

> ACTIVITY GUIDE

2017-2018

think
outside
the circle*


AUSTURLAND

WWW.AUSTURLAND.IS

WELCOME TO AUSTURLAND!

*Austurland is the region in the east of Iceland.
Often also referred to as the East fjords or East Iceland.*

The region consists mainly of three types of landscapes; firðir (fjords), hérað (shire) and hálendi (highland). Austurland is also the home to Vatnajökull, the largest glacier in Europe.

With a population of 10.300 inhabitants on 15.792 km² Austurland is considered a rural area. Even though Austurland is sparsely populated, all of the region is well known for its creative communities and strong businesses.

In recent years Austurland has become a vibrant destination for tourists looking for wild nature, authentic experiences and creative power.

In this destination activity guide we will introduce you to the endless possibilities of exploring beautiful nature, enjoying local food and culture and experiencing outdoor adventures that you will never forget.



FAR FROM ORDINARY. CLOSE TO NATURE.

This map shows some distances from Egilsstaðir, the largest town of Austurland to popular destinations along the ring road.

REYKJAVIK
8 h / ca 650 km
from Egilsstaðir
(same distance
north or south)



AKUREYRI
3 h / 260 km
from Egilsstaðir



HÚSAVÍK
3 h / 220 km
from Egilsstaðir



MÝVATN
2 h / 170 km
from Egilsstaðir



**AUSTURLAND :
EGILSSTAÐIR**
Equally distance
to Reykjavik north
or south route



HÖFN
2,5 h / 185 km
from Egilsstaðir



JÖKULSÁRSLÓN
3,5 h / 255 km
from Egilsstaðir



All Year Round

Austurland is a whole year destination and anyone – regardless of their motivations for travel – ought to find something to his or her liking whether its outdoor adventures, festivals or fresh local food.

ACTIVITY WHEEL



CULTURAL WHEEL



OUR GUESTS

Everyone who visits Austurland is our guest and is treated as such. In order to give our guests the best experience the region can offer we have defined our target audience, segmenting it into social profiles grounded on their motivations for travel rather than demographics. These groups allow us to specialise our products but also be flexible. Thus, one individual doesn't necessarily belong to only one of the listed segments, but can search for different kind of experiences from different trips or even from day to day.

SELECTIVE EXPLORERS

- Passionate about travelling and adventure
- Prefer to go off the beaten track
- Like to be surrounded by different people and environments
- Want to know where the food comes from
- Willing to pay for quality
- Well-informed with a curious mind
- Have a responsible side

NOTES:

Tend to be well educated, seasoned travellers and technology savvy. Main motivation for travelling is to explore new territories; nature, culture, local life, food and traditions. Want to go deeper into the core of the destination, and search for unique experiences that deliver a combination of physical and emotional value. Love to listen to stories, and appreciate the connection to people and places.

GENTLE ADVENTURERS

- Want to have the unexpected but reasonable
- Impressed by local food, culture and people
- Request organized freedom; prefer marked trails and not to rush into any nonsense
- Request experience guiding and planning; like to manage things by themselves, but appreciate good service and the help to do so
- Collect stories to tell friends about their trips; very active on social media, post a lot before, during and after the travel
- Admire nature and people; show respect towards environment and cultural heritage

NOTES:

Looking for experiences with the best value for money. Appreciate good service and the unexpected little extra. Situations providing time together are important, offering experiences for all to enjoy. Family friendly environments and tailored experience packages are attractive. Enjoy to experience through participation. Shared joy is twice the joy!

ACTIVE RELAXERS

- Love the outdoors, hot tubs and a cold beer
- Like lazy mornings but have nothing against a good hike in the afternoon
- Like to watch the volcano but don't need to understand how it works
- A coastal tour with picnic - a perfect day
- Value well organized travel packages that take care of all the details
- Appreciate comfort with good food, good service and good company

NOTES:

Looking for a quiet place, with an atmosphere helping to rest the mind and soul, and to recharge at. Often choose the extra comfort when offered. Like to bring some extra flavour to life, and to get the additional luxury, but are not demanding. Like to join and follow. Enjoy to participate in local events. Fill their life with self-fulfilling experiences, including time for contemplation and a good laugh.

