

2011 Wonderful Iceland by Our "Hotel Caddy"

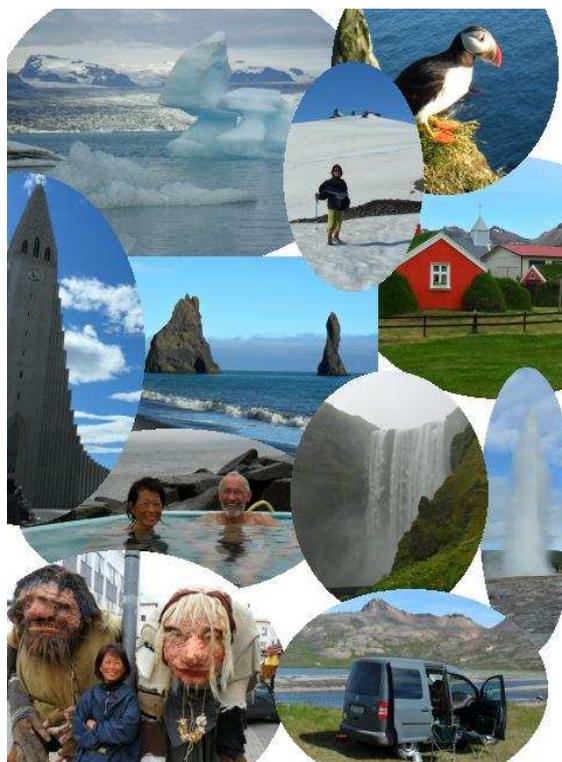
Starting from Home: 8th July
Touring Iceland: 21st July – 31st August
Back to Home: 5th September

Background

Peggy suddenly had this idea to visit Iceland with our new 'Hotel' VW Caddy.

First I had been very apprehensive to tour Iceland with its rough climate for as long as 6 weeks.....

Now we do love Iceland.....
...but its climate...brrrh!



Goals and Strategy

- **Just drive and see how we get on!**
- Of course we expected to do mostly wild overnight parking at nice spots!
- Keep things simple – the minimum luggage and equipment was imposed by the size of the Caddy!
- See nice countryside, dramatic sceneries - experience life the local way!
- Visit Ostfriesland on the way up – as this part of Germany is a bit off the mainstream itineraries!

Results

We managed to follow the master plan which required much flexibility to cope with the unknown and unexpected! **It was often hard to cope with the cold in the wind and we rarely could enjoy outdoor life – except when walking and sight seeing!**

Facts

- Time: Overall: 61 days
to Iceland: 13 days (2 nights ferry) **in Iceland: 42 days**
back home: 4 days (3 nights on ferry)
- Distance (car): Overall: 10'500 km **in Iceland: 6'500 km** (155 km /day)
- Fuel: Overall: ~600 l Price/l in Iceland: 2300 lkr/1400 = CHF 1.65
- Costs (CHF) Overall: ~4000.- Fuel: ~1000.- Ferry: ~2000.- Food etc: ~1000.-
- Weather (Isl): 50% of fair weather, often cool in the wind: max temp 10 to 15°, rarely 18°+
35% soso – rather cool and very windy: max temp 8 to 12°
15% bad, very wet, cold and stormy: max temp 4 to 8° (min record 1.5°)
- Health: Fine in general – I did not even have a cold.
Peggy was not well with light fever for a couple of days.
- Equipment: Minimum clothes (A few times we wore all we had).
A small gas cooker and minimum kitchen ware – we never used the bbq grill.
2 sleeping bags in a duvet case.

Driving

The main roads are mostly sealed and easy to drive. Very little traffic except in Reykjavik Area. We drove a lot on small roads and even tracks – sometimes 40km mostly in 2nd and even 1st gear. Most 'F-roads' are prohibited for normal cars – so we were restricted with regard to visiting the central highlands.

Walks

We walked a lot but we never ventured too far into the unknown since we had no detailed maps and the paths are often not marked and the tracks invisible.

There would be a lot of remarkable trekking to do but one needs proper equipment and also the willingness and bravery to survive the harsh climatic conditions.

But then – we have a lot of nice walking in CH too – why force the issue here!

Accommodation

We slept every night in our 'Hotel Caddy'. Most of the time we found suitable spots at remarkable and lonely locations. We stayed only one night at a ordinary camp-site in Reykjavik and a couple of times we found it useful to stay at one of the few free camp sites (remote and too little business for administration). Usually we started looking for a place for the night between 4 and 7pm – there was no real rush as there was no threat of nightfall:-). By the time we had rested, had dinner and looked for what to do next it was usually 9pm when Peggy went to bed for a long night. I usually read until 10pm (unless it was too cold to stay up)

Food and Beverage

During the whole trip we never had problems finding something reasonable to eat. There were bigger or smaller supermarkets (Sankaup, Bonus or even Netto etc) almost in every little village. Usually we bought food for 3 to 4 days (just in case) and since we did not have a fridge we had to eat it on time. This meant that we did not often find it useful to eat in restaurants (often fast-food). Alcohol is only sold in state-owned Vinbudin shops at exorbitant prices, so we became moderate drinkers and restricted ourselves to the little supply we took from home and otherwise to the inexpensive light beer – 2.25% - available in the supermarkets.

Sightseeing

The whole trip was sightseeing for us. Wherever you go, there is nature to see. Sometimes we just kept driving at lowest speed possible (hardly traffic) and enjoyed the everchanging sceneries (without being exposed to cold wind:-). Cliffs, fjords, waterfalls, glaciers, volcanoes, hot springs, lava fields, lakes, rivers, blueberries (very sparse forests) and no end.... then birds, flowers, seals. Of course there are museums of all sorts (traditions, nature, arts, and anything and everything) at every possible and impossible location.

AND: to enjoy a hot bath outdoors especially sitting in a hot pot is an experience and is part of sightseeing!

Lasting impressions

Fortunately we did not experience any severe trouble! In the following just a few events or aspects which stand out in our memory (some of them are described in more detail in the diary):

- We already enjoyed the leisurely drive up to **Northern Germany** and we will especially remember our sunny day at the **Wattenmeer** and eating the huge oysters we found by ourselves!
- It was also good to see our old friends in Kiel again who we had first met in Sicily in 1979. I even retain a painful experience from a **wasp bite in my tongue** at Laboe Beach where Annegret and Peter had taken us by ferry!
- Of course one never forgets being at high sea! It was not a luxury cruise but we enjoyed sailing over the **Atlantic Ocean**!
- The plethora of everchanging **impressive and dramatic landscapes** in a very icelandic atmosphere! Almost too much to digest!
- The lovely puffins and the nasty looking gulls, attacking intruders near the breeding places!
- Sitting in a hot pot outdoors (40°) with cold wind blowing around our ears!
- Walking up to Snaefellsjökull in the far West! And of course the many other walks!
- The helpful locals who found my car key and stuck it to our car's window and the others who helped spontaneously to pull out our caddy, stuck in deep mud. The young lady who in the cold storm knocked at our door at 9 pm and handed us a thermos with local tea.
- The hot cup of (instant) coffee Peggy 'brewed' first thing in the morning and the good cooking Peggy did with a small pan on the small gas cooker. We usually had a splendid view out of the car's windows during the whole ritual of apero, 1st and 2nd course! We called it 'sitting in our sunroom'!

Writing the Trip Reports

I write these trip reports primarily for my own future memory. While writing, I live the trip again, sometimes even more intensively than during the real trip. While writing, I also enjoy sharing our experience with the potential readers, who are my dear daughter and son, maybe close family and friends.

Also sometimes people ask me about details of our journeys and then I may just give them the Internet address instead of long explanations I know, in most cases they will be too lazy to go and look and read... tough luck for them:-).

Acknowledgement

I wish to express my gratitude to Peggy who as usually did wonders in managing our household logistics within the restricted space and possibilities of a VW Caddy and who put up with the hardship of simplest life while appreciating the enjoyment and satisfaction of self-achievement and successful survival!

DIARY

May – June 2011 **Prologue in France**

After returning from Australia in May we collected our brandnew VW Caddy in mid May and drove right away to Ste Marie to stay for a few weeks to install a (re-) movable bed and a permanent cupboard for clothes and kitchen. For long trips we will remove the single seat of the back row.



We then spent 2 nights on the way home in the Cevennes and the Vercors to validate and test the set-up!

8th July **Start: Ipsach End: Plittersdorf**

Distance from home: 280km (today 280)

We wanted to take it easy for the start and so I chose one of the nice places along the Rhine we had passed by bicycle in 2006. So we started from home at 10.30 and arrived at Plittersdorf at 3 pm already after having done our supply shopping in a LIDL nearby.



Hanging around and enjoying a sumptuous picnic in a beautiful summer day, watching the cargo ships busying up and down the big Rhine. The car was just parked behind and we went to sleep early.

9th July **Start: Plittersdorf End: Rorichum near Emden**

Dist: 953km (673)

Very early at 6am we got up and had breakfast in the morning sun, when a reporter turned up beside and asked for the permission to take a photo of us!

Well – he was there to write in the newspaper about the resumption of the ferry service by a brand new ferry. So we took a (free) ride to France for the very first crossing of the riverstream powered ferry! The interview by the German reporter with the French crew was a bit more difficult..... I could have helped:-)



Later in the morning we visited Rastatt and enjoyed the big market before the long drive to Ostfriesland via Frankfurt, Dortmund and Osnabrück where we left the Autobahn and continued leisurely via Cloppenburg to the estuary of the River Ems at the border to Holland. It was getting time to look for somewhere to stay and there, at Rorichum we saw it: Cassi's Biergarten with a little overnight parking for customers – that's us! After having enjoyed 'eating to the limits' with local specialities (Matjes, Grünkohl with mixed meat – a bit like Berner Platte) we went for a short walk to the polders (dam) in the evening sun before bed-time.



