

Húnafjörður (Vatnafjörður)

VATNSDÆLA SAGA HERITAGE MAP

The **Vatnsdæla Saga Map** is a guide in map form to the history of the **Vatnsdalur valley** and the county of **Austur-Húnvatnssýsla**. This is where the events recounted in the **Saga of the People of Vatnsdalur** (Vatnsdæla Saga) took place. The region abounds in heritage sites which are mentioned in the Saga. On the map the principal events of the Saga are described, while further detail is given on the reverse of the map.

the pioneering settlers who became chieftains in the new Icelandic society. Power struggles and conflict are an important element of this eventful Saga, which involves a colourful cast of characters from Vatnsdalur and beyond.

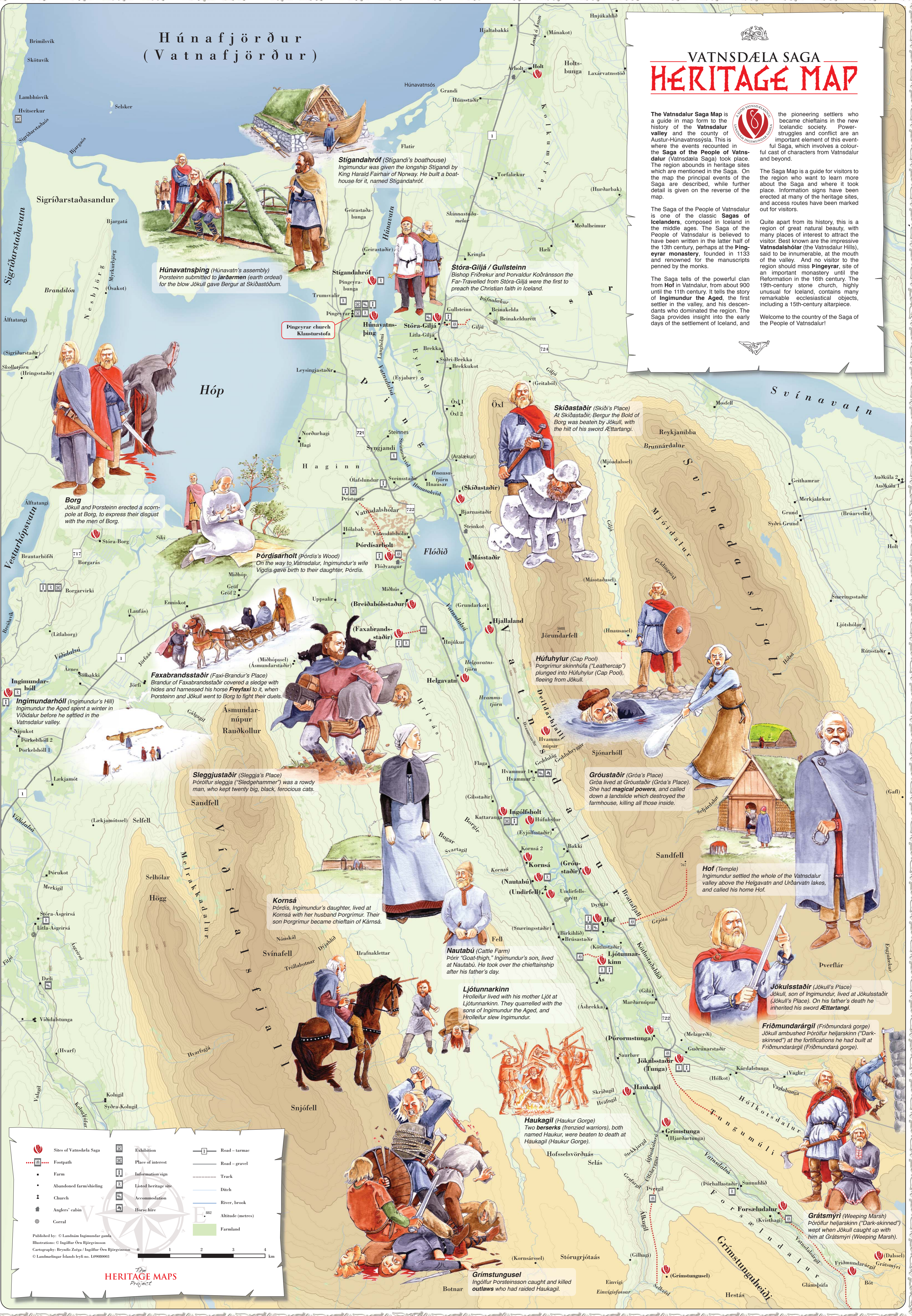
The Saga Map is a guide for visitors to the region who want to learn more about the Saga and where it took place. Information signs have been erected at many of the heritage sites, and access routes have been marked out for visitors.

