



SEEING CLEARLY

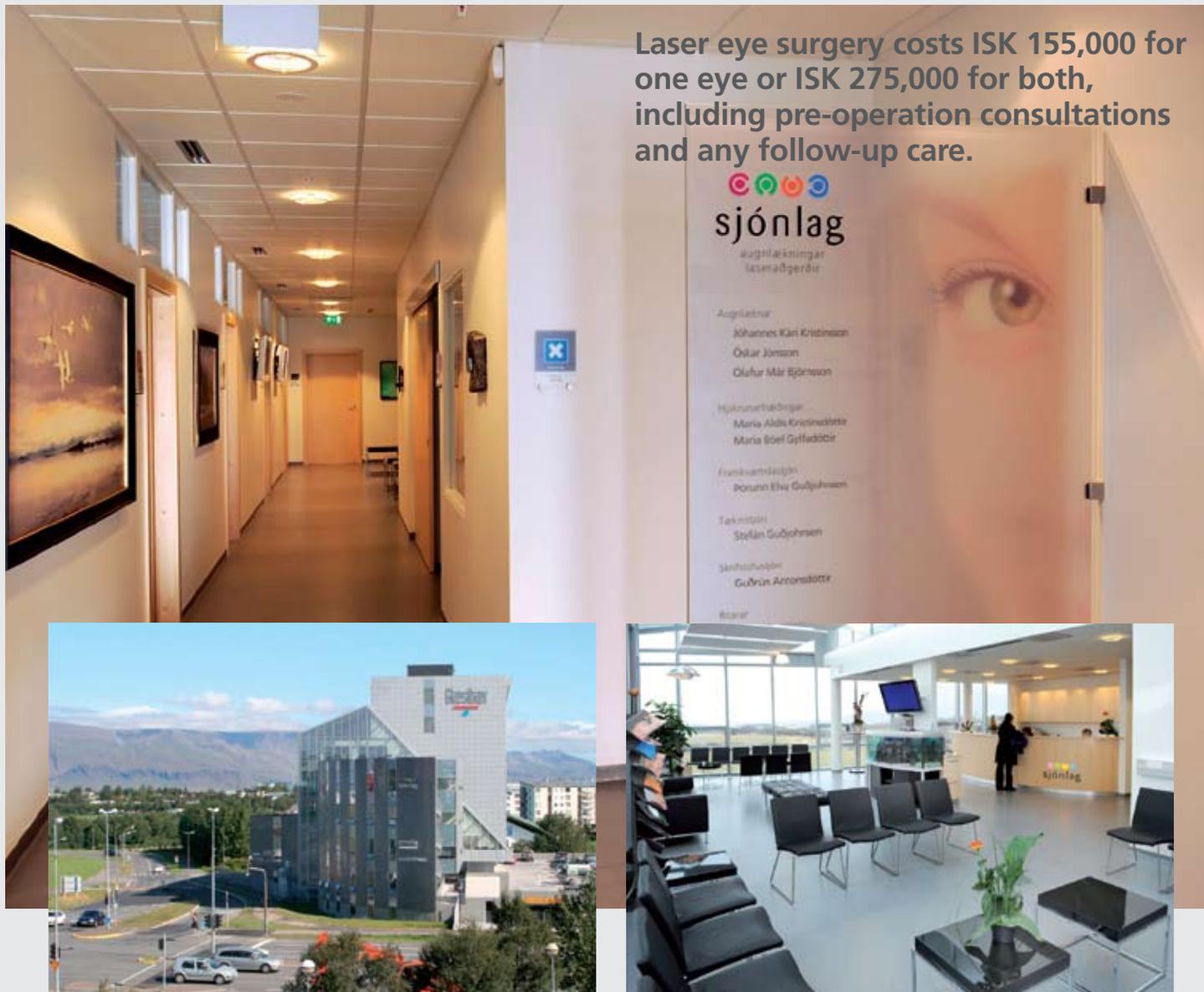
Forty-year-old Gudni's glasses fogged up every time he walked inside from the cold. He'd wear contact lenses when jogging, and sometimes the fierce Icelandic wind was so harsh it actually blew them off his eyes. Rain on the spectacles, dry eyes from lenses worn all day, fumbling in the dark for glasses when getting up in the morning—like thousands of others, Gudni had had enough.

"Several friends of mine had undergone laser eye surgery," says Gudni of the treatment he decided to take to restore his vision to perfect levels. Like his friends, Gudni contacted Sjónlag Eye Center, a leading Icelandic eye surgical center.

Owned and operated by ophthalmologists Jóhannes Kári Kristinsson, Ólafur Már Björnsson and Óskar Jónsson, Sjónlag Eye Center has been offering laser eye treatments for seven years. Numerous local celebrities, politicians and sports stars have had their vision improved there.

"The entire procedure was explained well and professionally," says Gudni of his experience at Sjónlag Eye Center. "I was not scared at all."

The safe, painless procedure itself lasts only a few minutes and involves re-



Laser eye surgery costs ISK 155,000 for one eye or ISK 275,000 for both, including pre-operation consultations and any follow-up care.

sjónlag

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laseraðgerðir

Auglæknar

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shaping the cornea with a laser. Sjónlag Eye Center also offers implantable contact lenses, or ICL surgery, a process for people with extremely poor vision in which a thin silicone lens is inserted into the eye.

Thanks to the weakening Icelandic króna, laser eye surgery is now cheaper than ever before for visitors to Iceland. The current exchange rate means that treatments at Sjónlag Eye Center are 50 percent cheaper than laser eye surgery in Denmark or Norway, and significantly cheaper than in Western Europe (not to mention the cost savings of never having to purchase glasses, contact lenses or solution again).

“We are a typical Nordic socialized health care system so people can rest assured that they will be getting similar quality and care as in other Nordic countries,” promises Kristjánsson, who studied ophthalmology in the United States for five years.

“We aim for the best possible service in excellent surroundings,” adds Björnsson, who completed his medical qualifications in Norway. “That is really important; after all, we are dealing with your eyes.”

That service includes a detailed consultation prior to the surgery itself, as well as a follow-up visit and, in the rare instances where further eye surgery is warranted (about 5 percent of cases), a complimentary “touch-up” procedure.

Therefore, while the main surgery itself takes only a few minutes, Sjónlag recommends that visitors book about one week in Iceland to allow time for the pre-check, recovery—and of course plenty of sightseeing! (Sjónlag is happy to provide clients with referrals to tour operations so a complete package can be booked.)

Following laser eye surgery, the quality of vision is usually superior to vision with contact lenses or glasses. Clients should be able to enjoy the steam of Geysir or the spray of Gullfoss without disrupting their vision.

“I’m very happy with it,” says Gudni, who is relieved to see the world when he goes jogging, swimming and cycling. “It’s like cleaning your window after a big storm.”

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