10th July **Start: Rorichum n/Emden End: Leybucht polder n/Neuwesteel**

Dist: 1061km (108)

After early coffee at 6 am we left in very clear morning atmosphere along the polders to Emden where we parked at the small port to visit the lovely small town.

As we continued leisurely along the polders to the open sea we saw light towers, beaches, wind-mills etc. In the afternoon we reached a small lake behind a gate (Schleuse) and even it was afternoon, we stopped for the night and had a great picnic in the warm weather.

We then took a long walk on the dam with great views of the Wattenmeer!

We were lucky as it started raining heavily just as we reached the car. By bed time everybody else had left and so we were alone at this parking.

Note:

Before we had decided to stay here for the night we had already continued to Norddeich – a typical beach resort and tourist trap – and there we decided to backtrack the few kms. As you will see tomorrow, this was a lucky decision:-)



11th July **Start: Leybucht polder n/Neuwesteel End: Hilgenriegelsiel n/Norddeich**

Dist: 1094km (33)

Got up early again and drove a bit to let the sun get warmer to enjoy outdoor morning coffee. Now we were ready for the day's enjoyment and 1km off the road we reached this little car park right beside the Wattenmeer.

With no plans and no intentions for the day we talked a few words with a couple of German campers who told us that this is THE PLACE for us to stay and enjoy a splendid day like that. They also mentioned that they had found some oysters far out in the slick at low tide.



That sounded great and so I awaited low tide, then with a large bag, I waded far out and came back with a heap of huge oysters and a pan full of cockles (Herzmuscheln) and mussels. Peggy found delicious sea asparagus which also found their way into the pan:-)
Enough for a big feast that day remains as one of the big highlights of our Iceland-Trip!



12th July **Start: Hilgenriegelsiel n/Norddeich** **End: Dedesdorf (Weser)** Dist: 1323 km (229)
Still happy from yesterday we started our 38th wedding anniversary day without clear target except hoping to find a lovely restaurant to have a yammie local style meal in the evening.

So we drove leisurely along the coast and enjoyed to see beaches here (Dornumersiel), small towns there (Hooksiel – with a free public hot shower -mmhhh) and windmills. In the end we crossed under the Weser in a recently built tunnel and stopped for the night right beside the Weser at the former ferry station of Dedesdorf.



Disappointment: no restaurant except a pizzeria - and the whole day we had been looking forward for a treat tonight! So we treated ourselves with picnic from our reserve stock – chorizo, red beans and the like – which on a normal day would be considered just right!

13th July **Start: Dedesdorf (Weser)** **End: Hamburg** Dist: 1473 km (150)

We got up at seven and after coffee we started to drive over to the Elbe towards Hamburg. It was a bit disappointing that we could not drive along the river but we managed to get to the shore at Cranz just to get an idea. But there were nice villages to see and the road was sided by beautiful and stately old houses! When we approached Hamburg I became increasingly tense and stressed since I did not have a proper city map to look for the caravan park near the center. Eventually I managed to drive over the spectacular Köhlbrandbrücke which spans high over the harbour and then leads directly into the eastern city center – close to the camper site (17Euro).



At 1 pm we left on foot for sightseeing and made a big tour via Bahnhof, Rathaus, the Ferry Terminals and then had a tidy beer at a local Biergarten just before starting on a (disappointing) tour of St Pauli.

Then we returned around the hills above the ferry terminals where we saw the 'Queen Elisabeth' passing. Now we were very hungry and looked for somewhere to eat..... walking for 2 hours also passing the huge renovated Ware House Compound (Speicherstadt) we did not find one place serving traditional German meals but Italian, Spanish, Turk, Asian etc everywhere!!



Still hungry after a few small fast food tidbits we decided to go back to the camper site and just before getting there under heavy rain, we bumped into a Tavern of the Sporting Lisbon Football Club and had an excellent Bifana (reminding us of last years walk in Portugal) and a few large beers – that saved the evening!

14th July **Start: Hamburg** **End: Cismar** Dist: 1607 km (130)

It still rained a bit in the morning and it was cold – but Peggy wanted to have a closer look through the Hafen-City and the Speicherstadt. It was really worth while to see the huge new city being created for business, entertainment, leisure, culture (the new concert hall), residential, ocean terminal etc.



We got back to the car at 1 and left at 2 pm heading for the Hansestadt Lübeck with a beautiful old town center. We enjoyed the extensive tour through old streets, visiting the Rathaus, Burgtor and the Holstentor etc.

We then left Lübeck at 4.30pm and continued towards the East Sea. It was rather cold and soon we started to look for some Landgasthaus with a suitable overnight parking. But it took a long while and only after getting away from touristic places along the sea, when we passed the small village Cismar, we discovered this small Gaststube 'Im Stillen Winkel' off the road.

Bingo – We devoured a 'währschafes' home cooking meal (with Klösse:-) and then we slept on their car park, although the owners were very reluctant to let us – the problem: they had no Kurtaxe permit and they worried of their nosy neighbours.



15th July **Start: Cismar** **End: Kiel** Dist: 1757 km (150)

We woke up very early (without 'police interference') and continued slowly through the Holsteinische Schweiz towards Kiel where we had been invited by Annegret and Peter to stay at their place tonight.

Nice villages – posh tourist traps like Heiligenhafen – but drizzling and foggy weather, no easy access to the shore - so we ended up in Kiel at 10am, far too early. And so we spent half a day in Ikea and Citypark – shopping-seeing!

We then moved on to Annegret and Peter's home and enjoyed a very nice time with them for 2 days! Annegret did a great job in the Kitchen and surprised us with several traditional local specialities (matjes etc).

Most of the discussions revolved around travelling of which they had done a lot too since we first met in Sicily as far back as 1979 - much of it with their good old 4WD VW-Bus!



16th July Start: **Kiel** End: **Kiel**

Dist: 1757km (0)

After nice breakfast and picking cherries in their big Lustgarten, Annegret and Peter took us by Ferry to Laboe, a attractive beach resort nearby.

Nice ferry ride – nice busy beach (sunday), lying in the sun – then the drama: a wasp swimming in my beer bottle had stung me in the tongue and then I spent 1h at the red cross station under observation until the swelling started to recede and the ambulance was released. 2 hours later pain and swelling had abated to a level which permitted me to enjoy another delicious and sumtuuous meal of Annegret's.

At midnight we said goodbye and then moved to our Caddy to sleep as we planned to get up very early next morning!



17th July Start: **Kiel** End: **Graerup (DK)**

Dist: 2102km (245)

Indeed we left before 7pm to Schleswig where we visited the old fishing village Holm - a bit awkward – a village circled around a cemetery in its center! We then continued for a quick turn in Flensburg and as it rained we only had a quick look at the historical Nordtor.

Now we moved across to the North Sea and up into Danmark where we made short visits to Mogeltonder (a street with thatched roofs, nice church), the island Roem with an enormous beach (kite surfers paradise), the old town Ribe (pic) and after bypassing Esbjerg looked for a place to stay at the beach near Blavand. This was probably the most traumatic beach resort I have ever seen and so we continued North via small and bumpy roads until we reached a quiet place behind a huge dune. The dunes are covered by deep grass which gives them a unusual aspect. It was cool and so we had a fondue for dinner:-)



18th July Start: **Graerup (DK)** End: **Hirtshals (DK) – Ferry Terminal**

Dist: 2451km (349)

After a very good night we continued all along the coastal dunes before we had to turn inland at Lemvig. Relaxed driving to the ferry-port Hirtshals where we arrived at 2.30pm.

The ferry would leave only the next morning – and so we had plenty of time to look for a place to sleep. It rained, so in the end we decided to stay on the small and crammed car park (no campers) right in front of the terminal office (with WC) and then had a lovely picnic with all the food rests we would not be allowed to take to iceland.

We went to sleep at 9pm to be fresh to queue for check-in early morning.



19th July Start: **Hirtshals (DK)** End: **Ferry at Sea (Noroena)**

Dist: 2451 km (0)

Peggy woke up at 4am – check-in opened at 5am – boarding at 8.30. Found our couchettes cabine, 6 in one room (on the way back 9). In fact one was supposed to take own sleeping bags – we did not and we could not go back to the car – we'll see. As such a ship ride is - one just hangs around and rests and we ate our picnic on the covered deck (pic). Peggy went to bed at 9pm and I went at 10.30. The sea was very calm.



20th July Start: **Ferry at Sea** End: **Ferry at Sea**

Dist: 2451 km (0)

After a good sleep and a morning coffee at the self-service we hung around again the whole day until we reached Torshavn / Faroer Islands at 4.30pm for 1h stop. Then cruised along the cliffs towards the very spectacular northern end of the islands. Now it was time for dinner picnic and then we spent some time chatting with a Belgian couple before going to sleep. This time it was cold and I had to wear my jacket and thus had no more pillow. Using my hard books as a pillow I slept very badly!



21st July Start: **Ferry at Sea** End: **Borgarfjörður (ISL)**

Dist: 2563 km (112)

Surprise - After the dull weather the last few days – splendid weather as we approached Iceland in the early morning. We disembarked in Seydisfjörður at 8am and got through customs 'just like that' – just a sticker on the windscreen showing when the car 'was imported'. 10 minutes later we stopped at the first waterfall and then crossed a pass, still mostly covered by snow.

Soon after we reached Egilstadir beside Lake Lagarfljot and were surprised that this little town had big supermarkets. So we did our shopping for 4 days supplies in Samkaup (Bonus only opened at 12). To mention: Roast Chicken for today and Egils Light Beer 2.25% for a while! Then we left for the first target – Borgarfjörður. Nice ride (on gravel roads) through the plain between 2 mountain-ranges and then a steep and winding scenic road over a pass to Borgarfjörður.

Then just found this spot outside the village beside a little creek flowing into the fjord and surrounded by wild mountains and all this in warm wheather – just ideal for our roast chicken!!!!!!



