

# Trøndelag



The Trøndelag is a region of rumpled hills, stippled with ox blood-coloured farmsteads and ruffled green with wheat and barley. Hay stands out to dry on distinctive long, low trellises like a line of shaggy yaks in procession, and always there's water near at hand, whether sea, a lake or an incised fjord.

Far and away the region's major draw is the attractive city of Trondheim, Norway's third-largest, and the most northerly place in Norway that merits the title 'city'. You can find fulfilment wandering the medieval streets and quays of this attractive town with its buzzing student life, pretty wharf-side restaurants and bars. Highlights include Nidaros Cathedral, Scandinavia's largest medieval structure, and the open-air Sverresborg Trøndelag Folk Museum.

The area also marks a couple of beginnings, one historical, the other contemporary. Stiklestad, site of the martyrdom of King Olav (St Olav) is at the heart of every Norwegian's sense of national identity. With its lovely little church, impressive visitors centre and open-air museum, it well deserves the minor detour from the Arctic Highway.

The town of Steinkjer marks the start of the ultrascentic Kystriksveien. Also called, more prosaically, the Rv17 (Steinkjer's tourist office, right beside the E6, is well endowed with information about this tempting alternative), this coastal route continues as far as Bodø, Nordland, and offers a stimulating alternative to the Arctic Highway for those with spare time – and cash – for the extra ferry fares. Even if the chronometer or a krone shortfall precludes you from following the Kystriksveien, you can get the flavour of this alternative by diverting to the little coastal settlement of Namsos, then cutting back eastwards to rejoin the E6 at Grong.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Browse **Nidaros Cathedral** (p276), Trondheim, Norway's most sacred building
- Trundle a **trolley** (p288) along the no-longer-active Namsos–Skage railway line
- Explore the cultural centre at **Stiklestad** (p287), where St Olav was martyred
- Learn about coastal life at multimedia **Norveg** (p289) in Rørvik
- Tuck into Norwegian specialities in Trondheim's historical **Vertshuset Tavern** (p283)
- Hike in the wilderness of **Bymarka** (p281), right in Trondheim's backyard



■ POPULATION: 407,900

■ HIGHEST ELEVATION: KRÅKVASTIND (1699M)



## TRONDHEIM

pop 161,750

Trondheim, Norway's original capital, is nowadays the country's third-largest city after Oslo and Bergen. With its wide streets and partly pedestrianised heart, it's a simply lovely city with a long history. Fuelled by a large student population, it buzzes with life. Cycles zip everywhere, it has some good cafés and restaurants, and it's rich in museums. You can absorb it in one busy day, but it merits more if you're to slip into its lifestyle.

### History

In 997, the Christian King Olav Tryggvason selected a broad sandbank at the River Nid

estuary to moor his longboat. The natural harbour and strategic position made Nidaros (meaning 'mouth of the River Nid'), as the settlement was then called, especially useful for defence against the warlike pagan chiefs of Lade, who were a threat to Christianity and to the region's stability. One plausible theory has it that Leifur Eiriksson (or Leif Ericson as he's usually transcribed in English) visited the king's farm two years later and was converted to Christianity before setting sail for Iceland and Greenland and possibly becoming the first European to set foot in North America. (If you're from the USA, the Viking staring out to sea near the Hurtigruten quay may seem familiar. That's because he's an exact replica of the Ericson

**TROND-WHAT?**

Listen to Trondheimers talk about their city, and you may wonder whether they're all referring to the same place.

Since the late Middle Ages, the city has been called Trondhjem, pronounced 'Trond-yem' and meaning, roughly, 'home of the good life'. But in the early 20th century the fledgling national government was bent on making Norwegian city names more historically Norwegian; just as Christiania reverted to its ancient name of Oslo, on 1 January 1930 Trondhjem was changed back to Nidaros.

Some 20,000 locals took to the streets in protest and by 6 March the government relented – sort of. The compromise was 'Trondheim,' the etymologically Danish 'hj' having been duly excoriated.

Nowadays the official pronunciation is 'Trond-haym', but many locals still say 'Trond-yem'. Thanks to the vagaries of the local dialect, still others call it 'Trond-yahm'. Typical of this tolerant city, any of these pronunciations is acceptable, as is the 'Trond-hime' that most English speakers hazard.

statue in Seattle that commemorates the tens of thousands of Norwegian emigrants to the New World.)

In 1030 another, now more famous, King Olav (Haraldsson) was martyred in battle at Stiklestad (p287), about 90km to the north-east, and canonised. Nidaros became a centre for pilgrims from all over Europe, its bishopric embracing Norway, Orkney, the Isle of Man, the Faroe Islands, Iceland and Greenland. It served as the capital of Norway until 1217, ruling an empire that extended from what is now western Russia to, possibly, the shores of Newfoundland. The cult of St Olav continued until the Reformation in 1537, when Norway was placed under the Lutheran bishopric of Denmark.

After a fire razed most of the city in 1681, Trondheim was redesigned with wide streets and Renaissance flair. The city's location became key once again in WWII, when German naval forces made it their base for northern Norway, although fortunately the city avoided major damage.

**Orientation**

Central Trondheim forms a triangular peninsula bordered by the river Nidelva to the southwest and east, and Trondheimsfjord to the north. The combined train station and bus terminal (Trondheim Sentralstasjon), and boat quays too are squeezed between the canal immediately north of the centre and Trondheimsfjord.

The epicentre of town is Torvet, the central square (also spelt 'Torget') with its statue of King Olav Tryggvason atop a column.

Just east of the centre, across the Gamle Bybro (Old Town Bridge), is the Bakklundet neighbourhood, where, within old warehouses and renovated workers housing, are some of the city's most colourful places to eat and drink. Small Solsiden, even more recently restored, is where you'll find Trondheim's trendiest cafés and wharf-side restaurants.

**Information**

**Ark Bruns Bokhandel** (☎ 73 51 00 22; Kongens gate 10) Carries a good selection of books in English.

**Elefantenvaskeri** (☎ 10am-6pm Mon-Fri, 11am-4pm Sat) Wash your smalls and sip a coffee at this congenial café and laundrette, Norway's northernmost.

**Library** (Kongens gate; ☎ 9am-7pm Mon-Thu, 9am-4pm Fri, 10am-3pm Sat) Free internet access. Carries international press.

**Main post office** (Dronningens gate 10)

**Spacebar** (☎ 73 51 53 50; Kongens gate 19; per hr Nkr40; ☎ 10-midnight Sun-Thu, 24hr Fri & Sat) Internet café with entry on Prinsens gate.

**Tourist office** (☎ 73 80 76 60; www.trondheim.no; Torvet; ☎ 8.30am-8pm Mon-Fri, 10am-6pm Sat & Sun late Jun-mid-Aug; 8.30am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm Sat & Sun late May-late Jun & mid-late Aug; 9am-4pm Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm Sat rest-of-year)

Trondheim is one of Europe's first wireless cities. If you're carrying your laptop, you can wifi for free anywhere within the city centre.

**Sights****NIDAROS CATHEDRAL & ARCHBISHOP'S PALACE**

**Nidaros Cathedral** (Nidaros Domkirke; Kongsgårdsgata; adult/child/family Nkr50/25/125, combined ticket to ca-

thedral, palace museum & crown jewels adult/child/family Nkr100/50/200; ☎ 9am-3pm Mon-Fri, 9am-2pm Sat, noon-4pm Sun May-mid-Jun & mid-Aug-mid-Sep, 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-2pm Sat, noon-4pm Sun mid-Jun-mid-Aug; noon-2.30pm Mon-Fri, 11.30am-2pm Sat, noon-4pm Sun rest-of-year), constructed in the late 11th century, is Scandinavia's largest medieval building. Outside, the ornately embellished west wall has top-to-bottom statues of biblical characters and Norwegian bishops and kings, sculpted in the early 20th century. Within, the cathedral is subtly lit (just see how the vibrantly coloured, modern stained-glass glows, especially in the rose window at the west end), so let your eyes attune to the gloom.

