

Ultimate Guide to Nightlife in Reykjavik: Where To Party in Iceland's Capital

What makes Iceland's nightlife different from anywhere else in the world? In Reykjavik, the fun starts late and lasts well into the morning—thanks to cozy pubs, buzzing clubs, and a social scene that's equal parts laid-back and electric.

Whether you're bar-hopping down Laugavegur Street, sipping whiskey on a [guided food and drink tour](#), or exploring the [best craft beer bars](#), there's something for every kind of night owl.

To stay close to the action, check out these [downtown Reykjavik hotel options](#) for easy access to the city's top nightlife spots.

Read on to discover everything you need to know about nightlife in Reykjavik.

Reykjavik's Party Culture: What You Need To Know

Nightlife in Reykjavik begins late, often after 10 PM. Locals kick off with pre-drinking (fylleri) at home or quieter bars. It's a time to socialize before heading to the livelier spots, often taking advantage of the [best happy hour in Reykjavik](#) before the prices go up.

An iconic tradition, the runtur involves visiting multiple bars and clubs in one night. People walk between venues, stopping for drinks and chatting along the way. It's about the journey, not just the destination.

In summer, Reykjavik's nightlife extends into the early morning. The midnight sun keeps the party going until sunrise, with bars staying open until 5 or 6 AM. After-parties often follow in private homes, lasting well into the daylight hours.

Reykjavik's nightlife thrives on spontaneity and socializing. The vibe is relaxed, with an emphasis on connection, fun, and enjoying the night. It's a unique and unforgettable party experience.

Best Times to Experience Reykjavik's Party Scene

Reykjavik's nightlife is electric year-round, but its character shifts with the seasons, school calendars, and even the day of the week. Whether you prefer sun-soaked street parties or cozy bar nights under the northern lights, there's a perfect time for every type of night owl.

High-Energy Summers (Midnight Sun Vibes)

Summer in Reykjavik is a nonstop celebration. With the midnight sun casting light well into the early hours, locals and tourists alike embrace the extended days with outdoor festivals, rooftop bars, and all-night parties. School is out, and university exams are over, which means a surge of youthful energy across the city.

Major events like Secret Solstice turn Reykjavik into a pulsating festival hub, with international acts, open-air stages, and packed venues. Bar-hopping, dancing in the street, and watching the sunrise after a night out are all part of the summer rhythm.

Cozy Winters (Northern Lights & Warm Bars)

Winter brings a more intimate vibe. As daylight hours shorten and snow blankets the city, Reykjavik's nightlife shifts indoors. Locals gather in snug venues with warm lighting, craft cocktails, and live music. The long nights create the perfect setting for aurora sightings after a night out.

School breaks (mid-February) and holiday vacations bring another wave of activity, particularly around Iceland Airwaves, the country's premier indie and electronic music festival. It's a season for slower nights, rich conversation, and discovering hidden musical gems in atmospheric venues.

School Calendars & Seasonal Peaks

Academic schedules play a surprisingly big role in the city's party atmosphere. The nightlife scene in Reykjavik noticeably ramps up after university exam periods, typically in mid-May and again in mid-December.

During summer break (from late May through mid-August) and the winter holiday season (mid-December to early January), bars and music venues fill up faster as students and locals hit the town in full force.

These periods bring a surge of energy, making Reykjavik feel especially lively and social, perfect for visitors looking to experience the city at its most exciting.

Reykjavik Nightlife by Day of the Week

The Reykjavik party scene isn't just for weekends—each day brings its own vibe:

- **Monday & Tuesday:** These are quieter nights, but you'll find locals enjoying happy hour or low-key live performances in relaxed venues.
- **Wednesday:** Known as "locals' night," it's when residents head out midweek. Bars are lively but not packed, offering a more authentic, laid-back experience.
- **Thursday:** The weekend starts early here. Popular bars fill up fast, and the music gets louder—expect everything from techno to pop.
- **Friday & Saturday:** These are peak party nights. Every club and pub is buzzing, streets stay crowded into the early morning, and Reykjavik truly lives up to its wild reputation.
- **Sunday:** The pace slows again, making room for recovery and relaxation. Many spots offer live acoustic sets or quiet drinks—perfect for winding down.

Weather and Daylight Impacts

The weather and daylight hours play a huge role in Reykjavik's nightlife. In summer, the long daylight hours foster a high-energy, social vibe that continues into the early morning. In contrast, winter nights are much longer, often fostering a more intimate, laid-back atmosphere with fewer but cozier gatherings.

For more weather information, visit the [Icelandic Met Office's official website](#).

Where To Find the Best Nightlife in Reykjavik

Nightlife in Reykjavik is concentrated in the downtown area, each with a distinct vibe. The city is walkable, so you can easily explore several neighborhoods in one night. From lively streets to intimate venues, Reykjavik has something for every party-goer.

Laugavegur: The Heart of Reykjavik's Nightlife

[Laugavegur](#) is Reykjavik's main street and the hub of the city's nightlife. This bustling area is lined with bars, clubs, and restaurants. It's where locals and tourists go to start the night. Expect crowded spots and a lively atmosphere, perfect for those seeking high-energy fun.

Hverfisgata: Alternative and Underground Vibes

Just off Laugavegur, [Hverfisgata](#) offers a more alternative vibe. It's known for quirky bars, underground clubs, and live music venues. This neighborhood attracts those seeking a more unique, less commercial nightlife experience in Reykjavik. It's a hotspot for creative locals and indie music lovers.

Austurstræti: Upscale and Chic Nightlife

For a more refined experience, [Austurstraeti](#) is the place to be. This area features stylish cocktail bars and upscale lounges. Perfect for those wanting a quieter, sophisticated evening out, Austurstraeti offers a classy nightlife scene in Reykjavik. Enjoy handcrafted drinks and intimate settings in this chic neighborhood.

