

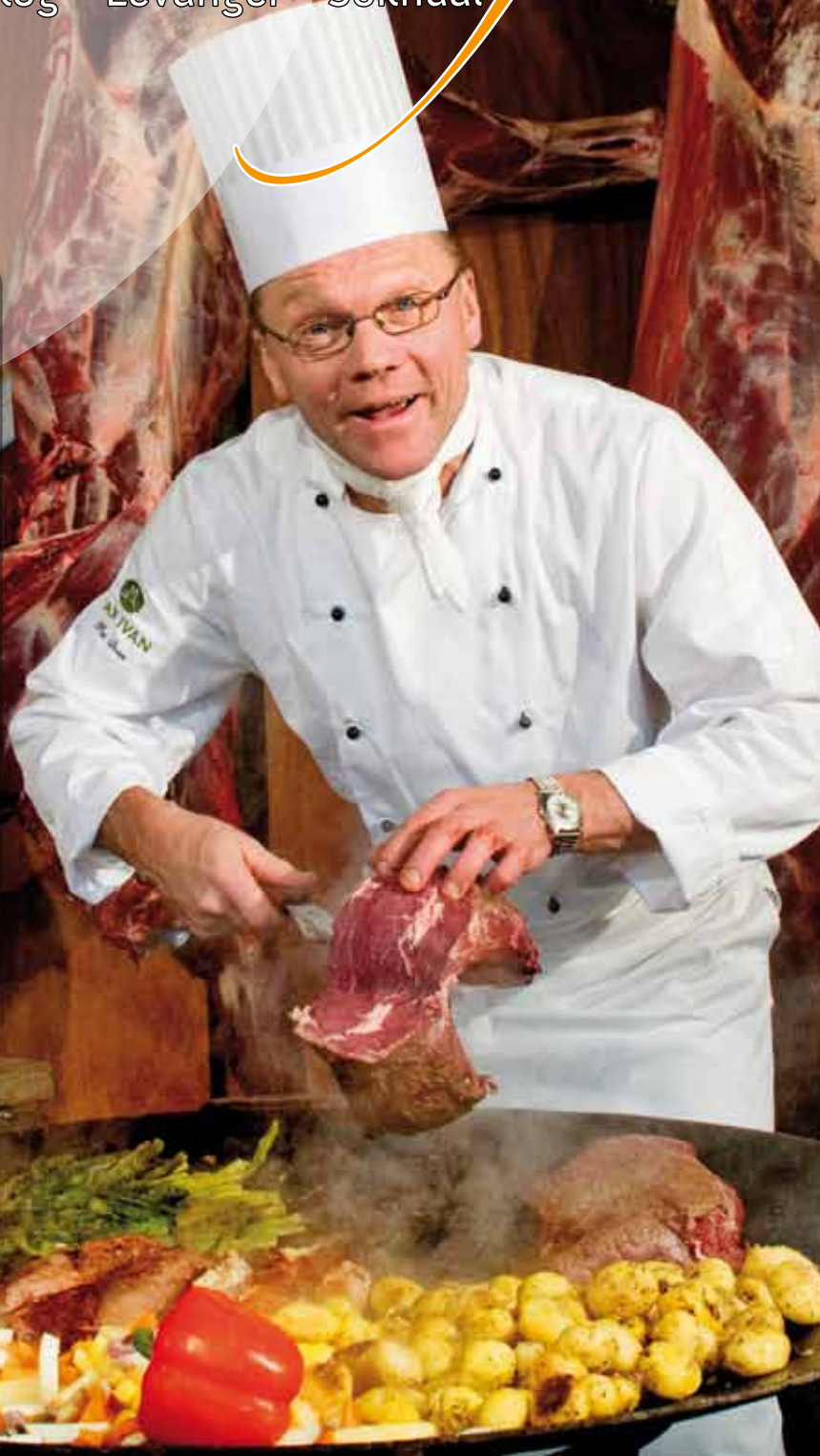
The good life

Eidskog - Levanger - Sokndal

Would you like to escape the hustle and bustle of daily life, slow down and focus on quality of life and the good life? In that case the three Norwegian Cittaslow municipalities - Eidskog in Hedmark, Levanger in Nord-Trøndelag and Sokndal in Rogaland - are just what you are looking for.

