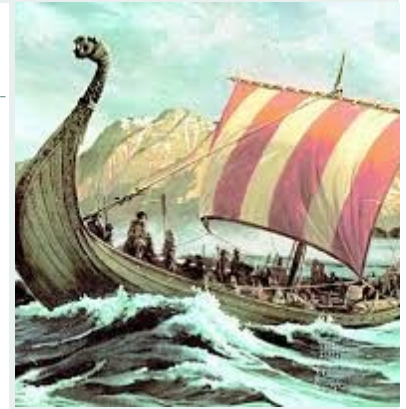




## Norsemen of the Lakes 5-650

Our meeting will be at the Advia Credit Union again on May 9th at 6:00 with a potluck dinner. For entertainment I am trying to get a foreign exchange student or more from the Nordic region to come and tell us of their experiences.



### Gratulerer med dagen

#### April Birthdays

Barb Ogne	29th
Kathleen Henderson	26th
Paul Johnsen	30th

## Norway Irked Over Sweden’s Silence on Rocket that Crashed on its Shores



Photograph: Jonathan Nackstrand/AFP/Getty Images

*The Guardian AFP in Oslo*

Tue 25 Apr 2023 16.36 EDT

The Norwegian foreign ministry has expressed irritation with Sweden for not immediately informing it of a research rocket that crashed in **Norway**, in a rare spat between the two neighbors. The rocket, which was launched early Monday from the Esrange Space Centre in Kiruna, northern **Sweden**, plunged into a mountainside in the Målselv municipality in Norway’s far north, about six miles from the closest inhabited area. No one was injured and no material damage was reported.

“The crash of a rocket like this is a very serious incident that can cause serious damage,” the foreign ministry in Oslo said. “When such a border violation occurs, it is crucial that those responsible immediately inform the relevant Norwegian authorities through the proper channels.”

The rocket was carrying out experiments in zero gravity at an altitude of 250km .

“The rocket took a slightly longer and more westerly trajectory than calculated and landed after a completed flight 9.3 miles into **Norway**,” the Swedish Space Corporation said in a statement on Monday. “Work on retrieving the payload is under way,” it added.

Norway’s foreign ministry also noted that retrieval work was not supposed to begin without Norwegian authorization, which had not been granted.

Norway’s Civil Aviation Authority said it had learned of the crash from the Swedish Space Corporation’s press release.

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### CALENDAR

#### Next meeting:

May 9th at 6:00

Advia Credit

Union—

Potluck

# Shetland Islands: Where Scandinavia Meets Scotland

David Nikel, Senior Contributor

Apr 26, 2023

Looking for something a bit different on your next adventure in Europe? Scotland's remote Shetland archipelago could be just what you're looking for. The [TV adaptation](#) of Ann Cleeves' *Shetland* series (on Prime) starring Douglas Henshall as DI Jimmy Pérez has introduced the islands to millions of people worldwide. Yet relatively few people visit, partly due to the islands' remote location. Those who do make the effort are rewarded with jagged coastlines, impressive sea cliffs, and rich archaeological sites.

Home to a deep-rooted Viking past, diverse wildlife, and a surprisingly thriving arts culture, this isolated archipelago off the northeastern coast of Scotland calls out to those with a sense of curiosity.

## Introducing the Shetland Islands

Shetland is an archipelago of more than 100 islands, only 15 of which are inhabited. The islands lie around 50 miles to the northeast of Orkney and 110 miles from mainland Scotland, making them the northernmost point of the British Isles.

A proud Viking history permeates the islands, with Norse influences evident in everything from place names to the local dialect.

The largest island, confusingly referred to as Mainland, is home to the capital, Lerwick. This charming harbor town provides an ideal base for exploring the islands, offering accommodation, dining options, and a range of cultural activities. Beyond the town, nature and wildlife lovers will find endless points of interest.



This sandbar connecting St Ninian's Isle with the mainland of the Shetland Islands off the north of Scotland is one of several natural attractions. GETTY



Jarlshof is an archaeological site on the Shetland Islands, which was inhabited from Neolithic times to the Middle Ages.

UNIVERSAL IMAGES GROUP VIA GETTY IMAGES

The islands are connected by a network of ferries, and regular flights from mainland Scotland make accessing Shetland a breeze. Combining a trip here with a tour of the [nearby Orkney Islands](#) will give you a fuller understanding of the fascinating history and nature of the Northern Isles.

## Uncovering Shetland's history

Shetland boasts a wealth of prehistoric archaeological sites, with evidence of human settlement dating back thousands of years. Stone roundhouses known as *brochs* are some of the best-preserved ruins, some of which are thought to be up to 2,000 years old.