Later in the afternoon we drove to a re-knowned birds cliff nearby to see our first Puffins (Macareux / Papageientaucher)! Getting back we realised that night will not occur – so we went for a walk to the village and saw our first grass-covered house and went to see the church with a famous painting (Sermon on the Mount - Bergpredigt) of the popular local painter Kjarval. Then we walked back to the car climbing over the Rock of the Elves from where we had a beautiful view over the Fjord in the late sun's atmosphere.



22nd July Start: Borgarfjörður End: Langanes Peninsula

Dist: 2806 km (243)

Great morning and breakfast. On return we drove again past the Nadakross (cross protecting from landslides) and then back over the pass to take another road across the wide plain, visiting a few small lovely chapels of which one held the oldest pulpit of Iceland. Eventually we drove up a winding road to Hellisheidi, a wild mountain range and enjoyed a spectacular view. We decided to press on because we thought that we may revisit this region if we had spare time before taking the return-ferry - we actually did in the end!



After a nice scenic drive (green valleys, cliffs, waterfalls) we passed Vopnafjörður (just used the WC of the tourism office) and then stopped in Bakkafjörður to have our fresh salmon treat right beside the water with view across to the Langanes Peninsula.....but soon, after Peggy started cooking, the sun disappeared and a cold wind started – by the end of the meal we were deep-frozen. After that we drove to the Langanes Peninsula where we found a great spot for the night... see picture!



The stranded logs on the beach are from Siberia!

Before we had driven through Thorshöfn, a small tidy town with not much to see – the track on the peninsula was rather rough but we still tried several options until we found the 'right' spot. We really enjoyed the long evening and the sun's fight with the fog flowing in over the hills. At 10 pm, before the sunset, the fog won the battle and I went to sleep....

23rd July Start: Langanes Peninsula End: Raudinupur near volcano

Dist: 2958km (152)

.....the sun was up and had pierced through the fog before we woke but we waited for the sun to warm the car before we got up for breakfast!

We then left at 9am and soon reached the Raudanes Peninsula where we made a round-walk to view the stunning cliffs and also admired the birdlife and flowers. Back at the car we had a nice picnic under the warming sun!

We then continued to Raufarhöfn, the northern-most village (250 inhabitants) of Iceland and took a free shower at the self-service mini-campsite.

At the tip of the Melrakkasletta Peninsula, at cape Hraunhafnartangi we reached the northern-most point of Iceland (main island) **3km short of the polar circle!** From the road we had to walk 1km over rough boulders and we had to wave sticks above our heads to fence-off small seagulls attacking us as we intruded in their nesting places.

Now was the time to look for somewhere to stay the night and we found a scenic spot on a volcanic hill (Raudinupur), slightly elevated over the green plain. In the bright light of the late evening sun the scene made us feel like being in the Australian Outback.



24th July Start: Raudinupur End: Hverir n/Myvatn

Dist: 3107 km (149)

Got up in bright sun and could not refrain from climbing to the lid of a small black volcano crater....

Then we left towards today's highlights in the Jökulsargljúfur National Park. Unfortunately I missed out the Aspirghi Gorge when I took the track to Vesturdalur (I had wrongly thought we would have to return to Aspirghi but the (partly rough) through-road is now open to normal cars and we did not feel like backtracking).

So instead of the planned 2 days we stayed only 1 day in this area. (In the end it was ok because it rained the next day).

At Vesturdalur we made a turn through an area with bizarre bazalt rocks (Hijodaklettur) and beautifully coloured volcano craters (Raudholar).

Then on the way to Dettifoss we also visited the wild gorge Katlar of the Jökulsa River which starts at the huge Vatnajökull (glacier) at 100km distance. Here my camera batteries went on low – and the replacement batteries showed near low!

By the time we reached the 2 big and spectacular falls, Selfoss and Dettifoss, it was already late afternoon and the sky became gray. So we did not stay long and started to walk towards the Hafragilfoss in a gorge down-stream. After stumbling 1 hour over moon-like territory we reached an abyss where one could only descend by help of a rope (Peggy on pic). It was late and rain started. So we skipped this highlight but the walk had been exciting enough:-).



As camping was not allowed here we had to drive on for the night. Shortly before lake Myvatn we saw the first suitable spot to pull out for the night. We had no idea where exactly we were but the air smelled strongly of sulfur and at about 500m distance we saw a steaming hill – it turned out to be Hverir.

25th July Start: Hverir n/Myvatn End: Hverir n/Myvatn

Dist: 3157 km (50)

First morning with really bad weather and so we first went to Reykjalid to the tourism office (WC, recharging batteries, finding out) and the supermarket.

When the fog lifted a bit and the rain got sparser we walked to the lavafield Dimmuborgir and then climbed and crossed over the extinct Hverfjell volcano enjoying the roundview. On the way back to Reykjalid we entered Grjotagja, with a hot underground pond.



In the late afternoon we toured the lake Myvatn and visited various scenic spots of which we liked most the pseudo craters, remnants of lava bubbles!

We then decided to drive back to last night's place near the Hverir and at 6.30pm we started our evening procedure with an apero. Then Peggy **cooked inside the car** with the gas cooker on our little round table. Of course we also ate inside both of us sitting on the bed with legs under the table..... so the **interior design for bad weather survival worked out!**

26th July Start: **Hverir n/Myvatn** End: **n/Husavik**

Dist: 3246 km (89)

First thing after opening our eyes was to drive the 500m to the Hverir and park right beside the steaming and bubbling holes and have our coffee accompanied by stinging sulphur odour! After having been steamed we climbed over the odd-coloured Hverir. Later we drove up to the Krafla Volcano area and visited the geothermal power-station. Peggy then dipped her feet into the burning hot water exiting from the turbines.



There had been several devastating eruptions in the Krafla area in the last few centuries and it was awesome to walk through the steaming dark lava fields. We also walked over the the Stora Viti (Explosion-) crater with a little lake inside.

In the afternoon we felt like having a good shower and so we went first time to one of the many swimming pools in Iceland. This one was special since the water strongly smelled of sulfur. But we enjoyed to dip into the 42°C water of the hot pots and warming our bones up. The swimming pool then felt comparatively cold even at 30°.



As we left Myvatn we crossed Eldhraun, a very barren solid stone field ... in the 1960s it had been used for training by Apollo's moon mission.



We then crossed over a barren plateau to join the sea again and after shopping in Husavik we stopped for the night just outside town at a lonely rest area with great view over the fjord. Before we went to sleep a heavy storm started and shook the car for the whole night.....

27th July Start: **n/Husavik** End: **n/Grenivik**

Dist: 3463 km (217)

... but the morning was just splendid and after a scenic breakfast we drove to the tip of the Tjörnes peninsula. On the way back we had a look at rocks with petrified mussels which prove that some million years ago there was a mediterranean climate in this region! Later we paid a visit to the famous harbour of Husavik, from where most visitors go on whale watching cruises. We did not join as we did not feel to pay 114 Euro to the same people killing the whales. Next target was Godafoss waterfall near the Ringroad. Then we drove inland for 40km on a rough track (last 3km AWD) to visit, Aldeyjarfoss, a spectacular waterfall with curtain-like basalt rocks. Here we met a sleepy French cyclist traveling with a tent – he had to hold his tent for the whole night in last night's storm. In fact we had planned to enjoy a nice afternoon-meal and stay for the rest of the day in this fascinating area



..... but this was the only time we had to surrender to the mosquitos and so we returned to the seashore and continued to Grenivik.

Following a dead end track we found a wonderful lonely spot overlooking the fjord. Of course the sun hid away just when Peggy started to cook and when we finished the meal we were undercooled, so what! Now the late evening sun came back and we made a little walk enjoying birdlife and flowers beside gurgling creeks in a great evening atmosphere. Before bed time we even warmed up in the sun-exposed car!



28th July Start: **n/Grenivik** End: **n/Dalvik**

Dist: 3638 km (185)

Today was church day. After visiting the church and the adjacent grass covered houses in Laufas we drove into a lovely valley and saw a 'bell tower', a grass chapel and the farmer's church in Grund.



Then we bumped into this all-year-round x-mas house with ongoing x-mas offerings and x-mas music. Eventually we reached Akureiry, the capital of the North with 17'000 inhabitants. First time since we arrived in Iceland, we strolled through some kind of shopping street and Peggy even met a nice couple. Then we shopped at Netto – lamb gigot steak!



We were impatient to savour the gigot and so we took the first opportunity to follow a bumpy side-track ending up at lonely parking. Not only did we enjoy the gigot but then it was also very interesting to learn about this most important northern trading post of the 13th century, Gasir.



Not much later, when we started to look for a place to stay, we discovered a small beer brewery and true enough, they let us taste a genuine 5% beer! Soon later we found a lonely spot above the fjord and enjoyed flowers and the view!

29th July Start: **n/Dalvik** End: **n/Siglufjörður** Dist: 3688 km (50)

I woke at 3am and saw the red sky – ah sunrise soon! So I stayed awake but the sun's flat trajectory made it disappear behind the cape before it rised.

After crossing 3 tunnels we reached Siglufjörður, the former capital of the herring industry and it was the 1st day of the famous herring festival! As it was early we decided to climb up to the surrounding mountains. It was a nice climb through varying sceneries.



At the top we enjoyed the breath-taking round-view, but we did not stay long as it was very windy. On the way back we visited the herring Museum and walked around town. There was some life music on a square with moderate affluance and there was not one single place where one could eat herring at this traditional herring festival. We also entered a tiny fish shop with hardly any fresh fish-offering. It was cold and windy and so we decided to leave. Soon we found a nice spot near the sea and then Peggy cooked delicious chilli con carne!



30th July Start: **n/Siglufjörður** End: **Skilift - Tindastöll** Dist: 3834 km (146)

No wind this morning – proper bed clearing. Then we drove along the Sakafjörður and also enjoyed a walk over a natural dam (3km long / 30m wide) to a pensinsula near Malmey and Drangey Islands. Peggy could not resist the temptation to walk in the ice-cold water. After a turn in Hofsos (small Harbour) we made a detour to a valley to visit the 12th century cathedral of the old abbey of Holar.



