

Sign In or Sign Up

HOME DELIVERY DIGITAL MEMBERSHIPS PLACE AN AD JOBS CARS REAL ESTATE RENTALS CLASSIFIEDS PUBLIC NOTICES

Orlando Sentinel



12:48 PM EDT
Tuesday, Aug. 7, 2012

86° F



HOME LOCAL WEATHER SPORTS BUSINESS ENTERTAINMENT LIFE/FAMILY HEALTH TRAVEL OPINION VIDEOS
SCHOOLS MOMS AT WORK FOOD/RECIPES HOME/GARDEN SUMMER CAMPS RELIGION GROWING BOLDER WEDDINGS PETS CELEBRATIONS

TRENDING | Alex Morgan | Robert Pattinson | Mark O'Donnell | Usain Bolt | NASA | London 2012 Channel | Olympics Schedule | George Zimmerman

Search

AdChoices

Ads By Google

Viking River Cruises ®

Official Site: Get the Lowest Price Top Destinations at 2-for-1 Prices!
VikingRiverCruises.com/OfficialSite

Luxury 2013 Cruises

Enjoy The Luxury Of A Windstar Sailing Cruise. Request A Brochure!
www.WindstarCruises.com



RELATED



ALSO

- Norwegian Prince Will Wed
- Made In Norway
- Norway A Hot Property At Epcot Colonists Import Knowledge...
- Norway
- Oslo



Home → Collections

Deconstructing Norway: A tune for travel, on backroads and byways

By Anne Z. Cooke, McClatchy-Tribune News Service (MCT)
3:15 p.m. EST, July 25, 2012

Comments 0

LILLEHAMMER, Norway - The visitors touring Maihaugen Heritage Village were itching with curiosity. They'd wandered the site's narrow lanes and peered inside the 200-year-old log cabins. They'd explored the [craft](#) shops and traditional hand-hewn barns brought from far-flung farms and forests and reassembled here, under the trees. Now they wanted to know if any of Norway's leading figures - statesmen, film makers, painters or artists - had their roots in these humble huts.



Fishing Village on Island of Moskenes on Lofoten Islands, Norway. (Michael Mellinger, Getty Images / Jul 25, 2012)

Ads By Google

Cruise the Fjords

Fjord Norway - You have to be here to believe it. See pictures!
www.VisitNorway.com

Oceania Cruises

Premium Cruises, Finest Food at Sea Enjoy 2-for-1 Fares and Free Air
www.OceaniaCruises.com

"What about [Thor Heyerdahl](#), the anthropologist, who wrote "Kon-Tiki?" asked a bearded man in a brown sweater. "Is there a connection with [Henrik Ibsen](#) or [Edvard Grieg](#)?" said a woman with two teenagers.

Elsa, our guide, tall and blond, paused to think. A frown flitted across her brow. Then she brightened, remembering. "Grieg was here!" she told us. "He vacationed in Lillehammer in summer. The Gudbrandsdalen Valley folk tunes were an important influence on his [music](#)." She adjusted her red-and-blue embroidered skirt and smiled. A half-dozen cameras clicked.

Elsa could be forgiven for wishful thinking. With Norway's tourist season at hand, every rural hamlet with a legendary anecdote claims one of Norway's native sons. From creators to cranks, Norway's finest are familiar to most of us: the controversial playwright Henrik Ibsen; [Edvard Munch](#), the eccentric painter; novelist and Nobel Prize-winning author Sigrid Undset, whose edgy themes are still current. But most often the halo spins over composer Edvard Grieg, whose plaintive melodies were born in these northern forests.

Plainly, deconstructing Norway was the key to the fertile genius of so many moody and eccentric prodigies. So we rented a car for 10 days and, after touring [Oslo](#), headed north from the capital city through sunny farm country, eventually turning west across Norway's mountain spine. Descending beside blue-green fjords, we ended our trip in Bergen, on the coast.

Along the way, as time allowed, we followed each beckoning back road in search of wood-timbered stave churches, lakeside villages and botanical gardens. Lunch, often bread, cheese and reindeer sausage, never tasted as good as when we picnicked in a wide spot with a view.

And what a land it is. Dark and brooding in winter, Norway awakens to the midnight sun. Snow-clad peaks feed rushing rivers. Swollen waterfalls careen over spongy tundra and trickle down steep ravines. Roses bloom. To the west, the coastline climbs out of the North Sea like a polar bear on the hunt, cold fjords probing the cliffs with slippery fingers.

