



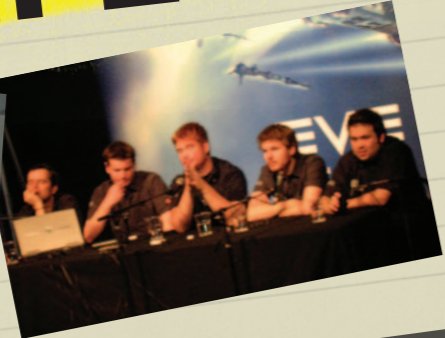
TEXT: BLANKSTARE

A resident of the Icelandic capital, heed his advice and you will be saved from passing out, lost in a gutter clutching only a traffic cone and a slip of paper with Dveur's phone number on it



ARE YOU READY FOR FANFEST? DO YOU KNOW THE BEST METHOD FOR THE HUNTING AND TRAPPING OF A DEV? CAN YOU SURVIVE IN THE BUSTLING STREETS OF REYKJAVIK AT FIVE IN THE MORNING? NO? FEAR NOT. SALVATION IS AT HAND

SURVIVING FANFEST



Some say that when Fanfest comes around, the average geekiness of the rest of the world drops fractionally as EVE players from every corner of the globe congregate in Iceland to celebrate with CCP in a party at the top of the world. Fanfest itself is only three days, packed with talks, presentations, roundtables, PvP and other EVE-related activities, but many players come for longer and take in some of the amazing sights and culture that Reykjavik and Iceland have to offer. Stunning scenery, fascinating history, inspiring art and an atmosphere that is decidedly 'viking' all serve to make Reykjavik one of the friendliest party towns in the world. If there's one thing the Icelandic know, it's how to have a good time. I can heartily recommend coming for longer than the three days of the Fanfest itself.

When I attended my first Fanfest, I only came for the 'fest itself. Three days packed with internet spaceship geekery and not a lot of time to do much else. I made the mistake of only going to the 'fest and missing out on the wonderful nightlife which is to be found in Reykjavik. For the next Fanfest, I came for a week, hired a car for a couple of days and had a much more enjoyable experience sampling Reykjavik's restaurants and bars along with other EVE players who had also come for an extended stay. Now I live in Iceland. This country is addictive.

SUPER CAPITAL

Reykjavik is a city of about 250,000 souls, perched on the south-west corner of Iceland and surrounded on three sides by the North Atlantic. It is Iceland's main port and the preferred base of operations for many of the tourists which flock to Iceland to take in the sights. Keflavik airport is situated about 45km from the city center, with regular buses running in sync with most flight times.

The center of Reykjavik is widely known for its colourful buildings, primarily built from wood (which is odd seeing as there are very few trees in Iceland) and clad with aluminium which is painted in a variety of hues, from deep reds to pastel blues and yellows. The city center is fairly compact, centered around the famous Hallgrímskirkja cathedral which dominates the skyline. Everything is within easy walking distance, though whether you will want to walk or not will depend on the weather, which is changeable to say the least. It is highly recommended that you invest in a windproof coat as the wind in Iceland either comes straight in off the North Atlantic (cold and damp), or down from the Arctic (very cold and dry). Even though Fanfest is in March, that is no guarantee of balmy spring weather, so it's best to prepare for the worst.

TRADE HUB

Getting around Reykjavik is easy if you're on foot, but taxis are pretty easy to come by in the city center, with ranks at regular intervals. Taxis can also be hailed if their light is on much like any other part of the world. The Fanfest venue is about an hour's walk from the city center, along with the regular Fanfest hotels (Hotel Cabin, The Grand and the Hilton Nordica) so if you're staying close to the venue, taxis into the center are the best option. The Hilton and Grand have their own taxi ranks and the staff at Hotel Cabin will be happy to call one for you.

The main shopping street in Reykjavik, Laugavegur, is the place to go to get all your touristy gifts for the folks back home - from plastic viking helmets to hand-made jewelry. It's certainly worth finding out how to claim back any tax on these purchases as sales tax in Iceland is quite high; the staff at these shops will often be happy to inform you how to go about doing this (you do it at the airport when you leave).

Reykjavik city center is also home to a variety of museums and exhibitions which are worth a visit if you're planning on coming for longer than the 'fest itself. The most notable of which is the Settlement Exhibition which is hidden away under the Hotel Centrum and features the archeological remains of what is thought to be the first settlement in Iceland, dating from approximately 871 A.D.



