



# SONS of NORWAY

## Norsemen of the Lakes 5-650

OCTOBER MEETING will be Friday the 6th. It's a trip to UW Green Bay to attend the **Viking Fest**. It is set up as a Viking village with demonstrations and lectures outdoors. They have food trucks for lunch.

We will car ride together leaving from Elkhorn **Advia Credit Union at 8:30**. Be there a few minutes early. We will be home about 4 p.m. If the weather is bad, we will probably cancel.

If you plan to ride with me, you must call me before hand so I know how many people who will ride with me. A couple of my friends would go with me, only if there is room in my car.

Below are four pictures from last year's fest. My contacts are here for you to easily notify me or answer questions. corlene121@gmail.com 262-949-9191



Oct. 2023  
Walworth County, WI



**Gratulerer med dagen**

### October Birthdays

Marjorie Christenson 8th  
Jane A Roberts 27th

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Greeting & Meetings	1
Book to read.....	1
The Viking Compass	2
Eric the Red	4
Oslo Money Hacks	6
Rise in Crime	7
Iceland's Hot Valley.	8

### CALENDAR

**Fri. October 6th.**  
Trip to Viking Fest in  
Green Bay  
Meet at Advia Credit  
Union @ 8:30 a.m.  
Return about 4p.m.

**Wed. November 8th**  
**trip to**  
**The Norwegian**  
**Restaurant**  
(only meeting this month)

**Here is the link to**  
**the menu. Yum!**

**Sat. December 2nd**  
Christmas Jul



# The Rebirth of Norway's Cider Tradition

By Amy McPherson 20th September 2023

There's a belief that some form of cider was made by Vikings in Norway, and today, its growing popularity has people convinced it's the country's national drink.

"Now, I want you to be opened minded," said Anne Gunn Rosvold, a food tour guide with Bergen Base Camp in Bergen, a city along the southwestern Fjord region of Norway. "Because you probably don't expect to drink this in Norway, but I am going to let you try Norwegian cider."

Rosvold would be right. Cider, made from fermented apple juice, is not something I'd expect the Norwegians to be drinking – it's more common in the British Isles and coastal parts of France, particularly in Normandy. But as she explained, it has been part of the culture for a while, in fact – possibly since the time of the Vikings.

The first recorded production of cider dates back to the Roman Empire, when it was made from native European crab apples, which grew wild throughout the continent. The definitive origin of this fizzy alcoholic drink is disputed, however. Some claim the Celtic Britons invented the drink after the Romans [introduced the cultivation of crab apples](#) around 50 CE, but others believe that some apple-based drinks were made long before that.

"Officially, cider was introduced from England by monks in the Middle Ages," Rosvold explained, "but there is a belief that some form of cider as a drink was made even by the Vikings, because they believed apples to have special God powers."

In popular Norse mythology, the Goddess Idunn supplied apples to the Gods to preserve their youth and immortality. Without Idunn and her apples, the Gods of Åsgård would face threats of aging and death. As a symbol for life, fertility and knowledge, it is no wonder that this humble fruit had such a place in history. The Vikings regarded apples as a treasure. In 1904, a Viking Queen was found in a burial mound in Tønsberg, Norway's oldest city, [buried with a basket](#) of wild crab apples and the Oseberg Viking ship, among other artefacts. The ship is believed to be from the 9th Century and is on display at [Museum of the Viking Age](#) in Oslo.

Native European crab apples would have been available to the Vikings through foraging, and "with access to apples, there is no doubt that the Vikings definitely made things with apples," explained Ellen Marie Naess, an archaeologist and lecturer from Oslo's [Museum of Cultural History](#).

"We know the Vikings loved to drink alcohol, and it is likely they made something similar to cider with

the apples. But the apples they had were the native crab apples, and they are not very good, so the Vikings would have used honey to sweeten it. Although as soon as you put honey in, it becomes mead, not cider, technically."

Could they have also made something without honey that could be classified as cider? "Probably. We don't know for sure," said Naess.

