

#### 4.9.2015, Dyngjiufjöll, Holuhraun, Svarta

We continue to bumper along stones and lava. Also today our average speed is about 10km/h and for a long distance we manage to drive only in 2<sup>nd</sup> gear. It feels like riding on a camel's back, swaying back and forth. The road sometimes is hard to detect and we need to fully rely on the sticks marking the way.



Cruising along at this low speed gives a lot of opportunity to study the lava formations and there is always something new to discover. Seeing this lava makes us craving for pudding...



At lunch time we reach the Dyngjiufjöll mountains, an ideal spot for a little outdoor picnic under an impressive skyline.





As we continue our way, we can see how the lava has flowed over the landscape. Only the higher hills and mountains stick out of the black lava.



Finally, we can see the steaming new lava at the horizon. This impressive sight is a fair reward for the efforts getting here. However, we still have to patient until we really can touch the lava. The road unfortunately makes speeding impossible...

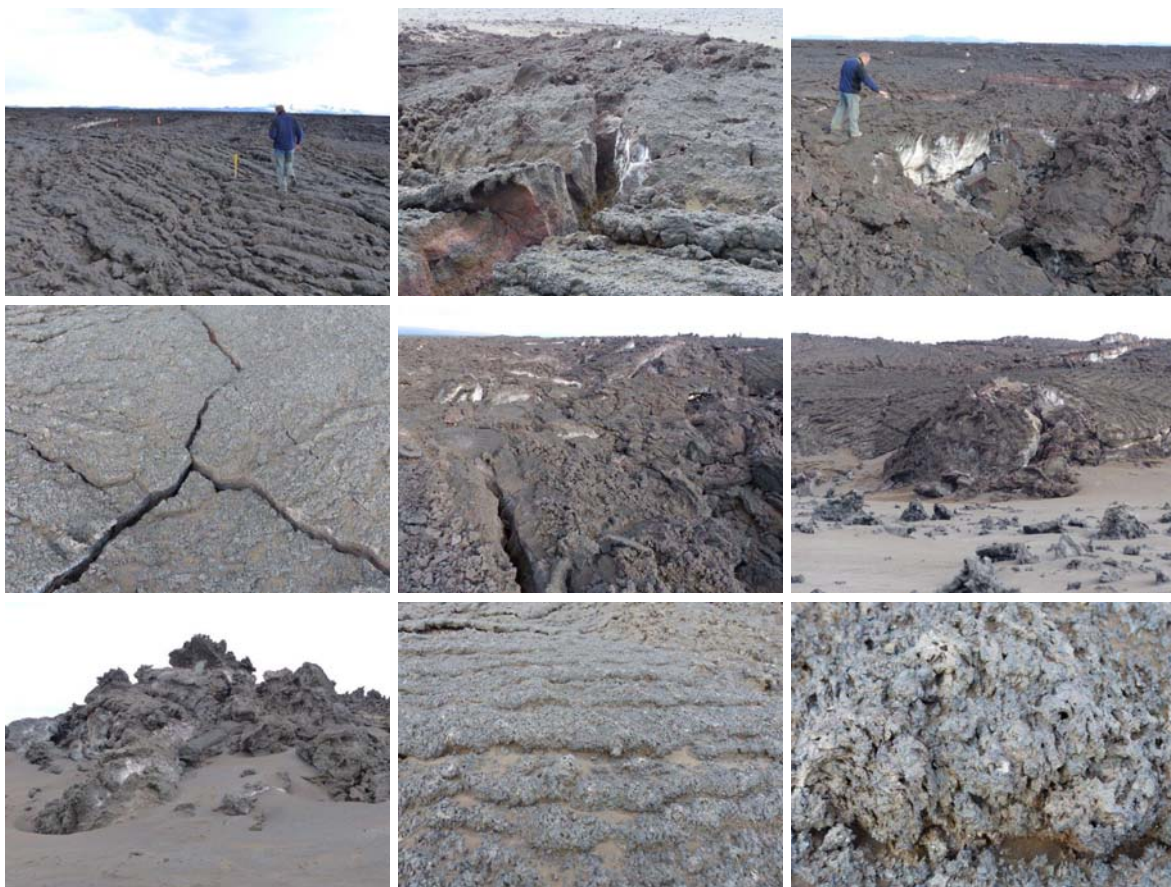


The lava originates from the eruption of the Barabunga volcano in December 2014 and covers an area of 85sq km (the biggest lava field created in Iceland since 1783). The lava covered even part of the F910 piste, therefore a new piste had to be made and marked in replacement.





