

DIVING AND SNORKELLING IN SILFRA FISSURE

A HANDBOOK TO PREPARE YOU FOR YOUR ADVENTURE

The Silfra fissure is one of the most amazing places in the world. Diving or Snorkelling through the crystal clear glacial water is an experience best explained by actually taking the plunge.

However, there are a few important things that you need to know in order to prepare yourself for this adventure. Also, this is not an activity for everyone, and it is important that you are aware of the risks and challenges involved.



DIVING

Diving in the Silfra fissure is one for the bucket list! The water in Silfra is 2 degrees C and all dives are performed in a dry suit. It is required that you have documented training and experience in cold water dry suit diving in order to enjoy this adventure.

Dry suit experience

For diving in the Silfra fissure, you need to have previous experience in dry suit diving. Your dive guide will ask to see your **Dry suit certification card, or a logbook showing that you have completed a minimum of 10 previous dry suit dives** (signed by a dive professional).

You need to have dived in a dry suit within the last 2 years to ensure that your skills are up to date. If failing to show us either certification or logbook you will not be allowed to dive.

Good buoyancy control is essential in order to safely dive Silfra. The water is up to +30 meters deep and there is no descent line to use. For your own safety, the dive guide will not allow divers demonstrating poor buoyancy control to complete the dive.

The notorious "Silfra walk"

As a dry suit diver, you already know that a full set of dry suit diving equipment is not a light thing! The full weight of the equipment is usually somewhere between 30 - 40 kg depending on how much weight you need for the dive.

The Silfra fissure is located in a pristine national park and we are not allowed to drive straight up to the water. Due to this all divers are required to walk about 150 meters to the entry point, and about 400 meters back from the exit point. This walk is done in full equipment. If you are doing 2 dives, you will do this walk twice.

You need to be healthy and in good physical shape in order to enjoy this dive site.

Age limit for diving

Minimum 18 years old. We do not recommend elderly people to join this tour, however there is no set upper age limit. It is important that you are in good health and in good physical shape.

Feeling unsure?

If you feel a bit nervous about your abilities regarding the dive or the walk, we strongly recommend our Silfra snorkelling tour. Snorkelling in Silfra is a 100% fantastic experience!



SNORKELLING

Snorkelling in the Silfra fissure does not require any certification or previous snorkelling experience. It is however required that you can swim independently, that you are comfortable in the water, that you are healthy with no medical conditions and that you are in good physical shape.

The fissure is about 500 meters long and you will swim this distance in a slow pace. The guide is there to show you the way and to assist with any equipment issues, but will not be able to hold your hand or to tow you through the fissure. You will have to swim by yourself. You will not be able to stand up in the water as the fissure is up to 30 meters deep.

“Lazy current”

There is a slow current flowing through the fissure. For the first half, you will cruise along in the same direction as the current. For the second half, you might have to swim against this slight current, which is why you have to be a confident swimmer.

The “Michelin” walk

The Silfra fissure is located in a pristine national park and we are not allowed to drive straight up to the water. Due to this all snorkelers are required to walk about 150 meters to the entry point, and about 400 meters back from the exit point.

This walk is done in full dry suit equipment. The dry suit can be tight and restrictive and weights up to 7 kg. Therefore, the walk can be a bit heavy and uncomfortable. **It is important that you are healthy and in good physical shape**, both for the walk and for the swim.

Age limit for snorkelling:

Minimum 12 years old. Minors under 18 needs to be in the company of a guardian. We do not recommend elderly people to join this tour, however there is no set upper age limit. It is essential that you are in good health and in good physical shape.



RISKS INVOLVED IN DIVING & SNORKELLING IN SILFRA

Diving and Snorkelling in Silfra is a beautiful experience that we love to share with as many people as possible. However, it is not a suitable activity for everyone. **It is important that you are aware of and accept the risks described in the following section.**

Please be aware that there have been serious Diving and Snorkelling accidents at Silfra.

We kindly ask you to thoroughly read this section and evaluate if you accept these conditions. Your safety is our primary concern!