'Walking in Stations' will have moved on since we last saw it in 2008



The days when CCP Devs could fill a stage are long gone. They'd need a dozen now

USEFUL PHRASES

Takk = Thank you

Nei (pronounced: nay) = No

Já (pronounced: yaoo) = Yes

Ég tala ekki Íslensku (pronounced: eh-y tah-lah eh-kee eeslenskoo) = I don't speak Icelandic

⤷ EVERYTHING IS WITHIN EASY WALKING DISTANCE, THOUGH WHETHER YOU WILL WANT TO WALK OR NOT WILL DEPEND ON THE WEATHER, WHICH IS CHANGEABLE TO SAY THE LEAST. IT IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED THAT YOU INVEST IN A WINDPROOF COAT

☺ The hi-tech interactive displays are really something else and are very appealing to geeks like us. Also worth a visit is the Maritime Museum, and not just because it's next door to CCP's office (so you've got an excuse if you're spotted stalking a Dev). Iceland has a rich maritime history and the museum covers near enough all of it, from the earliest vikings to the supertrawlers and cargo ships of today.

NULLSEC

Some of the most spectacular sights are to be found outside Reykjavík, and day trips and tours are available which take in the best of these. The Blue Lagoon, an iconic Icelandic landmark, is well worth a visit. CCP seems to think so too as it is organizing a 'morning after' trip to the resort on the Sunday after the Party at the Top of the World. Soak away your hangover in the geothermally heated pool set in the rugged Icelandic scenery. The Blue Lagoon is filled with mineral-rich water sourced from the nearby geothermal powerplant, filtered and cooled until it reaches the temperature of a warm bath, it's a great way to relax after a hectic three days of Fanfest frivolity. If you can't make the Sunday trip, Reykjavík Excursions runs buses to the Blue Lagoon on a daily basis and the fare includes entry to the pool.

Other trips available from Iceland Express and leaving from the BSI coach depot include a day tour of the Golden Circle, which takes in Geysir (a geyser), the spectacular Gullfoss waterfall, and Þingvellir national park, where the Icelandic parliament was founded in approximately 930 AD. There is no better way to take in some of Iceland's bleak, but stunningly beautiful, scenery.

☺ YOU CAN'T MISS PRIKI'S. ITS ORANGE AND YELLOW FRONT EMBLAZONED WITH A CHICKEN IS ALL YOU NEED TO GUIDE YOU TOWARDS THE BREAKFAST OF KINGS

REFUEL

Eating out in Reykjavík is always a pleasure, whether you're going up-market to restaurants like Vegamot, Tapas or the Austur Steakhouse, or your tastes and budget extend to simpler and cheaper fare, the food is always excellent. Fast food chains have not really taken hold in Iceland as much as they have in the rest of the world (the only McDonald's closed earlier this year). There's KFC, Subway, Taco Bell, and Dominos Pizza, but these are not as prevalent in the city center as they are out in the suburbs. For a fast bite at three or four am, I can heartily recommend Nonnabiti's. No trip to Reykjavík is complete without sampling one of Nonni's subs or burgers, especially after a few drinks in one of the nearby bars. Not far from Nonni's, at the end of the same street in fact, is what is claimed by Bill Clinton to be the best hotdog stand in the world. When it comes to fast food, more often than not you're better off going somewhere local rather than a chain – the food will be tastier and more than likely cheaper.

For meals out there is also a wide variety of restaurants to suit pretty much every budget and taste. Tapas Barrin, just off the main square, is a tapas bar, as you might expect, specialising in meals consisting of many small dishes. If your budget can handle it, their 'Journey into the Unknown' set meal is definitely worth a try, and will take you on a sensational journey of tastes, textures and flavours that will have you begging for more. At the other end of town there's the famous Vegamot, which offers a wide menu taking inspiration from many cultures, from Cantonese and Thai, to Italian and Indian, encompassing everything in between.

Slightly cheaper options are the various diners which offer fairly standard fare at reasonable prices. Try the fish, seriously. Any fish, anywhere in Reykjavík is pretty awesome. I could talk here about Iceland's national specialities, but I wouldn't want to spoil the surprise. If you go on the 'Pub Crawl with a Dev' you will more than likely be offered a taste of a variety of things which you wouldn't normally eat. I would recommend that you give them a try, you only live once after all (whalemeat is awesome by the way).

