



SONS of NORWAY



July 2023

Walworth County, WI

Norsemen of the Lakes 5-650

This month is a very busy month for me. I'm heading to northern Minnesota for a 150th anniversary weekend as we celebrate the establishment of the town. I hope to see many of my old friends and classmates as we have a 50th graduating picnic.

This month we have a presentation by Connie Aiello. Next month I will give a surprise presentation.

Norway Zone 3 and Mandt Lodge Picnic
Sunday, August 13, 2023 at 12:30 PM
John and Darlene Arneson home
2056 Skaalen Rd., Stoughton, WI 53589

Join members from our neighboring lodges for some food and fellowship at the home of John & Darlene Arneson. All members of your lodge, prospective members, and Masse Moro campers (past and present) are encouraged to attend. Please bring a dish to pass! Tableware, coffee, juice and other beverages will be provided.

There will be the Kubb game available so you can test your Viking skills! We will have basket drawing for some great items; feel free to bring items for it or just support it at the picnic!

Bring along announcements and flyers for "Remarks for the Good of the Order". For more information, call Darlene Arneson at 608-873-7209 (cell 608-514-4951) or email arnesonfamily5@gmail.com

Then in **October**, we will travel to UW Green Bay to attend the Viking Fest. It is very interesting and they have demonstrations, activities, food trucks, and lectures on the Viking culture. You'll love it. I will drive and can take 4 passengers. I may even be able to borrow a van and take a few more. We will see what transpires. I encourage you to come; I know you will love it.



Gratulerer med dagen

July Birthdays

Donald Henderson 15th

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CALENDAR

July 11th at 6:00

by Connie Aiello
Advia Credit Union
Potluck

Aug.8th meeting:

Potluck
Union Advia Credit
Corlene's presentation

September 12th:

Picnic in the park

October

Special outing:

Oct. 6th (Friday)
Viking Festival
Green Bay

November

Presentation

How to be French in Norway

June 25, 2023 by Lorelou

From the food and drinking culture to the drastically different way of making friends, Norway's favorite French writer tells us all about her experiences of being French in Norway.

Oulala, Hallo Hallo, Baguette.

Paris is a two hour flight away from Oslo, yet there seems to be more than the North Sea between France and Norway. Sure, France and Norway are both Western European countries with pieces of a common history, and seen from countries outside of Europe they are still pretty similar. But from my experience, there is in an ocean of differences and misunderstandings between the French and the Norwegians.

How is it to be French in Norway? What are the greatest cultural shocks? I am French, am born in Paris and grew up in Marseille, and I have lived in Norway for almost 14 years. Here are the biggest differences I've spotted.



The food culture

It's safe to say French people aren't the only ones who feel the cultural difference when it comes to food. Truth be told, anyone from Mexico to India is usually pretty shocked to find out what Norwegians eat every day. Spoiler alert: lots of bread.

Frozen pizza is a favorite in Norway.

In France we eat two warm meals per day, at lunch and dinner. Norwegians eat a lot of cold meals, with little variation from a French perspective. We'd have warm meals with rice, pasta, different kinds of vegetables, a sauce, a salad etc.

But Norwegians eat up to four meals a day made of bread. Think about it: a breakfast made of bread and cheese/other pålegg. Lunch with bread and more savoury pålegg. Sometimes a warm dinner but not always, and "kveldsmat" made of...bread and pålegg of course!

And sure, French people eat bread too, but the bread for us is not an actual meal. It's to have cheese on after you've eaten your actual lunch, not a staple food to survive the winter.

Another shock is the amount of processed food Norwegians eat on a daily basis. I've heard Norwegians tell me they don't have time to cook, which is the reason they eat so much food coming from bags (Toro soups for example), from cardboard boxes or meatballs from a plastic box. They even give that [food to kids](#).

Of course another cultural shock is the time of the day Norwegians eat lunch and dinner. Lunch can be as early as 11 a.m. in offices. Dinner can be as early as 3 p.m., or 4-5 p.m. when they leave work. That is not even apéritif time in France.

