

Hiking in the Faroe Islands



the Faroe Islands
Unspoiled, Unexplored, Unbelievable

WELCOME

Fresh air, wind in your hair, tall mountains, sunny valleys, fascinating fog, beautiful lakes, grazing sheep and breathtaking views. These are some of the things you will experience while hiking in the Faroese mountains.

One of the many special features of the Faroe Islands is that you don't have to go far to experience magnificent and untouched nature. Look around you. Take a few steps. Take a deep breath and listen. It's all right there!

This hiking guide will show you some of the beautiful places in the Faroe Islands that can be discovered on foot.

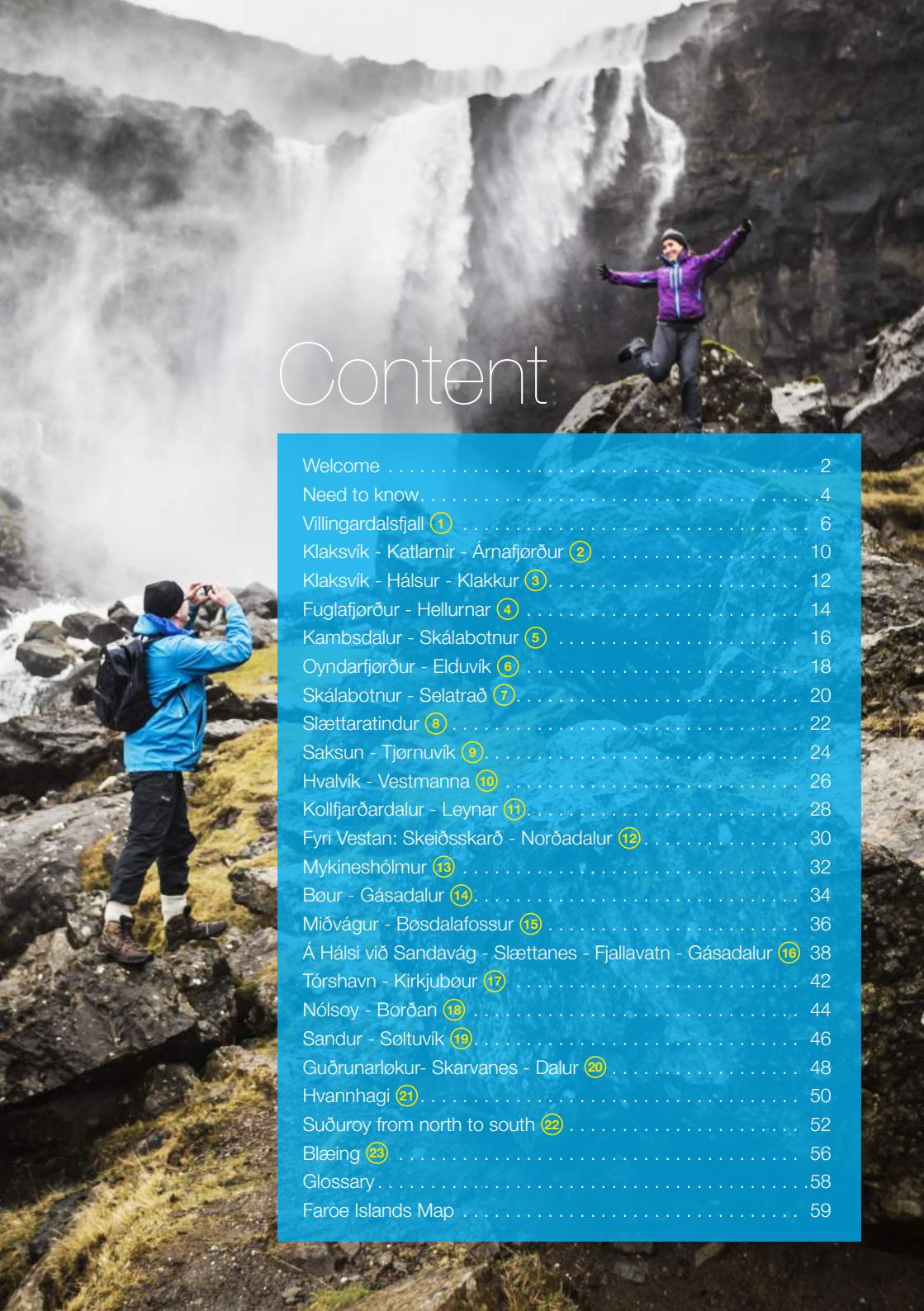
Visit Faroe Islands wishes you a warm welcome to the Faroe Islands.



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Published and distributed by Visit Faroe Islands; www.visitfaroeislands.com. Text: Óluva Zachariassen, Randi Meitil. Cover photo: @daylessday. Photos: Alessio Mesiano, Finleif Mortensen, Finnur Justinussen, Jacob Eskildsen, Mortan Ólason Vang, Náttúrugrípasavnið, Ólavur Frederiksen, Pauli Djurholm, Silas Olofson, @daylessday, @whatalexloves, @zobolondon. Maps displayed in the brochure: FDS 2014. Layout: Sansir. Print: TrykTeam.



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Need to know

PATHS AND ROUTES

Most of the paths described in this guide are old village paths. Before the roads came, you would travel between the villages using these paths, e.g. to trade, to visit family, to a Thing (local assembly) ([page 58](#)) or to church. Village paths were also used when the coffins of the dead were carried to the nearest church. The paths are marked with ancient cairns, a heap of stones set up as a landmark showing the way, so you don't get lost.

Some routes are not along the old village paths. These are along ancient footpaths that have been tread through the ages, such as on the mountains Slættaratindur, Bøsdalafossur and Klakkur.

The routes are listed in geographical order from north to south.

The cairns are in good condition and are well maintained in most places. In some places, the cairns can be hard to see, while the path is clearly visible. On some routes, the direction of the path is marked with poles sticking out of the ground. There are, however, a few places without cairns, clear path or poles. For these places, we have described other features, such as masts, buildings, inclination of the land and gorges, that will guide you in the right direction.

DURATION AND DIFFICULTY

Each route is marked with a time indication that shows the duration of the walk. Unless otherwise noted, the time indicated covers the whole trip, and not just one way. The duration indicates how long it takes for an adult with normal walking speed to walk the route. Meal breaks or other stops are not included.

The difficulty level is also described, along with a recommendation on whether the trip is suitable for children. The difficulty level is assessed on the basis of how steep the terrain is, if the surface is flat

or uneven, and how long the route is. It can be difficult to put a precise age on a route for children, as all children are different. For example, an eight-year-old in good shape can easily cover a seven kilometre journey, while a 12-year-old in bad shape can find the same trip difficult. It is important that an adult takes the child's physical shape and previous hiking experiences into consideration before making a decision on whether or not to allow them to join.

FAUNA AND CULTURAL HISTORY

There are birds on many of the islands: Curlew, Snipe, Plovers, Oystercatchers, Skuas, Great Skuas, Ravens and Crows. Sheep, geese and hares are also common.

In the outfield, you also get an idea of how ancestors of the Faroese people lived and got by. Stone outhouses, boat houses, Teigalendi (old arable strips), peat fields and Kráir (stone stores for peat) tell us how close to nature people have lived. You see old infield walls, drovers, sheep pens, sheep shelters, sheep houses and Fransatoffir (Frenchman's Ruins, which are ruins of small houses where people took refuge from pirates in the old days).

RESPECT NATURE

Nature is fragile. It should be treated well and protected for future generations.

- Follow the cairns or other marks and do not go off the paths out into the meadow or outfield
- Close the outfield gates behind you
- Treat the cairns, fences and walls well
- Do not disturb the sheep, birds and plants
- It is prohibited to pick plants or to take stones, eggs, or chicks
- It is customary to pick up loose wool that the sheep have shed
- Do not leave rubbish behind
- Beware of loose stones, especially when in a group

- Beware of not walking into marshland, as it can be deep
- Dogs must not be taken into the outfields
- It is prohibited to travel by bicycle or motor vehicle in the outfields or along the cairn paths

CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

- Always wear clothes suitable for the weather. However, as the weather in the Faroe Islands can change suddenly, even during the summer, it's a good idea to bring extra clothes. A cap and gloves are also recommended
- Many places in the outfield are rocky and wet. It is recommended to use walking shoes/boots with rough bottoms. Rubber boots with rough bottoms can also be used. Remember, shoes and boots need to be walked-in. Do not go on a long hike in brand new footwear
- We recommend you wear several thin layers of clothing, preferably with wool as the most inner layer, depending on the weather. Wool and fleece are best because they keep the body warm even if the clothes become wet. The outer layer of clothing could be a windproof and, if possible, a waterproof jacket
- In very steep areas, it is not recommended to wear clothes made of nylon because the clothes can be slippery. If possible, remove the nylon jacket until you have passed the steepest area
- A mobile phone can come in handy. Remember to charge the battery and maybe bring a power bank (extra charge) on long trips. Note that there is no telephone connection on some stretches in the outfield
- Head lamp, compass and whistle can be useful in an emergency or if you are surprised by fog/ darkness
- Always bring food, drink and something sweet - also for short trips
- A map of the route is an important part of your gear

OFF WE GO

- Notify your host about where you plan on hiking. Please let them know when you have arrived at the destination
- Always walk with others
- Do not be afraid to ask locals or experienced

- people for directions, weather or other advice
- Be particularly careful in areas with loose stones and rocks, especially if traveling in a group. Decide in advance on how you are going to walk in order to avoid accidents
- Do not go too close to the cliffs; especially in wet areas when the ground can be slippery. Be very careful with children

WEATHER DEPENDENT

- Check the weather forecast to see if conditions are favourable for walking
- Do not leave if there is fog or if it is dark outside
- Be prepared for the fact that meteorologists can be wrong or that the weather can suddenly change after you have left
- If you are surprised by unexpected fog on a trip, it is very important to keep to the cairns. If the fog is so dense that you cannot see from one cairn to the next, it is best to wait by a cairn and otherwise try to keep warm
- Turn back if there is something wrong. There is no shame in not finishing the hike
- Be well dressed, preferably in several layers of clothing. The weather can suddenly change

Maps

The maps that are referred to in the fact boxes are the topographic maps (topographical 1: 20.000) from the Danish Kort- og Matrikelstyrelsen, 1991.

Digital Maps

Contact local Tourist Informations for digital maps (GPX) of routes for iPhone and Android.

Public transport

See travel plans for buses and ferries on www.ssl.fo or contact the Tourist Information in the relevant area.

Emergency Number

Dial 112 for any type of emergency assistance anywhere in the country.

ENJOY!

1

Villingardalsfjall

Experience the beautiful mountain scenery in the north and enjoy one of the Faroe Islands' most beautiful villages from above





The route starts at Við Garð 1 in the northern part of Viðareiði. Go up the road and out through the gate to the outfield. Almost all the way to the top, the route is marked with blue plastic tubes that stick out of the ground. The first leg is grassy, but gradually the route becomes rockier and cliffs appear. Be aware of loose stones, especially if you are in a group.

Viðareiði is an ancient settlement. Precisely when it was established is unknown, but it is believed to be from about 1350 to 1400. It may, however, be older. The church was established in 1892. Nearby is the Old Rectory in Ónagerði 2, which is said to be haunted. The priest, however, disagrees.

One famous resident was the fabled priests' widow Beinta, who served as inspiration for the classic 1939 love-novel *Barbara* by Jørgen Frantz Jacobsen. It was made into a film in 1997 by the Danish film director Nils Malmros. Beinta was married three times, and all her husbands were priests. She was also called Illa Beinta (Evil Beinta) because it was thought that she murdered her first two husbands and made her third husband go mad.

One of the Faroe Islands' finest poets and scholars, Christian Matras (1900-1988), was born in Viðareiði. He was particularly known for his naturalistic poetry. On the way up the mountain is a nice view towards the islands of Fugloy and Svinoy. On the opposite side of Viðareiði, the great Malinsfjall towers, and on the other side of the sound is the abandoned settlement of Múli. There is a legend about the farmer Guttormur í Múla, who was strong in wizardry. His magic was only used for good. Once, he was summoned by the priest at Ónagerði to oust a ghost, the priest's dead wife that bothered the residents of the

FACTS

Duration: About three to four hours

Distance: About six km

Difficulty: Moderate. The walk up is fairly difficult, and in the last part of the route there are many rocks and cliffs

Maximum height: 841 m

Children: Not suitable for small children under seven to eight years

Surface: First grass path. Then path with mainly stones and rocks

Map: 613

Special comments: If you are traveling in a group, please take great care in the upper part of the route, as there are many loose stones

vicarage. As a thank you, the priest gave him his best cow and best sheep. Guttormur í Múla is buried in Viðareiði.

On one part of the route uphill is an old stone wall 3. The wall was erected to prevent the cattle from going to steep areas in the mountains.

When there are about 100 vertical metres left to the top, you will come to a small plateau with a cairn and some pointed rocks 4. One of the stones is called Kona Per (Per's Wife). There is a story about a bachelor from Viðareiði who was teased about not having a wife, and the men teasing him proclaimed the rock to be his wife.

