



Ultimate Iceland: Land of Fire & Ice READING & RESOURCE SUGGESTIONS

Courtesy of Mary Savina '72, Linda Rossi, and David Lefkowitz '85

Here is a selection of favorite books, movies, and websites prepared for your journey. The books should be available at local public or university libraries, and many of them may be purchased and/or downloaded for e-readers through local and online bookstores. The movies may be available online or through a streaming service.

MAPS & GUIDEBOOKS

National Geographic. *Iceland Adventure Map*. National Geographic Maps, 2016. A detailed map at a scale of 1:465,000, printed on handy tear- and water-resistant paper. ISBN-10: 1566955343 / ISBN-13: 978-1566955348.

Lonely Planet, Alexis Averbuck, Carolyn Bain, et al. *Lonely Planet Iceland*. Lonely Planet Publications, 2019. ISBN-10: 1786578107 / ISBN-13: 978-1786578105. This concise guide to Iceland includes short essays on history, culture and attractions and plenty of practical travel information.

NATURAL HISTORY

Gudmunsson, Agust. *The Glorious Geology of Iceland's Golden Circle*. Springer, 2017. ISBN-10: 3319551515 / ISBN-13: 978-3319551517. *Note from Prof. Savina: "Although the focus is on the Golden Circle (Geysir, Gullfoss and Thingvellir), the guide also does a decent job covering some basics of the geology. Also, it covers some other areas where we will go in southern Iceland: the Reykjanes peninsula, Eyjafjallajokull and Reynisfjara, and (nearer to Reykjavik) a couple of areas that folks coming earlier or staying later might be able to get to on their own."*

Gudmunsson, Ari Trausti. *Living Earth: Outline of the Geology of Iceland*. Mal Og Menning, Publisher. ISBN-10: 9979327774 / ISBN-13: 978-9979327776. *Note from Prof. Savina: "Some people prefer it to the Hoskuldsson and Thordarson book (below), finding it better illustrated and more suitable for non-geologists."*

Hoskuldsson, Armann, and Thor Thordarson. *Iceland*. International Specialized Book Services, 3rd ed., forthcoming May 2020. ISBN-10: 1780460929 / ISBN-13: 978-1780460925. This

geologic companion to Iceland covers rifting of the crust, volcanic eruptions and glacial and other geologic activity in detail.

Jordan, Brennan T., Tamara L. Carley, and Tenley J. Banik. ***Iceland: The Formation and Evolution of a Young, Dynamic, Volcanic Island—A Field Trip Guide***. GSA Field Guide, Geological Society of America, 2019. EISBN: 9780813756547. *Note from Prof. Savina: “*This field guide can be ordered through the GSA (\$40; \$28 for members, of whom there are a few on the trip). Easiest way to purchase is online: <http://rock.geosociety.org/store>”**

Pielou, E.C. ***A Naturalist's Guide to the Arctic***. University of Chicago Press, 1995. ISBN-10: 0226668142 / ISBN-13: 978-0226668147. *Note from Prof. Savina: “*Pielou's books are readable and good value; potential buyers should know that it doesn't specifically refer to locations in Iceland.*”*

Witze, Alexandra and Jeff Kanipe. ***Island on Fire: The Extraordinary Story of a Forgotten Volcano That Changed the World***. Pegasus Books, 2016. ISBN-10: 1605989584 / ISBN-13: 978-1605989587. Two science writers discuss the political and natural ramifications of the 1783 eruption of Iceland's largest volcano, Laki, which led to global death, famine and even revolution. Great for the geologically minded but accessible to all with an interest in volcanoes.

HISTORY & CULTURE

Byock, Jesse. ***Viking Age Iceland***. Penguin Books, 2001. ISBN-10: 0140291156 / ISBN-13: 978-0140291155. In this scholarly study, Byock challenges the conventional view of Norse society in Iceland. He describes the life, economy and culture of medieval Iceland – including its autonomy from kings and warlords back home. *Note from Prof. Savina: “*...strongly recommended by Bill North in the History Department and covers the archaeology, specific to Iceland.*”*

Diamond, Jared. ***Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed***. Penguin Books; Revised edition, 2011. ISBN-10: 0143117009 / ISBN-13: 978-0143117001. *Note from Prof. Savina: “*...includes a section on Iceland and Viking settlement in the North Atlantic (chapters 6, 7, 8). I teach this book, too, because it's important even if it isn't right. If you have it on your bookshelf, take a look at those chapters.*”*

Kurlansky, Mark. ***Cod: A Biography of a Fish That Changed the World***. Penguin Books, 2010. ISBN-10: 0140275010 / ISBN-13: 978-0140275018. *Note from Prof. Savina: “*...includes recipes!*”*

Lewis, Michael. ***Boomerang: Travels in the New Third World***. W. W. Norton & Company, 2012. ISBN-10: 0393343448 / ISBN-13: 978-0393343441. *Note from Prof. Savina: “*...chapter 1 [is] a story of the European Economic Crisis, 2008 – ??, from the perspective of Iceland, Greece, Ireland, Germany, and the U.S.*”*

Sigmundsdottir, Alda. ***The Little Book of Icelandic: On the Idiosyncrasies, Delights, and Sheer Tyranny of the Icelandic Language***. Little Books Publishing, 2016. ISBN-10: 993592985X / ISBN-13: 978-9935929853.

