

7.9.2015, Dettifoss, Namafjall, Myvatn

Shortly before lake Myvatn we interrupted our drive along the coast line of Iceland to turn South inland through the highland. Now we want to pick up our route North again and continue from where we turned off earlier. Enroute to Myvatn is the mighty waterfall Dettifoss, which is of course another to-do on our list. So we don't give it a miss.



How lucky we are to catch a perfect rainbow while there! It only appeared for a few minutes and soon after got too weak to be photographed.



We've been in the highlands for about 10 days only to realize, that autumn had arrived while we were out 'in the woods'. Since there is no vegetation in the highland, now the change of colour seemed even more dramatic.



Before reaching Myvatn we come through the high-temperature-area of Namafjall with many steam and mud springs (Solfatars). Steam is coming out of the ground everywhere and several boiling mud pools make the air smell so intensively of

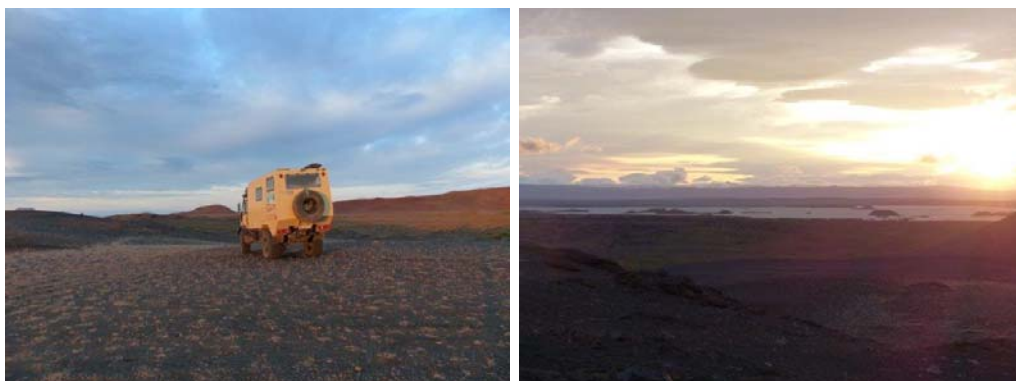
sulphur it literally stinks. In the past this sulphur was used for gunpowder production.



Finally we reach the „Myvatn Nature Bath“, the little sister of the famous „Blue Lagoon“. The water here is milky due to the silica in the muddy ground, feels a bit soapy-sticky and is supposed to be healthy. The intensive marketing of this bath has brought us here, but... although it is interesting to bath in this milky water, it is again a tourist rip-off. Since the entry fee is quite expensive, this creates certain expectations. But the showers were too few, the facilities too small, especially if busloads of visitors are dropped every 15 minutes in the pools. It all has a taste of “we don’t bother, these tourists will anyway only come once and never again”...



After the bath it is time again to look for a place for the night and we find a good spot shortly behind town on a 4x4 track, even with view of lake Myvatn.

