



FLJÓTSDALSHÉRAÐ



Fljótsdalshreppur



Hiking Treasures in Fljótsdalshérað

FLJÓTSDALSHÉRAÐ TOURING CLUB

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Hiking Treasures in Fljótsdalshérað

The local Touring Club in Fljótsdalshérað, East Iceland, has selected 18 wonderful walks which will prove a treasure to any hiker. Two routes have been chosen within each of the nine districts that used to make up the area: half of these routes are easy, while the others are more demanding. For instance, three hikes are included where the rise in elevation exceeds 900 m. At the main destination, a tubular container holds information about the site, along with a visitors' book and a stamp. Cards for you to stamp at each destination can be bought at the Egilsstaðir Information Centre or from those who lead walks scheduled by the Touring Club. Those who collect 9 or more stamps should take their card to



Hjördís Hilmarsdóttir at the office of INNI Fasteignasala, Kaupvangur 2, Egilsstaðir. They will be rewarded with three maps of area hiking trails and a document recognising them as experienced area hikers, as well as being entered in a festival raffle on the Hallormsstaður Day of the Ormsteiti Area Festival in August,.

Stapavík(1) – easy. (N65°36.022–W14°35.395)

Inlet once used as a harbour. Starting from just above Unaós farm, you will soon descend to Selfljót river and can follow it to the sea. Along the way you will pass the ruins of a hut for 15th-century fishermen and of a shelter for pasturing sheep. More ruins await above the banks at the mouth of the river, where an official trading harbour was located from 1920 onwards. The visitors' book is at the old winch above Stapavík inlet. You can also walk across Gönguskörð pass to Njarðvík inlet, as regional inhabitants did for centuries.

Stórurð(2) – longer.

A spectacular place below the twin peaks of Dyrfjöll. You can either leave Vatnsskarð pass and go over Geldingafell (640 m) and then west of Súlar mountains, or you can start from farther down the road, west of the Rjúpnafell slopes. A circular staked route will lead you through the huge rocks of Stórurð, in the lower reaches of which you will find the visitors' book and a sign. You can then continue into the next valley, Borgarfjörður, coming down either at the village or at Hólaland farm.

Fardagafoss(3) – easy.

Waterfall with a cave behind it (N65°16.06-W14°19.96). You can start this walk from Egilsstaðir village. After crossing Eyvindará river via the old bridge and passing the driveway to Miðhús, head right on the old gravel road and continue along it until reaching the asphalt road once more. Stay on the north bank of the river. Just below the second big waterfall, you will find a chain to help people down into the gorge. You can clamber over the rocks lying in the mouth of the cave. For those driving, there is a sign and parking place by the asphalt road, below

both of the bigger waterfalls, but the visitors' book is in the gorge, past the chain.

Vestdalsvatn(4) – longer.

Lake by the trail across Vestdalsheiði pass (N65°17.102–W14°07.887). This delightful route over the mountain range between Fljótsdalshérað and Seyðisfjörður fjord was once frequently travelled on foot or horse. You can either head up from Gilsárteigur farm to the west and then continue down to the fjord, or you can walk north from the road to Seyðisfjörður, leaving it somewhat west of the highland reservoir and traversing the gently rolling landscape. On reaching Vestdalsvatn, you will have several options for the return journey: walking on the west side of Bjölfur mountain and down to the Seyðisfjörður road in Stafdalur, taking the marked trail down Vestdalur valley to Seyðisfjörður, or turning left on the clearly worn trail along the river to reach Gilsárteigur farm or the nearby settlement of Eiðar. The visitors' book is located where Gilsá river runs from the southwest end of the lake.

Valtýshellir(5) – easy.

A very small cave said to have been a criminal's hideout. Leave Road No. 1 just north of Gilsá river and walk past the ruins of Hátún. This used to be a large farmstead, reported to have 18 doors with iron hinges and latches. Whereas the remains of former rock fences are still clearly visible, an ancient sword found here in the 19th century was melted down and turned into winter horseshoes and other useful things. Going farther, you will cross a flat, grassy area called Kálfavellir. Not far past the lake in the valley, the visitors' book awaits at Valtýshellir, which is located above rubble lying at the foot of the north slopes. The round-trip distance to the cave is less than 8 km.

Höttur(6) – longer.

The hike towards this mountain peak starts from Arnkelsgerði farm (N65°08.96–W14°30.98). Walk up along Grjótá stream, staying somewhat north of Víðihjallar cliffs. Continue up through the Hattarhólar mounds,

then veer right and head for the peak, 1106 m. Referring to the summit as a whole, the name Höttur means hat.