NATURE NERDS

- Like to watch the mountain and understand how it was created
- Visit the museum for lunch and hike in the afternoon
- Geology is their passion - the mountain is not just a mountain!
- Request guiding by nature specialists
- Request good planning
- Well prepared and equipped
- Value good information and service

NOTES:

Thirsty for knowledge. Want to come close and get deep understanding. Fascinated by nature. Are environmental conscious and show respect. Often well equipped and prepared. May have a specific agenda and purpose for the trip. Appreciate to get the extra information, as direction on how to get to special places, or help to find the best guiding provided.

ODD CREATIVES

- Charge the batteries in the East
- Take a lot of pictures
- Feel inspired
- I am a bohemian – I love the rural lifestyle!
- Looking for unique and fulfilling experiences
- Network with creative people
- Engage in cultural events
- Well-travelled and urbane

NOTES:

Active within creative sector. Looking for cultural activities, places and events. Like to participate in unique contexts, providing opportunities for interaction with other creatives. Find inspiration in the surroundings; from the meeting with people and in the environments. Appreciate the feeling of getting connection to the place, and to feel part of the local creative community.

EXAMPLE SELECTION

How do these social profiles work in practice?

In the following table we give you one example how the ideal visit could be for each and every group. Keep in mind that there are many other opportunities for activity based travelling in Austurland.

	ACCOMMODATIONS	ACTIVITIES
SELECTIVE EXPLORERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lakehotel Egilsstaðir• Hotel Aldan• Hotel Framtid• Hotel Hallormsstaður• Fosshotel Eastfjords	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ski down to the Atlantic ocean from Oddsskard• Taste the goodies from Vallanes Organic Farm• Enjoy a boat journey to isolated fjords with Hildibrand Tours• Go kayaking in Seydisfjörður• Visit the French museum in Faskrúdsfjörður
GENTLE ADVENTURERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Icelandair Hotel Herad• Blabjörg Guesthouse• Hotel Eskifjörður• Laugarfell Hostel• Hildibrand Hotel	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hike to Storurð – The Giant Boulders• Enjoy a ride or a hike with Skorrahestar tours• Enjoy a boat tour to Papey with Papeytours to experience great wildlife• Dinner with a local with Meet the Locals• Visit Djúpivogur – slow travel destination of Iceland
NATURE NERDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Berunes Hostel• Skorrahestar Guesthouse• Hotel Blafell• Sireksstaðir Cottages• Alfheimar Guesthouse	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visit Helgustaðir Spar mine in Eskifjörður• Visit Skalanes Nature reserve. Lonely Planet top pick for 2016• Visit Vatnajökull national park visitor center in Fljotsdalur• Visit Hafnarhólmur for a mindblowing puffin view• Snow avalanche barriers Neskaupstaður
ACTIVE RELAXERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mjoeýri Guesthouse• Hotel Hallormsstaður• Hotel Eyvindara• Wilderness Center• Silfurberg country resort	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ATV tour in Hallormsstaður Iceland's biggest forest with East Highlanders• Into the Canyon Hike tour with Wildboys.• Hengifoss ride and hike with Wilderness Center- Lonely Planet top pick• Highland circle by Jeep tours – hot nature shower included• Off the beaten path tour with Meet the locals
ODD CREATIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hafaldan Hostel• Havari Hostel• Kirkjubæur Hostel• Skalanes Mountain Lodge• Post Hostel	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hop on a local bike tour with Seydisfjörður Bike Tours• Visit Skaftfell Museum• Visit the fish factory, creative center Stodvarfjörður• Mindfulness Yoga – Meet the locals• Go for a swim in Selarlag Vopnafjörður

INTO THE HIGHLANDS • A Day Tour

START BRIGHT AND EARLY and visit Vallanes Organic Farm for breakfast. Then drive through Iceland's biggest forest, Hallormsstadaskogur, and hike up to Hengifoss – Iceland's second highest waterfall.

