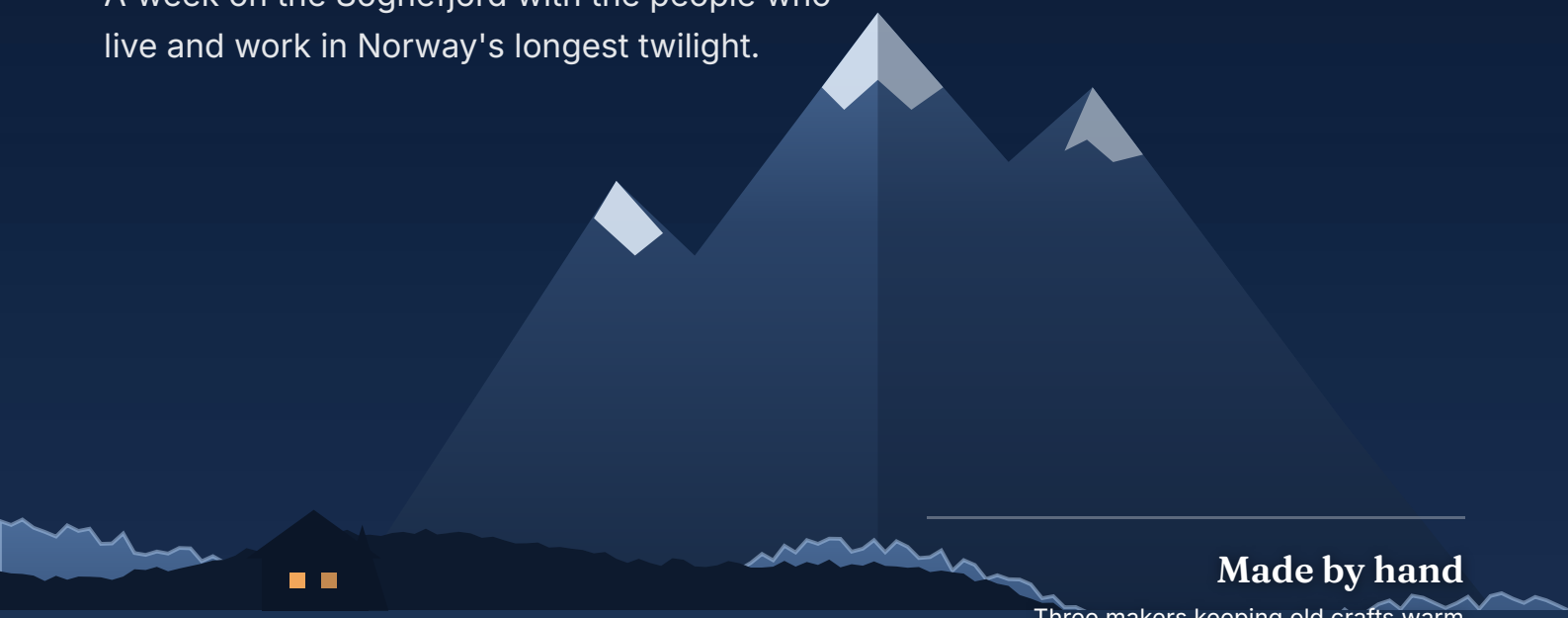
NORD

ISSUE 07
AUTUMN 2026
LIGHT · LAND · CRAFT

The art of the *blue hour*

A week on the Sognefjord with the people who live and work in Norway's longest twilight.



Made by hand

Three makers keeping old crafts warm

Three days in Lofoten

A slow route through the islands

Cinnamon buns

The slow way, from a Bergen bakery

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FROM THE EDITOR

This issue is about the months most people try to skip. We think they are the best part of the year: the light is softer, the kitchens are warmer and there is finally time to make things by hand. Pour something hot and take your time.

Sofie Berg, editor

The art of the *blue hour*

In November the light over the fjord lasts for most of an afternoon. We went to see what people do with it.



WORDS BY SOFIE BERG · ILLUSTRATION BY NORD STUDIO

Four o'clock, and the water turns to ink

Somewhere between four and half past four in the afternoon, the light over the fjord stops being daylight and becomes something else. Norwegians call it *blåtimen*, the blue hour, and in November it can last for most of an afternoon. The mountains lose their edges, the water turns the colour of ink, and every lit window in the village starts to glow like a small promise.