Stuttidalur(7) – easy.

A short valley reached via a marked trail starting at Road No. 1, north of Haugar farm. The valley leads east between the Hallbjarnarstaðatinur and Haugafjall mountains. The visitors' book is by a pond, just past the scenic views from big rocks on Sjónarhraun. You might want to take a detour on the way back by wandering through the numerous, largely overgrown mounds of former rockslide material.

Sandfell(8) – longer.

To climb this mountain, leave Road No. 1 north of Stóra-Sandfell farm, first following the vehicle track up to a fence and then the fence itself until you get to the ridge. Continue up the spine of the ridge until reaching the peak, at 1157 m.

Hengifoss(9) – easy.

This waterfall, 128 m high, is the second highest in Iceland. It is possible to get there from the road (N65°04.41–W14°52.84) along either side of Hengifossá river, though most people walk straight up from the parking area by the south bank. In all, your rise in altitude will be about 300 m, but you will be rewarded on the way by a view of some of Iceland's longest basalt columns, at the waterfall Litlanesfoss. For a longer hike, you could continue beyond Hengifoss, wade over the river and take the other bank down. The visitors' book is at the end of the trail up the south bank, somewhat below the waterfall.

Snæfell(10) – longer.

At 1833 m, this is Iceland's highest mountain which is not enclosed by any of the major glaciers. Leave from the parking area that is somewhat south of the mountain hut just west of Snæfell. Although the route is 7 to 8 km long, it is not terribly difficult and has no major hindrances. The path is clearly marked, involving a rise in elevation of just over 1000

m, and is suitable for any fairly accustomed hiker. What is called Snæfell is the biggest, highest mountain in a small central volcano.

Hrafnafell(11) – easy.

From Road No. 1, turn onto the gravel road towards Fjallssel. Park where it tops the highest ridge southwest of Hafrafell farm. From there, walk to the transmission towers, with the visitors' book nearby. You can descend south of the wooded Grímstorfa area on the east side of the ridge, or walk down the north end of the ridge and return below it to the road running just east of the ridge. Another attractive route is to return below the west slopes of the ridge. On the way to the towers, it is worth stopping at the picturesque dry-stone sheepfold (N65°18.02-W14°29.23), tucked between cliffs just east of the vehicle track.

Spanarhóll(12) – longer.

Hill peaking at 591 m, located at the north end of Fjórðungsháls ridge (N65°15.588-W14°41.446). Drive along the west side of Lagarfljót lake to Ormarsstaðir farm. After walking up Ormarsstaðaá river onto the Fjórðungur slopes, the moors will give you open access towards Spanarhóll. To the north of Spanarhóll, Sandvatn lake is accessible by car, so you could also walk from there.

Húsey(13) – easy.

Farm from which you can walk over the coastal plain to Héraðsflói bay. One option is a 6-km round trip, the other a 14-km trip. In either case, the visitors' book is at a picnic table situated 3 km from the farm. Besides the abundant bird life, seals come to give birth and nurse their young.

Heiðarendi(14) – short but rather steep route.

The “end” within the name indicates that this is the northern extreme of the long highland moors that separate the valleys of Jökuldalur and Lagarfljót lake. A stake marks the starting point, west of the stream above Nátthagi farm. The visitors' book is located up on the brink of the highlands.

Hnjúksvatn(15) - easy.

(N65°14.333-W015°15.887) Lake up on the highlands, across the road west of Merki farm. Just follow Hnjúksá river to the lake, where you will find the visitors' book at the fishing hut. It is well worth walking completely around the lake before heading back.

Eiríksstaða-Hneflar(16) - longer.