The drinking culture

French people drink alcohol, no doubt. Norwegians do too, and you could then think this brings us together. It doesn't, because our drinking cultures are different.

What is the difference? Simple. In Norway, socializing happens around [alcohol](#) whereas in France socializing happens around food. Sure, alcohol is there too, but the main focus is food. We can spend hours at a dinner table chatting, eating, and drinking.

At Norwegian parties, the food is what gets least focus, but when people start drinking, that is when the party starts. Unless it's Christmas Eve, Norwegians don't really see the point of spending more than 30 minutes at a dinner table. And then those are their closest family members.

Why would they put themselves through such a long dinner with sober "friends"? [So socializing happens usually when drunk](#).

Due to all this, a very strange thing used to happen to me. I was invited to a party at 7pm or even 6pm and expected food to be served. In addition I was expected to bring my own alcohol.

Those years were tough but now I know: if invited anytime after 5pm I am expected to have had dinner, and of course I need to bring my own drinks.

Socializing

The way to make friends in Norway and in France is very different. In France I'd say it is less formal, less organized, and surprisingly more cozy—or [koselig](#) as Norwegians like to call everything and anything.

How do you make friends when socializing happens around alcohol rather than food? You drink. Norwegians will loosen up when they are drunk, and they expect you to do the same. But are those koselig evenings? It depends if you know the people from before.

The issue here is that those Norwegian people you meet when drunk aren't necessarily people who will become your best friends, unless you know them from some other context such as university or an activity of some sort.

Those you just meet when drunk might not even say hello the next day when meeting you in the street. However, if you meet people regularly in activities or uni or even at work, and then get drunk together for example at a julebord, that will strengthen the bond between you.

Another difference is that Norwegians rarely invite people to their house. After meeting new friends, the French will quickly invite them for dinner, coffee, a birthday or anything else. French people will easily invite you into their home even though they might not know you that much.

In Norway being invited into someone's home is almost mission impossible. The only way to get in someone's home for sure is to buy something from them on Finn.no. Even that's not entirely true, since they can also leave the things you bought at the door. And now with Vipps you don't even need to meet them in person! How practical.

Being arrogant

Another huge difference is how socially unacceptable it is in Norway to be arrogant vs. in France. In Norway, social laws of Janteloven make sure everyone stays in their place. In Norway you cannot just say out loud how smart you think you are, how much money you have, and which elite schools you've been to impress the crowd. In France on the other hand, the national sport is to subtly (or not) show you superiority with all the knowledge you have, the great schools you've been to and the impressive CV you've built that makes you better than everyone else.

Bragging in Norway will get you bad vibes from the locals, even if everything you say is true. Just observe the Ingebrigtsen brothers when they win a race. They don't brag and say they are the best, they say "I could have not managed without my team, my wife, my trainer etc. It was so hard to train in the winter, I am so lucky to have won".

But beware, although Norwegians don't brag openly, they still do it in other ways. It is just much less visible than when French people do it. It is just that if you do it the French way it's not going to go too well for you socially or at work.

The flat structure

Hierarchy is pretty important in France. This is something you learn as a young child. Your parents and teachers are above you and on top of the hierarchy of your life as a child. Then come other adults around, even those you don't know. Parents and teachers, who are above all, decide what you wear, what you say, where you sleep and what you are allowed and not allowed to do.

When at school this hierarchy continues, as even in high school pupils use the "vous" of politeness for teachers, we don't even know their first name and we call them "madame" and "monsieur" (mrs. and sir). In Norway, you can challenge adults, your parents and your teachers alike. This is very surprising for a French person.

When I was on Lindmo with Jonas Gahr Støre, he said that the biggest shock for him when he went to study in France was that when he asked a question to the professor and said "I'm sorry there is something I don't understand", the professor said "No, there are many many things you don't understand".

Arrogance AND Hierarchy in the same answer. Yep, French people in a nutshell.