The altar sits over the original grave of St Olav, the Viking king who replaced the Nordic pagan religion with Christianity. The original cathedral was built in 1153, when Norway became a separate archbishopric. The current transept and chapter house were constructed between 1130 and 1180 and reveal Anglo-Norman influences (many of the craftsmen were brought in from England), while the Gothic choir and ambulatory were completed in the early 14th century. The nave, repeatedly ravaged by fire across the centuries, is mostly a faithful 19th-century reconstruction.

Down in the crypt is a display of medieval carved tombstones (the majority restored from fragments since many headstones were broken up and carted away to be recycled in domestic buildings). Look for one inscribed in English and dedicated to one William Miller, Shipmaster, of Dundee, Scotland, who met his end near Trondheim in the 18th century.

You can wander around freely but it's worthwhile joining a tour (a 15-minute canter or a more detailed 45-minute visit). Times vary but there are up to four daily in English (usually at 11am, noon, 1.30pm and 4pm). Music lovers may want to time their visit to take in a **recital** (admission free; ☎ 1pm Mon-Sat mid-Jun-mid-Aug) on the church's magnificent organ.

From mid-June to mid-August, you can climb the cathedral's **tower** for a great view over the city. There are ascents every half hour from its base in the south transept.

Admission to the cathedral also includes the complex of the adjacent 12th-century **Archbishop's Palace**, commissioned around 1160 and Scandinavia's oldest secular building. In the west wing, Norway's **crown jewels** (adult/child/family Nkr70/25/165) shimmer and flash. Its **museum** (adult/child/family Nkr50/25/125; ☎ 10am-3pm

Mon-Sat, noon-4pm Sun May-mid-Jun & mid-Aug-mid-Sep; 10am-4pm Mon-Fri, 10am-3pm Sat, noon-4pm Sun Jun-Aug; core hrs 11am-2pm Wed-Sun rest-of-year) is in the same compound. After visiting the well-displayed statues, gargoyles and carvings from the cathedral, drop to the lower level, where only a selection of the myriad artefacts revealed during the museum's construction in the late 1990s are on show. Take in too its enjoyable 15-minute audiovisual programme.

The adjoining **National Military Museum** (admission free; ☎ 9am-3pm Mon-Fri, 11am-4pm Sat & Sun Jun-Aug), in the same courtyard, is full of antique swords, armour and cannons, and recounts the days from 1700 to 1900, when the Archbishop's Palace served as a Danish military installation. On the top floor is the **Hjemmesfront** (Home Front) museum, devoted to Trondheim's role in the WWII resistance.

**SVERRESBORG TRØNDELAGE FOLK MUSEUM**

West of the centre, the **Folk Museum** (☎ 73 89 01 00; Sverresborg Allé 13; www.sverresborg.no; adult/concession/child/family Nkr80/55/30/195; ☎ 11am-6pm Jun-Aug, 11am-3pm Mon-Fri, noon-3pm Sat & Sun rest-of-year) is one of the best of its kind in Norway. The indoor exhibition, Livsbilder (Images of Life) in the main building, displays artefacts in use over the last 150 years – from clothing to school supplies to bicycles – and has a short multimedia presentation.

The rest of the museum, with over 60 period buildings, is open air, adjoining the ruins of King Sverre's castle and giving fine hilltop views of the city. Houses, the post office, the dentist's and other shops splay around the central market square in the urban section. There are farm buildings from rural Trøndelag, the tiny 12th-century Haltdalen stave church and a couple of small museums devoted to telecommunications (some great old phones) and skiing (with elaborately carved wooden skis). There are guided tours in Norwegian and English four times daily.

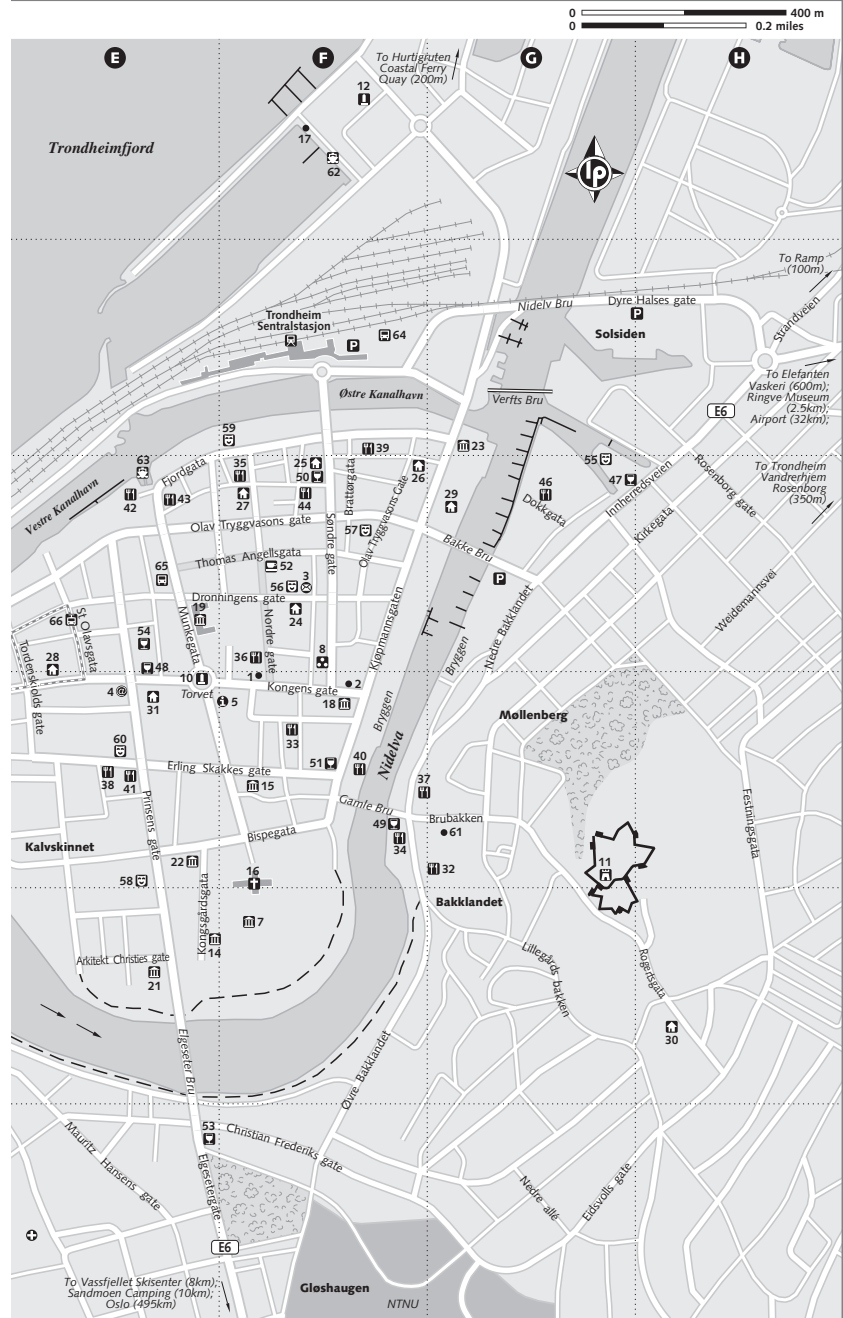
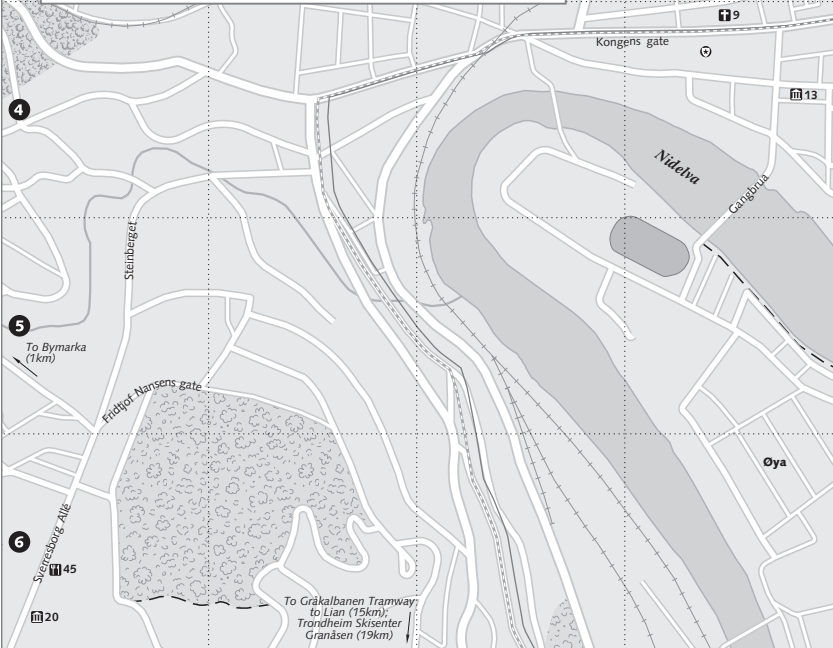
The museum's restaurant, **Vertshuset Tavern** (see p283), itself in a wonderfully preserved old building, is a great place to try Norwegian specialities. Take bus 8 (direction Stavset) from Dronningens gate.