Here, the blue plastic tubes end and some cairns go to the left (to the northwest).

The cairns lead to the steep cliff Enniberg. It is often said among the Faroese that Enniberg, with its 754 metres, is the highest promontory in Europe (indeed, the world) facing the open sea. Whether this is true is not known with certainty, but it is fabulous,



beautiful and steep at any rate. It is, however, recommended to visit Enniberg together with local guides, since the place is difficult to access and it is easy to get lost.

You should not follow the cairns. Instead, continue to climb in the same line as before. In some places there are small cairns, but after a few minutes you will see a cairn with a rod that marks Torratindur, which is at the top of Villingardalsfjall ⑤.

The view from the top is spectacular. In addition to Malinsfjall, you see further south than on any of the other beautiful mountains of Viðoy. To the west, you have the proud Kunoyarnakkur, the northernmost of the six mountains in Kunoy that is taller than 800 metres. Kunoyarnakkur is a popular destination for the adventurous, but it is recommended not to make the trip without a local guide.

From Villingardalsfjall you also have a view over the beautiful Villingardalur on the north side. Be careful, as it is very steep.

In old Faroese folklore, there is a story about Útiløgudreingirnar (The Wild Boys). These were two poor boys that lived as feral boys in the area around Villingardalsfjall. Their parents were dead and no one took care of them. Following a period in which they begged and stole, they suddenly disappeared. After a while, meat began to disappear from outhouses and many sheep were taken from the outfield. A few years later, people discovered two wild men with long hair, wild beards and leather clothing in the mountains. The two brothers had become adults. After much toil and trouble, the men from Viðareiði caught the two men, and promised that no harm would come to them.

Return to Viðareiði the same way you went up. When you come down to the place where the cairns lead out to Enniberg, you can take a small detour from the route down. Follow the cairns approximately 30-50 metres (to the west). Here, you will find Steinur Leirvíksdrong, which is an approximately 1.30 m high rock. In 1802, there was a boy from Leirvík who lived in Viðareiði. He used to walk this route when he went to catch birds in the mountains. One day, he



disappeared. He probably fell down the slope. On that same day, a large stone, which was not there before, appeared in this place. It is believed that the boy from Leirvík had erected the stone on the morning he disappeared.

Be careful on the way down as the rocky surface is slippery.

VIÐOY

"Sail island out of the fog, now you are a ship
with peaks as mast trees,
You head out with mountains
far out on a world journey."

(1. verse of the poem "Viðoy" by Christian Matras. From the collection of poems "Faroese Poems 1900-1971" by Poul P. M. Pedersen)

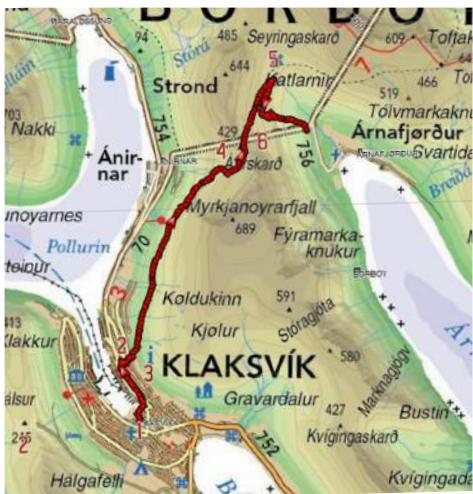
Klaksvík Katlarnir Árnafjørður

Enjoy the dramatic mountains in the north on this trip through Nólsoyar Páll's outfield and the old Thing, Katlarnir.

The route starts at the information office in Klaksvík 1. Walk up through Fjósabrekka and then turn left after Kjalarvegur, approximately five to six hundred metres. Turn right to Helnabrekka and walk 100 metres. Then turn right again along a path that goes diagonally uphill. Here is the gate to the outfield 2. The route is well marked with reflective wooden poles. This outfield belonged to the Faroese national hero Nólsoyar Páll (1766-1809) ([page 58](#)) and has been in the family ever since. Nólsoyar Páll was a shipbuilder, captain, farmer and poet, among other things. In 1804, he built the ship Royndin Friða together with his brothers. He was frequently in trouble with the Danish authorities in the Faroe Islands who had imposed strict rules for trading, limiting exports and imports to and from the islands. Nólsoyar Páll wrote the satirical ballad, *Fuglakvæðið* (Bird Ballad), where he made bird caricatures of specific people in the community. The poem prompted anger among the Danish officials in the Faroe Islands, but amusement among ordinary citizens. Nólsoyar Páll disappeared on a voyage in the winter of 1808-1809.

Follow the wooden poles uphill just above the first cliff wall. Here, at the seventh wooden pole, you can take a small detour from the route and the wooden poles. Walk about 300 metres to the south until you have a clear view south over Borðoyarvík and north towards Haraldsund. Here, you will find a low wall, about 2x2 metres, built of stone. This is an observation post, which is thought to have been erected by Nólsoyar Páll (probably in early 1807 3, i.e. in the midst of the Napoleonic wars), to keep an eye on enemy ships. Here, you see all of Klaksvík, south to Borðoyarnes, the hardy Hájfjall, and right ahead, you see Hálgfelli and Klakkur. To the north, you see the island of Kalsoy with the zig-zag shaped mountains and the steep island of Kunoy.

Go back and follow the wooden poles onwards. Walk through the old peat fields where residents in Klaksvík dug and dried peat for fuel. Some places you can see ruins from the ancient sod houses. There are many birds in the area, in particular Curlew, Oystercatcher, Golden Plover, Snipe and Herring Gull.



When you get to the area above Ánir and up to Áarskarð, the landscape becomes more rugged. Be careful because some places may be slippery when wet.

Áarskarð ④ is a real treat. The view over the nice, small village of Árnafjørður and the high mountains that encircle the village is magnificent. To the south you see Lisshøvdi, and north into the bottom of the valley lays the ancient Thing (page 58), Katlarnir, which was the local court for the northern islands in the old days. On both your sides, two high mountains protrude skywards - to the north, Snæfelli, and to the south Myrkjanoyarfjall.

To reach Katlarnir you must go diagonally down into the valley. There are cairns, but some of them can be difficult to spot. You enter through the area called Niðari Snæhjalli. As you approach the first large stream in the valley, you come to a fence. Climb carefully over the fence and cross the creek. The old Tingsteinur (Thing Stone) is located here ⑤. Katlarnir was the local Thing for the northern islands for centuries, where sentences were passed in various disputes and crimes. Parliament was in session during the spring. We do not know when it started, but there are signs that it ended around 1670-80. In addition to the great Thing Stones, there are smaller stones scattered on the rocky plateau, which were probably used for issues related to the Thing.

FACTS

Duration: Three and a half hours to Árnafjørður and four and a half hours back to Klaksvík

Distance: About eight km to Árnafjørður and 11-12 km back to Klaksvík

Difficulty: Moderate to difficult. Flat terrain above Klaksvík and by Katlarnir but reasonably steep by Áarskarð and in some places down to Árnafjørður

Maximum height: 440 m

Children: The route is not suitable for small children under seven to eight years

Surface: Path marked with wooden stakes on the first part of the route. Then cairn path, where the path can be a little difficult to see in some places. In the area around Áarskarð are many rocks and stones

Maps: 611 and 612

You can now choose to continue down to Árnafjørður or return to Klaksvík the same way you came.

If you choose Árnafjørður, you must walk about 500 metres back towards Áarskarð. However, do not climb Áarskarð again, but maintain roughly the same altitude as Katlarnir until you come to Rossastígar ⑥. There is a passage between the rocks where you can head down. Head for the scout hut that is further down where you will find the path down to the road between the two tunnels.

Follow the cairns, but be very careful as the terrain is steep in some places. You come down onto the road between the two tunnels. The distance from here to the village of Árnafjørður is approximately one kilometre. The village is one of the oldest in the northern islands and the inhabitants mostly work in salmon farming. There are also good areas for lobster fishing in the fjord.

Klaksvík Hálsur Klakkur

At the small mountain, Klakkur, experience a magnificent view of the beautiful islands in the north



The route starts at the parking lot below the church in the centre of Klaksvík. Walk approximately 100-200 metres towards the roundabout. Turn right and walk 25-50 metres to Vágstún, then to the left about 600 metres along Uppsalagøta and then Nýggivegur. Turn right and continue along Oman Eið, approximately 500 metres before you reach the roundabout. Follow the road Niðan Horn about 400 metres. Turn right and enter a partially unpaved dirt road, which has been nicknamed Ástarbreytin (The Love Path) ①. The gravel road continues all the way up to Hálsur.

You can also drive up to Hálsur by car and park there. Note that the gravel road is somewhat uneven.

Even though the path up to Klakkur is not well marked, it is very easy to find. Standing at the outfield gate, head for the highest point north of you. There

is also a cairn that you see straight away and can use as a landmark. Start walking through old peat fields. It is grassy all the way up to Klakkur with scarcely a single tiny stone. This is one of the few places where it is possible to ski in the winter.

Many birds breed here: Oystercatcher, Arctic Skua, Snipe, Golden Plover, Whimbrel, and Lesser Black-Backed Gull. Ravens can also be seen, and Rock Pipits inhabit the remains of peat storages.

In the valley just south of Hálsur is what the old folk called á Vaktini ②. Legend has it that people sat watching out for hostile ships here.

When you have nearly come up the mountain and look down the west side, you can see Fagralø ③. Fólkaháskúlin (Folk High School), which was



FACTS

Duration: Three hours. Hike from Hálssur to Klakkur is about one and half hours

Distance: Eight to nine km

Difficulty: Easy

Maximum height: 413 m

Children: Suitable for children

Surface: First dirt road, then grass path

Maps: 611 and 612

founded in 1889, originally stood here, until it was moved to Tórshavn. Símun av Skarði, a Faroese writer, poet and co-founder of Fólkaháskúlin, wrote the national anthem "Tú alfagra land mitt" here in 1906.

Be careful when you get to the top of Klakkur. It is very steep in some places. The view from the top is excellent. To the west, Leirvík, Götunes and Mjóvanes. Looking further south you see Nólsoy if visibility is good. Kalsoy lies to the north like a long snake on the sea. For many years, the island's nickname was "The Recorder" because of the many tunnels. There are four villages on Kalsoy. Syðradalur is on the southern tip, then Húsar, Mikladalur and Trøllanes on the northern tip, which cannot be seen from Klakkur. People come to Mikladalur to see the statue of Kópakonan (Seal Woman), which is based on a local village legend.

Kunoy is the tallest island in the country. There are six mountains over 800 metres. Eastwards, you see Haraldsund, and Klaksvík spread out below. There were originally four villages here: í Uppsølum, í Gerðum, Á Myrkjanoyri and í Vági.

When you come down from Klakkur, you see Halgfelli in front of you and then Hájfjall. On the other side of Klaksvík, you see Myrkjanoyrafjall and Kjølin (The Keel), named so because it looks like the keel of an upturned boat.

The route ends in the same place as it began.



Fuglafjørður Hellurnar

A pleasant walk between the magnificent mountains of Fuglafjørður along the old village path to Hellurnar

The route begins at the football pitch at the top of the village. From the road on the west side of the football pitch is a path that goes upwards. The first part is paved. You then arrive at a gate leading to the field. Follow the path about 2-300 metres through meadow before you reach the gate to the outfield. From here, it can be difficult to see the path, but approximately 500 metres further to the right, the first cairn is visible. Above the lowest cairn is a ridge called Rossaryggur ①. Traces of the path are seen winding up it. Fuglafjørður is behind you and to the west, you can see Blábjørg, Jøklaskarð, Gjógvaráfjall and Niðan á Hús, where people from Fuglafjørður hid from pirates in the old days. Then comes Nón (where the sun hits at “nónbil” – at 3 p.m.), Breiðaskarð, Kambur, Trælavatnaskarð, Tyrnar and towards east Ritafjall, known as Leirvíksfjall to people from Fuglafjørður.

The event Top Fuglafjørður is organised every September. It is a trip to the 10 mountains around Fuglafjørður. With its 18-20 kilometres, the trip is quite demanding, but uniquely beautiful. Further information can be found at the local information office.

The path from Fuglafjørður to Hellurnar is called Sjúrðargøta. There is a story about a giant from Suðuroy who went to Oyndafjørður to test his strength. No one dared fight him. The people from Oyndarfjørður urged Sjurður, the farmer, to challenge the giant. He wanted his youngest son, also named Sjurður, to try. They wrestled and Sjurður beat the giant. His father paid him well for his deed.

On the way up to Fuglafjarðarskarð ② you walk along Malunar Hav (Malan's Rock). Legend tells about a milkmaid named Malan, who was pregnant and was



FACTS

Duration: Two hours. 40 minutes extra up to Altarið

Distance: Six km

Difficulty: Moderate. Smooth slope up to Skarðið. It is steeper on the other side down to Hellurnar

Maximum height: 353 m (Altarið is at 483 m)

Children: The route is suitable for children, maybe with a helping hand the last stretch down to Hellurnar

Surface: Grass path and some places stones and rocks

Maps: 412 and 512

teased by the other milkmaids for not keeping up with them. Malan picked up a 176 kg rock and challenged the others to do the same. They could not. 100 metres west of the path runs Neytakonukeldan. The milkmaid's tankard, which people used to quench their thirst, lay here.