Sigmundsdottir, Alda. *The Little Book of the Icelanders in the Old Days*. Enska Textasmidjan, 2014. ISBN-10: 9935917770 / ISBN-13: 978-9935917775.

Sigmundsdottir, Alda. *Living Inside the Meltdown: Ten People Share their Experience of the Icelandic Economic Collapse*. Enska Textasmidjan, 2014. ISBN-10: 9935917746 / ISBN-13: 978-9935917744.

Sigmundsdottir, Alda. *The Little Book of the Icelanders: 50 Miniature Essays on the Quirks and Foibles of the Icelandic People*. Enska Textasmidjan, 2014. Kindle E-book, 223 KB/66 print pages. ASIN: B00PEXI6YU.

ART

Grynsztejn, Madeline. *Take Your Time: Olafur Eliasson*. Thames & Hudson, 2007. ISBN-10: 0500093407 / ISBN-13: 978-0500093405. Icelandic/Danish installation artist Olafur Eliasson is a contemporary artist whose work has focused on the landscape of Iceland.

Hollein, Max (ed.). *Erró*. Hatje Cantz, 2011. ISBN-10: 3775731687 / ISBN-13: 978-3775731683. This is a survey of the work of Iceland-born pop artist Erro, whose omnivorous appetite for pop culture imagery is well represented in the Reykjavik Art Museum.

Leslie, Clare Walker (a Carleton alum!) and Charles E. Roth. *Keeping a Nature Journal: Discover a Whole New Way of Seeing the World Around You*. Storey Publishing, LLC; 2003. ISBN-10: 1580174930 / ISBN-13: 978-1580174930.

TRAVEL & MEMOIR

Greenlaw, Lavinia. *Questions of Travel: William Morris in Iceland*. Notting Hill Editions, 2017. ISBN-10: 1910749567 / ISBN-13: 978-1910749562. From Amazon.com: “Poet and novelist Lavinia Greenlaw's poetic reflections on William Morris's Icelandic Journal, one of the overlooked masterpieces of travel literature.”

Holm, Bill. *The Windows of Brimnes, An American in Iceland*. Milkweed Editions, 2008. ISBN-10: 1571313109 / ISBN-13: 978-1571313102. In these provocative essays, Minnesotan Bill Holm writes about the fate of America from his fisherman's cottage on the shore of a creek in northern Iceland. *Note from Prof. Savina: “...Holm [was a] Minnesota writer/educator of Icelandic descent, who taught at Southwestern State University in Marshall, MN. His other books include *Coming Home Crazy* (about spending a year teaching English literature in China), *Box Elder Bug Variations* (about, well, box elder bugs) and several others. He died in February 2009.”*

Holm, Bill. *Eccentric Islands, Travels Real and Imaginary*. Milkweed Editions, 2001. ISBN-10: 1571312595 / ISBN-13: 978-1571312594. *Note from Prof. Savina: “Two long chapters on Iceland...”*

Kavenna, Joanna. *The Ice Museum, In Search of the Lost Land of Thule*. Penguin Books, 2006. ISBN-10: 014101198X / ISBN-13: 978-0141011981.

LITERATURE

Versions of the Sagas, Eddas, and the Landnámabók (the book of settlement) are available on the web, or as inexpensive electronic books; <http://www.northvegr.org/index.html> has links to online versions.

Here are several print copies:

Bellows, Henry Adams (transl.). *The Poetic Edda: The Heroic Poems*. Dover Publications, 2007. ISBN-10: 0486460215 / ISBN-13: 978-0486460215.

Bellows, Henry Adams (transl.). *The Poetic Edda: The Mythological Poems*. Dover Publications, 2004. ISBN-10: 0486437108 / ISBN-13: 978-0486437101.

Byock, Jesse. *The Saga of the Volsungs (Legends from the Ancient North)*. Penguin Classics, 2013. ISBN-10: 0141393688 / ISBN-13: 978-0141393681.

Cook, Robert (Introduction). *Njal's Saga*. Penguin Classics, 2002. ISBN-10: 9780140447699 / ISBN-13: 978-0140447699.

Sturluson, Snorri. *The Prose Edda*. Forgotten Books, 2016. ISBN-10: 1330589459 / ISBN-13: 978-1330589458.

Indridason, Arnaldur. *Jar City: A Reykjavik Thriller*. Picador USA, 2006. ISBN-10: 0312426380 / ISBN-13: 978-0312426385. Indridason's first moody police procedural finds Reykjavik detective Erlendur Sveinsson investigating the brutal murder of a lonely pensioner and the man's connection to the deaths of a number of young women. Made into a darkly superb film.