After driving leisurely around the fjord's back, the sun appeared and so we turned into a rough dead-end track taking us 15km up on the western side to Grettislaug – a natural hot pool. While Peggy went to stroll around to enjoy the view over the fjord to Drangey, I had fun warming myself up while having a chat with a Swiss family.



On the way back we looked in vain for a spot to stay but soon after turning into the main road we saw a road sign to a Skilift at the flank of Tindastöll. Bingo! Big car park – hidden and lonely! Peggy-made hamburgers for dinner!

31th July Start: **Skilift - Tindastöll** End: **Borgarvirki** Dist: 4036 km (202)

We left quite early and soon after we reached the fjord again we went for a little walk giving us a nice view of Drangey and the fjord in the thin morning mists. Then after passing the tip of the Skaga Cape we turned into a side track and not only found a small bay with extraordinary basalt rocks but also discovered grass-covered ruins and the story of a fishing village, Kalfshamarsvik, which was abandoned in the 1930's following the depression. We then passed Skagatrönd, but apart from a closed 'Country Western Pub' there was nothing really to attract us.



Next we stopped at the main town of Blönduos (900 people) and did our shopping. We also visited the modern church which they are very proud of – hmm. In the back of the fjord we made a detour into the Vatnsdalur valley and then opposite to the Thingeyrar church.



And now was time to look for a place again – so we engaged into a bumpy track off the road to Vastnsnes leading over hills and gorges and suddenly we ended up on top of a rocky hill with splendid view - Borgarvirki.

Borgarvirki turned out to be a major historical site – a fort built around the year 1000. Of course we made a turn through the ruins and then had a nice dinner! By bed time we were alone again.

1st August Start: **Borgarvirki** End: **Skridinsenni (Strandir)** Dist: 4242km (206)

Nice night – Peggy woke me up at mid-night to look at the red sky. Early morning we then had a nice drive down from our hill and passing beside lakes. As we reached the sea, we stopped at this famous rock – Hvitsekur – then continued around the cape of the Vastnsnes Peninsula.

At Illugastadir we made a turn to the shore to see a seals colony..... of course it was exciting to see our first seals but the cold stormy wind did not permit us to just sit there and enjoy, waiting to take a really good picture!

Around noon the sun broke through and we were eager for a walk and so we drove on a rough track to the front of the Heggstadanes Peninsula. As we got out of the warm car we were welcomed by stormy wind again – so we drove back right away and tried the same on the other side of the peninsula – same thing again and now the sun disappeared behind clouds! By now it was 3pm and so we decided continue to the wild Hunafloy coast of Strandir. At 4pm we started looking for a place to stay and after rejecting half a dozen opportunities we found this spot with 210° view right beside the water. At last we could enjoy the roast chicken we had bought yesterday at Samkaup



This concluded the Northern part of our trip – We have now entered the Region of the Western Fjords

As we had no clue about the time required for the whole trip, we have just proceeded as opportunities presented themselves. We had not rushed but we had also avoided wasting time. Sometimes we would have liked to hang around to enjoy or to rest but then the weather was often too uncomfortable.

2nd August Start: Skridinsenni (Strandir) End: n/Gjoegur

Dist: 4414 km (172)

At 4am Peggy woke me to look at a spectacular sky on fire and on the opposite dark side I saw the highest rainbow I had ever seen! As it was cold and windy we dropped back deep under the duvets. Got up at 7.30. Although the weather prospects were bad we continued up the eastern coast passing-by Holmavik for shopping – and bought nothing (the bread had not yet been delivered). We then continued to Drangsnes and found this great natural hot pot right beside the sea. It was heroic at first to move from the car to the water in swimming pants in 80km storm. Then the water was 40° and we boiled with our ears frozen:-). It was good to know that there was a public shower cabine closeby so we could relax and enjoy for a long, long while.



We now continued North on very muddy, often rough tracks and although the coast was very wild and attractive we felt sorry that the tops were covered in low fog. The coast had become very lonely and Arnesheppur (52 inhabitant for 724 km²) is the loneliest municipality of Iceland. After 5pm we started looking for a good place to stay and at 6pm we drove onto a filigrane side track and stopped after being out of sight from the road. After slow apero and dinner and clearing up it was only 8pm. It was our first long and cold evening in the car. 9°, rain and stormy wind for the whole evening – th most comfortable place to be was inside the car!



3rd August Start: n/Gjoegur End: Reykjarfjörður

Dist: 4494 km (80)

Today was to be a **memorable day!**

It had rained heavily the whole night and so we kept the eyes shut until 8am. Today we enjoyed coffee even more than usual!

At 9am we were back on the even muddier driving up to Nordurfjörður and the very end of the road at Krossness where we visited another natural swimming pool. After yesterday's enjoyment we skipped the opportunity for a dip and as the rain continued we decided to go for a coastal walk over a 4x4 track to Ofeigsfjörður to see some waterfalls.



After leaving the car at the roadside and equipped with umbrellas fighting with the wind, we walked on the muddy track along the sea. The wildness of the shore and the loneliness gave the walk a dramatic touch we enjoyed until a small river blocked the road. The rain had been swelling it so much that we could not cross on foot and we did not feel to take the shoes off in this weather and so we returned to the car. In the meantime the sky had cleared up a bit and we were happy!



The car was still there but my key was no more in my pocket! **I had lost my keys** somewhere in the mud! Sh.... (ok Peggy had a reserve key). Then Peggy saw an envelope stuck to the car's window. The key was inside with a kind note from 2 locals who had **found the keys**.....and we had believed that we were the only humans around:-).

Still panting we decided to drive back to last nights spot to avoid any more stressfull events..... hahaha.... first it took us many goes to find the hidden spot again... (see yesterday's picture)! Then when I tried to turn the car for the right position it came to a sudden halt! We were **stuck in the mud**.....no way to get out. So I walked to the road for help. 6.30pm, rain, wind, fog, no trafic of course! After 15 minutes I saw a car approaching – a AWD with a local family! Explaining and gesticulating I managed to get them to follow me and after wallowing in the mud we managed to sling my rope around the rear axle – unfortunately the impatient driver just started pulling and the rope broke! So they drove off somewhere to get ropes and came back 20 minutes later – tying the ropes again – this time he waited for me to reverse and assist – then we were **free again!** Many thanks and a bar of CH-chocky for the kids and then they left.

Of course we were no more keen to stay here and so we continued to the back of Reykjarfjörður where we found a gravel covered flat spot – now we felt like having our **fondue** and we truly enjoyed it!

PS:

Why did we have to sling the rope around the rear axle? This was our first trip with the new Caddy and I did not know that there is an special hook in the toolbox to screw on the bumper. My clothes were as dirty as the car!



After the fondue – Peggy started to cleanup and we tried to dry all the wet items (even the passports) heating the car just by a couple degrees with the engine on – went to sleep at 11pm – a record for us – but still daylight!

4th August Start: **Reykjarfjörður** End: **Kaldalon** (n/Glacier)

Dist: 4630 km (136)

Got up at 9am (record) and left at 10.30. The fog had lifted and so we had a better view on the way back on the same winding track to Bjarnarfjörður where, near the hotel Laugerholl, we noticed a footpath enabling us to visit to a small very nice gorge. After that we left the Strandir coast and drove on a good main road over a pass to the Isafjörður side but then turned North (toward Hronstrandir) over a very bumpy track with a dead end after 50km. I did not really know why I had decided to drive up there except for the loneliness. It paid out because at Kaldalon, we unexpectedly spotted a glacier just in front of us and a place to park. Although it was already 3.30pm, cold and very stormy, we immediately undertook a walk over the rubble of moraines and tip-toed over and through wild creeks. The last crossing was to risky for me but Peggy's bone head wanting her to touch the glacier pushed her through. We had expected a 2 hours walk – we only got back at 7pm and were extremely hungry and Peggy was deep frozen! But then we enjoyed our glacier-view apero and dinner.



We went to bed at 8pm to warm up. At midnight the storm had increased to a level shaking the car so violently that I was worried it might be turned over. An so I drove 100 m to seek shelter behind a moraine – now the car shook bothways.

5th August Start: **Kaldalon** (n/Glacier) End: **Skoetufjörður** (cape west)

Dist: 4818 km (188)

In the end we still had some sleep although we still felt uncomfortably cold. After warm coffee we made the rough but nice drive to the end of the road and enjoyed the view over the huge fjord. Then we backtracked the 50km to the main road which from there makes a 200km slalom through 7 Fjords to Isafjörður. We took it easy and stopped at Heydalur in the 2nd Fjord to go for a dip in a natural pool near a restaurant. We had to walk nearly naked 300m and back, tip-toeing over a river – but there was another hot pool beside the restaurant to heat up again:-)



After a good and warming rest, Peggy did her laundry and at 4pm we went to have our first restaurant meal in Iceland: delicious smoked puffin breast, traditional lamb & vegetable soup and trout with blue cheese. The meal was good, the service very pleasant – a young lady from the Jura at the Swiss border – who enjoyed speaking French with us!



We then continued the fjord-slalom on good road seeing a seals colony on the way. As we then wanted to stop for the night before reaching touristy Isafjörður, we found a suitable place at the tip of a fjord and had an easy evening, studying the travel material for the next few days' program.

We realised today that with our way of travelling it would be a bit difficult to find restaurants with good and really traditional food, being there and open when needed) – so we continued to stick to our shopping of local offerings and cooking ourselves (Peggy cooked of course).

6th August Start: **Skoetufjörður** (cape on westside) End: **Dyrafjörður** (n/Alvidra)

Dist: 5047 km (249)

Nice early morning atmosphere and through the whole day the weather improved. Nice slalom drive to Isafjörður where the car wash was highest of all priorities before we went shopping and take a look at the small town located deep in its spectacular fjord. The town itself did not offer much to see and it was quite crowded by passengers of a big cruiseship.