The most famous archaeological site is the [Jarlshof settlement](#), which reveals layers of Bronze Age, Iron Age, Pictish, Viking Age and medieval history. Visitors to Jarlshof can explore the remains of stone houses, a broch, and a Viking Age longhouse, among other structures.

Not only does the site provide startling physical evidence of the Norse communities of Shetland, it also provides a striking mix of nature, history and modernity from its location on a headland next to Sumburgh airport at the southern end of Shetland.

The nearby Old Scatness site is also well worth a visit. Uncovered by chance during road construction in the 1970s, Old Scatness is a large *broch*, believed to date as far back as 400 BCE. There's evidence the building and its surrounding structures were also utilized by Pictish people and during the Viking Age.

Finally, a visit to the stone tower of [Mousa broch](#) is a must to see the best example of such a building in all of Scotland. Despite falling out of use in 1153, you can still climb its stairs as long as you take care. The stone walls of Mousa are also the breeding place of a large colony of storm petrels, the smallest seabirds in Europe.



Shetland's Mousa Broch is the tallest remaining Iron Age broch and one of Europe's best-preserved prehistoric buildings.

UNIVERSAL IMAGES GROUP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Cont.



## Lerwick: A cultural hub

The capital of the Shetland Islands offers visitors a picturesque waterfront, narrow winding streets, and traditional stone buildings. Founded in the 17th century as a simple fishing port, Lerwick has since evolved into a vibrant cultural hub for the islands. The town boasts a thriving arts scene, with local music and dance events held throughout the year.



A Viking boat in the harbor of Lerwick, the biggest urban area on the Shetland Islands. GETTY

With its blend of modern amenities and rich heritage, Lerwick serves as a perfect base from which to explore the islands' charms. Shetland Museum is a must-visit attraction, offering a comprehensive overview of the islands' history, culture, and natural environment.

On the edge of Lerwick, Clickimin Broch is another example of Shetland's historic stone roundhouses. Despite evidence of settlement more than one thousand years ago, very little is known about the building.

## Scalloway and the Shetland Bus

Those with an interest in World War II beyond the basics will surely have heard of the Shetland Bus. The informal network of fishing vessels that acted as secret ferries for Brits and Norwegian resistance

members operated across the North Sea for several years with the loss of 44 lives. The Shetland base of operations moved to Scalloway, and three American "mini-destroyers" known as submarine-chasers took over operations from the fishing vessels. More than 400 tons of weapons, explosives, and other supplies were delivered across a total of 210 missions.

Today, a memorial to those who lost their lives stands outside the [Scalloway Museum](#), where you can learn more about the operation.

## Up Helly Aa: A fiery Viking celebration

Shetland's Viking past comes alive during the annual [Up Helly Aa festival](#), held in Lerwick in late January. The largest fire festival in Europe, Up Helly Aa features a torchlit procession, the dramatic burning of a Viking longship, and a night of revelry in traditional Norse fashion. (Covered in the Feb. 2023 Newsletter, p. 3).

This unforgettable community event showcases the islands' unique heritage and modern community spirit. If you want to attend, you'll need to book well in advance, as flights, ferries and accommodation will be in high demand.

## Discovering Shetland's wildlife

The Shetland Islands are a haven for wildlife enthusiasts, with thriving populations of seabirds, seals, and even orcas. At the islands' southern point, the cliffs of Sumburgh Head are home to thousands of guillemots and razorbills. At the other end of the archipelago, the northernmost island Unst is home to great skuas, gannets and charismatic puffins.

The late summer period of late July to mid-August is the perfect time for wildlife enthusiasts to visit. Minke whales follow mackerel and herring into the waters of Shetland while thousands of breeding seabirds fill the bird cliffs.

## Fair Isle: A remote haven for wildlife

Lying midway between Orkney and Shetland, the remote Fair Isle was once used as a lookout post and a place for sending fire signals to and from Shetland. Now owned by the National Trust of Scotland, the windswept island is known for its durable knitwear and bird observatory. Unfortunately the observatory building was destroyed by fire in 2019, but keen birdwatchers still come to Fair Isle. In addition to air travel, car and passenger ferries are a vital component of Shetland's transportation network.



# Rare Viking Age Iron Bars Discovered in Valdres

April 19, 2023 by [Life in Norway Editorial Team](#)

**Iron bars likely used as a means of payment have been discovered in Norway, in what archaeologists say is a very rare and exciting find. Here's what we know so far.**



These iron bars were likely used as a means of payment both in the Iron Age and the Middle Ages. They are made of iron from Valdres, and all are cast in the same shape. Photo: Mildri Een Eide / Innlandet Fylkeskommune.

shape and a hole in each bar suggests they were tied together in a bundle. This is likely to make it easy for people to carry them with them and exchange them for goods from other places in the country.

