

WALKING THE FAROE ISLANDS





WELCOME

With this walking guide, the Faroe Islands Tourist Board welcomes you to go for walks in our beautiful nature. There is nothing like a walking trip in the natural environment, where you can enjoy the tranquillity and breathe the fresh air. The Faroes is an exceptional place to travel in because there is no need to go far to experience outstanding and unspoilt nature. In addition, many interesting places connected to history and tradition can be seen on the routes.

Fauna and Cultural History



In the Faroe Islands, land is divided into 'infield' and 'outfield' areas. Often divided by a fence, the infields tend to be close to towns and are often cultivated, while the outfields are likely to be outside of towns and are left wild or for grassing.

In the outfields, you can get a feeling of how life was for our ancestors.

Stone houses, boathouses, old strips of fields, peat lands and store places for peat remind us of how close they lived to nature. You can also see old fences, fenced cattle runs, stone sheep runs, stone sheepfolds, sheep sheds and *Fransatoftir* (French ruins), which are the remains of small houses, where people sought shelter from the pirates in the old days.

Many birds breed in the outfields: Whimbrels, Snipes, Golden Plovers, Oyster- Catchers, Arctic Skuas, Great Skuas, Ravens and Crows. Sheep, geese and hares are also commonly seen.

Village Paths



All but two of the walks described in this guide follow the old village paths. These are ancient communication routes between villages. Before the construction of roads, it was normal to walk between the villages, for example to a "Thing" (local assembly), on trading errands or to the nearest church for services, christenings, weddings and finally, for the last trip - carried in a coffin.

The ancient paths are marked by cairns. As in neighbouring countries, the cairns mark the direction of the path, so the traveller does not get lost.

The walks up the *Klakkur* and out to *Bøsdalafossur* are not along village paths, but along footpaths.

The walks in this guide are described for people travelling by bus, but of course people travelling by car can also follow the guide. The duration set for each walk shows how long it takes to walk at a standard walking pace one way. The referred length is equally one way (except for the footpaths, where the duration and length is both ways). There are no food breaks and the like. The referred map numbers are topographical maps, 1:20 000 from Kort og Matrikelstyrelsen, 1991. Maps can be obtained from the bookshops mentioned in the chapter "useful information". The necessity for walking maps differs according to the level of difficulty. Please seek advice at the local tourist information.

www.visit-faroeislands.com

Publisher & distributor: Faroe Islands Tourist Board, undir Bryggjubakka 17, P.O.Box 118, FO-110 Tórshavn, Tel +298 316055,

Fax +298 310858, tourist@tourist.fo, www.tourist.fo · **Photographers:** Absalon Hansen, Guillaume Desmurs og Faroe Islands Tourist Board

Text: Randi Meitil · **Layout:** Reproz · **Maps:** Map extracts are from map of the Faroe Islands 1:100.000 © Kort & Matrikelstyrelsen (A 61-03)

Walking the Faroes Islands is at your own risk · The Faroe Islands Tourist Board is not liable for printing errors or changes that may occur



Respect Nature



Nature is sensitive, which is why it is very important to treat it well and protect it 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 your rubbish behind.
- Beware of loose stones, especially when there are several of you together.
- Beware of not walking out into marsh land, as it can be deep.
- Dogs must not be taken out into the outfields.
- Tents may not be put up in the outfield without permission from the land owners.
- It is prohibited to travel by bicycle or motor vehicle in the outfields or along the cairn paths.

So off we go



- If you travel by bus, be advised to enquire about departure times before you leave. Some bus routes do not have many departures and in addition, changes may be made to the timetable.
- For safety inform your host or the information office about where you are going. And then inform them when you have arrived.
- Always walk with others.
- Bring something to drink, food and/or e.g. chocolate.
- Always take a map, compass and whistle with you.
- There are some areas in the outfield where cell phones (mobiles) cannot be used.

Weather dependent



- Listen to the weather forecast to hear if conditions are favourable for walking.
- Do not walk in fog.
- If fog arrives whilst on a walk, it is advisable to keep to the cairns. If it is so dense that you cannot see between the cairns, it is best to wait by a cairn and keep yourself warm.
- Turn back if all is not well. There is no shame in not finishing the walk.
- Clothe yourself well, preferably with several layers of clothing – “layer on layer”. The weather can quickly change.

Duration:	3 hours both ways from the ferry landing, 11/2 hours from Hálsur to Klakkur and back.
Difficulty:	Easy
Length:	Almost 10 km (from the ferry landing and back).
Height:	0 m - 413 m
Map:	611

KLAKSVÍK – HÁLSUR – KLAKKUR

You walk from the ferry landing through the town and then along a partly asphalted gravel road, *Ástarbreytin*¹ (the Love path), which runs right up to Hálsur. People with cars may park their cars there.

Even though the path up to Klakkur is not well marked, it is very easy to find. Standing at the outfield gate, you head for the highest point north of you. There is also a cairn that you see straight away and can use as a landmark. You 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: The Oyster-Catcher, Arctic Skua, Snipe, Golden Plover, Whimbrel, and Lesser Black-Backed Gull. Ravens can also be seen, and Rock Pipits inhabit the remains of peat stores.

In the valley just south of Hálsur is what the old folk called *á Vaktini*² (on the watch). The story says that it was here that people sat watching out for hostile ships.

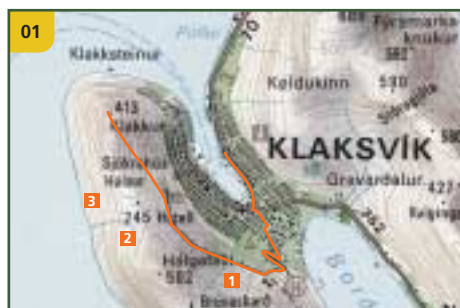
When you have nearly come right up the mountain and you look down the west side, you can see *Fagralið*.³ Here, the Folk High School, which was founded in 1889, originally stood, until it was moved to Tórshavn. Símun av Skarði, a Faroese writer and poet, composed the national anthem here in 1906.