When you have done the hike, taken pictures and enjoyed the view, we recommend you visit the Wilderness Center for lunch and an extraordinary museum. There you can even cross a glacial river in a cable box.

Then you can drive to Laugarfell and enjoy a nature bath and view over Snæfell. Afterwards you can enjoy a piece of homemade cake at the Laugarfell Hostel.

Drive further towards Karahnjúkar dam and enjoy the view over Hafrahvammur Canyon – the darkest canyon in Iceland.

At the end of the day follow route F910 (4x4) and 923 back to Egilsstaðir and end the day at Lake Hotel for a lovely late dinner.

TARGET AUDIENCE:

Selective Explorers, Active Relaxers

HIGHLIGHTS:

Local food, authentic experience, natural hot springs, highlands, history



Hengifoss



Wilderness Center



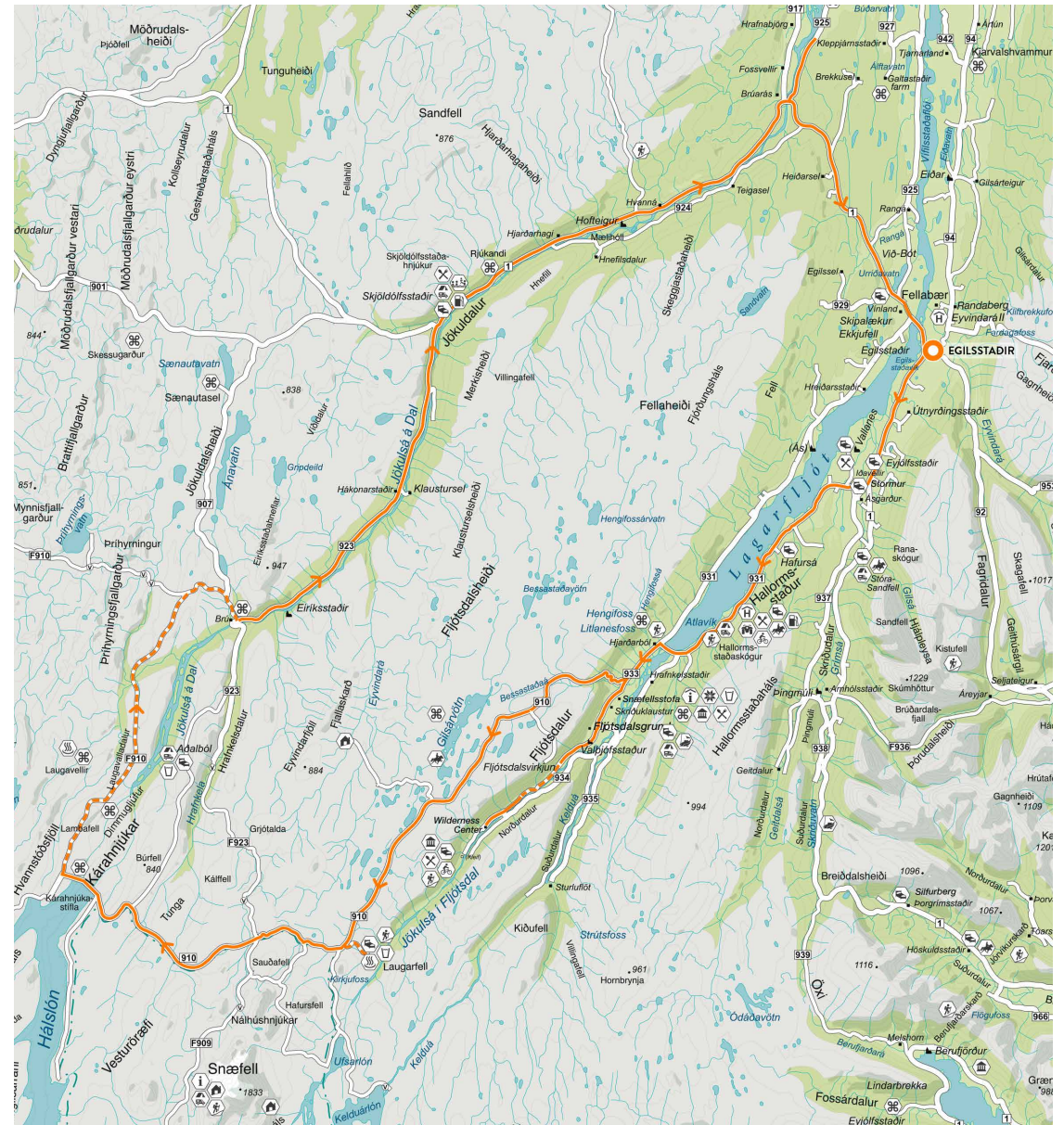
Lake Hotel



Hafrahvammur Canyon



Laugarfell



ON THE EDGE • 2 Day Tour

DAY 1

WE RECOMMEND YOU take 2-3 days to enjoy On the Edge to its fullest potential. You won't regret taking your time and become one with the Icelandic landscape and heritage.

You start by getting off the ringroad and head to Vopnafjörður. Visit the heritage museum in

Bustarfell and then have lunch at the beautiful Kaupvangur in the town center of Vopnafjörður.

Go for a swim in Selarlaug Pool - It is small and cosy, built on the bank of one of the most beautiful salmon river in Iceland. Enjoy a nice local dinner at Sirekstadir with an overnight at their cottages or at Hotel Tangi.



DAY 2

TAKE MOUNTAIN ROAD 917 (open during summer) Drive over Hellisheidi and enjoy the view.