Although the idea of Vikings making cider is only a probability, there's proof that cider was produced and sold [as early as the 13th Century](#) in Norway, when Cistercian monks who immigrated from England planted and introduced the cultivation of apples in the [Hardangerfjord](#) region. They taught fjord farmers how to grow and maintain the orchards, kick-starting a passion for apple products, and among them was the celebrated cider. Little did they know that they had unintentionally chosen one of the best spots in the country for this task.

The microclimate of the fjords turned out to be ideal for apple cultivation: 40% of all Norwegian fruit today is grown in this region. The apples are known to be so good that the award-winning cider made from Hardanger is considered to be the "[Champagne of apple cider](#)", and was granted [Protected Geographical Indication](#) status in 2009, a European food and drink quality



(Image credit: annalovisa/Alamy)



Cider has been part of Norwegian culture possibly since the time of the Vikings (Credit: Leonardo Spencer/Alamy)

label that protects a product of heritage from being copied outside of its production geography.

Cider remained popular for many centuries, until Norway placed stricter laws against the sale of alcohol in 1921 to curb alcoholism. The country banned private production and sales of alcohol, and it created a government owned monopoly of the market called *Vinmonopolet*.

The Vinmonopolet controlled the sales and production of any beverage with alcoholic content over 4.95%. This had a big impact on the cider industry, as cider generally contained a higher percentage of alcohol. Eventually, the population lost interest, although the idea that cider became unpopular might not have been all Vinmonopolet's doing.

"Even before the Vinmonopolet, ciders grew out-of-date, with more people leaning towards beers, mostly because crab apples were not particularly nice even after being made into cider," said Naess. "But cider is definitely making a comeback, and it is good! Even I am surprised!"

And that brings us back to the surprise taste of Norwegian cider. Recognising the popularity of the home-grown cider industry, since 2016, Vinmonopolet has relaxed their rules and allowed the producers to sell their cider with alcoholic content up to 22% directly to consumers, allowing more choices and flexibility in buying alcohol, helping to resurrect the long hibernating cider industry.

With the increased cultivation of different apple varieties along the coast of Western Norway (not just in the Hardangerfjord region), young producers have been stirring up a cider revolution, using traditional knowledge and methods with a mix of creativity to create fresh new tastes in cider.

With this newfound enthusiasm, Norwegian cider continues to gain status, with gold and silver wins at various international cider awards, the most recent being the [Nordic International Cider Awards](#) held in Bergen in 2022. It's proof that the heritage of working with apples, even if it cannot be credited entirely to Norway's Viking roots, has been awakened.

"In the countryside, cider is definitely considered the drink of Norway," said Arita Åkre, owner of Måge Farm and co-owner of [Åkre farm](#) with husband Gjermund Åkre. The couple produces a range of ciders from their orchard in Hardanger.

"I call my cider EDEL; it means 'noble' in Norwegian," Arita Åkre explained. "It is to honour all the women who farmed before our time. Their effort went unfortunately unnoticed."

"Since apples are our grapes, and cider is our wine, we notice more and more people are being convinced that this is our national drink," said Åkre.

In this industry that continues to grow with passion and pride, cider gained a festival in its honor in 2019. Every May, the [Hardanger International Ciderfest](#) attracts cider producers and enthusiasts to celebrate all things cider.

Back in Bergen, Rosvold proudly poured another round of cider, and it was excellent.

"A surprise, eh?" chuckled Rosvold, with an air that echoed Arita Åkre's sentiments. "I feel quite proud myself that this is locally produced!"



*Cistercian monks introduced the cultivation of apples in the Hardangerfjord region (Credit: Alf Jacob Nilsen/Alamy)*

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I found an article about a probable rune stone found in Oklahoma. It's too long for the newsletter, so I thought I'd put a link in for you to look at if you are interested.

