***Newsletter Service***

**January/February 2024**

**JANUARY ISSUE**

**15 Fun Facts About Norway**

1. Norway is home to the world's longest road tunnel, the Lærdal Tunnel, which is 15 miles long.
2. The world's-most remote island is a Norwegian territory in the South Atlantic Ocean called Bouvet Island.
3. Norway has a 120-mile land border with Russia.
4. Norway is home to Hell, a small village within walking distance of Trondheim's international airport.
5. A Norwegian delegation introduced salmon sushi to Japan in the 1980’s.
6. There are two official versions of the Norwegian language - Bokmål and Nynorsk.
7. Modern and ancient skiing were invented in Norway.
8. Norway has won more winter medals than any other country in Olympic history.
9. Europe's biggest herd of wild reindeer lives in Norway and roams Hardangervidda, Europe's biggest mountain plateau.
10. Norway has a volcano on the uninhabited island of Jan Mayen in the Norwegian Sea.
11. Norway gave the world the cheese slicer, which was invented in 1925 by Thor Bjørklund.
12. Norway isn't powered by oil - Around 98% of Norway's domestic power usage is drawn from hydroelectric power plants.
13. The Colonel-in-Chief and mascot of the Norwegian King's Guard since 1972, is a Scottish penguin named General Sir Nils Olav III, Baron of the Bouvet Islands.
14. No one knows exactly how long Norway's coastline is!
15. Norway supplies London with a Christmas tree every year as an ongoing thank you for Britain’s help during WWII.

Source: [25 Fascinating Facts About Norway (lifeinnorway.net)](https://www.lifeinnorway.net/norway-facts/)

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**Combatting the Long Winter**

As winter approaches and the days get darker, it is common for moods to do the same. In fact, many people suffer from seasonal affective disorder during this time of year. With this knowledge, how can we be proactive in combating the effects of a long winter? Perhaps we take notes from residents in Tromsø, Norway. During the winter months in Tromsø, there are only two to three hours of indirect sunlight, however its inhabitants don’t seem to be as affected by seasonal sadness as one might think.    
   
A study done at the University of Tromsø found that sleep was slightly disturbed but there was “no increase in mental distress during the winter.” Health psychologist, Kari Leibowitz, concluded that one’s mindset was the vital factor in determining how they would be affected by the winter. A positive mindset toward stressful events, such as a dark wintertime, not only enhanced moods but also influenced physiological responses. Amazingly enough, she also found that attitudes increased with latitude showing that positive thoughts were present where they were most needed.

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**Viking Discovery on Jomfruland**   
   
While looking for a lost gold earring in their garden, a family in Norway uncovered 1,000-year-old Viking artifacts. The Aasvik family, from a small island called Jomfruland, became the first to find a Viking-era discovery on the island. They had stumbled across it by using a metal detector to search for the earring in their yard.    
   
The metal detector alerted them underneath a large tree, so they began digging. Among the findings was a brooch and an additional item that was likely part of a Viking-era burial. Both were believed to have once been covered in gold and were engraved with depictions of animals. The brooch is believed to date back between 780 and 850. These artifacts help prove the Vikings’ existence on the island. Experts knew of settlements on the island dating back only to the Middle Ages, making this Viking discovery rather significant.

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**TRANSLATION**

[**https://www.forskning.no/fotball-sport/malvakter-oppfatter-verden-annerledes-enn-folk-flest/2268148**](https://www.forskning.no/fotball-sport/malvakter-oppfatter-verden-annerledes-enn-folk-flest/2268148)  
   
**Målvakter oppfatter verden annerledes enn folk flest** 

Keepere må gjøre veldig raske beslutninger basert på begrenset eller ufullstendig sanseinformasjon.

Oppfatter målvakter faktisk verden annerledes?

Nå støtter vitenskapelige data denne ideen. Hjernene deres ser ut til å kombinere signaler fra ulike sanser raskere, viser en irsk studie.