In Norway children are encouraged to raise their hand in class, challenge what the teachers say, and think by themselves. Later in life, at work, they expect a flat structure between them and their leaders with inclusive processes where compromise is important.

Gender equality

In France mothers get 2.5 months of maternity leave, and it's not paid 100% of your salary. Fathers used to get 11 days and recently that was taken up to one month. In Norway, partners share roughly one year of parental leave.

Strangely enough, French employers talk about women on maternity leave as if it meant they were leaving for eternity and abandoning their job, when they are in fact gone very little time.

On the contrary, in Norway they just hire a replacement and know that the mum will be back at some point between 6 and 11 months. Many take unpaid leave too. But it does not stress any employer, it is just part of the deal when you hire anyone from the age of 25 to 45.



In France employers are still known for asking women whether they will have kids soon during interviews, and many women around 30 have a hard time finding a job.

But new generations are changing things around. It is more trendy for men to want to take care of their small children, and hopefully misogyny is not accepted to the same level now.

Conflict

Last but not least, French and Norwegian people do not have the same way to manage conflict. In France I'd say conflict is part of life. People argue quite a bit, and raising your voice is seen as pretty normal.

In Norway, and this will also vary on the culture of the region in which you are located, open conflict is seen as something to avoid at all cost. Conflicts are there, but hidden somehow, and people deal with them by either ignoring the person, crying, quitting (in a job), being on sick leave (also in a job) etc. Talking about things that aren't going so well openly is not an option.

Also, an interesting point I think is that what qualifies as a conflict is very different from one culture to another. In Norway conflict can be smelled as soon as someone raises their voice or shows they don't agree, whereas in France and many other countries that is just a Tuesday at the office.

Lorelou Desjardins is the author of the blog and book, [A Frog in the Fjord: One Year in Norway](#). The book is available in English, Norwegian and French. Buy a signed copy [here](#) directly from the author or a regular copy on [Amazon.com](#). Lorelou was also a two-time guest on our podcast, the [Life in Norway Show](#). If you enjoy this post, [listen to this episode](#) about her first year in Norway.

Biking to Work for 50 years

Since 1973, Norges Bedriftsidrettsforbund (the Norwegian Business Sports Association) has encouraged citizens to commute by bicycle and choose green trips when running errands. As a result of this initiative, over a million Norwegians have taken part in their bike to work program.

Born in the same year and soon turning 50 in July, Crown Prince Haakon celebrated the May Cycle to Work opener, commuting from his home, Skaugum, to the Castle and meeting up with representatives of Norges Bedriftsidrettsforbund along the way.

Statistics from the Norwegian Sports Academy and Folkehelseinstituttet (FHI) [The Norwegian Institute of Public Health] reveal that most Norwegians sit far too much. Increased activity prolongs and improves a person's quality of life. Cycling to work not only boosts personal health and well-being, but lowers traffic on roads, which translates to lower carbon dioxide emissions.

The Cycle to Work program believes in rewarding good efforts by offering giveaways that inspire participation. Bike commuters join the program and track their bike trips. Participants with over 8 rides are entered for the chance to win prize drawings of cycling gear such as techy helmets and GPS watches.

It's not only the city of Oslo that is in on the program – [municipalities throughout Norway](#) have signed agreements to make the bike to work incentive program free for residents. In addition, some companies subsidize employee participation in the program.

On Rådhusplassen, the plaza outside Oslo's city hall, cyclists and various organizations like Syklistforeningen, the National Cyclists Association gathered on Cycle to Work Day for speeches by various cycling and green transportation groups. Transportation minister Jon-Ivar Nygård also spoke with the press, encouraging Norwegians to find more active routes to work, and to other destinations.

Years ago, Crown Princess Mette-Marit, who also turns 50 in 2023, got in on the green campaign, not only biking to the castle, but challenging her husband to turn off his computer as an energy-saving measure. About this year's 20 km (12.5 mile) ride to work, Crown Prince Haakon said: "It was nice to get going again. A super nice day to cycle to work."



