Pub ☀
Austurstræti 12A

★★★★☆☆

Spacious enough to get rowdy but clean and proper enough to stay

dignified, this is the kind of place people should go for after-work drinks with their mates, except people don't really do that here so much. It's super busy on this windy and rainy night with people ducking in for cover from both the front and back entrances.

🍺 950 🍷 1400 🍸 1100

🎵 A gaggle of troubadour gents crooning mainstream rock and pop tunes, heavy on the UK angle of course. Not just Oasis though! Sometimes they'll throw in a song by The Cure or Stone Roses.

🕒 20-30 Young (20s-50s).

👤 Professional drinkers, British expats, troubadour enthusiasts, early-bird tourists, out of work bankers, bros, hens.

★ There's a wheel of fortune where you can spin to win up to one metre of beer, a spacious back patio on Austurvöllur that fills up quickly on sunny days and nights, and complicated swinging bathroom doors.

All in all it's just another bar on the crawl. ☹ – RL

Faktorý ☀
Smíðjústigur 6



★★★★☆☆

Faktorý is exceptionally cool inside and out. Just off the main strip of Laugavegur, it's schmooze-y Manhattan-style lounge is tempered by a foosball table and very kind bartenders who smile sweetly when they take your empty glass. The eclectic musical line-up each weekend attracts a variety of people, which keeps the place interesting.

🍺 800 🍷 1000 🍸 1000

🎵 Faktorý is a jack of all trades when it comes to music - little of this, little of that - bodda bing bodda boom. There's a stage for live music, and the default playlist is interesting and dreamy. Plus, the free jazz show on Sunday evenings is a great way to end a weekend.

🕒 20-30 Young(20s-30s).

👤 Musicians (so basically any native Icelander), guys in sports coats and jeans, likeable hipsters, classy (or at least reasonable) folks, nicotine addicts.

★ One of Faktorý's best features is its spacious, graffiti-adorned front yard. It makes you feel like you are hanging out at a quirky, off-the-beaten-path house party.

Mi Faktorý es su Faktorý. ☹ – SS

Gallery Bar (Hótel Holt)
Bergstaðastræti 37

★★★★☆☆

This is an old school hotel with a '50s rat pack feel to it—dark decor, leather couches, dim panelling, cosy fireplaces and Iceland's finest art on the walls. We feel at home immediately although the bar is almost empty when we visit. The service is impeccable and the drinks are as good as they get. It doesn't need more than that to make it one of my favourite spots.

🍺 850 🍷 1000 🍸 1390

🎵 A mixture of gangster hip hop, samba and classical jazz.

🕒 20-30 Older (40+).

👤 Tourists, artsy fartsies, business

people, patrons of the arts, writers, poets, suits.

- ☆ Holt is kind on the eyes. As you sip on your excellent drink, you're surrounded by the brilliance of Kjarval as well as other Icelandic masters of the visual arts. So the Gallery Bar really delivers.

A hardboiled hangout for every aficionado of cool. ☹ – SKK

Glaumbar


Tryggvagata 20

★★☆☆☆☆

Glaumbar is technically a sports bar, but looks and feels more like a ship's converted poop deck. There's a centre bar with dimly lit seating around the periphery that makes it easy for anyone to snuggle up to you when you aren't asking for it. The two of you then have the privilege of watching the very to absurdly drunk groove in the small dance area near the bow. Glaumbar is not a place one goes to see and be seen. If someone really understands the bar scene in Reykjavik, he or she will go to get a cheap beer and get the hell out.

 350  800  N/A

- 🎵 Almost exclusively DJ remixes of other, already heavily auto-tuned, sexually-charged tunes.

 Young (20s-30s).

- 👤 Dudes, Wall Street weekend party boys, university students, 101 rats, middle-aged fellas busting out the old pick up lines, people trying to watch the damn match!, grown men who get competitive about foosball, Julian Assange, and anyone looking for one of the cheapest beers in town.

- ☆ There's a crowd-pleasing foosball table, pinball machine, grimy bathrooms, and very cheap beer (the same price as a Reykjavik bus ticket).

All dudes on the poop deck! ☹ – SS



Harlem

Tryggvagata 22




★★★★★★

Harlem's walls are essentially a permanent exhibition of some of the best contemporary Icelandic artists. Fittingly, young artists and art students make up a considerable chunk of the crowd. They engage in intensive table dancing, pouring beer on the floor, breaking glass and feeling like sardines. There are some good deals at the bar in the early evening but things don't pick up till well after 1:00 AM.

 750  1200  1050

- 🎵 House music, R&B, hip-hop and poppier party and rock music can all be heard depending on who's behind the decks.

 Young (20s-30s).

- 👤 Young artists, art students, university students, musicians, tourists, expats, graphic designers, cultural professionals.

- ☆ They have a foosball table and crazy paintings on the walls.

Cute, arty kids dancing on elevated surfaces. ☹ – AB

Hemmi og Valdi

Laugavegur 21




★★★★★☆☆

Even though it's pretty empty at this point in the evening, Hemmi og Valdi never feels lonely. Perhaps that's because its wooden walls breathe sweat generated by pan-faced, body-jerking hipsters. Although the seating is uncomfortable it's a good place for chatting, that is, until it becomes an over-crowded cesspit of skinny people wearing baseball caps listening to electronic (whatever that means) music. Then the smoking area is quite nice, being as it is to the side of the building.

 750  1000  980

- 🎵 It's a live music bar with lots of DJ sets and occasional bands with instruments. Grapevine Grassroots is a combination of music and performance art that is usually a good laugh.

 Young (20s-30s).

- 👤 101 rats; artsy fartsters, musicians.

- ☆ They have a toilet that is big and gross with no mirror and a toilet that is small and gross with a tiny mirror. There's a smoking area with seats.

Hemmi og Valdi is a combination of flaws that make it feel local and homely. ☹ – AG

Hótel 101 Bar

Hverfisgata 10

★★☆☆☆☆

This place is pretentious and it takes you up to 25 minutes to order a beer.

 950  1350  1290

- 🎵 80s Soft Rock.

 Older (40+).

- 👤 Business people, bankers.

- ☆ You can't order a drink from the bar.

A pretentious and un-cosy hotel bar. ☹ – OD

Hressingarskálinn (Hressó)


Austurstræti 20

★★★★☆☆

The bar recently underwent a bit of a facelift with snazzy colourful cushions replacing worn leather booths. There are plenty of seats here during the day, but they clear half of them out on late weekend nights. The place is refreshingly free of pretentious young things parading their new indoor sunglasses and it's not a bad choice if you're a person looking to meet a young, attractive gal, perhaps showing a little bit too much cleavage so long as you are willing to overlook that she isn't the most engaging conversationalist. The same goes for the people looking to meet young, buff men in low-cut t-shirts, so long as you don't mind that they seem to bathe in cologne.

 890  1100  1090

- 🎵 Expect troubadours, cover bands or live pub rock for the first half of the night and Euro-techno, hip-hop and Eurovision classics for the latter half.

 Young (20s-30s).

- 👤 By day, a very mixed crowd—tourists, university students, professionals, bums, grandparents, teens on a comedown, Grapevine staff.

At night, your basic Icelander—The Real Iceland, suburbanites, out-of-towners, fishermen, the tribal-tattooed brigade, average Joes, average Janes, floozies, students, single mothers on an odd night out, people on stag nights and hen nights.

- ☆ They have a large outdoor area in the back which is great in the summer and is sometimes used to host special events. They also feature a covered, heated-up smoking area (which is fucking awesome). The place is generally quite roomy, pretty clean and not too grimy (although that changes as the night goes on).

A place to go when you're in high spirits and valuing romantic conquest over good music. ☹ – RE

Kaffibarinn

Bergstaðastræti 1




★★★★★★

A cosy pub and coffee house by day, Kaffibarinn by night transforms into the Reykjavik party that never ends. Its steamy windows vibrate with pounding music from midweek through the weekend, when there's often a queue after midnight. At that point, the atmospheric main bar area becomes a packed dance floor, beyond which there's a crowded backroom, a smoking yard, and a second floor for overspill. As well as the assembled best and brightest of 101, the reputation of the place attracts its fair share of suits and celebrities, drunks and oddballs. You could be standing next to anyone.

 750  1150  800

- 🎵 Peak-time DJs tend towards the Pitchfork end of dubstep, electro and house in recent times. There are various DJs most nights, and in the daytime you can expect current sounds like Wild Nothing, Ariel Pink, or whatever the bar staff are into.

 Young (20s-30s)

- 👤 101 rats, grizzly regulars, legends, dancing queens, the bright and the beautiful, hipster locals, dressed-up tourists, fresh-faced up 'n' comers, artists, writers, Icelandic pop stars, bohemians, seen-it-all cynics, professional drinkers, musicians, old-timers, wastoids, scene royalty, wide-eyed Islandophiles.

- ☆ Kaffibarinn is an iconic kind of joint: atmospheric, careworn and dark, with maroon wooden walls, cosy seating, candlelight, corners to hide in, free wi-fi, free waffles on Sundays, and something good happening most nights.

A Reykjavik institution—amidst an ever-changing array of local clubs and bars, Kaffibarinn remains the evergreen centre of the city's nightlife. ☹ – JR

Kaffi Sólón


Vegamótastígur 4

★★★★☆☆

Kaffi Sólón is an upscale establishment that still maintains a laidback, casual, and comfortable aura, as long as you keep it classy. It's more of a restaurant than a bar, but like every other restaurant, coffee shop, bookstore, church, gas station, and house in Reykjavik, it transforms into a bar on Friday and Saturday nights.

 750  2100  990

- 🎵 A little Sinatra, a little misc. soft jazz, never unpleasant.

 Older (40+)

- 👤 People who go to meetings, well-behaved tourists, the engaged couple having that awkward dinner with the stoic father-in-law.

- ☆ It has a high, beautiful ceiling (look up), tables lit by pretty candles, decorated with expensive art that's also for sale.



Go to Prikíð to get a hook up, go to Kaffi Sólón to go on a date (maybe with a person, maybe just with the food). ☹ – SS

Kaldi


Laugarvegur 20b

★★★★☆☆

Chilled and friendly bar that is perfect to start the evening at.

 1000  1100  1100

- 🎵 Ambitious electro-pop.

 Young (20s-30s).

- 👤 Trendy graduate students.

- ☆ Freshly brewed beer.

It's perfect for beer lovers. ☹ – ÓD

KEX Hostel


Skúlagata 28

★★★★★★

KEX is a hostel, and feels like a hostel. This sounds awful, but isn't. The tourists are young, hot, and mostly pleasant, and the bar is quickly becoming a favourite amongst locals as well. The bar is spacious and filled with cool vintage knick-knacks, including old sewing tables. The décor and ambiance are cool but you won't feel like you're in Williamsburg, which is my biggest fear in basically any city. KEX isn't just a good bar because it's one of relatively few choices in a relatively tiny city; it would be a good bar in any city, but has a dreamy view of the sea that is truly Reykjavik.

 950  1100  800

- 🎵 The music is very quiet if there isn't a live band, and seems to be mostly country and folk.

 Young (20s-30s).

- 👤 Girls with bangs (about 50% are tourists), dudes with beards (about 50% are tourists), old guys who look like they're into critical theory and BDSM (about 50% are tourists).

- ☆ KEX has a menu of affordable treats, including full meals that are too good to be fairly called "bar food."

I would have sex with at least 65% of the people in KEX and would drink there even if this figure were much lower. ☹ – AS

Kiki


Laugavegur 22

★★★★☆☆

Kiki feels very exclusive because it's small, up a dark flight of stairs, and only open two nights a week (Friday and Saturday). The loud music and intimate atmosphere is conducive to dancing, mingling, and maybe taking somebody home, but the place never quite fills up, thus never quite reaches its full potential. The drink prices are exceptionally high, which might be because Kiki, the only gay club in town at the moment, has no competition.

 900  2000  2000

- 🎵 Very loud and consistently up-beat pop.

 Young (20s-30s)

- 👤 Cute middle aged gay couples, folks from LGBTQ tour groups, young guys who've just come out, people who don't know it's a gay

bar, women.

- ☆ It's Reykjavik's only gay club, so it's got that going for it.

They've got that painted rainbow behind the bar! ☹ – SS

Kaffi Zimsen


Hafnarstræti 18

★★☆☆☆☆

At the time of arrival, a young crowd has filled the dance floor, dancing stylishly to Beyoncé songs crossfading into each other. One mainstream beat gives way to the next, and a fresh batch of just 20 somethings make out furiously. Excited youths come in waves, hoping to get lucky. Do not show up before 1:00 AM unless you are desperate for a heart to heart with staff members.

 850  1100  900

- 🎵 Zimsen plays ultra-mainstream music as if it were hip, and they play it very loudly. If you can't dance to it, and haven't heard it on at least five different radio stations, you won't hear it at Zimsen. DJs freshen the place up during the week, but you will get exactly the music you expect during the weekends.

 Young (20-30s).

- 👤 Barely legal teenagers who stay up all night to get lucky, professional dancers, people who wish they were professional dancers, well-dressed knobs who desperately want to prove themselves, kids so young they make anyone from the '80s feel fossilised.

- ☆ It features a large dance floor filled with kids who've all put on their best threads in the hopes of impressing. There is a quiet corner where you might be able to attempt conversation with your newly found date.

The relentless pursuit of predictable, enjoyable hedonism. ☹ – TGB

Kofi Tómasar Frænda (Kofinn)


Laugavegur 2

★★★★☆☆

What is a completely unassuming daytime coffee shop and eatery turns into a sloppy, top-40 remix, off-beat thrusting and fist pumping disaster in the night-time. I can't tell who is local and who is a tourist because everyone is wearing a Gore-Tex jacket, but their pants look like they're from Dressman.

 900  1000  1000

- 🎵 Overly dedicated DJs who take utempoing "Gangam Style" and "Get Lucky" way too seriously.

 Too young (under 20)

- 👤 Mainstream enthusiasts who are really into Beyoncé remixes, teenagers, middle-aged questionable tourists, guys who wear unbuttoned polo shirts without a coat, one guy dressed head to toe in Jamaican flag colours, the entire morning staff from Hressó!

- ☆ They serve sushi from the restaurant upstairs, Sakebarinn, and have Viking's special Sumaröl ("Summer beer") on tap.

I've made a huge mistake. ☹ – RL

Kolabrutin

Austurbakki 2

★★☆☆☆☆

While Kolabrutin is a prestigious fine-dining restaurant on the top floor of Harpa, its cocktail bar seems to be a neglected child of the fancy resto. What used to be the go-to spot to get a marvellously composed cocktail is now nothing but an unattended reminder of what once was—dirty tables, crappy service and bad cocktails.

 900  1300  1100

- 🎵 Lounge-ish background beat.

- Young (20s-30s)
- Bankers, tourists, pseudo-celebs, celebs, money-people, athletes.
- They market their ambitious cocktail lab, but nowadays their fancy bar only seems to play host to a youth club of uninterested, inadequate barkeeps who act like you're an intruder when you dare to interrupt their gossip-session and ASK for service.

The ruins of Kolabrautin's former glory, an overpriced catastrophe of cocktails. ☹ – SKK

Laundromat Café
Austurstræti 9



★★★★★☆☆

Laundromat is a seamless blend between bar and café. Where others furrow their brows if you order a coffee after their lights have dimmed, Laundromat smiles warmly and offers you milk and sugar. The result is a fun, bubbly pot of the drunk, happy, and caffeinated. The "DIY" aesthetic invites a lot of camera clicking, so prepare yourself for background cameos on a lot of hip couples' travel blogs.

850 1300 1000

All the boom-tick-boom you could need without the hi-hat and the unce-unce-unce. Well known "post-dubbers" like James Blake, Flying Lotus, and Mount Kimbie made frequent stereo appearances.

Young (20-30s)

Travelling couples with oversized cameras, travelling couples with undersized cameras (iPhones), nice sweaters, good conversationalists.

A functioning Laundromat! Go figure.

A warm café latte with a shot of whiskey. ☹ – PKY

Le Chateaux des dix/ Tíu Dropar
Laugavegur 27



★★★★★☆☆

Walking into this bar is probably how Owen Wilson's character feels in "Midnight In Paris," as he strolls through the streets and it suddenly becomes the 1920s with all its romance, mystery, coy intimacy and a touch of highbrow debauchery. It's the perfect place for private conversations in a public place.

900 1000 1000

Francophone - lots of Edith Piaf, Charles Aznavour and Serge Gainsbourg, among others. On weekends, a pianist comes in to play all the French standards on

- the ivories.
- Young (20s-30s)
- Intellectual lushes, artsies and fartsies, understated glamorous types who appreciate candlelight over strobe lights, Francophones, Francophiles, poets, expats.
- Candlelight, live piano music (without vocals), extensive wine selection with special prices on different bottles every night, charcuterie plates of various meats, cheeses and olives on offer (3,000 ISK), actual French people.

C'est merveilleux! ☹ – RL

Lebowski Bar ☀
Laugavegur 20a

★★★★☆☆

This theme bar named for the iconic Coen Brothers movie greatly achieves their shtick without slapping you in the face with it or making you abide. There's no real type or style to it. It's kind of sloppy but still cosy, like a nice open bathrobe paired with Bermuda shorts and sandals. The place is split into sections though and they really could use something to tie the room together, man.

950 1400 1100

Sad dad rock, bluesy tunes from the Bayou, Led Zepellin, CCR, Dire Straits.

Young (20s-30s)

Suburbanites, tourists, burger lovers, football fans, tattoo nerds, rockers.

They offer 18 varieties of White Russian and have a Lebowski-themed diner in the back.

It's a pretty cool place. But that's just, like, my opinion, man... ☹ – RL

Litla Gula Hænan
Laugavegur 22

★★★★★☆☆

The newest occupant of the legendary location that some know permanently as 22, Litla Gula Hænan is an unofficial queer bar where you can go for a chat, bump into friends and quickly make some new ones! It's a one-man operation by manager-bartender-cleaner-booker-playlistmaker Ísar Logi who is arguably the nicest barman in town. He's always smiling!

900 1000 900

Besides some themed DJ nights, mostly electronic and darkwave, the music comes off of Ísar Logi's iPod and is a fun combination of retro and more recent music that would be played ironically in other places (like Robert Palmer) but is 100% sincere here! Volume is never too loud so conversation isn't interrupted, but you'll never strain to hear when "Buffalo Stance" by Neneh Cherry comes on.

Young (20s-30s)

Single ladies, cute boys, cool queers, sporty gays, bears, Grapevine interns, Drag King champion Mobus, nice slobes, funny drunks, lonely hearts, elder-goths, foosball fascists, foosball anarchists.

The bar features colourful decoration and a striking renovation on the bathrooms it inherited from its predecessors (Bakkus, Trúno, Karamba, etc.). Hand written announcements on the windows let passers-by know what is up that night. Ísar makes this crazy house cocktail with a secret recipe involving five different liqueurs called the Yellow Chicken (1,300 ISK). It will fuck you up.

A fun, welcoming and relaxed bar for friends and loners alike, where jerks and bad behaviour are not tolerated. ☹ – RL

Live Pub
Frakkastígur 8

★★★☆☆☆☆

Early in the evening (21:00 is very early for Reykjavík), this place is desolate and depressing. Later in the evening, after some misguided drunk people trickle in for karaoke, it might as well be desolate and is deeply, terribly depressing. There is an unidentifiable suspicious smell. Perhaps this would be a good place to film a horror movie.

800 1000 1000

Before karaoke starts, Live Pub plays the worst of whatever was playing ten years ago. The cheeriness of the music is rendered disturbing by the cheerless environment.

Young (20s-30s)

Would-be serial killers, tourists (by accident), the very drunk (by accident).

There is a foosball table, and peanuts (eat at your own risk).

Don't say you weren't warned. ☹ – AS

Loft Hostel
Bankastræti 7

★★★★★☆☆

This new bar on the main drag of downtown is the heart that beats in the chest of Loft Hostel, with a space that is both open and communal but with quaint little nooks to tuck yourself into. The bar's design is really reminiscent of Micro Bar, but has a cool collection of those trendy filter coffee carafes as decoration. Super friendly staff but too few bathrooms make for long waits on busy nights!

850 1200 1100

Playlists made by the staff, new Icelandic albums and frequent live shows by some of the coolest local bands right now.

Young (20s-30s)

101 rats, artsy types, writers, cartoonists, band people, hostel residents, hip tourists, staff members' babies.

A huge top floor balcony overlooking Bankastræti, with a crazy nice view of the city. Plus, an actual elevator!

Damn now I kinda wanna stay here! ☹ – RL

Loftið
Austurstræti 9

★★★★★☆☆

Loftið is a new addition to the Reykjavík nightlife and offers some of the best cocktails to be had in the city. On a typical weekend you will find this place filled with older Icelandic yuppies or older yuppie foreigners swallowing old and expensive alcohol dressed like the prosperity period of 2006 never ended. This vibe is achieved with a super strict entry policy and a dress code that makes no exceptions. This we found out in practice when the bar turned down our original reviewer who showed up wearing a hoodie, requiring that we send a substitute. But if you have the money and the clothes, this bar offers good service and excellent quality beverages.

1000 1500 1300

Great electric music, but sadly no one is dancing.

Older (40+)

The older rich people of Iceland.

They offer superb cocktails.

Excellent drinks for the select few. ☹ – RJH

Mánabár
Hverfisgata 20



★★★★☆☆

Mánabár seems to be having an identity crisis: The décor is all cosy couches and old chairs and low lamplight under cosmic ceilings and wallpaper, but there's nobody there on weekdays and on the weekends it's (apparently) half-full of trashy teenagers dancing to even trashier music. All of which is a shame because the place is actually quite inviting, reasonably priced, and could serve as both a great café and bar if someone just took charge and gave this business direction.

