

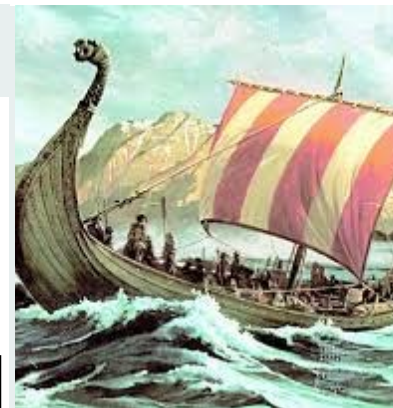


# SONS of NORWAY

Norsemen of the Lakes 5-650

Sept. 2023

Walworth County, WI



### Gratulerer med dagen

#### August Birthdays (corrected)

Margarite Hendrixson	5th
Olaf Bradley	10th

#### September Birthdays

Bob Pederson	8th
Kathy Norquist	11th
Torben Brun	16th
Ashley Wilson	17th
Cole Pepper	23rd
Carol Anderson	27th

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#### 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 15th**  
 Meet at Advia Credit Union @ 6 PM  
 Potluck  
**Presentation**  
 by Mette Baran

**Sat. December 2nd**  
 Christmas Jul Banquet  
 Advia Credit Union

## NEXT MEETING: WEDNESDAY

September 14th @ Advia Credit Union Elkhorn @6PM

Since we can't get the meeting room Tuesday this month, we are changing it to Wednesday.

Presentation will be of a famous Norwegian Athlete. Guess who it is.

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 there for lunch. We will car ride together leaving from Elkhorn **Advia Credit Union at 8:30**. Be there a few minutes early so we can see if we need one car or two. We will be home about 4 p.m. If the weather is bad, we will probably cancel.



Lisbeth Salander is alive and well, and embroiled in another thrilling adventure laced with danger, violence and enemies old and new. The new book in *The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo* series sees Salander reluctantly having to look after her niece Svala, whose mother has disappeared. The small town of Gasskas in northern Sweden is the setting for a series of shocks, as Lisbeth and her equally gifted niece are drawn into a

web of corruption, conspiracy, and cover-ups. Investigative journalist Mikael Blomkvist, struggling to cope with the demise of his Millennium magazine, enters the drama amid disturbing rumors about the man his daughter is about to marry – also in Sweden's far north.

Former journalist Smirnov has thrown in issues such as climate change and environmental exploitation, to continue the hugely successful series first started by the late Stieg Larsson. Fans of the heroic hacker Salander and ageing hack Blomkvist will not be disappointed. (Review by Alan Jones)

# Vegvísir: The Truth of the “Viking Compass”

June 26, 2022 by Jess Scott

**The vegvísir is a commonly used Viking symbol that's meant to stop people from losing their way. But is it actually from the Viking Age?**



If you're interested in Viking imagery and symbolism, you will have undoubtedly seen the vegvísir. Literally “way” (vegr) “shower” (vísir), the symbol is meant to prevent the person carrying it from losing their way and is known colloquially as “The Viking Compass” or “The Nordic Compass”.

It can often be seen on **Viking-inspired tattoos**, jewelry and illustrations, and even in **video games**, such as *Valheim*. Which is strange, as it's **not actually a Viking symbol at all**.

## Norse compass or a Norse con?

The vegvísir is featured alongside a number of other **galdrastafir** (magical staves) in **the Huld Manuscript**, which was written in Iceland by Geir Vigfusson in 1860. The text around it says:

*“Beri maður stafi þessa á sér villist maður ekki í hríðum né vondu veðri þó ókunnugur sá.”*

“Carry this sign with you and you won't get lost in storms or bad weather, even in unfamiliar surroundings” (**translation: Justin Foster**)

This is the earliest instance of the vegvísir in existence. While 1860 seems like a long time ago, it's still a far cry from the Viking Age, which ran **approximately 793-1066**. To add some historical context, the 1860 presidential election in the US was won by Abraham Lincoln... but “the Abraham Lincoln Presidency Compass” has less of a ring to it.

## The runic compass?

So other than the obvious yet tenuous connection of “old and Icelandic”, how did the vegvísir become so associated with the Vikings?