**OTHER MUSEUMS**

The **Ringve Museum** (☎ 73 87 02 80; Lade Allé 60; adult/concession/child/family Nkr75/50/25/150; ☎ 11am-3pm May-mid-Jun, Aug & Sep, 11am-5pm mid-Jun-Jul, 11am-4pm Sun only rest-of-year) is Norway's national museum for

TRONDHEIM

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### THE PILGRIMS' WAY

Nidaros Cathedral was built on the site of the grave of St Olav, who was canonised and declared a martyr after his death at the Battle of Stiklestad on 29 July 1030. The cult of St Olav quickly grew in popularity and 340 churches were dedicated to the saint in Scandinavia, Britain, Russia, the Baltic states, Poland, Germany and the Netherlands. Pilgrims from all over Europe journeyed to his grave at Nidaros, making it the most popular pilgrimage site in northern Europe. Historically, both rich and poor journeyed from Oslo for up to 25 days, while others braved longer sea voyages from Iceland, Greenland, Orkney and the Faroe Islands. St Olav's grave became the northern compass point for European pilgrims; the other spiritual cornerstones were Rome in the south, Jerusalem in the east, and Santiago de Compostela in the west.

As pilgrims travelled from village to village, their routes became arteries for the spread of the cult of St Olav. The pilgrims' way, with wild mountains, forests and rivers to cross, certainly gave plenty of opportunity to reflect upon the hardships of life's journey towards eternity. Most pilgrims travelled on foot, while the better off journeyed on horseback. Those without means relied on local hospitality; pilgrims were held in high esteem and openly welcomed.

In 1997 the Pilgrims' Way – 926km in all, counting alternative sections – was inaugurated, reviving the ancient pilgrimage route between Oslo and Trondheim. The rugged route, mainly mountain tracks and gravelled roads, has been blazed (look for the logo: the cross of St Olav intertwined with the quatrefoil knot indicating a tourist attraction that you see everywhere). It follows, wherever practicable, ancient documented trails. Along the trail are signs indicating place names and monuments linked to the life and works of St Olav, as well as ancient burial mounds and other historic monuments.

For further information, contact the **Pilgrims Office** (Pilegrimskontoret; ☎ 22 33 03 11; www.pilegrim.no; Kirkegata 34a, N-0153 Oslo) or consult its website.

The *Pilgrim Road to Nidaros* by Alison Raju, published by Cicerone Press, is an indispensable, well-written guide if you're thinking of taking on a stretch.

music and musical instruments. The Russian-born owner is a devoted collector of rare and antique musical instruments, which music students demonstrate. You can also browse the old barn with its rich collection of instruments from around the world. The botanic gardens, set within the surrounding 18th-century estate, are a quiet green setting for a stroll. Take bus 3 or 4 and walk up the hill.

The small **Trondheim Maritime Museum** (Trondheims Sjøfartsmuseum; ☎ 73 52 89 75; Fjordgata 6a; adult/concession Nkr25/15; ☎ 10am-4pm Jun-Aug), housed in an old prison, is an appealing little place full of relics such as 18th-century whaling ships and frigates, navigational instruments and models, paintings and photos of historic sailing ships.

The **Museum of Natural History & Archaeology** (Vitenskapsmuseet NTNU; ☎ 73 59 21 45; Erling Skakkes gate 47; adult/child/family Nkr25/10/50; ☎ 9am-4pm Mon-Fri, 11am-4pm Sat & Sun May–mid-Sep, 9am-2pm Mon-Fri, noon-4pm Sat & Sun rest-of-year) belongs to the Norwegian University of Science & Technology (NTNU). There's a hotchpotch of exhibits on the natural and human history of the Trondheim area: streetscapes and

homes, ecclesiastical history, archaeological excavations and southern Sami culture. More ordered is the small, alluring section in a side building devoted to church history and the fascinating everyday artefacts in the medieval section, covering Trondheim's history up to the great fire of 1681.

The permanent collection of the splendid **National Museum of Decorative Arts** (Nordenfjeldske Kunstindustrimuseum; ☎ 73 80 89 50; Munkegata 5; adult/concession/child/family Nkr60/40/30/100; ☎ 10am-5pm Mon-Sat, noon-5pm Sun Jun-late Aug, 10am-3pm Tue-Sat, noon-4pm Sun rest-of-year) exhibits the best of Scandinavian design, including a couple of bijoux Art Nouveau rooms. A whole floor is devoted to the pioneering works of three acclaimed women artists: the tapestry creations of Hannah Ryggen and Synnøve Anker Aurdal, and the innovative glasswork of Benny Motzfeldt.

The **Trondheim Art Museum** (Trondheim Kunstmuseum; ☎ 73 53 81 80; Bispegata 7b; adult/concession/child/family Nkr40/30/20/80; ☎ 10am-5pm Jun-Aug, 11am-4pm Tue-Sun rest-of-year) houses a permanent collection of modern Norwegian and Danish art from 1800 onwards, including

a hallway of Munch lithographs, and runs temporary exhibitions.

### STIFTSGÅRDEN

Scandinavia's largest wooden palace, the late baroque **Stiftsgården** (☎ 73 84 28 80; Munkegata 23; adult/concession/child/family Nkr60/40/30/100; ☎ 10am-4pm Mon-Sat, noon-4pm Sun Jun-late Aug) was constructed as a private residence in the late 18th century. It is now the official royal residence in Trondheim. Admission is by tour only, every hour on the hour.

### HISTORIC NEIGHBOURHOODS

From **Gamle Bybro** (Old Town Bridge), there's a superb view of the **Bryggen**, colourful 18th- and 19th-century riverfront warehouses reminiscent of their better known counterparts in Bergen. To the east, the one-time working-class neighbourhoods of **Møllenberg** and **Bakklandet** are now gentrified latte-land, all cobbles, car-free alleys, trim houses in pastel shades and gardens scarcely bigger than a towel that burst with flowers.

The cobblestone streets immediately west of the centre are also lined with mid-19th-century wooden buildings, notably the octagonal 1705 timber church, **Hospitalskirken** (Hospitalslokka 2-4), in the hospital grounds.

### KRISTIANSTEN FESTNING

For a bird's-eye view of the city, climb 10 minutes from the Gamle Bybro to **Kristiansten Fort** (Festningsgata; admission free; ☎ 10am-4pm daily Jun-Aug), built after Trondheim's great fire of 1681. During WWII the Nazis used it as a prison and execution ground for members of the Norwegian Resistance. The grounds are open year-round, whenever the flag is raised.