Arriving at the top of Klakkur, you have an excellent view in all directions (the way down is steep, so beware). Westwards, you can see *Leirvíksfjørður* with *Gøtunes*, *Mjóvanes* and, in good visibility, also *Nólsoy* towards the south. Northwards, you can see *Kalsoy* and the fjord *Kalsoyarfjørður*. You can see three villages on *Kalsoy*. The southernmost is *Syðradalur*, and then comes *Húsar* and *Mikladalur*. Further north is *Trøllanes*, which you cannot see. In front of



you, there is the magnificent *Kunoyarnes*. On average, *Kunoy* is the highest island in the country. There are six mountains over 800 meters. Eastwards, you can see *Haraldsund*, and finally you have *Klaksvík* spread out below you. There were originally four villages here: *Í Uppsølum*, *Í Gerðum*, *Á Myrkjanoyri* and *Í Vági*.

When you come down from Klakkur, you see *Halgafelli* in front of you and then *Háffjall*. On the other side of *Klaksvík*, you see *Myrkjanoyrafjall* and *Kjølín* (The Keel, because it looks like the keel of an upturned boat).



Duration: 2 hours. 40 minutes extra up to Altarið.
Difficulty: Average. Even slope up to Skarðið. It is steeper to walk down to Hellurnar.
Length: 9 km
Height: 0 m - 353 m (Altarið lies at 483 m)
Map: 512



⇒ FUGLAFJØRÐUR – HELLURNAR

Bus route 400 runs to Fuglafjörður.

The trip begins at the information office in the middle of the town. Walk up the road west of the football pitch.

The first stretch of the path is through meadow. Above the lowest cairn is a ridge called *Rossaryggur*¹ (The horse back). Traces of the path are seen winding up it. Fuglafjörður is behind you and to the west, you can see *Blábjörg*, *Jöklaskarð*, *Gjógvárfjall* and *Niðan á Hús*, where people from Fuglafjörður hid from pirates in the old days. Then comes *Nón* (where the sun hits at *nónbil* – at 3 p.m.), *Breiðaskarð*, *Kambur*, *Trælavtnaskarð*, *Tyrlar* and towards east *Ritafjall* (*Leirvíksfjall* to people from Fuglafjörður).

The path from Fuglafjörður to Hellurnar is called *Sjúrdargöta*. There is a story about a giant from Suðuroy who went to Oyndarfjörður to test his strength. No one dared to fight him. The people from Oyndarfjörður urged *Sjurður*, the farmer, to challenge the giant. He wanted his youngest son, also named *Sjúrdur*, 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). There is a story about a milkmaid named *Malan*, who was pregnant and was teased by the other milkmaids for not keeping up with them. Malan picked up a 176 kg rock and challenged the others to do it. They could not. 100 m west of the path runs *Neytakonukeldan* (The Milkmaid's spring). *The milkmaid's* tankard, which could be used to quench one's thirst, lay here.

At the top of *Skarðið*, you see two large cairns. An old custom is that 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 Ghost". This is meant to protect you from getting lost and to

bless the trip. To the north from *Skarðið*, you can see the village *Oyndarfjörður* and the mountains *Tindur*, *Knúkur* and *Sandfelli*. On the first Sunday in August, it is the custom to hold a public meeting on *Skarðið* in the open air with speeches and songs.

From *Skarðið*, it is possible to extend your walk by 40 minutes and walk up to *Altarið*³ on the top of *Rustakambur*. From here, there is a fine view of the Northern islands and *Norðurhavið*.

*Hulduheggjar*⁴ lies to the west when you walk down from *Skarðið*. Here, a *huldu* woman (grey elvish people of the outfield) received help in childbirth from the midwife from *Dalbøur* in Fuglafjörður. The midwife received a good reward from the *huldu* folk.

Another story tells about a landownership struggle between the Oyndarfjörður farmer and *Gullbrandur*, a farmer in Fuglafjörður. *Gullbrandur* was killed and hidden in *Gullbrandshellid*⁵ and later buried in *Gullbrandsleiði*,⁶ which this path passes.

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

Bus route 481 runs from *Hellur* to *Oyndarfjörður* and *Skálabotnur*.



Duration: 2 hours
Difficulty: Average. Somewhat difficult to come up from Kambsdalur. The path then runs level until you walk down towards Skálafjørður.

Length: 3.5 km
Height: 0 m - 373 m
Map: 511



⇒ KAMBSDALUR – SKÁLAFJØRÐUR

Bus route 400 runs between Tórshavn and Fuglafjørður to Kambsdalur where the tour begins.

Walk some 300 m from the bus stop to the scout's hall, *Kambur*.¹ The path begins by the river. First, you walk by the old peat strip in the outfield and by places where peat was stacked by the people of Fuglafjørður.

On *Skarðsbrúgvín*,² you have a panoramic view over Fuglafjørður. To the north of the mountains of Fuglafjørður, *Nestindar* on Kalsoy are silhouetted against the sky. At the extreme south under *Borgin*, a rocky knoll juts out, called *Eingilskahús* (The English house). Here, a man kept watch in hostile times. You can see both northwards and southwards. Spotting a hostile ship, he ran over *Eysturskarð* to signal the village by lighting a fire.

To the north, you can see some of *Djúpini*, the island of Kalsoy, *Skarðsgjógv* on Kunoy and *Leirvíksfjall*. The first carriage road to Leirvík³ was here. By the coastline lies the warm spring *Varmakelda* with its healing qualities. Here, allegedly two girls from Leirvík were taken on board a Shetlandic ship at the end of the 19th century. They were walking from Leirvík to Eiði. The girls were never seen again.