While walking on the newly created short walk through the lava field one can feel the heat rising from below. This is such a cool (or rather warm) experience.



To see all the steam above the lava and to imagine how the earth is still cooking hot below, this is truly Mother Nature at work.



The lava has flown over a big sand plain and we cross this plain until we reach the Svarta river. This will be our camping spot for the night; another great camping recommendation from Pierre.



Near the Svarta Fluss another small walk is possible through the new lava field, right next to a warm river. But the water is a bit too shallow. Only later we learned, that this warm river didn't exist two months ago! The river had to find a new way through the lava and while flowing under the lava the water is heated up. The river then all of the sudden reappeared – warm – and the newly established parking spot therefore had to move.



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## 5.9.2015, Askja, Viti, Kverkfjöll

Today we want to visit the famous Askja volcano, located basically in front of us. To get to Askja we first need to pass by the ranger station Dreki at the Drekagil Gorge. While driving there, we see that the wind is covering all traces on the track. Even already all traces of the car which we came across not long ago...





Behind the ranger station starts the short walk to the Drekagil Gorge.



The hike is quite adventurous along a steep slope and sometimes in the river.



From Drekagil it is only 8 more km until we reach Askja. The hike starts from the parking lot to the crater lake Öskjuvatn and small neighbouring lake Viti, which once was an explosion crater. We are at 1100m altitude, hence still so much (left-over) snow.

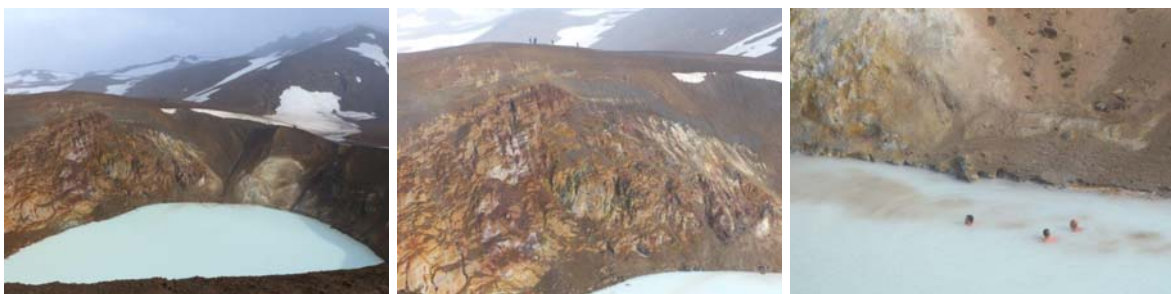


Unfortunately visibility is low and the wind is blowing strongly horizontally into our faces. Luckily we remembered last minute to bring our gloves.



The crater lake is huge. In this weather we can hardly see the other end of the lake. Also, the stormy waves remind us rather of the sea and not a lake.

The small lake Viti See has milky water and is supposed to be of 20-24C degrees. In the past the water was warmer, but this year the Viti is rather cool – so they say. Still, a few brave characters do the steep descent and have a bath.



On the way back we still have to fight our way through the wind. A lot of people are making their way to the lakes and we see several busses on the parking lot. Now, our next destination is the Kverkfjöll glacier (1929m); this mountain is easily detectable by its wind gap / jag.



Soon after the Askja the landscape looks totally different again. Light coloured pumice stone has been carried every where by the wind. Big and bigger stones are lying around as if carefully distributed by a big troll. Oh, are we starting to believe in trolls, too?



We cross the river Jökuldalshreppur and are all of the sudden in a sand storm. The landscape looks very magical, as if through a filter.



All the time we are driving straight West and the ice cap of the Kverkfjöll glacier is glaring, making it hard to see. But we still make it safely to the ranger station Sigurdarskali. Since we are in a National Park again we have to camp at the official camp site.



At the hut we learn, that today is the last day before they close for winter break. Many people are busy preparing the hut for winter, also the windows were protected with wooden planks. The hut manager mentioned that he has been stationed here for three summer months and will now return to Innsbruck where he usually lives.