Hidden Gems Beyond the Main Areas

Reykjavik's nightlife also thrives in lesser-known spots, mostly located in Vegamotastigur, Bankastraeti, Klapparstigur, Bergstadastraeti, and Ingolfstraeti. Beyond the main streets, find cozy bars and secret venues. These hidden gems offer a more local, authentic nightlife experience. Explore Reykjavik's offbeat bars and underground clubs for something special.

Top 5 Bars in Reykjavik

When it comes to finding the best bars in Reykjavik, it depends on what you like. It could be wherever has the cheapest beer or a bar that plays your favorite music. It's rare that people go out and stay in the same venue for the entire night.

The best thing to do is follow a bar crawl, make new friends, listen to different music genres, and maybe even stumble into that special person.

Reykjavik visitors should know about the [best bars for craft beer](#). Here are some of our picks for the best bars in Reykjavik.

5. Kaldi Bar

[Kaldi Bar](#) is now very popular with tourists and locals alike. It's so popular that you'll struggle to find a free seat. Kaldi Bar is a sit-down and chat bar with multiple beers on tap. It's a place to see and be seen, but come early to grab a seat.

Plan Your Visit to Kaldi Bar

Ready to experience Kaldi Bar? Here's what you need to know to plan your visit:

Kaldi Bar Ratings

- [Google](#): 4.7/5
- [Tripadvisor](#): 4.6/5

Hours

- Sunday through Thursday: 12 PM-1 AM
- Friday and Saturday: 12 PM-3 AM

Address

Laugavegur 20b, 101 Reykjavik

Directions

Kaldi Bar is centrally located at Laugavegur 20b, 101 Reykjavik, Iceland, situated at the intersection with Klapparstigur. It's easily accessible on foot from most central locations. For precise directions from your current location, you can use [Google Maps](#).

Website

[Visit Kaldi Bar's official website](#)

4. Litli Barinn

If you want a calmer, intimate setting for your evening out, [Litli Barinn](#) is the place to go. This neighborhood restaurant and bar has some of the best cocktails in Reykjavik, with a great beer and wine selection. It's perfect for a romantic date with a partner or a cozy night with a small group.

The prices are very affordable, especially the food. If you want something with your drinks, we recommend sharing two or three of the small plates or enjoying a full meal with the tasty mains. Litli Barinn is close to the main downtown area and has a relaxed and laid-back atmosphere. They also only play Icelandic music and use locally sourced ingredients.

Plan Your Visit to Litli Barinn

Ready to experience Litli Barinn? Plan your visit right with these pieces of information:

Litli Barinn Ratings

- [Google](#): 4.9/5
- [Tripadvisor](#): 4.2/5

Hours

- Monday - Sunday: 3 PM-10:30 PM

Address

Ranargata 4a, 101 Reykjavik

Directions

Litli Barinn is centrally located at Ranargata 4a, 101 Reykjavik, situated on the first floor of the Local 101 hotel. It's just a short walk from Ingolfstorg Square and Laugavegur, Reykjavík's main shopping street. The bar is easily accessible on foot from most central locations. For precise directions from your current location, you can use [Google Maps](#).

Website

[Check out Litli Barinn's official website](#)

3. Olstofa Kormaks og Skjaldar

[Olstofa Kormaks og Skjaldar](#) is a quieter place to sit down, have a beer, and talk to your friends. They serve craft beer on tap, including the Brio beer by local microbrewery Borg. This bar is a trendy venue with the locals, and its old-timey decor makes it worth visiting.

Plan Your Visit to Olstofa Kormaks og Skjaldar

Here's all you need to know to plan your visit right:

Olstofa Kormaks og Skjaldar Ratings

- [Google](#): 4.5/5
- [Tripadvisor](#): 4.4/5

Hours

- Sunday through Thursday: 3 PM-1 AM
- Friday and Saturday: 3 PM-4 AM

Address

Vegamotastigur 4, 101 Reykjavik

Directions

Olstofa Kormaks og Skjaldar is centrally located at Vegamotastigur. It's situated in the heart of downtown Reykjavik, making it easily accessible on foot from most central locations. For precise directions from your current location, you can use [Google Maps](#).

Website

[Visit Olstofa Kormaks og Skjaldar's official Facebook account](#)

2. Prikid Kaffihus

[Prikid Kaffihus](#) is a cafe by day and a popular pub by night. Its red facade, accompanied by bright red and green signs, gives it a very cheerful vibe. The music leans toward hip-hop, but it depends on the DJ of the night.

It gets rowdy past midnight, so if you want to enjoy some quieter moments, come earlier and enjoy their happy hour prices. Founded in 1951, it's been a mainstay in downtown Reykjavik for a long time.

Plan Your Visit to Prikid Kaffihus

Excited to experience Prikid Kaffihus? Here's what you need to know to plan your visit:

Prikid Kaffihus Ratings

- [Google](#): 4.5/5
- [Tripadvisor](#): 4.1/5

Hours

- Monday through Wednesday: 9 AM-1 AM
- Thursday: 9 AM-12 AM
- Friday: 9 AM-1 AM
- Saturday: 10 AM-3 AM
- Sunday: 10 AM-11 PM

Address

Bankastraeti 12, 101 Reykjavik

Directions

Prikid Kaffihus is centrally located at Bankastraeti. Situated in the heart of downtown Reykjavik, it's just a short walk from landmarks like Austurvollur Square and Laugavegur, the city's main shopping street. The cafe bar is easily accessible on foot from most central locations. For precise directions from your current location, you can use [Google Maps](#).

Website

[Check out Prikid's official website](#)

1. Lemmy Bar & Live Music Venue

[Lemmy Bar & Live Music Venue](#) is a rock-themed bar in downtown Reykjavik, known for its lively atmosphere and impressive selection of over 50 tap beers. Housed in one of the city's oldest buildings, the interior is filled with rock memorabilia, giving it a nostalgic and edgy feel.

The menu features a mix of comfort food, including sweet and savory waffles, sausages, and classic fish and chips. Guests can also enjoy a unique selection of breakfast cereals with free refills.

