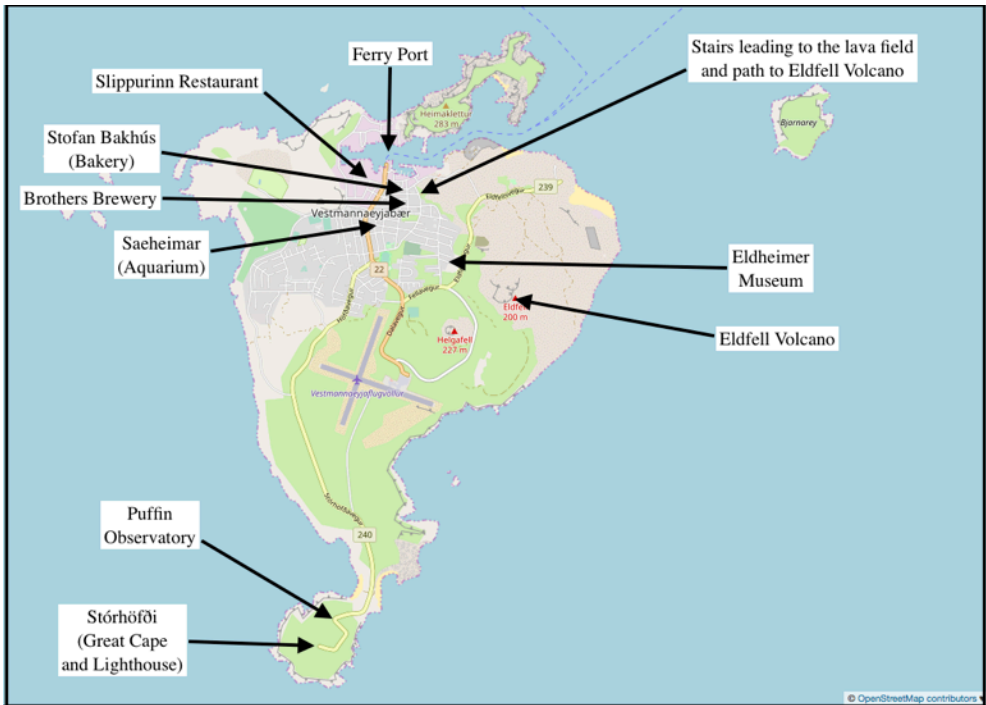




Day 2

Get the full itinerary on [Simply Awesome Trip's website](#) or find it on [Amazon](#).

Overview- Today you'll take the ferry to explore the volcanic history and stunning sights of Vestmannaeyjar, also known as the Westman Islands. One-third of Heimaey, the only inhabited island of Vestmannaeyjar, was buried under lava during a volcanic eruption in 1973. You can now walk along the lava field and climb to the top of the newly created volcanic cone, Eldfell, for amazing views. It's not every day that you get to walk to the top of an active volcano!



Approximate location of sites on Heimaey Island. Map courtesy of [openstreetmaps.org](#).

Heimaey is a compact village (only five square miles and four miles long) and most sites are within an easy 5-20 minute walking radius from the ferry with the exception of Stórhöfði (the Great Cape) which is located at the southern end of the island about 7km south of the ferry port.



You'll find incredibly scenic hikes, a wonderful local museum, puffin watching, a tasty bakery, and an excellent brewery. This day will easily be one of the most memorable days of your trip. You could even consider staying overnight on this small charming island. There's plenty more to do here.



The small village on Heimaey Island

The Ferry

The ferry departs from the southern coast of Iceland at Landeyjahöfn, which is located approximately 25 minutes south of Hvalsövellur. The ferry ride is a fun adventure for the kiddos and lasts about 35 minutes. It's a beautiful ride, especially as you enter the harbor hemmed in by steep cliffs.

Look for sheep grazing high on the cliffs and keep an eye out for Iceland's famous puffins. Note that the water crossing can be somewhat choppy. If you are susceptible to sea sickness, bring a dose of motion sickness remedy with you just in case.



