

# TRAVELER OF THE QUARTER



**TASHINA  
SCHIMMING-  
DALE**

**ALICIA  
ROWLAND**

## An Unexpected Connection: From Italy to Iceland

By: Tashina Schimming-Dale and Alicia Rowland

People say everything happens for a reason, but it's usually only later that you see how the moments in your life quietly link together. For us, it all started in 2023, when Alicia was vacationing in Italy. While dining at a restaurant, she struck up a conversation with a warm group of women seated nearby who were traveling together. She learned they were from all over the United States, most of them meeting each other for the first time on this journey; yet they all seemed as if they'd known each other for years. Alicia was deeply moved and inspired by the idea of women connecting through travel.

Two years later, Alicia came across an Iceland itinerary organized by Women of the Midwest, and we immediately fell in love with the idea of going. We were intrigued by the idea of women connecting through a shared travel experience, as well as by Iceland itself and how magical it seemed. After so many years of friendship, we knew this experience would add something special to an already incredible bond. Iceland was everything we imagined and more—wild, beautiful, and completely unforgettable. Waterfalls, glaciers, black sand beaches, and open skies filled each day, but what made the trip truly special wasn't the scenery; it was the people. Over twenty women traveled together, and from the beginning, there was this instantaneous connection. The laughter was constant, the conversations were real, and the sense of community felt effortlessly genuine.

One morning at breakfast, while chatting with our trip ambassador, Lora, we realized something extraordinary. The group Alicia had met in Italy a couple of years before had also been part of Women of the Midwest, and, even more surprisingly, Lora had been the ambassador on that very same Italian trip. It was one of those moments that makes you truly pause and appreciate how small the world really is. That realization gave our journey even more meaning. It reminded us that life has a way of quietly connecting people and experiences long before we notice. What feels like a coincidence often isn't; it's timing, alignment, and the mysterious way things tend to work out, as though the northern stars had aligned for us.

We came home with more than photos, souvenirs, and memories; we returned with new friendships, a deeper appreciation for connection, and further confirmation in our belief that timing really does have its own beautiful plan. Looking back, it's hard not to believe that maybe everything really does happen for a reason, just not always in the ways we expect.

Tashina & Alicia



**Friendship  
& Black Beaches**



**Friendship  
& Waterfalls**



**Inside the Glacier**