

Here Comes the Sun

10 WAYS TO ENJOY NORTHERN NORWAY'S MIDNIGHT SUN

BY CARTER G. WALKER

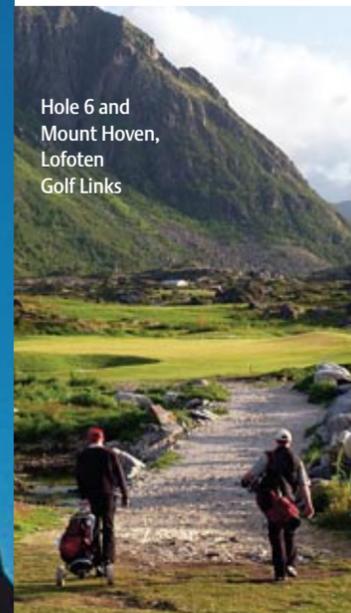
It is the ultimate reprieve from a long, dark winter, an almost surreal natural phenomenon. The midnight sun—which specifically refers to 24-hour daylight in which the sun is visible above the horizon—occurs definitively north

of the Arctic Circle and south of the Antarctic Circle. Since some 170,000 square kilometers of Norway, including the Svalbard archipelago, lie above the Arctic Circle—that’s nearly a third of the country—it’s no wonder that tourists from around the world flock to the region for a glimpse of this most divine spectacle.

“Northern Norway has got it all,” says Evgenia Egorova of the Northern Norway Tourist Board. “[Our] season of the midnight sun is the longest in Europe and maybe even the longest in the world.”

Viking has put together a list of just *some* of the unforgettable ways to enjoy the midnight sun.

Enjoying the midnight sun on Engeløya in Nordland.



Hole 6 and Mount Hoven, Lofoten Golf Links



Nusfjord

1

Golf all night long

Imagine teeing off with white sandy beaches on one side and the open sea on another. Sprinkle in a few Viking burial mounds and a scenic lighthouse to remind yourself you’re in Norway. What could be better? Now, imagine it is 1 a.m. and you can fit in another 36 holes before breakfast. That is the beauty of golfing under the midnight sun and Northern Norway boasts a handful of excellent courses. The 18-hole Salten Golf Club is just outside Bodø and the 9-hole Lofoten Golf Links is spread across the island of Gimsøy. bodogolfpark.no, saltengolf.no, lofoten-golf.no

2

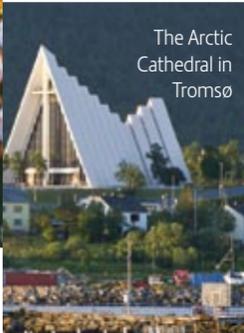
Stay in a rorbu

As early as 1100 A.D., small waterside cottages, or *rorbuer*, were built along Norway’s productive fishing coast as temporary housing for the fisherman who would follow the cod. Today these cozy cabins have been modernized as perfect getaway retreats. Popular especially in Lofoten for its excellent fishing and storybook villages, rorbuer of various standards—from those without running water to those with multiple bedrooms, kitchen and living room—are available in the stunning setting of Nusfjord. Most rorbuer come with their own rowboats so you can let the tides and the sun determine the pace of your delightful days. nusfjord.no

Did You Know?

Because the sun is a disc, rather than a point, midnight sun can be experienced up to 90 kilometers south of the Arctic Circle and north of the Antarctic Circle, with variations from year to year and increased visibility based on altitude.

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Hikers on Kvaløya.

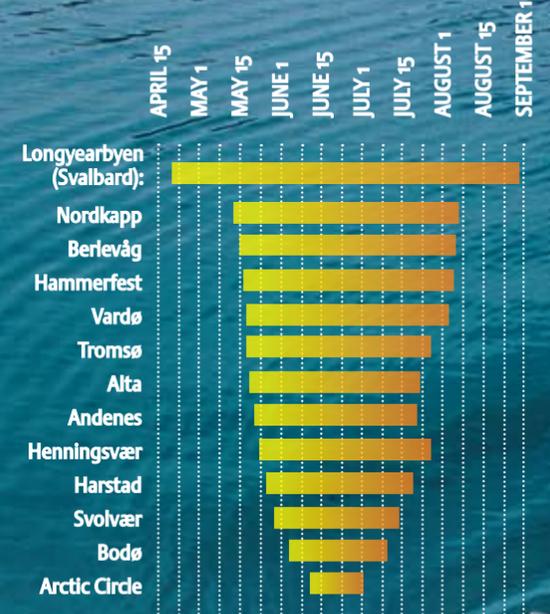


Dutch schooner Noorderlicht



Where and When

Norway's midnight sun is visible in the summer anywhere above the Arctic Circle, but the closer you are to the North Pole, the longer the midnight sun occurs. Here's the window of opportunity to experience the midnight sun in some of Northern Norway's locations.