[Did Vikings find their way to a remote part of Oklahoma?](#)

# Minnesota National Guard Troops Build Ice Walls, Snow Caves to Endure Conditions in Norwegian Mountains

BY REG CHAPMAN

FEBRUARY 9, 2023 / 5:24 PM / CBS MINNESOTA

**HALTDALEN, Norway** -- WCCO is with the Minnesota National Guard in Norway to mark 50 years of our countries training together.

This week, guard members are dealing with the dangers of Norway's cold and mountainous terrain. Members of the Norwegian Home Guard are right by their side to help navigate deep snow, strong winds and unpredictable precipitation at high altitudes.

Due to a wind event overnight Thursday, troops spent hours building up an ice wall around their tents for protection. Maj. Katie Lunning is the officer in charge of this year's NOREX exchange.

"We use our shovels and just make a brick and build it up. If the wind isn't as high, you can have the wall about two-thirds height they said around the tent. But with the winds last night and the way that they're coming in today, we built the walls up to almost the same height as the tent," Lunning said. "The goal of the snow wall is to make sure it's a windbreak to keep the canvas dry and to keep the wind blowing off you as much as possible."

Lunning braved the storm right beside the troops she commands. "I definitely woke up and I could feel the tent swaying back and forth, but the Norwegians know what they're doing, so we have a stove going, we have really great wool gear to keep us warm, so even though you could hear it howling outside, we were comfortable."

The wind shook everything and brought sub-zero temperatures. Troops relied on the shelter of their tents for protection. Cpt. Ellen McNair says Norwegian Home Guard troops stressed the importance of safety when it comes to using this stove.

"You start the stove as soon as you get in the tent because that's the source of your heat," McNair said. "You turn this heat gauge up all the way, it's got five levels up all the way to 5. You do a couple pumps of the fuel. The fuel is outside of the tent for safety purposes." Once the fire is inside the stove, it heats up fast. With eight people in the tent, they take turns on fire watch. That means one person stands guard to put out the fire if it gets out of

control. They also carry a knife to cut the sides open and get people out if needed to escape a burning tent.

While some stay close to the protection of the tents, others head farther up the mountain. Troops dig snow caves that will provide shelter from snow, rain, or sleet. It's another layer of protection from an unpredictable storm. They will hunker down inside until the weather allows them to move around. The snow cave is the perfect size to enjoy rations and a bit of down time with comrades.

This was one of the last looks these troops will get at the beauty and the danger a Norwegian winter brings. The time has come to descend the mountain and return to garrison. They overcame their fears and successfully completed training – thanks to the Norwegian Home Guard's expertise at conquering the elements.





# Norway's Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre Visits Minnesota

BY WCCO STAFF

SEPTEMBER 17, 2023 / 6:17 PM / CBS MINNESOTA  
MINNEAPOLIS

International bonds were made stronger Sunday as Norway's prime minister made his way to Minnesota. Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre joined Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar for a fireside chat at the Norway House on East Franklin Avenue in Minneapolis. This is the first time the country's sitting prime minister has visited Minnesota since 2009.

"It is, let me tell you, touching for a Norwegian prime minister to come here and to see how the roots really still are there," Støre said.

The prime minister is also celebrating a longstanding relationship between Norway and Minnesota, commemorated earlier this year. The Minnesota National Guard and the Norwegian Home Guard have partnered in a troop exchange for 50 years — the longest troop exchange program in U.S. Department of Defense history.



*Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre  
While in Minnesota, the prime minister  
also visited Camp Ripley in St. Cloud and St.  
Olaf College in Northfield. BY WCCO*

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## Walz Visits Norway to Commemorate Historic 50-Year Troop Exchange

BY REG CHAPMAN WCCO STAFF

FEBRUARY 15, 2023 / 6:21 PM / CBS MINNESOTA

**MINNEAPOLIS** -- All last week, our Reg Chapman and photojournalist Tom Aviles brought us stories from Norway with the Minnesota National Guard in honor of 50 years of training together. Now Gov. Tim Walz is in Norway to help recognize the partnership with the Norwegian Home Guard.