We do not want to get lost in the crowd, which is why we nurture the unique, local identity that sets us apart from the rest of the world - and concentrate on local products and ingredients. What could taste better than wild sheep from Sokndal, your own hunted moose from Eidskog, or cheese from Munkeby Maria monastery in Levanger?

A stroll among our architectural gems does wonders for body and soul. Smell the flowers, take your shoes off and feel the grass tickle your feet - just be alive! In Eidskog, Levanger and Sokndal, just being is wonderful. We want less stress in our lives and we want 'to hurry slowly' - welcome to the good life, whether you bring all your worldly goods with you or just a small suitcase.



Eidskog



Do you want to get away from everyday life and hum drum routine? To let the four seasons awaken your senses? Whether you only have a few hours or the rest of your life, you can come and sample the creative spontaneity of our little world and everything it has to offer of nature and industry, art and culture, hope and harmony. But first, come walk with us through a village abounding in opportunities...

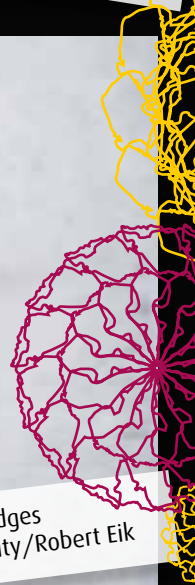
Taking a break in a cornfield
Photo: Eidskog municipality/Robert Eik



The traditional craft of glass blowing
Photo: Eidskog municipality/Robert Eik



Racing down a hill on sledges
Photo: Eidskog municipality/Robert Eik



We have lots to be proud of in Eidskog – in terms of culture, poetry, the saw mill industry and our canals and locks. That is why we have earmarked week 44 as 'Culture Week' to celebrate all the creative souls in the area, a week jam-packed with culture in the broadest sense of the word. We preserve the old traditions as well as creating new ones. And we have the world's only 'kingdom of peace'.

One of Norway's most influential poets, Hans Børli, was from Eidskog. His home, Oppistun Børli, in Fjellskogen, is in a beautiful, idyllic location by Børen lake. Thousands of people gather here every year to enjoy a 'June Evening' on the first Sunday of this summer month.

In the heart of Scandinavia, bang on the border between Norway and Sweden, we find the Peace monument, symbolising almost 200 years of peace between the two neighbouring countries. The monument was erected in 1914, and Morokulien kingdom of peace surrounds the monument.

There are several magnificent buildings here - steeped in history and with a magical energy. Eidskog church dating from 1665 is one of the oldest churches in Hedmark. The 'new' church stands on the site of an old church from the 11th century.

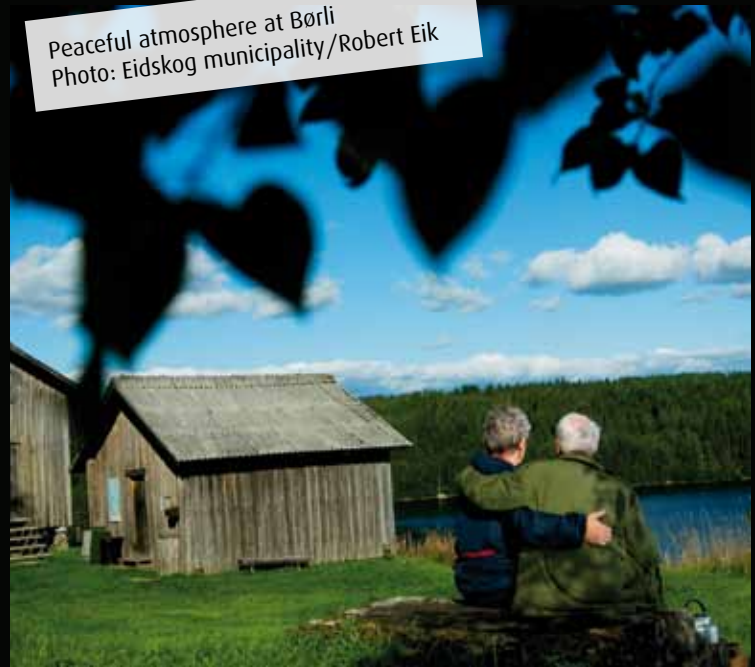
The farm museum, Almenninga, is one of many attractions in the area, and the old road to Sweden cuts across this farm cluster. This road was most likely also used by pilgrims on their way to Nidaros in Trondheim.