In the evening they have a big party. We see at least 20 cars and ATVs parked, even the rescue team - which came across us early afternoon - is back here. Looks like they celebrate the end of season and probably finish up all stocks...



P.S.: Please note the patches of grass, specially maintained for campers with tents!

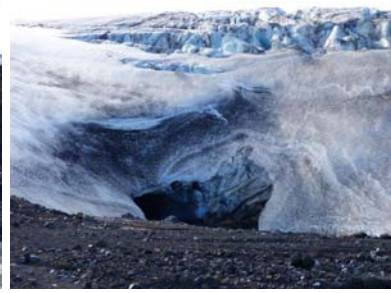
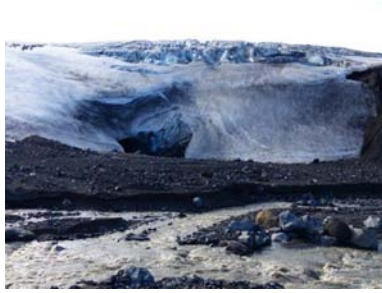
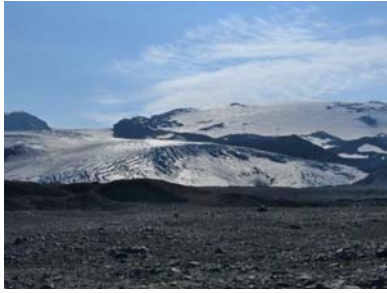
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### 6.9.2015, Kverkfjöll, F903

In the morning we visit the Kverkjökull glacier. During season guided glacier tours are offered to the glacier caves.







The road ends at the Kverkfjöll so we drive the F903 back North, passing by Hvannalindir, a small green oasis in this barren land (at 640m). In the 19<sup>th</sup> century outlaws were sent here and were able to survive for several years. A really interesting topic... we always wonder how they survived here, what did they eat? They can't have lived on wind and water only?



There are the ruins of the lava caves of the outlaws, but it wasn't possible anymore to visit, as the foot bridge over the river was taken down (for winter?) already.

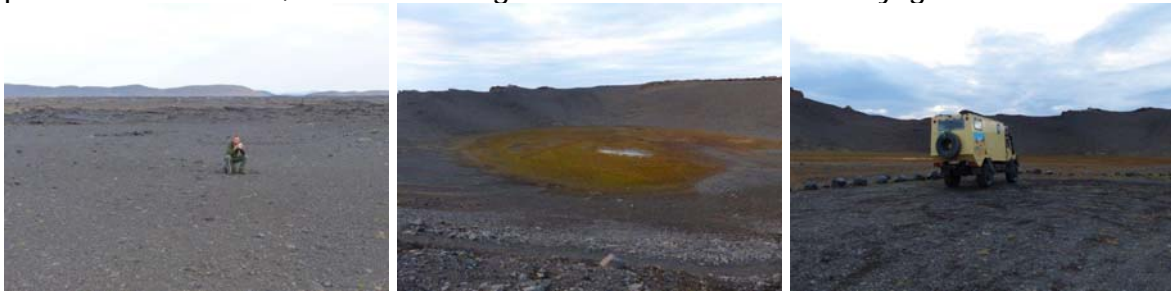
We continue our way back North as we haven't visited the North-Eastern corner of Iceland, yet. F910 and F88 will bring us to our destination, again through ever-changing beautiful highland landscape...



During our drive we circle around the Herdubreid and can admire this mighty mountain from all different sides and angles. Of course we shoot too many pictures, but this mountain is supposedly always hiding behind clouds and fog and we take advantage of the opportunity.



We need to reach our campspot for tonight, the ringwall crater Hrossaborg, before dark, so we only have time for a short coffee break. An eruption 10,000 years ago created this crater and due to its natural structure it was used to keep horses in the past. We arrive late, but still manage to climb to the rim in daylight.



As soon as we start preparing our dinner, strong wind starts again and our car is shaken heavily all night. We are sure, at home, such a storm would have been mentioned in the newspaper the next day. We assumed to be well protected by the crater walls, but... Can't imagine how the wind must be blowing out in the plains.

Who can spot the Unimog?