Beyond the drinks and food, Lemmy offers a one-of-a-kind entertainment experience with Iceland's only classic arcade collection available for guests to play. The venue frequently hosts live music, with performances from rock and metal bands, as well as DJ nights.

Plan Your Visit to Lemmy Bar & Live Music Venue

Ready to experience Lemmy Bar & Live Music Venue? Here's what you need to know:

Lemmy Bar & Live Music Venue Ratings

- [Google](#): 4.7/5
- [Tripadvisor](#): 4.7/5

Hours

- Sunday through Wednesday: 11:45 AM–11 PM
- Thursday: 11:45 AM–1 AM
- Friday and Saturday: 11:45 AM–2 AM

Address

Austurstraeti 20, 101 Reykjavik

Directions

Lemmy Bar & Live Music Venue is centrally located at Austurstraeti. Situated in one of the oldest buildings in Reykjavik, it's just a short walk from landmarks like Austurvollur Square and Laugavegur, the city's main shopping street. The venue is easily accessible on foot from most central locations. For precise directions from your current location, you can use [Google Maps](#).

Website

[Check out Lemmy's official website](#)

Top 5 Nightclubs and Dance Venues in Reykjavik

Reykjavik's club scene may be compact, but it delivers big on atmosphere, music, and unforgettable nights. From sleek lounges to gritty underground spots, these are the must-visit nightclubs in Reykjavik for dancing into the early hours.

5. Lux Nightclub

Lux is Reykjavik's premier upscale nightclub, known for its sleek design, LED lighting, and high-end atmosphere. Popular with a stylish crowd, it hosts top DJs spinning house and dance hits late into the night. With VIP tables and polished décor, it's ideal for a glamorous night out in the city.

Plan Your Visit to Lux Nightclub

Here's everything you need to know before visiting Lux Nightclub

Lux Nightclub Ratings

- [Google](#): 2.8/5

Hours

- Friday and Saturday: 11 PM-4:30 AM

Address

Austurstraeti 7, 101 Reykjavik

Directions

Lux Nightclub is a stylish nightlife spot located in central Reykjavik. Positioned near the city's main streets and close to popular bars and restaurants, it's easily reachable on foot from most downtown hotels. For the most accurate route from your location, check [Google Maps](#).

Website

[Visit Lux Nightclub's official Facebook account](#)

4. HAX

HAX is a high-energy, modern nightclub catering to Reykjavik's electronic music lovers. Featuring a powerful sound system and bold lighting, it attracts a young, lively crowd ready to dance. The club's minimalist, industrial vibe makes it a standout for late-night techno and house sets.

Plan Your Visit to HAX

Ready to experience HAX's high energy? Here's all you need to know to plan your visit:

HAX Ratings

- [Google](#): 3.8/5

Hours

- Friday and Saturday: 11 PM-3:30 AM

Address

Tradarkot, Hverfisgata 20, 101 Reykjavk

Directions

HAX Nightclub is a modern nightlife venue located at Hverfisgata. Situated in the vibrant downtown Reykjavik, it's easily accessible on foot from most central locations. For accurate directions based on your location, check [Google Maps](#).

Website

[Check out HAX's official website](#)

3. Auto

[Auto](#), a glitzy dance haven, is one of the few proper nightclubs in Iceland. It draws its name from its location in a repurposed basement parking garage. To enter the club, you'll descend a flight of stairs into a windowless space illuminated by shimmering lights and a dance floor.

Plan Your Visit to Auto

Ready to experience Auto? Here's what you need to know before visiting:

Auto Ratings

- [Google](#): 2.9/5

Hours

- Friday and Saturday: 11 PM-4:30 AM

Address

Laekjargata 2a, 101 Reykjavik

Directions

Auto Nightclub is an energetic nightlife venue located at Laekjargata. Situated in the heart of downtown Reykjavík, it's easily accessible on foot from most central locations. For accurate directions based on your location, check [Google Maps](#).

Website

[Visit Auto's website](#)

2. Paloma

One of the most popular nightclubs in Reykjavik, [Paloma](#) was founded in 2013 and is renowned for playing good music. Its other draw is the basement dance floor with wooden beams reminiscent of a Viking ship.

Paloma is popular with locals and visitors, with a great atmosphere and a local and international DJ lineup.

Plan Your Visit to Paloma

Here's all you need to know to plan your visit to Paloma right:

Paloma Ratings

- [Google](#): 3.4/5

Hours

- Friday and Saturday: 10 PM-4:30 AM

Address

1-3 Naustin, 101 Reykjavik

Directions

Paloma Nightclub is a renowned underground venue located in Naustin. Situated near the old harbor, it's easily accessible on foot from most central locations. To get the exact route from your location, use [Google Maps](#).

Website

[Check out Paloma's official Facebook account](#)

1. Pablo Discobar

[Pablo Discobar](#) has delicious but pricey cocktails, a stylish but fun crowd, and funky decor. It's the perfect spot to go if you're in the mood for dancing. However, you should note that they sometimes have a minimum age of 25 to enter.

Plan Your Visit to Pablo Discobar

Here's everything you need to know if you're visiting Pablo Discobar:

Pablo Discobar Ratings

- [Google](#): 4.0/5
- [Tripadvisor](#): 4.1/5

Hours

- Thursday: 5 PM-1 AM
- Friday and Saturday: 5 PM-3 AM

Address

Veltusund 1, 101 Reykjavik

Directions

Pablo Discobar is a cocktail bar and nightclub located in Veltusund. Situated in the heart of downtown Reykjavik, it's easily accessible on foot from most central locations. For precise directions from your current location, you can use [Google Maps](#).

Website

[Visit Pablo Discobar's official Instagram account](#)

Reykjavik's Live Music Scene

Reykjavik is home to a dynamic live music scene, with many venues hosting Icelandic bands and international artists. Whether you're into indie, rock, or jazz, Reykjavik has something for you.

Harpa Concert Hall: Iceland's Cultural Jewel

Standing proudly on the waterfront, [Harpa Concert Hall](#) is more than a venue—it's an experience. Its shimmering glass exterior catches the northern light, while inside, the music ranges from classical symphonies and jazz to electronic beats. If you're looking for a refined night out with world-class acoustics, Harpa is Reykjavik's crown jewel.