800 1100 1000

The occasional live jazz group or an impromptu piano singer-songwriter rehearsal on weekdays. Top 40 and 'EDM' on the weekends.

Too Young (under 20)

Invisible people, tanning machines, top 40 lovers, off-duty troubadours, people who like to play the piano but don't have one at home

There's A GRAND PIANO that anyone is free to play. Beat that!

Nothing but potential. ☹ – AB

Micro Bar
Austurstræti 6

★★★★★☆☆

Located behind the lobby of Center Hotel, Micro Bar's atmosphere is tasteful. It's an easy-going place with a knowledgeable, polite staff. There's a light chatter and a general satisfaction in the air. The walls are adorned with demure mountains and what look like tiny Bigfoots painted by Huggleikur Dagsson, Iceland's most famous vulgar/controversial/political cartoonist. We're smugly NOT drinking Viking beer with big bubbles in it, which by the way means the pipes never get cleaned. We're supporting Icelandic microbreweries without having to sit in a bar that looks like it was decorated by the children of Korn listening to Coldplay.

900 1200 1100

I never really notice it. It's probably death-metal.

Young (20s-30s)

Artsy fartsies, business people/bankers, journos, musicians, tourists.

They offer a train of eight draught beer tasters that comes with explanations of where it's from, how it's brewed, how it's meant to taste and the history of beer culture in Iceland. An enjoyable experience, even if you are sitting with a German who knows the difference between an IPA and a Pilsner.

The toilet, unlike in any other bar in Reykjavík, is clean. That's probably because it belongs to the hotel. On the downside, it's not really in the bar, but down a load of stairs. That's okay if you don't think that the toilet makes the bar.

A bar for people who like the taste of beer. ☹ – AG

Næsti Bar
Ingólfsstræti 1a

★★★★☆☆

Næsti Bar used to be an actor's hangout where philosophy and the arts were discussed, vino was consumed and not a single musical tone was ever heard. It's different nowadays and their crowd is more

or less under or around 20, and far from being of the artsy kind. The service is however outstanding and the drinks are both decent and cheap, albeit their promotional laminated A4 looks like a Bónus ad.

900 1100 1100

The DJ is usually an iPod behind the bar boasting playlists with the top charts.

Too Young (under 20)

Younglings, young-politicians, liberals, media people, high-schoolers.

Offers, offers, offers! Nice, cheap drinks, and the mood can be both laidback and rowdy.

A great place to get cheap, good drinks—if you don't mind suited-up youngsters. ☹ – SKK

Obladi Oblada ☀
Frakkastígur 10

750 110 800

N/A

N/A

N/A

N/A

Due to a mistake in the review process, we have taken our review of Obladi Oblada out of the Bar Guide in the online versions of this issue. ☹

Prikið
Bankastræti 12



★★★★★☆☆

One of the oldest cafés in Reykjavík, Prikið morphs into a carnival at night where young wildcats clash together with old hip hop strong-houses. When we pop in, that change is about to take place—we're in the twilight zone. The steady beat coming out of the PAs is slowly but surely taking over the atmosphere and what was a buzz is becoming a full-on drunkenness.

750 1090 N/A

Everything with a steady beat and rhymes from Nicki Minaj to Slick Rick.

Young (20s-30s)

Hipsters, hip-hoppers, artsy fartsies, youngsters, bimpos, tomcats, drinkers.

It's a good mixture of everything. Crowded dance floor, table area if you wanna take it easy and chat the night away, and 101 Reykjavík's biggest smoking patio. Plus, if you have anthropological interests, you can see a mixed demography in Prikið like nowhere else—suburbans mix in with downtown hipsters and 16-year-olds try their luck at seducing rappers in their 40s.

Whether you want to get some sweaty breakfast and a cup of joe or get completely hammered and hook up—this is the place. ☹ – SKK



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Reykjavík Beats

Hverfisgata 46

★★★★☆

During its lifespan, this bar has been a pool lounge, a gay bar, an art gallery, a bum bar and now a techno club. It always seems to attract a similar crowd though with the bro share of the clientele coming for the pool tables. The service is friendly and the prices are fair, but the recent transition into a techno club seems only half-done and not a hint of dancing occurs while the Grapevine reviewer came to visit. The pool tables were all in use though.

🍺 850 🍻 1300 🍷 850

🎵 Techno! Well, on the weekends at least. Also host concerts on some occasions.

🕒 Young (20s-30s)

👤 Poolsharks, gays, drinkers, students, lost souls, recreational drug-users

★ They have a great indoor smoking area, decent pool tables and a huge dance floor, which few dancers seem to have found as of yet.

A pool hall that wants to be a hardcore techno club on weekends. ☹ – HH

SKY Bar & Lounge

Ingólfsstræti 1

★★★★☆

This clean, nicely decorated, and comfortable lounge is on the top floor of the Centre Hotel overlooking Harpa and the water. The view is exceptional and there is only the slightest suggestion of calming music coming through hidden speakers. Here you won't dance, yell, or run into the hopelessly young and beautiful 101 rats (though SKY Bar puts on a little front with its hip bartenders). Instead you'll sit back to enjoy a symphony of European languages and a palette of attire ranging from just off the plane traveller to business executive.

🍺 650 🍻 1500 🍷 1100

🎵 What music?

🕒 Older (40+)

👤 Middle aged tourists, business executives, people on a date with their iPad, Pina Colada drinkers, more middle aged tourists.

★ Features a stunning view of the bay, and an outdoor seating area and balcony for the few days when Reykjavik warms up.

Half the cost is the view. ☹ – SS

Slippbarinn

Mýrargata 2

★★★★☆

This is not your typical hotel bar. Fancy cocktails are the place's claim to fame, but they also offer a good selection of beers. The place treads a thin line between being a fancy and cool hotel bar. The place has a nice buzz to it and is a perfect starting point for your night on the town as it closes early. It probably has the best cocktails in town and serves decent snacks as well.

🍺 900 🍻 1200 🍷 1000

🎵 The music is almost always in the background here although we hear they have occasional live gigs. Easy listening.

🕒 Older (40+)

👤 Quasi-hipsters, bankers, Icelandair staff, tourists, media and marketing people.

★ Offers interesting design details, and good booths for chatting. Sausages hang from the bar.

A hotel bar with the benefits of a fancy-yet-kind-of-cool bar. ☹ – HH

Stofan

Aðalstræti 7

★★★★☆

I'm particularly partial to drinking at home (mine or a friend's). Just sitting on the sofa with some nice tunes in the background and maybe some funny memorabilia to trade stories or make in jokes about, then sifting through LPs and quickly switching records on the hi-fi dancing in socks on the rug. This place is the closest one gets to that outside of an actual home, except you should probably keep your shoes on.

🍺 950 🍻 1450 🍷 1100

🎵 A nice mix of whatever suits the mood, usually picked by whoever's on staff. Rainy day blues to sunny day jams with a strong lean towards guitar/piano driven music rather than electro.

🕒 Young (20s-30s)

👤 Bookworms, freelancers, artists working on collaborations, journalists, cool parents, low-key rockstars, solo tourists Skyping with their families

★ Antique furniture, rugs, knick-knacks and old-timey books to give it that Funky Grandma charm.

Meet me in our living room on main street. ☹ – HH

Strawberries

Lækjargata 6a

☆☆☆☆☆

N/A

🍺 N/A 🍻 N/A 🍷 N/A

🎵 N/A

🕒 N/A

👤 N/A

★ N/A

"Not for women, not for women." ☹ – PKY

Stúdentakjallarinn

Sæmundargata 4

★★★★☆

About a fifteen minute walk from the heat of Austurstræti, Stúdentakjallarinn ("The Student's basement" at The University of Iceland) takes pride in being the little island of the bar scene. Lights are down, voices are up, but the space still fosters a healthy buzz (by 'healthy' I mean conscious, by 'buzz' I mean everybody can still form sentences) that many downtown establishments have sweat out by midnight. With cheap grub (served until 23:00), cheaper beers, and Will Smith's "Wild, Wild West" playing silently on repeat, it's a great place to kick start the night.

🍺 750 🍻 990 🍷 690

🎵 A hotlist of guilty pleasures and top 40s. The kind that one despises by day, until they're caught singing along to "lyrics they didn't even know they knew!"

🕒 Young (20s-30s)

👤 A STUDENT pub located on the UNIVERSITY campus. Take a wild, wild guess.

★ There's a colourful lounge area with exceptionally comfortable chairs for watching Will Smith. A projector that projects Will Smith onto the wall. Will Smith.

A hub of students cheersing cheap beer by day, a hub of students cheersing cheap beer by night. ☹ – PKY

Thorvaldsen

Austurstræti 8

★★☆☆☆

This is a club meets cocktail bar more than your average Icelandic dive bar. The place looks like a hole-in-a-wall when you peek in

through the door but it's actually surprisingly spacious. There are two entrances—one from Austurvöllur and one from Austurstræti. Both lead to a curving lounge bar and from there into a horse-shoe shaped dance floor that gets nice and toasty when people actually cut loose. And supposedly this is one of the places haunted by the rare and endangered "dancing Icelander" (although it was too early for that when we stop by). They do decent cocktails and feature (probably) the toughest female bartenders in Iceland.

🍺 900 🍻 1400 🍷 1000

🎵 Disco, hip-hop, samba, house music - seldom rock music.

🕒 Young (20s-30s)

👤 Clubbers, tourists, business types, people who like Capoeira Night, Samba Night, and Angolan National Day celebrations.

★ The semi-circular shape is quite distinctive, and they have an actual dance floor set aside for dancing (although it's quite small). Also, the bathrooms are clean.

A scrappy lounge bar with an ethnic sheen. ☹ – RE

Snaps

Pórsgrata 1

★★★★☆

Although primarily a restaurant or bistro, Snaps offers a great environment for a pre-"djammm" drink. This place has great service, the interior is cosy and the atmosphere friendly. Needless to say this place is usually packed with people dining so getting a seat might be a concern, especially on weekends. Snaps has probably the only bar in Reykjavik where you can enjoy oysters or devilled eggs with your drink.

🍺 950 🍻 1350 🍷 950

🎵 They play a mix of jazz and Icelandic classics. There's no live music.

🕒 Young (20s-30s)

👤 101 rats, Artsy fartsy, business people, journalists, tourists, musicians, hipsters

★ The place has really cool design and a great bar. You can watch the cooks sweat in an open kitchen while you chug an ice-cold Bríó from the tap.

A cosy bistro/bar recommended for warm-up drinks with snacks. ☹ – HH

Vegamót

Vegamótastígur 4

★★★★☆

Unlike the loud, neon Lebowksi Bar sign or the cosmic tape-work that marks Hemmi og Valdi, Vegamót's exterior gives passers-by little hint as to what's inside. This may be why walking into its throbbing hip-hop is such a pleasant surprise. The rather large building is chopped and screwed into separate rooms, each with its own level of intimacy. The only thing this bar lacks is a proper dance floor; by about 1:30 it had nearly cleared out as everybody's necks were sore from dancing in their seats.

🍺 1000 🍻 1200 🍷 900

🎵 The DJ at Vegamót was on fire, spinning, scratching and flipping all the hottest...mp3's. He really hit those MacBook keys with some heat. As for the tunes, (think: "When the pimp's in the crib ma, drop it like it's hoooot). I haven't heard that much Snoop Dogg since the early 2000s.

🕒 Young (20s-30s)

👤 People that travel in packs, people that order food while they drink

★ Vegamót's floor plan encourages exploration, with its labyrinth of sitting rooms. Also, the bathroom doors are beautiful.

Loosen up! Woah, not that much. Save that for Prikið. ☹ – PKY

Vitabar

Bergþórugata 21



★★★★☆

Vitabar feels more like a diner than a bar. At almost midnight, the crowd is more interested in greasy food than pints, but the pints are too cheap to skip. The combination of friendly servers and a total lack of irony creates a sort of family environment, albeit one where it's just fine to be belligerent.

🍺 700 🍻 1200 🍷 950

🎵 The servers keep top forty radio and inoffensive American oldies at such an unobtrusive volume that you can hear yourself chew.

🕒 Young (20s-30s)

👤 Miscellaneous drunk people in their twenties, stoners, lads, a few regulars in their 30s.

★ The (CHEAP!) burgers are more of a draw than the (CHEAP!) beer.

This isn't a hotspot, but it is the place to grab a cheeseburger and cheap pint with friends before the night really begins. ☹ – AS

Vínbarinn

Kirkjutorg 4

★★★★☆

This is the perfect lair if you want to get a glass of really good wine or try a beer you've never seen before. The atmosphere is laid back but sophisticated at the same time. It's one of the hallmarks of Icelandic bar culture.

🍺 900 🍻 1200 🍷 1100

🎵 The music is mellow and easy on the ear in the background. Jazz and alike.

🕒 Older (40+)

👤 Business people; bankers; artists, academics.

★ It offers Reykjavik's greatest selection of wine by the glass.

A must-visit for every wine connoisseur and lover of quality beer. ☹ – SKK

Ölsmiðjan

Lækjargata 10

★★★★☆

Ölsmiðjan is laid back. A single attempt at a chandelier hangs dimly over the main area, but thanks to the street-view windows lighting is more than sufficient this time of year. It's not a place to go and "get lost in the crowd." It's more a place to go on a low-pressure date with your business partner.

🍺 490 🍻 1150 🍷 950

🎵 The music plays so low you have to try to hear it. A fun game to play to endure the awkward silences while your date texts his mom or your business partner calls his wife. The tunes are all sing-along love ballads from the 50s and 60s. The kind that have overstayed their welcome, but are too charming to kick out.

🕒 Young (20s-30s)

👤 Lots of pairs, lots of men, lots of pairs of men, travellers on business that want a reason to leave their suits on for a while after the conference, students attracted to the cheap beer while pretending to be attracted to each

other.
★ An unusually large "round table" upstairs, if you're not used to such quiet music and prefer to scream conversation at your date.

Safe, comfortable, and enjoyable. Like oatmeal. ☹ – PKY

Ölstofa Kormáks & Skjaldar

Vegamótastígur 4

★★★★☆

This place is said to give you "the smell of the town" and it certainly will. It's normally full of large, bearded Icelandic males discussing all sorts of matters at '80 decibels minimum. While the music here offers more of a background buzz to the choir of tweed-clad grunts, the place is surprisingly cosy. The best smoking area in Reykjavik may easily be found here, with overhanging heat lamps to tackle Iceland's less than reliable summer. The place offers a rare house brew on tap called Bríó and the service is usually reliable.

🍺 800 🍻 N/A 🍷 N/A

🎵 You don't visit this place for the music.

🕒 Young (20s-30s)

👤 101 rats, artists, actors, writers, directors, entire whole movie crews, really, smokers.

★ This place has a great smoking area and its own brew on tap. The Bríó!

A Vikings-gone-English-gentlemen bar. ☹ – HH

Pingholtsbar

Pingholtsstræti 3-5

★★★★☆

Hidden away in a basement on a side street off of Laugavegur, you'd never stumble upon this place unless you knew what you were looking for. The sleek black interiors are somewhat austere but offer patrons so much space there's no danger of being overheard at all. In fact, it's more like a private party at a rich friend's house than a public bar. Perfect for intimate conversation.

🍺 900 🍻 1300 🍷 1100

🎵 In the short space of time that it took to finish one beer, I heard everything from Beyoncé to Leonard Cohen to Bill Withers' "Lean on Me." Fortunately the music was turned down very low so it was not a defining part of the experience.

🕒 Older (40+)

👤 Older tourists, most likely hotel guests.

★ The huge, luxurious black leather couches look great for lounging around in; you almost want to take your shoes off and make yourself at home.

This is a sleek hotel bar which is typically empty. ☹ – PP

The Drinking Problems Of The Scandinavians



Valur Gunnarsson has been following Icelandic politics closely for almost a decade, was Grapevine's first editor, and works as a journalist for various Icelandic publications.



Photos: Julia Staples

Drinks are served. We are at an annual convention of Nordic and German journalists in Helsinki, Finland. The usual topics are discussed: the debt crisis in Cyprus, gentrification in Stockholm and Berlin, the end of the war in Afghanistan. Then, the conversation turns to alcohol policy and suddenly the Nordic journalists spring to life.

"Did you know that in Sweden, we had alcohol rationing from World War I until 1955, when a ration book would allow you to buy 1.82 litres of strong liquor a month," says the Swede.

"There are some places in Norway where it is still forbidden to buy a double vodka, but you can buy two singles and mix them together," says the Norwegian.

"That is nothing," says the Finn. "Until recently in Finland, you could only buy a beer if you were also buying food, so the same sandwich was passed around all day with every drink order. Also, you could not move your drink from one table to another. You had to ask the bartender to do it for you. Otherwise, it was no longer considered a restaurant but a bar, and those were illegal."

The Dane has nothing to contribute. They are far too close to the mainland. In Denmark, you can even buy strong alcohol at food stores, whereas in the other Nordic countries you have to go to specially licensed, state-run liquor stores. In many ways, the Danes are Nordic in name only.

Being from Iceland, I know I hold the strongest card. I keep it until last.

"Did you know that in Iceland, beer was banned until 1989, but strong liquor was allowed?"

The table falls silent.

"But...but why?" asks a horrified

German colleague.

"Well, everything was banned in 1915," I say, "but then the Spanish refused to buy Icelandic fish unless the Icelanders bought Spanish wines. So wines were reintroduced in 1922 and then the strong stuff, but they never got around to legalizing beer. Everyone thought that would encourage too much drinking."

"And did it?" someone asks.

"People drink too much in either case, but after they switched to beer they seem to remember more of their Saturday nights."

"In Berlin, you can buy alcohol in kiosks and supermarkets at all times of day and night," says the German.

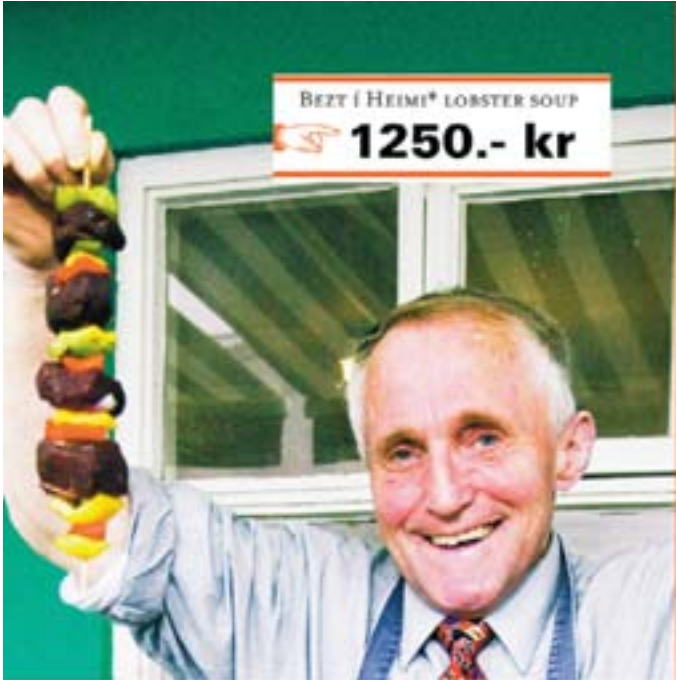
When I arrive in Berlin, I am slightly surprised by the fact that despite this, the city is still standing. The bus drivers don't seem noticeably drunk, unlike in Greenland which has some of the strictest alcohol policies in the world. And unlike in Helsinki, there is no confused looking, bleary eyed man at the airport asking me what day it is. Even on weekends, and despite all the parties, people in Berlin don't seem to get as horribly drunk as they do at home. Whatever it is that Nordic alcohol laws are supposed to accomplish, they don't seem very good at it.



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On A Date With:
Cindy Gallop

Let's Talk About Sex, Baby

Exploring the penis museum with the woman who's out to change the world through sex

by Rebecca Louder



Photo: Alisa Kalyanova

"Bloody hell. Good god... It's quite extraordinary, actually," Cindy Gallop said mere minutes after walking into the Icelandic Phallogical Museum. This was the first stop on Cindy's itinerary in Iceland, which is perhaps not surprising given that she is the brains behind MakeLoveNotPorn, a unique tech venture designed around sex and social improvement. Cindy really loves sex. Not just for engaging in it herself, but an unconditional kind of love of the act itself. She deeply cares about sex.

Of course this museum is not really about sex. It's just full of body parts—a bunch of

disembodied phalli dangling in formaldehyde, looking odd and car-crash-fascinating, like a set of shrunken heads. "I have a few items I could donate to this museum," she proudly exclaimed as she walked around.

Big explosions

Cindy was in town over the first weekend of June for the Startup Iceland conference, delivering a speech at their Sunday night dinner about MakeLoveNotPorn, as well as her other venture IfWeRanTheWorld, which aims to tap

the pool of human good intentions that never translate into action. The former one took considerable precedence, as it has been a viral hit since she launched it in a graphic TED Talk two years ago.

"I'm particularly pleased to have this opportunity to speak in Iceland because it wants to ban violent porn," Cindy said. "I have a very particular point of view on what all of us should be doing to change the things that concern people about porn, and it's not banning it. In fact, it's quite the opposite. It's opening everything up. I think it's safe to say that Iceland will not have heard my perspective before, because it's quite a rare one."

"Because of our attitude as a society towards sex, we're all ashamed and embarrassed around it. We all do it, we never talk about it and we're all screwed up about it. My main point boils down to—talk about it."