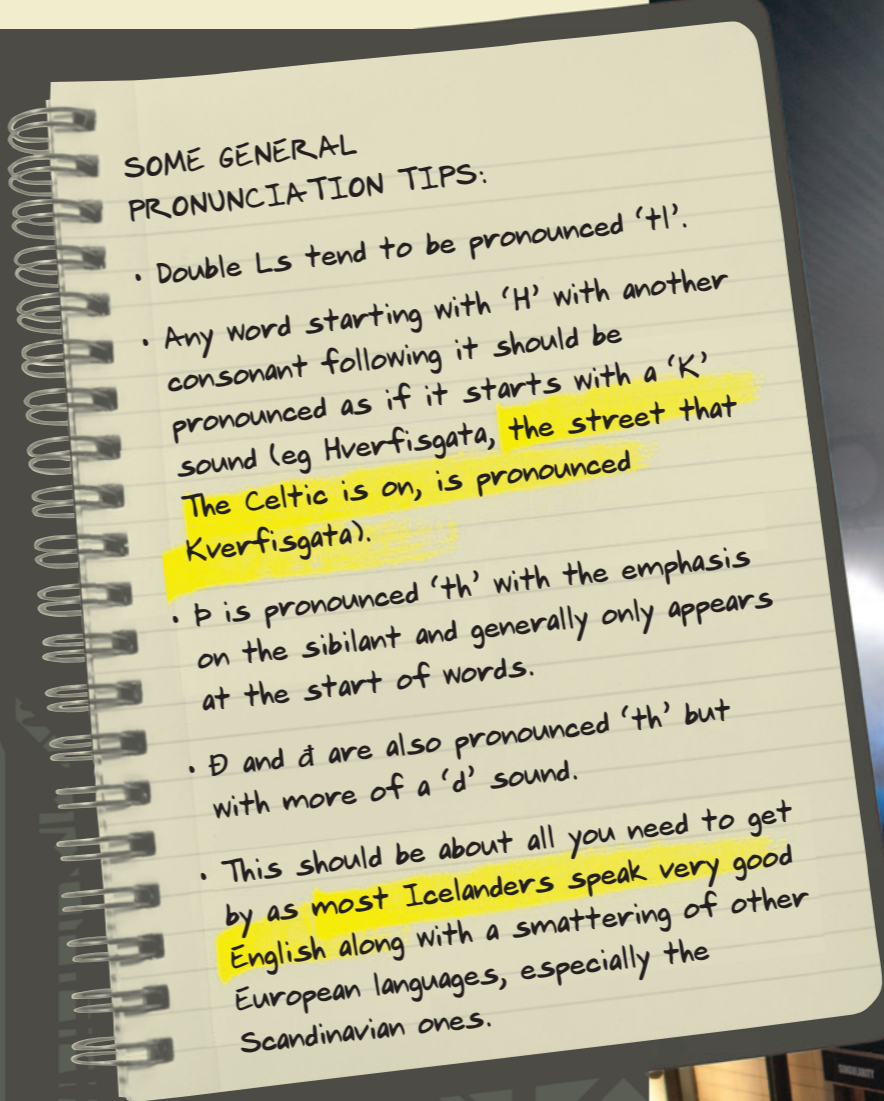
For recovery purposes after a heavy night (though whether you'll have time if you're only here for the 'fest is debatable), Priki's all-day English or American breakfast will banish your hangover. Situated centrally on Laugavegur, you can't really miss it, its orange and yellow shopfront emblazoned with a chicken is all you need to look for to guide you towards the breakfast of kings and coffee by the bucketload.

TARGETING

In order to justify a visit to Priki, you're going to need to generate a hangover to banish. In Reykjavík, nothing could be easier. There are plenty of bars which will seek to part you from your cash in exchange for inebriating liquids. If you participate in the 'Pub Crawl with a Dev' which CCP lays on, you will be sampling a fair few of them. My personal recommendations are as follows...

The Celtic Cross, locally referred to simply as 'The Celtic' is ostensibly an Irish-themed pub, though it must be said that it doesn't push the theming too far. Occupying a building which was formerly a funeral director's shop and extending across two floors, The Celtic is a nice bar in which to have a fairly quiet drink and where conversation is still possible.