The shared commitment to alliance and defense is now official, solidified by this state partnership signing ceremony. "It's great to see a world that feels a bit chaotic to see something so solid and so long still be in place," Walz said. "I think what Minnesotans know and Norwegians know is that friends and allies stick together as we train together. We share our values together. It's great in the good times but we also know when times get tough we are there for one another."

A handshake between Norway's Inspector General and Minnesota's Chief of National Guard started an exchange program that pre-dates the department of defense's state partnership program. "We will build on what they have actually built on the cultural bonds, the shared values, and the results have been very much strong relationships and at the most core of it, the trust between us," said Maj. General Elisabeth Gifstad Michelsen, Chief of the Norway Home Guard.

That trust was evident during the US Reciprocal Troop Exchange or NOREX. Chapman and Aviles went along to Norway with Minnesota troops as they learned how to survive and thrive in extreme conditions. From survival training in the mountains, to escaping after falling into open water, this exchange is the heart and soul of this partnership.

"There is probably going to be some more depth and breadth to the relationship with Norway," said Maj. Gen. Shawn Manke with Adjutant General Minnesota.

They shared techniques, tactics and lesson learned, the glue that holds this relationship together. On this historic day, the focus is taking this military and economic partnership to the next level. The Department of Defense pairs the National Guard of a state with a partner nation's military forces and agencies responsible for emergency and disaster response.

[Here is a URL to see the report from WCCO](#)

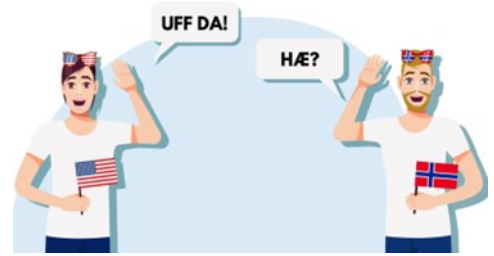


# Uff Da: What the Norwegian American Expression Really Means

December 5, 2021 by [Daniel Albert](#)

Norwegian Americans love to say *uff da* as a badge of Norwegian pride. But here's the story of what the expression actually means in Norway today.

If you're of Norwegian descent, you have almost certainly heard someone say *uff da*, and quite possibly also said it yourself. But did you know the expression is used very differently in North America and in Norway? Let us clear things up! In this article, I'll explore the different meanings of the saying, how its used by Norwegians and [Norwegian Americans](#)—and why none of this really matters anyway!



## Origins of the Norwegian expression

*Uff da* is an expression composed of two words. “Uff” is an onomatopoeia – that's a word that represents a sound. Just like “bang” or “woof” or “pow”. The word *uff* is meant to represent a sigh. *Da* is (roughly) the Norwegian equivalent of “then”. So, for example, “kom igjen da!” translates as “Come on, then!”. Of course, as an expression, the two words take a meaning that goes beyond their separate definitions.

## Uff da in the United States

In North America, *uff da* is used as an all-round exclamation or a kind of very mild curse. We've scoured the internet for evidence and found all manner of curiosities. It can express a whole gamut of emotions from surprise to dismay, via exhaustion and astonishment.

For example, it seems that [Minnesotans](#) will say *uff da* when they lift something that's heavier than expected, when they go outside and realize the temperature is very cold indeed, or when they kick their shoes off and collapse on the sofa after a long day at work.

## A marker of Norwegian American cultural identity

In North America, using an expression like *uff da* marks you as having a connection with Norwegian heritage. That might be unintentional. Maybe the expression is just part of your vocabulary, and always has been. Or it may be deliberate: you use the word *because* you want to show people you have a connection to Norway.

The latter is seen quite clearly in the use of the expression to name businesses, social clubs, restaurants or other organizations. There is [Uff-Da Airport](#), several Uffda festivals and many Uffda roads. Indeed, *uff da* has an almost legendary status in some parts of the United States and Canada. It is worn with pride ([sometimes literally](#)) by people of Norwegian heritage.