The site that accompanies the venture, MakeLoveNotPorn.com, is definitely one of a kind. Cindy presents myths from the porn world side-by-side with the reality of human sexuality, a porn world/real world construct. There you'll encounter such wisdom as:

Porn world: Saliva, all over everything, as much as possible.

Real world: Some women like having their pussies spat on, some don't. Some men like having loads of saliva all over their cocks during blowjobs, some don't. Some women like salivating all over cocks during blowjobs, some don't. How much saliva features in sex is up to you. If you're not wild about it, say so. If you are, spit away. But Cindy is quite the opposite of a pontifi-

Continues over

Dreaming Up The Breast Museum

Cindy wasn't just interested in the penis museum because of her fervour for sexuality—it turns out she's really into weird and unusual museums, like the Museum of Broken Relationships in Croatia. She only found out about the Icelandic Phallogical Museum on her way over to the country and it came as a delight, but with one little criticism.

"I do feel it should be balanced by a museum entirely dedicated to the vagina, so I'd like to lob this suggestion strongly at Iceland," she said insistently. "I saw in one of the rooms that something was donated to this museum from a vagina museum in Rotterdam, but nonetheless, Iceland needs a vagina museum!"

After telling her about last year's April Fools' joke by the town of Mosfellsbær calling for a vulva museum, I suggested the idea of an all-gender encompassing breast museum. Cindy approved.

"What would be interesting about a breast museum, and what's also interesting here and would presumably be in a vagina museum, are depictions through history," she hypothesised. "In a museum like this, you realise that this is a perfectly natural part of us. So it's great to have artefacts, carvings, things you can use in daily life. With breasts, I would be interested to find out when women had to start covering them up."

She noted that there is a woman in New York City who deliberately walks around topless in the summer to make a statement about men being able to go around shirtless but not women, even though breast tissue is all essentially the same. Cindy's also a pretty big fan of whipping her own out, but not on the streets of NYC.

"I spoke at the Cannes Advertising Festival last summer and one of the things I adore about the South of France is topless sunbathing," she said. "The minute I arrived, I dumped my stuff at the hotel, raced down the beach, ripped my top off and then I looked around. I was the only one on the beach topless! I was gobsmacked. Later I tweeted, 'France, what is going on?' and someone sent me an article which said that younger French women no longer want to sunbathe topless because they have body issues. So when I gave my talk at Cannes called 'Porn, Youth & Brands,' I said that the biggest socio-cultural influence on young people today that we don't talk about comes from porn, media, and us—the advertising industry. And that's appalling. It's France!"

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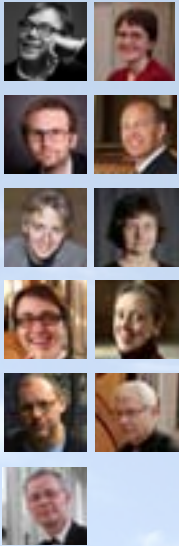
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- 28. júlí kl. 17 / July 28 at 5 pm Peter Van de Velde, Belgium
- 29. júlí kl. 20 / July 29 at 8 pm Bristol Bach Choir, Nigel Nash, organ UK
- 3. ágúst kl. 12 / August 3 at 12 noon Hans Fagius, Sweden
- 4. ágúst kl. 17 / August 4 at 5 pm Hans Fagius, Sweden
- 7. ágúst kl. 12 / August 7 at 12 noon Schola cantorum
- 10. ágúst kl. 12 / August 10 at 12 noon Björn Steinar Sólbergsson, Hallgrímskirkja
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25. júlí / July 25th	Lára Bryndis Eggertsdóttir, Árósar, Danmörk
	Fríðrik Stefánsson, Seltjarnarneskirkja
	Eygló Rúnarsdóttir, mezzosópran
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cating finger-wagger, emphasising that MakeLoveNotPorn is not anti-porn. "The issue I'm tackling isn't porn, it's the complete absence in our society of an open, honest, healthy, and authentic conversation around sex in the real world," she said, spelling out her site's tagline, 'Pro-sex, pro-porn, pro knowing the difference'. "If we had that, amongst many other benefits, it would mean that people would bring a real world mindset to the viewing of sexual entertainment."

Cindy continued: "Because of our attitude as a society towards sex, we're all ashamed and embarrassed around it. We all do it, we never talk about it and we're all screwed up about it. My main point boils down to—talk about it."

"We pride ourselves in the tech world on freedom of the internet and open access to everything for every venture. Tech world, I call bullshit."

Tight cracks

One of her goals at Startup Iceland was to encourage entrepreneurs to try to change the world through sex. "At a time when we welcome innovation and disruption in every other sector going, not enough people are designing tech ventures that could help us all have better sex," she said.

Cindy has particularly strong opinions on how difficult the tech world, the business world and the financial sector have made it for her to get MakeLoveNotPorn funded and driven. Since launching the site on no money, she has spent the past two years pitching her heart out to venture capital investors and coming up with bupkis. Finally, 18 months ago she found one private investor who put up a small amount of seed funding, and the investor remains anonymous. It still took her two months to access that money, since no financial institution would allow her to open a bank account with the word "porn" in the name, nor would any mainstream payment system, like PayPal or Amazon, allow her to set up shop.

"Many people said to me, 'Cindy, why not just change the name of your company? Call it something different, take the word porn out of it and make it an innocuous holding company. It'll make your life so much easier!'" Cindy said with an exasperated edge. "I refuse to do that. I refuse to bow to and reinforce existing societal prejudices and biases. I want to change them."

She cites that she has many friends who are feminist pornographers that are trying to change the template of hardcore violent porn and create a new dynamic. They too run into the same problems she has had with MakeLoveNotPorn in terms of access to funding, mentoring and putting payment systems in place. She is already envisioning a new tech venture—a long way off, of course—which is to start "an incubator-accelerator for radically

innovative tech startups operating in the field of sex and porn."

"We pride ourselves in the tech world on freedom of the internet and open access to everything for every venture," Cindy said. "Tech world, I call bullshit. Until they change their mindset about tech ventures that are designed to change the world through sex, all they're doing is perpetuating the same old world order closed-mindedness that they pride themselves, in theory, on exploding."

Spreading it

After seeing all the penises we could handle, we moseyed up to the Bubbletea Pancake Café where Cindy ordered some decadently sweet caramel-banana pancakes and a strawberry bubbletea. Surrounded by mothers with their 7-year olds, she went on passionately about her coital mission.

"I really want to exhort Iceland to think differently about this whole area and I would like to really move people's mindsets," she said. "There is a very unique opportunity for tech ventures in Iceland: they can be the tech community that is open-minded about all of this and seize the potential of tech ventures that can help all of humankind."

"Iceland needs to understand that you cannot ban or block porn," she continued, circling back to her solution of opening things up as far as porn in general is concerned. "It's a little like the criminalisation of the drug trade. If you force something underground you make it more attractive, as anything forbidden is, and you enable very bad things to happen. When you take the shame and embarrassment out of sex, you have a very profound impact on many areas of existence."

But as her orgasmic pancakes arrived at the table, her bleeding heart coagulated and her business-sense took over. "By the way, here's a message to Icelandic investors and financial institutions: oh my god the money you can make when you make sex socially acceptable. Sex is the single biggest market you will ever have."

The Final Member



By Donald Gislason

The Phallogical Museum of Reykjavík inducted its newest member on Friday, Sept. 28, at a reception held to celebrate the RIFF screening of 'The Final Member,' a documentary by Canadian filmmaker Zak Math. In a moving ceremony, hunter Arne Sólmundsson (right) presented a reindeer penis, on ice, to current museum curator Hjörtur Sigurðsson (left), as his father, the museum's founder Sigurður Hjartarson (centre), looks proudly on. Long housed in Húsavík, this stimulating collection moved to its new setting near Hlemmur last year, where it continues to attract a steady stream of tourists and curiosity-seekers from around the world.

Dressing Room Dicks
Wayward wanderings of a confused expat



Arni Hjörvar is a travelling musician and a genitalia art enthusiast currently living in London.



I tend to get a lot of questions about all things Icelandic when people find out that it's my nationality. The most common ones are related to Sigur Rós, Björk, elves, Aurora Borealis, and how to pronounce 'Eyjafjallajökull.' The resulting conversations get very tiring very quickly.

Occasionally, however, I face a topic that sparks some lively discussions. Currently the most enjoyable one is Iceland's Phallogical Museum. I have unfortunately not had the chance to go and enjoy its wonders, but I have most certainly found myself deep in philosophical discussions about its role and meaning.

During these discussions an almost inevitable question arises: How on earth could Iceland have the only one? First of all, you'll find more species of mammals in an average Australian backyard than you'll find in the whole of Iceland. Mammal species native to Iceland can be counted on one hand, and yet the biggest collection of penises is in Reykjavík! And second, I absolutely reject the idea that Icelanders are any more obsessed with the 11th digit than are other nations around the world.

Peculiar pricks

The world's dressing rooms support this belief of mine. Through the years they have provided a canvas for their inhabitants' pent-up creative energy. Artists never stay there for longer than a few hours, but all those rooms seem to inspire the same need for a creative outlet and therefore you'll find them full of elaborate and intriguing drawings of dongs.

These are the same kinds of cocks you're likely to find scribbled on the school desks of juvenile boys, but the ones that live on the walls of the world's dressing rooms tend to be a touch more creative. I've encountered dicks in all sorts of disguises. The pricks are often portrayed as monsters, animals, plants, clothing and fashion accessories or even various types of vehicles ranging from unicyles to spaceships. The variety is endless, and the amount

of creative thought that goes into these drawings is very compelling. But I can't help but wonder: Why penises?

Don't get me wrong, I do see a fair share of boobs and vaginas, but those tend to be accompanied by a manhood monster of some description. Female reproductive organs also tend to be drawn relatively characterless. They're normally just presented as body parts, rather than aliens or dinosaurs. I doubt I'm the only one, but I have always been of the opinion that a drawing of a uterus provides countless opportunities for characterization—Google 'cuterous' to jog your imagination. But this seems to be a yet untapped (pun intended) field of dressing room art.

Curiously absent cuterous

One possible explanation is that the vast majority of people who spend their time in these rooms are bored boys. Girls are, sadly, in a small minority when it comes to inhabitants of putrid rock club dressing rooms. Another could be that men are more inclined to express their obsession with their own genitalia. I've got no proof of this, but I do find it easier to imagine Högni sketching his private parts in the backroom of a dingy German joint than Sigríður drawing hers.

Unfortunately though, the misrepresentation of genitalia art is not the worst consequence of this gender discrepancy in rock 'n' roll. All discussions benefit from a variety of contributing voices, and like in so many other fields, rock 'n' roll is in dire need of more female input. But, as the saying goes, Rome wasn't built in a day, and we need to start somewhere.

I therefore strongly recommend that women start contributing to the newly launched International Association of Genitalia Art Enthusiasts. Further down the line this will hopefully result in a competitor to the highly revered Phallogical Museum, a celebration of all things vaginal.

There are too many dicks in Rock 'n' Roll!

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Lighthouse Recordings

Amiina release a new album



Photo: Alisa Kalyanova

In 2009, the founding members of the eclectic, multi-instrumental band Amiina were invited to play a concert in a lighthouse on the Reykjanes peninsula for an unsuspecting audience, mostly parents and children who were there for a family festival over the weekend. "It was a funny moment for us," violinist María Huld Markan Sigfúsdóttir says. "We knew that the people there knew nothing about us and were probably really surprised to see us banging saws and playing glasses."

María recalls setting up at the base of the lighthouse while visitors were scattered up six flights of stairs all the way to the top. Thanks to the natural acoustics in the building, the music Amiina performed that day filled the whole space and was as clear on the ground

floor of the lighthouse as at the top. At the end of the show, a father with two young boys approached the band. He had been standing at the very top of the lighthouse for the whole set. "I felt this strange feeling that the lighthouse was producing music instead of light,"

María recalls him saying. "I felt like the music came from down there, up to the lens, and then [was projected] out over the sea."

Inspired by this experience and poised for big changes within the band, Amiina set off, accompanied by a photographer, one spouse, one newborn baby and another about to be born, playing an intimate series of live shows in lighthouses around Iceland. Now, four years, two new members, and one album later, Amiina is releasing 'The Lighthouse Project,' a collection of new live recordings of the songs played on that tour. "It is like a memory," María says. "A photo album that you take out and flip through."

A delicate balance

Amiina was founded by Edda Rún Ólafsdóttir, Hildur Ársælsdóttir, María Huld Markan Sigfúsdóttir and Sólrún Sumarliðadóttir in the late 1990s as a string quartet with multi-layered and richly inventive instrumentation; in addition to the aforementioned saws, glasses, and string instruments, their compositions make use of xylophones, bells, synthesizers, kalimbas, and all manner of harps, among other things. There is an incredible generosity in their music—every sound, from the focal melody to the smallest chime, is given equal weight and importance. "We've always worked as though everyone had one fourth of a cake and then we put it together as a whole," María says.

"We knew that the people there knew nothing about us and were probably really surprised to see us banging saws and playing glasses."

It is, of course, a difficult balance to maintain, especially now that Amiina is a sextet, having gained drummer Magnús Tryggvason Eliassen and electronic musician Kippi Kanius in 2009. But the group has certainly benefited from this "broader sonic palette," not least during their live performances. "When you are performing, it is really nice to have power and volume on stage. When the four of us were touring together we sometimes felt exhausted," María says. "We had been playing all these delicate things, we felt out of breath from all the tiptoeing. So we really like the other side to turn the volume up."

Amiina's compositions and arrangements

develop collaboratively, often with members splitting up into pairs or small groups to work on song ideas together before presenting them to the rest of the band. "Usually we don't really talk about what we are going to do. We just do it," María says, "and we are always amazed, the outcome is always independent from us."

Reacting in the now

There are a few new singles on 'The Lighthouse Project,' but overall, the album is an opportunity for Amiina to revisit familiar songs from their debut album 'Kurr.' When asked why the band has chosen to revisit these songs and this project now, María reflects that the three years that have passed since the original lighthouse tour have given everyone involved the necessary perspective to get the most out of the material. "When we started listening to the recordings, we decided that this was too good to leave behind," she says, sometimes you have to have some distance to see where the good parts and the not so good parts are."

The band made several live recordings of each song on the album, with all of the members recording their instrumentation in the same take instead of separately, as is often the case with studio albums. This live approach makes it more musical, María says. "You have to react in the now to what's happening." The goal, of course, was to retain the intimacy of the original performances, to give the listener the feeling that they were hearing the set "in someone's living room."

Amiina is excited about releasing 'The Lighthouse Project,' their first album in three years, but they aren't by any means slowing down with their other projects. The band will be spending the next year or so working on their next studio album, and will also be performing at All Tomorrow's Parties, a music festival held at the former NATO base in Keflavík in June. They have been working on classical recordings with an American company, which is designing an app dedicated to the music of the composer Bach. Amiina has also been invited to the Cork Opera House in Ireland to collaborate with sixth grade students on musical interpretations of Amiina's music using the Indonesian gamelan. This project has cleverly been dubbed "Gamiina." Moreover, each member of Amiina has their own family life and independent projects—some musical, some not—which they cultivate outside of their work as a band.

"That's kind of our world now," María says. It is a difficult balance, but Amiina is just one element of all of our lives. It doesn't need to be the main thing; it doesn't need to dominate us. It's something that is always there and we can come in and out of. We don't have any expectations of Amiina growing bigger and more famous. We don't need that, and the music doesn't ask for it. It's just rolling there, steadily." — Larissa Kyzer

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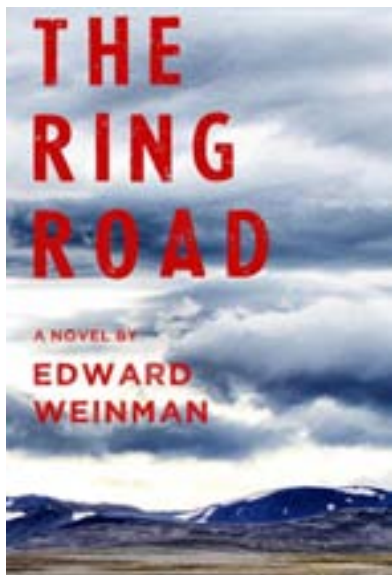


“Nobody Gets Out Of Iceland Alive”

Edward Weinman's **The Ring Road**

Edward Weinman spent eight years as a freelance journalist in Iceland, or rather, he “endur[ed] many long, dark, cold, windy, grey winters” during which he “suffered only one nervous breakdown.” It is apparently lucky that he escaped the country when he did because according to his portrayal of Iceland in ‘The Ring Road’—a “Scando crime thriller” and “dark fantasy” by his own reckoning—this is a truly dangerous and horrible place, one in which the threat of sexual assault is ever-present, where if the constant darkness doesn’t “finally break” you, the constant light will, and where death and disfigurement take myriad creative forms, threatening locals and travellers alike with scalding showers, wild animal attacks, and of course, volcanic eruptions.

The novel opens, Columbo-style, on the murderer: a lonely farmer who rapes and then accidentally kills a stripper. The clumsy killer is not without his human side, though: like Job, he’s suffered the consecutive losses of everyone he loves, leaving him with no one to talk to but his loyal dog, Halldór Laxness. This murder sets a deranged pimp off on a vengeance quest and also coincides with the arrival of Hobson, an American ex-cop, who stops over in Reykjavík on his way to Europe to heal wounds wrought by his own grim past. But then a volcanic eruption strands Hobson, and he finds himself circumnavigating the country with a group of hapless tourists who each fall prey to the terrors of Iceland, such as one-eyed witches and herds of man-eating swine.



In the last third or so of the novel, the absurdity of the aforementioned terrors hits such a fever pitch that you can actually, briefly, enjoy yourself: there is a deus ex polar bear that earns a chuckle, and Edward imagines a fittingly epic role in his post-apocalyptic Bizarro-Iceland for the crocodiles that Húsavík mayor Reinhard Reynisson sought to import for waste-disposal purposes in 2010.

Unfortunately, Edward hasn’t really written an alternate-reality, absurdist thriller-comedy about Iceland. If that were the case, his portrayal of the country could be read as farce and could be enjoyed in the spirit of a Carl Hiaasen Everglade caper. But Edward is gunning for credibility: he’s lived here, and obviously thinks he got to know the “real” Iceland, as the reader will surely be convinced of by his references to The Blue Lagoon, Prikid, deCode, and, oddly, www.vedur.is.

It is presumably on the strength of his copious insights into Iceland that Edward offers up frequent narratorial voice-overs in which he declaims assessments about the country which range from the facetious to the patently offensive. The best example of the latter is found in the novel’s very first sentence, which declares that “[s]ince Iceland’s lesbian prime minister outlawed strip clubs, women living in rural towns have begun...double-checking to make sure their front doors are securely locked.” The logic of this statement follows in a page-long scree, which is trotted out at regular intervals, and with more than one reference to the prime minister’s sexual orientation throughout the novel: with

“Unfortunately, Edward hasn’t really written an alternate-reality, absurdist thriller-comedy about Iceland.”

no strip clubs left for randy farmers and lusty sailors to relieve their tensions, these men have no alternative but to rape women (the lack of strip clubs is also blamed for the existence of prostitution in Iceland).

There have been an average of two murders a year in Iceland for the last three decades. Given this, the sheer volume of violent deaths in this purportedly “serious” crime novel just seems silly (there are at least six murders in the novel and nature dispatches countless others). Of course Iceland, like any country, has its share of violent crime, if not much of it. And yes, the weather is unpredictable and often deadly, the winter days are very short, there are all sorts of kooky characters living here, and periodically, there are volcanic eruptions, although the only people killed in the Eyjafjallajökull eruption in 2010 were a few tourists who got lost while trying to find a good vantage point to watch it from.

There’s nothing to prevent someone from writing a crime novel set in Iceland that deals with serious issues such as prostitution or domestic abuse or sexual assault or financial intrigue or murder. These topics and more have been successfully taken up by many Icelandic and foreign crime authors alike. ‘The Ring Road’s’ missteps (aside from its rampant misogyny, which we haven’t even touched on here) lie not in saying mean things about Iceland, but in not bothering to take its setting or its characters at all seriously. Rather, it delights in exoticizing Iceland, in portraying it as a place of ridiculous extremes, “a country so inhospitable that instead of nurturing its inhabitants it punishes them.” ♡ - Larissa Kyzer

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A Visit To The Sand Man



Photo: Alisa Kalyanova

Aegis Hands is the last remaining inhabitant of his wing at Höfðabakki 9. The steps are crumbling from the nibbles of a nearby bulldozer. The windows, coated in construction dust, reveal only vacant rooms and the occasional scaffolding structure. Despite the 'one-month notice' to vacate the property, and his neighbours' apparent compliance, something told Aegis Hands to stick around just a little longer. Something alerted him that someone may be interested—an interviewer from a local paper, perhaps—in seeing his work in person. And Aegis always listens to these 'somethings.'

Through two doorways, past abandonment and random piles of rubble, we arrive at a third doorway where a hand-painted sign hangs: "Aegis Hands Tears of Time." Aegis opens the door ahead of me and we step into what remains of Mr. Hands' living and studio space: a network of rooms that indicate some movement, but no rush, to leave.

Fate on line one

We step slowly around a U-shaped display of statues; Aegis runs his hands across the rough and glimmering black volcanic sand that the sculptures are made of. I tell him that I've never seen art made of this material before. "Yes, I am the only one in the world. Nobody has done this before," he responds. "And none of it is my idea. It's very unusual." It seemed like a curious statement to make, especially for an artist, but Aegis wasn't being facetious, and he wasn't being post-modern. What he meant is that through a series of intuitive callings he was pulled to the medium that would determine his career as an artist.