By the lake *Trælavatn*, a colony of lesser black-backed gulls nests in the summer. North of the lake, you come to an old cairn path. The path is level, but the terrain is uneven and stony. Some 100 m south, parallel to the path, there are some boundary cairns,⁴ which are outfield boundary marks. Make sure you do not lose your way!

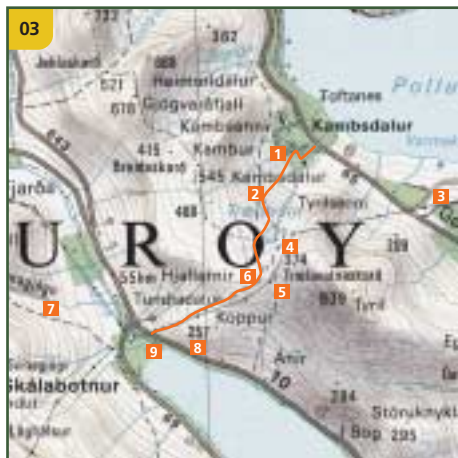
The path splits into two⁵ when you see *Skálafjørður*, *Toftavatn*, and *Nólsoy* in the background. The left path goes down to *Ánadalur*, and the other goes to the village of Skálafjørður. The cairns on the path to Skálafjørður can be seen westwards with *Reyðafelstindur*⁶ in the background.

Walking down to *Tundradalur*, it is best to walk by the river on the south side (left side). From here, you can see over to *Øksnagjógv* (a cleft) and *Typpafossur*⁷ (a waterfall) on the other side of the valley. According to a story, this is where the brute farmer, *Ormur bóndi á Skála*, hid the bodies of the Oyri farmer and his son, whom he had killed. Later, he undoubtedly got qualms of conscience and gave himself away by calling out in his sleep: "The clothes lie under the corn and the bodies under *Typpafossur*".

Another story tells that in ancient times, four men from Hattarvík, *Flokksmenninir*, planned to subdue the whole of the Faroes. They embarked on acts of violence, but one day, they were captured and sentenced to be thrown off *Valaknúkar*.⁸ The sentence was carried out and they were buried by *Tingsteinur*⁹ under Valaknúkar.

You can continue from Skálafjørður directly to Selatrað (walk no. 5).

From Skálafjørður, the bus route 400 runs to Leirvík, Fuglafjørður and Tórshavn. Bus route 480 runs from Strendur and route 481 from Oyndarfjørður.



Duration:	2 hours from the village of Lamba, 1 1/2 hours from the stone quarry.
Difficulty:	Easy. A bit difficult from Lamba and up to the top. Later, the trip becomes easy.
Length:	5,3 km
Height:	30 m - 243 m
Maps:	511 and 510



⇒ LAMBA – RITUVÍK

Bus route 440 runs from Toftir and passes *Lambareiði* where the tour begins. If you take bus 400 from Tórshavn or Fuglafjørður, you can change to bus 440 at Sældarfjørður, which drives to Lambareiði. From here, you have two possibilities. The first possibility is to walk 700 m towards the village of Lamba, where the old village path begins.¹ You first go through a white gate and begin to walk up along the stream. It is a little steep to get up. The other possibility is to go along the asphalt road, which goes down to a stone quarry. From there, you can also reach the path.²

When you have reached the top, you have a panoramic view over *Lambavík*. The Danish ship *Norske Løve* got stranded here on New Year's Eve 1707. It was on its way to the East Indies and a storm came upon them when they were west of the Hebrides. From there they were driven to the Faroes. The next day, there was no trace of the *Norske Løve*.

Some things from the ship can, however, still be seen today. The ship's clock and a model of the ship, which one of the crew made, hang in the cathedral *Havnar Kirkja* in Tórshavn. There were also two planks from the ship. One of them is found in a farmer's house in Lamba, and a chair is in the local museum *Blásastova* in Norðragøta.

If you look southwards, you will see cairns standing one after the other along a long stretch towards Rituvík. You walk along old peat strips. The terrain is flat and good to walk on.

When you approach Rituvík, you can see Nólsoy in the background and south to *Eystnes*, the wind turbine at Skarhæddin, *Svangaskarð*. On Streymoy, you can see the mouth of *Kaldbaksfjørður*.



There is grassy terrain all the way down to the road in Rituvík.

Bus route 442 runs from Rituvík to Runavík where you change to bus 440 all the way to Sældarfjørður where you finally take bus 400 towards Tórshavn.



Duration: 3 1/2 hours
Difficulty: Average/difficult. It is steep from the road upwards, difficult and long to walk. On the top, the walk is reasonably flat. Down to Selatrað it is grassy.
Length: 7 km
Height: 0 m - 360 m
Maps: 511 and 510



⇒ SKÁLAFJØRÐUR – SELATRAÐ

Bus route 400 runs through Skálafjörður from Fuglafjörður, Leirvík and Tórshavn. Bus route 480 runs from Strendur and route 481 from Oyndarfjörður.

Walk 2 km along the main road through the village Skálafjörður until you reach *Innara Ennisá*,¹ which is north of a stone quarry where the walk begins. Here, you start walking up. At the top of the steep slope, you walk through stony terrain, *Ennisstíggur*.² It is advisable to keep to the path here 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 much here. Eastwards you can see *Stöðlafjall*, *Götueiðið*, *Borðoyarnes* and *Sigatind*. Northwards, you can see the high northern mountains of Eysturoy, among others *Slættaratindur*. On the right, you have *Reyðafelstindur*, and you can clearly see the spectacular basalt intrusion “sill” *Eysturoyarsyllin*. One can imagine the extreme forces of nature which were working when the lava emerged up from below and forced itself between the basalt layers over 50 million years ago.

There is a story about *Orm*, the farmer from Skála, who was an evil-doer and a sheep thief. He had killed the farmer from Oyrar and his son. He was sentenced to death at the Eysturoy Thing, at *Stevnuvólur*. 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 Orm and hit him in the achilles’ tendon. Orm was arrested, executed and buried at *Stevnuvólur*, which is a

mound by the river *Millum Fjarða*, some 50-100 m southwards, where the river *Heltnará* runs down to *Fjarðará*. From here all the outfield sections, in which he had stolen sheep, can be seen.