At the top of Skarðið, you see two large cairns. According to an old custom, each time you pass Skarðið, you throw three small stones at these cairns while saying: "In the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit". This is meant to protect you from getting lost and to bless the trip. To the north from Skarðið, you can see the village of Oyndarfjørður and the mountains Tindur, Knúkur and Sandfelli. On the first Sunday in August, it is custom to hold a public meeting with speeches and songs on Skarðið in the open air.

From Skarðið, you can extend your walk by 40 minutes and walk up to Altarið ③ on the top of Rustakambur. From here, there is a great view of the islands and the sea to the north.

Hulduheyggjar ④ lies to the west when you walk down from Skarðið. Here, a Huldukona (Hidden Woman) (page 58) received help in childbirth from the midwife from Dalbør in Fuglafjørður. The midwife received a good reward from Huldufolk (Hidden People).

Another story tells about a landownership struggle between the Oyndarfjørður farmer and Gullbrandur, a farmer in Fuglafjørður. Gullbrandur was killed and hidden in Gullbrandshellið ⑤ and later buried in Gullbrandsleiði ⑥, which this path passes.

Approaching Hellur, you walk down Kliv ⑦ and down Spreingsibrekkja. It is a little steep, until you come to the outfield gate.

If you want to continue on a slightly longer trip, walk to Oyndarfjørður and follow the route by the old village path from Oyndarfjørður to Elduvík, which is also described in this booklet on page 18. Follow the paved road to the other side of the fjord and go into the centre of the village where the school and the shop are located.



Kambsdalur Skálabothnur

Gain peace of mind and enjoy the views of Fuglafjørður and Skálfjørður on this lovely hike past Trælavatn in the mountains



Start at the scout hut in Kambsdalur. The trail starts at the creek. Climb the fence. It's hard to find a clear path and there are no cairns here. Walk diagonally upwards to the left (south) and stay roughly in a straight line from the road that goes up between the high school and the sports hall ①.

First, you walk by the old peat strip belonging to Fuglafjørður. On Skarðsbrúgv, you arrive at a gorge. Walk towards the edge of the gorge where there is a passage up to Skarðsbrúgv ②. There, you will see the first cairn. You will have an excellent view over Fuglafjørður and the surrounding mountains. To the far south under Borgin, a rocky knoll juts out, called

Eingilskahús (The English House). Here, a man kept watch in hostile times, as you can see both northwards and southwards. Spotting a hostile ship, he would run over Eysturskarð to warn the village by lighting a fire, which people in the old days used to send warnings and messages over long distances.

To the north, there is also a view towards Kalsoy with the spiky Nestindur, with its 788 metres, towering skywards, and Kunoy with its distinctive, huge notch in the otherwise solid wall of rock. To the east Ritafjall (also called Leirvíksfjall) and if you gaze down you see an old road. This is the first road to Leirvík. On the way down to the seashore, you will find



Varmakelda - a hot spring, which in the old days was believed to have healing powers. Today, the spring is a popular tourist attraction.

This area is also shrouded in mystery. In the late 1800s, two girls were on their way on foot from Leirvík to Eiði where they intended to visit for 14 days. The girls disappeared without a trace and a search began across the northern part of Eysturoy. Things that belonged to one of the girls were found under Varmakeldueiði. Residents of Fuglafjørður had seen two ships from Shetland near Varmakeldueiði and a boat rowing towards the shore. There are theories that the girls might have been kidnapped and taken aboard the ships. Their fate is still unknown.

You now come to Trælavatn where there is a large colony of Herring Gulls in the summer. There are also Oystercatchers, Geese and other birds. Apart from the sounds of the birds, there is a meditative peace here. You must keep to the north side of the lake where you come in on the old path. The path is level, but the terrain is uneven and rocky. There are some cairns showing land boundaries in the outfield approximately 100 metres south of the trail ③. Be careful not to go the wrong way!

When you see the long fjord south towards Toftavatn with Nólsoy in the background, the village cairn path slowly turns to the right ④. On the other side of the fjord, you have the beautiful Reyðafelstindur in front of you. Be careful when you go down through Rossastígar, as it is steep in some places. It can be

FACTS

Duration: Two hours

Distance: Three and a half km

Difficulty: Moderate. Somewhat difficult to come up from Kambsdalur, then the path follows flat terrain until it starts to go down towards Skálabotnur

Maximum height: 373 m

Children: The route is reasonably suitable for children. However, be careful down from Trælavatnaskarð and down Rossastígar

Surface: Partly hard-to-see grass path up to the area before Trælavatn. From there, grass/stone path with cairns. In some places, stones and rocks

Maps: 411 and 511

Special comments: The settlement Skálabotnur is sometimes called Skálafjørður

difficult to spot the cairns. The cairns are further down on the plain. Walk towards them.

The best place to walk along the river down to Tundradalur is on the south side (left side).

Legend has it that once upon a time there were four men from Hattarvík on Fugloy called Floksmenninir who wanted to conquer all of the Faroe Islands. They ruled with iron fists, but were eventually captured and sentenced to be thrown off the steepest area by Valaknúkar ⑤. Their sentence was carried out and they were buried at Tingsteinur ⑥ under Valaknúkar.

Walk down on the main road near the petrol station. If you want to go further, you can continue from Skálabotnur to Selatrað. It takes about three and a half hours more.



Oyndarfjørður Elduvík

Enjoy hiking along the old village path from Oyndarfjørður to the charming village of Elduvík

The route starts at the old store in Oyndarfjørður 1. Walk 50 metres towards the school building, turn left and walk about 500 metres until you come to a sheepfold at the top of the village. There, where the path turns to the right again, go into the outfit field 2. Walk about 100 metres uphill to the stone wall on your right and then turn left following the path. After a few minutes you will reach the cairns.

Once you have walked about one kilometre you will come to Elduvíkslið, the grassy sloping hillside between the two villages. To the left you will see the mountains Middagsfjall and Tyril, and to the right you

have a fine view to the north of Kalsoy. Note specifically the two characteristic peaks, the jagged Nestindur and the somewhat flat Borgarin, creating a wonderful harmony together.

It was in the area below Nestindur that Páll Fangi hid from authorities in the 1600s, because he was wanted for murder. Páll was a farmer's son in Mikladalur. A maid on the farm was in love with him, but the feelings weren't mutual. The jilted maid took revenge by insinuating that Páll had murdered his father because the father had given the farm to his brother. Páll was convicted of murder and imprisoned in



Tórshavn, but he managed to escape from prison three times. On one of the occasions, he hid for a whole year in a cave in the rugged area under Nestindur.

The terrain in Elduvíkslið is rather steep, but the path is good. Further on, you have a view of the small village of Funningur that lies wedged between the high mountains on the other side of the fjord. One of them is Slættarindur, which - with its 880 metres - is the highest mountain in the Faroe Islands.

After about three kilometres, the lovely village of Elduvík appears ahead. Elduvík is an ancient settlement. It is not known exactly how old it is, but according to historical documents it dates back to no later than 1350 -1400, but it may well be older. Elduvík has retained much of its old, charming characteristics.

In the old days, there was no church in the village, and therefore all important religious ceremonies, including funerals, had to take place in Oyndarfjørður. When you arrive in the village, you see a flat rock on the right side of the road ③. It is called Líksteinur (Corpse Stone). This is where the people of Elduvík said farewell to their loved ones before their coffin was carried to Oyndarfjørður. The first church in Elduvík was established in 1951.

At the western end of the village, there is a magnificent gorge called Elduvíksgjógv ④, which is worth a visit.

FACTS

Duration: One hour

Distance: Three to four km

Difficulty: Easy. Flat terrain, but people with a tendency to vertigo might feel that the area below the path is somewhat steep

Maximum height: About 145 m

Children: Suitable for children. However, keep them on the path as it is steep in some places below the path

Surface: Grass path with cairns the first part, then clear path with grass and stone surfaces

Map: 412



Skálabotnur Selatrað

A hike across Eysturoy with magnificent rock formations and green meadows



This route starts at the sandy beach in the village of Skálabotnur, which is also called Skálafjörður. Walk across the sandy beach to the edge of the fjord's western arm. Then walk around 1 kilometre along the road until you reach Innara Ennisá ❶, north of the stone quarry. Here, you start walking uphill. Go through the gate and stay on the left-hand side of the stream. The route is well marked with cairns. At the top of the steep terrain, walk through stony terrain Ennisstíggjur ❷. It is advisable to keep to the path and watch out for loose stones.

At the top, the path is straight for a long stretch. The terrain is stony at first, then grassy, but there is also some marsh land where you must be careful not to

walk in the soft soil, as it can be very deep. You can see a lot here; eastwards you can see Stóðlafjall, Götueiðið, Borðoyarnes and Sigatindur, and northwards you can see the tall northern mountains of Eysturoy (among others Slættaratindur, which is the tallest mountain in the Faroe Islands). Above you there is Reyðafelstindur and you can clearly see the spectacular basalt intrusion Eysturoyarsyllin (The Eysturoy Sill). Imagine the extreme forces of nature, which were active when the lava emerged up from below and forced itself between the basalt layers over 50 million years ago.

There is a legend about Ormur, a farmer from Skála, who was a murderer and sheep thief. He had killed



a farmer from Oyri and his son. Ormur was sentenced to death at the Eysturoyarting (Eysturoy Thing) (page 58) at Stevnuválur. Stevnuválur is the hill by the creek that runs Millum Fjarða, approximately 50-100 metres south of the place where the river Heltnará flows into Fjarðará. When the sentence was pronounced, Ormur fled and rode along the path that you are walking. Men followed him. The horse collapsed up the hill, so he had to continue on foot. Then, a man with a knife in his hand caught up with him at Selatraðskarð. He threw the knife at Ormur and hit him in his Achilles' tendon. Ormur was caught and executed. They buried him at Stevnuválur, which has a view across the entire area where he had committed the crimes.

When you turn towards Selatrað, Borgarfelli is on your left. You can also see over to Streymoy with Sornfelli and Skælingsfjall to the west. When you come down from the plain, to the north you see Sundalagið, the village Hósvík, and to the south, the fjords Tangafjørður, the mouth of Kollafjørður and the northernmost houses in Kollafjørður.

Above the village of Selatrað, the path goes near a different path which comes from Skála. Make sure not to change paths! You must keep to the cairns on the path to the right ③. When you have walked down towards the meadow fences, cross the river, which runs by a stone sheepfold. Here, go through a gate

FACTS

Duration: Three hours

Distance: Seven km

Difficulty: Moderate/difficult. It is steep and difficult to walk uphill from the road. When you get up, the terrain is fairly even. It is grassy down to Selatrað

Maximum height: 360 m

Children: Not suitable for children under eight to ten years as the first part of the trip is difficult and steep

Surface: Grass path with cairns, but rocky in places

Maps: 410, 411, 510 and 511

Special comments: Skálabotnur is also sometimes called Skálafjørður

and then down to the village by way of a cattle track. Selatrað is also the village where Faroese Scouts often gather to camp.



Slættaratindur

On Slættaratindur, you have all of the Faroe Islands at your feet. Do not miss the opportunity to enjoy the fabulous view from the islands' tallest mountain



Slættaratindur is a must in the Faroe Islands. As the country's highest mountain, it has an alluring effect on both old and young, Faroese and visitors.

You start your trip at Eiðisskarð, which is the pass between Eiði and Funningur. Go over the fence at the parking lot where Eiðisskarð is highest. At this first leg, there is no path as such up to Slættaratindur, but when you go up, stay in a straight line from the parking lot. The fence is on your right-hand side.

When you get to about 670 metres' altitude, or after about a 30-40 minutes' walk, you will come to the path that leads to the top ①. The path is inclined uphill to the left. Here, you are already so high that

you have a view of, e.g. Haldórvík, with the eight-sided church and a string of mountains that encircle the villages in the north. Throughout the hike, you will be accompanied by sheep that graze at the top of the Faroe Islands.

Follow the path one kilometre uphill. You then come to a point about 30 vertical metres from the top where the path turns a bend and goes to the right again ②. There are several trails of the path up here, but it is recommended that you ascend up on the back of the mountain where you turn the corner to the right. After a few metres, you are on the path again where you proceed uphill, keeping the top to your right. Be careful here, as it is gravelly and there may be loose



stones. The last few metres up to the top are like a staircase made of rocks. Here, you also need to be careful because it is steep on your left-hand side.

Feel that sense of butterflies in your stomach when you've reached the top. The view is nothing less than spectacular; especially, if you are lucky with the weather. On a clear, sunny day, the view covers practically all of the Faroe Islands. It is often said that if the weather is very clear and dry, you can see right across to Vatnajökull in Iceland. The distance is 550 kilometres. Experts are, however, in some doubt as to whether this is possible and point to the possibility of this being a mirage.