### MUNKHOLMEN

During Trondheim's early years, the islet of Munkholmen (Monks' Island) 2km offshore was the town execution ground. Over the centuries it has been the site of a Benedictine monastery, a prison, a fort and finally a customs house. Today, it's a popular picnic venue. From mid-May to early September, ferries (Nkr50 trip) leave at least hourly between 10am and 4pm or 6pm from beside the Ravnkloa fish market.

### MEDIEVAL CHURCH RUINS

During excavations for the library on Kongens gate, archaeologists found the ruins of a 12th-

century church, thought to be **Olavskirken**, now visible beneath the courtyard, together with the skeletons of two adults and a child. In the basement of the nearby bank, **Sparebanken** (Søndre gate 4) are the ruins of the medieval **Gregorius Kirke**, also discovered during excavations. There's free access to both during regular business hours.

### OTHER SIGHTS

Trondheim's **Synagogue** (☎ 73 52 94 34; Arkitekt Christies gate 1B; ☎ 10am-4pm Mon-Thu, noon-3pm Sun) claims to be the world's northernmost. It has a small museum of the history of the local Jewish community (which was halved by the Holocaust).

Children will enjoy the hands-on experiments at the **Science Centre** (Vitensenteret; ☎ 73 59 61 23; Kongens gate 1; adult/concession/family Nkr65/45/140; ☎ 10am-4pm Mon-Fri, 11am-5pm Sat & Sun mid-Jun–mid-Aug, to 5pm rest-of-year).

### Activities

The free map, *Friluftsliv i Trondheimsregionen* (Outdoor Life in the Trondheim Region; text in Norwegian), available at the tourist office, shows all nearby outdoor recreation areas and walking trails.

### HIKING

Two easy strolls within town are the steep but short ascent through the traffic-free lanes of Bakklandet to Kristiansten Fort (left) and the riverbank footpaths beside the Nidelva between Bakke Bru and Gangbrua bridges.

West of Trondheim spreads the Bymarka, a gorgeous green woodland area laced with wilderness footpaths and ski trails. Take the Gråkallbanen tram, in itself a lovely scenic ride through the leafy suburbs, from the St Olavsgata stop to **Lian**. There you can enjoy excellent views over the city and a good swimming lake, Kyvannet.

For more serious two-legged stuff, contact the local DNT office, **Trondhjems Turistforening** (☎ 73 92 42 00; Sandgate 30).

### SKIING

The Vassfjellet mountains, south of town, offer both downhill and cross-country skiing. In season, a daily ski bus runs directly from Munkegata to the Vassfjellet Skisenter, only 8km beyond the city limits. The Bymarka also offers good cross-country skiing, as does the Trondheim Skisenter Granåsen, where

the brave or foolhardy can launch themselves from the world's largest plastic-surfaced ski jump.

### BOAT TRIPS

**Tripps** (☎ 73 52 87 15; adult/child Nkr140/55; ☹ Tue-Sun late Jun–mid-Aug) runs a 1½-hour cruise along the estuary of the River Nid and out into the fjord, sailing at noon and 2.30pm. Departures are from beside the Ravncløa fish market and you buy your ticket on the boat.

### PIRBADET WATER PARK

On the Pirterminalen quay, **Pirbadet** (☎ 73 83 18 00; adult/child/concession Nkr125/85/105; ☹ 11am–8pm Mon-Fri, 10am–6pm Sat & Sun Jun-Aug, core hrs 10am–10pm Sun-Fri, 10am–5pm Sat rest-of-year) is Norway's largest indoor water park with a wealth of liquid pleasures including a wave pool, sauna and 100m water slide.

### Tours

Between late May and August, **Visit Trondheim** runs a two-hour guided city bus tour (adult/senior/child Nkr185/160/free), departing at 11am daily from opposite the tourist office, where you can make a reservation.

### Festivals & Events

**Olavsfestdagene**, in honour of St Olav, is held during the week around his saint's day, 29 July. There's a medieval market and a rich programme of classical music, folk, pop and jazz (Sineád O'Connor topped the bill in 2007). The celebrations coincide with the annual **Trondelag Food Festival**, when stalls selling local fare pack Kongens gate, east of Torvet.

**Kosmorama** (www.kosmorama.no), Trondheim's international film festival, occupies an intensive week in late April, closely followed by the **Nidaros Blues Festival**, headed in 2007 by the late Ike Turner and Los Lobos.

Every other year in October and November, Trondheim's 25,000 university students stage the three-week **UKA** (www.uka.no, in Norwegian) celebration, Norway's largest cultural festival. It's a continuous party with concerts, plays, and other festivities based at the round, red Studentersamfundet (Student Centre; right and p284). It's next due to take the city by storm in 2009.

In February or March every second year, students put on **ISFIT** (www.isfit.org), an international student gathering with participants from over 100 countries. It's altogether more

serious in tone and intent, but with plenty of concerts and events to occupy the leisure hours. The next moot is scheduled for 2009.

### Sleeping

For a fee of Nkr30 the tourist office will book a room in a private house (singles Nkr250 to Nkr330, doubles Nkr400 to Nkr450).

**Sandmoen Camping** (☎ 72 88 61 35; www.sandmoen.no; camp sites Nkr150, 3–4-bed cabins Nkr400, with bathroom Nkr650–975; ☹ mid-Jun–Aug; ☹) Offering shade (pitch your tent beneath mature pine trees) this place about 12km south of Trondheim is the nearest option for campers.

**Trondheim InterRail Centre** (☎ 73 89 95 38; www.tirc.no; Elgesetergate 1; dm incl breakfast Nkr150; ☹ late Jun–mid-Aug; ☹) OK, so you're on a cot bed in a mixed dorm with between 15 and 35 sweating, snoring others but the advantages outweigh the downside at this convivial, excellent-value place, run by the Studentersamfundet. There's free internet access and luggage storage, frequent live music and curfew's an ugly word. Its Edgar Café serves inexpensive meals and beer (during backpacker evening, 8pm to 10pm every Tuesday and Friday, beers are only Nkr31). Should you hear strange shufflings, it's just the ghost of one S Møller, a student who mysteriously disappeared in the 1930s.

**Pensjonat Jarlen** (☎ 73 51 32 18; www.jarlen.no; Kongens gate 40; s/d Nkr450/560) There's nothing fancy about this central spot but it does have price, convenience and value for money on its side. All 25 rooms have full bathroom and all except the sole single have bunk beds, a fridge and self-catering facilities.

**Singsaker Sommerhotel** (☎ 73 89 31 00; Rogertsgata 1; dm/s/d with shared bathroom Nkr200/410/620, s/d with bathroom Nkr520/740, all incl breakfast; ☹ mid-Jun–mid-Aug; ☹) On a grassy knoll in a quiet residential neighbourhood, this imposing building, usually a student hostel, was originally built as a club for occupying German officers. It represents great value. Bus 63 from the train station passes by. If driving, take Klostergata eastwards from the Studentersamfundet and follow the signs.

**Trondheim Vandrerhjem Rosenborg** (☎ 73 87 44 50; www.trondheim-vandrerhjem.no; Weidemannsvei 41; dm Nkr230, s/d with shared bathroom Nkr490/620, with bathroom Nkr550/720, all incl breakfast; ☹) On a hillside 2km east of the train station, this hostel, no longer a member of HI, is overpriced. The

few rooms in the newer part are pleasant enough; the majority, in the old wing, need some serious investment. Internet costs Nkr2 per minute.

**Thon Hotel Trondheim** (☎ 73 88 47 88; www.thonhotels.com; Kongens gate 15; s/d Nkr595/795; ☹) This central hotel offers pleasant, nothing-fancy accommodation at a reasonable price year round. Inside is more appealing than the plain, boxy exterior might suggest and rooms have a simple, trim design.

