

30.8.2015, Fagrifoss, Kirkjubaejarklaustur

On track F206 we are leaving the Laki Craters and on our way South we pass again the Fagrifoss waterfall.



This time we can see this beautiful waterfall without being covered in snow and fog.



Well, then it is time to say good-bye to Theresa and Pierre. We had truly wonderful days travelling together, let's see if our paths will cross again...

However, we will meet each other latest on the ferry to Denmark, as we found out that we are sailing on the same day.

Close to the small town of Kirkjubaejarklaustur we hit the ring road and go straight to the local hot pot. We definitely need to get rid of all the accumulated highland dust.



Later we find a good camping spot at lake Flögulon.

Suddenly, around 10pm the whole car starts shaking and we hear some noise! This can't be sheep – only giant sheep... Werner is taking his torch and bravely leaves the car ready to defend us from the Trolls... and we see two wild/escaped horses galloping away. They have abused our Unimog to have a back scratch!

31.8.2015, F232, F210, F233, Eldgjá

The next morning we find the proof that we were not seeing any ghosts yesterday night: Horse tail hair on our bull bar!

Our next destination of choice are the new lava fields in the Holuhraun area, South of the Askja volcano. Since the 29th of August 2014 multiple fissure eruptions of the Bardarbunga volcano happened. This lava is still hot and steaming!

The track F910 has just recently been opened by the rangers and for us this is an ideal and adventurous connection to the new lava fields. We drive up again the F232 which we have travelled earlier in the opposite direction. It is confirmed, the landscape looks totally different when driving in the opposite direction. We could bet, that we never...



On the way we pass a hiker who is all by himself having a lunch break before crossing a river. He is only a tiny little blue dot in these vast green plains.

On our planned route we pass the Eldgja gorge – another to-do on our list. Unfortunately today we have not enough time left for a hike into the gorge.

Now the sun sets at 9pm, much earlier compared to when we arrived in Iceland. When we landed we had daylight until long after midnight. Now the days get shorter by 10 – 12 minutes every day.



We still have to cross a mountain pass covered in dense fog, until we find a camp spot and can call it a day!



1.9.2015, Eldgja, Kylingavatn

The Eldgja gorge was formed in 934 by supposedly the biggest volcanic eruption on earth since modern history and was lasting for several years. The gorge is 270m deep and 600m wide and was only discovered in 1893.



There is a nice hike to the waterfall Ofaerufoss and we choose to return to the car park via the rim of the gorge.



On our way to track F910 which will lead us to the new lava, we today mainly drive on F208. As this is a major track with lots of traffic of small 4x4s, we try to take as many side roads as possible. Some of these tracks are very interesting and adventurous and others are more or less boring, but most are very bumpy and in unmaintained condition. Some tracks end very unexpectedly although our map shows that they should continue. This ever changing landscape is one of the most interesting features of Iceland, we never know what will be behind the next corner....



As we pass lake Kylingavatn close to Landmannalaugar, it is totally calm – such a total calmness we have never experienced in Iceland before. It is also very quiet as normally the wind is blowing very noisily. It is so wind less, that the landscape is mirrored beautifully on the water surface. Werner opens our In-house coffee shop right next to the lake shore ☺ and serves Latte with cake while we enjoy the view.



It is hard to leave this amazing scenery, but we have to continue eventually... Hardly giving any side track a miss, we drive until we reach the waterfall Sigöldustöð close to the hydropower station and stay there for the night.



2.9.2015, Budarhalsleid, Sprengisandur

On our journey North we have to cross a second time the Sprengisandur plains. As we have been driving on the F26 already from North to South, we decide to take a track running parallel to the F26 – this is the unnumbered track Budarhalsleid which we follow Northbound.



The track leads us along the Hofsjökull glacier through typical highland country and very rocky terrain.





We are treated well by the sun with an almost spotless clear blue sky and can have outdoor lunch at lake Kjalvötn...

