***Newsletter Service***

**November/December 2024**

**NOVEMBER ISSUE**

**Health Benefits of Gratitude**

According to Norsk Helseinformatikk, Norway’s largest resource of health information, gratitude can help you live longer. A study published in JAMA Psychiatry in July 2024 looked at whether feeling grateful affects longevity.

49,000 women were surveyed, and the study revealed that gratitude may have had a protective effect on them, especially in bolstering heart health.

Expressing gratitude also increases short-term happiness and lowers stress. While gratitude is thought to help with emotional challenges and social well-being, one of the clear findings was that grateful people seem to get better quality sleep.

Another study split subjects into two groups and found that the people who were instructed to express their gratitude felt 25 percent happier and more optimistic than before the study had started.

What are some ways to promote gratitude? Here are a few ideas:

* Write down or talk about what you are grateful for, once or twice a week
* Practice gratitude by setting aside a few minutes every day to think over what makes you grateful
* Tell someone how you appreciate them or their work
* Concentrate on the good things that happen and see if your well-being increases

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**World’s Best at Geoguessr**

There is an online game that has grown in popularity in recent years. The concept of the game is simple, but the execution is quite difficult for most. The game is called Geoguessr and the objection is to guess the location from a Google Street View image you are given. Keep in mind that the images can be from all over the world and often times there are very few clues to go off.

A player in Trondheim, Norway, Håvard Vesterheim, has solidified himself as one of the world’s best at the game. He has learned an incredible amount about various parts of the globe, as is evident by the 400-page document he created on Nigeria’s Google Street Views or his extensive knowledge of a location in Botswana based on where Venus is in the sky.

It’s sleuthing skills like this that have made him so successful at such a challenging game. Vesterheim believes the game intrigues many because of its real-world applications. The more you play, the more you learn about the world around us.

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**Cranberries vs. Lingonberries**

If you were asked to name a tangy red berry that grows in cool climates, what springs to mind? If you are thinking ahead to Thanksgiving, your first choice may be “cranberry.” But if you’ve recently had lunch at IKEA, you might default to answering “lingonberry.” Are there differences, and if so, what are they?

Let’s start with their similarities. Both berries are tart and have a dark red exterior color. They also both are highly nutritious in vitamins and antioxidants. Cranberries and lingonberries both belong to the same family of berries, which would explain why they overlap in quite a few areas. This makes them versatile in cuisine and you can often substitute one for the other in recipes.

However, they also differ in some ways. In appearance, the lingonberry (also called the cowberry), is smaller in size compared to its close relative. Cranberries are often lighter on the inside, with the flesh being almost white, whereas the lingonberry is more pink or red. Also, while both berries are in high demand, cranberries are more commonly cultivated and farmed, whereas lingonberries are more likely to be harvested from nature. Lastly, lingonberries are just a little bit naturally sweeter than cranberries.

Both berries make an excellent choice in tasty fall dishes, so go ahead and experiment with both this coming season.

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**Translation**

[**https://www.klartale.no/norge/2024/09/05/bli-litt-sprekere-velg-trappa**](https://www.klartale.no/norge/2024/09/05/bli-litt-sprekere-velg-trappa)

**Bli litt sprekere? Velg trappa**

Generelt er nordmenn blitt litt sprekere. Det viser en ny rapport. Samtidig kan mange være mer aktive i hverdagen.

Norges idrettshøyskole (NHI) har undersøkt nordmenns fysiske form. De sier nordmenn generelt er i litt bedre form enn før. Deres undersøkelse viser at oksygenopptaket er godt hos det norske folk.

Samtidig er de sprekeste blitt enda sprekere. De sprekeste i 2024 er i litt bedre fysisk form enn i 2008.

Men også noen ligger dårlig an. Av deltakerne i undersøkelsen hadde mellom 30 og 40 prosent et dårlig opptak av oksygen.

Det positive er at lite skal til for å bedre deres fysiske form. De kan gå i trapper i hverdagen eller gå til butikken. Selv enkle aktiviteter kan gjøre mye for den fysiske formen, ifølge NHI.

Mange av oss er for lite aktive i hverdagen, viste en undersøkelse fra høyskolen i fjor. Helsedirektoratet anbefaler alle voksne og eldre å røre på seg i minst 2,5 til 5 timer i løpet av uken. Dette vil si 20 til 40 minutter hver dag. Det skriver Helsenorge. De sier og at mye stillesitting er dårlig for helsa.

**Want to get fitter? Take the stairs**

A new report shows that in general, Norwegians have gotten fitter. At the same time, many people could be more active in their everyday life.