Just down the street from The Celtic is Bar 11, a dark and throbbing rock bar which plays a mixture of alternative, rock and metal music. From there it's not far to Laugavegur which is the party street of Reykjavík and throngs with people on a Friday or Saturday night. Boy racers cruise in giant 4x4s and souped-up hatchbacks whilst people queue to get into the various bars and pubs situated along this street.



SOME GENERAL PRONUNCIATION TIPS:

- Double Ls tend to be pronounced 'tl'.
- Any word starting with 'H' with another consonant following it should be pronounced as if it starts with a 'K' sound (eg Hverfisgata, the street that The Celtic is on, is pronounced Kverfisgata).
- Þ is pronounced 'th' with the emphasis on the sibilant and generally only appears at the start of words.
- Ð and ð are also pronounced 'th' but with more of a 'd' sound.
- This should be about all you need to get by as most Icelanders speak very good English along with a smattering of other European languages, especially the Scandinavian ones.

Walking down the hill will take you into Reykjavík's city center proper, where there are many more bars available. The first one you'll probably come to is Hressingarskálinn, commonly shortened to simply Hresso. This is a large bar with a beer garden, and dance floor in the evenings at weekends. It has pretty much everything available, whether you want to dance or simply sit and have a chat.

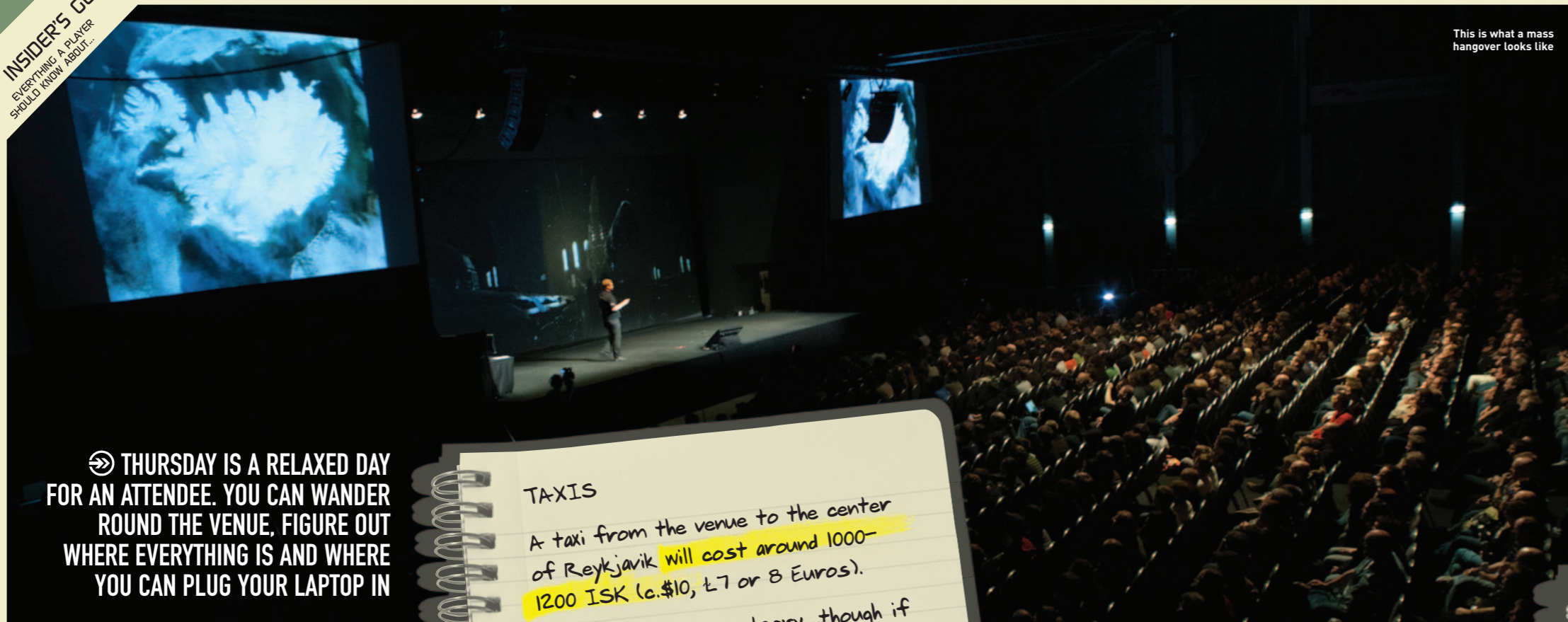
Heading further towards the central square and turning left will bring you to Islenski Barrin (The Icelandic Bar) where the beer and conversation flow in a wide variety of languages.