"Yes, I am the only one in the world. Nobody has done this before."

The story takes us back to 1991. Aegis is a 45-year-old father of four, and has been unemployed for five months when he is offered a job as a sandblaster on the Westman Islands. The night before his plane leaves, however, Aegis receives a second call from a company in Kópavogur offering him an interview for a similar position.

"At 45 years old, five months unemployed, what would you do?" Aegis asks, acknowledging the obvious and reasonable answer: get on the plane and take the Westman Islands job, happily ever after.

But Aegis stayed. He went to the interview the following day and, by a stroke of luck, or fate, got the job in Kópavogur. "And you see," he continues, "the difference between sandblasting on the Westman Islands is that they use Polish steel sand. You can't do a thing with it. But this [the sand the Kópavogur company used], this is natural Icelandic, volcanic sand. If I had taken the first job, I never would have been introduced to it. I was chosen."

Time will tell

Twenty-two years later, Aegis stands in his studio remnants and tells me this story amidst an audience of about twenty black volcanic feminine sand-sculptures. The figures curl into one another softly, their rounded backs reminiscent of a mother huddled over her child. One of them is even called "Mother Care." "I've been offered a lot of money for it," Aegis asserts, but we both know that "Mother Care" is not going anywhere.

Aegis tells me how he denied pleas from Ben Stiller for two of his statues. "I told him from the start, not for sale. Not for sale." Even when the offers started rolling in, Aegis kept his word. The statues stayed in Iceland. But Stiller didn't leave empty-handed. After spending two hours in a locked room with eight of Aegis's available sculptures, he decided that he wanted one titled 'Cogito Ergo Sum' ("I think therefore I am"). A few weeks later, the statue landed safely in America. Ben Stiller is just one on the roster of celebrities who own Aegis's sculptures. Others include the Clinton family, Al Gore, Shania Twain, Brian Tracy and Claudia Schiffer.

It takes more than just a pretty penny to own one of Aegis's statues. "The statues don't like everybody,"

Aegis tells me. For Aegis to sell, you can't just express a desire to own one. The statue has to 'want' to be owned, too. "The sand they're made of, it's been around forever. I came up with this theory that everything that ever happens is registered in the sand." And the sand reciprocates the knowledge, too. "It tells us things, like you know when people just 'get an idea' or the answer 'comes to them' while thinking? It's from the sands! It can put these things out there for you; you just have to be willing to receive it."

Your inner self

He walks around the corner to what used to be his living area and Johnny Cash's voice fills the room. It's one of the albums that he listens to while creating these sculptures, a highly intuitive process itself. It begins with him running his hands through a bowl full of the sand "to get the feel, to get in touch," he explains, before he is ready to enter the studio space.

He approaches a rotating stand where a hunk of dry sand stands. With closed eyes he moves his hands over it, quickly and with purpose. "And then I turn it, and begin on this side," he rotates the hunk, his hands still moving. "And then I begin to see lines, lines where I can make a hole, or a head," he tells me as he continues to wither down and round out the hunk. He digs his left fingers vigorously into a recessed region and a head appears. Simultaneously his right hand moves tirelessly back and forth, and a curved back suddenly extends from the head.

He stops there, as the demo is over, and we abandon the work-in-progress and walk back to the exhibit. "You can run on for a long time..." Johnny sings as we make one final lap around the finished sculptures. "You should always listen to your inner self," he says, looking at me before staring endearingly down at one of his figures. "I did and got lucky." **✎ Parker Yamasaki**

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It Wouldn't Be A Grapevine Party Without... Some Music Of Course!

It's been ten years since the first copy of Grapevine saw the Icelandic midnight sun and that certainly calls for an all caps PARTY. For that occasion Straum.is has compiled a list of 10 party hearty songs, one from each year in the last decade (plus we couldn't resist one from this year too). Without further ado:



Straum.is has been active since last summer, with writers Óli Dóri and Davíð Roach documenting the local music scene and helping people discover the best new music. It is associated with the radio show Straumur on X977, which airs every Monday evening at 23:00.

2 0 0 6



Reykjavík!
"All Those Beautiful Boys"

"All Those Beautiful Boys" off the band Reykjavík!'s first album, 'Glacial Landscapes, Religion, Oppression & Alcohol,' is the perfect gay anthem for a city that has become increasingly more gay friendly over this past decade.

2 0 0 7



GusGus
"Moss"

While Icelandic bankers were high on cocaine and cheap interest-rates, GusGus were apparently high on love, throwing each other into moss and expanding minds. The banks failed but GusGus are still the undisputed royalty of the domestic dance-scene. This song moves a crowd faster than riot police with tear gas and fire hoses.

2 0 0 8



FM Belfast
"Par Avion"

The song is so catchy that its final euphoric sing-along could be repeated at concerts for up to 20 minutes with everybody shouting along the whole time. The chorus is so big it could be a soccer anthem, and we mean that in a good way. If only we all had houses in the Caribbean.

2 0 0 9



Nolo
"Beautiful Way"

This is three minutes and 30 seconds of perfect lo-fi from a band that named their first album 'No-lo-fi,' a wordplay on their name and sound. The catchy as hell drum machine in the beginning of the song draws you in and you're hooked for life.

2 0 0 3



Dáðadrengir
"Allar stelpur úr að ofan"

Dáðadrengir have a special place in Grapevine's history. The same year the paper was founded this band won first place at Músiktilraunir for its joyful take on Icelandic rap. "Allar stelpur úr að ofan" ("All girls topless") is the only official single that the band has released and it's a perfect song to get our party started.

2 0 0 4



Singapore Sling
"Guiding Light"

The Summer of 2004, Sling released their sophomore album 'Life Is Killing My Rock 'N' Roll.' The most thrilling moments of that fantastic album come from the song "Guiding Light"—named after singer Henrik's favourite soap opera. The interaction between the Moog Synthesizer and one noted guitar feedback mesmerise the listener to the extreme. The song oozes so much cool that you could bottle it.

2 0 0 5



Trabant
"The One"
(Filthy Dukes remix)

Trabant were "The One," a unique phenomenon in the canon of Icelandic music. A postmodern electronic glam band with gallons of glitter, equal parts obscenity, sincerity and irony (though they would never admit that much), they are sorely missed.

2 0 1 0



Apparat Organ Quartet
"123 Forever"

A unique homebred blend of Kraftwerk and classic rock & roll, Apparat finally released their second album in eight years and the fans ate it up. The song "123 Forever" is all build-up and blissful rewards; no Icelandic band has put vocoders to such good use.

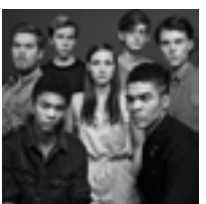
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Prins Póló
"Niðrá Strönd"
(Sexy Schidt Rework by Jack Schidt and Sexy Lazer)

In December 2011, Prins Póló performed their masterpiece "Niðrá Strönd" with local hero Megas on the television show Hljómskálinn. What a great way that was to close a year in which a remix of the song by Jack Schidt and Sexy Lazer was played in every bar and club in Reykjavík.

2 0 1 2



Retro Stefson
"Glow"

Last year's major hit is a cross between Prince and Masters at Work. Its rhythmic structure has a biological effect on your hips and feet and the monster chorus and soulful backing vocals nail every dance floor they are projected onto.

2 0 1 3



Sin Fang
"What's Wrong With Your Eyes"

Sin Fang's latest album is his best one yet. The first song has a glitzy electronic rhythm with endless layers of interwoven sounds and melodies. Sindri's fragile voice still manages to cut through it all, providing an anchor for the abundance of ideas that the song harbours.

Album Reviews

+



Samaris

Stofnar Falla EP

2012

www.samaris.is

More historical folk music for a dystopian future

On their second EP, young trio Samaris further develop their dystopian folk sound. The palette is similar—clarinet, breathy vocals, dark Icelandic folk melodies with folkloric lyrics—all held together with electronic beats, bass and synths. It's a move away from the dubstep leanings of their debut towards a more straightforward and minimal rhythm structure.

I was not familiar with Samaris's previous EP when I first listened to

this one. And, although sort of amazing, 'Stofnar Falla' is not quite as captivating as their debut. I attribute this mostly to the programming and processing which conjured striking walls of haze in both "Hljóma þú" and "Góða tungl," but feels a bit more generic this time round.

The best tracks here are "VöguDub," ("CradleDub") a spaced out track with lush pads and microscopic vocal snippets. The melody constantly winds around itself before introducing a beautiful harmony. When the sub-bass drops and the clarinet bends a blue note you realise that this is essentially a 95bpm deep house track masquerading as "folktronica" (Fuck, I promised not to use that word!). "Sólhvörf II" ("Solstice") is also a highlight, its ruthless kick drum and tambourine adding the spunk sorely missing from "Sólhvörf I."

However, it's entirely possible that the very best track is Subminimal's remix of the title track. His lung-collapsing bass and finely trimmed DnB breaks (somewhat reminiscent of Photek's work in the '90s) complement the eerie atmosphere perfectly, only embellishing the rural sound with an urban dread and loneliness. **✎ - Atli Bollason**

+



Nico Muhly

Drones And Viola

2012

www.nicomuhly.com

Two outta three ain't bad.

'Drones And Viola' is the second of three releases in Muhly's "Drones" series. It again features Bruce Brubaker on piano, this time accom-

panied by Nadia Sirota on Viola.

It feels like a far more measured affair than its predecessor, 'Drones And Piano,' opening with the elegiac "Part I Material In D" and maintaining a similar feel throughout this EP. There are more aggressive moments, like the back and forth between Sirota's urgent viola jabs, and exaggerated gasps for breath in "Part II Material In A Handsome Stack," but in the main this EP feels more restrained.

Nico Muhly describes this project as a method of developing harmonic ideas over a static structure. Thus far there seems to be a nice development across the EPs. Whereas 'Drones And Piano' felt somewhat like Nico was throwing all of the notes at the stove to experiment and see what stuck, on 'Drones and Viola' he seems to have settled on predominantly using those that stuck. It is all the better for it.

✎ - Clyde Bradford

+



Hymnalaya

Hymns

2013

www.hymnalayamusic.com

If you can climb past the piety, Hymnalaya have some winning tunes for you at the summit

Religion and "rock 'n' roll" are uneasy bedfellows. It seems fair to say that most Christian bands don't shout about their religion from the rooftops. From Low to Owl City to Belle & Sebastian, religion is often

a subtext, and it does seem like a valid concern that overt piety might be off-putting to a young, international, generally atheistic Western audience. Mumford & Sons keep their religion subtle in their lyrics, but still it comes up in every interview; The Arcade Fire "came out" in their music only after 'Funeral' had already propelled them to worldwide fame.

Hymnalaya, for better or for worse, completely ignore such concerns, setting out their stall bravely from the band name onwards. "A Colt For a King" is the album's opening gambit—a gentle, peaced-out indie-folk hymn quite possibly written from the perspective of Jesus's donkey—a parable set to music, in effect.

If any non-believer-readers are feeling queasy right about now, there's good news too. Just as it's hard not to love hippies for their right-minded views on peace and love etc., this family of hippie-Christians have produced a sweet-hearted album studded with memorable tunes. **✎ - John Rogers**

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Are We There Yet?

by Karen McKibbin



Photos: Karen McKibbin

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When my husband emerged from the Ísafjörður tourist office waving a detailed hiking map of the Westfjords, my heart sank. When it comes to choosing a walk, we have very different views. I believe in knowing your limits and sticking to them; my husband (the one I vowed NEVER to go walking with again!) prefers to push the limits.

We studied the map together. His first choice—a steep mountain route—was met with a withering look. He next suggested a hike through a valley that involved wading across a river. Was he mad? Finally, we both agreed on a walk around Hestfjörður, which the tourist literature described as easy going. I was so relieved to find a relatively straightforward walk that I forgot to check how long it was.

I would regret that.

Ducks, geese and a kamikaze Arctic tern

It all started off pleasantly enough as we followed a clear track along the eastern side of the peninsula. We were flanked by the magnificent cliffs on our left and the deep waters of Hestfjörður (The Horse fjord) on our right.

A group of ducks waddled down to the water and swam in a line into the middle of the fjord. The air was still; the water lapped gently against the shore. A pair of geese flew out of the cliff side and landed with a heavy splash. High above us, a few tiny, fluffy bundles stumbled across the rock face as their parents honked protectively from the water's edge.

We walked on.

“It was as if a giant troll had hacked chunks out of the mountain side and tossed them over his shoulder.”

We had enjoyed the promised easy going for about an hour when my husband asked, “What’s that funny clicking noise?” I looked up. A beautiful black and white bird, with a finely shaped tail like a swallow, was circling above us.

“What kind of a bir...? F**k!!”

We both ducked as the avian kamikaze swooped down and launched an attack on the tops of our heads. We tried to fend it off but our windmilling arms only made matters worse. Relentlessly, it dive-bombed us. Click-click, peck, peck.

“Do something!” I yelled.

“Find me a stick,” said my husband. He’d heard that the best defence, when being attacked by an Arctic tern, was to wave a stick above your head. I looked frantically around.

“There are no sticks. It’s Iceland—there are no trees!”

My husband resorted to brandishing the case of his camera above his head as I covered by his side, flapping my arms and shouting, “Get off me, you mad bint.”

We scurried on.

Jarred ankles, stubbed toes and an Arctic fox’s den

Once we had cleared the danger zone, we allowed ourselves a laugh at being ‘bested’ by such a small bird. And after another hour or so, we felt we’d deserved a rest. We ate our sandwiches and I checked our progress. So far, so good—we’d almost reached half-way. We should be able to complete the loop of the peninsula on schedule.

As we crossed from east to west over a low outcrop of rocks, I became aware of a low, guttural sound. I looked apprehensively at my husband (I was on alert for any unusual sounds, following the clicking tern incident). Suddenly

an Arctic fox appeared from a large mound of rocks. I realised that the noise—a rasping bark, like an old man clearing a fish bone from his throat—was coming from it.

We had visited the Arctic Fox Centre in Súðavík a few days earlier so I knew that an Arctic fox never bares its teeth in aggression. Instead, it raises its tail, which was exactly what this fox was doing to us now. We had obviously stumbled across its den. The fox bounded over the rocks, stopped and turned to eyeball us, then bounded off again. We watched as it, and its large bushy tail, disappeared into the distance.



When we turned into the western side of the peninsula, any semblance of a path vanished and the terrain became rougher. We gingerly pushed our way through thick tufts of knee-high grass. I jarred one ankle, then the other as I sank into the deep crevices that lurked beneath. I stubbed my toes on hidden rocks. At one point my husband’s entire leg disappeared down a hole. The more he writhed and twisted, the deeper he sank.

“I think I’m stuck,” he said.

I looked on with horror. Who was going to hack a path through the grass for me now? I told him to try harder. He did, and eventually succeeded in freeing himself.

We struggled on.

A beach assault course of slippery seaweed and gigantic boulders

By now our progress had slowed to a snail’s pace. It was getting late and more endless swathes of grass lay in front of us. Surely there must be an easier way around than this? We scanned the cliff side. Maybe there was a track at a higher level that we’d missed? But all we could see was sheer rock and ominous dark scree.

We looked down at the water. The tide had gone out, exposing a rough shingle beach. It had to be easier to negotiate than the hellish grass. It was ... but only marginally. What looked like rough shingle, from a distance, turned out to be large, uneven pebbles and rocks, freshly coated with slippery seaweed. We slithered and teetered along the shoreline. The beach assault course eventually gave way

to soft, black sand and, for the first time in hours, we found ourselves walking on a level surface. The lights from the roadway twinkled tantalisingly. Nearly there now, we punched the air in triumph. Little did we know that the worst was yet to come.

We rounded the last bend only to discover that our path was blocked by gigantic boulders. It was as if a giant troll had hacked chunks out of the mountainside and tossed them over his shoulder. My husband asked me anxiously if I thought I could climb over them. Tears welled in my eyes.

“I’ll bloody well have to, won’t I?”

Fear (a sheer cliff loomed above me; the fathomless waters of the fjord lay behind me; it was almost dark!) drove me on. I succeeded by scrabbling across them, like a crab. I’d have given myself a celebratory pat on the back but I needed both claws (I mean hands) to cling to the rock. I stifled my sobs and comforted myself with the knowledge that it was a circular walk. We weren’t lost. We would eventually complete a loop.

And so we staggered on.

We finished our ‘easy going’ walk just after midnight. It had taken us nine hours. My legs were so heavy and stiff that, for the next two days, I lumbered around with all the grace and charm of Frankenstein’s bride. But, you know what? It felt like a real achievement and we formed an even closer bond with the raw and spectacular wonder of the Westfjords.

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LINE.

Where Are The Glowing Rocks?

...I came to Iceland to see volcanoes!



As you would expect, many visitors to Iceland are more than eager to view the country's famous volcanoes. They may, however, be surprised to discover little more than rugged, cold lava flows and non-smoking volcanoes. These are of course fine sights, but they're not the glowing lava and fuming craters that many expect from one of the most active volcanic regions of the world. The explanation is rather simple: One needs to happen upon a live magma-spouting event to see those spectacular sights, and those occur roughly once every three to four years.

Iceland is born

Iceland formed gradually over many years after the Mid-Atlantic Ridge became positioned close to, and later over, one of the world's more powerful mantle magma plumes, one of its so-called hot spots.

Magma production within the plume and rising molten rock beneath the otherwise submarine ridge was sufficient to build up an approximately 40 km thick crustal expanse of basalt covering an area of 200,000 km². Out of all that, an area of 103,000 km² rose above sea level to form an island—Iceland. The oldest rocks above sea level, which are found east and west of the presently active volcanic zones, are about 15 million years old.

The plates drift apart approximately 2.5 cm per year, but in reality the spreading is localised and a long time passes between periods of rifting in any particular area. In each rifting episode, the plates "jump" apart in particular regions, with the associated earthquakes and new fracture formation—or movement along existing faults. This happens mostly without any magma surfacing, but from time to time the Earth mends itself and one of the volcanoes blows the lid or a new volcanic fissure opens up.

The systems

During the past 1,200 years or so, over 250 eruptions are known to have occurred. In terms of weight, the magma extruded at the surface on land over the past 11,000 years (the Holocene period) totals at about 1,500 billion tonnes. A still larger mass has simultaneously solidified in the crust, beneath the surface, at a considerable depth.



Ari Trausti Guðmundsson is a trained geophysicist and mountaineer who has written a number of books from short stories and poetry to fiction. His most recent English language books are 'Focus on Iceland,' a road guide for tourists, 'Magma,' a book documenting Icelandic volcanoes from the Katla eruption in 1918 to Vatnajökull in 2011, and 'Summit – 100 Mountain Hikes'.

The active volcanic zone covers an area of around 25,000 km², which equals to about one-fourth of Iceland's surface. In this zone, volcanoes and volcanic fissures do not appear at random, but are rather confined within elongated areas bounded by fissures, faults and volcanic formations. These areas, called volcanic systems, are typically 5-20 km wide and 20-100 km long.

There are 30 distinct volcanic systems in Iceland. Three are located on the Snæfellsnes Peninsula, four on the Reykjanes Peninsula, six in South Iceland and four in Northeast Iceland. The remaining fourteen dot the Central Highlands.

Most volcanic systems support a centre of volcanic activity, usually either a high composite cone or a large mountain massif with a central area of subsidence (a caldera). Underneath the majority of these centres, commonly referred to as central volcanoes, a magma chamber lurks somewhere in the abysses of the earth.

Although volcanic activity is most frequent at this centre, eruptive fissures also stretch out in opposite directions from the centre and open up from time to time. Large faults or open fissures without any traces of volcanic activity cut through the landscape like multiple steps or gaping cracks. Eruptive fissures are distinguishable by the presence of crater hills or pits aligned in a row, commonly composed of a number of segments. Some are up to 20-30 km long, but they typically measure 0.5 to 5 km in length.

Birthmarks

Iceland's most geologically active areas are rifting zones that stretch roughly from SW to NE across the island. Additionally, there are three lateral eruptive zones on the Snæfellsnes Peninsula in South Iceland between Örfæfjökull and Snæfell.

Within the rifting zones, fracture magma fountain eruptions—typical of basaltic sea-floor volcanism—are common, with large, central volcanoes also occurring from time to time. In the lateral volcanic zones, however, eruptions tend to be more explosive in nature, with magma extruding through high volcanoes and fractures (more akin to the activity in continental volcanoes).

Evidence of these eruptions manifests itself in a variety of structures: crater rows with spatter cones, scoria and pumice craters in offset sections, rows of explosion craters, lava shields, large mountain ranges with calderas, high cones (stratovolcanoes), volcanic domes and large, circular tephra craters.

Eruptions below the ocean or icecaps are also not uncommon. These lead to ash-producing eruptions and the sub-glacial ones can produce swift melt-water floods, termed 'jökulhlaups.'

So, what is there to say about the active volcanoes? If you've timed your visit right and a volcano happens to be erupting, you can probably go check it out. However, do be careful and follow the rules and directives set by 'Almannavarnir' ('Icelandic Civil Protection System,' www.almannavarnir.is). If no volcanoes are erupting, there's still plenty to see.

Fun trivia question answer: A) Caraway seeds (Please not that "delicious taste" is a relative term. Results may vary.)