The Norwegian Sports Academy (NHI) has examined Norwegians' physical fitness. They say Norwegians as a rule are in slightly better shape than previously. Their research shows that the Norwegian people's oxygen uptake is good.

At the same time, the fittest have become even fitter. The fittest in 2024 are in slightly better physical shape than in 2008.

But some are also in bad shape. Between 30 and 40 per cent of the participants in the survey had poor absorption of oxygen.

The upside is that not much is needed to improve their physical condition. They can take the stairs in everyday life or walk to the store. Even simple activities can promote physical fitness, according to NHI.

Many of us are not very active in everyday life, a survey from the university showed last year. The Norwegian Directorate of Health recommends that all adults and the elderly exercise for at least 2.5 to 5 hours during the week. This means 20 to 40 minutes every day. That's what Helsenorge (the National Online Health Services in Norway) writes. They also say that a sedentary lifestyle is bad for health.

**Lingonberry Cardamom Tart**

This tart is as beautiful as it is rich, tart, sweet, spicy, savory and delicious, which will soon make it a family favorite.

Author: Barrett Bridenhagen of[**Dirty Laundry Kitchen**](https://www.dirtylaundrykitchen.com/lingonberry-cardamom-tart/)

Prep time: 1 day, 1 hour 30 minutes

Cook time: 1 hour 25 minutes

**Ingredients:**

* 1 1/2 cups or about 5 oz. fresh cranberries
* 1/2 cup plus 1/3 cup granulated sugar, plus more for sprinkling
* 1 Tbsp. water
* 1 egg white
* 8 oz. lingonberry jam
* 10 Tbsp. unsalted butter room temperature
* 3 large eggs
* 1/2 tsp. pure vanilla extract
* 6 oz. or about 1 1/4 cups slivered almonds
* 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
* 1/2 tsp. ground cardamom
* 1/4 tsp. salt
* Pâte Sucrée (Sweet Crust) Ingredients
* 1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
* 4 1/2 tsp. granulated sugar
* 1/4 tsp. salt
* 1 stick cold unsalted butter, cut into small pieces
* 1 large egg yolk
* 2 Tbsp. ice water

**Instructions:**

1. To start, make the pâte sucrée crust.
2. Pulse flour, sugar, and salt in a food processor until combined.
3. Add butter, and process until mixture resembles coarse meal, about 10 seconds, or use a pastry blender or two knives to combine.
4. Lightly beat egg yolk with ice water.
5. With processor running, add yolk mixture in a slow, steady stream through the feed tube and process until dough just holds together (no longer than 30 seconds).
6. Turn out onto a work surface and shape into a disc.
7. Wrap in plastic and refrigerate for at least 1 hour (or up to 2 days).
8. Put fresh cranberries, 1/3 cup sugar, and the water into a saucepan over medium heat and cook.
9. Stir to dissolve sugar, until cranberries have just softened. 3-5 minutes.
10. Remove from heat and cool completely.
11. On a lightly floured work surface, roll out pâte sucrée dough to a 12-inch circle, 1/8 to 1/4 inch thick.
12. Transfer to an 8-by-2-inch springform pan, pressing crust into bottom and up sides. Trim excess flush with rim. Refrigerate 30 minutes.
13. Preheat oven to 350° F. Prick tart crust all over with a fork.
14. Line dough with a round of parchment paper and fill with pie weights (or dried beans).
15. Bake 10 minutes.
16. Beat egg white.
17. Remove weights and parchment and brush crust lightly with egg. Return to oven and bake until pale golden (25 minutes). Reserve remaining egg white.
18. Let crust cool in pan on a wire rack for 10 minutes.
19. Raise oven temperature to 375° F.
20. Spread jam over bottom of tart crust.
21. Beat butter and remaining 1/2 cup sugar with a mixer on medium-high speed until pale and fluffy (3 minutes).
22. Add eggs, 1 at a time, beating well in between. Beat in vanilla.
23. Reduce speed to medium. Slowly add ground almonds, cinnamon, and salt and beat until just combined.
24. Spread mixture over jam-covered crust.
25. Bake tart until filling is set and has darkened slightly (45+ minutes. If top darkens too quickly, cover loosely with foil).
26. Remove tart from oven, brush top with remaining egg white and sprinkle with sugar. Return to oven and bake for 5 minutes more.
27. Let cool on a wire rack for 15 minutes.
28. To serve, remove from pan and top with [**candied cranberries**](https://www.ful-filled.com/2021/12/12/soft-candied-cranberries/). Slice. Add a dollop of crème fraîche to bring it to the next level. And who wouldn’t want to do that?

[**Notes**](http://www.dirtylaundrykitchen.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Cranberry-Almond-Lingonberry-Torte-berries-and-sugar.jpg)

It’s easy to spread this recipe out over a couple of days. Make a day ahead if you like. Store on the counter, wrapped. Serve warm or at room temperature.