In his video *Vegvísir (wrongly called “Viking Compass”)*, Norse Scholar Jackson Crawford suggests that the appearance of the symbol may play a large role:

“Sigils like **ægishjálmur** and **vegvísir** bear a certain visual resemblance to runic letters and as much as they use a lot of straight lines. Some of those particular straight lines taken together look a little bit like runes. You can arrange the **ægishjálmur** sigil in such a way that it has 24 points, which equates to the 24 letters in the elder futhark alphabet, but they are not runes because they do not represent letters or even words. And they might not be any older than the manuscripts in which they’re written down.”



## The Viking revival

The historical setting of the time might also have played a role in cementing the **vegvísir's** Viking connection.

The 1800s in Europe was characterized by national romanticism, bringing with it the “**Viking revival**”, which saw a renewed interest in Norse history and mythology in the Nordic region as well as Germany, the UK and the US.

For example, Richard Wagner composed his opera, *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (*The Ring of the Nibelung*), which draws from Norse mythology such as *The Saga of the Volsungs*, between 1848 and 1874. The opera’s costume designer, Carl Emil Doepler, **single-handedly kickstarted the association of Vikings and horned helmets** (so cheers for that one, Carl).

Therefore, it’s possible that the **vegvísir** was also an expression of national romanticism, or at least, have received more attention because of it.

## Did the Vikings use a real vegvísir?

The symbol might not be from the Viking Age, but did the Vikings use a real **vegvísir** to find their way **across the seas**?

As with most things related to the Vikings, we don’t know for sure what they used to navigate (I know it’s frustrating, but that’s history for you). However, based on the knowledge and materials they had at the time, **it’s possible that they used a solar compass**.

Again, however, we do not know this for sure, and a solar compass would’ve had its limitations – particularly in the North, where **the sun disappears in winter**.

## Give me a sign

Ultimately, much like horned helmets or the *Vikings* TV show, the **vegvísir** is aesthetically pleasing but has nothing to do with the actual Vikings. That said, it’s very common to see a **vegvísir** being used in daily life – particularly in German-speaking countries (*wegweiser* means “sign(post)” in German).

# # #

# Erik the Red: The Norse Explorer who Settled Greenland

April 6, 2023 by Daniel Albert

**Step aboard and journey back in time to the world of Erik the Red, the intrepid Viking explorer who forever altered the course of Scandinavian history.**



The thrilling adventures and colorful life of this legendary figure filled a whole saga, but don't worry if your Old Norse is a bit rusty: we'll give you the jist of it right here. From his daring voyages to the discovery of Greenland, to the tales of his notorious temper and the legacy he left behind.

With his larger-than-life personality and incredible feats of exploration, Erik the Red is a **famous Viking figure** that will capture your imagination and leave you wanting more. And we'll even include tips of the best Greenland sights to visit should you decide to walk in his footsteps. So, come along and discover the captivating tale of one of history's most legendary explorers.

## The origins of Erik the Red

Erik Thorvaldsson, also known as Erik the Red, was born in Jæren, Norway, an area that is known today as Rogaland. Jæren is where the **city of Stavanger** is located, and its coast is known to have some of the best farmland in the country.

Erik's father, Thorvald Asvaldsson, was exiled from Norway for manslaughter, and for that reason decided to settle in Iceland. Erik, said to have been a grown man already at the time, followed his father to Iceland. Thorvald died a few years later, and Erik married high-born Tjodhild and settled in Haukadal where he built a farm.

It is at this farm that the most famous of his sons is thought to have been born, **Leif Erikson**, who would go down in history for being the first European to set foot in Vinland (North America).

Erik the Red arriving in Greenland by Viking boat. Image by Bing AI.

He would soon have to leave Haukadal because of a neighbor dispute. This was not a neighbor dispute. Erik's slaves (yes, slaves were a thing at the time) unwittingly triggered a landslide that ruined a neighbor's farm. Landslides were, **and still are**, an ever-present danger in certain areas of post-Ice age Scandinavia, and they can be triggered by seemingly harmless digging. In retaliation, the affected neighbor killed the slaves. This angered Erik, who then killed the neighbor as well as another man.

## A violent temper

Because of the slaughter at Haukadal, Erik was banished from the area and resettled further west. Essentially, he followed the valley toward the sea, where it opened up into a fjord, and settled at the islands of Brokey and Öxney, at the mouth of the fjord.