Drive further on the way to road 927 on your way to Borgarfjörður Eystri. Cross Vatnsskard road and stop to enjoy the view. Go for a short hike in Hvannagil. It is a popular short hike in from the road before you really go to the edge of land and sea and drive towards Borgarfjörður.

For lunch you should have the tasty fish soup at Kalli Sveins in Alfacafe. After lunch you could visit the friendly puffins at Hafnarholmi which is known to be one of the best locations in Iceland to see these magnificent birds.

End the day with a dinner at the newly opened Frystiklefinn Restaurant at Blabjörg.

Overnight at Alfheimar Hotel or Blabjörg Guesthouse.

TARGET AUDIENCE:

Nature Nerds, Gentle Adventurers, Selective Explorers

HIGHLIGHTS:

Black sands, magnificent views, old turfhouses, hiking trails, colorful mountains



Hellisheidi



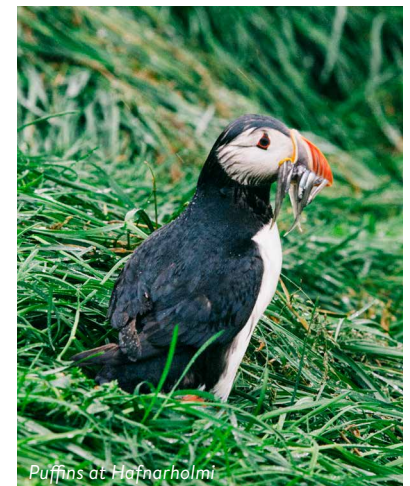
Hvannagil



Bustarfell



Selarlaug Pool



Puffins at Hafnarholmi

FROM FJORD TO FJORD • 3 Day Tour

DAY 1

START YOUR DAY in Egilsstaðir and drive towards Seydisfjörður. Before you head up to Fjardarheiði you should stop at Fardagafoss and walk up and experience the waterfall. You can even go behind the waterfall and see Egilsstaðir town from there.

After your hike you should drive over Fjardarheiði and head to Seydisfjörður and have lunch at Skaftfell Bistro.

You can either rent a bike with Seydisfjörður Tours or go kayaking. Thereafter enjoy walking around town and perhaps visit Skaftfell Center for Visual Art.

Go for a dinner at Nordic Restaurant in Hotel Aldan or Norð Austur Sushi.