Spending time outdoors in our beautiful scenery is an experience almost beyond compare - clean air, bubbling streams and green forests as far as the eye can see. Here, the great outdoors offers something for every taste - some choose a quiet walk in the forest or kayaking up the system of locks in the Soot Canal. Others prefer camping, hunting or fishing on the Vrangselva river that winds like a lazy eel through our district. Feel your pulse rise and your blood rush! Whether you have a fish on the line or a moose in your sights - being so close to the catch will get your adrenalin going. Listen to your heart racing and imagine Sunday dinner on the table - caught in Eidskog's own pantry!

The craft traditions in Eidskog date far back in time, and are fortunately kept alive by skilled craftsmen and women. Glassblowing has become a particularly well-known trademark, and many works of art are produced here. Glass, along with timber and aluminium, are our most important elements. Magnor Glassworks is the oldest company, founded in 1896. In 'the street' between the glassworks and Magnor market, the Vrangsfestivalen music festival pumps out the decibels every summer. We also have the only surviving factory that still makes wooden skis in Norway, and our very own wooden ski festival takes place on the first Saturday in March every year.

'... walk even further into our village rich in opportunities, you said ...?'

Peaceful atmosphere at Børli
Photo: Eidskog municipality/Robert Eik



Blåreik moped club
Photo: Eidskog municipality/Robert Eik

Vrangsfestivalen music festival
Photo: Eidskog municipality/Ronald Jørgensen



Levanger



Are you looking for a rich cultural and social scene, or unspoiled scenery as far as the eye can see? In Levanger, we say 'yes please, both' and offer lots more! We have been creating great stories for a thousand years and we would love to include you in the next chapter.

The Saga writers tell the story of two jealous skalds from Iceland who met in single combat in the area close to the Swedish border. Gunnlaug Ormstunge and Ravn were both in love with Helga 'the fair'. They fought hard and the fight ended in both their deaths. According to the Saga writer, Gunnlaug was carried to Levanger and nursed by a priest, but his injuries were so extensive that his life could not be saved. This is the dramatic introduction to Levanger's 1,000-year history.

Torch-lit procession in Levanger
Photo: Trønderavisa by Harald Sæterøy



Levanger church
Photo: Fotograf Hattrem



Horse-drawn carriage rides in the street during Marsimartnan market. Photo: Fotograf Hattrem

Levanger is a vibrant town in which everyone is included. We emphasise good schooling and education at all levels. The many students at our university college are an important part of the town, and they contribute to a lively and pulsating every day life. The many professional and amateur artists here help to create a rich artistic scene. From the sea to the mountains, we have natural wonders and inspiration on our doorstep summer and winter alike.

Embrace the feeling of peace and soak up the sacred atmosphere at the historic ruins of the Cistercian monastery at Okkenhaug - you might even hear the monks singing if you hold your breath. Munkeby monastery was probably founded by English monks in the latter half of the 12th century. A new monastic order has now been established at Munkeby Mariakloster, close to these historic ruins. This is where the popular Munkebyosten cheese is made, based on French traditions and made from local ingredients.

The Falstad Centre is a place for contemplation and reflection. The main building of the former German prisoner of war camp, SS Strafgefängenslager Falstad, houses items relating to the history of prisoners of war and human rights. The camp was the second largest in Norway and has a dark history that must not be forgotten.

