



Nordic Life

Culture + Taste + History + Events + Personalities

Tip!

If you're trying to type a Norwegian letter on an English Mac computer keyboard, press the Alt key and then the appropriate letter.



Happy Birthday "Å"

This year marks the centennial celebration of the Norwegian letter "å." It replaced "aa" in the Norwegian alphabet in 1917 to avoid having three "a"s in a row in names, such as Håa. "Å" is only used in Scandinavia and sounds like the vowel in "ball" or "not."



PHOTO BY IBRAHIM ELHAWANI / VARIOUS ARCHITECTS

BICYCLE HOTEL

Lillestrøm is a small town near Oslo that prides itself on being one of Norway’s best cycling cities. Last October, Lillestrøm Bike Hotel opened at the town’s train station. Norwegian National Railways commissioned Oslo firm Various Architects to build it. The structure is made of transparent glass walls that allow natural light to filter in, which result in minimal energy consumption. The sloping green rooftop connects to the main square of the train station. Commuters pay a monthly fee to store their bikes indoors while at work or out of town.

DID YOU KNOW?

Derived from a Norwegian word meaning “well-being,” the term “hygge” first appeared in 19th century Danish writing.

All Electric by 2025

By 2025, Norway will be the first country to completely phase out fossil fuel powered vehicles. Earlier this year, Norway introduced the world’s fastest charging station for electric cars – which make up 40 percent of newly registered vehicles in Norway. The station can charge up to 28 vehicles in about 30 minutes, making it time and energy efficient. Since 1990, electric car drivers have had priority highway access, waived toll and ferry fees and free parking.



kalender

Sept. 7–16, Oslo

Ultima Oslo Contemporary Music Festival

The Nordic region’s premiere contemporary music festival returns to Norway’s capital with more than 50 events to promote artistic innovation. +47 22 40 18 90, ultima.no/en

Sept. 8–10, 2017, Tønsberg, Norway

Tønsberg Viking Festival 2017

Travel to Norway’s oldest town as it transforms into a Viking village for three days, complete with games, traditional grub and ships in the port. vikingsaga.no

Sept. 10, South Elgin, IL

Scandinavian Day Festival

Indulge in a Lingonberry saft or fried herring while celebrating the five Scandinavian countries in the historic Vasa Park. 847-695-6720, scandinaviandayil.com



Sept. 27–30, Minot, N.D.

Norsk Høstfest

This 40-year-old gathering packs in the culture with a giant kransekake, artisan craft classes and author meet-and-greets — plus performances by Celtic Thunder and Josh Turner. 701-852-2368, hostfest.com



Top Blogs

Get to know two of Norway’s top bloggers, who collectively garner thousands of views each year.

Name: Trine Sandberg
Blog: Trines Matlogg (Trine’s Food Blog), trinesmatlogg.no
About: Trondheim-born Sandberg is passionate about cooking and photography, and combines those skills on her blog and in the pages of three cookbooks. Sandberg has been publishing recipes on her blog since January 2007, and keeps dishes simple and (mostly) healthy. Instagram: [@trinesmatlogg](https://www.instagram.com/trinesmatlogg)

Name: Kristine Ilstad
Blog: Det søte liv (The Sweet Life), detsoteliv.no
About: Ilstad proudly shares more than 3,700 recipes on her blog, and believes that a baker of any skill level can find something to whip up. With a deep love for cakes, Ilstad treats readers to a huge selection and reminds us that taste is far more important than appearance. Instagram: [@kristine_lifeissweet](https://www.instagram.com/kristine_lifeissweet)

ALL-FEMALE SPECIAL FORCES

What began as an experiment is now breaking down military gender barriers and making history. *Jegertroppen*, or “Hunter Troops,” is the world’s first all-female special forces military unit. It was created in 2014 after the Norwegian army identified a need for women special forces units in combat, particularly in conservative countries where women and male soldiers can’t interact. More than 300 women applied the first year — the majority elite high school athletes — but only 10 passed.

To qualify for *Jegertroppen*, applicants have to run about 4 miles carrying 60 pounds of military gear in less than 52 minutes. The women, age 19 to 27, complete the same training tasks and carry the same weight packs as the men, and after a one-year training program, “female soldiers are just as capable as their male (special forces) counterparts,” said Col. Frode Kristofferson, the commander of Norway’s special forces. As of now, no members of the *Jegertroppen* program have been deployed, but they are ready and able when they are needed.



PHOTO BY TORBJORN KJOSVOLD / FORSKVARET

Couch Fishing

A new video game will give players a Norwegian fishing experience from the comfort of home. In “Fishing: Barents Sea,” players use in-game GPS and sonar to find the best fishing spots, haul fish onto their boats, clean their catches and more. Game designer Gøran Myrland and his colleagues have recreated the northern Norwegian coastline using satellite data from the Norwegian Mapping Authority and 20 years of weather data. The game is partly based off Myrland’s own experience as a Barents Sea fisherman, and will likely be released by early 2018. fbgame.net, [facebook.com/fishingbarents/](https://www.facebook.com/fishingbarents/)



IMAGE COURTESY ASTRACON / MISC GAMES