There, he got into another dispute with a neighbor. Are you beginning to see a pattern here? The dispute is a bit difficult to understand from a 21<sup>st</sup> century perspective. He asked a neighbor, Thorgest, to keep his *setstokkr* for him while he was building his house. These are inherited ornamented beams believed to have mystical properties at the time, and that had been brought from Norway by his father.

When his new house was finished and he went to get the things back, they "couldn't be obtained". The saga is a bit fuzzy on the details but suffice to say that the result was another bloody battle in which several people were killed.

Erik and his allies were sentenced to be outlaws for three years. This meant, essentially, that they were considered enemies of the state and could be hunted down and punished without trial. This is when he decided to leave Iceland and try to find the mysterious land observed by Gunnbjörn Ulvsson a few decades earlier, when he drifted off course to the west.

## The rediscovery of Greenland

The mysterious land to the West that Erik had heard of was **Greenland**. During his three years of exile, Erik the Red explored the coastline of the great island.

He discovered signs of an earlier culture, now known to be the Dorset people, who had inhabited the island from around 500 BCE before abandoning it due to a change in the climate that saw temperatures increase. This temperature increase conflicted with the Dorset people's hunting methods, but made Greenland's west coast a viable alternative for Norse farmers from Iceland. Erik explored the areas that would later become the Eastern Settlement in the south and the Western Settlement around present-day **Nuuk** in the north.

He decided to establish his farm at a place he called Brattahlid, at the head of Eiríksfjörð (today's **Tunugdliarfik**) in the Eastern Settlement. For his project to succeed, he needed more people to take the leap and move to Greenland.

So, he went back to Iceland. Not one to hold a grudge, Erik met his rival Thorgest in battle while he was there. He was defeated, but survived, and reached a truce with Thorgest. Then, in a stroke of marketing trickery worthy of modern-day corporations, Erik decided to name the land he discovered "Greenland," – even though most of it was covered by an ice sheet – believing that an appealing name would attract more settlers. Erik the Red then led 25 ships carrying friends and their families to settle in the new land. Only 14 of these ships arrived safely, while the others were either wrecked or forced to return to Iceland. This first Norse settlement in Greenland can be dated to between 984 and 986.



Viking arriving in Greenland. Image by Bing AI.

### **The introduction of Christianity**

Erik the Red remained a leading chieftain in Greenland throughout his life, owning the farms at Brattahlid in the Eastern Settlement and Sandnes in the Western Settlement.

The Saga of Erik the Red and the Saga of the Greenlanders are the primary sources for this period and focus on further expeditions to Vinland and the **transition to Christianity** in Greenland.

According to the Saga of Erik the Red, it was his son Leif who brought Christianity to Greenland in 999 or 1000, after serving under **Olav Trygvason** in Norway. Leif's mother, Tjodhild, and many others converted to Christianity.

However, Erik the Red held onto the old faith, which led to conflict with his wife. Tjodhild built a church a short distance away from the other buildings at Brattahlid. This turn of events was a source of irritation for Erik. The saga tells us that "After she accepted the faith, Thjodhild would have no intercourse with Erik, and this was a great trial to his temper," as one can imagine.

The Saga of the Greenlanders has a different version of the events, claiming that Christianity was introduced to Greenland after Erik the Red's death, with Leif playing no role in this event.

It is worth mentioning that the sagas are oral tradition that was first transcribed and then copied and recopied quite a few times, so discrepancies are known to occur frequently.

In 1961, a small Viking-era church was discovered at Brattahlid. The oldest Christian graves around the church date back to before 995, suggesting that Christianity was established at Brattahlid earlier than the sagas indicate.

### **Tips for a visit to Greenland**

If you're interested in walking in Erik the Red's footsteps and learning more about Norse culture in Greenland, consider visiting the following sites.

**Brattahlid (Qassiarsuk):** This is the site of Erik the Red's farmstead and is located in the southern part of Greenland. You can visit the ruins of Erik's longhouse and see a reconstruction of a Viking church.

**Hvalsey Church (near Qaqortoq):** This is one of the best-preserved Norse ruins in Greenland. The church was built in the 14th century and was in use until the 15th century.