There is a tradition in the Faroe Islands to climb Slættaratindur on 21 June, the longest day of the year. At the top of the mountain, people can experience the sunset and then, a few hours later, watch the sun rise again. Time spent waiting for the sun to rise is used for traditional chain dancing and singing, and packed lunches typically consist of skerpikjöt (wind-dried mutton), dried fish and whale meat, along with a strong cup of coffee to help with staying awake.

FACTS

Duration: Two to two and a half hours

Difficulty: Moderate. A little difficult from Eiðisskarð and up to the path that leads to the top

Distance: Five to six km

Maximum height: 880 m

Children: The tour is suitable for children. However, keep an eye on children at the top, which is very steep in places

Surface: Partly visible grass path at the initial part. Then rockier path and rocks

Map: 412

TWO METRES THAT DISAPPEARED

Faroese schoolchildren will have to learn about the mountains all over again in geography lessons. New measurements of the highest mountain, Slættaratindur, show that the country's highest peak is two metres lower than previously assumed.

Old measurements said 882 metres above sea level, but the new say 880 metres above sea level. Slættaratindur is still comfortably in the lead as the country's highest mountain. The second highest, Gráfelli, just opposite Slættaratindur, is 856 metres.

Go down the same road as you walked up. Since it can be difficult to pinpoint where you came up on top, it can be a good idea to put a backpack, a colourful scarf or sweater by the "stairs" so you can find the spot to descent again. Be careful on the way down because the gravel can be slippery on a dry day, just as the rocks can be slippery in the wet.

Saksun Tjørnuvík

Saksun is one of the most beautiful and distinct places in the Faroe Islands. The trip to the lovely neighbouring village of Tjørnuvík is an unforgettable experience

The route starts at the parking lot below Dúvugarðar, located on the north-easterly side of the great gorge in Saksun. Dúvugarðar is a several hundred years-old listed farmhouse, which now functions as a museum.

Walk about 50 metres and turn right when you have crossed the bridge at Skipá, and walk about 2-300 meters uphill through the infield along the river.

When you get into the outfield, climb the first hill - about 30 vertical metres, around the same height as the start of the waterfall. From here, you need to look diagonally upwards towards the northeast. On the hill in the horizon you see a cairn about one kilometre away. Use it as a landmark. During the first 200 metres, you walk in roughly the same height and then reach the path that leads up to the cairn.

Saksun is one of the most beautiful places in the Faroe Islands. The place is simply wonderful, with a beautiful lagoon surrounded by sand in the fjord. The tall mountains give the area an air of mystery, but not least unimaginable beauty. The fjord used to be a

good natural harbour, but after a heavy storm in the 1600s, the fjord was blocked with sand.

On the way up to the cairn, the path may be indistinguishable in some places, but when you reach the cairn itself ①, there is a cairn path all the way to Tjørnuvík. The cairns will lead you in a more easterly direction towards the area Frammi í Dal, where the river, Gellingará, meanders down through the valley. There is a special tranquillity here that ensures peace of mind and a smile on your face.

You now come to Tjørnuvíksskarð and the path goes slightly uphill. On Tjørnuvíksskarð ②, there is a beautiful view to the north of Eysturoy. From here, you see the characteristic rock pillars, Risin and Kellingin (Giant and Witch). The story of these two is that they were sent to the Faroe Islands to drag the islands to Iceland. The giant was standing in the sea, while his wife climbed up the mountain Eiðiskollur to tie the Faroe Islands together so that the giant could pull the islands away. She then set off so hard that the north of Eiðiskollur cracked. The preparations took



longer than expected, and as the two were about to go back home to Iceland, the sun rose and turned the pair to stone.

Here, you also have a view of Slættaratindur and Gráfelli, which - with their respective heights of 880 and 856 meters - are the two tallest mountains in the Faroe Islands.

Follow the cairns all the way down to Tjørnuvík. The densely settled village is a very beautiful and

FACTS

Duration: Two and a half to three hours

Distance: Six to seven km

Difficulty: Moderate. Somewhat difficult from Saksun and up to the first cairn

Maximum height: 522 m

Children: The route is suitable for children

Surface: Grass path. In some places stones and rocks the first leg. Then cairn path, mostly with grass surface

Map: 312

charming part of the Faroe Islands. Tjørnuvík is known for its special hymn singing, the Kingo-songs, which is an ancient hymn tradition that originates from the Danish hymn writer Thomas Kingo. The village has a choir that performs Kingo hymns. Tjørnuvík also has a nice sandy beach and striking waves that attract many visitors.



Hvalvík Vestmanna

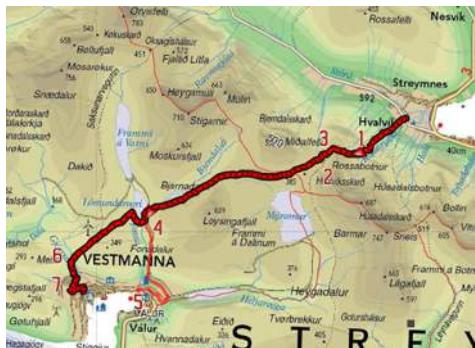
On this wonderful route from Hvalvík to Vestmanna, see breathtaking mountains and lakes while also getting an insight into the Faroese electric power development

The tour begins at Myllá, which runs north of the Mission House in Hvalvík. Walk along the river, through a gate and through the old cattle path. There is a path along the river's north side. About 200 metres from Hvalvíksgjógv ① is the first cairn.

When you have passed Eggjarmúli ②, there is a fine view through Saksunardalur, the longest valley in the country. From here, follow the SEV electricity line all the way to Vestmanna. SEV is the national electric power company. The first mechanical digger

purchased to the Faroe Islands came to Hvalvík. It was called the Hvalvíkskúgvín. On one occasion, the people from Vestmanna wanted to borrow it for some work and it was carried up over Hvalvíksskarð along this path.

Now, you arrive at a cairn, stacked on a large stone called Kellingarsteinur. At the next cairn, after Kellingarsteinur ③, the path divides. The path south goes to Kvívík and the path north goes to Vestmanna. Follow the latter.



On top of Hvalvíksskarð, you see over to Mýrarnar and one of the first dams built by SEV in the early 1960s. There is also a small private windmill park. To the south is the mountain range Egilsfjall, Goturshálsur, Sátan and Skælingsfjall and on Vágur, you can see Reynsatindur and Heldarstindur.

Loysingafjall is just in front of you. There is an account of a girl in Vestmanna who disappeared from the town and could not be found. The next day, a shepherd found her high up on Loysingafjall. She said that a man in white clothes had led her by the hand and fed her. No one knew this man.

The cairns and SEV-line take you to the left side of Bjerndalsgjógv ④. Be careful when the path turns south, as it is steep downwards.

There are now two possible ways down to Vestmanna. The path divides by the dam at Fossá. You can follow the road and go down Á Fjørð ⑤ or go over the first dam, follow the cairns to Vestmanna along Gjógvára ⑥ and down along Miðalsbrekka ⑦.

Another story is about a young milkmaid who disappeared in the river at Gjógvára. She had tripped and fallen and was carried down the large waterfall. There was no thought of her coming out alive from the fall. When people at home heard the news, they immediately went out to search. But they found no body. The girl was not dead. Naked, in a bad state, she was lying in the cleft, clinging to a stone. She could hear people calling for her, but she did not dare to call out because she was afraid of Huldufólk (Hidden People) (page 58) and trolls. Not until the day after,

FACTS

Duration: Three and a half hours if you go down into Vestmanna from Á Fjørð, or four hours if you go down at Gjógvára

Distance: 10 km

Difficulty: Moderate. From Hvalvík it is a little difficult to walk up the mountain. Otherwise, the path is easy to walk along

Maximum height: 385 m

Children: Not suitable for children under about eight years. Be careful with children at Bjerndalsgjógv

Surface: Grass cairn path. In some places, stones and rocks

Maps: 310, 311 and 411

when the river had settled down, did she dare to approach the houses. It was a miracle that she survived the incident.

Before the Faroe Islands got its first subsea tunnel between Streymoy and Vágur in 2002, the ferry port of Vestmanna was the hub for traffic to and from the airport in Vágur.



Kollfjarðardalur Leynar

Travel back millions of years in time on this route past tall cliffs and beautiful lakes

This route begins at Búnaðarstovan (the National Agricultural Centre) in Kollfjarðardalur. Three rivers run down to Kollfjarðadalur by Búnaðarstovan. The trip begins at the middle river, Brekká 1, which flows north of Búnaðarstovan. Walk along the river and keep the cairn in sight as a landmark.

Turn northwards by the first cairn after crossing the old mountain road, Oyggjarvegurin 2. At the next cairn, you arrive at Skælingsvatn 3. The lake has had other names, one of which is Nykatjørn (Nix's pond). In earlier times, people noticed that something alive and abnormally large lived in the lake, and the general opinion was that it must be Nykur (Nix) (page 58). Nykur is a creature that lives in lakes and is said to resemble a horse. There are reports of people who went to catch it and caught a huge trout in their nets. In this way, they got rid of Nykur and the name Nykatjørn. The lake is also called Tjørnini á Brekkunum. At the lake, three outfields meet: Norðari Skælingshagi, Hagin Uttan Fyri Húsini in Leynar and Heygshagi in

Kollafjørður. Several paths also meet here. They are the old paths coming from the south: Oyggjargótan, the path you are walking from Kollfjarðadalur to Leynar, and the path to Skælingur. Be careful that you don't take the wrong one.

Here, you should take a small detour off the path and walk a few hundred metres south to the rocky plateau, Stórareyn 4, which has a great, geological scenery. Sit on the plateau and enjoy the view. Feel the silence, the heat from the rocks, and travel back millions of years to when this place was first created.

The mountain north of Skælingsvatn is called Sátan. Here, you can see the geological formation Streymoyarsyllin (The Streymoy Sill) and often Fulmars on the mountain cliffs.

South of you is Skælingsfjall. It was first thought that it was the highest mountain in the Faroes, but when the height was measured with modern gauge



equipment, it showed the mountain to be 100 m lower than the highest. It is custom to climb Skælingsfjall on Jóansøkukvöld (Midsummer Night) to see the sunset, and then the sunrise a few hours later.

Go back to the path where you came from and continue towards Leynar. Further on, you have a view of Vágur to the west, and Koltur to the south. Cairns

FACTS

Duration: One hour

Distance: About three km

Difficulty: Fairly easy. From Kollfjarðardalur to the cairn on the hill is a bit tough. The rest of the trip is easy

Maximum height: 260 m

Children: Suitable for children

Surface: Grass path, in some places stony

Map: 410

lead you all the way down to the village of Leynar. The beautiful village is a popular holiday area, and the beach attracts many people on hot summer days.



Fyri Vestan: Skeiðsskarð Norðadalur

When you hike along the old path to Norðadalur, you are on the front row of one of the most wonderful and breath-taking sceneries in the country

This trip requires some logistics because there is no bus service to take you to start or end point. You can take a taxi or get someone to drive you. Another possibility, if you have two cars at your disposal, is to park one in Norðadal and drive the other car up to Skeiðsskarð, where the route starts. Note that the “parking lot” on Skeiðsskarð is quite rocky, so drive carefully.

From the flat area on Skeiðsskarð ①, turn left where you will find a grass/gravel road. Already at this point, the view is spectacular. Millions of years ago, the area was a geological playground, which has resulted in the unique rock formations around you.

Enjoy the view of Vágar with the special Trøllkonufingur (Trollwoman’s Finger), which – as far as anyone knows - was first climbed in 2012. To the right is the 767 metre tall Skælingur, which is among the highest mountains in the Faroe Islands. And right above you on the left-hand side, you have the mysterious Sornfelli, which created political friction in the Faroe Islands for many years. In 1963, NATO installed radar

equipment on Sornfelli to monitor air and sea traffic in the North Atlantic. Inside the mountain, there are many rooms and winding corridors where NATO servicemen went about their daily work. Ordinary citizens did not have access to this part of the mountain. The activity in Sornfelli led to protests by activists and politicians. In some years during the 80s, peaceful demonstrations were organised where people demonstrated from Mjørkadalur, located on the other side of Sornfelli, to Tórshavn. Since 2010, there has been no military activity on Sornfelli.

After about one and a half kilometres, you will arrive at an area with large rocks. Here, the path will be a little hard to see, but you will see the path on the other side of the rock piles. You are now approaching Skoradalsegg. Be cautious about 200 metres from Skoradalsegg, where there is a steep area that can be rocky or slippery. ②

On the other side of Skoradalsegg, you enter into another world, with grass and relatively few rocks and stones. There is a special peace that is only



broken by the sounds of birds and sheep - and maybe a single boat in the fjord. On the first few metres, the path is a little hard to see, and it may seem like there is no more path. Stick to the path that goes about 50 metres straight ahead and slowly slopes downwards. After about four to five hundred metres, you will find the old path from the village Skælingur.