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**DECEMBER ISSUE**

**Sing A New Julesang**

What is your favorite Norwegian Christmas carol? Chances are, if you live in the US or Canada, it’s *Jeg Er Så Glad Hver Julekveld*, a song written by Marie Wexelsen, published in her 1860 collection of children’s songs. This carol gained popularity just as Amerika fever broke out, and was carried cross the Atlantic on the lips of Norwegian immigrants.

A much newer carol with similar staying power is *En Stjerne Skinner i Natt*—A Star Shines Tonight. With a melody by composer and music professor Tore W. Aas and words by pastor and prolific lyricist Eyvind Skeie, the text to both carols mention an angelic chorus, the newborn child in the manger and bring stars shining above. While *Jeg Er Så Glad* remembers the prayers of the little ones, *En Stjerne* underscores peace on earth.

Both of these carols became the most famous work by their respective authors.

In 1992, the Oslo Gospel Kor (choir)—founded by Aas—was in the studio, and the song was written in time, to be added to their Christmas album. Three decades later, *En Stjerne Skinner i Natt* has been incorporated into several songbooks and recorded by a score of other artists.

Listen to this new classic on YouTube:

[**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BhwKEv51dlM**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BhwKEv51dlM)

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**A Tower for Peace and Reflection**

Imagine buying a water tower for just 1 Norwegian krone, or roughly 10 cents USD. That is just what cinematographer, Martin Otterbeck, did in Røst, Norway. The purchase was inspired by the life of Per Fugelli, a respected doctor and social justice advocate, who many say was one of Norway’s wisest men. While making a documentary about Per Fugelli, Otterbeck learned of his and his wife’s idea to restore the town’s water tower and make it a place for thought and reflection.

Otterbeck brought this idea to life and began refurbishing the water tower, which was no easy task. Because there is no road or bridge to the tower, they had to use a helicopter to transport material. Nonetheless, the project came to fruition on August 10 this year when the water tower, now known as Ettertanken (The Afterthought), opened its doors. And on top of the tower is a quote by Per Fugelli: “The best prescription for a good life is to give less of a damn.”

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**Saving Prehistoric Rock Art**

Vingen in Norway’s Vestland county is the site of one of the largest prehistoric rock carving sites in Northern Europe. Approximately 2,000 carvings and prints depicting animals, geometric patterns, and human figures estimated to date back 6,000-7,000 years. This site was discovered in 1910 by Bergen lawyer Kristian Bing, while looking for land to build on. He bought the land soon after, but ultimately sold the historic site to the Bergen Museum in 1923, who continues to own and manage it.

Now after many years of the site being undisturbed and protected, archeologists warn of a potentially catastrophic threat to the carvings. The nearby area of Frøysjøen was approved to plan for the building of a sandstone quarry near the top of Aksla mountain, as well as a crushing plant and shipping port which would assist the mining operation.

Proponents of the build state that it will provide jobs and would not impact the historic site because of its proximity and distance from the site. However, archeologists and critics of this proposed development state that the noise, light, vibrations and dust could have a devastating impact on the prehistoric cultural heritage site. They point to a quarry that currently exists further away, yet whose blast vibrations can be felt at Vingen. They emphasize that once a site like this disappears, it is gone forever. They also warn that this new quarry and facilities could destroy the region’s best opportunities which are its tourism, education and cultural knowledge.

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**TRANSLATION**

[**https://www.klartale.no/tema/2024/08/03/hvorfor-er-nordmenn-sa-glade-i-kaffe**](https://www.klartale.no/tema/2024/08/03/hvorfor-er-nordmenn-sa-glade-i-kaffe)

**Hvorfor er nordmenn så glade i kaffe?**

Nordmenn drikker nest mest kaffe i verden.

Du ser det overalt i Norge. Folk rusler gatelangs med en kaffe i hånden. Kaffe blir servert i møter. Mange er avhengig av en kopp for å starte dagen.

Kaffe er en del av det sosiale og kulturelle i Norge. Hvordan ble det sånn? Det er sammensatt, sier Marit Lynes. Hun er daglig leder i Norsk kaffeinformasjon.

– Historisk sett har vi tatt inn kaffe til Norge som har høy kvalitet. Det har gjort at folk orker å drikke mer. Da sier vi ja til kopp nummer to, sier Lynes.

Opplysnings-kontoret lager en undersøkelse hvert år. Tallene fra 2024 viser at 85 prosent drikker kaffe. 74 prosent drikker kaffe hver dag.