Quite apart from its history, this is a region of great natural beauty, with many places of interest to attract the visitor. Best known are the impressive **Vatnsdalshölar** (the Vatnsdalur Hills), said to be innumerable, at the mouth of the valley. And no visitor to the region should miss **Pingeyrar**, site of an important monastery until the Reformation in the 16th century. The 19th-century stone church, highly unusual for Iceland, contains many remarkable ecclesiastical objects, including a 15th-century altarpiece.

Welcome to the country of the Saga of the People of Vatnsdalur!

The Saga of the People of Vatnsdalur is one of the classic **Sagas of Icelanders**, composed in Iceland in the middle ages. The Saga of the People of Vatnsdalur is believed to have been written in the latter half of the 13th century, perhaps at the **Pingeyrar monastery**, founded in 1133 and renowned for the manuscripts penned by the monks.

The Saga tells of the powerful clan from **Hof** in Vatnsdalur, from about 900 until the 11th century. It tells the story of **Ingimundur the Aged**, the first settler in the valley, and his descendants who dominated the region. The Saga provides insight into the early days of the settlement of Iceland, and



Stigandahróf (Stigandi's boathouse)
Ingimundur was given the longship Stigandi by King Harald Fairhair of Norway. He built a boathouse for it, named Stigandahróf.

Húnvatnsþing (Húnvatn's assembly)
Porsteinn submitted to **jarðarmen** (earth ordeal) for the blow Jökull gave Bergur at Skíðastaðum.

Stóra-Giljå / Gullsteinn
Bishop Friðrikur and Þorvaldur Kódrásson the Far-Traveller from Stóra-Giljå were the first to preach the Christian faith in Iceland.

Skíðastaðir (Skíð's Place)
At Skíðastaðir, Bergur the Bold of Borg was beaten by Jökull, with the hilt of his sword **Ættartangi**.

Borg
Jökull and Þorsteinn erected a scampole at Borg, to express their disgust with the men of Borg.

Þórdísarholt (Þórdís's Wood)
On the way to Vatnsdalur, Ingimundur's wife Vigdís gave birth to their daughter, Þórdís.

Faxabrandstaðir (Faxi-Brand's Place)
Brandur of Faxabrandstaðir covered a sledge with hides and harnessed his horse **Freyfaxi** to it, when Þorsteinn and Jökull went to Borg to fight their duels.

Hífuhylur (Cap Pool)
Þorgrímur sínnhúla ("Leathercap") plunged into Hífuhylur (Cap Pool), fleeing from Jökull.

Ingimundarhöll (Ingimundur's Hill)
Ingimundur the Aged spent a winter in Viðdalur before he settled in the Vatnsdalur valley.

Sleggjustaðir (Sleggja's Place)
Þórólfr sleggja ("Sledgehammer") was a rowdy man, who kept twenty big, black, ferocious cats.

Gróustaðir (Gróa's Place)
Gróa lived at Gróustaðir (Gróa's Place). She had magical powers, and called down a landslide which destroyed the farmhouse, killing all those inside.

Kornsá
Þórdís, Ingimundur's daughter, lived at Kornsá with her husband Þorgrímur. Their son Þorgrímur became chieftain of Kornsá.

Nautabú (Cattle Farm)
Þórir "Goat-thigh," Ingimundur's son, lived at Nautabú. He took over the chieftainship after his father's day.

Hof (Temple)
Ingimundur settled the whole of the Vatnsdalur valley above the Helgavatn and Urðarvatn lakes, and called his home Hof.

Ljótunnarkinn
Hrolleifur lived with his mother Ljót at Ljótunnarkinn. They quarrelled with the sons of Ingimundur the Aged, and Hrolleifur slew Ingimundur.

Jökulstaðir (Jökull's Place)
Jökull, son of Ingimundur, lived at Jökulstaðir (Jökull's Place). On his father's death he inherited his sword **Ættartangi**.

Fríðmundarárgili (Fríðmundarárgile)
Jökull ambushed Þórólfr heljarskinn ("Dark-skinned") at the fortifications he had built at Fríðmundarárgili (Fríðmundarárgile).

Haukagil (Haukur Gorge)
Two berserks (frenzied warriors), both named Haukur, were beaten to death at Haukagil (Haukur Gorge).

Grátsmýri (Weeping Marsh)
Þórólfr heljarskinn ("Dark-skinned") wept when Jökull caught up with him at Grátsmýri (Weeping Marsh).

Grimstungusel
Ingólfr Þorsteinsson caught and killed outlaws who had raided Haukagil.

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HERITAGE MAPS Project

	Sites of Vatnsdæla Saga		Footpath		Road - tarmac
	Exhibition		Place of interest		Road - gravel
	Information sign		Listed heritage site		Track
	Accommodation		Church		Ditch
	Horse hire		Anglers' cabin		River, brook
	Corral		Altitude (metres)		Farmland

0 1 2 3 4 km