So we continued to the end of the peninsula, to a small bay at Skalavik. Ok, it was a nice drive and the bay was nice too, but we did not see a place to stay.

Also had a look at Bolungarvik with its light tower and then after the tunnel, at Hnífsdalur we decided to stop at a beautiful view point to cook and enjoy lunch. The view reached from the Ocean all the way back into the fjord and we even could distinguish Kaldalon at the opposite side.



As usually the sun went just when Peggy started cooking the steak and so we ate quickly and, feeling cold, we left after 1h. Pity, it was huge whale steak and we had been looking forward – but telling you the truth: it was tender and just delicious!

Few minutes later the sun was out again! So we went for the next fjord through another tunnel. The sun was bright and so we visited Sudureyri a very small village with a small fishing harbour – we just got there to witness the arrival of the catch – the only time in 6 weeks! After a while we drove back to the 3-legged tunnel and then made a short turn in Flateiry. It was still too early to stay and the scenery invited us to continue driving. We then drove into Dyrafjörður and took a small track towards the open sea and then found THE place to stay tonight!!



7th August Start: **Dyrafjörður** (n/Alvidra) End: **Selardalur** (Arnarfjörður)

Dist: 5210 km (163)

Got up early in the shade of a mountain but soon the sun took over the spotless sky for the whole day!!!! First thing: bed out in the air!

The whole day we enjoyed beautiful sceneries driving along fjords and over passes. Made a quick turn in Thingeyri but apart from a fish-drying plant and a lonely open museum viking village there was nothing really to stay for.



So we went for a short climb to Sandafell to enjoy the view over the fjord and over to the 'Iceland Alps' which we then crossed to descend to Borgarfjörður with the famous Dynjandi Waterfalls.

It was warm and we loved the falls and we also found lots of blueberries and so we stayed here for 3h until 4pm.



We could even have stayed there at the small self-service camp-site but we felt like staying at a more lonely place.

So we continued over Dynjandisheidi, a wild plateau before reaching Bildudalur in the Arnarfjörður. The road had been very rough and slow and it was already 6pm.

So we decided to take the small dead-end track along the fjord hoping to find a good spot. The track was very bumpy and we only found a place 25km later for which it took us 45 minutes driving at maximum speed! But it was worth it!

We had fish/potatoe-balls and brussel-sprouts for dinner and then watched the slow sunset until late!



PS Near Bildudalur we had seen several nice beaches – one of them seemed popular for 4WDs to have fun and we saw a tourist bus stuck in the sand being pulled out by a bulldozer!

8th August

Start: **Selardalur** (Arnarfjörður)

End: **Hvallatur** n/Latrabjarg

Dist: 5341 km (131)



The bright sky motivated us to get up early and at 7.30am we started to walk, attempting to reach the cape. It was very nice to walk in the calm weather through wilderness but after almost 2h we turned back because the shore formed into a steep slope of slippery rubble. Never mind!

We then had a look at some old houses in Selardalur being restored since 1998 by volunteers in souvenir of the popular painter Samuel Jonsson. The valley has been abandoned in modern times.



Same bumpy way back to Bildalur and over a pass to Talknafjörður. 4Km west of the village we found another set of natural hot pools – well the picture says it all!

We were warm and the weather was warm and we decided to have our main meal right here! Just after Peggy had put the filet mignon in the pan, a cool wind freshened up. While eating we and the filets cooled down very quickly – but we still enjoyed our meal!

Now we left without regrets and had again a beautiful drive over spectacular roads to Patrecksfjörður and on to Latrabjarg, the western-most point of Iceland – less than 300km from Greenland!



Latrabjarg is one of the Highlights for an Iceland trip and there was quite a crowd. Nevertheless it was very exciting to walk on the rim of the high cliffs in the evening sun and watching the bird-life, in particular the lovely fearless puffins!

We then decided to drive back to the nearby Hvallatur Beach to stay for the night – there was a free of charge camp-site with several Swiss campers – We then stayed up until the sun disappeared at 10.15pm!



9th August

Start: **Hvallatur** n/Latrabjarg

End: **Thorskafjörður**

Dist: 5588 km (247)

The night was cold – at the limit of discomfort. But soon sun and coffee made us feel better.

Then we drove back east and made a very bumpy but exciting detour to Raudisandur - Red Sand Beach, a wide 10km beach with fine red, firm sand.

Peggy could not resist to have a Tai Chi session and then we enjoyed a 'cool' 10 minutes jog in the water!

Far away (75km), over the bay loomed the snow-covered Snaefellsjökull....

Now we started a long and winding journey East and we only stopped near Flökalundur to try out a natural hot pool and near Djupidalur to see a steaming waterfall!

Now it was 6pm and we climbed up a pass with spectacular views on the way to Thorskafjörður. We had been looking for a night spot for a while, when half way down the winding road, Peggy saw a small flat place on the opposite side of the fjord along the water below the road. We enjoyed the 2nd half of the filet mignon!

Although it was very windy – we were now used and organised to live inside the car – in fact we often felt like living in a tiny wintergarden (or sunroom) with splendid view!



10th August

Start: **Thorskafjörður**

End: **Berserkjähraun** (n/Stykkisholmur)

Dist: 5843 km (255)

Early morning and great sun! We decided to take the 100km detour of the lonely peninsula North of Snaefellsnes. It was really a nice drive at mostly 50km/h on a reasonably smooth unsealed road.

At the tip we drove through the 'Klofningur' (cleavage) and then climbed the small hill for a splendid panorama over the huge Breidafjörður with countless islands (as stars in the sky – a saga says).

At 3pm we reached Stykkisholmur the capital of the Snaefellsnes Peninsula.



Getting fuel, car wash - Peggy did it! – although I told her that we will just go back to dusty roads. Then shopping before visiting the viewpoint on the little hill behind the harbour. A short turn in town to see the same things as everywhere: a few nice traditional houses turned into restaurants, tourist shops and museums or all 3 together.



On the way out of Stykkisholmur I climbed the 73m high sacred hill Helgafell to do the 3 customary wishes and enjoy the view over Breidafjörður.

Peggy stayed in the car, already frustrated because of the short drive on the dusty dirt road!

But then we had to start looking for a spot to stay and this time I had my idea from the Lonely Planet – drive into the lava fields of Berserkjahraun. After 3km of dramatic narrow lava-ash track - up'n' down – left'n'right – we found this lovely little meadow! During the drive Peggy had gotten out of her mind (about the dust) but after a while she calmed down and cooked an excellent meal! Thanks! While Peggy did the dish-washing I took to the hills to look for blueberries – out desert! Before sleeping we tried to figure out tomorrows way – too many options – let it be!



11th August Start: **Berserkjahraun** (n/Stykkisholmur) End: **n/Hellnar**

Dist: 5983 km (140)

The sun just came on time for breakfast at 7am.

Did the 2nd part of our lava drive to reach the main road towards Olafsvik. Shortly before we suddenly faced the target of today – Snaefellsjökull! The Lonely Planet had not told us how to get up there without 4WD but just before Olafsvik we saw an indicator and turned into a narrow bumpy track. Well – let's try! The track was rough and sometimes very steep but in the nice dry weather we made it – although once I had to reverse for 300m to get enough speed in 2nd gear to make the steepest rubble slope! Poor Caddy!



At the glacier's limit we parked and in no time we started to walk up – a little ice and small crevasse here and there and 2 hours later we reached the top! Great feeling of course, although we did not climb the little rocky tip. We were above the clouds in bluest sky but the view to the bottom was a bit obstructed. Then in high spirits we almost glided down the snow fields and reached the car within 1h.



On the way down the track was less challenging and we had done it.....

..... The day was far from over! After passing Olafsvik we drove on an unbearably rough road (slow 1st gear) to visit the northern cape of Oendverdarnes with black wild bird cliffs on the Nesbjarg side and black flat cliffs on the other. Then we turned towards the southern cape and on the way we visited and walked around in Djupalon Beach (picture) and Dritvik Beach all along enjoying the view to the dominating Snaefellsjökull.



A big part of this area is national park and camping prohibited – it was getting late now! Just after leaving the park's limit our trained eyes noticed a filigrane track beside a little creek disappearing behind a small hill, 200m from the road – bingo again! Perfect spot – view to our Snaefellsjökull in setting sun, water for dish and body washing! Tonight Peggy cooked the sauerkraut – although it was very sauer we finished the whole 500g package!

12th August Start: **n/Hellnar** End: **n/Bifroest**

Dist: 6168 km (185)

I had to get up at 2am and for the 1st time I saw a rather dark sky with just a few dim stars but a bright moon at the horizon – the high summer is over!

Routine morning procedure and after 1km, just before Hellnar, we saw this memorial of Gudridur Thorbarnardottir. She lived 1000 years ago and was the first european woman to give birth on american soil. She was a big traveller - she had also visited Rome!



A few minutes later we drove down to the shore of Hellnar and walked through the wild lava cliffs to Arnarstapi – the place Jules Verne referred to as 'Gate to the Middle of the Earth'. Very exciting sceneries for sure!

After returning to the car we continued our leisurely drive along the South Coast of Snaefellsnes visiting a few places of interest – the very narrow gorge, Raudfeldsgja, hardly 1m wide and the little bay Ytry Tunga with a seals colony (again, I did not manage to take a picture of a whole seal).



After being off the Snaefellsnes peninsula we made a short detour to visit the very impressive basalt formation, Gerduberg, with huge pillars lined up for over 1km.

Shortly before Borgarnes we turned North to Bifröst (smallest University village) and visited the nearby extinct volcano, Grabrock and the Glanni Waterfall. Now it was time to look for a place to sleep and after exploration of various sidetracks we found this scenic spot even with view to the Langjökull snowmountains at the horizon.