Photo Source: [bedriftsidretten.no](#)

Culture Minister Resigns “In Shame”

June 23, 2023 NewsinEnglish.no

The Norwegian government has been hit by its second conflict of interest this week involving appointments at the ministerial level. In the new case, the conflict is so serious that the government minister in charge of culture and equality issues, Anette Trettebergstuen, had to tearfully announce her resignation.

Anette Trettebergstuen of the Labour Party has been Norway’s culture minister since 2021. Now she’s had to resign in shame over several conflicts of interest. PHOTO: Kultur- og likestillingsdepartementet

“I am so sorry that my mistakes also affect others, all the fantastic people in the fields of culture and equality, my colleagues in the government and everyone else I’ve disappointed,” said Trettebergstuen, who represents the Labour Party, at a hastily arranged press conference in Oslo Friday morning.

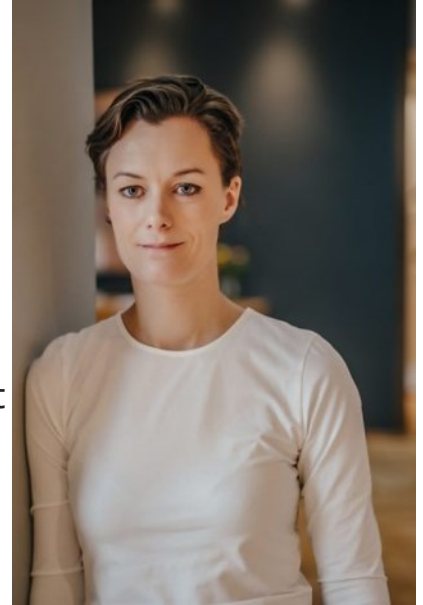
Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre arguably tops the list of those disappointed. He had to postpone an annual and more festive pre-summer press briefing in order to deal with the latest trouble within his government. Earlier in the week his education minister Tonje Brenna, also a new deputy leader of the Labour Party, had to admit to several conflicts of interest herself regarding appointments of friends to official posts. Brenna hasn’t resigned, though, and Støre claims he still has confidence in her as the Parliament launches an investigation into her case.

Trettebergstuen’s violations of the rules regarding conflicts of interest, however, were in “another category,” Støre told reporters when he faced them in a dark suit and tie at a much more sober meeting than the annual session initially planned before summer holidays. He said Trettebergstuen made “the right decision” in resigning because of the “serious” nature of her mistakes.

“Anette has on several occasions proposed and appointed good friends ... to boards and other posts tied to her (ministerial) portfolio,” Støre said. He noted that she has acknowledged that “there was no doubt she was *inhabil*,” the Norwegian word used when someone is partial towards someone else and thus unable to act objectively based on merit.

“She has broken the rules and exhibited a lack of knowledge about the rules and what it means to be impartial,” Støre said. He was repeatedly questioned about why two of his ministers have lacked such knowledge, but Støre claimed ministers receive instructions, undergo reviews with ministerial administrators of any potential conflicts, are given a manual about the issues involved and “must take personal responsibility themselves” for evaluating their impartiality or lack thereof on a case-by-case basis.

Trettebergstuen admitted she simply had never examined the rules carefully enough, and is now lost her top political job over that. “I had the world’s best job as culture minister, I have enjoyed every single day,” she said at her own press conference. “I’m embarrassed, I’m sad and I’m ashamed of myself, but I think it’s important to take the consequences of my mistakes.”



The Story of the Ålesund Fire of 1904

January 30, 2023 by David Nikel

Read the full story of the tragic city fire that ripped through Ålesund in the winter of 1904, and the city's subsequent reconstruction that made it famous.

In stark contrast to other coastal Norwegian towns that are filled with white, dark red, and mustard yellow wooden buildings, the fairytale architecture of Ålesund has more in common with Paris, Prague and Brussels.



Photograph taken a short time after the 1904 fire in Ålesund. Photo: Aalesunds Museum / Møre og Romsdal County Archive.