When you turn towards Selatrað, you have *Borgarfelli* on your left. You can also see over to Streymoy with *Sornfelli* and *Skælingsfjall* westwards. When you arrive above the plain, you see to the north *Sundalagið*, the village Hósvík and to the south, the fjords *Tangafjörður*, the mouth of *Kollafjörður* and the northernmost houses in Kollafjörður.

Above the village of Selatrað, the path goes near the path which comes from *Skála*. Take care not to change paths! You must keep to the cairns on the path to the right.³ When you have gone down towards the meadow fences, you cross a river which runs by a stone sheepfold. Here, you go through a gate and then down to the village by way of a cattle track .

Bus route 480 runs from Selatrað.



Duration: 3 1/2 hours, down to á Fjørð in Vestmanna or 4 hours if you walk down along Gjógvará.
Difficulty: Average. From Hvalvík, it is a little difficult to walk up the mountain. Otherwise, the path is easy to walk.
Length: 10 km
Height: 0 m - 385 m
Maps: 411 and 311



HVALVÍK – VESTMANNA

Bus route 400 runs from Tórshavn and Fuglafjørður with a stop in Hvalvík.

The trip begins at the river *Myllá* which runs north of the Mission house in Hvalvík. Walk along the river, through a gate and through an old fenced cattle way. There is a narrow path along the river on the north side. The first cairn is some 200 m from *Hvalvíksgjógv*.¹

When you have passed *Eggjarmúli*,² there is a fine view through *Saksunardalur*, the longest valley in the country. From here, follow the high voltage electricity line path all the way to Vestmanna.

The first mechanical digger bought by the Faroese came to Hvalvík. It was called the *Hvalvíksskúgvín*. 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* (witch's stone). At the next cairn after *Kellingarsteinur*,³ the path divides. The path south goes to Kvívík and the path north goes to Vestmanna.

On top of *Hvalvíksskarð*, you can see over to *Mýrarnar* and one of the first of SEV's dams, built in the early 1960s. To the south is the mountain range *Egilsfjall*, *Goturshúlsur*, *Sátan* and *Skælingsfjall* and on *Vágar*, you can see *Reynsatindur*, *Heldarstindur* and *Haonartindur*.

Loysingarfall 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 *Loysingarfall*. She said that a man in white clothes had led her by the hand and fed her. No one knew this man.

Another report is about a young milkmaid who disappeared in the

swollen river at *Gjógvará*.⁴ 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 *huldu* people (stone spirits) and trolls. Not until the day after when the river had settled down, did she dare to approach the house. It was a miracle that she survived the incident.

The cairns and the high voltage electricity line take you to the left side of *Bjendalsgjógv*.⁵ When the path twists southwards, you should be careful as there is a steep downwards slope. There are two possibilities of walking down to Vestmanna. By the dam at *Fossá*, the path divides. You can follow the road and walk down to á Fjørð or you can go over the first dam, follow the cairns and come down to Vestmanna along *Gjógvará* (where the milkmaid disappeared) and down to *Miðalsbrekka*.⁶

Bus route 100 runs from Vestmanna to Tórshavn.



Duration:	2 1/2 hours from the bus stop by the mouth of the tunnel in Kollafjørður.
Difficulty:	Easy - average. From Kollfjarðadalur it is a little difficult up the slope to the cairn, which is in view. The rest of the trip is easy.
Length:	4.4 km
Height:	0 m - 260 m
Map:	410



⇒ KOLLFJARÐADALUR – LEYNAR

This walking trip starts at the Búnaðardepilin¹ (the farming centre) in Kollfjarðadalur. Bus route 300 runs from Vágur and route 100 from Vestmanna or Tórshavn. The busses from Vágur and Vestmanna stop at the Statoil station in Kollfjarðadalur, where you have to change busses. You can also take bus route 400 from Fuglafjørður, Leirvík or Tórshavn. The bus stop² is at the mouth of the tunnel above *Oyrareingir*. From there, you walk along the main road to the Búnaðardepilin, about 1 km, until you come to a gate on the left side of the road. From the gate, you first walk along a farm road until you come to the actual village path.

Three rivers run down to Kollfjarðadalur by the Búnaðardepilin. The trip begins at the middle river, *Brekká*,³ which flows north of the Búnaðardepilin. Walk along the river and keep the cairn in sight as a landmark.

You turn northwards⁵ by the first cairn after crossing the old mountain road, *Oyggjarvegurin*,⁴ a carriage road. At the next cairn, you arrive at *Skælingsvatn*.⁶ 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 the Nix. The Nix 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 the Nix and the name *Nykatjørn*.

At the lake, three outfields meet: *Norðari Skælingshagi*, *Hagin Uttan Fyri Húsini* in Leynar and *Heyghagi* in Kollafjørður. Several paths also meet here. They are the old paths coming from the south: *Oyggjargøtan*, the path you are walking from Kollfjarðadalur to Leynar and the path to Skælingur.

The mountain north of *Skælingsvatn* is called *Sátan*. Here, you can see the geological formation "The Streymoy Sill" (*Streymoyarsyllin*), and one can often see 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 the custom to climb *Skælingsfjall* on Jóansökukvöld (Midsummer Night) to see the sunset and then the sunrise a few hours later.

As you walk further, you will get a view over to the islands Vágur to the west, and later of Koltur to the south.

The cairns lead you all the way down to Leynar village.

The bus stops at *Frammi á Trøð* at the village Stykkið just after you cross the bridge.