③

Notice the beautiful cairns, erected with stones from the area. Follow the cairns straight out and up towards Vatndalsegg. **④** The path can be a little steep uphill and difficult, but it is short. The view from Vatndalsegg is worth it. If you are looking for the right place for a coffee break, then this place is highly recommended. Here, you see the beautiful rock formations on Likkureyn and Núgvan. Further out to sea are the islands of Koltur, Hestur and further still Sandoy and Suðuroy. And do not forget the lakes in the valley.

The hill, about 50 to 100 metres on the right-hand side of the path, is called Stroyisklettur **⑤**. Legend has it that the residents of Norðadalur and Skælingur were in a dispute over the area in Skorðadalur. The farmer in Norðadalur and the farmer in Skælingur fought a battle that the farmer in Skælingur won. The farmer from Norðadalur, whose name was Stroyur, was killed and is said to be buried at the mound, which today bears his name. Skorðadalur still belongs to the village of Skælingur today.

FACTS

Duration: Two and a half hours

Distance: Six and a half to seven km

Difficulty: Easy to moderate. A little steep and stony through Áarstíggjur

Maximum height: About 490 m

Children: Suitable for children. However, be extra careful just before Skorðadalur and Áarstíggjur

Surface: Gravel/grass track, then path partly with cairns. Few places with gravel and rocks, especially at Áarstíggjur

Maps: 409 and 410



The path into the valley and past the lakes is difficult to see. Stay to the left of the big lake and the river along the lake. A little further, the river comes together with another river from the left. There, in front of you, is a little hill. Stick to the left of the hill and tread carefully to the edge where you will find a cairn. Here, you will find Áarstíggjur **⑥**, which is the path towards Norðadalur. Be careful on the path, which can be slippery and rocky.

Continue down towards the road and then left towards the gate.

Mykineshólmur

The Puffins and Gannets love this place. You will too. Get nature under your skin on this magnificent and wondrous journey to the "Island of the Birds"



Start hiking from the village sign, which shows the path out to Mykineshólmur. The first leg goes uphill following the green grass path that has been tread for centuries. Where the terrain becomes flat again, you are reminded of how tough life can be on this rocky island. Here, you see the memorial monument for those who have died at sea or fallen off the mountain cliffs through the ages ①. The stone was erected in 1939.

Follow the path and after a few hundred metres, turn down to your right, away from the mountain ridge. It may feel very steep here, but the path is safe and good to walk on. As you approach the bridge, you will come to the area Lambi ②, which is one of the largest areas in the Faroe Islands where puffins nest. The area is filled with thousands of caves, which the puffins call home. It is very rare to experience birds as closely as you do in Mykines. They stand right in front of your feet and fly close past you.

Here, before you come right down to the bridge, are also ancient agricultural traces ③. Botanists believe that grain was grown here around the year 650, i.e. before the Viking Age; first monks, who planted oats, and then Vikings, who planted barley. But archaeologists have voiced criticism of this theory because of lack of evidence.





You then come to the 35 metre high suspension bridge. Feel the butterflies in your stomach when you cross and do not forget to look down into the waves. Turn your attention towards the mountainsides where there are birds everywhere: Gannets, Puffins, Kittiwakes and Fulmars. Their echoes reverberate in the rocks - a concert hall is no match for this music. On the islet is a magnificent view of the west and south of the Faroe Islands where you can see Vágur, Hestur, Koltur, the southwestern part of Streymoy, Sandoy, Skúvoy, Stóra Dímun, Lítla Dímun and Suðuroy.

Follow the path diagonally uphill and proceed out to the lighthouse. If you are curious and unafraid, you can walk closer to the cliff and follow it out to the lighthouse. However, be careful, because the cliff is very steep down to the sea. Gannets (which have a special fondness for Mykineshólmur) sit on the rocky ledges. Indeed, this is the only place in the Faroe Islands that is home to the Gannet. From here, you also have a view of the beautiful mountains in the north of Streymoy.

In the past, three families lived in Mykineshólmur. Their task was to tend to the lighthouse. During World War II, this was a dangerous and exposed occupation because German planes often attacked the lighthouse. On the slope, about 200 metres from the lighthouse, are the remains of the old shelters that the families used during the bombings ④. In 1970, the lighthouse became fully automated and the last people left around this time. It is a special feeling to come out to the lighthouse and stand on the westernmost point of the Faroe

FACTS

Duration: Approximately two and a half hours

Distance: Seven to eight km

Difficulty: Moderate. People who have a fear of heights may experience the terrain from the mountain ridge towards the bridge as rather steep. It can be a little heavy to walk up from the bridge and back to the village

Maximum height: 125 m

Children: Suitable for children. It is steep by the bridge to Mykineshólmur, so you must be extra careful with young children

Surface: Grass path. In some places rocks and soil

Map: 110

THE GANNETS LOVE MYKINESHÓLMUR

Mykineshólmur - and the rocks around the islet, Píkarsdrangur and Flatidrangur - is the only place in the Faroe Islands where Sea Gannets (*Morus bassanus*) can be found. The bird comes to Mykineshólmur around 25 January and leaves again around 11 November when the chicks are fledged. With its wingspan of about one and a half to two metres, the Gannet is the largest bird in the Faroe Islands.

Islands. The lighthouse was built in 1909. During construction, the first bridge was built to Mykineshólmur. By the lighthouse, you have the most amazing view over the protruding rocks where the Gannets live. At sea, you have the fishing grounds where the Faroese have fished for centuries.

When you return, you can choose to go the way you came, or you can go down past the lighthouse and find the path back further down.

Bøur Gásadalur

Hike along the old village path to the beautiful village of Gásadalur, which was one of the most isolated villages in the Faroe Islands until a few years ago





The route starts in the valley about three kilometres west of the village of Bøur. The path begins about one kilometre south (or left) of the tunnel entrance. You can see the path, which meanders up the Gásadalsbrekkjan.

Gásadalur has been one of the most isolated villages in the Faroes. It is difficult to get to the village by sea and it was not until 2004 that the village was connected to the rest of the island by road when the tunnel was built. The people of Gásadalur used to walk this path when they had to go to the neighbouring villages to trade or for other errands. The helicopter service began in 1983.

The first stretch of the path is steep and runs close to the edge of the mountain ①. Therefore, walk extremely carefully, but do not forget to enjoy the outstanding view over Sørvágsfjørður, Tindhólmur, Gáshólmur and Mykines. In 2014, two men managed to climb all five peaks of Tindhólmur.

There is no church in Gásadalur so the school is used for services. The cemetery is from 1873. Before then, people were buried in Bøur and so the coffin had to be carried over the mountain to Bøur from Gásadalur. The trip was very difficult and the only place that the bearers could rest was at the Líksteinurin ② (Corpse Stone), which you will come upon halfway through the route.

Further on, you come to the spring Vigdá ③. There is a story that a baby in Gásadalur became seriously ill and had to be taken to the doctor in Bøur. On the way to Bøur, the baby's condition worsened and it was about to die. According to the Lutheran faith, your soul does not gain salvation if you die

FACTS

Duration: Two and a half hours

Distance: Three and a half km

Difficulty: Moderate to difficult. It is steep and difficult to climb Gásadalsbrekkjan, and the descent to Gásadalur is also steep

Maximum height: 434 m

Children: Not suitable for children under eight to ten years, as the route is steep with many loose stones

Surface: Grass path. Down towards Gásadalur, path with stones and small rocks

Map: 210

Special comments: Be extra careful on the way down towards Gásadalur, as there are many loose stones, especially if you travel in a group

unbaptised. Therefore, the priest, who was travelling with them, quickly blessed the spring and baptised the baby.

When you continue, you will see Risaspórið ④. There is a legend about two giants. One lived in Gásadalur and the other in Mykines. Once, they quarrelled and the Gásadalur giant wanted to go to Mykines to settle the dispute. He took running leaps along the mountain, took off, and with one leap, he landed on Mykines. He took off so hard that you can see his footprint to this day.

From Skarði, the path twists down the mountainside to the village. Beware of loose stones! The view down to Gásadalur is one of the most beautiful sights you can experience. The small, beautiful village is surrounded by green infield with harsh high mountains. One of them is Árnafjall, which, with its 722 metres, is the tallest mountain on Vágar.

In the village, there are ruins from the Middle Ages, called Uppi við Garð and Gæsutoftir.

Miðvágur Bøsdalafossur

An easy and beautiful walk along the Faroe Islands' largest lake to the beautiful waterfall Bøsdalafossur

When you have passed through Miðvágur by the main road from Sandavágur, turn left on the first street just after the church ❶. Continue straight about two to three hundred metres, then turn right and continue until you reach the gate to the outfield. Along the way, you will see Trøllkonufingur (Trollwoman's Finger), a high cliff southeast of the village of Sandavágur. As far as anyone knows, the rock was first climbed in 2012. The walking path, the old path to the peat field, begins at the outfield gate ❷. Go through the old peat meadows and note the many collapsed peat stores of stone. There are no cairns on the path.

Vatnið is the largest lake in the Faroes. It is called Leitisvatn as well as Sørvágsvatn, but most people call it Vatnið.

There are several legends about Huldufólk (Hidden People) (page 58) at Vatnið. On the way from Miðvágur to Sørvágur, there was a Huldu-mound. One day, a Huldu-woman asked a priest to come inside. There were supposed to be many Huldufólk inside. When

leaving, the priest, who knew how to practice witchcraft, made sure to seal the mound so that it could not be opened again. There was said to be both moaning and wailing within.

Another legend talks about Nykur (Nix) (page 58), a scary creature that lives in lakes and often resembles a beautiful horse. It lures people close, grabs them and pulls them to the bottom of the lake. Once upon a time, children had gone to play by Vatnið. Nykur came to them in the shape of a horse and they climbed on its back to play. The smallest boy, who could not get up on Nykur, was frightened and called out to his brother, Niklas: "Brother Nika" (he had not learned to talk yet). Nykur, thinking his name was called, lost its power and disappeared, and the children were saved. Nykur loses all its power when called by name.

The area Úti í Svanga ❸ is characterised by the large amount of birds that preside there during the summer. Trælanípa (Slave Mountain) is a perpendicular rock



FACTS

Duration: About two hours

Distance: Five km

Difficulty: Easy

Maximum height: The terrain is almost flat, but with the possibility to go up to Trælanípa at 142 m height

Children: Suitable for children

Surface: Grass path most of the route

Map: 309



wall, which juts 142 metres upwards out of the sea. Supposedly, it has gotten its name from the Viking Age when slaves were pushed off the mountain. Be careful not to get too close to the edge as it is steep! From here, you can see the southernmost part of Streymoy, Hestur, Koltur, Sandoy, Skúvoy and Suðuroy.

When you arrive right at the edge of Bøsdalafossur, you can see ruins from buildings that the British left behind in Vágar after World War II. During the war, there were several thousand British soldiers in the Faroe Islands, especially in Vágar. The British built the airport, which was extended in 2011.

The waterfall Bøsdalafossur itself is a magnificent sight as it thunders down towards the sea. This area alone, with its waterfall, ocean and lake, has been much depicted in dramatic weather in winter, when natural forces struggle against each other.

You can cross Bøsdalaá by using the stepping stones that are placed in the river. You can then walk up to a gorge where there is a good view of the cliff Geituskorradrangur. You also see the bird cliffs of Sørvágsbjørg, Mykines and Mykineshólmur and to the south you see Sandoy, Skúvoy and Suðuroy.

For the trip back, use the path by the lake on the same side as you came. The end of the path is through a walled sheepfold ④.



Á Hálsi við Sandavág Slættanes Fjallavatn Gásadalur

Enjoy this adventurous route to
some of the most beautiful pearls
in the Faroe Islands





Á HÁLSI - SLÆTTANES

The route starts at the parking lot á Hálsi before Sandavágur (also called Sandavágshálsur). Go diagonally to the left toward the gorge called Ravnagjógv ❶ and follow the path uphill. Here, you will find the first cairn on the cairn path. This is the old path that connected the villages of Sandavágur and Slættanes. All traffic between the settlements took place on this path.

After one to two kilometres, the terrain evens out, and you have a good view over a large part of Streymoy, the villages of Skælingur, Leynar and Kvívik, and the southern mountains of Skælingur and Sátan. Soon, the charming village of Vestmanna appears on the other side of the fjord. For many years, Vestmanna was a hub for traffic to Vágar and the airport. A ferry sailed between Vestmanna and Oyrargjógv, but was replaced by a subsea tunnel in 2002, the first of its kind in the Faroe Islands.

After about five kilometres, another cairn path crosses the path ❷. This is the path between Sørvágur and Oyrargjógv. Stay on your current route. It can be difficult to see the path and the next cairn in some places, but if you take your time, you will find them. By Fótamørsklettur, ❸ you will find a rather square stone next to the fence. This type of stone is called Hav. In ancient times, men used to compete by lifting the stone and seeing who was strongest. Be careful not to hurt your back if tempted to match your strength with the strong men of the Faroe Islands.