Across the square from Islenski Barrin is the somewhat oddly-named English Pub; there really isn't anything outstandingly 'English' about this pub, but it does have a unique selling point. On the wall behind the bar there is a large wheel, and for the price of a couple of beers you can take a spin for the chance to win, yes you guessed it... more beer. As a focal point and conversation piece it's certainly a lot of fun as you cheer with your fellow patrons when someone lands the jackpot of 10 beers (half a pint, or 250ml). I worked it out and your chances of at least winning the cost of a spin back in beer is greater than not so it could be worth giving it a whirl.

Leaving the English Pub by the exit on the other side to the ☺

☺ ON THE WALL BEHIND THE BAR AT THE ENGLISH PUB THERE IS A LARGE WHEEL, AND FOR THE PRICE OF A COUPLE OF BEERS YOU CAN TAKE A SPIN FOR THE CHANCE TO WIN, YES YOU GUESSED IT... MORE BEER





This is what a mass hangover looks like



You'd think that in the far future, capsulereers would be able to afford larger screens



THURSDAY IS A RELAXED DAY FOR AN ATTENDEE. YOU CAN WANDER ROUND THE VENUE, FIGURE OUT WHERE EVERYTHING IS AND WHERE YOU CAN PLUG YOUR LAPTOP IN

square will bring you back out onto the main street and a short stroll to the main square and round the corner will bring you to my favourite drinking establishment in the city center. The Dubliner really does push the Irish theme, more so than The Celtic, but still manages to avoid laying it on too thick. This has been a regular stopping off point of mine during Fanfest since 2008 and is frequented by many EVE players around the 'fest. Hosting live music every night (as most bars in Reykjavik do) and with a relaxed and friendly atmosphere, The Dubliner is an ideal place to start or end an evening, with the added bonus of Nonni's being just across the street.

MISSION ACCEPTED

The city of Reykjavik is always going to be the secondary attraction when it comes to Fanfest though, the main event being the 'fest itself - three days packed with EVE-related goodness and the chance to meet CCP Devs and players from across the world. As of writing, specific events and talks are yet to be confirmed, but the usual activities will no doubt be available.

Things tend to start off slowly on the Thursday as people filter in for registration and try and track down the people they've arranged to meet up with. Schedules are studied and, often, difficult decisions are made regarding what talks and activities to attend. Players stand around in groups or singly wondering what to do next. Thursday is a fairly relaxed day from an attendee's point of view, giving you the chance to wander round the venue and figure out where everything is and where you can plug your laptop in; knowing where the toilets are takes second place to being able to change your skills or watch the markets. After all, it's good to have priorities.

Live missions are a well-loved feature of Fanfest and if you want to be in with a chance of winning prizes, it's best to start them early on. They're also a good way to meet Devs (who play the part of agents and other roles) and other players as some missions will require a group effort. The EVE Store will generally be available on Thursday as well, and if you have purchases planned its best to get in early as by the time Friday and Saturday roll around stock can be running low. If you get your shopping in early, it also means that you're not carrying your purchases around during the busy days of Friday and Saturday.

SIEGE MODE

Things start to ramp up on Friday with a pretty packed schedule of talks and roundtables. If you didn't start participating in the live missions on Thursday then you're going to have to grind them mercilessly to catch up if that's your thing. The PvP tournament is usually in full swing by this point and spectating a couple of matches is a good way to kill time between

TAXIS
A taxi from the venue to the center of Reykjavik will cost around 1000-1200 ISK (c.\$10, £7 or 8 Euros).
Tipping is not compulsory, though if paying with cash it is generally expected that you round the total up to the nearest hundred ISK. No-one likes change in Iceland as it is generally useless in denominations lower than 50 ISK.
All taxis accept plastic. Here are the main taxi operators:
• Hreyfill-Bæjarleiðir (588 5522)
• B.S.R. taxis (561 0000)
• Borgarbilastöðin (552 2440)
• B.S.H. taxis (555 0888)

presentations. It's worth making backup plans if a talk you want to see is over-attended. You generally have to put your name down for the roundtable events, but there may be a couple that are under-subscribed so you may be able to sneak in at the back. The Alliance discussion is always good for a laugh as the big 0.0 alliances bring their grudges to the fore; however, with the lack of Goonswarm to spice things up they may be a more staid affair this time around...