Duration: 2 1/2 hours.
Difficulty: Difficult. The hill Gásadalsbrekkan is steep and difficult to walk up. It is also steep down to Gásadalur. Beware of loose stones on the path.
Length: 3.5 km
Height: 100 m - 434 m
Map: 210



⇒ BØUR – GÁSADALUR

Bus route 300 runs from Tórshavn to Bøur. Follow the road just 3 km west of Bøur village, where the walk begins. The road divides - make sure to take the road to the left.

Gásadalur has been one of the most isolated villages in the Faroes. It is difficult to get to the village by sea and there has been no road, so this path has been the only connection to the other villages. Even though the helicopter has flown to Gásadalur since 1983, the postman has walked up the mountain three times a week until the end of February 2003, when the hole was blasted through the mountain. The tunnel is expected to be open for traffic in 2005 at the latest.

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.

There is no church in Gásadalur, therefore the school is used for services. The cemetery is from 1873. Before then, people were buried in Bøur. The coffin was carried over the mountain to Bøur. The trip was very difficult and the only place that the bearers could rest was at the *Líksteinurin*² (the body stone), which you will come upon in the middle of the tour.

Further on, you come to *Keldan Vigda*³ (the blessed spring). 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 Christian faith, your soul does not gain salvation if you die unbaptised. Therefore, the priest, who was travelling with them, quickly blessed the spring and baptised the baby.

If you continue, you will see *Risasporið*⁴ (the giant's footprint). There is a story 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!

In the village, there are ruins from the middle ages, *Uppi við Garð* and *Gæsutoftir*.

There is a helicopter service to Gásadalur three times a week. Seat reservations from the airline company, Atlantic Airways, must be made in advance.



Duration: 2 hours there and back.
Difficulty: Easy. The walk is level, but it is possible to climb up some 40 m to a viewpoint out at Oyrar.
Length: 5 km there and back
Height: 30 m - 100 m
Map: 309



⇒ MIÐVÁGUR – BØSDALAFOSSUR

Bus route 300 runs through Miðvágur from Bøur and from Tórshavn.

Get off the bus at the police station¹ in Miðvágur and walk southwards the first stretch through the village until you come to the outfield gate. Walking through the village, you will see in an easterly direction *Trøllkonufingur* (the troll woman's finger). It is a high projecting rock on Sandavágur's side. You now come to the outfield gate where the path starts.² You walk along a lot of peat bogs and remains of peat stores. There are no cairns on the path.

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

There are several legends about the enchanted realm at Vatnið. On the way from Miðvágur to Sørvágur, there was supposed to be a huldu mound. One day, a huldu woman (stone spirit) asked a priest to come inside. There were supposed to be many trolls inside. On leaving, the priest, who knew how to practise 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.

There has also been a Nix at *Vatnið*. The Nix, which is a creature that lives in lakes, often resembles a beautiful horse. It lures people to it, grabs them and then pulls them to the bottom of the lake. Once upon a time, children had gone to play by *Vatnið*. Then a Nix 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, was frightened and called out to his brother *Niklas*: "*Brother Nika!*" (he had not learned to talk yet). The Nix, thinking it to be its name being called, lost its power and disappeared, and the children were saved. The Nix loses all its power when called by name.

In *Úti í Svanga*³, there are many birds in the summer.

Trælanípa (slave mountain top) is a perpendicular rock wall, which juts 142 m straight up out of the sea. Supposedly, it has gotten its name from the Viking Age when slaves were pushed off here. Be careful not to get too close to the edge, it is steep! From here, you can see the southernmost part of Stremoy, 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.

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

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

Bus route 300 has five bus stops in Miðvágur.



Duration: 2 hours
Difficulty: Easy
Length: 7 km
Height: 100 m - 230 m
Maps: 408, 508 and 509

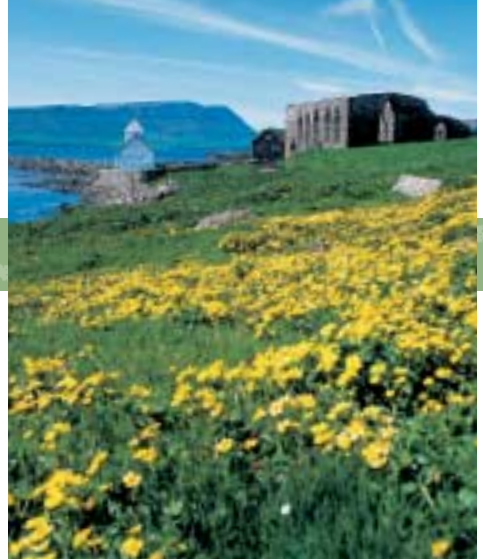
⇒ TÓRSHAVN – KIRKJUBØUR

The walk begins where the roads *Landavegur* and *Velbastaðvegur* intersect. From there, a road goes down to *Sandá* and passes the farm where the path to Kirkjubøur starts. First you walk up a hill. When you arrive at the top, if you turn round, you will have a good view over Tórshavn and all of Nólsoy.

When you start to walk again, you go round *Reynsmúli* and then you arrive at *Reynsmúllalág*. Two small lakes are in front of you. You may see many Kittiwakes there in the summer. Follow the cairns and you will see a speaker's chair¹ built of rocks. For the past 120 years, open air public gatherings have been held in this place with waving flags, national speeches and patriotic songs composed for the occasion. One can imagine how crowds of people have sat on the hill before the speaker's chair and listened to, amongst others, *Jóannes Patursson*, a pioneer in the Faroese national movement.

The path continues southwards. On the route, you have a great view of Sandoy, Hestur, Koltur and Vágar. There is a story about *Magnus*, a young man from Koltur, who was courting 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, was together with the girl and when the tide turned, he swam back to Koltur. The father discovered this. One day, as Magnus came ashore, the father stood before him with an axe and threatened to kill him. The wooer was forced to go back, and he was never heard of again. Undoubtedly, an eddy took him and carried him out to sea. The story relates that after this, the eddy, which is called *Grisamir*, arrived inside *Koltursund*. This must have been an act of revenge.