[Valdres is a historic valley](#) in the heart of Norway. A traditional Norwegian farming district, Valdres is today a popular destination for skiing, hiking, and cycling.

## Iron production in Valdres

The Viking Age was a prosperous time for iron trade. Vikings needed iron for tools, weapons, and nails. It was an important material for [boat building](#). Valdres had significant iron production, evidenced by packhorse trails and production sites in the surrounding mountains. Most of the iron production took place during the late Viking Age from 900-1200 CE. But in Valdres and other places, remains of iron production have been found dating back to 200 AD.

In the most productive years, several tons of iron were transported from Valdres, said archaeologist Mildri Een Eide. Most of it went to other parts of Norway, but also for export, especially to Denmark.



Valdresflye, a mountain road in Valdres. Photo: Roger Ellingsen / Statens Vegvesen.

Grete Margot Sørum found nearly 1000-year-old iron bars while cleaning her parents' house. It's been a century since a similar discovery in the country. The iron bars were found near the historic King's Road in Aurdal, Valdres. According to [the NRK article](#), her father found the bars in the 1980s while digging a well but stored them away.

Sørum took the bars to Valdres Folk Museum. They were then sent to the Innlandet county archaeologist.

## Likely a form of payment

The 32 small bars, each weighing about 50 grams, were likely used as [a means of payment](#) in the Iron Age and Middle Ages. They are all cast in the same



Holes in the iron bars suggest they were tied together in a bundle. Photo: Mildri Een Eide / Innlandet Fylkeskommune.

## A rare find of cultural relics

The bars are now at the Cultural History Museum in Oslo. Kjetil Loftsgarden, an archaeologist and associate professor, said someone likely buried it to hide it. He said such discoveries are rare today due to modern excavation methods destroying small cultural relics.

Iron extraction in Valdres has few written records but was likely a specialized job owned by farmers and "small kings" before state and church control. Thousands of charcoal pits from iron extraction remain in the mountains.

Sørum and her family are glad the iron bars are being preserved and find the discovery special and exciting.



# Bergen's Cable Car: The Mount Ulriken Experience

December 21, 2022 by [David Nikel](#)



**Ready for an unforgettable view of Bergen? Here's everything you need to know about the Ulriken cable car.**

Among other nicknames, Bergen is known as the city of the seven mountains. Hiking these peaks is a popular activity with locals while visiting them gives tourists a fantastic perspective on the city and its surroundings.

Bergen's [Fløibanen funicular railway](#) is well-known and much-loved by tourists. But it's the Ulriken cable car that provides an even more spectacular view of Norway's second biggest city.

Perhaps one of the reasons the cable car is less-known than the funicular is its location. The lower station is away from the city center and required a bus trip. But the recent opening of Bergen's second light rail line has made it easier to access than ever before.

If you're visiting [Bergen](#) on a cruise ship, I understand you have limited time and so Fløibanen is a sensible option. But if you're visiting for a day or more, I'd urge you to consider a trip to Ulriken instead.

## Introducing Mount Ulriken

Ulriken stands taller than any of the other mountains in the immediate surroundings of Bergen. At a height of 2,110 ft above sea level, the view from the summit is absolutely wonderful—on a clear day, of course! The mountain is so dominant in the city that the Bergen line railway runs right through it in a lengthy tunnel. On rainy days, the summit is often obscured by clouds.

The cable car means that Ulriken is a popular destination for [hiking in Bergen](#), although you don't need to take it to enjoy the trails. More on that later.

## Introducing Ulriken643

Ulriksbanen, branded as [Ulriken643](#), is an aerial tramway from city level up to the summit of Ulriken. Soaring to the summit in just seven minutes, the cable car takes you twice as high as the Fløibanen funicular. Whereas Fløibanen is great for a lofty view of downtown, the views from Mount Ulriken set the city in context with its stunning natural surroundings.

The individual carriages are brand new following a recent renovation of the entire system. Tickets are not cheap at \$32.65 for a return trip, but there are departures every five minutes. Still, you should be prepared to wait at busy times.

At the summit, you'll find a drop-in cafe with a traditional Norwegian menu, snacks, drinks, ice-creams and what the cafe claims is a "renowned" Ulriken bun. If you prefer to try the seasonal menu in the formal restaurant, you'll need to make advance reservations. Both the cafe and restaurant are closed on Mondays.