Find inspiration while wandering among the wooden houses - imagine if the beautiful Swiss-style, new Gothic and Art Nouveau buildings could tell their secrets... steeped in character, you cannot fail to be impressed. The Directorate for Cultural Heritage has decided that this collection of wooden buildings is of national importance and work on listing them has started. The district sheriff's home, Brusve Gård, built in 1803, which has its own park and herb garden, is particularly beautiful.

Let romance blossom on the beautiful wooden bridge and the Kjærlighetsstien 'love path' over to Røstad. Listen to the music of nature on paths close to the town centre or in wild, unspoiled nature. When summer arrives, make time to enjoy Levanger's floral splendour - for which it has won several prizes. Set aside half an hour to take the ferry out to 'the gem of the Trondheimsfjord' - Ytterøy, a lush island with many cultural monuments preserved in the natural surroundings. You do not even need to be exceptionally lucky to experience the deer at close range, as the island has the densest deer population in Norway.

Set aside three days in week 8 every year for Marsimartnan - a market based on quality, culture, experiences and traditions that can be traced all the way back to the Viking Age. And be sure not to miss Levangermartnan either - a traditional summer market held in week 31. Farmers Market days are held regularly, selling locally produced, high quality food. There is also an annual autumn festival, at which a great array of food is served and local produce is sold. In November, it is time for some pre-Christmas fun, with art, culture and experiences on offer during the 'Førrijul' event.

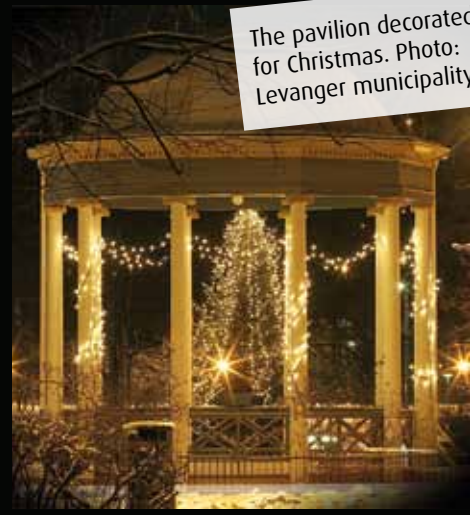
If it is excitement and challenges you are after, register for the terrain cycling race 'Tour de Tomtvatnet', or the 'St. Olavsloppet' run. Children can compete every August in the 'Ta sjansen' (take a chance) event - a competition in which competitors 'sail' their home-made boats down a downhill slope.

Welcome to the good life in our little world in the middle of Norway!

One of our beautiful old town houses
Photo: Levanger municipality



The pavilion decorated for Christmas. Photo: Levanger municipality



Levanger - the floral town
Photo: Levanger municipality



At the playground
Photo: Levanger municipality

Sokndal



In Sokndal, it is OK to be a bit different and slightly crazy. The 'tall poppy syndrome' (Janteloven) is dead and buried and you can visit its grave in the park. Experience the contrasts between the barren, rocky landscape that you would have to visit the moon to see more of in one place, and the small sheltered coves and lush valleys. From angry sea to purple heather. Meet the warm, hospitable people who host a Love Week every year that focuses on the important things in life - under the motto: 'The Love Week in Sokndal sustains us in love all year'. We offer authentic experiences and welcome you - as a guest or for the rest of your life.

Row of wharfside buildings in Sogndalstrand. Photo: Knut Bry



The 'tall poppy syndrome' is buried in the park. Photo: Knut Bry



Week 39 is Love Week. The founding father of Love Week Olav M. Lundø. Photo: Dalane Tidende



Climbing route at Hellenen in Jøssingfjord. Photo: Jan Ove Grastveit



The houses below Hellenen
Photo: Jan Ove Grastveit



Sogndalstrand Amfi. The historical play 'Klokkene i Vammelsund'. Performed the first two weekends in August. Photo: Dalane Tidende