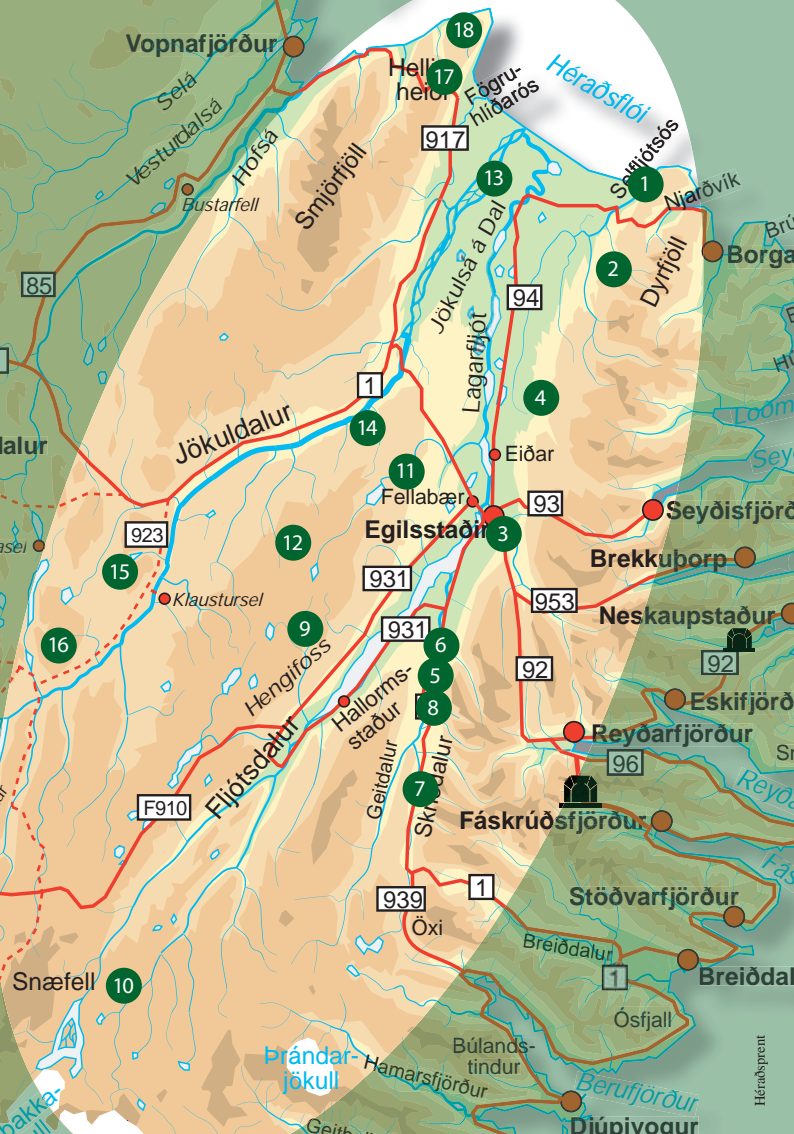
(N65°08.617-W15°28.195) Mountain summits on the Jökuldalsheiði highlands. Departing the road somewhat north of Eiríksstaðir farm, you climb first onto the Fremri-Hnefill summit (947 m) and then onto Ytri-Hnefill (922 m). You can add on a walk to Hneflasel farm, which was abandoned in 1875. From there, you can return through the pass between the two summits. A shorter route to the summits starts at Þverárvatn lake, but means you will have to wade across Þverá river. The visitors' book is on the top of Fremri-Hnefill.

Landsendi(17) - easy.

Start the walk from Biskupshóll mound (N65°42.52-W14°24.41), where the road begins to ascend the slopes of Hellisheiði. The visitors' book is on a bank above the shore, not far from a long-deserted fishing station called Ker. If you continue farther, you will gain a view of the colourful Móvíkur inlets from Landsendahorn point.

Þerribjarg(18) - longer.

East of Hellisheiði pass, turn northwards onto a track that will lead you to a signpost at the head of the valley Kattárdalur. Park there before the track descends farther into the valley. Stakes will guide you from there to the brink of the mountains, directly above the small historical harbour of Múlahöfn. Follow the sheep trail down the steep slopes and continue down the spine of a rockslide until you reach the remains of huts at the point by which boats landed. Afterwards, go north along the coast to another point, from which you can observe the colourful cliffs of Þerribjarg and the beach of Langisandur. The visitors' book awaits at the place (N65°45.336-W14°20.990) where you can descend onto the sandy beach under the cliffs.



Vopnafjörður

Selá
Vesturdalsá
Hofsá

Smjörfjöll

Hell
heróu

Fögru-
hlíðarós

Héraðsflói

Selvíðsós

Njaróvik

Borga

85

917

94

Jökuldalur

Lagarfjöt

Dyrfjöll

1

14

11

Fellabær

Egilsstaðir

Eiðar

93

923

15

Klaustursel

16

12

Hengifoss

931

931

953

Brekkuþorp

Neskaupstaður

92

Fijótsdalur

Hallorms-
staður

Geitdalur

8

7

Skrúdalur

Reyðarfjörður

96

F910

Fáskrúðsfjörður

939

1

Öxi

Stöðvarfjörður

1

Breiðdalur

Snæfell

10

Þrándar-
jökull

Hamarsfjörður

Búlands-
tindur

Berufjörður

Þiúþingur

Héraðsprent