**P-Hotel** (☎ 73 80 23 50; www.p-hotels.no; Nordre gate 24; s/d incl breakfast Nkr695/795; ☹) This slick, modern hotel, part of an expanding Norwegian minichain, has 49 spruce rooms, each with beverage-making kit, that speak of good Scandinavian style. Someone pads by in the early morning and hangs your breakfast bag on the door.

**Chesterfield Hotel** (☎ 73 50 37 50; www.bestwestern.no; Søndre gate 26; s/d Nkr785/985 mid-Jun–mid-Aug, Nkr985/1095 Sun–Thu, Nkr775/1025 Fri & Sat rest-of-year; ☹) All 43 rooms at this venerable hotel are spacious. They were decorated and fundamentally renovated, with fresh beds and furniture, in 2006 following a major fire in the adjacent building. Those on the 7th (top) floor have huge skylights giving broad city views.

**Britannia Hotel** (☎ 73 80 08 00; www.britannia.no; Dronningens gate 5; s/d Nkr900/1100 mid-Jun–mid-Aug, Nkr1650/1850 Sun–Thu, Nkr995/1195 Fri & Sat rest-of-year; ☹) This mastodon of a hotel with nearly 250 rooms is Trondheim's most venerable and was constructed in 1897. It exudes old-world grace from the mellow, wooden panelling from public areas to the magnificent oval Moorish-revival Palmehaven restaurant – but one of three places to eat – with its Corinthian pillars and central fountain. Relax or exert yourself in the brand new sauna or mini-gym.

**Clarion Collection Hotel Grand Olav** (☎ 73 80 80 80; www.choice.no; Kjøpmannsgaten 48; s/d from Nkr805/995 mid-Jun–mid-Aug & Fri & Sat year-round, from Nkr1045/1245 Sun–Thu rest-of-year) Two of Trondheim's finest hotels stare across the street at each other in perpetual competition. The Clarion offers sleek luxurious living above an airy shopping complex and the Olavshallen concert hall. It has 27 different styles among over a hundred rooms, so no guest can complain of lack of choice.

**Radisson SAS Royal Garden Hotel** (☎ 73 80 30 00; www.radissonsas.com; Kjøpmannsgaten 73; s/d Nkr1095/1195 Fri–Sun & mid-Jun–mid-Aug, Nkr1695/1945 Mon–Thu rest-

of-year; ☹) Opposite the Clarion, this first-class, contemporary river-side hotel (you can fish from your window in some rooms) is open, light and airy – and particularly family-friendly; children are accommodated for free when sharing a room with their parents and there's a summertime playroom.

### Eating

#### RESTAURANTS

**Persilleriet** (☎ 73 60 60 14; Erling Skakkes gate 14; ☹ noon–6pm Mon–Fri; ☹) This tiny lunchtime-only box of a place does tasty vegetarian fare, to eat in or take away.

**Ramp** (nr Strandveien & Gregusgate; mains Nkr80–140; ☹ noon–midnight) Well off the tourist route and patronised by in-the-know locals, friendly, alternative Ramp, both bar and restaurant, gets its raw materials, organic where possible, from local sources (its veg man, for example, calls by each morning). It's renowned for its juicy house burgers (Nkr100) filled with lamb, beef, fish or chickpeas.

**Benitos/Zia Teresa** (☎ 73 52 64 22; Vår Frue gate 4; mains from Nkr90) At these two related restaurants – fancy Italian trattoria and informal pizza and pasta joint – the gregarious, extrovert owner bears a striking resemblance to the late Luciano Pavarotti and may well burst into an aria.

**our pick Baklandet Skydsstasjon** (☎ 73 92 10 44; Øvre Baklandet 33; mains Nkr115–200; ☹ noon–1am) Within what began life as an 18th-century coaching inn are several cosy rooms with poky angles and listing floors. It's a hyper-friendly place where you can tuck into tasty mains, such as its renowned *bacalao* (cod stew or fish soup) for Nkr145, while always leaving a cranny for a gooey homemade cake (around Nkr50).

**Grønn Pepper** (☎ 73 53 26 30; Fjordgata 7; mains Nkr165–230) Bright Mexican blankets and – 'fraid so – sombreros add colour and life to the Pepper's architecturally staid interior. The food's Tex-Mex and you can slam down a tequila or two. Monday's special is four tacos with rice and salad (Nkr120).

**our pick Vertshuset Tavern** (☎ 73 87 80 70; Sverresborg Allé 11; mains Nkr110–270) Once in the heart of Trondheim, this historic (1739) tavern was lifted and transported, every last plank of it, to the Sverresborg Trøndelag Folk Museum (p277). Tuck into its rotating specials of traditional Norwegian fare or just peck at waffles with coffee in one of its 16 tiny rooms, each



low-beamed, with sloping floors, candlesticks, cast iron stoves and lacy tablecloths.

**Sushi Bar** (☎ 73 52 10 20; Munkegata 39; mains Nkr175-240) The name says it all; the house speciality is sushi in multifarious forms. To savour the flavours, go for the 16-item *sushi moriawase* selection (Nkr198). It also does takeaway.

**Chablis** (☎ 73 87 42 50; Øvre Bakklundet 66; mains 180-220; ☎ 5-11pm) The Chablis is beside the river, indeed, part of it's on the water; reserve a table on its floating pontoon. Alternatively, the interior of this brasserie-style place is light and appealing and from the kitchen emerge the most delightful dishes, both Norwegian and international.

**Ørens Kro** (☎ 73 60 06 35; Dokkgata 8; mains around Nkr200) This characterful bar and restaurant was once a boat repair workshop. Tools of its former trade are arranged around the walls while part of the large external terrace straddles a former slipway, its rusting pulleys and hawsers still taut below. The menu's Norwegian and mainly fish, as befits its long waterside history.

**To Rom og Kjøkken** (☎ 73 56 89 00; Carl Johansgate 5; mains Nkr200-235; ☎ Mon-Sat) At Two Rooms & a Kitchen, service is friendly, the ambience, with original, changing artwork on the walls, is bright and brisk, and prices are reasonable. Vegetables and meat are sourced locally, wherever feasible.

**Emilies** (☎ 73 92 96 41; Erling Skakkes gate 45; 2-6 courses Nkr350-595; ☎ 4pm-midnight Mon-Sat) The menu, carefully selected and constantly changing to reflect what's available locally, couldn't be shorter or sweeter at this sophisticated restaurant, its table linen and furniture an essay in contrasting blacks and whites.

**Credo** (☎ 73 53 03 88; Ørjaveita 4; 3-5-course menus Nkr465-580; ☎ 6-11pm) There's no need for a formal à la carte menu at this adventurous Spanish-influenced world-cuisine spot – the chef chooses the day's best items and serves them up in fine style. There's also a trendy bar upstairs.

**Havfruen** (☎ 73 87 40 70; Kjøpmannsgaten 7; meals Nkr455-785; ☎ 6pm-midnight Mon-Sat) This elegant riverside restaurant specialises in the freshest of fish. The quality, reflected in the prices, is excellent, as are the accompanying wines. The short menu, from which you select between three and eight courses, changes regularly according to what's hauled from the seas.

## CAFÉS

Trondheim has plenty of lovely cafés for a light meal, coffee and cakes. Some stay open at night and turn into lively pubs.

**Dromedar** (☎ 73 50 25 02; Nedre Bakklundet 3) This longstanding local self-service favourite serves light dishes and very good coffee indeed, in all sizes, squeezes and strengths. Inside is cramped so, if the weather permits, relax on the exterior terrace bordering the cobbled street. There's a second **branch** (☎ 73 53 00 60; Nørde gate 2), similar in style, also with a street-side terrace, that serves equally aromatic coffee.

**Café ni Muser** (☎ 73 53 25 50; Bispegata 9; light dishes Nkr60-85) For inexpensive light meals and an arty crowd, go to the café at the Trondheim Art Museum. On sunny afternoons, the outdoor terrace turns into a beer garden.

