



# VOLCANIC ERUPTION IN GRÍMSVÖTN 2011

[www.iceland.is](http://www.iceland.is)



**PROMOTE ICELAND**  
PROMOTEICELAND.COM

Many questions have come up following the recent eruption in Grímsvötn, Vatnajökull. How does the eruption affect Iceland and air travel? Are tourists safe in Iceland? We hope to answer most of your questions here in this document, but if you seek further information feel free to visit us online at [www.iceland.is](http://www.iceland.is), where you will find all the links and the latest updates that you need.

Bottom line: Travelers are safe and secure in Iceland – and can enjoy all the same activities as before and even more!

## Who are we?

## About Grímsvötn

Grímsvötn volcanic system in historical times. This is the fifth eruption since 1983, the last eruptions through glacier occurred in 2004, 1998, 1996, 1983 and 1934. These eruptions occurred in the Grímsvötn depression with the exception of the eruption in 1996 known as Gjálp. The volcano has a

## How does this eruption compare to the eruption in Eyjafjallajökull in 2010?

since scaled down considerably. The plume has held steady at about 10 km lately, which is slightly

from Eyjafjallajökull was explosive in nature and created very fine ash particles, 90% of which was in grains less than 1 mm. Grímsvötn on the other hand erupts basalt magma, which is rarely explosive. The fragmentation is therefore less efficient, and the ash particles it projects are much coarser, and not likely to stay airborne for long. At the moment, there is melt water flowing into the crater, and the

greatly reduce explosions, resulting in a flowing stream of magma, and greatly reduced ash particles

## Will other volcanoes erupt?

## How long will the eruption last?

It is difficult to predict how long an eruption can last. The last eruption in this area was in 2004 and

all been relatively short lived. An eruption in 1873 lasted seven months, but intensity was relatively low

## How does this affect inhabitants?

Tests conducted on samples from the ash in the area have shown very low levels of fluoride and other

## Is it safe?

1947 there have been two deaths related to volcanic eruptions. In that time there have been 12 volcanic eruptions. The first death involved a scientist who was killed by rocks falling from the front of a lava stream where he was collecting samples, this was during the eruption of Hekla in 1947. The

volcanic gases had gathered during the eruption of Heimaey in 1973. In both instances these people

## Can floods be expected?

Floods will often follow an eruption in this area. These are glacier outburst flood, as the area of activity

were low to begin with. Large or damaging floods are therefore not expected in connection to this event

## How is the eruption monitored?

The Icelandic Meteorological Office (IMO) monitors earth movements, water conditions and weather

and floods. The IMO's weather radar on the southwest tip of the country and the mobile radar, which

the University of Iceland and the British Meteorological Office, where the London VAAC (Volcanic Ash Advisory Centre) is stationed. The London office gives information on ash which are based on information from the Icelandic Met Office.



## How are eruptions forecast and monitored in Iceland?

glacial floods. To monitor the glacial floods, IMO uses water-level gauges and electrical conductivity

## How do I find weather forecasts for Iceland?

the IMO-web. The text forecast is most reliable but maps with specific wind-, temperature- and mountains can be considerable. Wind-chill and wetness (rain, snow or blowing snow) are always a

## Can I fly?

The Grímsvötn eruption has not caused wide-spread disturbances to flight schedules. There have been local disturbances, with Icelandic airports, including Keflavík International Airport, closing

disturbances to flight schedules are not considered likely.

As a precaution, passengers are asked to monitor flight schedules closely on travel industry web sites.

one were to close down, air traffic would be directed to one of the others.

## Clean and safe!

one of the world's leaders in green energy and sustainable development. It is also the only Western

## For further information visit

[www.iceland.is](http://www.iceland.is) - The Official Gateway to Iceland

[www.almannavarnir.is](http://www.almannavarnir.is)

[www.imo.is](http://www.imo.is)

[www.earthice.hi.is](http://www.earthice.hi.is)