## How to get to the Bergen cable car

First things first, don't set your plans in stone. Ignore the pushy sales tactics from the downtown street vendors and don't book your trip in advance. Instead, wait until the morning of your planned visit and make a visual check of the weather. If it's cloudy on the mountains to the southeast of the city



The TV tower and restaurant at the summit of Mount Ulriken, Bergen.



A view to the southwest from the summit of Ulriken (Bergen city centre is off to the right of this image).

or if there are high winds, don't make the journey. You won't see anything from the summit!

Those same vendors will try to sell you the trip on a brightly-coloured historic double-decker bus. While you might want to pay the \$9.46 for convenience, you can also get there relatively easily under your own steam.

To make your own way there, take the bus or light rail to Haukeland sjukehus (Haukeland Hospital). If you are taking the light rail, be sure you are on the new line 2 and not line 1 which goes to the airport. From the hospital stops, it's a relatively short walk to the Ulriken 643 station.

## Hiking at Ulriken

To really get an understanding of the [Norwegian outdoors lifestyle](#), you should hit the hiking trails. Ulriken is a favorite spot for many.

## Hiking up/down Ulriken

Feeling active? Join some locals and walk up Ulriken instead! The trail begins at the lower cable car station. After a turn, the sherpa steps appear. 1,400 steps later, you're at the summit. You should allow 60-90 minutes to complete the journey. Of course, you could choose to take the cable car up and walk back down instead!

## Other hikes

The hike from [Fløyen to Ulriken](#) is a classic Bergen hike, albeit a challenging one. Allow up to 6 hours to complete the 18km hike, bearing in mind you will cover a lot of open, high mountain terrain. You can take the Fløibanen funicular and cable car at either end of the hike.

Local guides advertise "panorama hikes" from Ulriken. These can be booked with the cable car company.



Bergen's light rail, Bybanen

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# 7 Reasons Why You Shouldn't Move to Norway

April 22, 2022 by [Daniel Albert](#)

**Many of our readers have longed to move to Norway for years. But sometimes, reality is quite different from the dream. We take a look at some of the worst reasons to make the move.**

People move to Norway for a variety of reasons. For some, it's for love or a job, for others, it's to find better opportunities or flee a conflict.

But there are bad reasons to move to the land of the Vikings. Many people have misconceptions about Norway and may end up feeling underwhelmed after moving here. Get the straight facts and avoid the pitfalls by reading our factual but not-too-serious list of reasons *not* to move to Norway.

## "Norway is the happiest country"

Norway is often considered to be one of the happiest countries in the world, if not the happiest. Well it turns out that [it's not](#) anymore, and [hasn't been for a while](#). But let's not be unfair. [Norway still topped the ranking](#) quite a few times and seems to have consistently earned a spot in the top 10 in most rankings. To be happy in Norway, you have to approach the concept of [happiness like a Scandinavian](#).



You want self-realization through a job that links your skills with your passions, with money to boot? While they also like money, Scandinavians highly value work-life balance. In short, finding happiness in the Scandinavian way is about making the best of your situation with little moments of bliss here and there, instead of pursuing the never-quite-attainable goal of "happiness".

### "Norway is a socialist country"

Norway sometimes gets painted as a socialist (or even communist) country. It is, in fact, capitalist, with free trade having a high priority and a set of property rights that are much more in line with capitalism than with communism.

Some economists have referred to the Nordic economic model as a form of [cuddly capitalism](#).

It has low levels of inequality, generous welfare states, and reduced concentration of top incomes, contrasting it with the more "cut-throat capitalism" of the United States, which has high levels of inequality and a larger concentration of top incomes.

In short, you may want to come to Norway because of the country's public health care system or social safety net, and that's fine. But the "socialist" label just does not apply.

### "It's the country of my ancestors"

Your great-grandparents may have come from Norway on a steam ship in the late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century, but the truth is she would barely recognize the country she left if she came back.



Life in Loen, Norway, circa 1900

[In 1900](#), Norway was still largely a farming and fishing nation. The country's major cities weren't even linked by rail yet. Staple dishes of today such as Grandiosa pizza and [Norwegian taco](#) did not yet exist!

Since then, Norway [discovered oil](#), [exploited that resource](#) for many decades, becoming [very rich](#) in the process, and even started making [plans for what would come after the oil](#).

Today's Norway is a very different country than the one left behind by boatloads of emigrants. The stories they passed down are now just a distant memory.

### "Salaries are high"

While it's true that salaries in Norway are [typically higher on the low end](#), things tend to equalize a bit more once you climb up the scale a bit. Add to that the fact that the Norwegian krone has gone down in value in the last decade, and [salaries in Norway](#) are not as impressive as they used to be.