Norwegian parents may use ‘Uff da’ when their child gets an ow-ey.

It is not only an expression but a badge of honor of sorts, claiming a small part of one's ancestors' culture. For people who are in the know, it signals that connection very clearly. Perhaps that's why so many Norwegian Americans comment on Life in Norway's Facebook posts with *uff da*!—something a native Norwegian would never do.

## Uff da in Norway

Here's a bit of good news: *Uff da* is a genuine Norwegian expression that is used in Norway to this day! There is a difference though, which I will attempt to explain.

First, it has to be said that *uff da* is not a very common expression in Norwegian. Everyone in Norway knows what it means, but most people will use it only sporadically, if at all – and certainly not every day.

Another difference is in the range of situations in which *uff da* is the appropriate thing to say. This range is much narrower in Norwegian than in English. In fact, about 80% of the time (this is a very crude and non-scientific estimation by yours truly), *uff da* is used in Norway to console a child who inflicted themselves a minor injury.

Norwegian parents may use “Uff da” when their child gets an ow-ey. The point of *uff da* in Norwegian is to express compassion for something unfortunate that happened – but not *too* unfortunate. You can say *uff da* when a child comes to you crying because they scraped their knee, but not if they come to you crying because one of their relatives died. This sort of equates to the use of “aww, there there” by parents in English!

If you use *uff da* in a situation that is too serious, it will sound like you're minimizing the gravity of that situation. In fact, that is probably why it's so commonly used to console children with minor scrapes and bumps. It's an expression that says “that sucks, but it's not that bad”. Because of that added bit of meaning, *uff da* can sound a little condescending if used at the wrong time. If you want to express compassion without sounding like you're trying to minimise the problem, you can simply say “uff”, without the “da”.

### **It's used only in conversations**

Because it's not used as a minor curse word in Norwegian, *uff da* really only makes sense when used in a conversation with another person. This makes sense given that it's meant to express compassion. In Norway, “uff da” would only be used as part of a conversation.

Of course some people talk to themselves, and they can use any expression they want – it could be argued that they are, in fact, holding a conversation. But the point is, using *uff da* because you're exhausted, surprised or shocked (in the same way you would use another minor swear) would just be weird in Norwegian.

### **The pronunciation**

Another small but very noticeable difference in use of the expression between Norway and the United States is in the way it's pronounced. The Norwegian “u” is notoriously difficult for native English speakers to pronounce, and it is likely to be replaced with something sounding more like an “oo” sound. But the good news is, even Norwegians sometimes pronounce it with a “oo” sound, depending on their dialect.

### **How did the expression cross the Atlantic?**

Many Norwegians left Norway in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in search of a better life in the vast expanses of the American Midwest. Because they wanted their children to integrate, they often tried to speak only English to them.

Despite this focus in English, *uff da* is one of those Norwegian expressions that still made it through. Perhaps the children heard it and remembered it precisely because it's so commonly used to console them. Either way, it came to represent a connection to a Norwegian past.

### **So who's right?**

We've established that *uff da* doesn't mean the same thing on either side of the Atlantic. So who's right and who's wrong? Well... everyone is right. Linguistically speaking, if a large group of people (say, Americans in the Midwest) use a word or expression in a certain way and understand each other when they do, they cannot be wrong. This remains true even if said word or expression has a different meaning than it did originally. Languages evolve, expressions change, words disappear and reappear through time.

Regardless of the meaning you assign to it, *uff da* is undeniably a tangible connection people of Norwegian descent have with their past. As such, it's no wonder the expression is as cherished as it is.



# Is Norway Really So Bad For Foreigners?

July 12, 2023 by David Nickel

**A new edition of an annual expat survey has ranked Norway as one of the worst countries in the world for relocation. Let's take a look at why.**

Incredible landscapes, free-to-access nature, and a focus on children are some of the reasons people are drawn to Norway. But what about the high cost of living, difficulty to settle, and lack of cultural activities? These are some of the factors given by Norway-based respondents in the Expat Insider 2023 survey, which looks at the ease of living and working abroad. Norway placed 52nd of the 53 countries included in the Expat Insider Index. Norway only ranked higher than Kuwait in the index, part of the survey which has been run for the last 10 years. More than 12,000 people living abroad in 53 countries took part in the survey.