The dashing art nouveau influenced architecture means Ålesund is a city quite unlike any other in Norway. But the reason why the city looks the way it does today is a direct result of tragedy.

When a 1904 fire devastated the wooden city, young designers and German money came together to rebuild the city in the fashion of the time. More than 100 years later, the turrets and towers of Ålesund stand apart from the rest of Northern Europe as a shining example of the style.

Historians today generally accept that the city fire was positive in terms of city development. Nevertheless, it's important to remember that the fire destroyed the lives of thousands of people at the time.

I've mentioned the fire a lot when referencing Ålesund, but today it's time to take a deeper dive into the story.

Ålesund in 1904

At the turn of the century, trade was more important to Norwegian coastal life than ever before. Ålesund had emerged as a key regional trading center and as a result had grown quickly.

Rapid population growth required rapid construction of housing. Simple wooden buildings were built in great numbers to house about 10,000 people who worked in the area.

There was nothing unusual about this as many small Norwegian towns used wood for their buildings at the time. But the construction of so many wooden houses so close together turned out to be one of the major contributors to what would happen next.

The night of the fire

At around 2 a.m. on 23 January 1904, Ålesund was suffering from a winter storm with strong winds raging across the city. A small fire broke out in the factory of Aalesund Preserving Co., possibly because an animal knocked over a lit torch.

Within about 15 minutes of the fire starting, the fire watchtower observed an open fire and two alarms were received from manual pull stations. Crews were dispatched but by the time they arrived, the factory building was fully ablaze, and the streets were filled with smoke.

Firefighters struggled to keep pace with the development of the fire. With so much wood available as fuel and the wind helping the flames jump between buildings, the fire quickly took hold.



Photograph of Ålesund taken one month after the devastating fire. Photo: Nordmøre Museum / Møre og Romsdal County Archive.

Despite firefighters attempting to hold the fire line several times, high winds blew sparks onto other buildings. The focus turned to evacuation, with thousands of people forced to flee their homes, many on foot with only what they could carry.

Within hours, the fire had destroyed the majority of buildings between where Nedre Strandgate 39 and Borgundvegen 37 stand today. In total, the fire destroyed nearly 850 houses. Only about 230 buildings remained within the town.

One remarkable fact about the fire is the number of fatalities. Despite the high number of houses destroyed, only one person is said to have died.

Rebuilding the city

With much of the wooden city left in ruins, outside help was des-



Ålesund today is known for its architecture.

perately needed to rebuild Ålesund. Much of that help came from abroad, especially from Germany. That's because Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany often vacationed in Ålesund and was a big fan of the area.

He was so shocked to hear of the news that he sent four ships with people and materials to help in the rebuilding efforts. Local Norwegian designers and architects were inspired by the art nouveau style popular in Germany and across Europe at the time, so they set about building a city in that image.

Visiting Ålesund

While a walk through the city center and along the waterfront today drips with history, the style was contemporary at the time. Today, the town's architecture and spectacular natural setting have made Ålesund a popular tourist attraction.

One of the best places to appreciate both is from **the Aksla viewpoint**. A popular way to reach the viewpoint is to take the 400+ steps up from the city park. Although the city is an art nouveau museum in itself, **Jugendstilsenteret** (the Art Nouveau Centre) tells the story behind the city's renaissance through a 15-minute multimedia experience. Textiles and furniture from the era are also on display.

It's well worth the NOK 110 admission fee, especially as the ticket also gains you admission

to the neighboring art museum.

The museum is housed inside one of the city's finest examples of the architecture, with a pristine exterior overlooking a cobbled street and the city's canal. The reception area retains the original fittings from the building's former use as a pharmacy.



View of Ålesund today.



Jugendstilsenteret (the Art Nouveau Centre) in Ålesund.