Kent, Hannah. *Burial Rites*. Back Bay Books, 2014. ISBN-10: 9780316243926 / ISBN-13: 978-0316243926. Setting her story against Iceland's stark landscape, Kent reimagines the final days of a young woman who was accused of murder in Iceland in 1829.

Laxness, Halldor. *Independent People, An Epic*. Vintage Books, 1997. ISBN-10: 9780679767923 / ISBN-13: 978-0679767923. Rich in local color, this great mock-epic by the Icelandic Nobel Prize-winner features the indelible Bjartur of Summerhouses, a hard-headed, independent-minded sheep farmer.

McPhee, John. *The Control of Nature*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1990. ISBN-10: 0374522596 / ISBN-13: 978-0374522599. *Note from Prof. Savina: “‘Part 2 – Cooling the Lava’ is about Iceland and the (ultimately successful) attempts to prevent lava flowing on Heimaey in 1973 from completely blocking the island. We visit Heimaey, the largest of the Westman Islands on June 30th.”*

Olafsdottir, Auður Ava, and Brian Fitzgibbon (Translator). *Butterflies in November*. Grove Press, Black Cat; 2014. ISBN-10: 9780802123183 / ISBN-13: 978-0802123183. Scorned by love, a quirky, unapologetically independent 33-year-old woman takes a spontaneous trip along Iceland's Ring Road, her best friend's 4-year-old deaf-mute son in tow. Evocative of the

Icelandic spirit.

Sigmundsdottir, Alda. *Icelandic Folk Legends: Tales of Apparitions, Outlaws, and Things Unseen*. 2016. Little Books Publishing, 2016. ISBN-10: 9935925994 / ISBN-13: 978-9935925992.

Sigmundsdottir, Alda. *The Little Book of the Hidden People: Twenty Stories of Elves from Icelandic Folklore*. Enska Textasmidjan, 2015. ISBN-10: 9935924874 / ISBN-13: 978-9935924872.

Sigmundsdottir, Alda. *Unraveled: A Novel about the Meltdown*. Enska Textasmidjan, 2013. ISBN-10: 9979723114 / ISBN-13: 978-9979723110.

Sigurdardottir, Yrsa and Philip Roughton (Transl.). *Someone to Watch Over Me – A Thriller (Thora Gudmundsdottir Book 5)*. Griffin, 2016. ISBN-10: 1250080975 / ISBN-13: 978-1250080974.

Thorsson, Ornlófur (Ed.). *The Sagas of Icelanders*. Penguin Classics, 2001. ISBN-10: 0141000031 / ISBN-13: 978-0141000039. Nine sagas and six tales composed between the years 1000 and 1500, including an account of Leif Eriksson's voyage to North America, all newly translated.

Verne, Jules. *Journey to the Center of the Earth*. Dover Publications, 2005. ISBN-10: 0486440885 / ISBN-13: 978-0486440880. ***Note from Prof. Savina:** “*The 1959 movie (starring Pat Boone) is a hoot, but it’s filmed in Carlsbad Caverns – which has no resemblance to either Iceland or Stromboli. The book is much better...*”*

FILM & VIDEO

And Breathe Normally. Directed by Isold Uggadóttir. Zik Zak Kvikmyndir, 2018. (1 hr. 42 mins.)

National Geographic Wild Islands Iceland HD Nature History Documentary (approx. 56 minutes): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WCGP87LkklY>

“Olafur Eliasson: The Design of Art.” *Abstract: The Art of Design*, season 2, episode 1, 25 September 2019 (45 minutes). Available by Netflix subscription. Netflix abstract: “Olafur Eliasson creates sensory-rich immersive installations, including a lamp-lit sun at the Tate Modern and chunks of Arctic ice on city streets.”

Olafur Eliasson traces his artistic practice over the last 25 years, 2019 (approx. 1 hour): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jEuVjVO0prc&list=PLnUA0S2tkNBD7pd7wspZJyoCZV1LEORpQ&index=26&t=0s>

Olafur Eliasson Interview: A Riverbed Inside the Museum, 2014. (approx. 42 minutes):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZLUX3AI2Uic>

Rams. Directed by Grimur Hakonarson. Phase4FilmsUSA, 2016. (1 hr. 32 mins.) Available for rent or purchase on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8s2k4AFlx_E

Woman at War. Directed by Benedikt Erlingsson. Magnolia Pictures, 2019. (1 hr. 40 mins.) Available for rent or purchase on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xYw94UfMvvU>

Land Ho! Directed by Aaron Katz and Martha Stephens. Sony Pictures Movies & Shows, 2014. (1 hr. 35 mins.) Available for rent or purchase on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zKYQp-xyXmc>

WEBSITES

<https://www.iceland.is/>

<http://inspiredbyiceland.com/>

<https://visitreykjavik.is/>

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ic.html>

<https://icelandnaturally.com/explore/>

<https://www.britannica.com/place/Iceland>

<https://www.nytimes.com/topic/destination/iceland>