Hiking For Volcanos

Eldborg: The perfect crater



Halfway between Reykjavík and Stykkishólmur in the west is a great hike to the rim of Eldborg ("Fire City"). Although it's not quite a proper mountain at 112 metres above sea level, Eldborg is still well worth a visit. It is a circular crater formed out of dark and reddish basalt lava spatter and some scoria that looks like a circular wall surrounding a deep pit. From afar, it really looks like an exceptionally well-formed volcanic crater. It is 5-8,000 years old, the product of a vigorous but short-lived lava eruption on a short fissure.

birch shrubs and willows or moss and grass-covered lava. The scoria base of Eldborg and its high lava wall are cut by the trail, so the route up there is easily discernible.

While hikers can walk along the crater's rim, they should refrain from doing so in order to preserve this unique but fragile formation. The crater is about 200 metres wide and 50 metres deep. After marvelling at the surroundings, head back the way you came from. Note: Eldborg is protected by law as a natural monument—do not walk off the path or leave anything behind.

How to get there:

The hike starts not far from a farm called Snorrastaðir in Hnappadalur valley, off Snæfellsnesvegur (Road 54). On the road connecting Snorrastaðir to the main road, cross a bridge over the small river Kaldá. Head more or less straight for the crater, through

Time:

The hike should take about two hours total.

Distance:

The distance covered is about six kilometres.



Stóri-Meitill: A large chisel

An unobtrusive mountain south of the Hellisheiði Geothermal Power Plant, Stóri-Meitill (514 metres above sea level), doesn't appear to hold much appeal for the hiker at first glance. Looks can, however, be deceiving. Hiking to the summit not only provides a great view over south Iceland—including Hekla, Eyjafjallajökull and Vestmannaeyjar—but it also reveals a large, deep volcanic crater. The eruption that created Stóri-Meitill ("The Large Chisel") likely occurred under a rather thin glacier on a short fissure, blowing ash and pumice (tephra) into the air. Meanwhile, less active craters formed the hills to the southwest of Stóri-Meitill.

lava field in the direction of Stakihnúkur. Climb the screes of the peak directly to the top (15-20 min.). Descend a bit and start turning to your right, across grassy and mossy hillocks and gravel flats towards the north-western shoulder of Stóri-Meitill.

Pass the highest cliffs on your right and hike upslope along the southwest (right) side of the tuff rocks. The slope is steep and a low-angled, and the rocky section at the top requires some very light scrambling. Pass the cairn at the flat top to marvel at the big volcanic crater. The best descent route follows the SW-ridge of Stóri-Meitill for about a kilometre. Head down and walk back towards the NW shoulder. From there, head for Stakihnúkur again but instead of climbing it, hike down the small valley at its southern side and back to your vehicle.

How to get there:

From Road 1, take Prengslavegur (Road 39), a low pass between the bulky mountain Lambafell and the cone-shaped Stakihnúkur. It branches off from Road 1 at an area of lava field called Svínahraunbruni, which dates to the year 1000. You may find a suitable parking place at the intersection between Prengslavegur and a short road leading to a mine.

Cross the main road and a small

Time:

The ascent should take about 1.5-2 hours.

Distance:

The length of the hike is about 5 kilometres.



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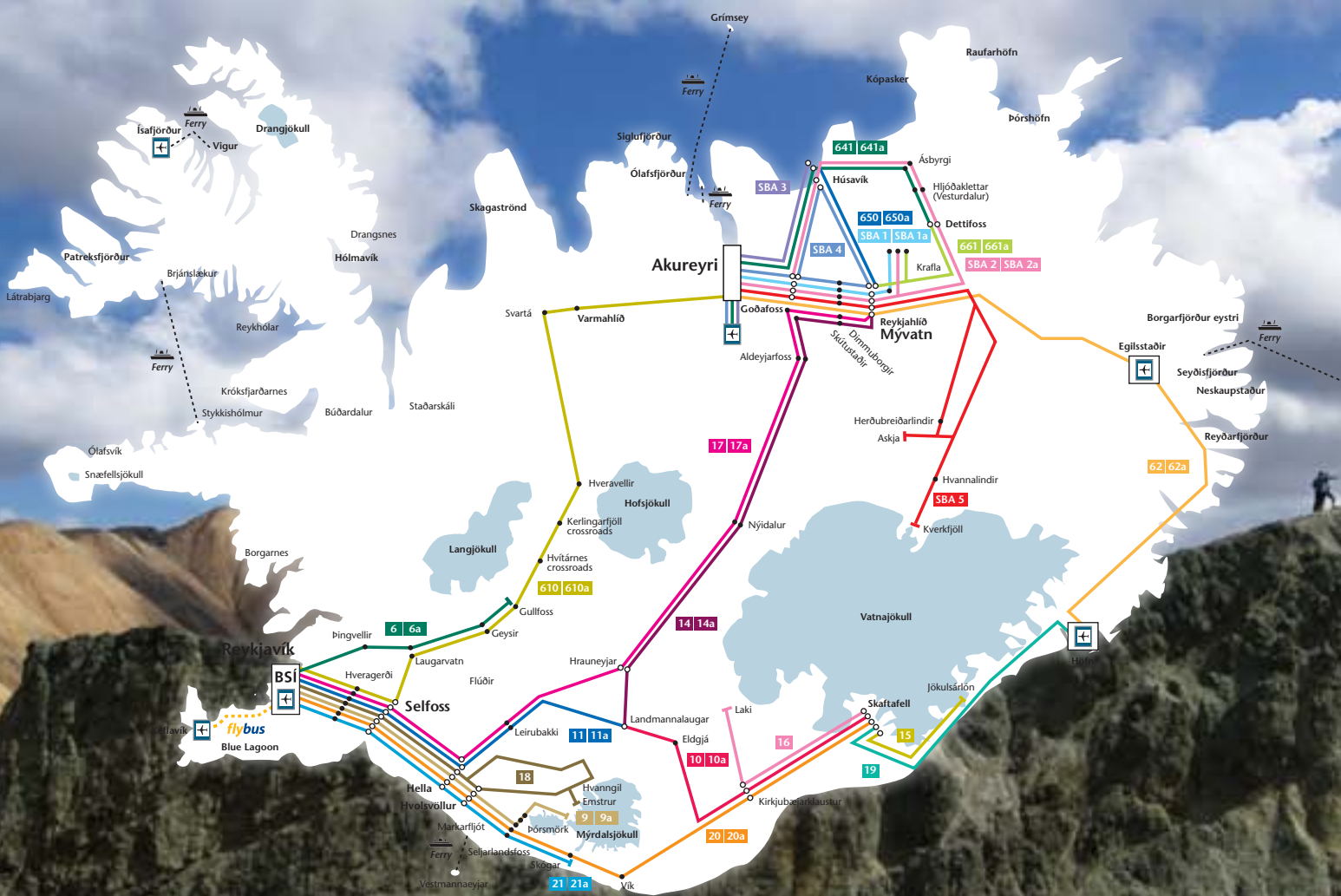
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L E M U R I N N

Coca-Cola In Iceland In 1944: Come, Be Blessed And Be Happy!

by Vera Illugadóttir & Helgi Hrafn Guðmundsson



Alaska



Admiralty Islands



Belgium



China



England



France



Italy



New Zealand



Newfoundland

A Coca-Cola Company ad campaign from 1944 is evidence of the far-flung places that World War II took American soldiers. In the series of ads, the soldiers are not only shown bringing safety to the locals, but also the most important gift of all—Coca-Cola.

In the Icelandic edition, a soldier brings carbonated joy to a hard-working fisherman and his family. "Come, be blessed and be happy," reads the headline, a very literal translation of the Icelandic greeting, "komdu sæll og blessaður."

"Come, be blessed and be happy," says the hospitable Icelander when he meets a stranger. That's a warm way of putting it, but no more friendly than the way American soldiers say it. Have a "Coke," says the Doughboy, and it works in Reykjavic [sic] as it does in Rochester. The pause that refreshes is the friendly way to say, 'Hi, pal' in any language. Around the globe Coca-Cola has become the gracious ice-breaker between kindly-minded stranger."

Coca-Cola became a symbol of the war for many Icelanders. The British and American occupation of Iceland during World War II had a great impact on life on an island that had been an isolated and relatively poor country on the fringes of Europe, a forgotten colony of the Danish Kingdom. Iceland emerged from the war an independent and modern state, which was crystallized in the bottles of ice-cold Coca-Cola now available everywhere in the country.

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STUFFED WITH STUFF

Issue 7

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Page 32



"We've always worked as though everyone had one fourth of a cake and then we put it together as a whole."

Amiina's María sheds light on their new live album, 'Lighthouse Recordings'

Page 33



"The novel opens, Columbo-style, on the murderer: a lonely farmer who rapes and then accidentally kills a stripper. The clumsy killer is not without his human side, though: like Job, he's suffered the consecutive losses of everyone he loves, leaving him with no one to talk to but his loyal dog, Halldór Laxness."

Edward Weinman's new novel 'The Ring Road' is full of gruesome fantasy

Page 38



"We both ducked as the avian kamikaze swooped down and launched an attack on the tops of our heads. We tried to fend it off but our windmilling arms only made matters worse. Relentlessly, it dive-bombed us. Click-click, peck, peck."

The Westfjords are full of psycho-killer birds!

Page 42



"In the Icelandic edition, a soldier brings carbonated joy to a hard-working fisherman and his family. "Come, be blessed and be happy," reads the headline, a very literal translation of the Icelandic greeting, "komdu sæll og blessaður.""

Lemúrin explores the introduction of Coca-Cola to Iceland

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G Music, Art, Films and Events Listings
+ Eating, Drinking and Shopping + Map

Issue 7 - 2013

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5PM TILL LATE**

Looks like we made it! After all this time... can you believe it? We are turning 10! Which means it's still totally okay for us to be making fart and poop jokes and using inane words like 'awesome' way too often. And if you don't like it, eat our shorts! We don't care anyway because we're gonna have such a cool birthday party!!! There's gonna be music and games and beer and maybe cake and tonnes of super fun people and musicians performing live. AND YOU ARE TOTALLY INVITED! OMFGWTFLOLBBQ!



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MUSIC

CONCERTS & NIGHTLIFE

June 7 - June 20

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

Friday June 7

Café Rosenberg
22:00 Magnús Einarsson and band
Dillon
22:00 Dorian Gray
Faktory
14:00 Rototom Sunsplash Reggae
Hressó
22:00 Mammút & Low Roar
Kaffibarinn
23:00 CasaNova
Lebowski Bar
22:00 Anna Brá
Prikið
22:00 Gay Latino and Sura

Saturday June 8

Bar 11
21:00 Dimma, Sykur & Noise
Café Rosenberg
22:00 KK Band & Guest
Dillon
22:00 Trausti Laufdal Aðalsteinsson
Hallgrímskirkja
12:00 International Organ Summer
Harlem
22:00 Benni B-Ruff
Harpa
19:00 How To Become Icelandic In 60 minutes
Hressó
22:00 RetRoBot
Iðnó
22:00 Júpíters
Kaffibarinn
20:00 Summer of Lobster
Lebowski Bar
22:00 Jesús
Prikið
16:00 Clothes Bazaar, Árni Kokkoon
Volta
22:00 303

Sunday June 9

Hallgrímskirkja
17:00 International Organ Summer - Guðný Einarsdóttir
Harpa
10:00 Harpa International Music Academy
16:00 Setting the Tone for the Future
19:00 How To Become Icelandic In 60 minutes
20:00 Pears of Icelandic Song
20:00 Best of Jethro Tull
21:00 The Deep
Kaffibarinn
22:00 Bakkelsi
Lebowski Bar
21:30 Haraldur Einars

Monday June 10

Café Rosenberg
20:00 Jazz Band
Harpa
14:00 Master Class
16:30 Master Class
20:00 Sasmannshaus Piano Trio
Kaffibarinn
22:00 Simon FKNHNSM

Tuesday June 11

Café Rosenberg
22:00 Skúli Mennski
Harpa
20:00 Band of Horses
Kaffibarinn
22:00 Óli Dóri
Nordic House
20:00 Nordic Sonatas
Prikið
22:00 Súr Berndsen

Wednesday June 12

Bar 11
21:30 Foosball Competition
Café Rosenberg
20:00 Eva Björk
Hallgrímskirkja
12:00 International Organ Summer
Harpa
18:00 The Deep
20:00 How To Become Icelandic In 60 minutes
Iðnó
21:00 Sin Fang Album Release Show
Kaffibarinn
22:00 Alfons X
Prikið
21:00 Shrimp Reggae

Thursday June 13

Bar 11
22:00 Taleoh
Café Rosenberg
22:00 Edgar Smári and Band
Dillon
22:00 Norn and Saktmóðigur
Hallgrímskirkja
12:00 International Organ Summer
Harpa
10:00 Harpa International Music Academy

**6-8
June**



Rock Out With Your Ink Out Icelandic Tattoo Festival

Bar 11 | 12:00-22:00 | 700 ISK per day, 1,500 ISK full weekend

Insert seventeen international masters of tattooing into one rock bar with live music from Dimma, Sykur and Noise, and you have the makings of the Icelandic Tattoo Festival. Expect a great vibe and rock and roll music as artists paint fleshy canvases to the constant sound of buzzing. If you want to get inked, be sure to show up early, find an artist you like (like Jason June, who made the pictured tattoo) and give yourself time to discuss the concept. The festival is held in the beer garden, but no worries, it'll be warm and dry even if the summer isn't. **TGB**



**19
June**

Extravagant Gestures Dionne Warwick

Harpa | 20:00 | 9,900 - 12,990 ISK

Legendary vocalist Dionne Warwick is bringing her famous tunes to Reykjavík for one night and one night only! In the US she's one of the most charted female singers of all time, not to mention she was a United Nations Global Ambassador. We're pretty glad she had time to stop off in Reykjavík and didn't just walk on by, because what the world needs now is more Dionne. Buy a ticket for your bestie because... that's what friends are for! Seriously, how great is her music? **SR**



Kaffibarinn
21:00 Logi Pedro
Prikið
21:00 DJ KGB

Friday June 14

Bar 11
22:00 The Dandelion Seeds
Café Rosenberg
22:00 Þóra Björk and Band
Dillon
22:00 Alchemia
Harpa
10:00 Harpa International Music Academy
20:00 Red Bull Flying Bach
Hressó
22:00 Goðsögn
Kaffibarinn
23:00 DJ KGB
Kaffi Zimsen
22:00 Nyxo
Prikið
21:00 Ari Bragi's Big Band and DJ Moonshine

Saturday June 15

Café Rosenberg
22:00 The Vintage Caravan & Björgvin Gíslason
Dillon
22:00 Blind Bargain & Kaleo
Hallgrímskirkja
12:00 International Organ Summer
Harpa
10:00 Harpa International Music Academy
21:00 The Deep
Hressó
22:00 Timburmenn
Kaffibarinn
21:00 DJ AnDre & Housekell
KEX Hostel
15:00 KexReið Bike Race & Concert
Prikið
21:00 Logi Pedro

Sunday June 16

Café Rosenberg
22:00 Danish & Icelandic Jazz Band
Hallgrímskirkja
17:00 International Organ Summer
Harpa
10:00 Harpa International Music Academy
Hressó
22:00 Gunni Óli's Rock Quartet
Kaffibarinn
21:30 DJ Magic & Gísli Galdur
Prikið
21:00 MC Gauti

Monday June 17

Laugardalshöll
20:00 Chic featuring Nile Rodgers
Harpa
10:00 Harpa International Music Academy
16:00 The Four Seasons - IMA

Tuesday June 18

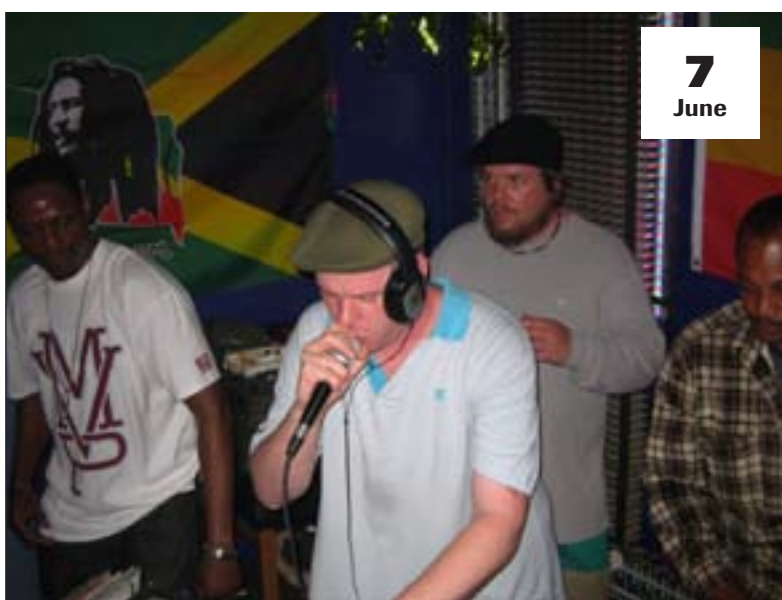
Kaffibarinn
22:00 DJ Katla
Prikið
21:00 Sólvaki

Wednesday June 19

Bar 11
21:00 Foosball Competition
Harpa
20:00 Dionne Warwick
Hallgrímskirkja
12:00 International Organ Summer
Prikið
21:00 Orange Volante

Thursday June 20

Café Rosenberg
22:00 Svavar Knútur
Dillon
22:00 Þausk
Hallgrímskirkja
12:00 International Organ Summer
Hressó
22:00 Una Stefáns & Fox Train Safari
Kaffibarinn
21:00 Bakkelsi
Prikið
21:00 Dungeon Massive



7
June

Praise Jah Like You Should
Rototom Sunsplash Reggae Party

Faktorý | 14:00 | Free!

What do Spain and Iceland have in common? The Rototom Sunsplash Festival! Well, actually Spain will be hosting this massive annual reggae festival, not Iceland, but Reykjavík's own Faktorý will be having a party in the spirit of Rototom Sunsplash. This dance-filled night will feature performances from Hjálmar, Ojba Rasta, Amaba Dama, Panoramix, and DJ talent from RVK Soundsystem. **SS**



14
June

Bach To The Future
Red Bull's Flying Bach

Harpa | 20:00 | 2,690 - 5,690 ISK

Sprinkle some hip hop into Grandpa's hot oatmeal, and slip some Fresh Beats into Grandma's afternoon tea. The resulting concoction will resemble what audience members can expect from 'Red Bull's Flying Bach' at Harpa on Friday, June 14. The four-time breakdance world champions, Flying Steps, hit Reykjavík powerfully and gracefully, performing to J.S. Bach's 'the Well Tempered Clavier.' Shine your spectacles, you won't want to miss a step in this show. And yes, Grandma, those pearls go great with your swagger. **PY**



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FESTIVALS

HOE-DOWNS AND HOOTENANIES

June - September

Iceland is proud of its Summer (I mean, it only happens once a year). What better way to get out there and experience it than by going to a festival? Or two. Or ten. Below is a chronologically ordered list of festivals taking place all across Iceland, from June until September.

JUNE

Keflavík Music Festival

June 5-9

During the Keflavík Music Festival, the town known for the old NATO base and international airport is transformed into one big venue. The hotels all get a facelift, bars fill up and even the church is used as a venue. Whether you want to hear fabulous Páll Óskar and Monica play soft tunes, groove out with Ojba Rasta or head bang to SIGN, the Keflavík Music Festival is a great way to start the summer.

www.keflavikmusicfestival.com

Podium Festival

June 6-9

A festival where young musicians celebrate classical music and try to get more people into it.

www.podiumfestival.com

Viking Festival

June 14-17

The Viking village in Hafnarfjörður hosts a Solstice Festival to mark the longest day of the year which is celebrated on June 21st. Various gatherings, Viking clothing, dance, songs, instruments, crafts, and food and drink can be found there.

www.fjorukrain.is

Independence Day

June 17

We may not have any funny films about Iceland's struggle for independence starring Mel Gibson yelling "Freeeedooooom," but June 17 is a pretty big deal to us. It is 69 years since Iceland became independent from Denmark, and the whole of downtown Reykjavík turns into one big celebration. So get your face painted and look like a walking Icelandic flag, buy balloons, and chow on some hot dogs!

www.17juni.is

All Tomorrow's Parties Iceland

June 28-29

ATP is an international festival organisation, and they have one in Keflavík at the end of June. Expect to see Æla, Kimono, Amiina, Múm, and Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds. Yes, the actual Nick Cave.

www.atpfestival.com

JULY

Rauðasandur

July 4-7

Rauðasandur Festival is a yearly music and outdoors festival that takes place the first weekend of July, when the sun is high, and stays high, all day and night. The scenery (Rauðasandur means "Red Sands") complements perfectly the great tunes and good vibes emanating from the "warm" Westfjords beach over the course of the weekend.

LungA

July 14-21

A weeklong celebration of youth and creativity in Seyðisfjörður in the Eastfjords of Iceland. The festival brings together an international community in the name of art--from workshops and exhibitions to musical performers and fashion shows.

www.lunga.is

Eistnaflug Festival

July 10-13

Annual heavy metal festival in Neskaupsstaður, Eastfjords, that attracts all the big bands. Expect insane guitar solos, guttural screams and lots of headbanging.

www.eistnaflug.is

14-21
July



In The Words of Gwen Stefani...
LungA Festival

Seyðisfjörður, Eastfjords | 3,900 - 4,900 ISK

"...here we are now, going to the east side!!" Celebrating all things creative, LungA is an art enthusiasts' wet dream. The festival is packed full with activities, workshops, live shows and exhibitions. Numerous bands have confirmed their attendance, including FM Belfast, Mammút and Úlfur Úlfur, and you can get better acquainted with the inner workings of the art scene in Iceland. If your favourite band is playing or you want to become someone's muse, then start putting ads up on your Facebook or Tumblr for a ride East. **TGB**

3-5
August



Unshine Your Shoes
Mýraboltinn Swamp Soccer

Ísafjörður, Westfjords | Free!