When you pass Tungufellið, the path separates into two ❹. You must follow the lower of the cairns. The other is a horse path that leads into the mountains.

FACTS

Duration: 12-15 hours

Distance: About 28-30 km

Difficulty: Moderate to difficult. The first part of the route to Slættanes is on flat ground and then goes downhill. The stretch from Slættanes and to Skoradalshálsur is quite difficult. The trip from Reipsá to Gresskarð can also be a challenge

Maximum height: 625 m

Children: Because the trip is long, it is not suitable for small children. Children from 10-12 years of age can participate, but you could consider dividing the route in two to three stages

Surface: Grass path with cairns. In some places, rocks and stones

Maps: 210, 309 and 310

Special comments: Because the trip is long, it is important to bring a big packed lunch, water (2-3 litres) if you do not drink water from streams, and preferably something sweet. The nearest store is far away from the route. It's a good idea to bring sandals to wade across the river at Fjallavatn. If you don't have the courage to cover the hike in one stretch, consider staying the night in Vágar and continuing the following day. There is no phone coverage in many places on the trip

Follow the cairns down through Skáardalur and soon you arrive in Slættanes.

There are a few houses in Slættanes, but they are usually empty because the village is uninhabited. The settlement has only been inhabited for a period of around one hundred years. A family moved to Slættanes in 1835 and spent the first five years alone in this desolate place. Others then arrived, and in 1940, 75 people lived in Slættanes. Sometimes there were even more people. In 1964, the last inhabitants of the village left.



SLÆTTANES - FJALLAVATN

From Slættanes you move up to Skoradalshálsur. You will find the path by the end of the road above the village. Follow the cairns uphill towards Skoradalshálsur.

On Skoradalshálsur you have a stunning view to the north of Streymoy, including the famous Vestmanna bird cliffs and Mýlingur, which - with its very sharp and steep shape - is one of the most beautiful mountains in the Faroe Islands. Here, you are at the threshold of some of the most beautiful places that Vágur has to offer.

Follow the path down to Reipsá, which is the river from the north end of Fjallavatn. The lake is the second largest lake in the Faroe Islands. The largest, Leitisvatn (also called Sørvágvatn and Vatnið), is also on the island of Vágur.

From Skoradalshálsur you can choose a more off-road route down to Reipsá. You can walk towards the mountains in the north (on your right), follow the ridge westwards and then get back on the path again by Reipsá. The view is unique over the green hills and blue sea. However, be careful, as the terrain is very steep and there are some gorges, and the area downhill towards Reipsá is quite rocky and uneven.

FJALLAVATN - GÁSADALUR

It can be difficult to cross Reipsá without getting your feet wet, but try to find a place where the river runs slower. You cross Gullringsá, which is the stream that runs down the mountainside on the left.

Before going up, you must remember to glance towards Víkar [5](#), which is another uninhabited village. It was founded in 1833, but was abandoned in 1932. The settlement is indeed very remote, since the

distance to the nearest village is about two hours on foot and in difficult terrain. The area is incredibly beautiful with the small beach in the hook, the green carpet of grass and steep Árnafjall towering over the area.

Follow the path diagonally uphill towards the mountain wall. It can be a little confusing here because it can look like there are several paths. But when you get further uphill and westwards, you will see the path that goes through Kálvarók more clearly. Beware of slippery rocks in some places on the way up. Follow the cairns through Jókladalur and Kjógvadalur. Then you come up to Gresskarðadalur. Here, the path is difficult to see. Walk in the green area under the rock wall on your right-hand side and head for the green area up by Gresskarð at the end of the valley.

From Gresskarð, located at approximately 630 metre altitude, you have clear view of Árnafjall, which is the highest mountain on Vágar. Right above you is Eysturtindur, which is the second-highest mountain on the island. This place is perfect for a coffee break and to enjoy the colours of the evening sun on the surrounding mountains. The descent to Gásadalur

is quite rocky and it can be difficult to discern the path. But go down through the rocky area, and when you get further down, you can spot a trail that runs from the edge and down the valley. In recent years, the path has been expanded to a road for vehicles. Moving further downhill, you spot the small village of Gásadalur, which is located in the valley by the sea. The closer you get, the more you'll understand why Gásadalur is many photographers' favourite site. The settlement is unique and fascinating no matter which angle it is viewed from. Gásadalur has been one of the most isolated villages in the Faroes. Until a tunnel was built in 2004, the village could only be reached by walking along a steep mountain path south of the village, or by helicopter service, which started flying to Gásadalur in 1983.

There are several explanations for the name Gásadalur (Goose Valley). Tradition says that the name is related to Gæsa, a woman from Kirkjubøur. She had eaten meat during Lent, which was forbidden. As punishment, she lost all her property and moved to the valley, which was named after her. Another explanation for the name is that it comes from wild geese that used to live in the valley during the summer.



Tórshavn Kirkjubøur

A nice trip along the old mountain path to the beautiful old village of Kirkjubøur

The route starts at the crossroads Landavegur - Velbastaðvegur. From there, follow a path down to Sandá and the farm where the path to Kirkjubøur begins. First, you go uphill. Once you have come up and turn around, you have a good view of Tórshavn and all of Nólsoy.

When you start to walk again, you go round Reynsmúli and then you arrive at Reynsmúlalág. Two small lakes are in front of you. You might see many Kittiwakes there in the summer. Follow the cairns and you will see a dais ❶ built of rocks. The dais has been used for open air public gatherings since the 1800s and is still in use today. Public gatherings have been held in this place with flags, speeches and patriotic songs composed for the occasion. It is easy to imagine how crowds of people have sat on the hill before the dais and listened to, amongst others, Jóannes Patursson

(1866-1946), a pioneer in the Faroese national independence movement. These outdoor public gatherings are still held in the Faroe Islands, e.g. during the national holiday Ólavsøka on 28-29 July.

The path continues southwards. On the route, you have a great view of Sandoy, Hestur, Koltur and Vágar. Legend talks about Magnus, a young man from Koltur, who courted a girl from Hestur. The girl's father was not to know about this, so they met in secret. Magnus swam from Koltur, when the tidal current flowed southwards, spent time with the girl, and when the tide turned, swam back to Koltur. The girl's father discovered this. One day, as Magnus came ashore, the father stood before him with an axe and threatened to kill him. Magnus was forced to go back, and he was never heard of again. Undoubtedly, a current took him and carried him out to sea. The story goes that after



FACTS

Duration: Two hours

Distance: Seven km

Difficulty: Easy

Maximum height: 230 m

Children: Suitable for children

Surface: Grass and rocky cairn path

Maps: 408, 508 and 509

this, the eddy, which is called Grísarnir, emerged inside Koltursund. This is said to have been an act of revenge. To this day, this same eddy still exists in Koltursund. As you approach Kirkjubøur, you will see a small islet, Kirkjubøhólmur, which used to be part of the mainland and part of the village. Out on the islet, you can still see old ruins of houses.

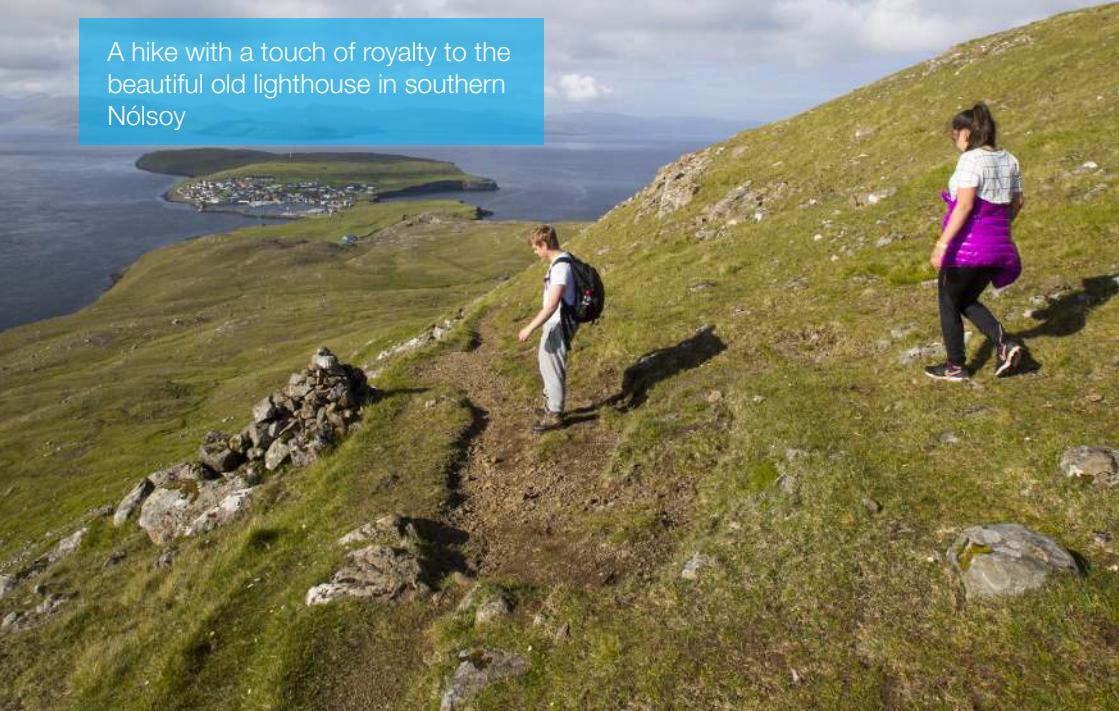
The path now goes gradually down to the village and ends at a cattle grid some 50 metres from the nearest houses.

Kirkjubøur is a beautiful and charming village where most of the houses are built in the old style. Kirkjubøur has a wealth of attractions; for example, Kirkjubømúrurin, the ruins of an old cathedral, which is believed to have been built around 1300. There is also Stokkastovurnar, the old farmhouses from about 1350, which are built on the ruins of the old bishop's seat. The church in Kirkjubøur is the oldest church in the Faroe Islands still in use. It was built in the 1200s.



Nólsoy Borðan

A hike with a touch of royalty to the beautiful old lighthouse in southern Nólsoy

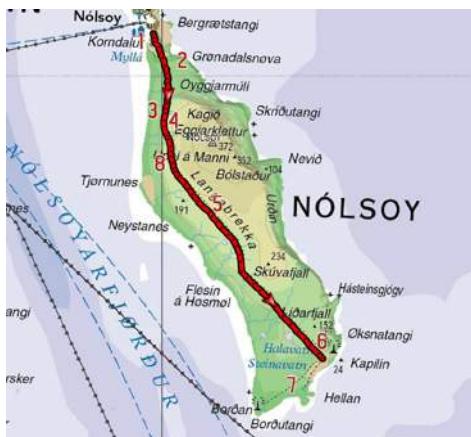


The route starts at the path that runs southwards from Nólsoy village. Just inside the outfield fence, you come upon an area, Korndalur, with many ruins from the old days. These are the Prinsessutoftir ①. Legend tells about a Scottish King's daughter who had a falling out with her father because he would not acknowledge the man she wanted to marry and whose child she was carrying. They fled, arrived at Nólsoy and settled here.

There are traces of the old water pipe just outside the outfield fence. Follow this trail to the old reservoir ②. Here, the cairns begin and soon you will walk up

the slope west of the island. On the hike uphill, there is a site called Uppi í Skipi, where people hid from pirates in the old days.

Near the top, you come to Hvíiplássið ③. It is customary to rest here. The view is outstanding. You can see the northern islands, Skálfjørður, Sundalagið, all of Tórshavn and a little bit of Sandoy. Somewhat further south, at á Kagnum ④, there is a very good view southwards. The name stems from troubled times when people sneaked out from their hiding places and came to peek southwards to see if the pirates had left.



From the small spring, Kolturskeldan, you see Koltur outlined above Havnardalur.

Then there's a long stretch, Langabrekka ⑤, where you follow the path straight ahead. Here, the terrain can be quite wet in places.

There are cairns all the way to the Nólsoy lighthouse, the beacon at Tumbin ⑥, but some of them are small and can be difficult to spot. Use the two masts that stick up where the lighthouse stands as landmarks. Just north of the house, the British built two attraps (houses built to mislead the Germans during World War II).

The lighthouse, Nólsoyar Viti, was built in 1893. Back then, the lens was one of the largest in the world of its kind. It is 2.82 metres high and weighs about four tons. Both the lighthouse and the related houses are superior workmanship, stacked from carved rocks. Nearby, you can see where the rocks were collected. The houses were built for three families. Borðan's population totaled 10 children at its peak. Borðan alternated with Nólsoy village in having the school. No one lives in Borðan now. The silhouette of Kapilin can be seen in front of the beacon.

You can also walk down to Stallurin ⑦. This is the landing place where everything which was taken to Borðan was unloaded. People from Nólsoy have also shipped peat from Stallurin. The name Stallurin (the stable) stems from the boats being able to lie side by side like horses in a stable.