The Secret Cellar: Underground Sound, Literally

For something more intimate, head below street level to The Secret Cellar. This cozy basement bar feels like Reykjavik's best-kept secret. Here, you'll find stripped-down sets, spontaneous jam sessions, and up-and-coming Icelandic artists sharing their stories through song. It's raw, real, and absolutely unforgettable.

Reykjavik Art Museum: Where Music Meets Modern Art

When music spills into the world of visual art, you get a night at the [Reykjavik Art Museum](#). With live performances tucked into gallery spaces, it's a cultural mashup of sound and sculpture. Expect indie bands echoing through minimalist halls or DJs spinning during edgy art openings.

Bokabud Mals og Menningar: Where Literature Meets Live Music

Bokabud Mals og Menningar blends books, culture, and nightlife, transforming from a cozy bookstore cafe by day into a lively bar with nightly live music. Its resident Bookstore Band plays classic rock and sing-alongs in a warm, three-level setting that draws locals and tourists alike. With events like comedy nights and poetry readings, it's a standout spot in the city's exciting live music scene.

Pub Crawls and Party Tours

Exploring nightlife in Reykjavik becomes even more exciting with guided pub crawls and party tours. These experiences offer a fun, social way to discover the [best bars in Reykjavik](#), as well as its hidden gems. Whether you're a beer lover or cocktail fan, there's a themed tour perfect for your taste. Most start in the evening and continue well into the night.

The popular [Reykjavik beer & schnapps tour](#) is a favorite among visitors. It includes tastings at local bars and shares the history of Icelandic beer. The [Bryggjan Brewery tour](#) lets you dive into craft beer culture right at Reykjavik's first microbrewery. You'll sample fresh brews straight from the taproom on the scenic harbor.

For a more exclusive experience, the [private Reykjavik microbrewery and distillery tour](#) is a top choice. You'll visit local producers of craft beer, whiskey, and gin while learning about Iceland's distilling heritage. These tours are perfect for travelers wanting a deeper insight into Icelandic drinking culture. Tastings are always generous and thoughtfully curated.

Some tours go beyond the drinks. Themed experiences like Viking pub crawls or cocktail-making competitions bring extra energy to your night out. With music, costumes, and creative activities, they add a playful twist to nightlife in Reykjavik. It's not just bar-hopping — it's a party adventure.

LGBTQ+ Nightlife in Reykjavik

Reykjavik is one of the most LGBTQ+-friendly cities in Europe, and its nightlife reflects that inclusive, welcoming spirit. The city embraces diversity, offering safe, dynamic spaces for queer locals and visitors to connect, celebrate, and dance the night away.

Kiki Queer Bar

[Kiki Queer Bar](#) is Reykjavik's most iconic LGBTQ+ venue. It's bright, bold, and full of energy, located right on Laugavegur. Kiki hosts drag shows, themed dance nights, and karaoke, all in a high-spirited, colorful atmosphere. It's a go-to spot for anyone seeking fun and acceptance on the dance floor.

Plan Your Visit to Kiki Queer Bar

Ready to experience Kiki Queer Bar? Here's all you need to know to plan your visit right:

Kiki Queer Bar Ratings

- [Google](#): 4.0/5
- [Tripadvisor](#): 4.0/5

Hours

- Thursday: 8 PM-1 AM
- Friday and Saturday: 8 PM-3:30 AM

Address

Laugavegur 22, 101 Reykjavik

Directions

Kiki Queer Bar is Reykjavík's iconic LGBTQ+ nightclub, located at Laugavegur. It's situated on the second and third floors of a colorful building, with the entrance on Klapparstígur. The venue is easily accessible on foot from most central locations. For precise directions from your current location, you can use [Google Maps](#).

Website

[Visit Kiki Queer Bar's official website](#)

Gaukurinn

Gaukurinn is a fun and inclusive dive bar. Home of Iceland's drag scene, it frequently hosts stand-up comedy nights in English. It's an alternative, artsy underground venue featuring regular movie nights and live music, with the lineup available on its website.

They have gender-neutral bathrooms and serve juicy, grubby, all-vegan food. The music here varies, but rock or metal nights are typical, as well as local electronic artists showing their latest dance grooves.

Plan Your Visit To Gaukurinn

Plan your visit to the Gaukurinn right with these pieces of information:

Gaukurinn Ratings

- [Google](#): 4.6/5
- [Tripadvisor](#): 4.6/5

Hours

- Sunday through Thursday: 5 PM-1 AM
- Friday and Saturday: 5 PM-3 AM

Address

Tryggvagata 22, 101 Reykjavik

Directions

Gaukurinn is a vibrant live music venue and bar located at Tryggvagata 22, 101 Reykjavík, Iceland. It's situated in downtown Reykjavík, making it easily accessible on foot from most central locations. To get exact directions from where you are, check [Google Maps](#).

Website

[Visit Gaukurinn's website](#)

Bravo

Just steps away from Kiki, Bravo is a cozy bar popular with the local LGBTQ+ community. With a relaxed vibe and affordable drinks, it's a great spot to start the night or unwind after dancing. Bravo doesn't advertise as a gay bar, but its inclusive atmosphere and loyal queer clientele make it a beloved hangout.

Plan Your Visit to Bravo

Here's everything you need to know before visiting Bravo:

Bravo Ratings

- [Google](#): 4.5/5
- [Tripadvisor](#): 4.4/5

Hours:

- Sunday through Thursday: 12 PM-1 AM
- Friday and Saturday: 1 PM-2 AM

Address

Laugavegur 22, 101, 101 Reykjavik

Directions

Bravó is a cozy and vibrant bar located at Laugavegur. Situated on Reykjavik's main shopping street, it's easily accessible on foot from most central locations. For accurate directions based on your location, check [Google Maps](#).