As you approach Kirkjubøur, you will see a small islet, *Kirkjubøðólmur*, 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 m from the nearest houses.

Bus route 101 runs from Kirkjubøur to Tórshavn.



Duration: 3 1/2 hours
Difficulty: Easy to Skarvanes, average to Dalur.
Length: 7.5 km
Height: 0 m - 100 m (300 m to Dalur)
Map: 506

GUÐRUNARLÖKUR – SKARVANES – DALUR

Bus route 101 runs from Tórshavn to the harbour *Gamla Rætt*. From there, you take the ferry Teistin to Skopun. Take bus route 601 from Skopun towards Dalur and get off by the small river Guðrunarlökur. You can also take bus route 600 towards Skálavík and ask to get off at the cross-road Skálavík/Húsavík, then walk 200 m towards Húsavík to *Guðrunarlökur*¹ along a path that runs by a sheepfold.

Walk from the sheepfold at Guðrunarlökur onwards under the rock ledge to the south. Under the rock ledge is *Runtaurö*² (Runti's skree). The story is that *Runti* was a sheep thief who hid himself 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, so 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. There was a superstition 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 *Líðarökur*,⁴ you get a beautiful view of *Dúnjavoatn*⁵ with Stóra and Lítlá Dímun and Suðuroy in the background. You can also see *Salthøði* and the village of Sandur. A little north of Stóra Dímun is *Øssursdrangur*, named after *Øssur Haogrímsson*, a chief from the Viking Age, who was killed by *Sigmundur Brestisson* in a power struggle. South of the towering rock lies *Grønaskor*. *Øssur* asked to be buried so that his head faced *Grønaskor*. In good visibility, you can see all the way to Mykines. To the right, is the island of Skúvoy which has a bird life and is worth a visit.



Further up 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 stonewall, and there, the path to Dalur begins. Past *Dalsrók*,⁶ about 1/2 km from Skarvanes, there is a short steep stretch downwards. Otherwise, the path slowly inclines up towards *Handasti Varði*⁷ (see the map). While you walk up to *Handasti Varði*, you can see marsh land and *Vatnsdalur* lake on the right. After the last cairn in Dalur, you walk along the road down to the village.

Bus route 601 runs from Dalur to Skopun.



Duration: 2 hours
Difficulty: Average. It can be a little difficult to walk up along the cleft Káragjógv, otherwise the path is easy. Be careful as some areas are steep.
Length: 6.5 km
Height: 0 m - 350 m
Maps: 403 and 503



⇒ HVALBA - TRONGISVÁGUR

Bus route 702 runs from *Sandvík* and from *Tvøroyri* through Hvalba.

The path starts at *Fitjarnar* west of *Nes* in Hvalba. First, follow the fence between the meadow and the outfield right up to *Litli Hamar*.¹ Up on the ledge, there is a stone laid path, which is now grassy. It is called the *Priest's path*, probably because it is so wide, that it was never necessary for the priest to dismount. The path goes up on *Káragjógv*, where the priest *Kári* was said to have fallen. The path up the cleft is steep at times, however, it is not difficult to walk. It takes about half an hour to reach the top of the mountain.

Upon arrival, you see *Hvalbiarfjall* in front of you. If you follow the cairns, the first peak you come to is *Litli Íslendingur*² and just to the west are *Sigmundarsteinar*³ (*Sigmund's stones*). They are called *Sigmundur*, *Tórður* and *Einar*. If you walk between them, you will either become suddenly old or you will not live out the year. The story is that *Sigmundur Brestisson* carried the stones up here. *Sigmundur* was a Viking chief and is known from the *Faroese Saga*. He lived in *Skúvoy* around the year 1000. His greatest achievement was to swim from *Skúvoy* to *Sandvík* – most of the way with two men on his back.

Arriving at *Íslendingur*,⁴ a rise in the terrain by the highest cairn, there is a magnificent view. Towards the east, you can see both *Dímuns*, *Skúvoy*, and *Sandoy*. Westwards, you can see a part of Hvalba village, *Norðbergsvatn*, *Norðbergseiði* and *Grímsfjall* in the background. It is now a level walk south to *Mannagjógv*. The third cairn after *Miðjufjall* has its own story. On 1 December 1917, a man from Hvalba went from *Tvøroyri* to Hvalba. The weather was good, but after he had walked for quite a while, there was a snowstorm. He did not dare to continue, but stopped by this cairn. To keep warm, he took down the cairn and stacked it up again, hoping that people would

come looking for him. After a long time, when he had almost given up hope of being helped, and had sat down, men found him and got him safely to Hvalba.

Half way between Hvalba and *Mannagjógv* you have an exceptional view of *Vatnsdalur* and *Vatndalsvatn* with two small islets, where there are many birds during the summer.

The path runs from *Mannagjógv* down to *Trongisvágur*.

Bus route 702 runs from *Trongisvágur* to *Sandvík*, *Tvøroyri* and *Drelnes*.



Duration: 4 hours
Difficulty: Difficult. It is difficult to walk to the top of Mannaskarð and Vágsskarð. The rest of the trip is easy.
Length: 6,6 km
Height: 30 m - 420 m
Maps: 503 and 502.



⇒ ØRAVÍK – VÁGUR

Bus route 700 runs from Sumba, Vágur and from Tvøroyri through Øravík. Bus route 703 runs from Fámjin and Froðba.

First, walk about 100 m in Øravík along the road to Fámjin. There is a path to the left. Nearly 200 m down the path, you come to an outfield gate. From here, you can see where the path goes up to *Mannaskarð*.