So you know swamp football ('soccer' to you Yanks) is pretty cool, right? It's an excuse to have a beer with your buddies and play football together. What you probably didn't know is that the European championship is happening in Ísafjörður, in the Westfjords! There's a list of concerts, dances and other activities happening alongside the tournament. So get your team together and sign up. You'll probably not win, but you'll have a ball. **TGB**



Open from 8.00 - 24.00
June - August.

Cinema is open from
10.00 - 22.00.

Shows every hour on the hour in English, except in German at 18.00 and French at 21.00

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www.volcanoohouse.is
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- Tourist information and Booking Service
- Volcano House Boutique



FESTIVALS

FAIRS AND FIESTAS



10-13
July

Squares Beware Eistnaflug Music Festival

Neskaupsstaður, Eastfjords | 5,000 - 11,000 ISK

A festival filled with headlining heavy rock and metal bands, it is the ideal place to get truly shitfaced in July. Set in scenic Neskaupsstaður, Eastfjords, it may be tricky getting to the town, but once there you don't ever want to leave. Expect any band worth its chops to be there, on pain of forever being branded soft and mainstream. Skálmöld, Dimma, Sólstafir, and others will be there, as well as a few niche and fringe bands. Another festival, 'Natas á Neskaupsstað: Enter The Mayhemisphere' is happening alongside Eistnaflug, featuring art inspired by heavy metal, a sort of visual representation of the music being played. Bring a tent, bring a friend, and bring your own booze – the alcohol store famously gets bled dry every year. If you aren't coming after reading this blurb, there truly is no hope left for you. **TGB**

Natas á Neskaupsstað - Enter The Mayhemisphere

July 10-13

Annual art show in collaboration with Eistnaflug metal festival that goes on at the same time. The show features artists inspired by heavy metal and takes place in an abandoned steel factory in Neskaupsstaður at the same time as Eistnaflug.

Ingólfshátíð

July 13-14

Reykjavík Viking society Einherjar puts on their very first festival in Hljómskálagarður, and it looks to be very ambitious. They have international guests from Norway and England, mock fights, and horse rides through the park.

Rey Cup

July 24-28

Reykjavík International Football Festival for boys and girls U13-U16. Annual tournament held since 2002 at the Laugadalur Sport Centre in Reykjavík. Information for participation and matches can be found at:
www.reycup.is

AUGUST

Þjóðhátíð í Eyjum

August 2-4

The last weekend of July or on the first weekend of August, Icelanders have their annual shopkeeper's holiday, named Verslunarmannahelgi. All over the country they celebrate numerous parties and festivals. The biggest and best known is Þjóðhátíð í Eyjum, located on the Westman Islands, an island outside the mainland which attracts around 14,000 people each year. For band schedules and prices check out their homepage:
www.dalurinn.is

Innipúkinn Festival

August 2-4

Don't feel like going to the Westman Islands, but want to have a good time? Check out Reykjavík's Innipúkinn, where you can hang out with all the other cool cats that didn't want to wake up with vomit in their tent.

Mýraboltinn

August 3-5

The European championship in Swamp soccer will take place in beautiful surroundings in Isafjörður, the capital of the Westfjords. For registration and participation check out their homepage:
www.myrabolti.com/english

Icelandic Chamber Music Festival

August 7-17

The festival offers music courses for people of a wide range of age as well as an exciting concert series. The aim of the festival is for young musicians to get to know each other, participate in chamber music and to get a chance to perform, irrespective of where they live or study.
www.musicfest.is

Reykjavík Gay Pride

August 10

Organized by the gay community of Reykjavík, the festival is a family friendly affair celebrating diversity. Expect to see a lot of big names from the community, as well as famous supporters such as the Reykjavík City mayor Jón Gnarr. There will be several events during the week of the August 6-11, but the Gay Pride march that goes down Laugavegur will happen on the Saturday.
www.gaypride.is

Reykjavík Jazz Festival

August 15-22

The flagship for Jazz in Iceland, the annual festival showcases local talent and attracts international stars.
www.reykjavikjazz.is

Reykjavík Marathon

August 24

Featuring a full and half marathon, as well as team competitions and a "fun run." The Reykjavík Marathon is a great event to watch if you enjoy seeing exhausted people push themselves to get over the finishing line.
www.marathon.is

Menningarnótt

August 24

A culture night where people are encouraged to walk through downtown Reykjavík, Menningarnótt features a variety of activities and events. Last year we even had Russell Crowe play a set.
www.meningarnott.is

Tango Festival

August 29-September 1

Features international dance teachers, workshops, Tango bands, DJs, and Tango shows.
www.tango.is

LÓKAL

Date TBC in August

International professional theater festival. It focuses on new productions and original theatre.
www.lokal.is

Reykjavík Dance Festival

Date TBC in August

A dance festival celebrating a plethora of different styles and hosting multiple workshops. The organisers were so determined to get people into dance they didn't charge an admission fee last year. Let's hope they do the same in 2013.

SEPTEMBER

The Reykjavík International Literary Festival

September 11-15

The Literary festival is held bi-annually and takes place at the Nordic house and Iðnó Theatre.

Réttir (Sheep and Horse Roundup)

Early to mid-September

A chance to watch some Icelandic sheep herding as the holiday season comes to an end.

Reykjavík International Film Festival (RIFF)

September 26-October 6

Annual international film festival with screenings all over town. For schedule go to:
www.riff.is

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06.00 - 08.00 - 10.00 - 14.00

Sea Safari.is
Sími/Tel. 861 3840

THE HOUSE AT EYRARBAKKI
The House at Eyrarbakki

Árnessýsla folk museum is located in Húsið, the House, historical home of the Danish merchants built in 1765. Húsið is one of the oldest houses in Iceland and a beautiful monument of Eyrarbakki's time as the biggest trading place on the south coast.

Today one can enjoy exhibitions about the story and culture of the region, famous piano, shawl made out of human hair and the kings pot, are among items. Húsið prides itself with warm and homelike atmosphere.

HÚSIÐ Á EYRARBAKKA
Bygðasafn Árnesinga

Opening hours: May 15th - September 15th daily 11.00-18.00 or by an agreement

i8i8 Gallery
Tryggvagata 16
101 Reykjavík
www.i8.is

6 June - 17 August 2013

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www.hverfisgalleri.is

MAGNÚS KJARTANSSON
18 May - 22 June 2013

ART

OPENINGS AND ONGOING

June 7 - June 20

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

Opening

i8 Gallery

June 6

Belief

Ólafur Elíasson's new exhibit, *Belief*, is an exploration of natural phenomena and perception. His work often combines design, architecture, and science to create thought-provoking work and spaces.
Runs until August 17

Museum of Design and Applied Art

June 7

Chance Encounters - Toward Modernity In Iceland Design

The exhibit focuses on the introduction of modernism in Icelandic domestic interiors from the 1930s to the 1980s. It will feature well-known designs that have emerged from the modernist movement of the 20th century and made their way to Iceland.
Runs until October 13

Ongoing

ASÍ Art Museum**Face To Face-Portraits**

An examination of the varying approaches to portraiture.
Runs until June 23

The Culture House**Lightplay**

Derek Mundell displays 26 paintings, large and small, that portray Iceland's particularly ethereal light.
Runs until August 30

Medieval Manuscripts, Eddas, and Sagas

It includes principal medieval manuscripts.
On permanent view

Child of Hope - Youth and Jón Sigurðsson

Exploring the life of Icelandic national hero Jón Sigurðsson, made especially accessible to children, families and school groups.
On permanent view

Millennium - Phase One

A selection of pieces from the collection of the National Gallery.
On permanent view

The Library Room

The old reading room of the National Library displays books of Icelandic cultural history dating from the 16th century to the present day.
On permanent view

The Einar Jónsson Museum

The museum contains close to 300 art works including a beautiful tree-clad garden adorned with 26 bronze casts of the artist's works is located behind the museum.
On permanent view

Gallerí Bakarí

Brot / Fraction



A Mildly Impressive Man Tiltrú/Belief by Ólafur Elíasson

i8 Gallery | June 6 - August 17 | Free!

Have you ever been blown away by Harpa? The way its windows glisten a mermaid-teal, the hard lines cutting harshly against the natural background, and where did they get all that glass? Well, if you have ever been to Iceland, then I can answer for you: yes. Yes you have. Because it's absolutely jaw-dropping, eye-popping, heart-stopping magnificent. From June 6 - August 17 Harpa's Danish-bred designer Ólafur Elíasson presents *Tiltrú/Belief*, his fourth solo exhibition at i8 Gallery. The exhibit features all new works by Ólafur which play with human sensory experience and tickle our understanding of reality. He seems to know what he's doing, so yeah, it might be kind of decent. **PY**

A new exhibition of paintings and other work by Þórvaldur Jónsson.
Runs until June 18

Hafnarborg**Art=Text=Art**

An exhibition of more than 80 drawings, prints, and artist's books by close to 50 artists.
Runs until June 23

Hellisgerði, Flower and Recreation Park

The exhibition looks at the public's use of the park, vegetation and overall mood of the park in different time periods.
Runs until June 17

Hverfisgallerí**Magnús Kjartansson**

Works from 1978-1983.
Runs until June 22

Knitting Iceland

Come and knit at Laugavegur 25, 3rd floor, every Thursday, 14:00 - 18:00.
On permanent view

Kling and Bang**Clive Murphy Exhibit**

Kling & Bang Gallery hosts Clive Murphey, a New-York based artist who upcycles materials.
Runs until June 23

Kunstschlager**Primitive Jungle Heat**

A new exhibition by Guðlaug Mía Eyþórsdóttir.
Runs until June 15

Latin Dance Studio, Faxafen 12**Guided Practica**

Argentine tango, Sundays from 17:30-19:30. Register by phone 821 6929 or email tangoadventure@gmail.com, 500 ISK for students, 800

ISK for others. Six-week courses are also available.
On permanent view

Living Art Museum**The 6th Volume**

The 6th Volume presents works and writings chosen by Katrín in an attempt to define contemporary art via the Icelandic practices that have influenced her.
Runs until August 25

Mokka Kaffi**Mokka Fólk - Mokka People**

Established in 1958 this café is celebrating its 55th birthday with an exhibition of black and white portraits of its favourite patrons.
Runs until June 27

The National Gallery**Subjective Maps-Disappearances**

Work from over 40 artists from 15 small European countries.
Runs until June 30

Treasures

Three separate exhibitions showing different periods from The National Gallery's personal collection.
Runs until June 30

The Making of a Nation - Heritage and History in Iceland

An insight into the history of the Icelandic nation from the Settlement to the present day.
On permanent view

The Long Moment

Sarah Cooper and Nina Gorfer fiddle with the Icelandic folktale, blurring the line between photography and painting to create "dreamlike realities."
Runs until June 17



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The REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE

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WHATS INSIDE

Reykjavík Map

Happy Hour Guide

Places we like

Best of Reykjavík

Practical Info

Reykjavík Area

June 7 - June 20

Keep it in your pocket

Two Weeks

The Grapevine picks the events, places and what to experience the next two weeks

8 JUN

Jazz Concert
Cosmic Tunes



Júpiters
Íðnó

You'll want to wear some loose clothing to this show, because Júpiters will make you lose control of your limbs with their funky jazz. Your toes will tap, your arms will flap and you won't know where to look. This fourteen-member band has been playing together since 1989 polishing and perfecting their stage presence. They're energetic, but composed. Saxophones, trumpets, keyboards, and bongos litter the stage, simultaneously acting as many and acting as one. **PY**

June - August **SAY CHEESE** Skyr heads and cheese lovers, rejoice! Búrið opens its kitchen this summer for bi-weekly **Icelandic cheese & skyr workshops**. Every Monday and Friday from 12-13:30.

June 10 **GET YOUR PINS OUT** So it's time to get funky at the **Knitting Workshop** at Hótel Laxness. Learn both Icelandic and Continental methods, granny style!

June 15 **THE BRATS ARE BACK** The foul mouthed kids of **The Vintage Caravan** will light up Café Rosenberg with their own brand of classic rock.

June 14-16 **KEXREIÐ** KEX Hostel is hosting a bicycle race in the centre of Reykjavík, with 15 and 30km categories. So dust off your old steed and have some fun! Proceeds go to Umhyggja charity.

18 June **THROWBACK TUESDAY** After a long, fun-filled weekend, head over to Prikið where you can kick back and relax with **Sólvaki**. Go on. You know you deserve it.

21 JUN

Metal Progress
Total Heaviosity



Momentum, Azoic, and Morð
Gamli Gaukurin

Best to be present when three local acts – Momentum, Azoic, and Morð– bring their deep sounds together for night of metal that will surely achieve total 'heaviosity.' But, in all seriousness, these are not your average metal bands. They are dedicated to their craft and to experimenting with what people expect from the genre. Momentum identifies as a progressive metal group and dons contemplative song titles such as "Indifference of the human mind" and "Pt. II Death, acceptance, and disillusion". Azoic, a black metal group, has created an equally intriguing sound, and Morð, a brand spankin' new band, will feature musicians from World Narcosis and Celestine. **SS**

6-9 JUN

In With The Old
A New Take On The Classical



Podium Festival
Selö, Stokkalæk, Nordic House, and Harpa

Always wanted to see what all the fuss was with Wagner? Whether Bach is back in black? The Podium festival may be just the right event then, as it aims to introduce people to classical music in a new and exciting way. Organised by young enthusiasts, the festival brings together child prodigies from six different countries, and its stated purpose is "for every guest to walk away with butterflies in their stomach, goose bumps and a smile." **TGB**



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B

Café Loki in front of Hallgrímskirkja



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C

MAP

Places We Like

Food

1 Argentína

Barónsstígur 11a
Argentína is the best place in the world for a red meat-loving person to have a special celebration. One of the oldest steak houses in town, it has worked hard to earn its name and has never wavered from its red meat loving stature.

2 Café Loki

Lokastígur 28
Café Loki is not only a place where one can try all of Iceland's weird and wacky food-stuffs, as well as some decidedly delicious, unweird dishes. It's also a great little café that locals love to frequent as well as a welcoming place for tourists.

3 Roadhouse

Snorrabraut 56
Roadhouse serves authentic Cajun and Creole food – a.k.a good ol' Southern soul food. Roadhouse smokes its ribs on site, makes its own homemade French fries and otherwise serves customers in an authentic American diner style atmosphere. Don't miss the Empire State burger, which is piled high with a burger patty, onion rings, a grilled cheese and drizzled in barbeque sauce.

4 Hamborgarabúlla Tómasar (Búllan)

Geirsgata 1 and Bankastræti 5
Considered by some to be the best "real" hamburger in Reykjavík, "Búllan" does serve some mysteriously delicious burgers, guaranteed to take the edge off any hangover.

5 Krua Thai

Tryggvagata 14
For quick, tasty and well-priced Thai food, stop by this family run restaurant for reliably good and invigorating meals. Their cute harbour-adjacent location is both intimate and communal at once. Stay and enjoy the vibe or take your food to go, it will be delicious either way.

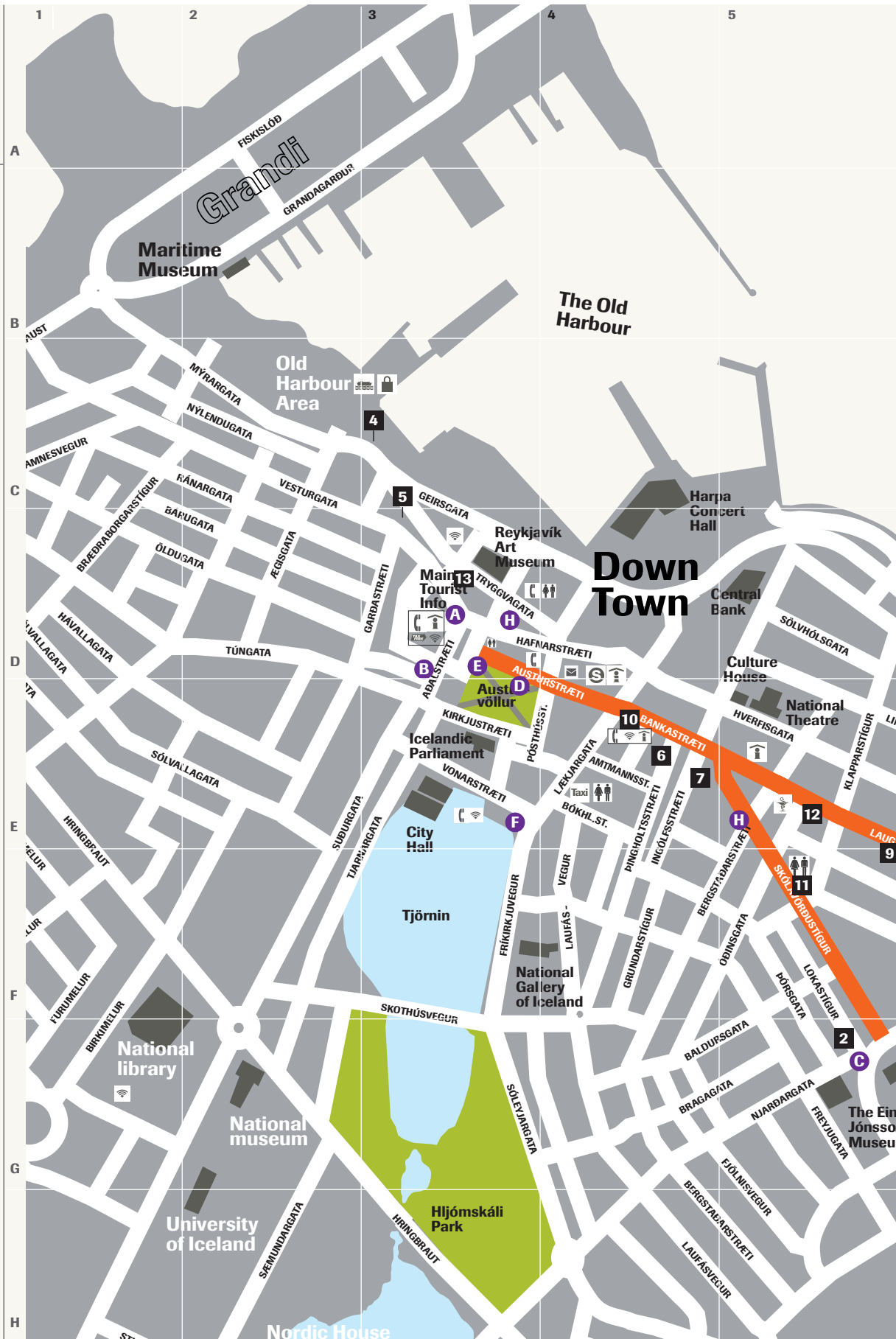
Drinking

6 Þingholt Bar

Þingholtstræti 5
Located in Center Hotel Þingholt, this bar is tucked away just outside of the mayhem that is Laugavegur on a weekend night. For a quieter evening, check out their daily happy hour between 17-19, lounge in their chic and modern environment with one of the many beers and cocktails on offer.

Useful numbers

- Emergency number: **112**
- Medical help: **1770**
- Dental emergency: **575 0505**
- Information: **118**
- Taxi: Hreyfill-Bæjarleiðir: **588 5522**
BSR: **561 0000**
- Tax Free Refund**
- Iceland Refund**, Aðalstræti 2, tel: 564 6400
- Tourist information**
- Arctic Adventures**, Laugavegur 11, tel: 562 7000
- City Centre**, Aðalstræti 2, tel: 590 1550
- Iceland Excursions – Grayline Iceland**, Hafnarstræti 20, tel: 540 1313



7 Den Danske Kro

Ingólfsstræti 3
This Danish-themed bar is located on Ingólfsstræti, just off Laugavegur. They serve up Danish favourites, such as open faced smørrebrød sandwiches, Tuborg beer and Akavit schnapps. Their 'Happy Hour', every day between 16-19, is a great source of fun. How to ask for a large beer in Danish: "Hej, jeg vil gerne ha' en stor øl, tak".

8 KEX Hostel

Skúlagata 28
An old biscuit factory turned into one of the hottest hostels in the world, KEX mixes industrial chic and secondhand charm successfully. Apart from the dorms and rooms, KEX also houses has a gym, library and a bar, that has quickly become a favourite hangout for locals and travelers alike.

9 Dillon

Laugavegur 30
Dillon is the resident home of tattooed rock and rollers, and whisky drinkers. With moderately priced drinks, the bar livens up after 22 on weekends. Sit down, share a pint with a friend, and wait for an impromptu dance floor to erupt to a Metallica tune. It's just the right place to go and show off that band t-shirt you got the other day.