Website

[Visit Bravo's official Facebook account](#)

Reykjavik Pride Week

Held every August, [Reykjavik Pride Week](#) is one of Iceland's most colorful and spirited events. Over a week of parades, performances, panel talks, and parties, the city becomes a hub of love, acceptance, and celebration. The Pride Parade alone draws tens of thousands — a huge number in a city this size.

Bars and clubs extend their hours and host special Pride events, including drag competitions, live music, and street parties. It's the best time of year to fully experience LGBTQ+ nightlife in Reykjavik at its most inclusive and exhilarating.

Food After Dark: Late-Night Eats in Reykjavik

Are you feeling hungry after a night of dancing and drinking? Luckily, some late-night Reykjavik eateries can satisfy your pre- and post-party cravings. Also, you can explore some of the best [Reykjavik restaurants](#) for delicious meals throughout your trip.

4. Mandi

Nothing quite hits the spot like Middle Eastern food late at night. [Mandi](#) is a family-run restaurant that serves late-night food like falafel, shawarma, salads, and burgers. They have three locations, but their original restaurant in Veltusund by Ingolfstorg is the perfect place for an after-party bite.

Plan Your Visit to Mandi

Ready to taste some Middle Eastern treats? Here's what you need to know to plan your visit right:

Mandi Ratings

- [Tripadvisor](#): 4.5/5

Hours

- Monday through Wednesday: 10 AM-11 PM
- Thursday: 10 AM-2 AM
- Friday and Saturday: 11 AM-5 AM

Address

Veltusund 3b, 101 Reykjavik

Directions

Mandi is located at Veltusund, Reykjavik, near Ingolfstorg Square and Austurvollur Park. The restaurant is easily accessible on foot from most central locations. For precise directions from your current location, you can use [Google Maps](#).

Website

[Check out Mandi's official website](#)

3. Islenski Barinn

[Islenski Barinn](#) serves authentic Icelandic dishes if you prefer more local fare. The menu includes smoked lamb, fermented shark, and reindeer burgers. It's a popular place, so it's worth making a reservation.

Plan Your Visit to Islenski Barinn

Here's all you need to know before visiting Islenski Barinn:

Islenski Barinn Rating

- [Google](#): 4.7/5
- [Tripadvisor](#): 4.5/5

Hours

- Sunday through Thursday: 11:30 AM-1 AM
- Friday and Saturday: 11:30 AM-3 AM

The kitchen is open daily from 11:30 AM to 10 PM.

Address

1a Ingolfsstraeti, 101 Reykjavik, Iceland

Direction

Islenski Barinn is located at Ingolfsstraeti, just off Laugavegur, Reykjavik's main shopping street. The restaurant is easily accessible on foot from most central locations. For precise directions from your current location, you can use [Google Maps](#).

Website

[Visit Islenski Barinn's official website](#)

2. The American Bar

The [American Bar](#) is a diner combined with a sports bar that provides a typical American nightlife experience with great burgers and music. They also have live music every night and a dance floor on the weekend. Plus, a wheel of fortune for those who are feeling lucky.

Plan Your Visit to The American Bar

Ready to experience the American nightlife in The American Bar? Here's what you need to know:

The American Bar Ratings

- [Google](#): 4.1/5
- [Tripadvisor](#): 3.8/5

Hours

- Monday through Thursday: 11 AM-1 AM
- Friday and Saturday: 11 AM-4:30 AM
- Sunday: 11 AM-12 AM

Address

Austurstraeti 8-10, 101 Reykjavik

Directions

American Bar is a lively sports bar and grill located at Austurstraeti. It sits right in the heart of downtown Reykjavik, close to major landmarks and shopping streets. The bar is easily accessible on foot from most central locations. For precise directions from your current location, you can use [Google Maps](#).

Website

[Visit The American Bar's official website](#)

1. Baejarins Beztu Pylsur

Known for the [famous Icelandic hot dog](#), [Baejarins Beztu Pylsur](#) has been visited by foreign dignitaries and world-famous celebrities. It's also one of the [most affordable restaurants in Reykjavik](#).

Unlike regular hot dogs, these are made with three types of meat: beef, pork, and lamb. The nearest one is on Tryggvagata, a short walk from the main street.

Plan Your Visit to Baejarins Beztu Pylsur

Ready to visit Baejarins Beztu Pylsur? Here's everything you need to know:

Baejarins Beztu Pylsur Rating

- [Google](#): 4.4/5
- [Tripadvisor](#): 4.2/5

Hours (Reykjavik location)

- Monday through Thursday: 9 AM-12 AM
- Friday: 9 AM-12 AM
- Saturday and Sunday: 12 PM-6 AM

Address

Tryggvagata 1, 101 Reykjavik

Directions

Baejarins Beztu Pylsur is located at Tryggvagata. It's situated near the old harbor, just across from Harpa Concert Hall and close to many attractions in downtown Reykjavik. The stand is easily accessible on foot from most central locations. For precise directions from your current location, you can use [Google Maps](#).

Website

[Visit the Baejarins Beztu Pylsur's official website](#)

Reykjavik's Hidden Gems and Underground Scenes

For those seeking an authentic, off-the-beaten-path experience, Reykjavik offers a vibrant underground music scene that locals cherish. These venues provide intimate settings, diverse music genres, and a chance to immerse yourself in the city's rich cultural tapestry.

Hurra – A Hub for Indie and Alternative Music

[Hurra](#) is a beloved downtown Reykjavik venue known for its eclectic mix of live performances, DJ sets, and themed nights. From indie rock and jazz to electronic beats, Hurra's stage hosts both emerging and well-known artists, making it a cornerstone of Reykjavik's underground music scene.

The venue's cozy interior, complete with retro decor and a spacious dance floor, creates an inviting setting perfect for a night out with friends. Hurra also hosts a popular jazz night every Monday, offering a relaxed atmosphere with live music.

KEX Hostel – Where Culture Meets Community

[KEX Hostel](#), housed in a former biscuit factory, has been a cultural hotspot in Reykjavik, offering a blend of accommodation, dining, and live music. The venue has hosted various events, including concerts, jam sessions, and cultural gatherings, attracting locals and travelers.

