

1 Skógar – Fimmvörðuháls, 1116m – Þórsmörk 7.45 hrs.



Impressive crossing of a pass between waterfalls and glaciers

From the Fimmvörðuháls pass there is a breathtaking view of Þórsmörk with its bizarre rock formations and deeply eroded canyons with caves and waterfalls and of the glacier tongues that reach right down to the valley floor.

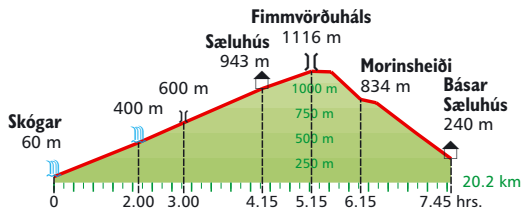
Location: Skógar, 40m, located on the Ring Road.

Starting point: Skógafoss, 60m, in Skógar.

Access: bus service from the Ring Road leaving once daily in both directions.

Height difference: 1100m in ascent, 900m in descent.

Grade: this is a long and strenuous walk. In the area of the Fimmvörðuháls the path crosses large snowfields which are only marked with a few posts and so there might be route finding problems when visibility is poor. One particular spot on the descent into Þórsmörk is somewhat exposed.



Food and accommodation: In Skógar: campsite and hotel. In Þórsmörk: hut, possible to camp next to the hut.

Alternative route: the walk can be split into two days by spending the night in the hut at Fimmvörðuháls. There is usually no water in the rain tank, no spring, only snow. There is also a small staffed hut below the top of the pass.

To the right of **Skógafoss** the path leads steeply up some steps and continues along beside the Skóga river which rushes towards the sea over numerous waterfalls. Some small side valleys can be crossed without any problems. You will be so distracted by the beauty of this place that you will hardly notice the continuous uphill climb. After 1 hour you reach a particularly beautiful waterfall: it is better to take the path to the right as the left-hand one is more exposed and steeper although it offers a better view.



Afterwards cross a few streams coming from springs where you should refresh your water supply. After two more waterfalls the path goes up over a ridge and after 3 hrs. you come to the footbridge where you cross over onto the left bank. It is better to follow the road here (the waymarker posts are intended for the winter). When the hut comes into view, head directly towards it because the road goes round a long bend. The **hut** is reached after a good 4 hrs. This is a suitable place for a rest (there's a gas jet in the hut but no stove). From here the gentle ascent to the **Fimmvörðuháls** pass crosses snowfields. On the left-hand side there's a hut which offers skiing tours in the summer. The highest point is reached after 1 hr. and then you begin the descent during which, after half an hour, you have to negotiate a place protected with ropes that requires some climbing. The path continues over **Morinsheiði**, a mountain with a plateau on the top. After this keep to the left-hand flank of a mountain ridge and then walk along a crest. The path becomes narrow in places. Down to the left you are afforded views into the Strákagil. Once again descending steeply you arrive at the sheltered floor of the valley where you will be surprised by luxuriant birch forests. After reaching the level of the river an arrow points towards the **Básar hut** which is accessed in 15 minutes by crossing a bridge, then turning right and walking along beside the birch forest.