- The Icelandic Travel Market**, Bankastræti 2, tel: 522 4979
- Trip**, Laugavegur 54, tel: 433 8747
- Pharmacies**
- Lyf og heilsa**, Egilsgata 3, tel: 563 1020
- Lyfja**, Laugavegur 16, tel: 552 4045 and Lágmúla 5, tel: 533-2300
- Coach terminal**
- BSÍ**, Vatnsmýrarvegur 10, tel: 562 1011, www.bsi.is
- Domestic airlines**
- Air Iceland**, Reykjavíkflugvöllur, tel: 570 3030, www.flugfelag.is
- Eagle Air**, Hótel Loftleiðir, tel: 562-4200

- Public transport**
- The only public transport available in Reykjavík is the bus. Most buses run every 20-30 minutes (the wait may be longer on weekends) and the price per fare is 350 ISK for adults and children. Multiple day passes are available for purchase at select locations. Complete route map available at: www.bus.is. Tel: 540 2700. Buses run from 07:00-24:00 on weekdays and 10:00-24:00 on weekends. Main terminals are: Hlemmur and Lækjartorg
- Opening Hours**
- Bars and clubs**: According to regulations, bars can stay open until 01:00 on weekdays and 04:30 on weekends.
- Shops**: Mon.-Fri. 10:00-18:00, Sat. 10:00-16:00, Sun. closed. The shopping centres Kringlan and Smáralind as well as most supermarkets and tourist shops have longer opening hours.
- Swimming pools**: Weekdays 06:30-22:00 and weekends 09:00-17:00, although each pool varies plus or minus a few hours.
- Banks** in the centre are open Mon.-Fri. 09:00-16:00.
- Post Offices**
- Post offices are located around the city. The downtown post office is at Pósthússtræti 3-5, open Mon.-Fri. 09:00-18:00. Stamps are also sold at bookstores, gas stations, tourist shops and some grocery stores.

LIVE MUSIC EVERY NIGHT

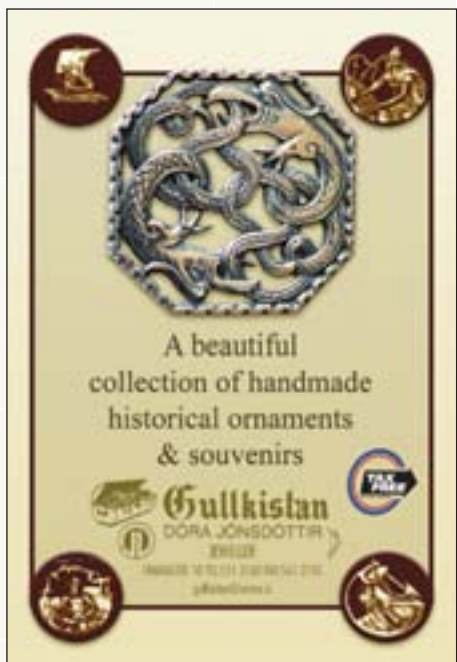
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D



1



13 IDA Zimsen

Vesturgata 2a

If you are the type to enjoy a warm cuppa with your new book, then IDA Zimsen is definitely the place to go. On a warm summer's day you can even sit outside on the lawn and pray it doesn't rain on you. So comb that moustache, put on your empty frames, wrap that scarf inventively around you, and head on over before it becomes too mainstream.

Venue Finder Music & Entertainment

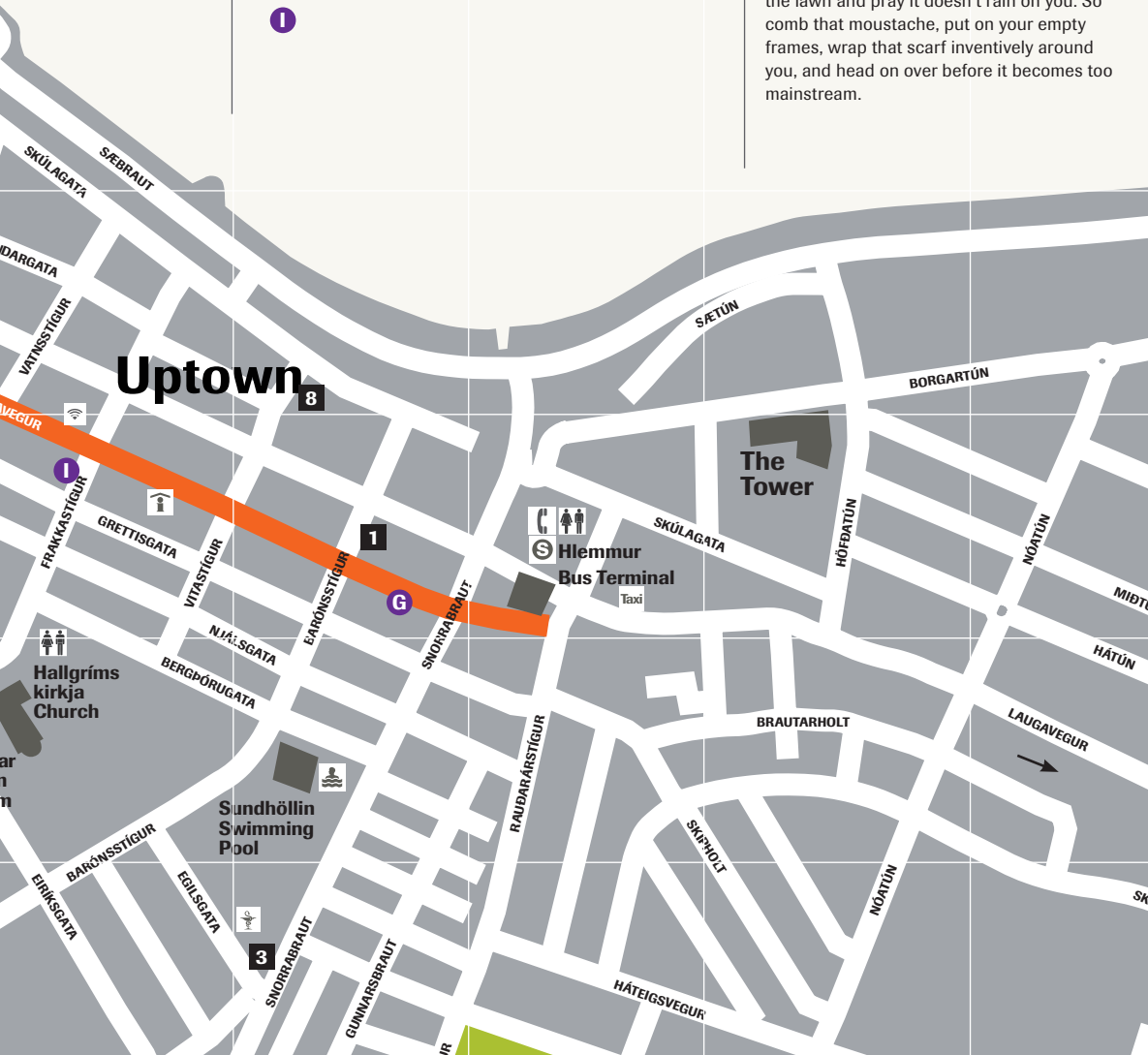
- Amsterdam**
Hafnarstræti 5 | D3
- Austur**
Austurstræti 7 | E3
- B5**
Bankastræti 5 | E4
- Babalú**
Skólavörðustígur 22 | F5
- Bar 11**
Hverfisgötu 18 | E5
- Bjarni Fel**
Austurstræti 20 | E4
- Boston**
Laugavegur 28b | F6
- Café Paris**
Austurstræti 14 | E4
- Celtic Cross**
Hverfisgata 26 | E5
- Den Danske Kro**
Ingólfsstræti 3 | E4
- Dillon**
Laugavegur 30 | F6
- Dolly**
Hafnarstræti 4 | D3
- Dublínar**
Hafnarstræti 1-3 | D3
- Esja**
Austurstræti 16 | E4
- English Pub**
Austurstræti 12 | E3
- Faktory**
Smiðjustígur 6 | E5
- Gamli Gaukurinn**
Tryggvagata 22 | D3
- Gay 46**
Hverfisgata 46 | E5
- Hressó**
Austurstræti 20 | E4
- Mánabar**
Hverfisgata 20 | E5
- Kaffi Zimsen**
Hafnarstræti 18 | D4
- Kaffibarinn**
Bergstaðastræti 1 | E5
- Mánabar**
Hverfisgata 20 | E5
- Nýlenduvörverzlun Hemma & Valda**
Laugavegur 21 | E5
- Næsti Bar**
Ingólfsstræti 1A | E5
- Ólsmiðjan**
Lækjargata 10 | E4
- Ólstofan**
Vegamótastígur | E5
- Prikið**
Bankastræti | E4
- Rósenberg**
Klappastígur 25 | E5
- Sólon**
Bankastræti 7A | E4
- Thorvaldsen**
Austurstræti 8 | D3
- Vegamót**
Vegamótastígur 4 | E6

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Museums & Galleries

- ART67**
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Mon - Fri 12 - 18 / Sat 12 - 16
www.listasafn.is
- ASÍ Art Museum**
Freygata 41 | H6
Tue-Sun 13-17
www.listasafnasi.is
- Árbæjarsafn**
Kistuhylur 4
- The Culture House**
Hverfisgata 15 | E5
Open daily 11-17
www.thjodmenning.is
- The Einar Jónsson Museum**
Eiríksgrata | G6
Tue-Sun 14-17
www.skulptur.is
- Galleri Ágúst**
Baldursgata 12 | G5
Wed-Sat 12-17
www.galleriagust.is
- Galleri Fold**
Rauðarástígur 14-16 | G8
Mon-Fri 10-18 / Sat 11-16 / Sun 14-16
www.myndlist.is
- Kaolin**
Skólavörðustígur 22 | E5
www.kaolingallery.com
- Galleri Kling & Bang**
Hverfisgata 42 | E6
Thurs-Sun from 14-18
this.is/klingogbang/
- Ásgrímur Jónsson Museum**
Bergstaðastræti 74
Mon-Fri through Sept. 1
- Gerðuberg Cultural Centre**
Gerðuberg 3-5
Mon-Thu 11-17 / Wed 11-21 / Thu-Fri 11-17 / Sat-Sun 13-16
www.gerduberg.is
- Hitt Húsið**
Galleri Tukt
Pósthússtræti 3-5 | E4
www.hitthusid.is
- i8 Gallery**
Tryggvagata 16 | D3
Tue-Fri 11-17 / Sat 13-17 and by appointment www.i8.is
- Living Art Museum**
Skúlagata 28 | E7
Wed, Fri-Sun 13-17 / Thu 13-22. www.nylo.is
- Hafnarborg**
Strandgata 34, Hafnarfjörður
www.hafnarborg.is
- Mokka Kaffi**
Skólavörðustígur 3A | E5
www.mokka.is
- The National Gallery of Iceland**
- Frikirkjuvegur 7 | F4**
Tue-Sun 11-17
www.listasafn.is
- The National Museum**
Suðurgata 41 | G2
Open daily 10-17
natmus.is
- The Nordic House**
Sturlugata 5
Tue-Sun 12-17
www.nordice.is
- Restaurant Reykjavík**
Vesturgata 2 | D3
www.restaurantreykjavik.is
- Reykjavík 871+/-2**
Aðalstræti 17 | E3
Open daily 10-17
- Reykjavík Art Gallery**
Skúlagata 30 | E7
Tuesday through Sunday 14-18
- Reykjavík Art Museum composed of Hafnarhús**
Tryggvagata 17 | D3
Open 10-17
Thursday 10-20
- Kjarvalsstaðir**
Flókagata 24
Open 10-17
- Ásmundarsafn**
Sigtún
Open 10-17
More info on www.listasafnreykjavikur.is
- Reykjavík City Library**
Tryggvagata 15 | D3
Mon 10-21, Tue-Thu 10-19, Fri 11-19, Sat and Sun 13-17
www.sim.is/Index/Islen-ska/Artotek
- Reykjavík Maritime Museum**
Grandagarður 8 | B2
www.maritimemuseum.is
- Reykjavík Museum of Photography**
Tryggvagata 16 | D3
Weekdays 12-19 / Sat-Sun 13-17 - www.ljosmyndasafnreykjavikur.is
- Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum**
Laugarnestangi 70
www.lso.is
- SÍM**
Hafnarstræti 16 | D4
Mon-Fri 10-16
- Skörin**
Aðalstræti 10
- Spark Design Space**
Klappastígur 33 | E5
www.sparkdesignspace.com

G

CAFÉ IÐNÓ

IÐNÓ

Oldest theater in Reykjavík where you can sit down outside by the pound, after you have explored this old historical house and have a good meal or just a glass of wine

www.idno.is idno@xnet.is

F

Shopping

10 Aurum

Bankastræti 4

Guðbjörg Kristín Ingvarsdóttir's nature-inspired designs are a breath of fresh air and a celebrated entity of Icelandic design. Her jewellery-cum-concept store offers stunning accessories for both us and our homes.

11 Handprjónasambandið

Skólavörðustígur 19

The Hand-knitting Association of Iceland's official store, Handprjónasambandið, sells wool products of uncompromising quality. The store features pullover sweaters, cardigans and other wool accessories.

12 Mál og Menning

Laugavegur 18

Mál og Menning bookstore is a Reykjavík essential if there ever was one. It occupies three levels at Laugavegur, and sells stationary, children's games, foreign newspapers, Icelandic books, CDs, postcards and souvenirs. You'll find the always-buzzing café and the foreign book section on the top floor.

Public phones

There aren't many public payphones in the city centre. The tourist information centre at Aðalstræti 2, City Hall, Kolaportíð, entrance at Landsbankinn and in Lækjargata. Prepaid international phone cards are recommended for int'l callers.

Internet Access

Most cafés offer free wireless internet access. Computers with internet connections are available to use at:
Ráðhúskaffi City Hall, Tjarnargata 11
Ground Zero, Frakkastígur 8, near Laugavegur 45
The Reykjavík City Library, Tryggvagata 15

The National and University Library, Arngrímsgata 3

Tourist Information Centre, Aðalstræti 2
Icelandic Travel Market, Bankastræti 2
Reykjavík Backpackers, Laugavegur 28

Swimming Pools

There are several swimming pools in Reykjavík. The one in 101 Reykjavík, Sundhöll Reykjavíkur, is an indoor one, located at Barónsstígur. That pool features a nice sunbathing area and some outdoor hot tubs. Opening hours: Monday to Thursday from 06:30-22:00, Friday from 06:30-20:00, Saturday from 08:00-16:00, and Sunday from 10:00-18:00.

Public Toilets

Public toilets in the centre can be found inside the green poster covered towers located, for example, at Hlemmur, Ingólfsstortorg, by Hallgrímskirkja, by Reykjavík Art Museum, Lækjargata and by Eymundsson on Skólavörðustígur. Toilets can also be found inside the Reykjavík City Hall and the Reykjavík Library.

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Best Of Reykjavík

Every year around the beginning of July, we make a BEST OF REYKJAVÍK ISSUE celebrating some of what makes Reykjavík-life worthwhile, posting some good entries into a hopefully never-ending discussion. The primary purpose of BEST OF REYKJAVÍK is celebration! It's about big-upping stuff, giving mad props to it and patting it on the shoulder. The following are some nice tips we pulled from BEST OF REYKJAVÍK 2012, which you can find in full at www.grapevine.is



BEST BURGER: GRILLMARKET



While Búllan is still a popular choice among Reykjavík's burger lovers, there's a new burger in town that simply can't be ignored—its sheer tasty, meaty, juicy, burgery, bacony deliciousness ensures its status as Reykjavík's best burger bar none. We are of course talking about Grillmarket's hamburger, what with all its glorious 220 grams of high quality, fire-grilled ground beef topped with crispy bacon sandwiched between freshly baked, mustard-smear buns. Anyone who has tried it will attest that the Grillmarket-burger is leagues beyond any other burger in town, and at 1,890 ISK it comes at a fair price. The only downside is that it's only available until 14:00 daily!

Located at Lækjargata 2A



BEST SHOP FOR 'HIGH FASHION': KRONKRON



Those with a fashion fetish will tell you that KronKron offers "the only proper selection of current international designers in Reykjavík," with one even remarking: "I would have no idea what I'd do without them! They are the only ones actively importing new clothes!" Go there for clothes by labels such as Marc Jacobs, Wood Wood and Vivienne Westwood, shoes by Eley Kishimoto and Sonia Rykiel and of course the storeowners' newly launched label KRONbyKRONKRON. Of course it all comes with a price, but we are told tourists can get tax-free rebates of the stuff, which ultimately renders it pretty cheap.

Located at Laugavegur 63B



BEST POOL LAUGARDALSLAUG



Swimming is a favourite pastime in Iceland. Most towns around the country have a swimming pool and Reykjavík has seven of them. They do in fact all have their charm, but we think it's safe to call Laugardalslaug the best pool. Why? Because it's huge, it has a bunch of hot tubs at varying temperatures, it has a killer waterslide and the stadium seating blocks out the cold northerly winds, which are usually accompanied by sunny rays. Not to mention, it was remodelled last year and it is more beautiful, relaxing and funner than ever.

Located at Sundlaugarvegur

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Awesome Icelandic fish, incredible steaks and Epic burgers along with a huge selection of Icelandic brew.



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A GUIDE THAT FUCKS YOU UP

A list of every Happy Hour in 101 Reykjavík

101 Hótel
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. Beer for 450 ISK, wine for 645 ISK.

Austur
Every day from 20:00 to 00:00. Beer for 495 ISK and wine 550 ISK.

B5
Every day from 16:00 to 22:00. Beer 550 ISK, cider 750 ISK, wine 550 ISK.

Bjarni Fel
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. 2 for 1 beer for 890 ISK.

Boston
Every day from 16:00 to 22:00. Beer 500 ISK. Wine glass 500 ISK, wine carafe 1000 ISK.

Celtic Cross
Every day from 17:00 to 20:00. Gull and Tuborg for 500 ISK.

Den Danske Kro
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. 2 for 1 beer 900 ISK and wine for 900 ISK.

Dillon
Every day from 16:00 to 20:00. 2 for 1 beer for 850 ISK.

Dolly
Every day from 16:00 to 20:00. Beer 500 ISK and wine 500 ISK.

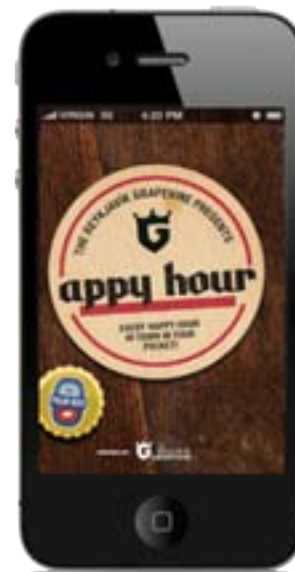
Dublín
Every day from 16:00 to 20:00. 2 for 1 beer (Pilsner Urquell) for 1000 ISK.

Faktóry
Every day from 17:00 to 20:00. Gull beer for 500 ISK.

Fálkinn bistro
Every day except Sundays from 17:00 to 22:00. Beer for 500 ISK and wine for 500 ISK.

Harlem
Every day from 17:00 to 22:00. Beer 550 ISK, wine 700 ISK.

Hemmi og Valdi
Every day from 12:00 to 20:00 (to 22:00 for Viking Lager). Draft beer for 550 ISK, Viking Classic and Viking lager. Wine for 700 ISK.



Download the FREE Grapevine Appy Hour app!

Every happy hour in town in your pocket. Available in the App store and on the Android Market.

Hilton Hotel Bar
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. Beer for 500 ISK and wine for 650 ISK.

Hótel 1919
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. 2 for 1 beer for 1000 ISK, white wine for 1190 ISK, Red wine for 1290 ISK, Cocktail of the Day for 1919 ISK.

Hótel Holt Gallery Bar
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. Stella for 475 ISK, Kaldi for 550 ISK, Wine for 695 ISK, sparkling wine for 750 ISK, Cocktail of the Week for 950 ISK.

Hótel Plaza Bar
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. Beer for 500 ISK.

Iða Zimsen
Coffee happy hour every morning from 9:00-11:00. Every night from 19:00 to 22:00. 2 for 1 on Gull and 445 ISK for a 330cl can of beer.

Kaffi Zimsen
Sunday - Thurs from 17:00 to 22:00. 2 for 1 beer for 800 ISK.

Kaldibar
Every day from 17:00 to 20:00. 2 beers or 2 glasses of wine for 900 ISK, 2 for 1 on all drinks.

Kolabrautin
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. Beer for 500 ISK. Wine for 700 ISK. All cocktails 1000 ISK. Champagne glass 1500 ISK.

Lebowski Bar
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. 2 for 1 beer for 900 ISK and wine for 1000 ISK.

Loft Hostel
Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. Can of Gull beer for 500 ISK. Wine for 700 ISK.

Micro Bar
Every day except Saturday from 16:00 to 19:00. Selected draft microbrew for 500 ISK, 2 for 1 on beer on Saturdays.

Miðgarður Bistro bar
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. 50% off all drinks. Beer for 500 ISK, wine for 600 ISK.

Obladi Oblada
Every day from 12:00 to 20:00. Beer for 600 ISK.

Prikið
Weekdays from 16:00 to 20:00. 2 for 1 beer for 690 ISK.

Roadhouse
Friday and Saturday 22:00 - 23:00. 2 for 1 Beer for 790 ISK, wine for 790 ISK.

Slippbarinn
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. 50% off beer 475 ISK and wine 500 ISK.

Stofan
Every day from 17:00 to 20:00. Beer for 500 ISK and wine for 600 ISK.

Tapashúsið
Every day from 16:00 to 18:00. 2 for 1 beer for 950 ISK and wine 1150 ISK.

Uno
Every day from 17:00 - 19:00. 50% off all drinks. Beer for 450 ISK, wine 575 ISK.

Uppsalar - Bar & Café
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. 2 for 1 Beers for 900 ISK, except Tuborg Classic for 950 ISK, wine for 1100 ISK.

Pingholtsbar
Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. Viking beer for 500 ISK.

ART ONGOING

— continued —

The Icelandic Phalological Museum

The museum contains a collection of more than two hundred and fifteen penises and penile parts.

On permanent view.

Reykjavik Art Museum - Ásmundarsafn

Tales From the Vault

A collection of Ásmundur Sveinsson's sculptures tied together by a common literary thread.