Overnight at Hotel Aldan

DAY 2

DRIVE THROUGH Reydarfjörður and make a stop at Holmahals with a view over Holmanes nature reserve and the fjord. There you can do a short hike or have a nice picnic.

Drive further to Eskifjörður and visit the local geothermal swimming pool with a perfect mountain view.

Visit the supermarket and make a lunch pack then drive towards Helgustaðir spar mine and visit the old mine and see the cave.

End the day with a dinner and a museum visit at the Randulff's Seahouse.

Overnight at Mjoeyri Cottages on Mjoeyri peninsula.

DAY 3

DRIVE TO Neskaupstaður through the recently opened tunnel. Visit Skorrahestar farm for either a guided hike or a horseback ride.

After the visit to Skorrahestar go to the Baitshack for lunch with a fjordview.

Relax and walk around town and go for an afternoon sailing with Gerpír SU to abandoned fjords near Neskaupstaður.

Enjoy a nice meal at Kaupfelagid Bistro and overnight at Hildibrand Hotel.



TARGET AUDIENCE:

Selective Explorers, Gentle Adventurers, Odd Creatives

HIGHLIGHTS:

Exploring, coastal drive, local food, hiking, riding natural hot springs, highlands, history



Norð Austur Sushi



Baitshack



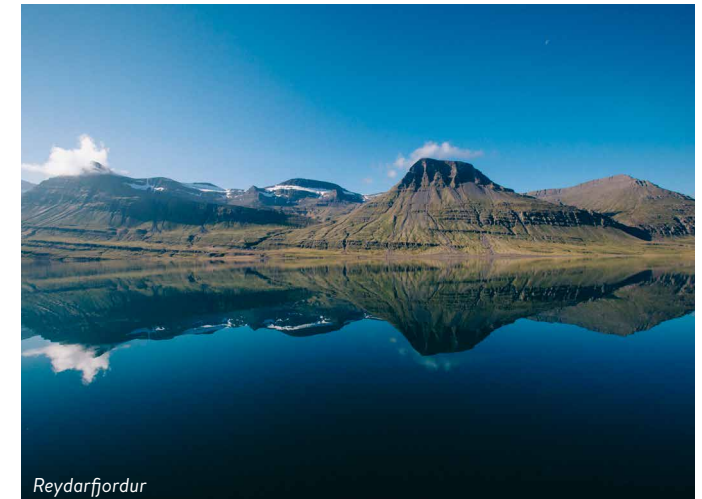
Seydisfjörður kayaking



Helgustaðir spar mine



Sailing in Nordfjörður



Reydarfjörður

COASTAL EXPERIENCE • 3 Day Tour

DAY 1

DRIVE FROM Egilsstaðir to Reydarfjörður. Make a stop at the Wartime Museum and learn about the British soldiers that stayed in Reydarfjörður during the Second World War. Drive over to Faskrúdsfjörður either through the tunnel or the old road with views over Skrudur Island. Enjoy lunch at L'abri and visit the French Museum devoted to the French fishermen and the French heritage of Faskrúdsfjörður.

Drive further on road 96 and make a stop at Petra's Stone Collection in Stodvarfjörður.

Drive further to Breiddalsvík and enjoy sea angling with Travel East or a jeeptour with Tinna Adventure.

Overnight and dinner at Hotel Blafell but before you go to bed walk across the street for beer tasting at the recently opened Beljandi Micro Brewery.

DAY 2

DRIVE FURTHER on route 1 towards Djupivogur. Make a stop at the beautiful beach of Meleyri south of Breiddalsvík. Make a coffee stop at Havari and try "bulsur" (vegan hot dogs) and other healthy snack.

Drive further to Djupivogur and enjoy a boatride to Papey with Papey Tours and experience wildlife (puffin and seals). Have a homemade cake at Langabud Museum

Walk around town and get to know Djupivogur – the only "Slow" certified town in Iceland.

Don't forget to experience the eggs in Gledivik

End the day at Hotel Framtid for an overnight and dinner stay.