And from May through September? Norwegians - and visitors - take to the outdoors, to pick blueberries, lie in the sun, tour manor [houses](#) and gardens, visit art exhibits and take in outdoor concerts, music recitals and craft fairs.

In Oslo (www.visitoslo.com/en/), we strolled through Frogner Park to see sculptor Gustav Vigeland's modernist sculptures, more than 200 in the one park. Over-sized, physical and stolid, they are arranged in a formal garden setting that creates a perfect contrast to their sense of free space. Grouped as couples, families and children, their faces expressionless, they are all mankind at its core. Nearby was the Edvard Munch Museum, where not just one version of the painter's famous work, the "Scream," but many

sponsored by
CREWS & PESQUERA, P.A.
 Personal Injury Attorneys

Delivering your news
 any way you want it

Orlando Sentinel

versions, a subject that obsessed the eccentric Munch.

Ads By Google

Silversea Luxury Cruises

Embark on a Grand Luxury Voyage. Enjoy Up To \$1,500 On-Board Credit

www.Silversea.com/Official-Site

These and their contemporaries in the late 19th and other early 20th centuries were frequent patrons of the Grand Hotel Café, where they met for morning coffee or in the evening, for conversation and beer. And the café is still popular, packed with residents and tourists. You won't have to ask who's who among the crowded faces painted onto a wall-length mural behind the tables. Norway's best and brightest, they are identified by name and position on the back of the menu.

Heading north to Lillehammer we stopped briefly to see the "long jump" facility, where Olympic-bound skiers practice during the winter. But we spent most of the day at Maihaugen, exploring its more than 140 timbered houses, barns, craft shops and even a stave church. Farther north, we stopped in Lom to tour another stave church, this one a 12th century relic, and like its kin, built entirely of wood. The gloomy nave and massive beams left a frisson of darker days; fierce dragon heads topped a half dozen peaked, wood-shingled gables.

Beyond Lom, a sign on a dirt road pointed the way to the Juvbre Glacier and the summit of 8,148-foot Galdhopiggen, a mystery we couldn't miss. Icebound year around, the mountain is the site of the SkiCenter, a summer host for Olympic skiers in training. And there, unexpectedly, was the U.S. Women's Ski Team, taking slalom runs.

"We spend a week or two here in August, because it has Europe's best snow," one of the skiers told us, pausing to smile and chat on her way in for lunch.

Ads By Google

Norwegian Cruise Line

Last-minute specials and early-bird savings. Best price guarantee.

NorwegianVoyages.com

Luxury Cruise Exclusives

Exclusive deals on most Sailings Award Winning- Shop/Book Online

LuxuryTravelTeam.com

Copyright © 2012, McClatchy-Tribune

1 | 2 | Next (Single Page)

POPULAR STORIES	
▶ John Goodman found guilty in DUI-manslaughter trial	▶ Cash flow imbalance: Social Security's dirty little secret
▶ Father and son found dead in St. Cloud home	▶ Michael Phelps: Model's tweets reveal romance
▶ Ryan Lochte's parents face foreclosure on Volusia home	▶ Philadelphia Eagles coach Andy Reid's troubled son Garrett found dead at training camp

Comments (0)

[Add / View comments](#) | [Discussion FAQ](#)

Currently there are no comments. Be the first to **comment!**

All comments are filtered for vulgar language, for [web addresses](#) and for e-mail addresses. Those will cause comments to generate an error message or not to post. Registration on OrlandoSentinel.com is required to comment. The Sentinel makes no guarantee of comments' factual accuracy. Readers may report inappropriate comments by clicking the Report Abuse link. (**Here are the full legal terms you agree to by posting a comment.**)

Orlando Sentinel

[Privacy Policy](#) [Terms of Service](#) [Baltimore Sun](#) [Chicago Tribune](#) [Daily Press](#) [Hartford Courant](#) [Los Angeles Times](#) [Orlando Sentinel](#) [Sun Sentinel](#) [The Morning Call](#) [Daily Disney](#) [Sentinel Article Collections](#) [About Our Ads](#) [Work For Us](#) [Contact Us](#) [Advertising Policy](#)
 Index by Keyword Index by Date
 Orlando Sentinel, 633 N. Orange Avenue, Orlando, FL 32801

A Tribune Newspaper website

Please note the green-lined linked article text has been applied commercially without any involvement from our newsroom editors, reporters or any other editorial staff.