It was quite warm and comfortable tonight and we could relax..... but somehow I was empty..... restless.... a bit overwhelmed by the everyday impressions.

Until now it had been clear which way we should go - just following the fjords and picking up whatever opportunities occurred and now? We had reached an area giving many choices for the coming itinerary – well, tomorrow, as a first step, we will just make a loop eastward and see where we get.

13th August Start: **n/Bifrost** End: **Hvalfjörður**

Dist: 6394km (226)

The night was cold, 8°, we loved the hot coffee. After 8 days of splendid weather - now a rough icy wind had started. We then drove to Deildartuguhver, the biggest hot source of Europe where the water emerges at 100° - the water is then piped to Borgarnes. After a brief visit to Snorri's hot bath etc in Reikiholt we continued up the valley and enjoyed the Hraunfossar - water emerging from under a lava field and falling into a wild river.



Then continued over a very rough track through lavafields to the Surtshellir lavafields with km-long caves one can visit.

We took our small torch and descended over big rough boulders - soon we were in the dark and our torch proved to be too weak and also we had no gloves and my hands were soon sore from the rough lava. Another problem was my lack of balance in the dark. So we turned back - a bit frustrated - but at least we had seen what it was about. Btw: This lava stream is 56km long, one of the longest in the world! Then we drove back enjoying the view as the sky had cleared up - the Langjökull in the distance and a horseparty in a round natural lava-wall shelter!



After reaching the Borgarfjörður we bypassed Borgarnes and continued to Akranes where we did our shopping. Then we made a turn in town - Saturday afternoon - hardly anybody around! What could you do? Go to any of the museums - well - usually we don't because we forget things so quickly again and then it is easy at home to find the information of interest in the Web!



Getting out of Akranes we decided to drive into Hvalfjörður to find a place for the night. Almost at the back of the fjord we drove onto a small peninsula with a flat spot and enjoyed the roundview from our stormsheltered sunroom while enjoying the delicious fish filets we had shopped in Akranes!

14th August Start: **Hvalfjörður** End: **Reykjavik**

Dist: 6471 km (77)

The car had been rocking the whole night in the storm (100km, 8°). Nevertheless we got up early and then drove into the back of the valley where we parked to visit Glymur, the highest Waterfall of Iceland, 196m high.

It was to be an exciting walk for the sceneries, the exposed paths and the storm, which almost blew us off the gorge's rims as we reached the top.



So once more - a beautiful place - but no way to take it easy because the rough wind!

We got back to the car after 3h and then decided to move directly to Reykjavik and after a nice drive we reached the city's campsite beside the international football stadium. This was our 1st stay at a normal campsite and as the sun shone Peggy decided to fix the sun shade..... 30 minutes to do it!



As I had expected, the sun went and the wind came back and I had to take the sunshade off again after 5 minutes.

Now Peggy really went into her home routine and did a **major cleaning-and-re-establishing-of-order-procedure** after which she was frozen. So Peggy decided to do the cooking at the campsite's kitchen and we intended to eat on the terrace. The electric hot-plate was very slow and by the time the food was on the table the wind had changed direction and we had to sit in the drought!

I wrote these lines while Peggy went for a warming shower while I was shaking! It is now only 5pm - what will we do the rest of the evening (Sunday)? Sitting in the car, talking, listening to radio music - lucky, I had this book to read which Peggy had found on the ferry: Empire of the Clouds by James Hamilton-Paterson!

15th August Start: **Reykjavik** End: **Gardskagi Cape**

Dist: 6550 km (79)

Took it easy and left only at 8.45 to walk to the city along the Bay Promenade heading toward the skyline. Again it was cold and windy. Eventually we reached the brandnew concert hall and while warming up we marvelled at the impressive design and construction (thought of LAVA and ARUP in Sydney). Of course we also visited the cathedral and admired the statue of Leifur Eiriksson who discovered America.



This statue reminded me of the Vasco da Gama Statue in Belem near Lisbon (we talk about 500 years difference).

The walk in town was quite pleasant with many nice houses to see - the first time in a busy city for a long while. Some place we went to a cafe to warm up and then the sun came and changed the world for the better!

After 3 hours walking around we thought we had seen Reykjavik and so walked back with the intention to have lunch at the praised Ning's chinese self-service. The food was surprisingly good and inexpensive: spare ribs, fried fish, then rice, soup, coffee, tea all a gogo - for 1500ikr / 9 E - satisfied! - 20 min later we reached the campsite and left soon.



Slow drive through town, then shopping and driving along the coast to Kevlavik where we paid a visit to the awesome giantess making awfully scaring sounds in the Svarti Hellir cave. We then concluded the busy day at Gardskagi, the northwestern cape of Reykjanes, at a little free campsite just beside the rough ocean. We had our apero with another slice of the huge blood-lump (kind of dry, awkward blood sausage).



Then while waiting for bed time and watching the sun fighting in vain to shine at us, we studied our onward itinerary and I realized that we had only 16 days left (of the seemingly unterminable time:-) and still many things to see!

16th August Start: Gardskagi Cape End: Þingvallavatn

Dist: 6764 km (214)

We did not feel like hanging around in the cold wind – we always wondered how the tent campers (some with bikes) survive! So we comfortably drove via Sandgredi to the south-western cape with a few short stops here and there!

We also walked on the **'between continents bridge'** over the rift between the European and the American Continental Shelves which grows by a few mm every year. Eventually we reached the cape, Reykjanesta with view to the Eldey Island. We also had fun at the nearby Gunuhver hot springs which we did not see because the wind blowed the hot sulfurous steam in our direction. The famous Blue Lagoon was for us....



...more of a crowded tourist trap, although it spread a unique atmosphere! We did not enter as we had been able to enjoy so many natural hot spots before.

We then visited the Krisuvik National Park walking up through steaming hot springs while enjoying the view and looking at the Green Lake – Graenavatn.



After a nice drive along the coast we turned up to Hveragerdi to do shopping and also made a turn in the town's hot springs where one may boil eggs as is shown on the pannel.

Now it was well after 4pm and we by-passed Selfoss to turn towards Þingvellir Ntl Park to look for a spot for the night before reaching it. After trying several side tracks unsuccessfully we found a nice spot just beside the Þingvallavatn (lake) along a nice creek. The cold wind which had been disturbing through the whole day still persisted and so we had to spend the evening in the car – which by now had become our way of life.

17th August Start: Þingvallavatn End: Thjoersa River

Dist: 6943 km (179)

Nice morning and leisurely drive along the lake passing by a big geothermal watersupply station for Reykjavik. Today we will visit the Golden Circle tourist attractions – let's see!

At the top of the lake we reached the Þingvellir Ntl Park with the historical and geological site Almannagja.

Geological because it forms again the rift between the European and American Continents. Historical, because this was after the year 1000 the meeting place of the Alþing, the first democratic parliament of the world!



Then, after stopping at some abandoned caves on the way, we visited Laugarvatn with hot springs inside the lake – here I badly burned and bruised my feet!

After a sunny picnic beside the lake we continued to the Geysir Park and stayed for a long while to observe and admire Strokkur, one of the big few Geysirs in the world. Peggy seemed to enjoy her 'private' pool more!



We also made a turn inside the tourist center – the toilet was placed such that one had to pass all 100 souvenir shelves – this did not make us stay any longer.

So we soon moved to Gullfoss, the last of the Golden Circle's highlights. It is a very nice and impressive Waterfall and we made the whole turn in the crowd – but 1 hour later we had seen it! The weather was clear and so we saw the Langjökull snow mountain again, not far away.



I had budgeted 3 days for today's tour! Well – that meant that we could afford a little detour via Fludir to the Thjoersa River Valley. Just when we started to get itchy we saw a sidetrack to a small hidden parking above the biggest river of Iceland.

18th August Start: Thjoersa River End: Reynisfjara (n/Vik)

Dist: 7161 km (228)

I was really not sure what we should do today: we were within reach of the top walking highlight Landmannalaugar (4WD needed-?!) and the Hekla Volcano. As it was we seemed to have mixed weather to expect for the next period. So we dropped the idea of Landmannalaugar and just made a turn by car to look for opportunities.

Lovely drive up the valley to the Hjalparfoss falls in a lovely setting of lava stones.

Then we took a terribly stoney track for 10km to Stöng, an ancient Viking settlement. The settlement was just a rebuilt barn. As we did not see any opportunity for a walk to a definite target we returned by the same bumpy way. After this experience we also rejected to undertake the sidetrip to Landmanna and took another rough road with terrible ripples, hoping we would get a close view of the Hekla Volcano, which however kept hiding in the clouds.



Instead we enjoyed to see all sorts of waterfalls. First the Thjofafoss in the Thoersa valley and after we had joined the Ring Road near Hella via small hilly tracks, we came across the Seljalandsfoss and the Skogafoss. Unfortunately strong rain set in and we had to shorten our visits to those nice falls.



It was the first rain since Strandir on 3rd August and after half hour on the way in direction of Vik the sun came out again, just on time for the detour to the rocky formations of Dyrholaey, the southernmost point of Iceland with lots of tourists and puffins!



We then realised that Reynisfjara at the other side of the bay would be more suitable to stay for the night! Indeed, not only did we find a good quiet car park just beside the basalt cliffs and the impressive columns in the sea – we also had a great view back to Dyrholaey in the late evening sun, setting at 9pm already. So we spent a nice evening eating pork-schnitzel in our sunroom!

19th August Start: **Reynisfjara** (n/Vik) End: **Svinjafellsjökull** (n/Skaftafell)

Dist: 7343 km (182)

The morning was grey and it rained but I was keen for a walk. So we first made a turn in Vik to play time.

Then drove up to a black volcanic roughland hoping to make a scenic walk at Þackgil. The road was pretty difficult (thrilling though) and the weather got darker and so we turned back after 10km. Then we continued through the plane and admired the endless moss-covered lavafields until, near Kirkjubæjar-klaustur, we reached a wild gorge, Fjadrargljúfur around which we made a walk in light rain.