The top ten countries in the index are Mexico, Spain, Panama, Malaysia, Taiwan, Thailand, Costa Rica, the Philippines, Bahrain, and Portugal.

## It's not a Nordic thing

Norway may have ranked badly but that wasn't the case with other **Nordic countries**. Finland (16th) and Sweden (24th) both ranked in the top half, while Denmark placed 41st.

There were not enough respondents from Iceland for the country to feature in the index. All Nordic countries ranked high in the Working Abroad Index, although Norway was still notably behind Sweden, Finland and Denmark. Foreigners living in Finland also ranked the country well for quality of life.

## Norway: expensive and difficult?

Norway is not only the worst-rated Nordic country in the Expat Insider survey but also second-to-last worldwide. It also comes second-to-last in the Personal Finance Index, only ahead of New Zealand.

More than three in five expats (62%) rate the local **cost of living** negatively, compared to 35% globally. Perhaps most worrying, 37% say that their disposable household income is not enough to lead a comfortable life (vs. 27% globally). Similarly to the other Nordic countries featured in the survey, Norway does not perform well in the Ease of Settling In Index (48th). Close to a third of expats (32%) describe the locals as unfriendly towards foreign residents, compared to 18% globally.

## Norway is an expensive country.

They also find it hard to make local friends (51% unhappy vs. 36% globally) and are unhappy with their social life (38% vs. 25% globally). Overall, 37% do not feel at home in Norway (vs. 20% globally) — 17% do not feel at home at all, which is more than twice the global average (8%)!

Some of the reasons given for Norway's poor ranking in the Quality-of-Life Index include the affordability of public transport, the opportunity to travel, and the availability of healthcare. Norway also ranks **last for culinary variety** and dining options, and badly for culture and nightlife. However, Norway-based respondents valued the political stability, the high air quality, and the natural environment.

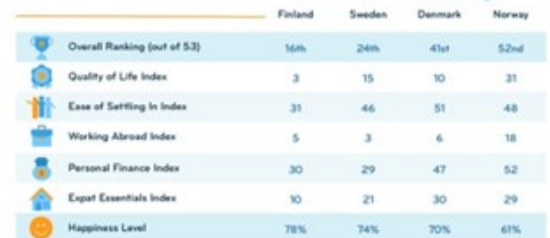
## About the survey

InterNations has been conducting its annual **Expat Insider survey** since 2014. This 10th edition of one of the world's largest expat surveys is based on data from 12,065 expats representing 171 nationalities and living in 172 countries or territories. They provided information on various areas of expat life, as well as their gender, age, and nationality.

Participants were asked to rate up to 56 different aspects of life abroad on a scale of one to seven. The process emphasized the respondents' personal satisfaction with these factors, considering both emotional topics and more factual aspects with equal weight.

The ratings of the individual factors were then bundled in various combinations for a total of 16 subcategories, and their mean values were used to draw up five topical indices: Quality of Life, Ease of Settling In, Working Abroad, Personal Finance, and Expat Essentials.

These indices were further averaged together with expats' general happiness with their life abroad to rank 53 destinations around the world. To be featured in the indices and overall ranking, a sample size of at least 50 survey participants per destination was necessary.



	Finland	Sweden	Denmark	Norway
Overall Ranking (out of 53)	16th	24th	41st	52nd
Quality of Life Index	3	15	10	31
Ease of Settling In Index	31	46	51	48
Working Abroad Index	5	3	6	18
Personal Finance Index	30	29	47	52
Expat Essentials Index	10	21	30	29
Happiness Level	78%	74%	70%	61%

Expat life in Nordic countries graphic. Source: Expat Insider 2023.