

The Lónsöræfi Trail

Start	Bjálafell
Finish	Stafafell
Distance	85km (52¾ miles)
Time	4 days
Terrain	One of the more difficult trails, starting in a very remote, pathless area and including two glacier crossings and several river crossings. It becomes easier later, with waymarks and trodden paths, and finishes with a dirt-road walk.
Facilities	Basic huts
Accommodation	Huts and/or camping; hostel and campsite at Stafafell

Before planning to walk the Lónsöræfi Trail, note that this is one of the tougher, more remote treks in Iceland. It was more difficult to reach a few years ago, but reservoirs and hydro-electric power plants have been constructed and new roads serve the area. The Lónsöræfi Trail is unmarked and untrodden for half its length, so prospective trekkers must be competent navigators. The first day on the trail involves crossing glaciers – the large Eyjabakkajökull and the smaller Kverkkvislarjökull – as well as rivers. This cannot be recommended for anyone without glacier-walking and river-crossing experience. Basically, trekkers have to 'read' the terrain and take care with every step, and some maps of the trail are woefully inadequate. There are likely to be

few or no other trekkers, and some of the huts are not staffed by wardens.

In the event that walkers start this trail only to realise that it is beyond their capabilities, then turn back while there is still time and retreat to Snæfellsskáli (Walk 26). In any case, it is wise to heed any advice about current conditions that the wardens at Snæfellsskáli offer, and they may ask you to leave your name and contact details before you start the trail. Beyond the halfway point, there are waymarks and trodden paths, as well as an option to finish early at Illikambur, on Stage 4.

Jeep tours will transport groups of walkers, by arrangement, from Egilsstaðir to the start of the Lónsöræfi Trail on the slopes of Bjálafell. Once committed to the trek, an early finish can be arranged with Stafafell Travel, who offer pick-ups on a dirt road at Illikambur. The final stage is long, but half of it follows a dirt road, and if necessary it can run into an extra day. Once Stafafell is reached, Sterna buses run to Egilsstaðir in one direction, and in the other direction to Höfn, where it is possible to stay overnight and continue to Reykjavík the following day.