DAY 3

DRIVE BACK on route 1 towards Egilsstaðir over mountain road Öxi, make a stop along the way and enjoy the view. Try horseback riding at Stóra Sandfell in Skriðdalur.

Drive to Egilsstaðir and go for late lunch at Cafe Nielsen.

Enjoy a swim in the afternoon at the geothermal pool in Egilsstaðir followed by a dinner at Glod restaurant in Valaskjalf.

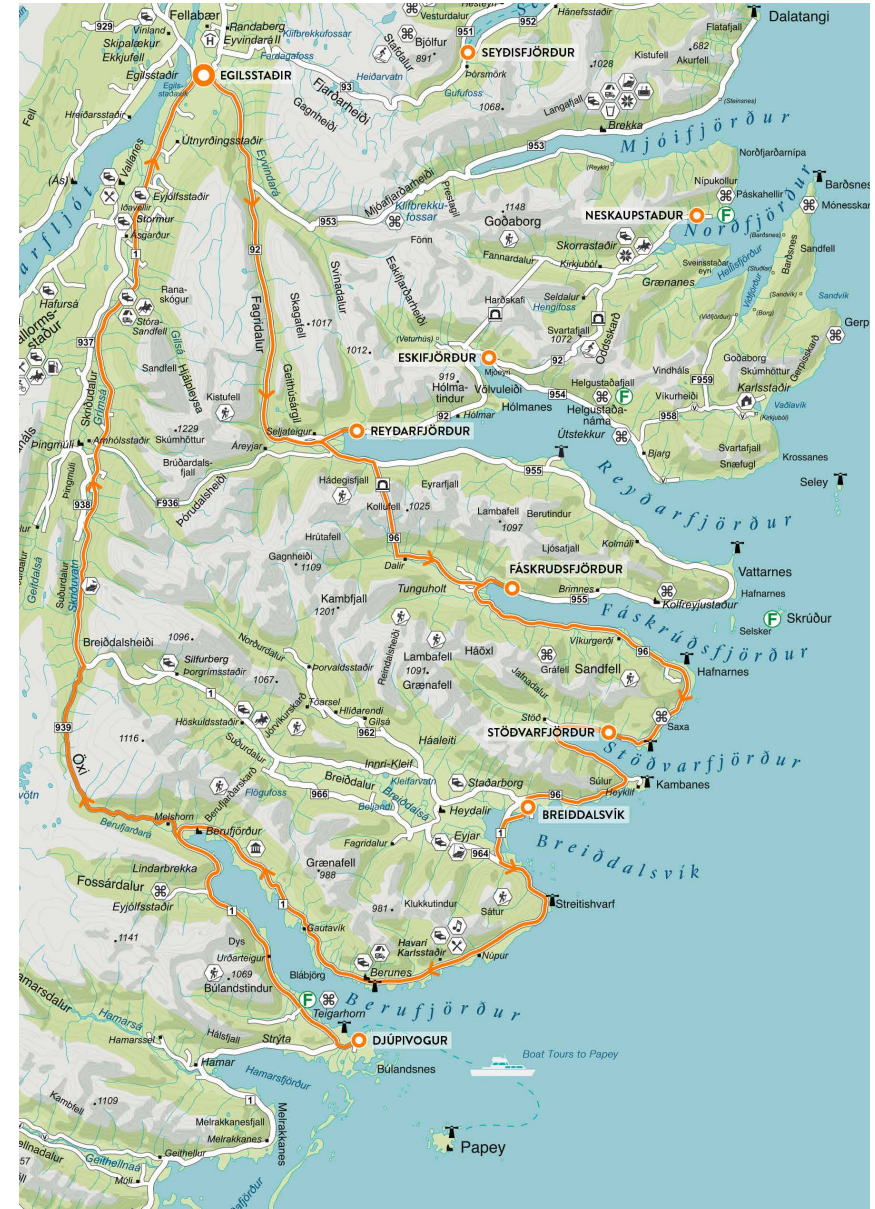
Overnight at Valaskjalf.