**The Greenland National Museum and Archives (Nuuk):** This museum has a collection of artefacts related to Norse Greenland, including tools, weapons, and clothing. Nuuk itself, Greenland's capital, is on the site of the Western Settlement established by Erik and his followers.

# Norway Travel: Save Money In Oslo

## With These 5 Travel Hacks

David Nickel Senior Contributor Feb 28, 2023,12:27pm EST



There are many free, outdoor activities to do in Oslo, Norway. Vigeland Park is one of the most popular.

From the modern Scandinavian architecture of the waterfront to the emerging art scene, Oslo has a lot to offer the curious traveler in 2023. However, while there are many great [things to do in Oslo](#), a traveler can easily run up a big bill as Norway is one of the most expensive countries to visit in the world.

Yet there are some simple things you can do or avoid that will save money for other things in your trip. From making smart transport choices to adopting a more flexible approach to food and beverages, here are some top travel tips to save money in Norway's capital city.

### Ignore the airport express train

This first travel hack will save you more than \$10 per person before you've even arrived in the city. Oslo Airport is just 20-25 minutes away from downtown Oslo yet there is a substantial difference in price between the two train services. The airport express train *Flytoget* is a direct service that runs every 10 or 20 minutes throughout the day. It's convenient and sometimes more frequent than regular trains, but it's much more expensive than the local commuter train. It makes no sense to fork out 230 Norwegian kroner (\$22) for a one-way ticket when the local train costs just 118 Norwegian kroner (\$11.50). The journey time is exactly the same on half the services, but even the slowest take just 10 minutes more. Search for timetables on [vy.no](http://vy.no) and buy a ticket using the Vy app or from one of the ticket machines when you arrive.

### Embrace the outdoors

So many of the usual attractions and museums on travel itineraries come with an entry fee. There are some in Oslo well worth paying for, such as the vast new National Museum. But some the best attractions in Oslo are entirely free thanks to the Norwegian [love of the outdoors](#). Only a public transit ticket is required to visit the handful of peaceful islands with historic sites and nature reserves, just minutes from downtown Oslo on a fleet of passenger ferries.

Visiting the Nordmarka forest is a great way to meet the locals and get to know Norwegian culture. The same is true for the hiking trails of the Nordmarka forest and the world-famous Vigeland sculptures in leafy Frogner Park. Take advantage of these free activities to save money and also experience the nature Norway is known for without even leaving the capital city.



### Stay in an apartment, not a hotel

There is now a great range of hotels from luxury to budget available for visitors to Oslo. But even if you can find a cheap hotel room, consider the overall cost of your trip before you book. Staying in an apartment is a fantastic option especially for couples or families. The reason is simple. Cooking your own meals saves a small fortune especially for larger groups. Options range from serviced apartment blocks at the heart of downtown to local rentals through AirBnB in a leafy suburb. Saving money by limiting your meals out doesn't have to limit your experience of [Norwegian cuisine](#) either. Supermarkets stock local favorites including fresh salmon, brown cheese and lefse.

## Avoid alcohol

If you're used to enjoying a bottle of wine with dinner or a few beers in the evening, consider whether that's a necessary part of your travel plans. If not, you'll save considerably. A regular pilsner will cost \$8-10 in a bar or restaurant, more for craft beers, while wine and spirit drinkers should budget even more.

If you choose to shun alcohol, you won't be the only one. There's a growing trend among Norwegian breweries to produce non-alcohol versions of popular pilsners and IPAs, while mocktails packed with intense fruity flavors are often available in bars and restaurants.

If you want to enjoy a bottle of wine with your dinner and you choose to stay in an apartment, be sure to make use of the airport duty free store upon arrival. Otherwise you'll need to visit the state-run liquor store *Vinmonopolet*, which has short opening hours and far from budget prices.

## Don't buy bottled water

This final travel tip won't save huge amounts, but if you're staying for a few days it will quickly add up. Keeping hydrated is an important habit to get into on any trip, but just one small bottle of mineral water costs \$2 in a supermarket and more from convenience stores. Tap water in Norway is perfectly drinkable and delicious, so bottled water is an unnecessary expense. Take or buy a reusable water bottle and you'll save money over the duration of your trip, and also use a lot less plastic. Keep an eye out for water fountains in airport terminals too, as bottled water is even more expensive there.