Don't expect too many big announcements at this stage in the game; it may be that someone will let something slip, but all the big news will be saved for Hilmar's presentation on Saturday late afternoon.

After the somewhat dazed meanderings of Thursday, Friday sees attendees in a more relaxed (and possibly hungover) state but imbued with more purpose. They know the layout of the venue, they know what they're planning to do, they're more confident in their surroundings and more likely to strike up conversations and corner

Devs. Fanfest is a time to meet other players and Devs, and here you are, surrounded by them. Pick one, and start a conversation. This is what you are here for, to extend the social meta-game of EVE into the real world, with real people. Compare notes on the talks you plan on seeing, swap stories of your legendary in-game exploits, discuss the details of the latest patch notes, or even talk about something other than EVE. Fanfest is where the tendrils of the social world of New Eden extend into the real world and connect players across national, cultural and language boundaries.

TACKLE

Cornering a Dev can be quite a tricky proposition; the best time to try is usually just after they've given a presentation, though this can be when they're at their busiest. There are precious few Devs who can resist the lure of free beer however, and many will stop for a chat if a drink is in the offing.

Once you have a Dev tackled, it's best to avoid going on at them about your own pet peeve or how the idea you posted on the forums hasn't been implemented yet, despite the well-reasoned and considered wall of text that accompanied it. The likelihood is that you are both EVE players, or even players of other games, and if you're really struggling to find something to say, remember that Devs are human beings and will quite happily talk about the weather if all else fails.

Don't expect to be able to tackle Hellmar, Oveur, TOriffrans, or Hammer in this fashion however; they're going to be busy and I swear they sew warp stabilizers into their clothes for Fanfest. They will no doubt be pressing the flesh at 'The Party' though and will likely be more accessible at this point, once Fanfest is coming to a close.

Outside of the 'fest itself, there are the various bars around Reykjavik (as detailed above, though other bars are out there) and the organized 'Pub Crawl with a Dev' is a pretty good place to run into people wearing the famed black Dev shirt.

TUTORIAL

In closing I'll leave you with a few tips which will hopefully make your Fanfest an enjoyable and memorable experience.

First of all, come for longer than the three days of the 'fest if you can. Iceland is a wonderful country and it really is worth seeing more of than just the Fanfest venue. Learn how to pronounce the name of the venue; Laugardalshöll, pronounced: LOY-GA-DAALZ-HOTL. If in doubt and calling a taxi to come pick you up, grab an Icelander and get them to pronounce it. I still have to do that and I live here.

If you're going out drinking, pace yourself. There is nothing worse

I've prepared a Google map which has all the places mentioned tagged along with some of the hotels and a few extra places. It can be found at <http://bit.ly/gfLzro>

Or if you have QRcode functionality on your smartphone you can use this and bookmark the map on your phone for when you're in Reykjavik.



THE 'PUB CRAWL WITH A DEV' IS A GOOD PLACE TO RUN INTO PEOPLE WEARING THE FAMED BLACK DEV SHIRT

than overdoing it and passing out in a gutter (yes, I'm talking to you. Yes, you. You know who you are). Do not under any circumstances get into a drinking contest with any of the CCP staff. They will win, and it will be messy. Save your beer tokens for the Saturday night. If nothing else they make for good trading currency.

Have second choices for all the talks you plan to attend in case your first choices are too crowded/boring. Talk to random people, we're all EVE players and we're all here for the same thing. Also, leave corp and alliance rivalries at home. The place for PvP is in-game and not at the Fanfest. There are no pirates, scammers, ninjas, carebears, n00bs, miners, or gankers at Fanfest, only pilots.

Most importantly of all, remember that everyone there loves EVE, plays EVE and to one degree or another, lives EVE. Fanfest is meant to be a party to celebrate our shared passion for this universe so, above all else, make sure you just enjoy yourself! ☺