- ➡ Diving and Snorkelling in the Silfra fissure can lead to overexertion and exhaustion. It is also important to understand that exposure to near freezing point glacial melting water includes potential hazards.
- ➡ Participants wear a tight and constricting full body dry suit. The suit is heavy and may make walking and swimming more difficult than you are used to.
- ➡ Because of the geographical layout of Silfra, participants must walk in full gear about 150 meters to the entry point and later 400 meters from the exit stairs back to where the tour started.
- ➡ The dry suit has seals on the neck and wrists that stop water from getting in. These need to be tight and some times an additional rubber strap has to be worn around the neck. If you are claustrophobic this can be uncomfortable and challenging.
- ➡ In-water duration is 30-40 minutes and the water temperature is 2° Celsius. For this reason, participants should have eaten and be rehydrated before the tour starts.
- ➡ When entering the water there is a small chance of the dry suit leaking. In this case 2° Celsius water will enter the suit and the water will be in direct contact with your thermal layer and skin. There is no guarantee that your body will stay dry during this activity.
- ➡ Participants wear a neoprene hood and neoprene gloves. This means that the heads and hands are exposed to the water. Part of the face will not be covered by the hood and therefore be in direct contact with the water.
- ➡ Your face, hair and hands will get wet during this activity.
- ➡ Your face and hands are likely to get a little cold during this activity, especially in the winter.
- ➡ There is a slight current in Silfra and participants must be comfortable swimming against it during the last part of the tour.

- ➡ Silfra is situated in the Þingvellir national park. This is a UNESCO World Heritage Area and new constructions are not allowed. There is no changing room or buildings to protect you from the weather. Participants get changed outside or in our tour vans in potentially wet, windy, and cold weather conditions.
 - ➡ During winter this tour can be very cold. Outside temperatures in Iceland may be far below the freezing point. You will spend up to 3 hours outside on a Snorkelling tour, and up to 5 hours outside on a Diving tour. You need to be dressed accordingly. Make sure you have warm thermals, winter coat, hat and gloves during the winter.
 - ➡ Participants cannot wear any types of jewellery in the water. Please leave accessories not needed on tour at your accommodation so that they do not get lost.
 - ➡ There are no locker rooms at Silfra. Please do not bring any valuable items that you don't need for the tour.
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MEDICAL CONDITIONS?

You **are not allowed** to dive or snorkel in Silfra if you have any of the following conditions:

- Inability to perform moderate exercise (swimming 500m and walking 600m)
- Any kind of current or previous heart disease, heart surgery or heart attack
- Any form of current or previous lung disease
- Previous pneumothorax (collapsed lung), chest disease or chest surgery
- Previous head injury with loss of consciousness
- Thrombocytopenia or other blood disorders
- Colostomy or ileostomy
- Epilepsy or conditions resulting in sudden unconsciousness
- Obesity
- High or low blood pressure
- Severe asthma

Notice: Pregnant women are not allowed to dive or snorkel in Silfra.

We reserve the right to reject participants with any of the above-mentioned conditions, if we think it would not be safe for you to participate in the activity.

EQUIPMENT DIVING AND SNORKELLING

When Diving or Snorkelling in Silfra you will be wearing 3 layers of clothing to protect you from the 2 degrees C glacial water. Instruction video on how to dress, [click here](#). Most of the equipment is provided by us. You need to bring the items closest to your body, the base layer.

Layer 1 - You bring this

Thin thermals in wool, fleece, or synthetic (No Cotton!)

Warm socks in wool, fleece or neoprene



Layer 1: Base Layer

Layer 2 - Provided by us

Undersuit

Material: Nylon Taslan

Manufacturer: Waterproof, Santi



Layer 2: Undersuit

Layer 3 - Provided by us

Dry suit

Material: Neoprene

Manufacturer: Waterproof or O'Three



Layer 3: Drysuit

Additional equipment - All provided by us

When Diving and Snorkeling you will also be needing some extra equipment, hood and gloves to keep your head and hands a little bit warmer in the cold water, a mask, snorkel and fins. These items are all provided by us. For the diving tour we will also be providing all the diving equipment.

1.



1. Hood and Gloves

Manufacturer: Waterproof or O'Three

Material: Neoprene

2.



