

With the promise of another sunny day, we decided to go for a longer hike up from the top of the Floibanen. We had invested in a hiking map book and Matt had planned out a 7km route that went way above the tree line. The kids went in search of picnic supplies, which proved more challenging as it was Sunday. Shops bigger than 100 square metres must stay closed on a Sunday, so none of the supermarkets were open. They did a really good job of pulling together a picnic from the 7-Eleven though and we were on our way.

The Floibanen was much busier today with locals making the most of the sunshine. It's a really popular area for running, dog walking and even mountain biking. The paths and routes were snowy or icy, but we soon learnt what to step on and what to avoid. Our challenge was to get through the day without falling over. A few people had crampons on their shoes, but most were in regular hiking shoes like us, and the dogs were all bare-feet! Our route took us uphill, but it wasn't too steep. With snow all around it felt like we were at high altitude, but we never got above 600 metres so didn't have the problem of getting puffed at altitude.



We walked above those high cliffs



Ice Walls



Up some more



European Sunshine



Sometimes tracks were well signposted



Other times we made up our own

We added a few kms to our hike distance with side detours to scenic viewpoints. Matt has an amazing sense of direction and the ability to glance at a map and know exactly which way to go. Some of the paths on our route were roads, others were nothing more than following cairns or marker posts. The footsteps in the snow were really useful as well to keep on track.



Easy to miss side-track



Side "track" to a viewpoint



Rewarded with this view!

We probably walked around 10km in total. Some of it was easy going, although you couldn't go too fast on the slippery surface. Other times it was quite rugged and every step had to be carefully placed to stay on two feet. The top part way above the tree line was rocky and barren, and pretty windy. We found the Bergen water supply at the top, although we wondered if water was in short supply in winter as it was pretty frozen.



The highest part



Dam across Bergen water supply



The only running water we found



What made these prints?

Thanks to Matt's navigation, we didn't get lost once. We also succeeded in not falling over. There were a few close calls with sliding on the ice, but we managed to recover just in time. There were plenty of tourists at the top of the Floibanen, but on the hiking routes above it was all locals - and us. People frequently spoke to us in Norwegian, so we must have looked like locals!

It's easily one of the best day hikes we have ever done. The varied scenery and unexpected side-tracks to hidden viewpoints made it extra special. We got back to the hotel feeling on top of the world but utterly exhausted. We hadn't walked that far, but on top of all the other exhausting days and travel, we were completely worn out. Matt was so tired he was asleep by 7pm without any dinner. Anna and I got through dinner but weren't too far behind. An early night made sense anyway as we'll be up early tomorrow to catch the train across snowy places to Oslo.