FACTS

Duration: Five hours

Distance: About 13 -14 km

Difficulty: It is steep and in some places difficult to walk up to Hvíplássið. But when you come up, there is level ground all the way to Borðan

Maximum height: 200 m

Children: Suitable for children

Surface: Grass cairn path, some places stony and rocky

Maps: 508 and 509

There is also another lighthouse on the southern tip in this area, about one and a half kilometre from Nólsoyar Viti.

Be careful on your way back. Follow the cairns so you are on the right path down the hill. Two cairns are placed closely together. The northern one is Omansneiðingarvarðin ⑧. Turn here when going down.



Sandur Søltuvík



Embark on an adventure in a special landscape filled with dramatic history where you can even feel the witch's breath on your neck

The route starts at the old school in Sandur ①. Follow the road Undir Reynam. Continue along the road that says Søltuvíkarvegur.

On the right-hand side of the road, after about 700 metres, you will have your first encounter with the witch. Here, the Gívrinarspor (Witch's Footprint) is visible in stone ②.

According to legend, there lived a witch in a hole west of Gróthúsvatn. One day, a man passed the hole and saw the witch grinding gold on a grinder. On the floor, a child was playing with a golden stick. The man grabbed the golden stick from the child and fled from the spot on horseback. The witch called

on a neighbouring witch, who ran after the man. She jumped across Gróthúsvatn, and you can still see the imprint of her foot in the stone. There are also imprints of her knuckles in this area.

At Gróthúsvatn, there is a four-metre tall stone that the women of Sandur have decorated with a knitted cover, which is based on the legend of the witch. The stone has a circumference of 18 metres, which means many, many hours of knitting.

Enjoy the view over the beautiful, peaceful Gróthúsvatn. The serene nature of the lake is in stark contrast to the winter waves, which can be quite rough in this area. The sea does not even rest during the summer. Hear the waves relentlessly thunder against the rocks and feel the fresh scent of salt water.

Sandur is one of the oldest villages in the Faroe Islands. The latest archaeological excavations show that people have lived in the village as early as the years 300-400.

From Gróthúsvatn, the path winds uphill, and after approximately one kilometre you will come to Gívrinarhol ③, a hole where the witch lived. From





Gívrinarhol you can look to the southeast and see the old village of Skarvanes, which was one of the best places in the Faroe Islands to grow grain. You can also see Skúvoy. This was the home of Sigmundur Brestisson (page 58), the Faroese chieftain who, according to the Faroese saga, brought Christianity to the Faroe Islands. Skúvoy is also where his grave is located. From here, you also have a good view of Stóra Dímun, Lítla Dímun and Suðuroy.

From Gívrinarhol and about 300 metres on, you must be careful as the terrain on the road's left-hand side is steep. After a while it evens out again, and the terrain is flat.

After about three kilometres, the sound of the sea mixes with bird songs from the outfield. First as a slight whisper, but for every metre it deepens into a roar. Slowly, the beautiful bay of Søltuvík reveals itself, surrounded by a collection of rocks that only allow very small boats to come inside when the weather is good.

As beautiful as it is, it can be equally harsh and ruthless. In November 1895, a shipwreck took place in the area. A British steamer, *Principia*, got caught in a storm and drifted into the rocky area. The ship sank and 28 people drowned. Only one person survived the tragedy. He managed to pull himself up on a cargo hatch and drifted at sea for 14 hours until he was rescued in Kirkjubøur. That same hatch is today used as a table top in Roykstovan on the old farm in Kirkjubøur.

When you follow the road down to the beach, you can see two anchors from *Principia* that divers retrieved from the ocean floor in 2001. At the site, there is also a memorial stone in memory of the dead. Why walk to Søltuvík when you can drive? You know the answer when you have made the trip. If you drove,

FACTS

Duration: Two and a half to three hours

Distance: Nine to ten km

Difficulty: Easy. Flat terrain most of the way, however, it goes uphill slightly from Gróthúsvatn to Gívrinarhol

Maximum height: 121 m

Children: Suitable for children. However, it is a good idea to hold small, lively children's hand from Gívrinarhol and about 300 metres forward, as there is a steep left-hand side of the road

Surface: Road with gravel and asphalt

Maps: 406, 407, 506 and 507

you would miss the sound of the roaring waves, the smell of salt water, grass and heather, bird songs and, lastly, the witch's breath on your neck.

TWO BURNT BARLEY GRAINS

In all likelihood, people have lived in Søltuvík in the 900s. Archaeological records and excavations some years ago found debris from buildings and objects from the settlement. And carbon-14 dating of two burnt barley grains show that they come from a settlement layer from the 900s, i.e. from the Viking Age. The settlement may be from an earlier date because the soil layers with the barley grains date from late in the possible settlement period. How early people may have settled in Søltuvík is still unclear.

This is interesting because Søltuvík has never been settled, except for a brief period in 1830 and in the middle of the 1900s. The settlement from the Viking Age was somewhat south of Søltuvíkará by the beach.

Guðrunarlökur Skarvanes Dalur

Follow the path through the old peat stores and visit the beautiful southernmost villages in Sandoy

Start at the crossroads Skálavík/Húsavík. Go 200 metres from Húsavík to Guðrunarlökur ①, which runs by a sheepfold by the road.

Walk from the sheepfold at Guðrunarlökur onwards under the rock ledge to the south. Under the rock ledge is Runtaurð ②. The story is that Runti was a sheep thief who hid there. On Christmas Day, he risked leaving his hiding place in order to cook himself a meal as he thought that people would not be out. But this was not the case and he was seen and caught.

A short way further on, the path comes to Klovnastein ③. These are two stones standing in such a way that they appear to be a single stone cleaved in two. Superstition had it that if you walked between them, you would die before the end of the year.

The land you are walking on here is old peat land. When you curve south at Liðarðkur ④, you get a beautiful view of Dúnjavatn ⑤, with Stóra and Lítla

Dímun, and Suðuroy in the background. You can also see Salthövdi and the village of Sandur, which is thought to be one of the oldest villages in the Faroe Islands. A little north of Stóra Dímun is Øssursdrangur, named after Øssur Haygrímsson, a chieftain from the Viking Age, who was killed by Sigmundur Brestisson (page 58) in a power struggle. South of Øssursdrangur is Grönaskor. Øssur asked to be buried so that his head faced Grönaskor. To the right is the island of Skúvoy.

A beautiful and interesting trip on Skúvoy is hiking out to Høvdin and continuing on to Fagridalur. Sigmund Brestisson's grave is also believed to be in Skúvoy. Looking to the northwest, you can spot the island of Mykines in clear weather.

Further up in Skarvanes, go through the opening in the fence closest to the river. Make sure you walk down between the river and the electricity pylons and not through the meadow.



FROM SKARVANES TO DALUR

From Skarvanes, there are two parallel paths. Go south along the upper one. The path ends by a broken stone wall, and there, the path to Dalur begins. Past Dalsrök, ⑥ about half a kilometre from Skarvanes, is a short steep stretch downwards. Otherwise, the path slowly inclines up towards Handasti Varði ⑦. While you walk up to Handasti Varði, you can see marshland and Lake Vatnsdalur on the right. After the last cairn in Dalur, walk along the road down to the village.

FACTS

Duration: Three and a half hours

Distance: 7.5 km

Difficulty: Easy to Skarvanes, moderate to Dalur

Maximum height: 300 m

Children: Suitable for children

Surface: Grass cairn path

Map: 506

Dalur is the southernmost of the villages on Sandur. It was connected to the other villages by road in 1963. The church in the village is from 1957.



21

Hvannhagi

One of the most beautiful and unique natural experiences in the Faroe Islands





Starting from the hospital in Tvøroyri, go up to Ovari Vegur and continue left in the direction of Trongisvágur. Once you have walked approximately one and a half kilometres, you arrive at the gate leading to the out-field. Here is a sign that reads Hvannhagi. The path begins ①. Follow it, first straight out and then it turns slowly to the right uphill. When you get to the top and look towards the northeast, you have a magnificent view of Lítla Dímun, Stóra Dímun and Sandoy.

After about a 20-minute walk, you arrive at Grindin ②, which is where you go down in Hvannhagi. Here, you begin to see parts of the beautiful Hvannhagi. You also have a view to other islands further away, for example, Koltur and Vágar.

Naturalists, especially geologists, are always thrilled when Hvannhagi is mentioned. They call the area a geological Eldorado. The place is teeming with interesting geological phenomena. Among the things you can see are stones from giant avalanches or rock slides that roared down into Hvannhagi several thousand years ago. The rocky area is called Dysjarnar ③. People are working on getting Hvannhagi and all of Suðuroy registered as a geopark.

There are also others who find Hvannhagi interesting: the sheep. Parts of Hvannhagi have for years been used as "fitilendi" (fat pasture) for sheep.

Follow the path, which slowly turns to the left into the valley. Suddenly it is there! The beautiful, circular lake, surrounded by the greenest grass and steep mountainsides. No wonder Hvannavatn and Hvannhagi have been popular destinations for families and travelers coming to Suðuroy for generations.

FACTS

Duration: About two hours

Distance: About six km

Difficulty: Moderate. Down to Hvannhagi and back is somewhat difficult

Maximum height: 230 m

Children: Suitable for children. However, be aware of loose stones through Frostgjógv

Surface: Grass path. Towards Hvannhagi, stones and rocks, and through Frostgjógv passage with loose stones

Map: 503

When or if you can tear yourself away from the place and are ready to head home, you can choose to walk back the way you came, or you can go through Frostgjógv ④, which is a gorge further up in the southern part of the valley. Beware of loose rocks in the gorge, especially if you are traveling in a group.

You then come to a sheepfold at the end of the gorge. Here, there is no visible path. But once you've gone a few metres from the sheepfold, you will spot the path from Tvøroyri where you walked up to Grindin earlier. Head over towards the path and go back to Tvøroyri.



Suðuroy from north to south

Fall in love with the southernmost island in the Faroe Islands on this challenging, special and beautiful route from north to south



SANDVÍK-HVALBA

The route starts at the end of the road by Mýrarnar ❶ in the valley west of the village of Sandvík. There is a sign explaining that this is the old village path to Hvalba. Follow the cairns uphill.

Sandvík is one of the oldest villages in the Faroes. According to legend, the chieftain Sigmundur Brestisson ([page 58](#)) swam from Skúvoy to Sandvík in the early 1000s after the rivaling chieftain Tróndur í Gøtu and his men had attacked him. Sigmundur swam most of the distance with two men on his back. Exhausted, Sigmundur came ashore on the beach in Sandvík, but was murdered by the farmer Tórgrímur Illi and his sons.

At the top, the terrain is flat well before it starts to go downhill again towards Hvalba. On the last stretch down to the village, continue in a wedge with a stone wall on the right and a fence on the left. Go through the village, past the sandy beach and then left towards Nes.

HVALBA-TRONGISVÁGUR

On the road to Nes, you can look up to an area in the valley where coalmining has taken place for many years. Suðuroy, and especially this part of the island, is the only place in the Faroe Islands where coal can be mined.

A few hundred metres before you reach Nes, you have Turkagravirnar (The Turkish Graves) on your left hand side ❷. Hvalba was, like the rest of Suðuroy, much plagued by pirates in the past. There are records of a major pirate attack in Hvalba in 1629 when Algerian pirates kidnapped many of the villagers. According to the stories, one of the ships ran aground and the bodies of the pirates washed ashore. They are said to be buried in this area.

The route begins at Fitjarnar just west of Nes. First, follow the fence between the cultivated land and outfield up onto Lítil Hamar. Up on the ledge, a stone path, which is now overgrown, begins. It is called Prestgøta (Priest's Path), presumably because it is so broad that it was not necessary for the priest to



FACTS

Duration: 15-16 hours

Distance: About 42 km

Difficulty: Moderate to difficult. Rather steep in Káragjógv by Hvalba. Relatively tough hill climb from Trongisvágur to Oyrnaskarð. Difficult from Ørvík to Mannaskarð and Vágsskarð and rather steep towards Vágur. Rather difficult from Lopra up to Hesturin. Otherwise, there are many stretches of flat terrain

Maximum height: 430 m (at Vágsskarð)

Children: Not suitable for children under 10 to 12 years because of the distance. But if you choose to divide the route into stages, you can bring children. Contact the local tourist office for possible lodgings

Surface: Mostly grassy cairn path. However, in some places stones and rocks, e.g. at Káragjógv. There is a paved road from Hvalba to Nes and from Vágur to Lopra

Maps: 403, 404, 501, 502 and 503

Special comments: When the trip is long and demanding, it is important to bring a big lunch, plenty to drink and something sweet. In Hvalba and Vágur, however, you have the option to buy supplies, as the route goes past convenience stores. Remember extra warm clothes, as the evenings can be cool, especially when you're tired.

dismount from his horse. The path continues up in Káragjógv, into which the priest Kári is said to have fallen. Up through the gorge, the path is steep in some places, but it is not difficult to walk. However, be careful if wet, when the stones can be slippery.

