

TROMSØ

Tromsø is a city in the very northernmost part of Norway. It is almost 350 km north of the Arctic Circle and is one of the best places to view the spectacular Northern Lights in winter. Tromsø is a surprise to most visitors: here you find art, history, sophistication, good food and an infamous nightlife in a bustling, tiny city. All of it, though, is surrounded by spectacular scenery that is visible from everywhere in town.

TRAVELLING INTO TROMSØ

Most travellers will be arriving into the small and modern airport and the distance into town is short. The cheapest public transport option to the city centre is public bus 40 and 42, from across the airport parking lot (wait at the bus stop closest to the sea for transport into town). The bus ride is about 15 minutes, and costs approximately NOK 26.

There is also a dedicated Airport Express Bus (Flybusen) that will take you straight into the town centre, only stopping at a few hotels along the way (costs about 50 NOK). Taxis are also available, for about 120 NOK. (Please note that taxis can cost about 260 NOK on Sundays).



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ACTIVITIES

The Capital of the North has a rich cultural life. Several important events are held during the Northern Lights season such as the Silent Film Days in September, the Tromsø International Film Festival and the Polar Night Half Marathon in January, the Northern Lights Festival and the Sami Week in February. The New Year's Eve Concert and the Northern Lights Concerts at the Arctic Cathedral are also popular among the visitors and the locals.

Botanical Gardens- A must in Tromsø for those interested in Arctic plants is a visit to the Botanical Gardens. Due to the Gulf Stream, Tromsø is able to grow many plants that would not survive at similar latitudes elsewhere on the planet. It's the world's northernmost botanic garden and is open from late May to early October.

Polar & Arctic Museums - A must is to visit the excellent Polar and Arctic museums near the town centre. There are several museums to choose from so have a sneak preview at the Tourist Information desk and pick the one that interests you the most.

Craft & Design - Tromsø also has a lot of design and craft shops so make time to explore these shops. In particular, the glass blowing shop near the Polaria museum is fascinating and you will often see the actual craft of glassblowing. Check with the tourist information desk as to the times for the farmers and craft markets during your stay.

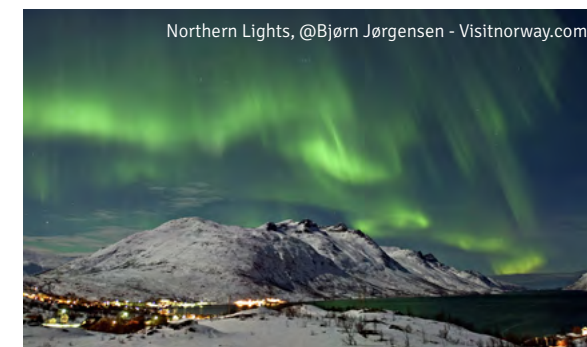
Fjellheisen - Take a cable car up to mountain. The Cable car runs from Solliveien in Tromsdalen up to the mountain ledge Storsteinen (421 m above sea level) in just four minutes. From the viewing platform at the upper station, you can enjoy spectacular panoramic views of Tromsø and the surrounding islands, mountains and fjords.

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The city enjoys midnight sun from May 18 to July 26. During this period, the sun is always above the horizon. Popular viewpoints include the Tromsø Bridge, the front of the Arctic Cathedral and most prominently the Upper Station of the Cable Car.

OUR LOCAL FOOD TIPS

Tromsø's cuisine is inspired by a mix of traditional North Norwegian dishes and new, exciting cultures, based on fresh, locally sourced produce.

Mathallen Tromsø (Grønnegata 58/60, 9008 Tromsø) is a temple of the Arctic with plenty of fresh Northern Norwegian ingredients. Delicacy groceries such as cheese, meat and especially fish all have places in their own counters. Norway's best cheeses lie side by side with famous names from abroad, making it sharp in this competition. One can enjoy both lunch and/or dinner at Mathallen.

Compagniet Restauration is Tromsø's oldest restaurant located in an old merchant house from 1837. The building hides the secret why this city is called "Paris of the north". Visit them for a gourmet dinner in a historic and cosy atmosphere. In rooms filled with continental atmosphere and 175 years of history, you can still be served the best in gourmet cuisine north of the 69th latitude.



MORE RESTAURANTS...

A number of good seafood restaurants are worth the extra kroner, and especially in the winter, when the cod reaches the coast, there is a lot of good eating. It all comes at a price, though. Do note, however, that cheap food is relatively expensive in Tromsø (as in Norway in general), whereas exclusive food is relatively good value. In other words, a little extra money increases the experience immensely.

Fiskekompaniet Sjosiden

This restaurant has excellent fresh fish, and a menu of modern Norwegian cuisine. Enjoy huge seafood platters and the beautiful view.
Address: Killengrens gate, 9007 Tromsø
Website: www.fiskekompani.no
Tel: +47 77 68 76 00

Skarven Kro

Skarven Kro is an informal place – licensed to sell beer and wine. They also serve simple dishes like seal lasagne, seaweed and shellfish soup, fresh mussels, reindeer soup and beef casserole, along with fresh waffles, lefse (a thin pancake served buttered and rolled) and other treats.

Address: Vertshuset Skarven AS, Strandtorget 1
Website: www.skarven.no/international
Tel: +47 77 60 07 20

In winter, the sun is below the horizon between November 26 and January 15. Because the city is surrounded by mountains, the period is prolonged a few days. In the city centre, the sun is not visible between November 21 and January 21. However, there is some daylight for a few hours, and often there are beautiful colours at midday.