KEX Hostel's vibrant atmosphere blends vintage decor with modern amenities, creating a cozy space for both travelers and locals. Its bar and restaurant offer a mix of local and international

flavors, while live events and jam sessions add to its cultural appeal. It's the perfect spot to relax, socialize, and enjoy Reykjavik's creative energy.

The Secret Cellar – Intimate and Underground

[The Secret Cellar](#) is a tiny underground venue in Reykjavik, known for its intimate atmosphere and focus on up-and-coming Icelandic artists. The venue's walls, adorned with local art, create a unique vibe that complements the intimate performances.

This venue is perfect for those looking to discover new talent in a cozy setting, away from the bustling tourist spots. The Secret Cellar often features genres like indie rock, folk, and experimental music, providing a platform for emerging artists to showcase their work.

After-Parties in Reykjavik: The Real Nightlife Secret

In Reykjavik, the party doesn't always end when the bars close. After-hours house parties and spontaneous gatherings are a big part of the local nightlife culture. Many locals invite friends (and friends of friends) to private parties after the clubs close, typically between 4 AM and 6 AM.

- **How to join:** These after-parties are often word-of-mouth, so mingling with locals during the night or making friends in the bars increases your chances of getting an invite. Just remember, Reykjavik is small, so everyone knows each other, and these gatherings are all about good vibes.
- **What to expect:** Don't expect anything too wild; Icelanders enjoy spending time with friends, playing music, chatting, and enjoying the relaxed atmosphere. It's a more intimate and friendly way to experience Reykjavik's after-dark energy.

Safety Tips and Local Laws You Need To Know About Nightlife in Reykjavik

Reykjavik is considered one of the safest cities in Europe, and its nightlife scene is generally relaxed and welcoming. However, following local laws and customs is still important to ensure a safe and enjoyable night out. Here are a few tips to keep in mind:

- **Age limits and ID requirements:** In Iceland, the legal drinking age is 20, strictly enforced in nightlife venues. ID checks are common at bars and clubs, so always carry a valid photo ID or passport. Some clubs may have higher age limits on weekends or for special events.
- **Behavior norms in Reykjavik nightlife:** Reykjavik locals are laid-back, friendly, and respectful, especially during nights out. While drinking is common, public drunkenness and aggression are frowned upon. In quieter venues, keep your voice down and be polite, as respecting personal space is important in the social scene.
- **Drinking and driving laws:** Iceland has very strict drinking and driving laws, with a legal blood alcohol limit of just 0.02%. Even one drink can impair your ability to drive. Police frequently conduct roadside checks, so if you're out enjoying the nightlife in Reykjavik, use taxis or buses and never drive after drinking.
- **General nightlife safety tips:** Reykjavik is safe, but keep an eye on your belongings in busy clubs and bars. Stay with friends at night and be cautious with after-parties or unfamiliar places. Enjoy the fun and friendly nightlife in Reykjavik, but stay smart and aware.

Getting Around at Night in Reykjavik

Reykjavik is a compact and walkable city, making it easy to navigate even during late-night hours. Whether you're bar-hopping on Laugavegur or heading to a nightclub on Hverfisgata, most of the nightlife in Reykjavik is concentrated in the downtown area, meaning walking is often the best way to get around.

Walking: The Easiest Way to Explore Reykjavik Nightlife

The city center is flat, well-lit, and safe, so walking between bars, clubs, and late-night eateries is convenient. From one end of Reykjavik's nightlife district to the other usually takes less than 15 minutes on foot, making walking not just practical but enjoyable, especially during the midnight sun in summer or under twinkling lights in winter.

Taxis and Ride-Sharing Options

If you're staying outside the downtown area or prefer not to walk, taxis in Reykjavik are readily available, though they can be expensive. You can call a taxi, find one at a designated taxi stand, or use local ride-hailing apps like Hreyfill or Bílabjónusta.

While global services like Uber or Lyft don't operate in Iceland, locals often use Hopp, an electric scooter-sharing app, as a quick and eco-friendly way to travel short distances during a night out.

Public Transport and Designated Drivers

Reykjavik's public buses (Straeto) operate on a limited schedule at night. While most routes end by midnight, weekend night buses sometimes run later, depending on demand. If you're staying late or drinking, it's safer to plan ahead.

If you're [renting a car in Reykjavik](#), Iceland has strict DUI laws. The blood alcohol limit is very low (0.02%), so designated drivers are strongly recommended if you're driving from nightlife venues. Alternatively, rely on taxis or return early enough to catch a bus.

Nightlife for Non-Drinkers in Reykjavik

Reykjavik nightlife isn't just for those who drink — the city offers plenty of alcohol-free options for a fun and social night out. Whether you're avoiding alcohol for personal, cultural, or health reasons, you'll find welcoming spaces and activities that don't revolve around drinking.

Thermal Pools and Evening Soaks

One of the most uniquely Icelandic ways to spend an evening is soaking in a geothermal swimming pool, and [Laugardalslaug](#) is a top choice. Open late, this popular spot features hot tubs, steam rooms, and a relaxed social atmosphere. Locals often visit in the evening to unwind after work, making it a great place to mingle without the bar scene.

Cinemas, Culture, and the Arts

Reykjavik has a vibrant arts and culture scene perfect for non-drinkers. Enjoy a movie at [Haskolabio](#) or [Bio Paradis](#), which screens indie and international films.

For live performances, head to the [National Theatre of Iceland](#) or explore Reykjavik Art Museum exhibitions, which often include evening openings and special events. These venues offer a relaxed yet stimulating night out without alcohol.

Cafes, Lounges, and Late-Night Bites

Many Reykjavik cafes stay open late and serve excellent coffee, hot chocolate, and Icelandic pastries. Spots like [Kaffibrennslan](#) or [Te & Kaffi](#) are great for late-night conversations or casual hangouts. Some venues even offer board games, poetry nights, or live acoustic music for a laid-back, social experience.