Sea-spray and salty air on the open sea. Photo: Jan Ove Grastveit



On the bow of MS Sjødis at Nesvåg. Photo: Knut Bry

If quality of life is important to you and you do not want to spend every day stuck in traffic, you can start by relaxing and letting the feeling of peace wash over you as you enter Sogndalstrand. Savour lazy days among listed buildings and old wooden houses from the 18th and 19th centuries. Sogndalstrand was formerly a trading centre and it was a municipality until 1944. Today, Sogndalstrand with its warm and friendly atmosphere at the mouth of the salmon river Sokno is one of Rogaland's most popular destinations. Awaken all your senses and experience art and culture - salty air and excitement on the ocean waves - small and sweet temptations - nature's own melody accompanied by beautiful singing voices. Walk into the hills and the kingdom of the wild sheep. Soak up the old and modern history of the area on a voyage of discovery among the real scenes behind the historical play 'Strandaspelet'.

The powerful, impressive scenery and the winding road down to the Jøssingfjord will take your breath away. There is little to remind us of the drama of the Altmark incident that took place here, which was the first act of war on Norwegian soil during World War II. This narrow fjord with its wide significance has been home to industrial success stories and the mining industry that is still very important to Sokndal. Two early 19th

century houses under the Hellenen overhang bear witness to a bygone age and allow us a glimpse of how hard life was in days of yore here and in the fishing communities of Åna-Sira, Nesvåg and Rekefjord.

So perhaps it is no wonder that the people of Sokndal cultivate love. At Rossland, the fertility cult with its godhead, stone alter and early Iron Age sacrificial vessel, shows that the people of Sokndal have been worshipping Mother Earth for more than 2,000 years - in the hope of harvesting good crops and successful hunting, at sea and in the mountains. For more than 150 years, the resources in the mountains have been exploited and finds and deposits have laid the foundation for industrial success stories, both big and small. The geology of the area is unique. Magma Geopark, which is a member of the European Geopark Networks, tells the 930 million-year-long history of the geology of the area. Visit the Ruggesteinen rocking stone, and move Northern Europe's largest movable 74-tonne block of stone with ease.

The slightly crazy people of Sokndal are proud of everything their community has to offer and heartily welcome you to the good life!



Cittaslow is an international movement founded in Italy in 1999. Today, more than 130 municipalities are members of the movement, spread over 20 countries. For more information, see: www.cittaslow.net, www.cittaslow.com and www.cittaslow.no.



EIDSKOG municipality, located in the far south of the county of Hedmark, borders on Sweden to the east. It has a population of 6,400 and covers an area of 643 sq. km, 60% of which is productive forest. We have wonderful scenery and a blossoming cultural scene and a variety of outdoor pursuits. There are many local enthusiasts in Eidskog, and we have a great variety of clubs and associations. Eidskog is Norway's third Cittaslow municipality, and we emphasise respect for small-scale, local values in a globalised world. The municipality focuses on providing good, safe schooling and a good environment in which to grow up. We have a 'culture for learning'. Eidskog is a good place to live, work and stay in.

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LEVANGER is a large, agricultural municipality in Nord-Trøndelag county. It has a population of 18,500 and covers an area of 646 sq. km. The administrative centre is the town of Levanger, which is in a beautiful location by the Trondheimsfjord and is surrounded by fertile, low-lying villages and mountainous areas. The municipality has approximately 30 industrial enterprises. Norske Skogsindustrier with 650 employees is the biggest - one of the world's foremost in the production of paper. There is varied business and industry in the municipality, with a mix of small-scale and larger

enterprises, not least in foodstuffs and technology. The hospital in Levanger is the biggest single workplace in the municipality, employing approximately 1,000 people.

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SOKNDAL is a coastal municipality in the far south of the county of Rogaland. It has a population of 3,300 and covers an area of 295 sq. km. The administrative centre is Hauge i Dalane, which has a good variety of shops. There is varied business and industry in the area, and the mining company Titania AS is the cornerstone of the local economy with 250 employees. Sokndal is a cultural municipality that has many voluntary organisations. It also has a sports hall, football pitches, a shooting range, tennis court, enclosed ball parks, plastic ice rink and lots more. In 2003, Sokndal was the first municipality in the Nordic countries to become a member of Cittaslow.

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