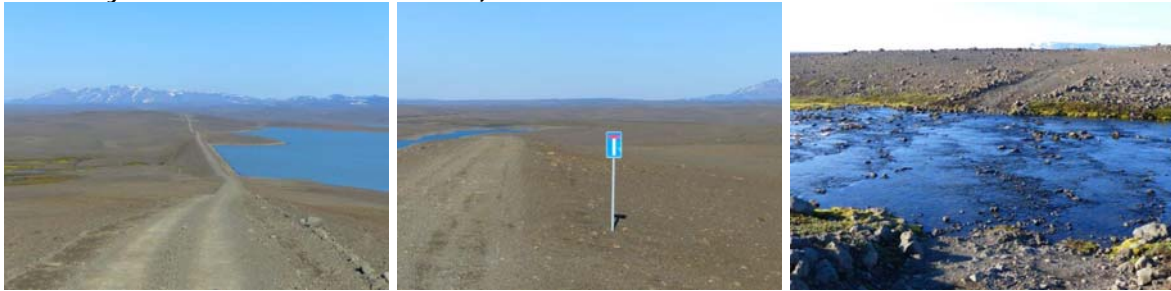


There are many fantastic views of the Hofsjökull glacier.



We drive along Lake Kvíslavatn, until we reach a turn off which is signposted as a dead-end road. We are a little confused and therefore first take the wrong track. Realizing that we are obviously going in the wrong direction, we turn back and decide to take the dead-end road. We are quite sure that this track is the right one, because our friends have been driving here already this year.

(In hindsight, we wonder if the dead-end road sign has been deliberately set up, in order to direct the traffic in a certain direction, more towards the main track – it certainly is not a dead-end road...)

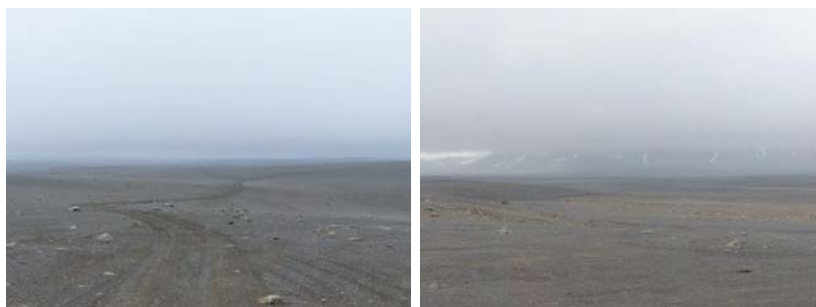


The camp site at the Þjorsa river is a real hidden gem. Due to the misleading signage there seem to be no other tourists here and we are all alone in the vastness of the Icelandic highlands. With our wind protection we manage to BBQ our steaks and after the meat is finished we use the remaining glowing coal as an under-table heater.



3.9.2015, F910 gen Askja

We awake to dense fog – what a difference to yesterday! No glimpse possible of the surrounding mountains and glaciers. During our first crossing on F26 we had such foggy weather almost the entire journey.



Shortly before the ranger station Nyidalur we return to the main track F26 and from here it is not far to the turn off onto the F910. The F910 runs East to West and is connecting the North to South running highland tracks, at the same time it is also the boundary of the Vatnajökull National Park.



We are bumping and bouncing along the track and have to navigate around huge rocks and through lava fields. Top speed is 20 km/h, but on an average we drive walking speed at around 5 km/h. We have 120 km to cover until Askja, today we only make 48km.....





It is hard to find the track through all these rocks ...

This is the worst track we have done so far and there is no way to go faster than 5km/h. Even at this speed our Unimog is shaking dangerously.

For the entire day, we only see three other cars. In the afternoon a 4x4 with five Belgians stops us; they were totally excited to see another car, they claim we were the first car they came across today. The Unimog was of course of big interest as well.

Our exclusive private camp for the night is set up right next to the track. We are all alone again in the vast plains. As the entire landscape around us is already pebble grey, at least our dinner should show some colour...