**Keepere er annerledes**

Keepere får lite oppmerksomhet i forhold til spisser. Men når motstanderen får en kjempefarlig sjanse, og keeperen redder ballen i et brøkdels sekund. Da bølger et unisont sukk av lettelse over tribunen.

– Denne studien kan være den første som beviser vitenskapelig at de faktisk er annerledes, mener David McGovern. Han er psykolog ved Dublin City University. 

Hjerneforskere rekrutterte 60 fotballspillere og andre til ulike tester.

Fotballspillerne var profesjonelle målvakter eller utespillere. Kontrollgruppen var personer i samme alder, som ikke spilte fotball. 20 deltakere i hver gruppe.

Deltakerne ble bombardert med en rekke lyder og lysglimt. Disse sanseinntrykkene skulle de prøve å skille fra hverandre.

Var det forskjeller i reaksjonstiden deres? Altså hvor raskt sanseinntrykk tolkes i hjernen?

Og ganske riktig. Målvakter har et smalere tidsvindu enn andre fotballspillere. Og andre som ikke spiller fotball.

– De oppfatter sansesignalene raskere i hjernen, forklarer psykologen David McGovern til avisen [The Guardian.](https://www.theguardian.com/science/2023/oct/09/goalkeepers-perceive-world-differently-says-study-football)

McGovern ledet studien, som er publisert i tidsskriftet [Current Biology.](https://www.cell.com/current-biology/fulltext/S0960-9822(23)01130-2)

**Vet ikke om det skyldes talent eller trening**

Men forskerne vet ikke om disse forskjellene skyldes det strenge treningsregimet til profesjonelle målvakter. Eller om de som blir keepere har disse naturlige evnene fra de er unge og derfor blir målvakter. 

– I labben vår ser vi på mulige metoder for hvordan vi kan utvikle denne evnen ytterligere hos keepere, ved bruk av teknologi, sier Anders Meland, forsker og overingeniør Anders Meland ved Norges idrettshøgskole.

**Integrerer ikke sansene**

Siden målvakter oppfatter signaler så fort, tror forskerne at de ikke kobler sanseinntrykkene sammen.

– I stedet tror vi at de bruker den sansen som gir informasjon raskest, sier McGovern.

Studien inngår i Michael Quinns masteroppgave. Han er selv tidligere keeper.

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**TRANSLATION**

**Goalkeepers perceive the world differently than most people**

Goalkeepers must make very quick decisions based on limited or incomplete sensory information. But do goalkeepers actually perceive the world differently? Scientific data support this idea. Their brains seem to combine signals from different senses more quickly, an Irish study shows.

**Keepers are different**

Keepers get little attention compared to strikers. Except when the opponents come dangerously close to scoring, and the goalkeeper saves the ball in a fraction of a second. Then a unison sigh of relief spreads over the stands.

“This study may be the first to scientifically prove that they are actually different,” says David McGovern. He is a psychologist at Dublin City University.   
   
Brain researchers recruited 60 soccer players and others for various tests.

The players were professional goalkeepers or field players. The control group were people of the same age who did not play soccer. 20 participants in each group.

The participants were bombarded with a series of sounds and flashes of light. They were supposed to try and separate these sensory impressions from each other.

Were there differences in their reaction time? So how quickly are sensory impressions interpreted in the brain?

Quite right. Goalkeepers have a narrower window of reaction time than other soccer players. And other people who don't play soccer.

“They perceive the sensory signals faster in the brain,” explains psychologist David McGovern to The Guardian newspaper. McGovern led the study, which is published in the journal Current Biology.

**Unclear whether due to talent or training**

But the researchers do not know whether these differences are due to the strict training regime of professional goalkeepers, or whether those who become goalkeepers possess these natural abilities from a young age and therefore become goalkeepers.

**No integration of the senses**

Since goalkeepers perceive signals so quickly, the researchers believe that they do not integrate the sensory information.