If you follow the cairns, the first hill you come to is Lítli Íslendingur, and just to the west are the stones Sigmundarsteinar ③, called Sigmund, Tórir and Einar. Do not walk between them. Either you age rapidly on the spot, or you won't live out the year. So legend says. It is said that Sigmundur Brestisson carried the stones up here.

The view from this area is magnificent. Here, you see Lítla Dímun and Stóra Dímun, and Skúvoy and Sandoy to the east. To the west, you see part of the village of Hvalba.

Halfway between Hvalba and the gorge Mannagjógv, you have a unique view of Vatnsdal and Vatnsdalvatn, two islets that are home to many birds.

When you get to Mannagjógv, the cairn path splits into two ④. You must take the path to the right. Go down to the grove, down the valley in Trongisvágur. In the grove, there are tables and benches and the place is ideally suited for a coffee or lunch break, before you continue on your journey.

TRONGISVÁGUR-ØRDAVÍK

Go down to the end of the grove, over the bridge and up the road. After about 40 metres, you come ➤

to the sign that says GI. Fámjinsgøtan. Follow the path and cairns uphill towards Hvammabotnur and further up to Oyrnaskarð. In Hvammabotnur, the landscape is quite fascinating with many rocks. To the west is Gluggarnir, which is the highest mountain on Suðuroy. Above you is Oyrnafjall. There is a tradition to mount Oyrnafjall on New Year's Eve and light a fire.

From Oyrnaskarð you see the village Ørðavík. Go down towards the village and cross the stream. Head for the first turn before the road turns uphill. Then continue approximately 1.3 km along the road, down towards the houses in the village. Right by the first building there is a road to the right. Follow the road for about 200 metres up to the gate to the outfield. From here, you can see up to Mannaskarð, from which the route continues.

ØRÐAVÍK-VÁGUR

The path follows Tinggil Uppi Millum Stovur [6](#), which was the site for the ancient Thing (*page 58*) (local assembly) in Suðuroy. The landscape is distinctive, with gorges in the terrain with hills with sharp ridges on the sides. Here, you also see Tingborðið where, according to legend, a farmhand from Hvalba called Snæbjørn was sentenced to four-years hard labour on Bremerholm for having bought scarves from an illegal trading ship. Not surprisingly, Snæbjørn was dissatisfied with the judgment and tried to kill the judge, but instead he struck the sheriff so hard that he died. He escaped from the Thing, and lived for many years as an outlaw in the mountains in Suðuroy. Walking up to Mannaskarð is tough. There are many stones on the last stretch. Be careful not to dislodge stones.

BLOOD SAUSAGE RECIPE

In the old days, it was common in Suðuroy to bring blood sausage on trips into the outfield or the mountains. This recipe comes from “Matur og matgerð”, one of the oldest and most popular cookbooks in the Faroe Islands (pages 131 and 132).

Blood sausage

Sheep's stomach

(this can be replaced by a boiling bag or tin foil)

- 1 litre of blood
 - ½ kg brown sugar
 - 2 tablespoons sugar
 - 1 bag cinnamon (5 tsp)
 - ½ kg of rye flour
 - 2 tsp cloves
 - 1 teaspoon ground ginger
 - 1 teaspoon allspice
 - 1 teaspoon pepper
 - 1 teaspoon salt
 - ½ teaspoon baking soda
 - 100 g of oat flakes
 - 100 g of wheat flour
 - 1 cup milk
- Add raisins according to taste

Add tallow according to taste (optional, but if not added, the blood sausage might become too dry. Another option is to use thin slices of apple instead of tallow)

Method: Cut the stomach into four pieces, wash it thoroughly and sew it into bags. However, there must be room for the stuffing.

Stir the ingredients together. Fill blood, tallow and raisins into the bags and sew them together. You can choose to put one piece of tallow in each bag, or you can chop the tallow into small pieces so that it is well distributed. Fill the pot with water, add a bit salt and boil the blood sausages. Turn them regularly while they are being cooked. Use a pointed stick or a thin knitting needle to poke the blood sausages to let the air out. The blood sausage is finished when there is no visible blood on the stick that you use to stick it with.

Instead of using a sheep's stomach, you can pour the ingredients into cooking bags and cook as directed. Or, you can use aluminium containers and bake the blood sausage in the oven.

Up on Mannaskarð you have a good view of Dalurin with Vatnsnes and Bessavatn. At Vatnsnes in the 1960s, SEV, the national electricity company, built a dam for hydropower and drilled a tunnel that goes from Vatnsnes down to Botnur. Then comes Vágskarð, which this path also passes, and Hvannafelli. On the right you see Borgarknappur, whose top resembles a medieval castle.

The path follows Vatnaryggur between the lakes. There are many birds to see here. It's also said that there are particularly many Huldufólk (Hidden People) (page 58) here. To the left of the path on Vatnaryggur is Ærgidalur. Here, archaeologists from the National Museum excavated ruins of a house. The valley was used as a mountain pasture in the Viking Age ⑥. Back then it was common for people to live in the outfield during the summer to tend to the livestock. After Vágsskarð, the path slopes downhill gradually until it reaches Hvannadalur. From there, the descent is rather steep. The cairns lead the way down to Hvannadalsá. As you approach the grove, cross the river and go down to Vágur on the west side of the plantation.

VÁGUR-AKRABERG

Head for the bay in Vágur and walk along the paved road to Lopra. The old village path used to be here in the area. Beware of cars because there is no pavement here. From here, you can see the famous Beinisvørð and the pyramid-shaped mountain Kirvi. A few metres before the tunnel to Sumba, turn right up through the outfield ⑦. The path is quite difficult to see here, but aim for the electricity pylons and the small stone bridge on the first part of the way. Use the big mast on Hesturin as a landmark.

On Hesturin you can choose to walk along the paved road all the way to Akraberg. This is recommended if there is fog in the area. But otherwise you can follow the old path down to Sumba and from there move on to Akraberg. You will find the path on the right-hand side by the road just after the cattle grid ⑧. Sumba is considered to be one of the oldest villages in the Faroes. The village is famous for its chain dance and not least for its beauty with the legendary Sumbiarhólmur just outside the village. Sumba has also raised one of the most famous poets in the Faroe Islands, Poul F. Joensen, who was



known for his satirical and critical poems about Faroese society. He was, nevertheless, also a master of heartfelt love poems and patriotic poems.

The path leads down to the area by the football pitch. Here, you get to the main road where you turn left at the sign showing Akraberg. The route to Akraberg is about two kilometres on paved road.

MOTHER TONGUE

"Not the happy song of a thousand birds
not morning blushing gentle,
not northern lights and passage of stars,
not bewitching summer nights
can lift like the language that eternal grows
smelling fresh as a flower's bloom,
moulded in natural form
of heaven and earth, of burning and storm."

Poul F. Joensen (1898-1970)

(Source: Færøske digte 1900-1971 v/ Poul P. M. Pedersen, Rosenkilde og Bagger 1972)

Blæing

Visit the beautiful and spectacular stone landscape of Blæing by the village of Sumba. You may even stumble upon the cave where the sheep thieves hid out in the old days



The route starts at “the parking lot” on top of the hill Hesturin, where the road between Lopra and Sumba is highest ①. Cross the road and walk on the mountain ridge to the east. There are no cairns here; however, visibility is very good in this first leg. Continue in the direction of the big antennae on the ridge.

Do, however, take a moment to turn around and look south towards the beautiful 469 metre high Beinisvørð, which is one of the country’s most famous bird cliffs. Beinisvørð is a frequently used motif in Faroese poetry and its rich bird life has also traditionally been an important source of food for the people of the area.

After about one kilometre, you will reach Spáafelli where the large mast is as well as a small building ②.

Here, you have a view of Víkarbyrgi and Hamrabyrgi, which are abandoned settlements. Local legend has it that Víkarbyrgi was wiped out in 1349 when the plague scoured the Faroe Islands. Only one woman is said to have survived. Before that, Víkarbyrgi was an important settlement complete with its own church and cemetery. It took another 500 years for people to settle in the village again. In early 1900, roughly 40 people lived in the village, but it was deserted

again some years ago. You can still see medieval ruins.

Please make sure to select the right direction on Spáafelli because there are two ridges. One goes to the east (to the left), while the other goes in a more southerly or south-easterly direction (to the right). Choose the latter and follow the fence. The ridge roughly follows the road further down the valley on your right-hand side.

Once you have walked about four kilometres you will come to Blæing. The area is unique with a tremendous amount of big and small rocks and stones, which have come down into the valley during the Ice Age. One characteristic of the stones is the bright colour that looks like shiny silver, glinting in the green grass. You go down in Blæingsskarð ③, which is a passage down from the ridge. There is a story about two brothers, Kaspar and Sjúrður, who hid here in the stony landscape. They had leased land from the priest in Vágur, but because the price was high, they would often starve and had to steal sheep to survive. In the old days, stealing sheep was a very serious crime in the Faroe Islands. The brothers fled from the authorities and hid in a cave in Blæing, which is called Cave Kaspar today ④.



The cave can be difficult to locate, even for local people, but if you're lucky (and a bit stubborn) you might succeed. A little hint: When you go down in Blæingsskarð there are traces of a path that goes diagonally down to the right and turns more and more to the right. About a 300-400 metre walk from Blæingsskarð, there is an old stone wall, and then you're almost there. The cave is about 50 metres straight out from the stone wall. An old iron sign marks the entrance and inside the cave there are many messages and greetings written by young people through the years.

Blæing is a favourite destination for the locals because the climate in the area is mild and warm. The green grass, along with the stones, makes for an ideal playground for children.

When it's time for you to move on, go back up through Blæingsskarð. You can choose to go back the same way or you can continue along the ridge. Here, you can still enjoy the view of Blæing. Among other things, there is a long stone wall, called Eiriksgarður 5, and a sheep fold, which is probably built centuries ago. No one knows exactly when or who built them. You can also see Lítla Dímun and Stóra Dímun. On a clear day you can see all the way north to Fugloy, at the other end of the country.

The bird life is rich with Skuas, Oystercatchers, Great Skua and Curlew.

Go down towards the end of the ridge. Then pass the infield on the left-hand side and down to the road in Akraberg. Here, you are on the southernmost tip

FACTS

Duration: Two to three hours

Distance: Six to seven km

Difficulty: Easy

Maximum height: 462 m

Children: The route is suitable for children. Small children may need a helping hand in the stony landscape

Surface: Partly visible grass path. In Blæing there is a grass path, stones and rocks

Map: 501



of the Faroe Islands. The lighthouse, which was built in 1909, has been of great importance for the safety of fishing vessels and other vessels in this part of the sea. In Akraberg, there is also a weather station and a radio transmitter. There are traces of high-backed fields in eastern Akraberg, which may originate from the Vikings. Local legend has it that around the year 1040, a Frisian boat stranded at Akraberg, and it is said that the crew settled here.

Akraberg had an important role during World War II because of its strategic location with good sea views to the east, south and west. The British had an important radio station in Akraberg during the War and ruins from the War can still be seen.

Glossary:

- **Huldufólk (Hidden People):** Grey, elfish people who live in stones. In Faroese folk tales, Huldufólk are said to be “large in build, their clothes are all grey, and their hair black.” They also dislike crosses, churches and electricity. In the old days, road constructions were sometimes altered to prevent damaging the rocks believed to be inhabited by Huldufólk.
- **Nólsoyar Páll (1766-1809):** A national hero. Shipbuilder, captain, farmer and poet, among other things. In 1804, he built the ship Royndin Fríða together with his brothers. He was frequently in trouble with the Danish authorities in the Faroe Islands who had imposed strict rules for trading limiting exports and imports to and from the islands. Nólsoyar Páll wrote the satirical ballad, Fuglakvæðið (Bird Ballad), where he made bird caricatures of specific people in the community. The poem prompted anger among the Danish officials in the Faroe Islands, but amusement among ordinary citizens. Nólsoyar Páll disappeared on a voyage in the winter of 1808-1809.
- **Nykur (Nix):** Nykur is a horse-like being that lives underwater. Easily identified by its grey colour and backwards hooves, the Nykur will occasionally surface to try and lure passing humans to mount it. Once mounted by an unwitting passer-by, the Nykur will immediately ride towards its underwater home – drowning the person on it back.
- **Sigmundur Brestisson (961 – 1005):** Introduced Christianity to the Faroe Islands in 999. He was the first Faroe-man to convert to the Christian faith, bringing Christianity to the Faroes at the decree of Olaf Tryggvason, king of Norway. Initially, Sigmundur sought to convert the islanders by reading the decree to the Thing in Tórshavn, but was nearly killed by the resulting angry mob. He then changed his tactics, went with armed men to the residence of the chieftain Tróndur í Gøtu broke into his house by night. Sigmundur offered Tróndur the choice between accepting Christianity or beheading; he chose the former.
- **Thing:** Things – from the Old Norse word þing, meaning assembly - were an early system of justice and administration.

When the Vikings and early Norse settlers arrived in a new place they brought with them their customs and legal systems. Things were where political decisions were made, laws upheld and disputes settled. They acted as meeting places and were often the focus for trade and religious activity.