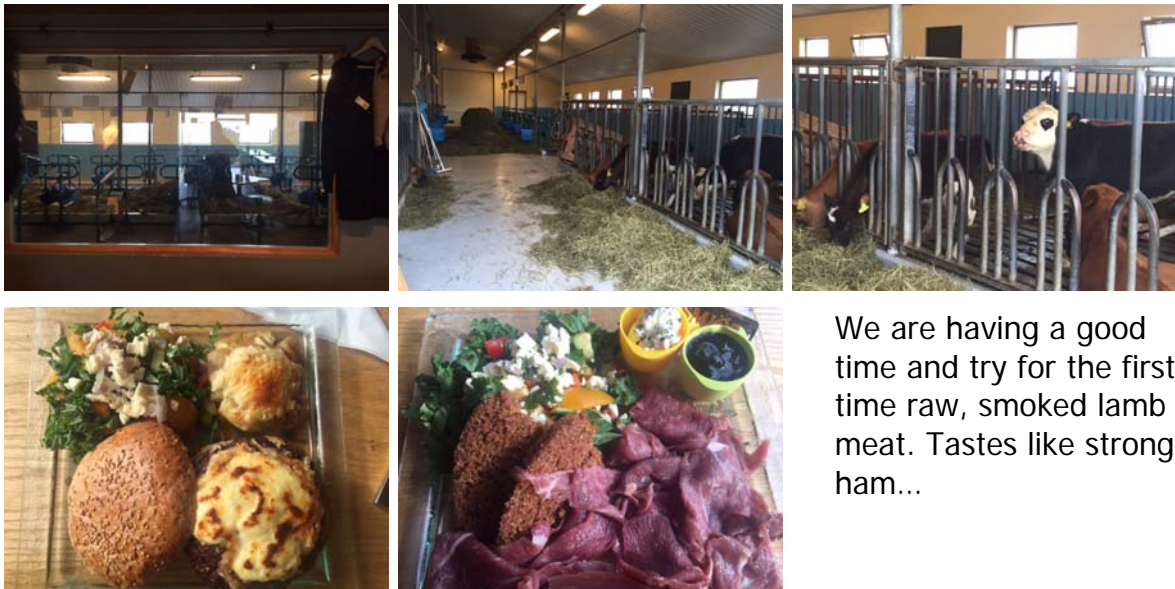


8.9.2015, Myvatn

This morning Werner is climbing the Hverfjall crater, while Dewi has to give her back a break. It is again very windy and quite steep to get up.



For lunch we visit the recommended „Vogafjos Cowshed“restaurant, where you can look from the restaurant directly into the cowshed – hence the name.



We are having a good time and try for the first time raw, smoked lamb meat. Tastes like strong ham...

After such a nutritious meal we are ready for the next sightseeing highlights: The Grjotagjia- and the Storagjia-lava caves. Inside the caves are warm water springs which have been used in the past for bathing. But now it is not allowed anymore to enter these lakes. What a pity!



For the night, we go back to the same place as yesterday, only trying to find a bit more wind protection on the back side of the mountain. The wind is blowing strongly, but the remedies against bad weather are homemade pancakes a la Chef Werner.



9.9.2015, Krafla, Dimmuborgir, Laxafluss



The wind was blowing so strong all night, that in the morning we find sandstorm like conditions. The sky is filled with sand particles and lake Myvatn is hardly visible anymore.

We drive to mount Krafla which is famous for its geothermal power plant. The pipelines are all over the mountain. Werner hikes the Krafla crater and is almost blown off the crater rim while the sand dust is every where in the sky. In the visitor centre of the geothermal power plant we learn that the boreholes - from where the hot steam is coming for power generation - are up to 3000m deep. There are plans to even dig 5000m deep.



Afterwards we visit the lava formations of Dimmuborgir. These very impressive formations have been created by hot water steam, which shot through the layer of lava above it. There is a famous 'cathedral' to see and many more can be discovered in the lava structure. We saw many faces...





We still do a quick stop at the pseudo craters of Skutustadir at the Southern end of the Myvatn lake. These craters were created by steam eruptions (and not lava eruptions) when hot lava flowed over a wet surface like a swamp or lake.



Since the weather is not so pleasant, we decide to continue driving further North in the direction of Husavik.

At the river mouth of the Laxa river we find our place for the night. The Laxa is one of the biggest salmon rivers of Iceland; salmon fishing here is expensive and limited.

10.+11.9.2015, Husavik

In Husavik we take a break from all the driving in the past few days. We explore the city, stroll along the port, test different cafes, need to run errands like swimming, fishing and shopping... the usual program. Then we are ready to visit the North Eastern part of Iceland.



12.9.2015, Asbyrgi Schlucht, Kopasker

We continue our way to the North East, but as soon as we leave town, we see local farmers mustering their sheep and trying to sort them so that the rightful owners get their sheep back. As of mid-September, all sheep (and horses) are collected from the highlands, where they were grazing freely all summer. After mustering they have to be sorted and distributed to their owners. The process doesn't look very efficient though. Everyone is "wading" through the sea of sheep, trying to catch a sheep and to identify it via their ear clip. After identification the sheep has to be moved to the correct door of its temporary stable. It all looks a bit chaotic and troublesome – but at least the children had a lot of fun.



We enjoy watching the show for a while before we continue our way to the Asbyrgi gorge. On the road we witness another sheep mustering. In the news it was mentioned already, that possible traffic disturbance may occur due to the many musterings going on. Werner helped in the end with the Unimog to move the sheep forward.



The Asbyrgi gorge is U-shaped and with steep walls going up vertically almost 100m high. Most likely this gorge was created by glacial rivers, who carved through the rocks with mighty powers millions of years ago.



At the end of the gorge you can do a little walk to the lake Botntsjörn. A very idyllic lake with crystal clear water.



The sea bird Fulmar lives in Asbyrgi and we were lucky to spot one. They produce only one egg per season and little one leaves the nest in late summer.



From Asbyrgi we want to drive clockwise around the peninsula Melrakkasletta. In Kopasker we find out, that the local camping place is for free and even offers a warm(!) shower. This is the first time ever that tourists are welcomed so warmly in Iceland. Of course we stay for the night.