“Instead, we believe that they use the sense that provides information the fastest,” says McGovern.

The study is part of Michael Quinn's master's thesis. He is a former goalkeeper himself.

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**Nordic Winter Vegetable Soup**

Warm up this winter with this delicious, simple and healthy soup.

Recipe from: <https://www.foodandwine.com/recipes/nordic-winter-vegetable-soup>

**Ingredients:**

* 2 Tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
* 1 large onion, thinly sliced
* 2 leeks, white and tender green parts only, thinly sliced
* 2 garlic cloves, minced
* 1 cup pearl barley
* 8 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
* 4 cups water
* 10 thyme sprigs
* 2 bay leaves
* 1 1/2 lbs. celery root, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch cubes
* 1 lb. parsnips, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch pieces
* Salt and freshly ground pepper
* 1 lb. baby spinach
* 1 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg

**Directions:**

1. In a large pot, heat the oil. Add the onion, leeks and garlic and cook over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until tender, about 5 minutes. Stir in the barley. Add the vegetable broth, water, thyme and bay leaves and bring to a boil. Add the celery root and parsnips and season with salt and pepper. Simmer over moderately low heat until the barley and root vegetables are tender, about 40 minutes.
2. Stir in the spinach and nutmeg and simmer for 5 minutes. Season the soup with salt and pepper and serve in deep bowls.

**Serve with:**

Hearty whole-grain rye bread

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**FEBRUARY ISSUE**

**Ice Bathing**

This winter, how would you like to start every Saturday morning with a refreshing ice bath? That is what Norwegian Anne Kristin Møller has done every Saturday since 2015. She became infatuated with the activity after participating in an event to set a new ice bathing record in Oslo. She stated, "The rush you feel in your body and the contrast of going from cold to warm is an absolutely fantastic experience.”

Additionally, Møller enjoys seeing nature from a new angle at each location she has ice bathed which includes Oslo, Tromsø, Karmøy, and Svalbard to name a few. Ice bathing has become quite popular in Norway, with over 100 ice bathing clubs around the country. It is a great social activity that also has many health benefits, such as aiding with fatigue and stress. In a survey conducted, 1 in 5 Norwegians said they were planning on ice bathing in the winter. If you’d like to take a page from their book, here are some tips: bring something hot to drink right afterwards and always swim with others for safety.

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**Soccer Star’s Unique Diet**   
   
Top athletes are known for being notoriously picky about what they eat. Norway’s top male soccer player Erling Braut Haaland takes his menu choices to the next level, airlifting salmon from his hometown to his team in England.    
   
When Haaland won the 2020 breakthrough of the year award for Norwegian soccer at age 19, he thanked a certain *tante* (auntie) in his acceptance speech. He credits Torbjørg Haugen, his former team’s chef at Molde Soccer Club, for transforming him from a gangly teen into a soccer phenom. Haugen revealed that Haaland still sends her photos to prove that he’s eating properly.   
   
When Haaland became a striker for Manchester City in England, he brought his specific tastes with him. And the food at the team’s campus was just not passing muster. So, he convinced coaching staff to fly Norwegian salmon to Manchester. He didn’t stop there, but also had the nutritionist bring over chefs from a top fish restaurant in Norway to prepare the fish.   
   
This change has been a hit with his teammates and staff, who say that, although costly, it’s the best salmon they’ve ever had.   
   
Source: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-12766795/Manchester-City-striker-Erling-Haaland-reveals-flies-Norwegian-salmon-UK-fish-stadium-isnt-scratch.html>

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**Historic Landing in Antarctica**

Last year, Norse Atlantic Airways made history by landing the first Boeing 787 Dreamliner on Troll Airfield in Antarctica. The Norwegian low-cost airline and its crew landed the plane on a blue ice runway approximately 9,800 feet long and 100 feet wide. The runway was prepared in advance for the landing by carving grooves in the ice for better traction. Other considerations that can complicate this type of endeavor are that weather conditions in Antarctica can change rapidly and planes landing on ice cannot use typical braking methods. They also must account for additional weight since planes cannot refuel and must carry enough in reserves for the return flight.

