

VISITING THE BLUE LAGOON

The procedures for a visit to the Blue Lagoon are basically the same as at other Icelandic pools (see the “Pool Rules” sidebar on page 42). Watch the helpful video on the website (www.bluelagoon.com), which walks you through a visit.

Entry Procedure: When you pay, you’ll get an electronic **wristband** that serves as your locker key (and lets you charge drinks, face mud, and other extras—pay when you leave).

Once in the **changing area**, find an available locker. To lock the locker, touch your wristband to the light-up panel (if you forget, your locker will pop open after you leave—oops!). You can use your wristband to reopen your locker as often as you like (making it easy to enjoy the experience without your camera, then get a few shots when you’re finished soaking). If you forget your locker number, touch your wristband to the panel and it will remind you.

Once you’ve changed and showered (in a private cabin, if you prefer), head out to the **lagoon**. Review the chart above the main door as you leave the indoor area. It locates everything (bar, mud shack, waterfall, sauna, steam rooms, etc.) and shows the temperature of various hot spots. If you get turned around, bath attendants are standing by to answer questions and point you in the right direction.

In the Pools: The lagoon is *big*. The towel situation is chaotic. I don’t even bother tracking mine: It’s easy to just ask for another.

Once you’re in, be aware that the water ranges from waist to chest deep. The temperature varies more than in a regular swimming pool, with hot and cool spots—the average is around 100°F. For safety, the original scalding hot springs are contained in “**hot boxes**” (never over 105°F). While the water is not chlorinated, new water continually circulates into the lagoon—refilling the entire pool about every 40 hours. Bathers congregate by the warm spots where the hot water enters. Lifeguards love to talk and are full of fun facts.

Splish and splash around, exploring the hidden nooks and crannies of the interconnected **pools**, including a little roofed grotto, and several areas with benches that resemble hot pots at the municipal baths. The farther out you go, the quieter the pool becomes. Find the hot, thundering **waterfall** and give your shoulders a pounding. From there you can access the steam room, steam cave, and sauna.

Don’t forget to find the **swim-up bar**—everyone gets



one free drink. Water fountains under the bridges help you stay hydrated.

At the **mud station**, there are three options. Every bather gets a free ladleful of the white silica mud that collects in the lagoon. Smear this exfoliant on your face, let it set for about 10 minutes, then wash it off. Bathers with a higher-end ticket (or who pay extra for a dollop) get a blob of greenish algae, which supposedly reduces wrinkles and rejuvenates the skin (same procedure: wear for 10 minutes, then rinse). Or try a black “lava scrub” face wash. While it adds to the experience, all that mud is really just a sales pitch for the spa products for sale inside.

Leaving the Bath: After you’ve showered and dressed, you’ll pay for any extras you indulged in. At the exit turnstile, touch your wristband to the panel, then insert it in the slot. The machine eats it, and you’re on your way. Now comes the hard part: Try to keep your relaxed body awake on the drive back to your hotel or the airport.