The path continues by *Tinggil Uppi Millum Stovur*,¹ where the men from Suðuroy held their “Thing” in the old days. Here, the scenery has a character of its own, there are gullies with high peaked ridges on the sides. Also found here is the “Thing table”, where the story says that the farmhand *Snæbjørn* in Hvalba was sentenced to four years in a labour camp in Bremerholm Copenhagen for having bought scarves for his true love from a smuggler’s boat. *Snæbjørn* was, dissatisfied with the sentence and intended to kill the judge, but instead, he hit the sheriff so hard that he died. He escaped from the “Thing” place and lived a long time outlawed in various places in the cliffs in Suðuroy.

It takes some time to walk from *Tinggil* up to *Mannaskarð*. The last stretch up is stony. Be careful not to dislodge stones.

There is an excellent view from *Mannaskarð* over *Dalurin* by *Vatnsnes* and *Bessavatn*. At *Vatnsnes*, the electricity corporation built a dam and drilled a tunnel in the 1960s, which goes from *Vatnsnes* and down to *Botnur*.² They breed salmon and trout in the lake. You can also see the mountain ridges, which at the south starts with *Vágfelli*. Then comes *Vágsskarð*, where this path also, goes and *Hvannafelli*. On your right, you have *Borgarknappur*, a mountain where the top resembles a castle from the middle ages. Four municipalities have boundaries at *Borgarknappur* – *Hov’s*, *Porkeri’s*, *Vág’s* and *Fámjin’s* municipalities.

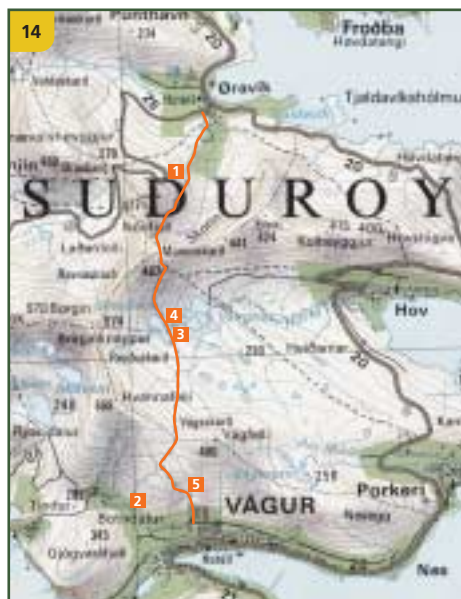
The path goes between the lakes along *Vatnaryggur*.³ Here, you can see many birds. There is said to be many *huldu* folk here. On the left of the path,

at *Vatnaryggur*, lies *Ærgidalur*.⁴ Here, The National Museum of History has excavated the ruins of a house. The valley was used as an outfield pasture (*ærgi*) in the Viking Age. At that time, it was normal for people to stay in the outfield pasture in the summer, looking after the cattle.

There is a story about the scoundrel farmhand, *Snopprikkur*, who rode along this path and on towards Hvalba, followed by the farmer of *Laðangarður* in Sumba, whose horse *Snopprikkur* daringly had stolen.

From *Vágsskarð*, the path gradually slopes down until it reaches *Hvannadalur*.⁵ From there, the descent is rather steep. The cairns guide you down to *Hvannadalsá*. East of the river, some 50 m from where you cross it, there is a byrgi. It is a fenced-in piece of outfield, which was formerly used to acclimatise foreign sheep. You walk down to Vágur on the west side of the grove. Notice the remains of an old stone wall down by the river!

Bus route 700 runs from Vágur to Sumba and Tvøroyri.



⇒ USEFUL INFORMATION



Norðuroyggjar

Norðoyar kunningarstova, Tourist information (T.i.)
Nólsoyar Páls gøta 32, P.O.Box 269, FO-700 Klaksvík
Tel +298 456939
Fax +298 456586
info@klaksvik.fo

Eysturoy

Eysturoyar Kunningarstova Saltangará (T.i.)
Heiðavegur, P.O.Box 200, FO-600 Saltangará
Tel +298 449449
Fax +298 449180
infoey-r@post.olivant.fo
www.framtak.com/eysturoy

Eysturoyar Kunningarstova Fuglafjørður (T.i.)
á Bug, P.O.Box 100, FO-530 Fuglafjørður
Tel +298 444860
Fax +298 445180
infoey-f@post.olivant.fo
www.framtak.com/eysturoy

Streymoy, Nólsoy, Hestur og Koltur

Kunningarstovan (T.i.)
Niels Finsens gøta 13, P.O.Box 379, FO-110 Tórshavn
Tel +298 315788
Fax +298 316831
torsinfo@post.olivant.fo
www.visittorshavn.fo

Aldan (T.i.)
undir Bryggjubakka 17, P.O.Box 118, FO-110 Tórshavn
Tel +298 316055
Fax +298 310858
tourist@tourist.fo
www.tourist.fo

Vágar - Mykines

Vága Kunningarstova (T.i.)
FO-370 Miðvágur
Tel +298 333455
Fax +298 333475
vagar@post.olivant.fo

Suðuroy

Kunningarstovan á Tvøroyri (T.i.)
FO-800 Tvøroyri
Tel +298 372480
Fax +298 371814
sout-inf@post.olivant.fo

Kunningarstovan í Vági (T.i.)
FO-900 Vágur
Tel +298 374342
infovag@post.olivant.fo

Sandoy, Skúvoy og Stóra Dímun

Sandoyar kunningarstova (T.i.)
FO-210 Sandur
Tel +298 361836 / +298 222078
Fax +298 361256
sandinfo@post.olivant.fo

Information of Faroese folk tales

Many walks refer to tales and stories connected to the mountain paths. The local guides can tell these stories and information in English and Danish is also available at the local libraries.

The local tourist information offices around the islands also offer information on other organised walks.