On the approach to Skaftafell we crossed another volcanic dust plane and at times we did not see the road in the sandstorm! When we reached **touristy Skaftafell** the weather had cleared up which allowed us to do the standard walks to the glacier and up to the Svartifoss fall and up Skerholl.



Now we had reached the area of Vatnajökull, by far the biggest ice-covered area of Europe. We were very lucky that the weather stayed clear for the next 2 days.

After the nice walks at Skaftafell which we could not extend as it was already getting late, we realized that we would not be happy to stay the night at the crowded official campsite. So we decided to go on and a few km's later we saw a track leading to an adjacent glacier, the Svinafellsjökull. Not only was this glacier much more attractive than the Skaftafell 'tourist glacier' – but there would be no problem to stay the night at the lonely car park 100m beside! We had a very nice evening and enjoyed our chilli beans with sausages!



20th August Start: **Svinjafellsjökull** (n/Skaftafell) End: **Flaajökull**

Dist: 7483 km (140)

Beautiful morning and right after coffee we went to make a turn to the wild glacier – we had to climb down to get across. We did not go far on it because without equipment it would be too risky. Then we followed the ring road on its most famous stretch – with countless glaciers and lakes.



Lakes with icebergs at sea level!

First we visited Fjallsarlón on two sides and then we spent a long time at the famous Jökullarlón.

One could just not get enough of discovering new figures and different perspectives!



Later we walked along the short lake's outlet to the sea. After yesterday's storm the beach was crowded with shattered iceblocks and there was even a surfer having fun in high swell!



Later we drove over very bad tracks to Skalafells- and Heinargergsjökull (glaciers) but we did not find any opportunity to walk or even to stay. A bit frustrated we returned to the ring road. A few km's later we tried again – this time we reached a beautiful spot at Flaajökull.



Also the sun had come back and we had a real sunroom atmosphere with view to the glacier and we could even hear the glacier's river. Normal evening routine and then bed-time!

21st August Start: **Flaajökull**

End: **Stocksness n/Höfn**

Dist: 7546 km (63)

Beautiful morning and so we drove 3 km further to the other side of the glacier's tongue and then went for a nice walk to its lake and even climbed up the slippery sideslope! 3h later we returned to the car and then drove to Höfn while we kept looking back at the 5 glaciers flowing down this side of Vatnajökull. We only paid a shopping visit to Höfn as we had decided to go for a walk on the Stocksness peninsula.



By now the sky had darkened but we found a lonely spot just beside the NATO Base radar of Stocksness. Strange light and dark cliffs and dark sand beaches – we still went for a walk with our wind-tormented umbrellas – but 1.5h later we gave up and took shelter in our Caddy and had a warm coffee! It was only 4pm – but we felt like having a rest!
PS – Peggy cooked enough for the next 3 days – today we had fishballs with couscous!

22nd August Start: **Stocksness n/Höfn** End: **Stöðvarfjörður**

Dist: 7749 km (203)

Getting to the **Eastern Fjords** today. From Reykjavik we have progressed much faster than expected. I thought we would spend 3 days more to Vik and 2 days more in the Vatnajökull area. Now we know that we can take all the time we want!

Gray and soggy morning. Looks like we will keep moving on, but as slowly as possible! Nice drive through the Lon with big birdlife between lagoons and steep mountains until we reached the eastern Fjords at Djupivogur. We strolled around to get the atmosphere but there was not much to do in the light rain. We then made a side trip into a valley at Berufjörður and saw beautiful waterfalls on the way up to the Öxipass. At the top we managed to turn around and then we drove the same way back to the sea and continued our slow driving along the fjords passing Breidalsvik where we did not stop. By now I had made up my mind to go for a hot bath in the next village, Stöðvarfjörður. The temperature was a cool 7° and even if it was a very simple outdoor swimming pool and a small hot pot, I spent a great time for 1.5 hours, while Peggy went for a turn in the village.



After that we parked for the night at the free camp-site nearby. It was a bit early and we had a cool evening at the limit of discomfort. Later we heard another car turning up and parking beside.



23rd August Start: **Stöðvarfjörður** End: **n/Krossanes**

Dist: 7875 km (126)

In the morning we realised that it was a French couple with a Caddy Maxi. Of course we mutually showed off our different Caddy solutions - ours, self-made – theirs, professional installation!

Their Maxi is 50cm longer but we seemed to have more useful space!

This morning the weather looked a bit better – at least dry – but first I paid a short visit to the lovely church, which has become a dorm. There I met 4 youngsters from Davos. They outed themselves because of my blue bonnet with a Davos Logo.

Nice shore and fjord drive the whole day. Shortly after starting, I went to see the Saxi Blow Hole but the sea was too calm to 'blow' fountains.



In the next fjord we visited Faskrudsfjörður known for its French past, street pannels showing both the local and French names.

In Reyðarfjörður we did a little shopping (lamb gigot) and then went for a walk up the river to see the view and waterfalls. On return we just saw an open vinbudin (state's wine shop) and for the first time we bought alcohol (tempranillo was the cheapest). Now in adventurous spirits we undertook to drive to Vladlavik Bay near Grepir, the eastern-most point of Iceland.



After a long drive on rough road we reached a crossroad and there was just no way to take the 4WD track to Vladlavik and so we tried to continue straight to the tip of Krossanes. After 3km the track was barred by a river but there I saw an ideal spot below to stay for the night – hmm – very difficult 200m descent obstructed by boulders, holes and rubble! Now we deserved our delicious lamb gigot steak – Peggy already worrying about the difficult drive back up in the morning! Before we went to bed – heavy rain started – a great omen!

24th August Start: **n/Krossanes** End: **Dalatangi Cape**

Dist: 8028 km (153)

The rain storm continued the whole night which was interminable because both of us were haunted by the idea that we would not be able to get back to the track and here we were far from any help and no phone coverage of course! After a gloomy breakfast we managed to drive back to the track, but it was on the limit!

On the way back we visited Helgustaðanáma, an old spar mine where cristals had been extracted for telescopes and mikroskopes in times gone by.

In Eskifjörður we turned to Neskaupstaður which we reached via a high pass and a very narrow tunnel. The fog was very low and we hardly saw anything.

Cold and very stormy wind made our visit to Neskaupstaður and the short walk to the Easter Cave a rather suffering exercise.

So we drove back to Eskifjörður (Peggy washed the car) and on towards Egilstadir..



10km before closing the Iceland loop in Egilstadir we turned right over a pass to Mjoifjörður (with 28% slopes) in spite of the bad weather. A very lonely fjord and 40km of muddy track (after the car wash) until we reached the cape at Dalatangi and parked beside the abandoned Lighthouse (closed museum). There was a lonely farm at 200m and I went to ask if we are allowed to stay overnight beside the lighthouse! The elderly couple did not really understand but the daughter (breeder of sheep dogs) assured us and even asked if we need any food. Storm and rain persisted and the temperature dropped to 7° (no heating) – somehow we still survived with a warm meal and now we had wine again....



... at 8pm we heard a soft knock at the door! The young lady stood there and handed us a thermos with hot tea made of local berries and herbs. So nice! Ohoh....I then had to get out into the storm at mid-night – in the beams of the light-tower!

25th August Start: Dalatangi Cape End: near Snaefels

Dist: 8286 km (258)

After a noisy (waves) and shaking (wind) night (warm enough in bed) we got up at 6am, because I hoped to see our ferry passing the cape (a week before our boarding). I almost froze to death in the pijama and so did the camera's batteries (only one picture). After coffee we said bye to the nice people and as the weather was miserable we did not stay and drove back, this time stopping at this and that waterfall.



We reached Egilstadir at 10am and wondered what to do for the whole week to our ferry's departure! Peggy had the idea, that we may go to find out about practicalities for departure. So we went the 2x25km to Seydisfjörður not see much and but when we got back to Egilstadir after midday the Bonus supermakret was open. By now we had decided that we will try to drive to the highland to get close to the Snaefels snow mountain.

Driving along the Lagarfljot lake we made a turn up to the Litlnessfoss and Hengifoss waterfalls cascading over interesting basalt formations but the storm almost blew us off the ridges! After that we drove up to the highland and to our surprise it was not a 4WD track but a very good sealed road which had been built very recently in connection with the huge Karanjukar hydraulic power scheme.



It was a nice and good drive but the clouds were low and the wind did not permit any big escapades. So all we did was to pass-by a natural hot spring which was just in the process of being converted into a wellness center and of course we made a turn over the huge dams of the Karanjukar lake looking down into the deep empty gorge. Now it was getting time to look for somewhere to stay overnight and we found a small lonely parking from where we hoped to see Snaefell if the weather cleared. Ohoh – it only got worse and colder – 3.5° by now!



Peggy still prepared a lovely meal – fish and couscous – which both were cold the moment they touched the dishes! Somehow we survived staying up with tea and vodka until we retreated to the ice-cold bed at 9pm! That night I put on the day and the night clothes and 2 pairs of socks! The blue bonnet anyway!

26th August Start: n/Snaefels End: Jökulsa a Dal - Bridge

Dist: 8478 km (673)

It was again a stormy night and I needed to get out at 3am – at 4am I could no more wait – uuuuugh! When we looked out of the window at 6am it was **snowing at 1.5°**.....so we pulled the duvet over the ears again! Eventually we got up and the instant coffee was the best thing on earth! The clouds then lifted a bit and so we drove to lake Folvatn to the end of the track for us. On the way we passed close to Snaefels but we only saw the flanks powdered with new snow. We did not feel like hanging around although there was some birdlife to see here and there and so we drove back down to the big lake Lagarfljot.



We got down well before mid-day and went to warm up and spend time in the big and interesting information center of the Karanjukar hydraulic power scheme. Still in grey weather we drove to both ends of the lake and due to the cold wind we even renounced to walk for 1 or 2 hours to the Strutsfoss waterfall.