## SELF-CATERING

For self-caterers, there's a grand little open-air fruit and veg market on Torvet each morning. You can munch on inexpensive fish cakes and other finny fare at the excellent **Ravnkloa fish market**.

## Drinking

As a student town, Trondheim offers lots of through-the-night life. The free papers, *Natt & Dag* and *Plan B*, have listings, although mostly in Norwegian. Solsiden (Sunnyside) is Trondheim's trendiest leisure zone. A whole wharf-side of bars and restaurants nestle beneath smart new apartment blocks, converted warehouses and long-idle cranes.

**Trondheim Microbryggeri** (Prinsens gate 39) This splendid home-brew pub deserves a pilgrimage as reverential as anything accorded to St Olav from all committed *øl* (beer) quaffers. With up to eight of its own brews on tap and good light meals (around Nkr150) coming from the kitchen, it's a place to linger, nibble and tinkle.

**Macbeth** (Søndre gate 22b) Homesick Scots will feel at home, Geordies with nostalgia can weep into their draught Newcastle Brown, and the rest of us can watch big-screen football or car racing (don't get yourself into the corner where the committed race-goers sit, though, or you'll be *persona-really-nongrata*). Absolutely everyone can enjoy a dram or two of its more than a dozen single malt whiskies...

**Studentersamfundet** (Student Centre; ☎ 73 89 95 38; Elgesetergate 1) During the academic year, it

has 10 lively bars, a cinema and frequent live music, while in summer it's mostly a travellers' crash pad (p282).

**Metro** (☎ 73 52 05 52; Kjøpmannsgaten 12; ☎ 10pm-2am Wed, Fri & Sat) Trondheim's only gay bar is also a pub, lounge, disco and friendly meeting place for both boys and girls.

**Bare Blåbær** (Innherredsveien 16; burgers & pizzas Nkr110-130, Tex-Mex around Nkr140) Join the throng that packs both the interior and dockside terrace of this popular place. It's renowned for preparing the finest pizzas in town, including the intriguing *chili bollocks* – presumably a wintertime special.

**Den Gode Nabo** (Øvre Bakklundet 66; mains Nkr174-194; ☎ 1pm-1am) The Good Neighbour, dark and cavernous within and nominated more than once as Norway's best pub, enjoys a prime riverside location.

**Bruk Bar** (Kongens gate; ☎ 11am-3am Mon-Sat, 1pm-3am Sun) Inside, candles flicker and designer lamps shed light onto the 30-or-so-year-olds who patronise this welcoming joint. The music is eclectic, varying at the whim of bar staff, but guaranteed loud. Outside, the street-side terrace, just off Torvet, is ideal for people-watching.

**Rick's Café** (Nordre gate 11; ☎ from 11am) The original Rick's burnt down (at least one major conflagration over the years is almost a rite of passage in Norway) and this slick reconstruction opened in 2007. The ground floor is all edgy stainless steel while upstairs, more for quiet cocktails and lingering wines, has sink-down-deep leatherette sofas and armchairs. The weekend nightclub in the basement has two zones – one for rock, the other playing house.

## Entertainment

**Dokkhuset** (☎ 11am-1am Mon-Thu, 11am-3am Fri & Sat, 1pm-1am Sun) In an artistically converted former pumping station (look through the glass beneath your feet at the old engines), the Dock House is at once an auditorium (where if it's the right night you'll hear experimental jazz or chamber music), restaurant and café-bar. Sip a drink on the jetty or survey the Trondheim scene from its roof terrace.

**Tiger Tiger** (☎ 73 53 16 06; Fjordgata 56-58; ☎ 11pm-3am Thu-Sat) The three storeys of this kitsch disco display a sub-Disney combination of artefacts, purportedly from South Africa, India and Polynesia. DJs cater to the masses, who flock in by the hundreds.

**Supa** (☎ 73 50 37 08; Kongens gate; ☎ 10pm-3am Fri & Sat) The downstairs nightclub of Bruk Bar, once a wine cellar, continues the longstanding association with alcohol. DJs spin house, jungle, drum and bass with liberal lashings of R&B.

**Frakken** (☎ 73 52 24 42; Dronningens gate 12; ☎ 6pm-3.30am) This multistorey nightclub and piano bar features both Norwegian and foreign musicians and has live music nightly.

Trondheim's main concert hall, **Olavshallen** (☎ 73 99 40 50; Kjøpmannsgaten 44), within the Olavskvartalet cultural centre, is the home base of the Trondheim Symphony Orchestra. However, it also features international rock and jazz concerts, mostly between September and May.

**Trøndelag Teater** (☎ 73 80 50 00; Prinsens gate 18-20), constructed in 1816 and handsomely refurbished, stages large-scale dance and musical performances.

The town's two main cinemas are **Nova Kinosenter** (☎ 82 05 43 33; Olav Tryggvasons gate 5) and **Prinsen Kino** (☎ 82 05 43 33; Prinsens gate 2b).

## Getting There & Away

### AIR

Værnes airport is located 32km east of Trondheim. SAS connects Trondheim to all major Norwegian cities, as well as Copenhagen. **Norwegian** ([www.norwegian.no](http://www.norwegian.no)) flies to/from London (Stansted), Oslo and Bergen.

### BOAT

The Hurtigruten coastal ferry stops in Trondheim leaving at noon (northbound) and 10am (southbound). Express passenger boats between Trondheim and Kristiansund (3½ hours) depart from the Pirterminalen quay up to three times daily.

### BUS

The intercity bus terminal (Rutebilstasjon) adjoins Trondheim Sentralstasjon (train station, also known as Trondheim S).

As the main link between southern and northern Norway, Trondheim is a bus transport crossroads. Nor-Way Bussekspress services run up to three times daily to Ålesund (Nkr500, 7¼ hours), Namsos (Nkr320, 3¾ hours) and Oslo (Nkr575, 6½ hours). There's also an overnight bus to/from Bergen (Nkr751, 13¾ hours). If you're travelling by public transport to Narvik and points north, it's quicker – all is relative – to take the train

### TRONDHEIM: CYCLE CITY

You have to admire the Kommune of Trondheim for its tenacity. A few years ago, it laid on around 200 green bicycles, available free of charge for use on the central peninsula. But they were soon stolen, wrecked or simply not returned. Undeterred, the municipality tightened up on security and tried again.

This time the distinctive bikes are red and widely used for short hops around town. You borrow one for a maximum of three hours before returning it to any of 10 racks around central Trondheim (including one at the train station). To join in, get a bike card (Nkr70 for up to four days plus a refundable deposit of Nkr200) from the tourist office, pick up a cycle from the nearest rack and jump into the saddle.

Other cycle-friendly measures include clear signing of cycle routes, often traffic-free and shared with pedestrians, a lane of smooth flagstones along cobbled streets that would otherwise uncomfortably judder your and the bike's moving parts – and Trampe, the world's only bike lift, a low-tech piece of engineering to which cyclists heading from the Gamle Bybro up the Brubakken hill to Kristiansten Fort can hitch themselves.

to Fauske or Bodø (the end of the line), then continue by bus.

### CAR & MOTORCYCLE

There's an E6 bypass that avoids Trondheim – but why would you want to take it? The main route ploughs through the heart of the city. Drivers entering this central zone must pay a toll of Nkr25 (the motorway toll into town also covers the city toll, so keep your receipt). Use the 'Manuell' lane and pay up or you risk a steep fine.

Among car-hire options are **Avis** (Kjøpmannsgaten ☎ 73 84 17 90; Kjøpmannsgaten 34; airport ☎ 74 84 01 00), **Europcar** (Thonning Owesens ☎ 73 82 88 50; Thonning Owesens gate 36; airport ☎ 7482 67 00) and **National** (Ladeveien ☎ 73 50 94 40; Ladeveien 24; airport ☎ 74 82 29 90).