Tour organisers

Faroe Trekking

Slættalið 4, FO-100 Tórshavn

Tel +298 320404

trekking@trekking.fo

www.trekking.fo

Færøernes Guideforening

Tel +298 223249

GreenGate Incoming

udir Bryggjubakka 3, FO-100 Tórshavn

Tel +298 350520, Fax +298 350521

info@greengate.fo, www.greengate.fo

Smyril-Line Incoming

J. Broncks gøta 37, P.O.Box 370, FO-110 Tórshavn

Tel +298 345936, Fax +298 345950

incoming@smyril-line.fo

www.smyril-line.fo

Flogfelag Føroya Incoming

Hoydalsvegur 17, P.O.Box 3225, FO-110 Tórshavn

Tel +298 340052, Fax +298 340051

incoming@ff.fo, www.ff.fo

Public transportation

Strandfaraskip Landsins (buses & ferries)

Yvíri við strond 4, P.O.Box 88, FO-110 Tórshavn

Tel +298 343030, Fax +298 343003

ssl@ssl.fo

www.ssl.fo

Atlantic Airways (helicopter)

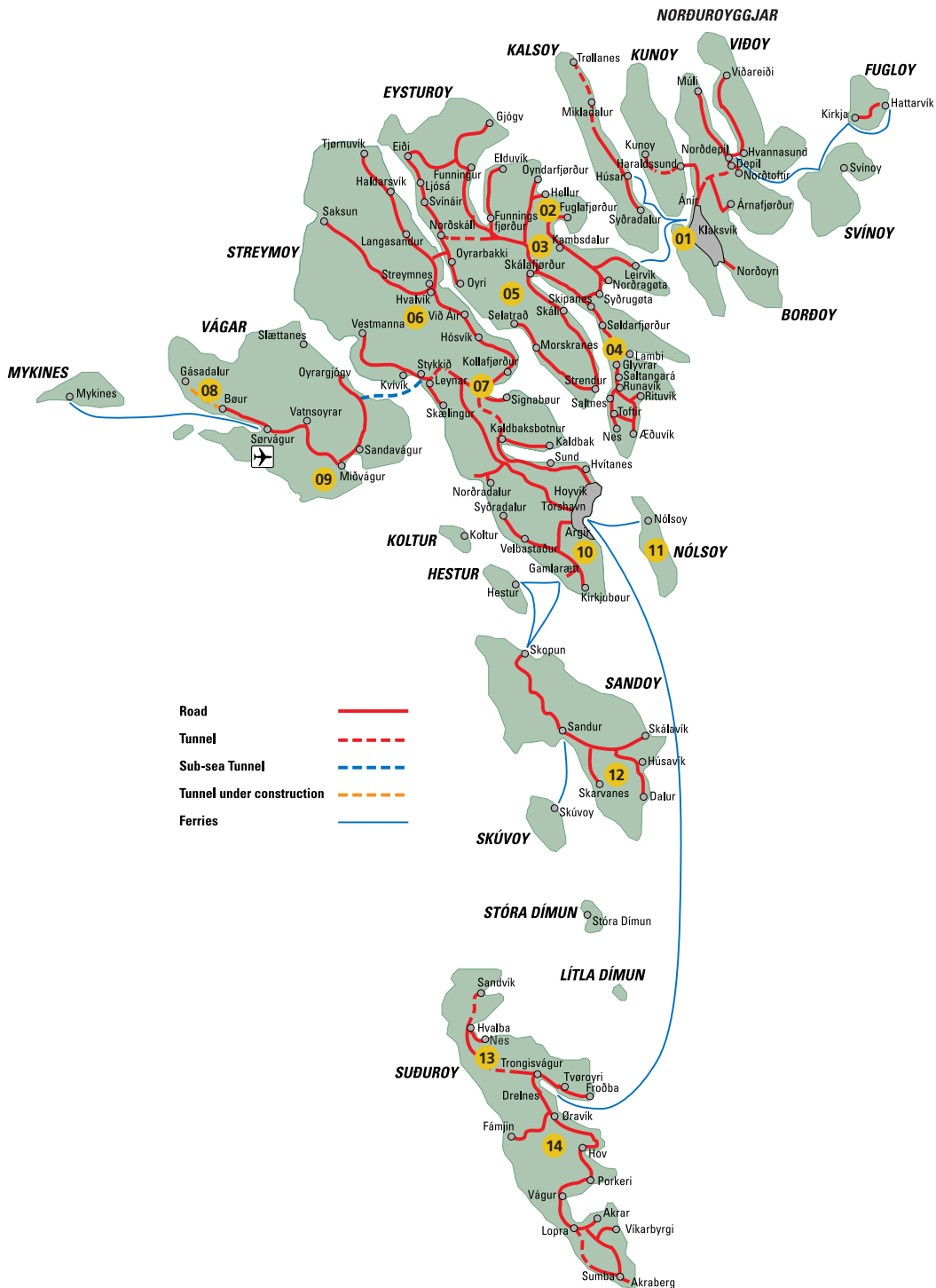
Vagar Lufthavn, FO-380 Sørvágur

Tel +298 341060, Fax +298 341061

booking@atlantic.fo

www.atlantic.fo





Bookshops

H.N. Jacobsens Bókhandil, Tórshavn,
Tel +298 311036

SMS, Bókasölan, Tórshavn,
Tel + 298 319575

Hjalmar Jacobsens Bókahandil, Tórshavn,
Tel + 298 311584

Bókabúðin, Saltangará,
Tel +298 449292

Alfabókahandilin, Klaksvík,
Tel + 298 455533

Leikalund, Klaksvík,
Tel +298 457151

Sandoyar kunningarstova (T.i.), Sandur,
Tel +298 361836 / +298 222078

Eldhús, Sandur,
Tel +298 36 10 02

Suðuroyar Heimavirki, Vágur,
Tel +298 373960

Most tourist information offices sell maps.

Clothes and equipment

Local clothing and sport shops have a wide range of equipment. For further information, contact the local tourist information office.





Faroe Islands Tourist Board

undir Bryggjubakka 17 · P.O.Box 118 · FO-110 Tórshavn
Tel +298 316055 · Fax +298 310858 · tourist@tourist.fo · www.tourist.fo

www.visit-faroeislands.com