What is remarkable about Norway is the lower levels of inequality. The income gap between the top 20% and the bottom 20% is smaller in Norway than in the United States, and [The Global Gender Gap Index 2021](#) places Norway (in 3rd place) far ahead of the US (in 30th place).

Even more important than all that is the fact that [finding a job in Norway](#) is hard. Unless you have particularly sought-after qualifications or a good network of local connections, chances are you will struggle for a few months – maybe even a few years – before you get a position you are satisfied with. Finding a job in Norway can be a challenge.

### "I love Lutefisk"

It may come as a shock if you come from one of North America's Norwegian-heavy areas, but [lutefisk](#) really isn't that big a deal in Norway. Sure, it appears on supermarket shelves and restaurant menus during the holiday season, but it's really not that popular.

When it comes to [Christmas dinners](#), a [recent survey](#) found that ribbe (roast pork belly with crackling) and pinnekjøtt (dried mutton ribs, steamed for several hours) are the clear leaders, being eaten by a total of 85% of survey participants at Christmas.

In contrast, lutefisk is found on only 3% of Christmas tables. And let's face it: given its odd smell



and jelly-like texture, is that really surprising?

A Norwegian once told me that even lutefisk lovers eat it for the trimmings (it is famously served with bacon but also sometimes with [other sides like brown cheese or mustard](#)). Mmmhhhh... lutefisk with brown cheese and mustard. Now that's an idea for a new horror franchise.

### “I love beer”

Norwegian beer certainly is delicious, and [craft beers](#) have exploded in numbers and in popularity over the last two decades. That being said, drinking [beer in Norway](#) has a few drawbacks.

First, there's the obvious question of the price. A single half-litre of beer (about a pint) will set you back 2.85 USD *at least* if you buy it at a supermarket. In a bar, beers tend to cost around \$10 for a half-liter and premium brands can easily reach \$14. That's enough to make you reconsider that round you were going to order isn't it?

Another less shocking but ever present fact about beer in Norway is [how heavily regulated alcohol is](#). You can get it in supermarkets but only before 8 PM (6 PM on weekends and forget about Sunday). Regulations state that beers above 4.7% ABV are only available from licensed premises (bars, restaurants and clubs) or from the Vinmonopolet, a state-run alcohol retail store. As a result, your favorite beer bought from the supermarket might not exist in its original version, but in a slightly weaker (dare I say watered-down?) version.



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## War Sailor Lands On Netflix

When World War II broke out, over 30,000 Norwegian merchant marines were roped into serving the allied forces—though without the benefit of ammunition, infrastructure, or combat training. The film *Krigsseileren*—War Sailor—illustrates through narrated letters the agonizing struggles of a working-class sailor and his family as they are separated during the war.

Kristoffer Joner, previously in *The Wave*, stars as Alfred “Freddy” Garnes. His best friend Sigbjørn “Wally” Kvalvåg is played by [Pål Sverre Hagen](#), known for portraying Thor Heyerdahl in another watery picture, *Kon-Tiki*. Ine Marie Wilmann, appearing as Alfred’s wife Cecilia, recently starred in the Netflix original film, *Troll*.

Freddy initially takes a job to support his growing family, but once conscripted, he and buddy Wally have two goals: to evade German submarine attacks and make it home alive. At the same time, Cecilia is embattled in occupied Norway with three young children, wondering as missiles rain on Bergen whether her husband will ever return.

Be forewarned: this is not an easy watch. It is a movie showing the violence of war, and since these are sailors, there will be swearing! The series is rated TV-MA for mature audiences.

Director Gunnar Vikene says that *War Sailor* is about the consequences that warfare has on everyday people, a universal narrative in which war is the antagonist. After meeting several *krigsseilerne* as a teenager and hearing about their traumatic experiences followed by scant recognition for their efforts, Vikene decided to bring their tales to the screen.

This movie about bravery, friendship and adversity was a hit in Norwegian theaters and became a mini-series for its American Netflix debut. Though the characters are fictional, the storyline is a distillation of true accounts by Norwegian war sailors and their families.

The heroics of the war sailors were largely overshadowed, but decorated war veteran Gunnar Sønsteby was quoted as saying that the war sailors’ efforts truly made a difference in the duration of the war. Sir Philip Noel Baker, the 1959 Nobel Peace Prize recipient stated that “Without the Norwegian merchant fleet, England and the allies would have lost.”

War Sailor is Norway’s most expensive film production to date, costing 110 million kroner (10.5 million dollars). Dagbladet.no calls the film a “Must-see.”