### TRAIN

For train information, phone ☎ 177. There are up to six daily trains to Oslo (Nkr810, 6¼ to 7¾ hours) and two head north to Bodø (Nkr937, 9¼ hours) via Mosjøen (Nkr648, 5½ hours), Mo i Rana (Nkr749, 6½ hours) and Fauske (Nkr905, nine hours). A *minipris* ticket (see p419) may considerably undercut these standard prices.

You can also train it to Steinkjer (Nkr217, two hours, hourly).

### Getting Around

#### TO/FROM THE AIRPORT

**Flybussen** (☎ 73 82 25 00) runs every 15 to 20 minutes from 5am to 8pm (less frequently at weekends), stopping at major landmarks such as the train station, Studentersamfundet and Britannia Hotel (Nkr80; 40 minutes).

Trains run regularly (every two hours) between Trondheim Sentralstasjon and the Værnes airport station (Nkr68, 35 minutes).

### CAR & MOTORCYCLE

Parking garages throughout town offer better rates and greater convenience than the krone-gobbling street-side meters.

### PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The city bus service, **Team Trafikk** (☎ 73 50 28 70), has its central transit point, where all lines stop, on the corner of Munkegata and Dronningens gate. Bus and tram cost Nkr22 per ride (Nkr55 for a 24-hour ticket). You'll need the exact change.

Trondheim's tram line, the Gråkallbanen, runs west from St Olavsgata to Lian, in the heart of the Bymarka. Antique trolleys trundle along this route on Saturdays in summer. Transfers are available from city buses.

### TAXI

To call a cab, ring **Trønder Taxi** (☎ 07373) or **Norgestaxi** (☎ 08000).

## THE ROUTE NORTH

If you're heading north, from Steinkjer you have a choice of routes: the more frequented, inland Arctic Highway or the slower E17 Kystriksveien (Coastal Route). The railway line north to Bodø via Hell and Steinkjer more or less follows the Arctic Highway to Fauske.

### HELL

Hell has little to offer but its name, meaning 'prosperity' in Norwegian. All the same, lots of travellers stop here for a cheap chuckle or at least to snap a photo of the sign at the train station. Forever after, whenever someone suggests you go here, you can honestly say you've already been and it wasn't all that bad.

### STIKLESTAD

The site of Stiklestad commemorates what in terms of numbers was a small skirmish but which, in its impact, is at the heart of Norwegians' sense of national identity. They flock here by the thousands, some as pilgrims visiting the church associated with St Olav, but most come to picnic and enjoy the fresh air, open space and associated exhibitions.

On 29 July 1030 the larger and better-equipped forces of local feudal chieftains defeated a force of barely 100 men led by the Christian King Olav Haraldsson here in Stiklestad. Olav had been forced from the Norwegian throne by King Knut (Canute) of Denmark and England. He briefly escaped to Russia but on his return met resistance from local chiefs, who were disaffected by his destruction of pagan shrines and execution of anyone who persisted with heathen practices.

The Battle of Stiklestad marks Norway's passage between the Viking and medieval periods. Although Olav was killed, the battle is generally lauded as a victory for Christianity in Norway and the slain hero recalled as a martyr and saint.

St Olav developed a following all over northern Europe and his grave in Trondheim's Nidaros Cathedral became a destination of pilgrims from across the continent. The site, around most of which you can wander for free, is laid out rather like a sprawling theme park, with exhibits on the Battle of Stiklestad, an outdoor folk museum and, predating all, the 12th-century Stiklestad church.

### Sights & Activities

The **Stiklestad National Cultural Centre** (Stiklestad Nasjonale Kultursenter; ☎ 74 04 42 00; www.stiklestad.no; ticket per adult/child Nkr95/40) is a grandiose wooden structure. Entry entitles you to visit **Stiklestad 1030**, an evocative exhibition about the battle with dioramas and plenty of shrieks and gurgles on the soundtrack; a 15-minute film on St Olav; a guided tour of the church; and

a small WWII resistance museum. Within the complex too is a **restaurant** specialising in locally sourced food and a recently opened **hotel** (s/d incl breakfast Nkr690/790), its structure in the shape of St Olav's shield.

In the grounds there's a collection of over 30 historical buildings (admission free), ranging from humble crofts and artisans' workshops to the Molåna, a much grander farmhouse and, within it, a small, summertime café. In summer, actors in period costume bring several of the buildings to life.

Across the road is lovely Stiklestad **church** (☎ core hrs 11am-6pm), built between 1150 and 1180 above the stone on which the dying St Olav reputedly leaned. The original stone was believed to have healing powers, but it was removed during the Reformation and hasn't been seen since.

The booklet *Stiklestad Yesterday & Today* (Nkr30), on sale at the centre, gives a succinct background to the site and its significance for Norwegians.

### Festivals & Events

Every year during the week leading up to St Olav's Day (29 July) Stiklestad hosts the **St Olav Festival** with a medieval market, lots of wannabee Vikings in costume and a host of other folksy activities. The high point of the festival is an outdoor pageant (held over the last five days) dramatising the conflicts between the king and local farmers and chieftains. Some of Norway's top actors and actresses traditionally take the major roles while locals play minor parts and swell the crowd scenes.

### STEINKJER & NORTH

pop 11,000

Medieval sagas speak of Steinkjer as a major trading centre and indeed it continues to be a crossroads, requiring a decision from northbound travellers: to opt for the more scenic Kystriksveien coastal route (Rv17) to Bodø or to continue northwards on the E6 (Arctic Highway).

The **tourist office** (☎ 74 16 36 17; www.visitinnherred.com; Namdalsvegen 11; ☎ 9am-8pm Mon-Fri, 10am-7pm Sat, noon-8pm Sun mid-Jun–mid-Aug, 9am-4pm Mon-Fri rest-of-year) is beside the E6. From the train station take the foot tunnel. Doubling as the Kystriksveien Info-Center, it can book accommodation in town and along the coastal route. It also rents bikes (per hour/day Nkr30/150) and has free internet access.



## Sights & Activities

Steinkjer's main attraction is its **Egge Museum** (☎ 74 16 31 10; Fylkesmannsgården; adult/child Nkr60/free; ☞ 11am-4pm mid-Jun–mid-Aug), an open-air farm complex 2.5km north of town. On the same hilltop site are several Viking burial mounds and stone circles.

To the north of Steinkjer, the E6 follows the north shore of the 45km-long, needle-thin lake **Snåsavatnet**, bordered by majestic evergreen forests. You may prefer to take the Rv763 along the quieter southern shore to see the **Bølarein**, a 5000- to 6000-year-old rock carving of a reindeer and several other incised carvings. Pass by the **Bølabua restaurant & gift shop** (☎ 45 42 65 88; ☞ late Jun–early Aug), a short walk from the carving, for information.

## Sleeping & Eating

**Føllingstua** (☎ 74 14 71 90; www.follingstua.com; E6, Følling; car/caravan sites Nkr100/160, cabins Nkr490-570, 3-4-bed r with shared bathroom Nkr450) Beside the E6 14km north of Steinkjer, near the lake's southwestern end, this lovely, welcoming camping ground may tempt you to linger for a day or two, fish in the lake or rent one of its boats and canoes.

**Guldbergaunet Sommerhotel & Camping** (☎ 74 16 20 45; g-book@online.no; Elvenget 34; camp sites Nkr160, d Nkr720, cabin Nkr375-480; ☞ hotel mid-Jun–mid-Aug, cabins year-round) Normally student accommodation, this camp site and summer hotel is 2.3km from town amid a grassy area. A small river, ideal for paddling and bathing, flows right by.

**Tingvold Park Hotel** (☎ 74 14 11 00; www.tingvoldho.tel.no; Gamle Kongeveien 47; s/d mid-Jun–mid-Aug & Fri & Sat year-round Nkr700/970, Sun-Thu rest-of-year Nkr1240/1530; ☐ ☑) Beside an old Viking burial site, this secluded, good-value option overlooking Steinkjer has a pleasant lawn and garden.