3

Cruise the fjords on a midnight sun safari

Setting off from the idyllic fishing village of Henningsvær and out through the Lofoten fjords, travelers will feel like they are moving through a fairytale. Once out in the open sea, boaters soak in the rays from the midnight sun as it moves across the sky without ever dipping beneath the waves. The 24-hour light makes animal viewing a round-the-clock activity. Bring your binoculars to look for sea eagles, puffins, seals and sea otters.

lofoten-opplevelser.no

4

Hike up Nupen for Norway's most romantic view

In Harstad, where the midnight sun shines for some 1,600 consecutive hours, lending an all-night bronze hue to the mountainous coastal landscape, countless hiking opportunities afford visitors incredible views of the midnight sun. One such spot is a small mountain called Nupen, just 1,352 feet tall. Overlooking the rocky coast, it was voted one of Norway's most romantic spots to watch the midnight sun in 2009.

destinationharstad.no

5

Look for whales in the waters around Vesterålen

Departing from the picturesque village of Stø, Arctic Whale Tours takes visitors to the edge of the continental shelf and over a unique underwater canyon, Bleik Canyon, which offers prime habitat for sperm whales (the company boasts a 96 percent success rate for spotting the behemoth creatures), and other species including orcas, pilot whales, minke and humpbacks. The aquatic life overall is stunning: Expect to see white-tailed eagle, cormorants, kittiwakes and puffins that congregate around the scenic Anda Lighthouse. Time your cruise right and it will feel like the longest, loveliest sunset cruise imaginable.

arcticwhaletours.com

6

Spend some time at Sami summer camp

Get a glimpse of Sami culture on the stunning Lyngen Peninsula at Camp Tamok with the Nyheim family and their reindeer. Whether you're throwing a lasso, admiring Sami handicrafts or just enjoying traditional Sami food from the comfort of a *lavvu* (tent), this family-friendly all-day outing will introduce you to the fascinating culture of Northern Norway's indigenous people.

lyngsfjord.com

Much farther inland, an hour's drive from Alta in the heart of Finnmark, ávžo Safari offers traditional and authentic Sami experiences as well.

sautso.no

7

Run the Midnight Sun Marathon in Tromsø

Though there is no scientific evidence to support it, many believe that the midnight sun is physically energizing; and there is wide agreement that residents of the far North sleep less during the summer than their more southerly counterparts. Why not put it to the test by running a marathon—or a half-marathon, 10k, 4.2k fun run, or children's race—in the middle of the night? Tromsø's Midnight Sun Marathon, the world's northernmost AIMS-certified marathon, will be held this year on June 30 and attracts 1,000 runners from all over the world.

msm.no

For non-runners, a Midnight Sun concert is held nightly (11:30 p.m.–12 a.m.) in Tromsø's iconic Arctic Cathedral.

ishavskatedralen.no

8

Explore Tromsø's magnificent nature on foot, in a kayak or with a pack of huskies

Just 25 minutes from Northern Norway's most romantic city, Tromsø Villmarkssenter offers innumerable adventures for everyone from nature lovers to adrenaline junkies. They'll pick you up at your hotel at 6:15 p.m. and guide you up into nearby mountains—hikes are customized for your ability and energy level—and have you back by 2 a.m., with the sun still overhead. Other options include hiking with some of their 250 Alaskan huskies, or slipping into a sea kayak and paddling the waters around Kvaløya (Whale Island) just outside Tromsø. Whatever you choose, adventuring in the middle of the night under the midnight sun will be a rare and unforgettable experience.

villmarkssenter.no

9

Attend Riddu Riddu, an international indigenous festival

Celebrating its 21st year from July 11–15 in Kåfjord—at the top of the Norwegian mainland—Riddu Riddu brings together hundreds of artists, musicians, academics and historians to celebrate and share indigenous cultures from around the world. You can camp onsite in a *lavvu* (tent) so you won't miss any of the wonderful open air concerts, stage plays, seminars or children's programs.

riddu.no

10

Sail the coast of Svalbard

Though Basecamp Spitsbergen offers a host of fantastic day trips—think summer dogsledding, mountain scrambling and boat trips to Russian ghost towns and calving glaciers—to maximize your time under Svalbard's incredible midnight sun, why not set sail for five days or more on a 100-year-old Dutch schooner, *Noorderlicht*. Look for walrus colonies, beluga whales and even polar bears as you slip past the glaciated landscape. The sun will never set as you explore 17th century whaling sites, 19th century mining camps, and don snowshoes to traverse glaciers. A cozy shipboard cabin and hearty meals will reenergize you when sleep is elusive.

basecampspitsbergen.com

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