You have the option to bring your car or book passenger tickets only. From the ferry port in Heimaey, you can easily walk to the museums, shops, and restaurants in the village, as well the lava field and Eldfell Volcano. You would need a car (or taxi), however, to drive to the cape, Stórhöfði at the southern most end of the island. Parking is ample on the island, and you can leave your car parked until you're ready to drive to the southern cape.

Ferry Times: The ferry runs 6-7 times per day with the first departure from Landeyjahöfn at 8:15am and the last departure from Heimaey to the mainland at 10pm. Make sure to check the website for updated time schedules. If you bring your car, it is a good idea to make reservations in advance as the ferry sometimes sells out for cars but rarely for passengers (except during the last weekend of July/first weekend of August during the Þjóðhátíð Festival.)

Make sure to arrive at least 30 minutes before the ferry leaves, and keep in mind that you will need to check in at the service desk to receive your boarding pass even if you purchased tickets ahead of time. Remember to snag a map of Heimaey at the ferry terminal.

Note: *Although rare during the summer season, the ferry can be cancelled due to bad weather or harbor conditions. If this is the case, the ferry either tries to sail later that day or sails to another harbor on the mainland in Þorlákshöfn (Thorlákshöfn), a 2 hour and 45 minute ride.*

Ferry Prices: Roundtrip passenger tickets cost 3,200 ISK (about \$26) for each adult, 800 ISK for teenagers, and children ages 12 and under ride free. If you are taking your car, add 4,600 ISK (about \$37) for roundtrip portage. **Note:** You will need to know whether your car is less than 5m or between 5-8m long when making the reservation. According to the ferry operators, most cars are under 5m in length.
<https://visitwestmanislands.com/tour/ferry-landeyjahofn-to-vestmannaeyjar/>

Note: Food is available on the ferry for purchase, but they make it clear that only food bought in the ferry cafeteria should be enjoyed on the boat.

Directions to ferry port at Landeyjahöfn: From Route 1 (The Ring Road), take Route 254 to the end. It is well-signed.



Eldfell Volcano

After departing the ferry, stroll through town on your way to the lava field and Eldfell volcano. If you need to refuel, stop at **Stoffan Bakhús** for coffee, delicious baked goods, and sandwiches or grab lunch at **Gott**.



Approximate locations of sites in the village. Map courtesy of openstreetmaps.org.

To reach the lava field, walk up the stairway found on Kirkjuvegur Street at the intersection of Miðstræti Street. You can walk along the various paths across the lava field where you'll realize you're standing 50 feet above what was once a busy residential street. The town has even placed street sign posts above the lava field to give you an idea of what was once there.



Staircase



Street Signs

From the lava field, continue walking toward Eldfell. You'll see its red slope in the near distance and any foot path you follow will eventually lead you there. The walk will soon become a steep and dusty climb to the top of Eldfell ("fell" means "mountain" in Icelandic) but is completely doable for most children. Plan on about 30-45 minutes walking time and note that it can be super windy at the top. Remember to take your time and watch your footing on the loose volcanic rock, especially when coming back down.



Walking up the slope of Eldfell



At the summit, you'll have a better view of the lava flow and enjoy amazing views of the ocean, the village, and neighboring Helgafell volcano. Parts of Eldfell are said to still be warm to the touch even decades after the eruption. After you've explored the summit, walk down the path that leads to the Eldheimar Museum which sits just below the volcano.



Views from the Peak of Eldfell

Eldheimar Museum

The Eldheimar Museum is built around an actual family home that became stuck in lava in 1973. You can peer into the house and see the family's possessions right where they left them as they fled. The story of Eldfell's impact on the town is told chronologically with films, audio tracks, and exhibits. Even the kids enjoyed the audio tour.

The museum really brings the impact of the eruption to life, and the town's extraordinary effort to save the harbor. Children under 10 are free, 10-18 years 1,300 ISK, Adults 2,400 ISK, and Family 5,700 ISK.
<http://eldheimar.is/en/>

For an excellent recap of the eruption, evacuation, and lava-cooling operations, see Wikipedia's *Eldfell* article.



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