



Greetings from Iceland

It is so much easier to travel from the UK to European countries, that we cannot resist the temptation to use summer time off from the university to explore. This summer it was Iceland. I had been intrigued by this land of fire and ice since one of my university professors (that was a looong time ago) came back from a Fulbright exchange there. It has a low population density (the entire country has less people than Indianapolis) but a high density of incredible scenery. So I will let the pictures speak for themselves, with only a wee bit of interpretation. Here you go.....

There are amazing waterfalls and cascades:



Steaming fissures and geysers:





More waterfalls, like Gullfoss:



Rugged coastlines:



Bubbling geothermal mud pools:



Mountains and fjords:



Including some which are obviously volcanic craters.





This one is called the Politician River – so named because it cannot make up its mind which way to go.



And more waterfalls, like Dynjandi:



And more waterfalls, like Godafoss:



Icelandic construction is interesting. There are some amazingly rough and twisty roads – like the thin dirt-brown line in this photo.



Rivers, both wild and meandering



And tunnels of many miles in length, passing under the mountains – some with crossroad intersections in the middle.



There are tiny quaint churches dotting the hillsides.



This one is named the Blue Church for its coloring, both inside and out.



Those churches, and many of the houses, like these cute little homes, have an interesting construction. The ground level is poured concrete, and then everything above that is metal, with corrugated sheet metal walls. There aren't many trees in Iceland, so use of wood is avoided.



This is the rift canyon created by the mid-Atlantic continental drift. The canyon wall on the right is part of the European continental plate. The ridge on the left is the edge of the North American continental plate. The two are continuing to drift apart at an infinitesimally slow rate. Iceland is the only place on earth where the rift between the two plates occurs above the surface of the ocean.



We saw unexpected wildlife, like this huge jellyfish.



And tons of seabirds, such as Curlew, Diver, Slovenian Grebe, Godwit, Whimbrel, Fallarow, Arctic Tern and Plover.



Perhaps the most amazing things in Iceland, however, are the Lava fields.





Including the famous Blue Lagoon, where you can bathe in the mineral springs surrounded by steaming lava rocks.



And even have a facial with the mineralized mud.



It was a wonderful trip....not one to be missed.