2. Mask and snorkel

Variety of manufacturers and models. Kindly note you cannot wear glasses under the mask. Contact lenses work fine.

3.



3. Fins

Manufacturer: Poseidon, Apeks, Mares

Material: Rubber for Diving, Rubber or plastic for snorkelling.

AVAILABLE DRY SUIT SIZES

If you are not within these limits, we unfortunately do not have the equipment for you.

Women Snorkelling

150 cm – Max weight 75 kg
155 cm – Max weight 80 kg
160 cm – Max weight 85 kg
165 cm – Max weight 90 kg
170 cm – Max weight 95 kg
175 cm – Max weight 100 kg
180-200 cm – Max weight 110 kg

Women Diving

155 cm – Max weight 70 kg
160 cm – Max weight 75 kg
165 cm – Max weight 80 kg
170 cm – Max weight 85 kg
175 cm – Max weight 90 kg
180-200 cm – Max weight 100 kg

Men Snorkelling

150 cm – Max weight 75 kg
155 cm – Max weight 80 kg
160 cm – Max weight 85 kg
165 cm – Max weight 90 kg
170 cm – Max weight 100 kg
175 cm – Max weight 110 kg
180-200 cm – Max weight 120 kg

Men Diving

155 cm – Max weight 80 kg
160 cm – Max weight 85 kg
165 cm – Max weight 90 kg
170 cm – Max weight 100 kg
175 cm – Max weight 110 kg
180-200 cm – Max weight 120 kg



MEETING POINT

Directions to the meeting location

The meeting location for your tour is at Silfra Car Park. Type **“Thingvellir Parking P5”** (GPS coordinates 64.255825, -21.123666) into google maps, and it will give you directions to where you can park your car, which is the 2nd car park 400m further along the road to where you will be snorkelling/diving from. Please allow one hour if driving from Reykjavik. Once parked at Thingvellir parking P5, you will need to buy a ticket to display on your dashboard, which costs 500 ISK (you can pay at the machine with a credit or debit card).

To meet your guide

Walk 400m back along the road until you reach the car park with all the snorkel and dive vans, and look for your guide. There are other companies at the site so make sure you go to the right one and show your voucher.

When to be there

Please be ready in the car park to meet your guide **15 MINUTES before** your tour is due to begin.

Duration

A Diving tour takes about 5 hours on location.

A Snorkelling tour takes about 3 hours on location

PICK UP

Some of our departures include a pickup from Reykjavik. The booking page will tell you if pick up is available or not.

- 🕒 **“Snorkelling in Silfra from Reykjavik”** - Always include pick up from Reykjavik
- 🕒 **“Snorkelling in Silfra from Thingvellir”** - Never include a pick up
- 🕒 **“Diving in Silfra”** - You can choose pick up or meet on location

We only serve the **pick-up locations** specified in our **pick-up list**. Due to traffic restrictions, we are not allowed to pick up from hotels in the city centre, or from private Air BnBs. Please contact us to find out your closest pick up point if your accommodation is not on our pick-up list.

If pick up time is for example 09.00, it means that we are arriving to the first pick up location at that time. **Kindly note it can take us up to 30 minutes to complete all pick-ups.** Pick up time at 09.00, means that we will pick you up between 09.00-09.30.

Duration

A Diving tour takes around 7 hours including transport from Reykjavik

A Snorkelling tour takes around 5 hours including transport from Reykjavik.

WHAT TO BRING

For Diving and Snorkelling

- Thermal base layer in wool, fleece or synthetic material, No cotton!
 - Warm socks in wool, fleece or neoprene
 - A spare set of clothes and socks for after the activity in case you get wet
 - A towel (remember your hair, face and hands will get wet)
 - Outdoor clothing suitable for the current weather conditions
 - Voucher
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- If Diving, bring proof of Open water and Dry Suit certification, or Open Water certification and a logbook showing that you have completed a minimum of 10 logged dry suit dives from within the last 2 years. The logbook needs to be in English so your dive guide can read it.



**WE LOOK FORWARD TO SHOWING YOU SILFRA
-THE FANTASTIC FISSURE!**