The aircraft left Oslo on November 13 with researchers and gear aboard. It then landed in Cape Town, South Africa for a layover before the final leg of the journey to Queen Maud Land in north central Antarctica, completed on November 15. This area is claimed as a dependent territory of Norway and houses the Troll Research Station. While the wide-bodied 787 can carry over 300 passengers, it landed on the airstrip with a total of 45 scientific researchers and 12 tons of gear, equipment, and supplies. While the majority of researchers on this historic flight work for the Norwegian Polar Institute, researchers and scientists from other countries were also on board and heading to other research stations on the continent. This is a common occurrence, since the territory hosts 11 nations which can coordinate, pool resources, and share costs of the research they conduct.

The Boeing 787 joins a growing list of aircraft that have made a successful trip to and from Antarctica and is proud to also have made history in being the first Dreamliner to do so.

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**Translation**

**Livet som akrobat**

A person posing for a picture

Description automatically generated

Bouhcin Ahchoun har reist verden rundt som sirkusartist. Nå oppmuntrer han unge mennesker til å uttrykke seg gjennom kunst og idrett.

– Hvor gammel var du da du begynte å trene akrobatikk?

– Jeg var seks år gammel da jeg begynte å trene akrobatikk. Jeg begynte på stranda i Aourir i Marokko med storebroren min.

Aourir er en spennende by. Mange turister besøker byen og det er mye som skjer der. På vei til skolen så guttene flere akrobatiske grupper som spilte musikk og danset. Da ble de inspirert.

– Når ble du profesjonell akrobat?

– Jeg var 14 år da jeg begynte å jobbe. Min første sjanse til å jobbe utenfor Marokko kom fire år senere. Da reiste jeg til Chicago i USA. Der jobbet jeg som artist. Der begynte jeg min livsreise som internasjonal akrobat.

Etter det lange oppholdet i USA, reiste Achoun til Canada, Kina og Australia. Han lærte om forskjellige kulturer og ble rik på erfaringer. Kreativiteten hans eksploderte.

Trener hver dag

– Hvor mye trener du?

– Jeg trener hver morgen i to timer. Så spiser jeg lunsj. Etterpå trener jeg tre timer. Om kvelden har jeg forestilling.

– Hvilke triks gjør du?

– Jeg jobber med hester. Jeg hopper på hestene. Hesten løper og jeg hopper baklengs på hesteryggen. Jeg brukte fire år på å lære meg det trikset.

A person doing a handstand on a horse

Description automatically generated

– Hvilke egenskaper bør en flink akrobat ha?

– En god akrobat bør ha disiplin. En flink akrobat er kreativ, myk og sterk. Samarbeid mellom kolleger er viktig. En akrobat må være modig og tørre å vise seg fram.

Gjør det du elsker, elsk det du gjør.

Ahchoun anbefaler studentene sine til å utdanne seg til profesjonelle akrobater. Da kan de reise og se verden. Hvis de vil. De har også jobbmuligheter i Marokko.

Når Ahchoun gjør akrobatikk, er kroppen og hodet i ett. Det er som meditasjon. Han er i flyt. Dette vil han lære ungdommene.

– Kroppen vår fortjener det beste gjennom idrett. Et sunt sinn i en sunn kropp.

Ahchoun vil at ungdommen skal stole på seg selv og elske seg selv.

**Translation**

**Life As An Acrobat**

A person posing for a picture

Description automatically generated

Bouhcin Ahchoun has traveled the world as a circus performer. Now he encourages young people to express themselves through art and physical activity.

How old were you when you started practicing acrobatics?

“I was six years old when I started learning acrobatics. I started on the beach in Aourir, Morocco with my older brother.”