Viking Age Discovery Found Near Trondheim

An exciting discovery has been made just centimeters below the soil in Stjørdal, near Trondheim. Pawel Bednarski took a metal detector out to his field right before Christmas last year and uncovered a treasure trove of [Viking objects](#). The find consisted of 46 silver objects – including finger rings, coins, jewelry – and dates to the Viking Age. At first Bednarski did not know what he was looking at as the pieces were covered in clay. After rinsing them at home, he was delighted at what he saw.

When Bednarski got archeologists involved, specifically the NTNU Science Museum, they realized how exceptional this find really was. NTNU archaeologist Birgit Maixner stated, “It has been many years since such a large treasure find from the Viking Age has been made in Norway.”

The pieces from the discovery give archaeologists much insight into the period and economy from which they came. Many of the silver pieces they uncovered were broken into fragments, which tells Birgit: “This find is from a time when silver pieces that were weighed were used as means of payment. This system is called the ‘weight economy’ and was in use in the transition between the barter economy and the coin economy.”

Additionally, the collection consisted of Arab coins, the [largest source of silver](#) during the Viking age, which is likely explained by the fur trade. By examining the features of the coins, it is predicted that the treasure is from around 900 AD. More notably, the Arab coins found were older than most Arab coins found in Norway thus far. Maixner also concluded that the value of the treasure during that time period would have been worth half a cow, which was quite substantial.

Although the discovery gives us insights into what the Viking Age was like, how the treasure ended up in the field will remain a mystery. “Perhaps the owner of the silver treasure found the trading post unsafe and hid their valuables in the entrance area to the plain. Here it remained for about 1,100 years,” said Maixner.



Public Grilling Banned as Norway Roasts in Summer Heat

June 18, 2023 by [David Nikel](#)

Forest fires are causing issues across Norway as temperatures top 86 degrees. Many parts of Norway have introduced temporary bans on lighting fires in public areas such as campsites and parks.



As the Norwegian summer holiday nears, the extreme fire danger, heatwave, and drought conditions are causing great concern across the country. Many regions of Norway are already grappling with forest fires. The hot, dry weather means there's an extremely high risk of fire spreading or new fires starting.

In the capital, Oslo, emergency services have already spent over NOK 7 million (650 thousand dollars) in response to fires in the past two weeks alone. Costs extend beyond financial implications, with wildlife and the natural environment also significantly impacted.

Lightning-induced fires have disrupted train traffic between Oslo and Bergen, halting Bergensbanen, and caused power outages in Southern Nor-

way. The harsh conditions have led to a ban on fire in many municipalities, including Oslo, Bergen and Drammen. This prohibits campfires, bonfires, portable stoves, and even the use of single-use grills.

Anyone breaking an extraordinary fire ban risks being prosecuted. Punishments vary from a fine up to three months in prison.

Summer traditions in Norway

The temporary rules will significantly alter many of Norway's summer traditions. As we race towards the period with the [longest days of the year](#), many people enjoy grilling in their local park late into the light evenings.

While [midsummer celebrations in Norway](#) are not as extensive as in Sweden, many Norwegians mark the longest day of the year by grilling and lighting bonfires. Those bonfires will now not take place.

"The urge to light campfires is strong in Norway, but you must not do so now," said a spokesperson for state preparedness agency DSB to newspaper Aftenposten.

Drought conditions

Water restrictions are being imposed in Oslo, largely due to the drought-like conditions. These restrictions primarily prohibit the use of sprinklers to water lawns and gardens. Residents are being urged to take shorter showers and adopt other [water conservation measures](#) to prevent further bans on water use.

Farmers across southern Norway are bracing for a drought similar to 2018 when a lack of grazing opportunities and insufficient locally produced cattle feed led to forced cattle slaughtering.

A spokesperson for the Directorate of Civil Protection (DSB) expressed concern that the summer of 2023 could be as bad or even worse than 2018. Data from the Meteorological Institute indicates an alarming trend with 128 fire warnings issued so far this year. That's the highest in five years.



Midsummer bonfires like this one in Balestrand will not be permitted this year in much of Norway. Photo: TasfotoNL / Shutterstock.com.



Oslo is surrounded by at-risk forest.