**Breidablikk** (☎ 74 16 22 05; Kongens gate 22-24; mains around Nkr100; ☞ 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, noon-6pm Sun) Nothing fancy but friendly Breidablikk serves up honest, reliable Norwegian fare. Choose from its short à la carte selection or go for the dish of the day. Fish balls in white sauce, dessert and coffee for Nkr89? You won't find better value in all Norway.

**Brod & Cirkus** (☎ 74 16 21 00; Kongens gate 40; ☞ Mon-Sat) On the main street 150m from the train station, it bakes its own bread daily and offers a range of tempting à la carte dishes. It'll even knock you up a six-tier wedding cake, if you've a happy event on the horizon...

## NAMSOS pop 9000

Namsos is considered the first port town of consequence on the northbound coastal route between Trondheim and Bodø; it makes a pleasant overnight stop and has a couple of interesting diversions.

The **tourist office** (☎ 74 22 66 04; www.namsosinfo.no; Damskipkaia; ☞ 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm Sat, noon-4pm Sun mid-Jun–mid-Aug; 9am-3.30pm rest-of-year) is at the quayside, co-located with the local bus and ferry company headquarters. It rents cycles (Nkr25/150 per hour/day) and also provides information about the Kystriksveien.

**Cyberland Café** (☎ 74 28 74 55; Kirkegata 11; ☞ 11am-10pm Mon-Sat, 1-10pm Sun) has several internet terminals (Nkr36 per hour).

## Sights & Activities

An easy scenic 20-minute walk up Kirkegata from the centre will take you to the lookout atop the prominent loaf-shaped rock **Bjørumsklumpen** (114m) with good views over Namsfjorden, the town and its environs. About a third of the way up, a sign identifies a track leading to some impressive WWII Nazi bunkers hewn from solid rock.

For exercise both for the body and the sake of nostalgia, you can hire a **trolley** (single Nkr250, up to 4 riders Nkr350) from Namsos Camping (see opposite) and trundle it for 17km along the disused railway line between Namsos and Skage as it follows the gentle River Nansen.

If you're interested in wood chopping and chipping, check out the **Norsk Sagbruksmuseum** (☎ 74 27 13 00; Spillumsvika; admission free; ☞ tours 10am, noon, 2pm & 4pm Tue-Sat Mid-Jun–mid-Aug, Mon-Fri rest-of-year), which is over the bridge 4km east of town and commemorates Norway's first steam-powered sawmill (1853).

The **Namdal Museum** (Namdalsmuseet; ☎ 74 27 40 72; Kjerlighetstien 1; adult/child Nkr30/free; ☞ 11am-3pm Tue-Sun mid-Jun–mid-Aug) has displays on local history, including the typical wooden sailing boats of the area, and is – hold on to your hat – 'Norway's only museum featuring exhibits of hospital equipment presented in chronological order'.

The **Oasen swimming hall** (☎ 74 21 90 40; Jarle Hildrums veg; adult/child/family Nkr80/35/190; ☞ 10am-8pm Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm Sat & Sun), about 1km east of town, has three heated pools and a 37m water slide built deep inside the mountain.

The **Namsos Candle Foundry** (Lysstoperiet; ☎ 74 21 29 00; Lokstallen; ☞ 10am-6pm Mon-Fri, 11am-4pm Sat)

makes and sells lifelike sculpted candles (such as tropical flowers and – incongruously – ice), in a former train shed.

## Sleeping & Eating

**Namsos Camping** (☎ 74 27 53 44; namsoscamp@online.no; tent/caravan Nkr150/185, 4-bed cabin with outdoor bathroom Nkr375-450, with bathroom Nkr800-850) This superior camp site has a large kitchen and dining room, playground and minigolf. Basic cabins are a bargain and the more expensive ones are well equipped. Alongside is a shallow lake that's ideal for children, who'll also enjoy communing with the romping squirrels and two tame goat kids. Take Rv17, direction Grong, then follow airport signs.

**Borstad Hotel & Gjestgiveri** (☎ 74 21 80 90; www.borstadhotel.no; Carl Gubransons gate 19; s/d Jul–mid-Aug & Fri & Sat year-round Nkr710/960, Sun-Thu rest-of-year from Nkr850/1090; ☐) Bright and friendly, this recently upgraded hotel has large sunny rooms and a pleasant outdoor garden. There's a cosy lounge and the huge oak dining table (over a century old and at which breakfast is served) was once used for company board meetings.

**Tino's Hotell** (☎ 74 21 80 00; www.tinohotell.no in Norwegian; Verftsgata 5; s/d from Nkr950/1200 Sun-Thu, Nkr750/1000 Fri & Sat) Rooms are large and comfortable at this hotel, just a stone's throw from the waterside. Tino, the owner and Italian as they come despite many years in Norway, runs a great restaurant, La Sirenetta (mains around Nkr200; open 3pm to 11pm) that serves both international food and fine Italian cuisine (such as 25 varieties of pizza), a continent away from Norway's usual pizza and pasta joints.

**Cyberland Café** (☎ 74 28 74 55; Kirkegata 11; ☞ 11am-10pm Mon-Sat, 1-10pm Sun) It offers good burgers in three sizes, ciabattas and grills, all at very reasonable prices (Nkr45 to Nkr 106). While you're there you can check your email.

**Aakervik** (☎ 74 27 20 90; cnr Havnegata & Herlaugs gate 16; ☞ core hr 9am-4.30pm Mon-Sat) A great shop for wild salmon and other fish, reindeer, roe deer and elk. The interior is a minimeragerie of stuffed animals and birds eyeing you glassily from all angles; pay your respects to the amiable brown bear.

## Getting There & Away

Nor-Way Bussekspress runs twice daily between Namsos and Trondheim (Nkr320, 3½ hours) and there are up to eight local buses to/from Steinkjer (Nkr120, 1½ hours).

## RØRVIK

Tiny Rørvik buzzes when the northbound and southbound Hurtigruten coastal ferries meet each other here each day around 8.30pm. What gets passengers up early from the dinner table is the splendid multimedia **Norveg** (☎ 74 39 04 41; www.norveg.org; adult/child incl audioguide Nkr70/35; ☞ 10am-10pm mid-Jun–Jul, 10am-5pm rest-of-year & when the Hurtigruten's in port). Architecturally exciting and resembling a giant sailing ship, it recounts 10,000 years of coastal history through a variety of media, including an accompanying audioguide, available in English. It also runs a well-regarded gourmet restaurant.

A combined ticket (adult/child Nkr120/60), valid for two days, gives admission to Norveg, Berggården (an old trading house once typical of coastal communities) and several other historical buildings. Whether or not you go for the package, pick up from Norveg *Coastal Town Rørvik*, a useful free brochure that guides you around this small community's principal sites.

Buses run between Rørvik and Namsos (Nkr306, three hours) once or twice daily. If the day's right, it's swifter by express passenger boat (Nkr163, 1¼ hours, Monday, Friday and Sunday).

## LEKA

pop 600

You won't regret taking a short side-trip to the wild and beautiful island of Leka; for hikers, the desert-like Wild West landscape is particularly enchanting. This prime habitat for the white-tailed sea eagle (hold on to your little ones; in 1932, a three-year-old girl was snatched away by a particularly cheeky specimen) also has several Viking Age burial mounds and Stone Age rock paintings.

Bed down at **Leka Motell og Camping** (☎ 74 39 98 23; www.leka-camp.no; tent/caravan sites Nkr80/120, cabin with outdoor bathroom Nkr250-700, d/q with bathroom & kitchen Nkr600/700). For comfort, reserve one of its well-equipped, reasonably priced motel rooms. For something different and more spartan, hire a sod-roofed stone hut (Nkr350), sleeping up to four in bunk beds.

Leka is accessed by hourly ferry from Gutvik (Nkr26/68 per person/car and driver, 20 minutes), which lies about 20 minutes off the Rv17 coastal road.



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