Aourir is an exciting city. Many tourists visit the city and there is a lot going on there. On the way to school, the boys saw several acrobatic groups playing music and dancing. Then they were inspired.

When did you become a professional acrobat?

“I was 14 when I started working. My first chance to work outside Morocco came four years later. Then I traveled to Chicago in the USA. I worked there as an artist. There I began my life's journey as an international acrobat.”

After the long stay in the United States, Achoun traveled to Canada, China and Australia. He learned about different cultures and gained a wealth of experience. His creativity exploded.

Exercises Everyday

How much do you exercise?

“I train every morning for two hours. Then I eat lunch. Afterwards I train for three hours. In the evening I have a performance.”

What tricks do you do?

“I work with horses. I jump onto the horses. The horse runs and I jump backwards on the horse's back. It took me four years to learn that trick.”

A person doing a handstand on a horse

Description automatically generated

What qualities should a good acrobat have?

“A good acrobat should have discipline. A good acrobat is creative, limber and strong. Cooperation between colleagues is important. An acrobat must be brave and dare to show off.”

Do what you love, love what you do.

Ahchoun advises his students to train as professional acrobats. Then they can travel and see the world, if they want. They also have job opportunities in Morocco.

When Ahchoun does acrobatics, his body and head are one. It's like meditation. He is in flux. This is what he wants to teach young people.

“Our body deserves the best through physical activity. A healthy mind in a healthy body.”

Ahchoun wants the youth to trust themselves and love themselves.

**Grov Rengakake / Whole Grain Spiral Rolls**

From Rana, Nordland

The origin of this dish, translated from [norsktradisjonsmat.no](http://www.norsktradisjonsmat.no/):  
Despite the name, *rengakake* is not a cake, but rather a type of bread which is eaten with butter and toppings. Savory cold cuts, cheese and jam are often enjoyed on these spiral-shaped rolls. Scholars debate whether it should be brown cheese or aged cheese.   
   
No one knows how long rengakake has existed as a baked good, but it has probably been several hundred years. The farmers in Rana grew barley, and thus barley flour could be used to bake rengakake.   
In the past, rengakaka was an everyday staple, but today it is most often baked for holidays such as Christmas and Easter. It is a traditional bake in many homes. Rengakake is baked in both whole grain and white flour variants. But in the eyes of many, it is the whole grain rengakake that is the authentic one. Rengakake keeps well and can be stored for longer than yeasted breads.   
   
This recipe was submitted by *Nord-Rana Bygdekvinnelag,* theNord-Rana Rural Women's Association to the *Tradisjonsmatjakten,* the Traditional Food Hunt under the auspices of the *Norges Bygdekvinnelag* (Norwegian Rural Women's Association) in 2017.   
  
**Grov Rengakake – Whole Grain Spiral Rolls**   
   
4 cups (400 g) barley flour   
3/4 cup (100 g) wheat flour   
1/2 cup or 1 stick (100 g) margarine   
2 Tablespoons horn salt\*   
13.5 oz or 1 cup plus 2 Tablespoons (4 dl) milk   
2 Tablespoons sour cream

**Directions:**

Mix together dry ingredients. Crumble in the margarine, sour cream and sprinkle with milk. Mix into a dough that should be easy to roll into long thin ropes. Knead the dough well and divide into small pieces, rolling into smooth ropes about the width of a pencil and between 25-30 inches (65-75 cm long).

Coil the dough into a spiral on a baking sheet- each rengakake should have 5-6 rings and be roughly palm-sized. Leave a small opening in the middle. Taper the outer end of the end of the rope and tuck it under the edge, so the rounds are completely flat.   
   
Optional: once all of the dough is ready to bake, brush roll tops with milk, to give it a shiny finish.

Bake at 400° to 425°F / 200°C to 225°C degrees for approximately 25 minutes or until golden brown.   
   
\*In lieu of horn salt, substitute with baking powder or baking soda. Please note that these alternatives will slightly change the texture and flavor of your rolls.

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