Reykjavik Events and Festivals with Nightlife Focus

Reykjavik's nightlife peaks during the city's vibrant festivals and cultural events, which blend music, art, and partying into unforgettable experiences. These celebrations attract both locals and international visitors, transforming Reykjavik into a non-stop party hub for days on end.

Iceland Airwaves – A Winter Music Wonderland

Held every November, the [Iceland Airwaves Festival](#) is Reykjavik's most iconic music event, transforming the city into a vibrant stage for live performances in clubs, concert halls, record shops, bars, and even historic churches.

This immersive festival showcases a mix of international headliners and emerging Icelandic talent, spanning genres like indie rock, electronica, hip-hop, and experimental music. With Reykjavik buzzing late into the night with after-parties and DJ sets, it's the ultimate experience for music lovers and nightlife enthusiasts.

A [5-day Iceland Airwaves Festival vacation package](#) is the perfect way to enjoy the music, explore the city, and dive into Iceland's dynamic cultural scene.

Secret Solstice – Party Under the Midnight Sun

[Secret Solstice](#), held in June, celebrates the summer solstice with a party unlike any other. Thanks to Reykjavik's 24-hour daylight, festival-goers dance well past midnight without ever seeing the dark.

Set in open-air venues and natural landscapes, Secret Solstice features multiple stages, big-name international performers, and even once-in-a-lifetime experiences like concerts inside glaciers or lava caves. It's a surreal, high-energy celebration of music and Icelandic nature.

Other Nightlife-Focused Events

In addition to these two major festivals, Reykjavik hosts events throughout the year that highlight its unique nightlife. [Reykjavik Pride](#) in August turns the city into a colorful celebration with parades, drag shows, and vibrant after-parties.

[Culture Night \(Menningarnott\)](#) in late August brings outdoor concerts and late-night art happenings to every corner of the city, creating a festive, inclusive atmosphere that stretches well into the night.

Whether you visit during the light-filled summer or the cozy winter season, Reykjavik's festival calendar offers some of the best nightlife experiences in Europe. It's the perfect way to immerse yourself in the city's energetic, creative, and welcoming party scene.

Cost of a Night Out in Reykjavik

Reykjavik is often ranked among the most expensive cities in Europe, and nightlife is no exception. While the experience is unforgettable, it's wise to budget ahead, especially when it comes to drinks, club entry, and late-night eats.

Expect to pay ISK 1,000–1,500 (USD \$7–11) for a beer at most bars. Cocktails are pricier, typically ranging from ISK 1,500–2,500 (USD \$11–18) depending on the venue and ingredients. Entry fees for clubs vary but usually fall between ISK 1,000–2,000, though some upscale venues or events may charge more. Many bars have no cover charge earlier in the evening, but may add one later at night.

One of the best ways to save money is by taking advantage of happy hour deals. Most bars offer discounts on beer, wine, and cocktails from around 4 PM to 7 PM, with some extending until 8 PM. Use apps like *Appy Hour* or check bar websites for daily specials. Opting for local Icelandic beers or spirits instead of imports can also cut costs without sacrificing quality.

Dining out in Reykjavik can be pricey, but there are tasty, budget-friendly options. Grab a famous hot dog from Baejarins Beztu Pylsur, or check out food trucks and casual street vendors around Laugavegur for filling meals under ISK 2,000. Many bars also offer small bites or combo deals during happy hour, perfect for keeping your night fun and affordable.

With a little planning, you can enjoy Reykjavik's nightlife scene without overspending — just time your visits, drink smart, and explore the city's more casual, local favorites.

Reykjavik Nightlife Etiquette and Dress Code

While Reykjavik's nightlife is friendly and relaxed, understanding local customs and dress expectations can help you blend in and enjoy the scene more fully. Whether you're bar-hopping with locals or heading to a chic lounge, a little etiquette goes a long way.

Dress Code: Casual, But Stylish

Most bars and pubs in Reykjavik have a casual but neat dress code. You'll see locals wearing jeans, boots, and stylish jackets — think smart, not sloppy. While sneakers are fine in casual spots, avoid wearing hoodies, sportswear, or overly casual clothing in upscale venues and nightclubs.

At trendier clubs or cocktail lounges, opt for smart-casual attire: button-down shirts, blouses, dresses, or fashionable outerwear are appreciated, especially on weekends. Reykjavik locals take pride in dressing well, even in colder months.

Local Etiquette and Social Norms

Icelanders are known for being polite, easygoing, and respectful, especially in nightlife settings. Loud or rowdy behavior is frowned upon, particularly in quieter venues or early in the night. Respect personal space, and don't interrupt conversations or touch strangers without consent — even casual flirtation is approached with subtlety.

As the night goes on, some people may get quite drunk, especially in busy venues. In crowded bars or clubs, it's not uncommon for someone to accidentally step on your shoes or spill a bit of their drink. These incidents are usually unintentional, so it's best not to take offense, they're just part of the lively atmosphere.

Flirting is typically low-pressure and humorous, and gender dynamics are refreshingly balanced. It's common for women to make the first move, and everyone is expected to be respectful and open-minded. Consent and personal boundaries are highly valued, and no always means no.

Reykjavik's nightlife is about connection, not confrontation. Dress smart, be respectful, and embrace the friendly, open vibe — and you'll fit right in.

Nightlife in Reykjavik for Tourists vs. Locals

Reykjavik's nightlife scene welcomes everyone, but there's a noticeable difference between where tourists go and where locals actually party. Knowing the distinction can help you avoid tourist traps and enjoy a more authentic Icelandic night out.

Where Tourists Tend to Go

Many visitors gravitate toward well-known, centrally located bars like [Lebowski Bar](#), with its quirky theme and Instagram-worthy cocktails, or Kaffibarinn, a popular spot known for its DJ nights and celebrity ties.

These venues are lively and fun, and great for first-timers.

