

SAM'S Column...

Not that long ago I went on holiday, and not your usual holiday of lounging on a beach somewhere getting sunburned and complaining that its too hot all the time, not that I don't enjoy doing things like that, no on this holiday I went to Iceland. Iceland, you may say, why would you ever want to go there? Surely it's just cold and there can't be anything to do. Well that is what I thought until I visited there and found out what a great place it was.



Firstly a bit of geography, Iceland is northwest of Europe and has a beautiful landscape covered with high rocky mountains, huge glacial rivers, tumbling waterfalls and a lot of hot springs. It has a cold climate and has up to twenty-two hours of daylight in summer but twenty-two hours of darkness in the middle of winter. Reykjavik is the largest city in Iceland but it is only about the size of Oxford and you can get to anywhere in the city in about thirty minutes.

There are also a lot of things to see and do in Iceland, in summer one of the main attractions is whale watching, this fantastic experience takes you into the Atlantic Ocean on a voyage seeking out whales, you even join in the fun by looking for them as well, it does get very cold though so make sure you wrap up warm for this trip, but its not only whales that you spot on this trip, you can also see birds such as puffins, black headed gulls and arctic terns.

Another great summer attraction is the Icelandic marathon which takes place early in August, people from all around the world come to take part in this feat of endurance, after the marathon there is Iceland Celebration Day. Suddenly the streets become packed with street vendors, performers and fun activities which last long into the night. There is also an amazing fireworks show at about eleven o'clock and parties that last well into the early hours of the morning, and Icelanders really know how to party!

But you don't need to stay in Reykjavik to enjoy Iceland, just take a short drive outside of the city and you can see some spectacular scenery, in the heart of Iceland there is a great waterfall where hundreds of tons of water cascade down every minute. You can also see giant glaciers in the distance but they will not be there for long as they are receding one hundred meters every year due to global warming.

If you just want to relax though and take it easy there is no place better than the blue lagoon. It is natural geo thermal pool where you can just watch the world go by in warmth and comfort. It has a spa and massage area and even a special mud which can make you look years younger, supposedly.

So if you want a change from sitting on a beach with nothing to do then Iceland is the place for you, with so much to do in both summer and winter it really is an enjoyable and different holiday for all the family.

BY SAM GREGORY
Age 15