TARGET AUDIENCE:

Selective Explorers & Active Relaxers

HIGHLIGHTS:

Local food, authentic experience, natural hot springs, highlands, history



French Museum



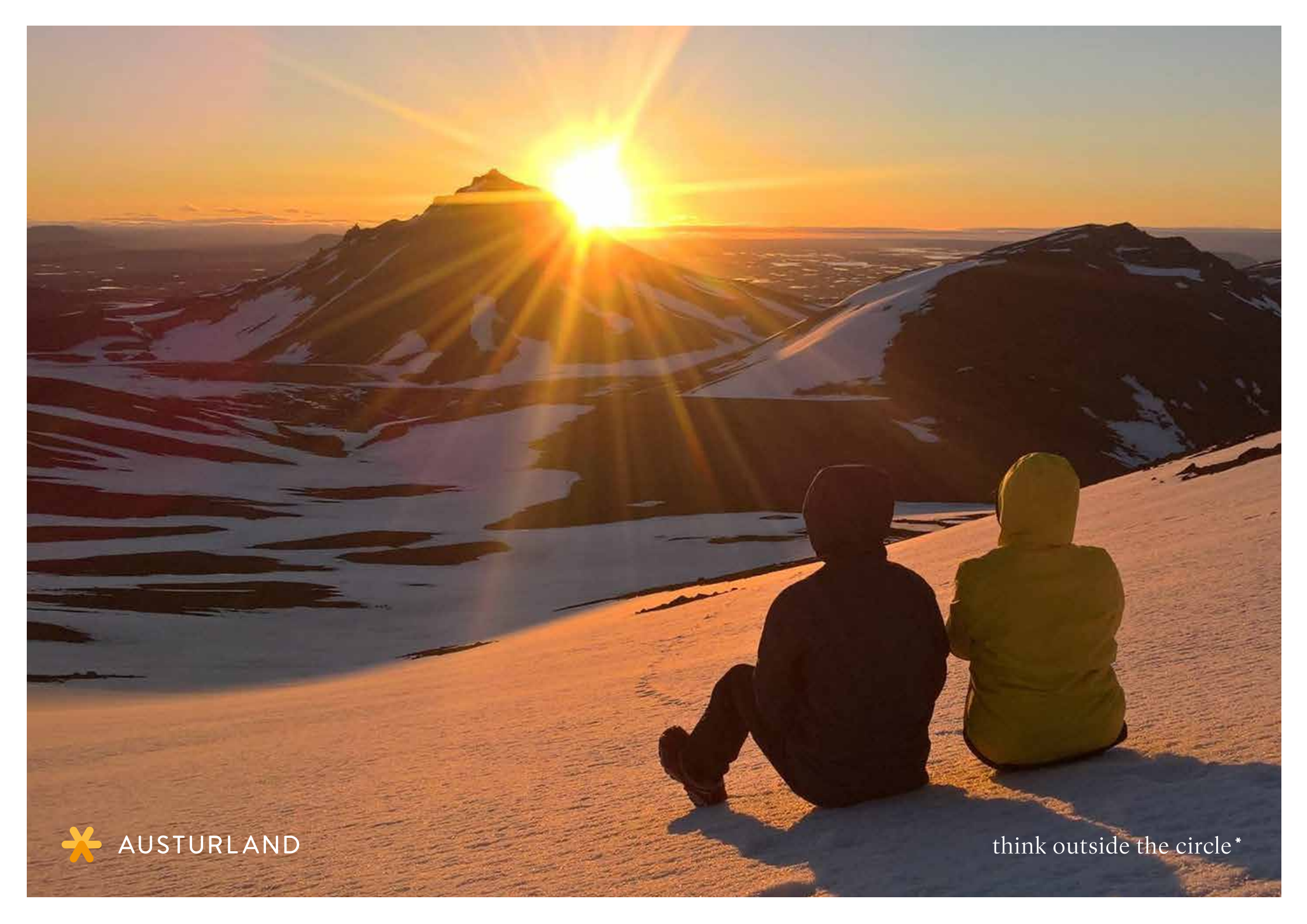
Djupivogur



Öxi



Stóra Sandfell



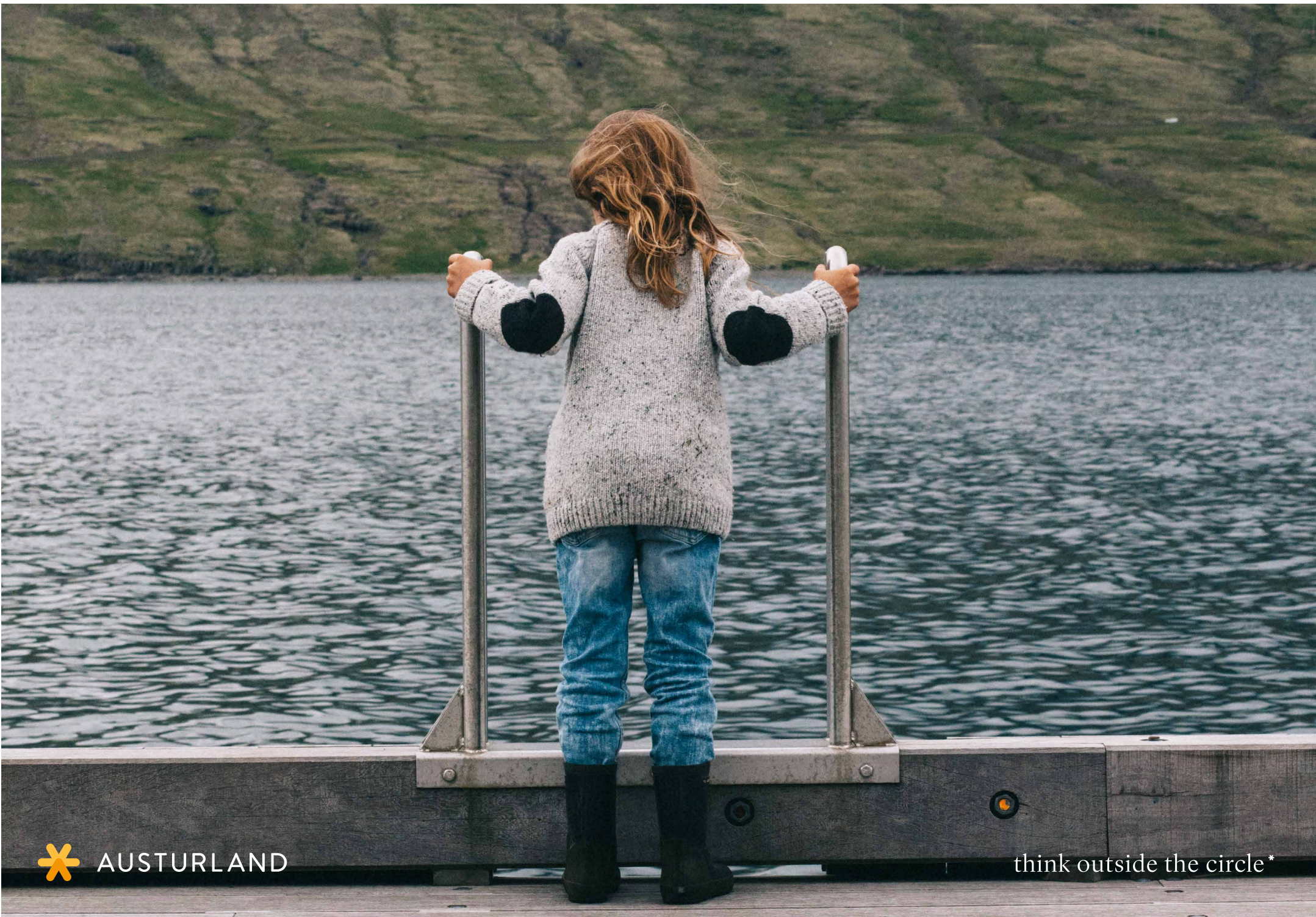






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