We spent a week in Balestrand, on the northern shore of the Sognefjord, following the people who make their living in this half-light: a ferry captain who has crossed the same eleven kilometres of water for thirty-one years, a baker who starts work in the dark and finishes in the dark, and a painter who only paints between three and five.

> *“You have the fjord to yourself, the kitchen is warm, and the light does something to people.”*

“Tourists come in summer for the midnight sun,” says Ingrid Solheim, who runs the guesthouse at the end of the quay. “But the real secret is now. You have the fjord to yourself, the kitchen is warm, and the light does something to people. They slow down. They talk.”

The village keeps its own rhythm in these months. The shop closes at four, the ferry runs four times a day instead of twelve, and dinner is early and long. Candles are lit in every window not for decoration but out of habit, the way people elsewhere might switch on a radio.

6 h
of daylight in Balestrand in late November

205 km
length of the Sognefjord, Norway's longest

1,308 m
its deepest point below the surface

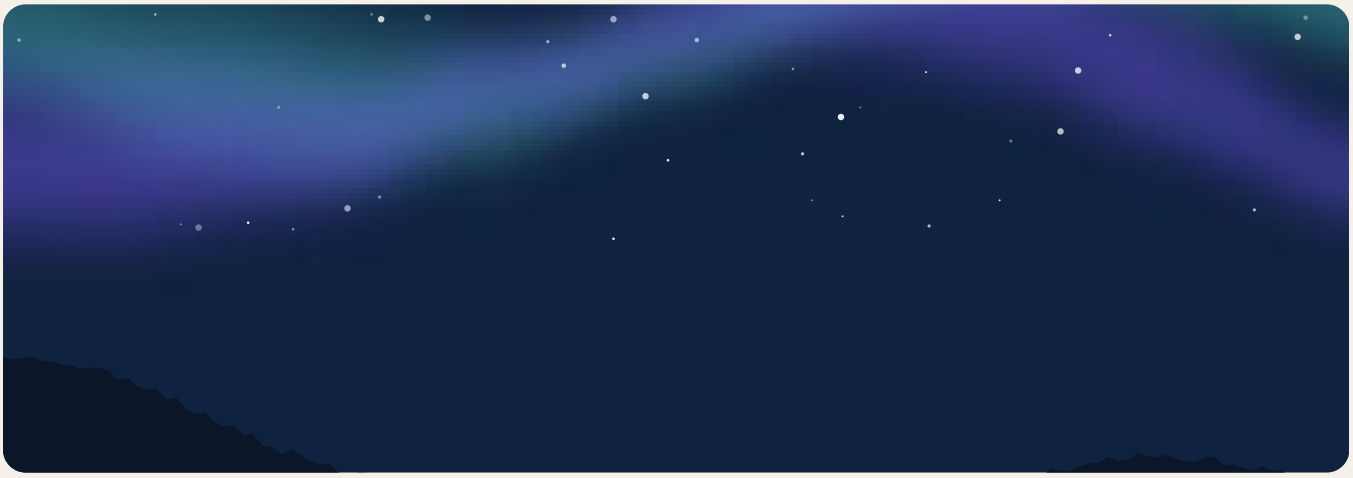
Thirty-one years on the same eleven kilometres

Captain Arne Fosse steers the *MF Vangsnes* with one hand and points out landmarks with the other: the farm where his grandmother was born, the waterfall that freezes solid in January, the stretch of water where a pod of porpoises followed the ferry last week. He knows every buoy by name.

“People think the dark is something to get through,” he says. “I think it is something to get used to. After a few weeks your eyes open. You see more colours in the snow than you ever saw in the grass.”

The painter, Mette Lund, agrees. Her studio faces west, and she keeps the lights off until the last moment. Her canvases from the past three winters hang in a row along one wall: twenty-four shades of blue, each named after the day it was painted.

By the time we leave, we have stopped checking the clock. Dinner happens when it is dark, which is to say early, and the evenings stretch out like the fjord itself: long, quiet and full of light if you know where to look.



Getting there: fly to Bergen, then take the express boat to Balestrand (about four hours). Guesthouses stay open all winter; book the fjord-view rooms.

CRAFT

Made *by hand*

Wool, wood and clay: three makers who learned their craft from a grandparent, and are now teaching it to strangers on the internet.