Kaffe startet som en drikke for hjemmet i Norge. Andre steder var det noe du fikk offentlig. Så har det blitt tatt inn i hjemmet. I Norge var det altså omvendt. Det er i nyere tid at vi begynte å dra på kaféer.

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**Visste du dette?**

80 prosent av daglige kaffedrikkere drikker vanligvis svart kaffe.

23 prosent liker best kaffe med melk.

Hvem drikker cappuccino? Det er flest kvinner, de under 30 år og de som bor i Oslo.

Iskaffe blir stadig mer populært. 49 prosent hadde drukket det i løpet av det siste året.

70 prosent har kaffetrakter. 36 prosent har presskanne. 31 prosent bruker kapsler.

73 prosent synes kaffe er viktig tilbud på jobb eller skole.

Kilde: Norsk kaffeinformasjon sin undersøkelse fra 2024.

De fleste drikker kaffen sin svart. Da orker vi mer enn hvis du drikker med melk, sier Lynes.

– Traktekaffe og filtrert kaffe legger grunnlaget for hvor mye kaffe vi drikker.

**TRANSLATION**

**Why are Norwegians so fond of coffee?**

Norwegians drink the second most coffee in the world.

You see it everywhere in Norway. People stroll along the street with coffee in hand. Coffee is served in meetings. Many people depend on a cup to start the day.

Coffee is part of the social and cultural life in Norway. How did that happen? It is complex, says Marit Lynes. She is the general manager of Norsk kaffeinformasjon—Norwegian Coffee Information.

“Historically speaking, we have imported high-quality coffee into Norway. This has made people want to drink more. Then we say yes to cup number two,” says Lynes.

The Information Office conducts a survey every year. The figures from 2024 show that 85 percent [of Norwegians] drink coffee. 74 percent drink coffee every day.

Coffee started as a drink for the home in Norway. Elsewhere, it was something you got in public. Then it was taken into the home. In Norway, it was the other way around. It is in recent times that we started going to cafes.

Did you know?

80 percent of daily coffee drinkers [in Norway] usually drink black coffee.

23 percent like coffee with milk best.

Who drinks cappuccino? The majority are women, those under 30 and those who live in Oslo.

Iced coffee is becoming increasingly popular. 49 percent drank it in the past year.

70 percent have a coffee maker. 36 percent have an espresso maker. 31 percent use pods.

73 percent think coffee is an important offering at work or school.

**Source: Norwegian Coffee Information's survey from 2024.**

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“Most people drink their coffee black. Then we can drink more than if you drink it with milk,” says Lynes.

"Drip and pour-over coffee lay the foundation for how much coffee we drink.”

**Almond Star Cookies**

**Ingredients:**

**For the Cookies**

2 sticks unsalted butter, softened
1 cup whole blanched almonds
1/2 cup sugar
2 cups flour
¼ tsp. salt
1 tsp. almond extract

**To Decorate (optional)**

Powdered sugar for dusting
Various colors of sanding sugar
Luster pearl deco dots
Frosting for piping designs

**Recipe**

**Step 1**

Puree 1/2 cup of the whole blanched almonds in food processor and set aside. Coarsely chop the remaining 1/2 cup of almonds and reserve for later.

**Step 2**

In a large mixing bowl, whisk the flour and salt together and set aside.

**Step 3**

Cream the butter with an electric mixer. Add the pureed almonds and sugar. Blend together until well-combined, and remember to scrape down the sides of the bowl occasionally. Add almond extract and mix until well combined. Next, add the flour mixture and beat until just incorporated.

**Step 4**

Prepare a lightly floured surface and pour out the dough, dividing it in half. Shape each half of the dough into a disc and wrap it in plastic wrap. Refrigerate the discs for at least an hour.

**Step 5**

While dough is resting, line cookie sheets with parchment paper.

**Step 6**

After dough has rested, preheat oven to 325°. (Use an in-oven thermometer to make sure that the temperature of your oven is accurate. Most ovens are 10-25° off of the temperature shown.)

**Step 7**

Lightly flour your work surface and roll out one disc of dough until it is about 1/4″ thick. Cut out shapes using various star cookie cutters. Sprinkle with the coarsely chopped almonds.

**Step 8**

Place the cut cookies onto cookie sheets lined with parchment paper and bake for 15-20 minutes. Keep an eye on your first sheet of cookies. You will know they are done when the edges start to turn golden brown. You now know how long each batch should take and can set your timer with no guess work.

**Step 9**

Place your cookies on a wire rack to cool.

**Step 10**

Once your cookies have cooled, dust them with powdered sugar or with sanding sugar if you want more color. Another great option are luster pearl deco dots.

Makes about 4 dozen cookies. *(Note: These cookies can be stored in airtight containers for about a week.)*

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