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# Police Report Sharp Rise in Youth Crime

NEWSinENGLISH.no

August 22, 2023

**Oslo has long been viewed as a safe city, but police are now reporting far more juvenile crime that's become more violent. Crimes reported to police are up 18 percent since the pandemic ended.**

Crime fell during the pandemic but it's been rising steadily since, especially among the young. Newspaper *Aftenposten* reports that 1,744 incidents reported during the first half of 2023 involved defendants between 10 and 17 years old. Several are repeat offenders who police worry can be capable of extreme violence or murder.

Gangs are behind some of it, along with organized crime that recruits youth because they can't be jailed in Norway if they're under the age of 18. They only get professional supervision or help if they commit serious crime and then can be held in youth detention centers.

**There's also been a rash of stabbings in Oslo lately**, while police in Kristiansand have reported aggravated violence carried out by girls as young as 13. It's apparently become popular to beat and kick random victims while others film the attacks and spread it on social media.

There were also several reports of violence at the [recent Norway Cup football tournament in Oslo](#), but not carried out by participants. Organizers complained, however, of what they called "bad behavior" among some of the teenage boys against girls' teams and simply in cafeterias, where they refused to clear their tables or spoke demeaningly to others. "We wonder where such behavior comes from," Pål Trælvik, secretary general of Norway Cup, told *Aftenposten*, when commenting on the lack of respect for elders and one another. "There must be some parents who haven't done their job."

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## Here are some links for news in Norway:

[Support Soars for Ukraine](#)

[15% Travel in Norwegian Airports](#)

[Norway to Stockpile Grain](#)

[Norway's Largest Floating Wind Park](#)

# The Hottest Valley on the Island

Christine Dohler [christinedohler@mbl.is](mailto:christinedohler@mbl.is) Photos by [mbl.is/Christine Dohler](http://mbl.is/Christine Dohler)

Well, maybe there are hotter places, but the foreigners unpronounceable town of Hveragerði offers an unforgettable bath in the nearby hot river and more.

You can see the steam from afar before you reach the pretty valley Reykjadalur, about a 40- minute drive east of Reykjavík: the geothermal energy around Hveragerði is particularly high, as the area is part of the system of the central volcano Hengill. The sight is fascinating and mystical at the same time. In the town, you can find restaurants that cook and bake using geothermal energy. Ölverk, for example, not only serves great pizza, but also beer brewed with geothermal energy.

Where else in the world could you experience that? You can also visit a geothermal park with boiling hot pools and get fresh strawberries or flowers from the greenhouses, which are heated with geothermal energy. Even bananas grow there!

The small town not only attracts tourists, but also artists who settle here. There is even a walking route called “The Walk of the Artists“ and the LÁ Art Museum (a map with all the routes and sights is available at the Tourist Information Centre). The art museum is well worth a visit and has ongoing exhibitions of modern art. You can also sit on a sun terrace in the nice café.

What many visitors overlook is the really beautiful little waterfall Reykjafoss, which is located on the way to the parking lot that serves as the starting point for the popular hike to the hot river. In the parking lot, you will also find a nice café with a panoramic view and delicious cake. Here, you can decide whether to stay for coffee before or after.



Coffee and cake at Reykjadalur Cafe

Bathing here is a highlight at almost any outdoor temperature, because the river is pleasantly warm, and it is an incredible feeling to sit or lie in the riverbed - while the warm water flows past you. You look out over the lush green hills and almost feel like you're in the Shire of *Lord of the Rings* .

What you tend to ignore at first, however: After the relaxing bath, of course, you also have to walk back - probably with wet hair. That's why it's always good to have a hat with you - no matter what the .



The most beautiful outdoor swimming pool you can find.

The hiking trail to the hot springs within Ölfus Municipality is about 3.5-kilometers long - one way takes an hour. As the route has become more popular, it is now well developed and signposted.

The route is beautiful - with rushing waterfalls, steaming hot springs and a great view of the mountains, which have extraordinary colors, but it should be said: the way there is steep at the beginning. So you have to earn your relaxing swim in the river. The path ends at the bathing area with wooden footbridges and changing facilities.



Steam from the geothermal activity.