Keeping old crafts warm

None of them planned to make a living from it. All three started by posting short videos of their hands at work, and found that people everywhere wanted to slow down and watch something being made properly.

K

KNITTER · VOSS

Kari Haugen

Kari knits the eight-petalled *selburose* pattern her grandmother taught her, and sells around forty sweaters a year. Each one takes about sixty hours.

O

WOODCARVER · TELEMARK

Ola Nygård

Ola carves spoons and bowls from birch he cuts himself. His online classes now have students in twenty-two countries.

S

POTTER · TROMSØ

Siri Dahl

Siri glazes her mugs in the colours of the northern lights, mixing each batch by hand. Her waiting list is four months long.

> *“A sweater is a letter you write with your hands. It just takes sixty hours to send.”*

TRY IT THIS WINTER

1

Start with a spoon. A green birch branch and one sharp knife are enough.

2

Knit a hat before a sweater. One evening, one ball of wool.

3

Find a pottery class with a wheel. Most towns have one, and the first lesson is humbling.

SHOP THE ISSUE

Objects for the dark months

Six things the NORD team actually uses every evening, from a lamp with the colour of candlelight to boots that have survived four Tromsø winters.



Fjell table lamp

Spun brass, warm 2200 K bulb

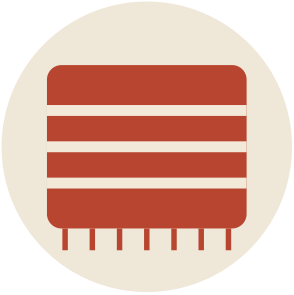
NOK 1,890 NEW



Aurora mug

Hand-glazed stoneware, 350 ml

NOK 349 NEW



Selbu wool throw

100% Norwegian wool, 130 × 170 cm

NOK 2,450 NEW



Long-night candle

Beeswax, burns for 60 hours

NOK 229 NEW



Hytte kettle

Enamelled steel, for stove or fire

NOK 690 NEW



Trail boots

Waxed leather, wool lined

NOK 2,190 NEW

Prices are examples for this demo issue. NORD is an invented magazine.

Cinnamon buns, *the slow way*

MAKES 12 ACTIVE 40 MIN TOTAL 2 H 30 MIN

YOU WILL NEED

Plain flour	500 g
Whole milk, warm	250 ml
Butter, soft	75 g
Caster sugar	50 g
Fresh yeast	25 g
Cardamom, ground	1 tsp
Egg	1
Filling: butter	100 g
Filling: brown sugar	80 g
Filling: cinnamon	2 tbsp

METHOD

1. Dissolve the yeast in the warm milk. Add sugar, cardamom, egg and flour, and knead for ten minutes.
2. Work in the soft butter until the dough is smooth and glossy. Cover and leave for an hour, until doubled.
3. Roll out to a 40 × 30 cm rectangle. Spread with the butter, sugar and cinnamon filling.
4. Roll up from the long side, cut into twelve slices and set them in a lined tin. Rise for thirty minutes.
5. Brush with beaten egg and bake at 220 °C for 12–14 minutes, until deep golden. Eat while warm.



From the bakery: “The cardamom is not optional. In Norway a bun without cardamom is just bread with ambitions.”

Three days in Lofoten

Skip the summer crowds. In late autumn the islands are quiet, the rorbuer are half price and the northern lights start to show from early evening.



1 Reine and Hamnøy

Arrive by ferry from Bodø. Walk the red fishing cabins at dusk and eat fresh cod at the harbour.

2 Nusfjord

Drive the E10 east to one of Norway's oldest fishing villages. Stay in a converted rorbu.

3 Henningsvær

End at the island of artists and climbers. Watch for the northern lights from the bridge.

Plan your route with the official guide at visitnorway.com.

THE SEASON

What's on *this winter*

14 NOV	**Bergen Christmas market** Festplassen, Bergen	MARKET
21 NOV	**Gingerbread Town opens** Bergen Public Library	FAMILY
28 NOV	**Lights of Trondheim** Nidaros Cathedral	LIGHTS
06 DEC	**Polar Night Half Marathon** Tromsø	SPORT
13 DEC	**Santa Lucia concerts** Across the country	MUSIC
21 JAN	**Sun Festival** Rjukan, Telemark	FESTIVAL



NORD

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