Runs until December 30

Reykjavik Art Museum - Hafnarhús

Erró - Graphic Art, 1949-2009

For the first time the general public are able to view Erró's graphic art spanning half a century.

Runs until August 25

All State

Theresa Himmer's elevator sound installation.

Runs until September 1

Reykjavik Art Museum - Kjalvalstaðir

Icelandic Art 1900-1950

A collection of over 200 Icelandic works from the period of 1900-1950.

Runs until September 22

The Reykjavik City Library

The collection centers around new Nordic literature, both fiction and nonfiction.

On permanent view

Reykjavik City Museum

Reykjavik 871 +/- 2: The Settlement Exhibition

Archaeological findings from ruins of one of the first houses in Iceland and other excavations in the city centre.

On permanent view

Reykjavik Maritime Museum

From Poverty to Abundance

Photos documenting Icelandic fishermen at the turn of the 20th century.

On permanent view

The History of Sailing

Iceland's maritime history and the growth of the Reykjavik Harbour.

On permanent view

The Coast Guard Vessel Óðinn

This vessel sailed through all three Cod Wars and also served as a rescue ship to over 200 ships.

On permanent view

The Reykjavik Museum of Photography

Horse With No Name - Spessi

Spessi took portrait photographs of numerous bikers during his travels and exploration of the biker culture.

Runs until September 15

Skotið: David W. Lewis

Old remnants with Bromoil photographic process.

Runs until July 16

Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum

De Profundis

A collection of sculptures by Sigurjón Ólafsson and the paintings of his contemporaries.

Runs until September 1

Poka

SEIZE

An exhibition by Darri Lorenzen involving hands that point.

Runs until June 9



National Pride, Candy Floss & Hot Dogs! Icelandic Independence Day

June 17 | Downtown Reykjavik | Free!

It's time to celebrate 69 years of Icelanders being free from Danish tyranny, no longer forced to eat disgusting rotten food or taking pride in being descended from marauding murderous Vikings. Or wait, do we still do that? Well, we're celebrating with hot dogs, flags and balloons, and a lot of free events. Expect to be rudely awoken as all the church bells in the capital go off at once, reminding you to see our bishop preaching in Dómkirkjan. The festivities begin just after 11 at Austurvöllur with a number of people wanting to show off their excellent voice, including choirs, singers, and our new prime minister (we hope he does Duran Duran's 'Wild Boys,' but we suspect he'll just make a speech). At 13:00, parades start from Hlemmur, as well as festivities in Hljóm-skálagarður and children's events at Arnarhóll. Then Arnarhóll turns into a stage, so head there to catch bands like Retro Stefson and Ojba Rasta play for free. You are pretty much guaranteed to see something fun if you head out, so stop reading this and just have a good time already! Don't expect to get any good parking spots, but busses will be running on a Sunday schedule. **TGB**

Photo by Sigfús Már Pétursson



Find all art listings
online
listings.grapevine.is



Get Lost "A Small World" by Soffía Sæmundsdóttir

June 1-16 | The Icelandic Printmakers Association | Free!

"A real traveller doesn't need a place to stay but for the night," reads Soffía Sæmundsdóttir's artist statement. Soffía's latest exhibition, "A Small World," explores the relationship between the fleeting freedom of travel and the comfort of permanence. Get lost. Get found. Move around. In the end, it's all about locating yourself. **PY**

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Kópavogur Art Museum- Gerðarsafn

Hamraborg 4, Kópavogur

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Closed on Mondays

www.gerdarsafn.is



Hönnunarsafn Íslands Museum of Design and Applied Art

Garðatorg 1, Garðabær

Tel. +354 512 1525

Open 12-17

Closed on Mondays

www.honnunarsafn.is



Hafnarborg

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Thursdays 12-21

Closed on Tuesdays

www.hafnarborg.is

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Icelandic Design

To the Blue Lagoon

Hellisgerði
Pleasure Garden

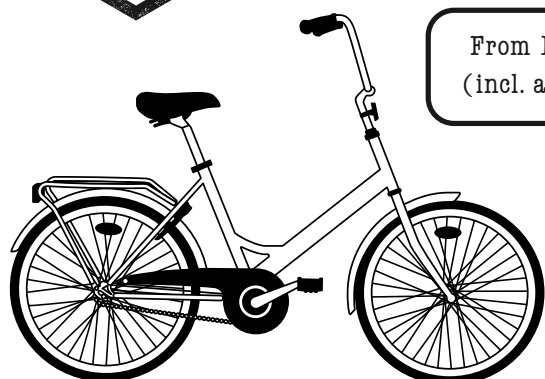
Art=Text=Art
Works by Contemporary Artists



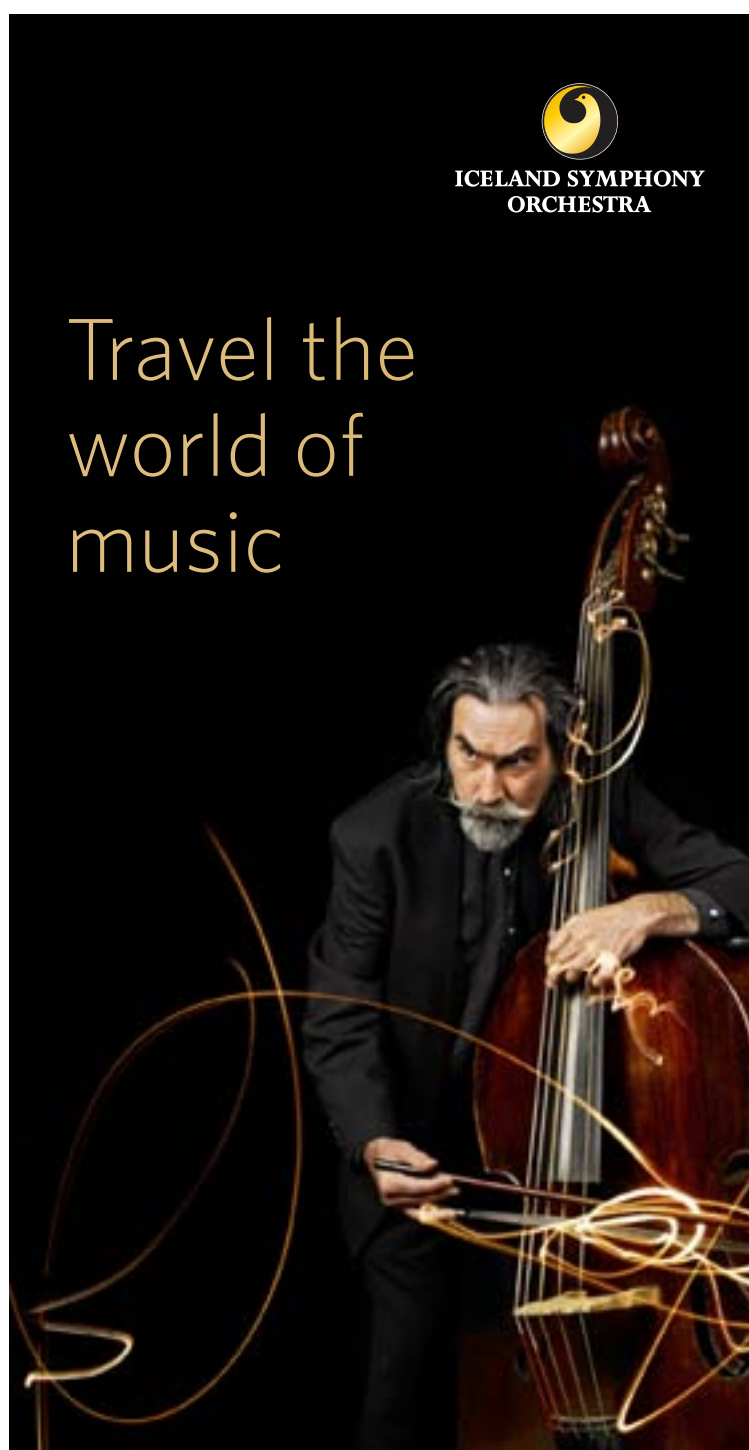
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OUTSIDE

REYKJAVÍK IN JUNE



Viking Festival

Fjörúkráin

June 14 - 17

Adults 800 ISK, Children 500 ISK

They could be Vikings failing terribly at fitting into modern society, or a group of normal people putting on a heck of a show. Either way, the annual Viking Festival is one where Fjörúkráin's yard turns into a medieval market place filled with handmade souvenirs, wool clothes and fine silver. There will also be a medieval dance-off, as well as exhibition fights from the Hafnarfjörður Viking society Rim-mugýgur (pictured above). The festival is family friendly, and sure to offer lots of Kodak moments. Just ask one of the burly bare-chested bearded men to pretend to cut your head off with that heavy axe; I'm sure they'll be up for it! **TGB**

Photo by Elín Reynisdóttir and Ægir J. Guðmundsson

OUTSIDE REYKJAVÍK

North Iceland

Akureyri

Akureyri Art Museum Facing The Sea

April 27 - June 9

A collection of art inspired by the sea.

A Step In The Direction - Destination Unknown

May 18 - June 16

A painting exhibit that focuses on forms.

Ping-Pang-Púff

May 18 - June 16

Figurative paintings and drawings made by the recent graduate from Denmark's Designskolen Kolding.

Græni Hatturinn

DIMMA

June 8, 22:00

Þór Breiðfjörð

June 13, 21:00

Dúndurfréttir

June 14, 22:00

Bravó Bítarnir

June 15, 22:00

Hvannaldsbræður and Rögnvaldur

Gáfaði

June 16, 22:00

Gylfi Ægisson

June 20, 22:00

Hof Menningarhús Best of Jethro Tull

June 7, 20:00

A comprehensive program that spans the band's 45 year history as music-makers. Tickets can be purchased online for 10,900 ISK.

Listagilið

Sýning - Ausstellung - Exhibit

June 8 - July 12

A retrospective of Hlynur Hallsson's last ten years interspersed with new works. Text work, spray paint, and prints.

Flóran

Free Show

June 7, 16:00

Young bands from the grassroots put on a free show outside Flóran. After the show, check out the market in the port.

Lystigarður (Akureyri Botanical Garden)

National Day Parade

June 17, 13:00

The National Day parade kicks off a day of celebration and nation-wide cheer. The parade begins at 13:00 and entertainment will ensue until midnight.

Dalvík

Byggðasafnið Hvoll á Dalvík The North In The North

An exhibit about Greenland and artifacts from there.

June 2 - March 1 2014

Húsavík

Gamli Baukur

"Lets Talk Local" Comedy Show

Every day at 15:30

The show is presented in English and takes listeners on an entertaining and informative journey through Húsavík

East Iceland

Egilsstaðir

Sláturhúsið

Icelandic Movie Days

June 4 - August 28

All summer long Sláturhúsið holds free showings of must-see Icelandic movies, every night from Monday - Thursday beginning at 8 PM. Showing start the week of June 4, check the Facebook page for this week's titles!

South Iceland

Hveragerði

LÁ Art

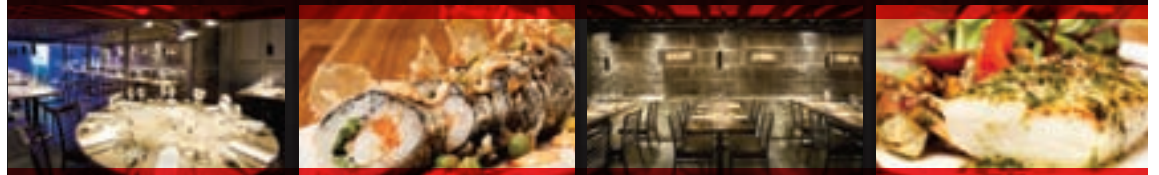
Time in the Landscape

June 9 - September 15

Landscape paintings by representatives of two separate generations. Ásgrímur Jónsson (1876-1958) displays alongside Arngunnur Ýr (b. 1962), creating a dialogue that traces the development of Icelandic landscape art.

THREE Course Menu

Sushi - Lamb or fish - Chocolate Kr. 6.990-



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魚 [RUB23] 海

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OUTSIDE

REYKJAVÍK IN JUNE

Mosfellsbær

Gljúfrasteinn
Maxímús Músíkús

June 9

Maxímús Músíkús and company put on a children's show. The author talks about Maxímús, and about musical adventures.

Gunnhildur Halla Guðmundsdóttir

June 16

Chelloist Gunnhildur Halla Guðmundsdóttir puts on a show.

Selfoss

Hrísmýri

Kótelettan Festival

June 7-9

An annual family friendly festival in Selfoss! Events and activities span this light summer weekend, from daily musical performances to lazer tag in the park, to a Saturday night "meat festival!" Tickets are 2,900 ISK. More information and program on the event page: www.facebook.com/kotelettan.

Westman Islands

Heimaey

Pompei of the North

Excavation project at the site of the 1973 volcanic eruption on the island of Heimaey.

On permanent display

West Iceland

Borgarnes

The Icelandic Settlement Centre

The Settlement Exhibition

A thirty minute-long multi-media exhibit that provides insight into the settlement of Iceland. Admission is 2,400 ISK.

On permanent display

The Egils Saga Exhibition

Located in the stone-walled basement of the Centre, this exhibit leads visitors through the colourful saga of Egil, one of Iceland's first settlers.

On permanent display

West Fjords

Flateyri

Vagninn

June 8, 22:30

Prins Pólo, Holy B, Hlaupkarlarnir and Óli Popp put on a live gig. 1,500 ISK.

Stykkishólmur

Vatnasafnið / Library of Water
Water, Selected

Twenty four columns filled with glacier water from all over the country.

Ongoing

To Place

An audio exhibit offering insight into the Icelandic psyche, where you can listen to recordings of people talking about the weather.

Ongoing



STEYPA

Old Herring Factory, Djúpavík

June 1 - August 31

The old herring factory in Djúpavík has exchanged fish for photography. Djúpavík, in Iceland's mystifying Westfjords, is the host of a summer long photography exhibit entitled, STEYPA (Icelandic for concrete). The exhibit will feature the work of both Icelanders and non-Icelanders as they each explore their unique experience with Iceland. If the scenery wasn't reason enough to take a drive to the Westfjords, you now have another excuse. **SS**



Sýning - Ausstellung - Exhibition

Listagilið

June 8 - July 12

Do you love Icelanders who've gone to Germany and are totally artsy? Then you will dig Hlynur Hallson! He's been a name to watch in the North of Iceland, and is putting on a show on in Akureyri's Listagilið. Combining a wide range of mediums, Hlynur has won several awards, including the Kunstverein Hannover in 1997, and being Akureyri's town artist in 2005. The show itself is in Kartöflugeymslan, the top floor of Listagilið, and showcases selected works of Hlynur from the last decade. **TGB**

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Fish-and-Miss

Sakebarinn

Laugavegur 2,
101 Reykjavík
Mon-Sun 17-23

What we think

Charming and cosy, but the food is hit-and-miss, like shooting shrimp in a barrel

Flavour:

Sushi miscellanea

Ambience:

A flowery treetop with lovely views of the streets

Service:

Slightly aloof but generally prompt

Price for 2 (with drinks):

6,500-9,000 ISK



Perched on the corner of Laugavegur and Skólavörðustígur, this secluded little hideaway is the perfect post for people watching. Nearly every table faces a window overlooking the lively streets and its pretty walls are dotted with cheery hand-painted flowers and animals, making it an ideal setting for a girl's night out. That was exactly what I hoped for when I took my sister out last Friday. Although we were greeted by a frowning waitress and seated by the door, we had no problems changing to another table that was further inside, and the menus and water were quickly

laid out for us.

True to its name, Sakebarinn had a small but beguiling selection of sake as well as a special, weekly-changing sake cocktail for 1,600 ISK. We decided to go with the cocktail, which was lychee-flavoured this week. They were a bit slow to arrive, but they were sweet and fresh when they did.

The menu was bursting with dozens of juicy names like "Rice against the Machine" and "Shogun Wasabi." The rolls were divided into two categories, "Uramaki" (inside-out rolls, ranging from 1,550-1,990 ISK for eight pieces or 950-1,200 ISK for four) and "Futomaki" (large, fat rolls, ranging from 990-1,450 ISK for five giant pieces). We were a little overwhelmed by the selection but our waitress pointed out a few of their most popular rolls, such as the Chuck Nori and the Crunchy Munchy (coconut-and-lobster roll). I'd already tried the latter and loved it, so we dared ourselves to try the Chuck Nori. The rest of our rolls we chose on a whim: the double-deep-fried tempura shrimp roll, the Salmon Lover, the San Francisco roll as well as the Roll of Week.

Our food arrived on a circular tray, dramatically arranged like colours on an artist's palette. The shrimp tempura futomaki was nicely crisp and quite filling, as each piece was nearly twice the size of the other ones. My sister's favourite was the Salmon Lover, a classic salmon-and-avocado roll with a garlic twist. Both of us also loved the San Francisco roll: cucumber, shrimp and avocado topped

with a lustful slice of grilled salmon (which granted might offend the sensibilities of some sushi eaters). These last two rolls were exactly what sushi should be: fresh and ever-so-slightly sticky, with a hint of something special.

The rest of the food, however, didn't live up to these standards. From the start of our evening I had been enticed by the Roll of the Week: pan-fried scallops with Serrano ham and herb cream cheese, but this one proved to be the most disappointing of the bunch, unless you enjoy getting a bagel when you order sushi. Certainly there are a million other ways to serve scallops, and any of them would have been better than this.

The Chuck Nori was wrapped in beef and slathered with kimchee sauce and shichimi, a Japanese chilli blend. It tasted like peppery catsup to me and so completely upset my palate that I had to wash it down with a bagel roll. Steer clear of this one and order the Kamikaze (a spicy tuna roll) or the Crunchy Munchy instead. Or play it safe and order the double-deep-fried shrimp tempura—you certainly won't go hungry.

I would probably come here again—for the scenery, if not the service—but I will definitely stick to what I know off the menu. A drink, a girlfriend and a good dose of gossip will certainly help.

PATRICIA PORMAR
 NANNA DÍÐ

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Pan-ambus

Bambus

Borgatún 6, 105 Reykjavík
Mon-Thurs 11–21, Fri 11–22,
Sat-Sun 17–22

What we think

A potentially great idea, with room for improvement

Flavour:

Fairly bland Asian cuisine

Ambiance:

Bright and spacious - but a tad too much

Service:

Thoroughly prompt if a little shy

Price for 2 (no drinks):

6,000–9,000 ISK



If there were something Reykjavík could use more of in the gastronomic sphere, it would be ethnic restaurants. Specifically, I'm hoping somebody will open an amazing Moroccan or Vietnamese place here someday (any takers?), but a great way to kill several birds with one stone is by means of the pan-Asian restaurant. Serving a carefully constructed selection of classic Chinese, Japanese, Indian and South-East Asian dishes, these places are sure to have something that hits the spot when you're craving something farther from home. Bambus, I thought, might be just that kind of place.

A friend and I arranged to go last Thursday, and apart from one

or two other parties we had the place to ourselves. The place was brightly lit, almost like a diner, and quite roomy—a plus for groups or families, but lacking in intimacy. Our waitress brought us water and menus, and although we took our time, she was unremittingly prompt throughout the entire evening, always smiling and very polite. So far, points for good service.

The composition of the menu took a little while to grasp, with entrées divided into four categories: curries, stir fries, noodles, and just plain “main courses.” There were also soups, which were cheaper than the appetizers, but apart from the price there was nothing to indicate whether they were meant as starters or mains. Eventually, and with some help from our waitress, we settled on the shrimp tempura and grilled beef skewers for our starters. For our main courses, we chose the lemongrass chicken skewers as well as their most popular dish, the “Roaring Tiger”: beef steak with fried potato cake.

The shrimps were satisfyingly crisp and came with a tasty Szechuan dipping sauce, although I would have preferred fatter, firmer specimens. The beef skewers were pretty disappointing as they were too tough and greasy to actually enjoy. My lemongrass chicken came with brown rice, pan-fried vegetables and a very minimal mango salad: a healthy choice, if not much else. It certainly could have had more kick to it as it really wasn't very lemongrass-y at all. The serv-

ing was perfectly portioned for someone watching their weight, but not so much for a full grown person with a healthy appetite.

The “Roaring Tiger,” was probably the most satisfying dish of the lot but that's not saying much. The meat was tender and soaked in a nameless sauce, which was quite savoury, although it left absolutely no aftertaste whatsoever. In fact, it would have been a perfectly adequate dish had we been sitting in a diner or a bistro, but neither of us could fathom what made this dish a tiger and not simply a European wildcat, or why it claimed to be roaring – I can safely attest that the flavour was hardly louder than a cat's meow.

Finally, for dessert, we tried the mango kulfi, which was said to be “a real delicacy, a kind of both ice cream and sorbet,” but what we got was a drippy vanilla ice cream with what seemed to be applesauce topping. At least the strawberries were fresh, though.

This restaurant is a great idea but the execution leaves a lot to be desired. There's certainly something for everyone on the menu, but perhaps they should stick to a handful of defining dishes that focus on intense flavours. If you're going to serve pan-Asian, at least start with something Asian, and not merely pan.

✍ PATRICIA PORMAR
📷 NANNA DÍŠ



SNAPS

BISTRO - BAR



#109



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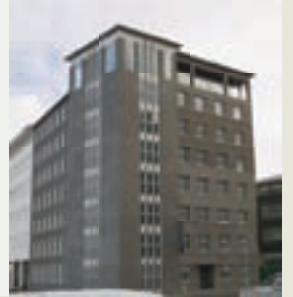
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