Where Locals Actually Hang Out

Locals often skip the big-name spots in favor of understated bars, live music venues, or late-night cafes tucked into side streets. Places like Prikid, a dive-bar-meets-hip-hop-hub, or Dillon Whiskey Bar, with its rock 'n' roll spirit, attract a more Icelandic crowd. Gaukurinn, a cultural space and music venue, is also a local favorite for alternative shows and inclusive events.

Locals also love pop-up parties and underground events, often announced last minute on social media or through word of mouth. These gatherings range from DJ sets in warehouses to cozy gigs in basements, offering an insider feel and a genuine look at Reykjavik's creative nightlife culture.

How to Blend In and Avoid Tourist Traps

If you want to blend in like a local, skip the obvious spots on weekends and explore beyond the Laugavegur strip. Use apps like *Grapevine* or check local event boards for indie concerts, DJ nights, or themed parties. Arrive late (after midnight), dress smart-casual, and don't be afraid to chat with bartenders — they often know where the real action is happening.

To truly experience the nightlife in Reykjavik, follow the locals: dive into hidden venues, support Icelandic music acts, and keep things chill and respectful. That's where the real magic happens.

FAQs About the Nightlife in Reykjavik

What Makes Reykjavik's Nightlife Special?

Reykjavik's nightlife is vibrant, inclusive, and full of unique charm, offering a laid-back yet fun atmosphere with options for every taste. The main nightlife scene is centered around Laugavegur, the city's main shopping street, making it easy to hop between spots.

Does Reykjavik Have Good Nightlife?

Absolutely! Reykjavik's nightlife is packed with bars, pubs, and clubs, offering a variety of atmospheres. The lack of entrance fees (unless there's a live performance) means you can explore different spots freely.

What Time Do Bars and Clubs Open and Close in Reykjavik?

Most bars and pubs open in the afternoon. Thursdays and Sundays, known as "Little Fridays," see increased activity, but Fridays and Saturdays are when nightlife peaks. Bars typically close around 1 AM on weekdays and as late as 4:30-5:30 AM on weekends.

Where Is Reykjavik's Nightlife Located?

Reykjavik's nightlife is concentrated around Laugavegur, its main shopping street, and the connecting roads Bankastræti and Austurstraeti. Many other popular bars are located on side streets or Hverfisgata, all within walking distance of the main nightlife hub.

Is Reykjavik Safe at Night?

Yes! Reykjavik is one of the safest cities in Europe. While alcohol can lead to some rowdy behavior, serious incidents are rare, and the city's police handle any disturbances quickly.

What's the Dress Code for Reykjavik Nightlife?

Reykjavik's nightlife is relaxed, with no strict dress codes in most venues. While locals often dress up, it's perfectly fine to prioritize warmth in winter with layers, gloves, and hats.

What's the Age Limit for Nightlife in Reykjavik?

The legal drinking age in Iceland is 20, and you'll need an ID showing your date of birth to enter bars or buy alcohol.

What Are the Best Times to Experience Reykjavik Nightlife?

The best times to enjoy Reykjavik's nightlife are during its lively festivals and events. New Year's Eve is a standout, with bar hopping and fireworks lighting up the night. In November, the Iceland Airwaves Music Festival turns the city into a hub for live music.

August brings two major events: The Reykjavik Pride Festival, a colorful celebration of the LGBTQ+ community, and the Reykjavik Culture Night, featuring artistic activities, concerts, and a grand fireworks display. These occasions add an extra spark to Reykjavik's already vibrant nightlife scene.

Does Reykjavik Have a Gay-Friendly Nightlife?

Yes, Reykjavik is one of the most LGBTQ+-friendly cities in the world. All bars and clubs welcome everyone, but Kiki Queer Bar is specifically known for its lively LGBTQ+ crowd and atmosphere.

What's a Pre-Party in Reykjavik?

Locals often gather at home for a pre-party to save on bar prices, drinking from 6 PM to midnight before heading out. Visitors can join a bar crawl or seek out happy hours to enjoy the nightlife on a budget.

What's the After-Party Scene Like?

Official after-parties aren't common, but it's easy to find informal gatherings with new friends at someone's house. Alternatively, you can grab a late-night bite at one of Reykjavik's excellent restaurants or pizza spots.

How Do I Navigate Reykjavik at Night?

A map of Reykjavik's nightlife hot spots can help you locate the city's best drinking spots. If you're unsure, just follow Laugavegur and its nearby streets for the best nightlife experience.

Are Taxis Available in Reykjavik at Night?

Yes, Reykjavik has reliable 24-hour taxi services:

- Hreyfill Taxi: +354 588 5522 (or via their app)
- BSR Taxi: +354 561 0000
- Borgarbilstodin: +354 552 2440

Unlike in many countries, you can't hail taxis on the street. Instead, use designated taxi stands, the most convenient being on [Laekjargata](#), though it can get crowded late on weekends. All taxis use official taximeters, as ride-sharing services like Uber and Lyft are not available in Iceland.

What About Public Transport?

Buses are an alternative for getting around Reykjavik. Nearby bus stops to the nightlife area include Laekjargata, Stjornarradid, and Hlemmur. For schedules and routes, check the official [Straeto website](#) or our [Reykjavik City Bus Guide](#).

Plan Your Night Out in Reykjavik

While Reykjavik's nightlife is a highlight for many visitors, Iceland's true magic lies in its breathtaking landscapes and unique excursions. Consider exploring Iceland further through [guided food and drink tours](#) or late-night experiences like northern lights hunting.

For those eager to discover Iceland's culinary scene, enjoy a [small-group food walking tour in Reykjavik](#) or an exciting [7-hour Reykjavik food tour with northern lights views](#) by boat.

By pairing Reykjavik's vibrant nightlife with immersive tours, travelers can experience the best of both worlds—thrilling evenings in the city and unforgettable adventures across Iceland's stunning landscapes.

What's your ideal way to experience the downtown nightlife in Reykjavik — bar hopping, venturing out on a night tour, or mixing both for the ultimate trip? Let us know your go-to nightlife spots in Reykjavik below!