



MÝVATN - Iceland

Yuletide wonderland

Mývatn offers a unique natural environment. With large contrast and small distances you can experience the most and the best that Iceland has to offer. Large open spaces with roads and walkways lead travellers to interesting locations, where volcanic eruptions have played a crucial role in the formation of the landscape. Whether the plan is to enjoy the landscape, examine unique natural phenomena or take a closer look at the plant and bird life, Mývatn has it all. Furthermore the area offers a variety of services in accommodation, food and entertainment, based on years of experience and knowledge.

A large number of travellers visit Mývatn in the summer, but many believe the lake and its surroundings to be no less impressive in the wintertime.

In winter during the dark nights the ground is covered with snow. This is the time you can experience the Northern Lights, Aurora Borealis. Keeping silent, watching and even hearing the lights dancing through the sky, it's a magnificent experience.

During the day time you can go crosscountry skiing, snowmobiling or hiking through steaming grounds. In summer the sun shines 24 hours a day, there is no night.

The exploitation of natural resources in the area has a long history. Arctic Char fishing has been practiced for centuries both in summer and though ice in the winter time when the lake freezes over. The Char is flattened and salted one night and then smoked with dung in smoke houses.

Due to the geothermal heat in the area the locals bake the famous Hot Spring bread in the ground.

Sheep farming has been the most important livelihood in the Mývatn district for centuries. Smoked lamb is one of the local specialities and almost every farm has its own smoking shed. On Christmas day most Icelanders eat smoked lamb as the main course.

The Yule Lads are the 13 sons of a vicious troll, Grýla and Leppalúði.

An old tradition in Iceland is, that 13 days prior to Christmas the Yule Lads start coming down from the mountain one each night. Children in Iceland place their best shoe on their windowsill before going to bed and each night a little gift is left in the shoe from the Yule lad that came down from the mountain that night. If the child has been misbehaving, there might be a raw potato left instead.

During December you can visit the Yule Lads in their home of Dimmuborgir every day between 13 and 15. During the first Saturday of December all the brothers come for their annual Christmas bath in the Myvatn Nature Bath. It's an experience to join them in the bath.

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