Now we had decided to go for a hot bath and so we returned slowly through the biggest forest of Iceland on the Lagarfljöt's right side. At 3pm we reached Egilstadir and went directly to the swimming pool and had our bones warmed up. It seems that it was too much for Peggy as she fainted later in the changing room. It was now 4.30pm and we decided to look for a place to stay the evening. From 5 weeks ago we remembered a parking along the ring road beside a bridge over a small gorge and there would not be much traffic any more. We got there at 5pm and spent a comfortable evening at comparatively **warm 6°**.



27th August Start: Jökulsa a Dal - Bridge End: n/Vopnafjörður

Dist: 8702 km (224)

This was the first really good night for several days. At breakfast we had a bit of panik when the gas leaked because I had not inserted the bottle properly. Peggy was then a bit gaga until the afternoon and so she did not enjoy the great drive in most beautiful weather. First we drove into a side valley to Bru and on to Adalbol where 4WD became compulsory. So we returned to Bru and then 25km on very rough tracks over highland to Saenautasel passing by beautifully blue lakes.



Then we followed the 901 road through stoney, hilly countryside to Mödrudalur, a off road tourist stop with a chalet-like gas-station and a lovely young polar fox! Now the sky darkened and we thus continued driving without definite target.... the sceneries were nice everywhere. In the end we reached the sea at Vopnafjörður which we had passed 5 weeks ago.



This time the town was dead and even the tourist office was closed. After unsuccessfully erring around the harbour we

drove out on a small 'nowheretogo' track and found this beautiful lonely spot to stay the night.

28th August Start: **n/Vopnafjörður** End: **n/Theribjarg**

Dist: 8761 km (59)

Record – yesterday we stopped at 5pm, bed at 9pm, today up at 8am and left at 9.30am! We had stopped for 16.5 hours – sitting or lying in the car.

In a whole week since Höfn we have been in the car all the time until this afternoon, except for 2 short walks in the storm (easter cave and Hengifoss), 2 times swimming pool, a few short stops for shopping, WC and fuel!

Now we were only a few hours drive distance from the ferry port and still 3 days to go! Take it easy and **today the weather improved for the rest of our stay!!**

After breakfast we visited Sundlaug, a natural pool in a small valley and then we drove back slowly through Vopnafjörður then along the coast and over Hellisheidi to the Lagarfljót Estuary enjoying the great view again!

Early in the afternoon we reached the plane and immediately we found a good place to stop for the rest of the day intending to visit Theribjarg.

It was a nice walk on a filigrane path. Apart from nice cliffs and coves and views over the wide plane ending in a endless black sand beach we were in high spirits, feeling **comfortable in the warming sun!**

Even we had reached the car as early as 4pm to rest and have dinner we thought the evening had passed quickly this time!



29th August Start: **n/Theribjarg** End: **Lagarfljót (n/Estuary)**

Dist: 8899 km (138)

Today's objective was to kill time...and relive this beautiful area which we had so much enjoyed at the start of the trip. So we drove up-river to the ring road bridge again to turn off immediately towards Husey and cross the river at the dam before driving up to the pass to Borgarfjörður. After the pass we visited a small gorge with rubble resembling shredded wood. Then we made a nostalgic turn to our 1st night's place. Driving the whole day at 35km/h and stopping here and there we were back at the river's estuary at 4pm.

Warm and calm evening and so we made a little walk along the wild river and even spotted a seal playing on its own. Then we returned to our sunroom to enjoy apero, dinner and the view in the late sun.



30th August Start: **Lagarfljót (n/Estuary)** End: **Seydisfjörður**

Dist: 8970 km (81)

Slow breakfast in the morning sun – then slow drive back to Egilstadir passing-by a lonely selfservice Kiosk (you put the money in a small basket). In Egilstadir we did our shopping for tonight and the 3 nights on the ferry, filled up fuel and did some window shopping at the few shops in town (interesting turn in the big do-it shop).

Nice drive over to Seydisfjörður with great view to the now distant Snæfells and over the Lagarfljót Valley.

In Seydisfjörður, after the last car-wash, we stopped on the empty check-in lane and then Peggy turned the car inside out to clean while I waited for errands to do. At 4pm we moved to a nice parking for Peggy to do her big cooking - goldbut filet and brussel-sprouts for today and gigot steaks for tomorrow and our meals on the ship. After a delicious dinner in our sunroom we moved back to the check-in lane to spend the night.

We still had some wine (although rationed) and enjoyed a glass for night cap.



31st August Start: **Seydisfjörður** End: **Ferry at Sea**

Dist: 8970 km (0)

Got up in bright and probably best weather of the whole trip! After breakfast we could not resist to go for a walk along the northern slope of the fjord and it was a good way to engrave a good memory of Iceland. After 8km forth and 8km back we were ready for the long wait to board. Well – the wait was endurable because Peggy prepared a meal – then we realised that the gigot steaks were salted, which was a bit disappointing! There was also some packing to do for bed, clothing, food and drink on the ship.

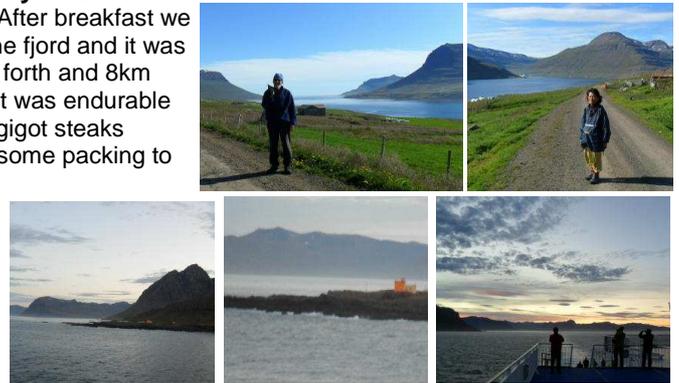
The boarding was a bit squeezey – people wanted to go home! After moving our belongings to our 9-berths cabin we went on deck to witness the departure in a beautiful evening sky. On the way out of the fjord we passed close to cape Dalatangi and we waved to our light-tower.

1h later – a bit stiff – we saw Iceland disappearing and then we took a shower and went to sleep.

After asking myself before this trip - how the hell we would spend 6 long weeks in Iceland, just living in a Caddy?

Now I know

Enjoying this beautiful and fascinating country! And surviving cold and wind? – Hot pots!



1st September Start: **Ferry at Sea** End: **Ferry at Sea** Dist: 8970 km (0)

After a good night I got up alone and went to the lounge to read the free magazine 'Reykjavik Grapevine', issue nr 13-2011. I found that this paper made by young people is very instructive about what makes Icelanders tick and about their views! Later Peggy joined and we had a good chat with a lady from Myvatn who lives in Faroer Islands. At midday we reached the Faroer Islands but it was grey and fog was low. This did not stop us to get off at Torshavn to make a turn in this quite busy town. The atmosphere was very different from Iceland, much more 'European Scandinavian'. We walked through the center with many restored grassroof houses for about 2h and also made a turn in a large shopping compound for 1h, warming up and thereby noticing that prices were higher than in Iceland!



2nd September Start: **Ferry at Sea** End: **Ferry at Sea** Dist: 8970 km (0)

We had a very good night and after breakfast we went to the swimmingpool with hotpot, sauna and fitness room. The ship rolled in heavy sea and the swimmingpool was in turmoil and swapping over at every dip. Peggy went right for the sauna and after a short while I went to the fitness to do some biking. After 10 minutes I was seriously sea sick and I had to stop. It took me about an hour to recover when Peggy turned up and looked white. Later I noticed that many people stayed in their cabins feeling awful. At 7pm we had our gigot steak and the rest of the rationed tempranillo from iceland:-). The rest of the evening was hanging around – NO – I went to the duty free shop to buy a bottle of Brennivin from Iceland – the lady from Myvatn had recommended!

3rd September Start: **Ferry at Sea** End: **Bönningstedt (Hamburg)** Dist: 9490 km (520)

We had a good sleep again and then everybody started packing, looking forward to go home on shortest way! We reached Hirtshals at 10am but for unkonown reasons it took till 11.30 to get out on the road. The drive became a rush because we wanted to do saturday shopping and still go beyond Hamburg to stop for the night. Everything was against this plan! We got trapped in a 18km Stau before Hamburg and after 1h we had only done 8km! It was 6pm and Peggy pushed me to get off at the first exit (just at the limit of Hamburg) – which of course was in a mess too – so we drove back outward and soon, in Bönningstedt we passed a LIDL, still open! One problem solved – here we then asked people for a german restaurant – no way! – everything except german! Then we saw a sign to a greek restaurant in a REWE supermarket compound and a lonely outdoor parking in the backyard! Bingo!!!!!! We had a great greek feast and then a good sleep on the parking! Ende gut, alles gut!



4th September Start: **Bönningstedt (Hamburg)** End: **Aarau** Dist: 10373 km (883)

Early start – drive to Evelyne in Aarau as quickly as possible. No Stau, no problems, but from Basel to Aarau we drove in heaviest rain I had ever seen (Motorway Bern - Zürich was blocked). At 5pm we arrived at Evelyne and Rafa's new place in Aarau (met in their garage) and had a lovely and relaxing evening with them. Thanks!



5th September Start: **Aarau** End: **Ipsach** Dist: 10463km (90)

Just 1h drive to Ipsach and it was nice to arrive relaxed in the morning to start the chore of unpacking and picking up loose ends after 2 months' absence

THE END

Epilogue

19th September – 8th October **Ste Marie en Roussilon** to recover missed Summertime

The highlights:

Oyster eating again and a memorable mountain walk to the Canigou



*PS - During our trip, on 20th August,
Our Grand Twins had had
Their 3rd Birthday*

*.....Somewhere in the
Australian Outback*

