

NORGE NEWS

Wednesday 13 February 2019

Somewhere in the Norwegian Sea

62° N

The small city of Ålesund (OH-leh-soond), population about 50,000, was our major port call Tuesday on our Hurtigruten cruise up the Norwegian coast to the Arctic, which begins four degrees further up the globe at a latitude of 66° 33' North. More about what all that means inside.

Weather
13 February
Wednesday /
Onsdag'
48°F / 9°C
41° / 5°C
Early clearing, wind



Alesund spreads across five islands and once was built, like other Norwegian cities, primarily of wooden buildings. But in 1904, the city caught fire and burned. Germany's Kaiser Wilhelm, who liked to vacation in the area, sent four ships loaded with workers and materials to build temporary housing. Then he hired architects and builders who rebuilt the town entirely in the *art nouveau* style. This picture was shot from the city's best-known photo location, a restaurant called Fjellstua (mountain lodge) atop a tall hill called Aksla. In addition to pictures hanging on the restaurant's wall of Norway's king and queen entertaining international visitors, there is a picture of Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter in their Dale sweaters waving a Norwegian flag from this overlook. They were on a Hurtigruten cruise.



Emily and Gordon in the center of Ålesund, where a bridge links two of the city's islands.

How far north are we?

The cities are listed north to south to give you a sense of how far north each is relative to the others. Each degree of latitude is 60 nautical miles (about 69 statute miles or 111 kilometers). The cities we are visiting are in the white rows. Sunrise, sunset and amount of daylight are for the date of this newsletter.

City	Latitude	Sunrise	Sunset	Daylight
North Pole – 90° N, 24 hours of darkness				
Barrow, Alaska	71° 18' N	10:23	5:01	6 hours 37 minutes
Svolvær	68° 14' N	8:31	4:01	7 hours 39 minutes
Bodø	67° 17' N	8:25	4:09	7 hours 45 minutes
Arctic Circle – 66° 33' N (1,413 nm from the North Pole)				
Fairbanks, Alaska	64° 51' N	8:56	7:14	8 hours 18 minutes
Reykjavik, Iceland	64° 8' N	9:30	5:54	8 hours 23 minutes
Trondheim	63° 27' N	8:18	4:48	8 hours 37 minutes
Ålesund	62° 28' N	8:30	5:09	8 hours 40 minutes
Anchorage, Alaska	61° 13' N	8:47	5:40	8 hours 53 minutes
Bergen	60° 24' N	8:24	5:22	8 hours 58 minutes
Oslo	59° 55' N	8:01	5:02	9 hours 1 minute
Moscow	55° 45' N	7:59	5:28	9 hours 29 minutes
London	51° 31' N	7:18	5:11	9 hours 53 minutes
Seattle	47° 36' N	7:18	5:29	10 hours 11 minutes
San Jose	37° 20' N	6:58	5:45	10 hours 46 minutes
Hamlet, N.C.	35° 47' N	7:06	5:59	10 hours 55 minutes
Honolulu	21° 19' N	7:03	6:28	11 hours 25 minutes
Mexico City	19° 26' N	7:06	6:25	11 hours 29 minutes
Equator – 0°, 12 hours each of daylight, darkness (equator = equal)				
Quito, Ecuador	0° 11' S	6:24	6:31	12 hours 7 minutes

How does being far north affect daily life?

ARCTIC CIRCLE: The Arctic Circle is a circle in the northern hemisphere with the North Pole at its center. All the area within the circle is considered the arctic, and that's where we're going. The edge of this circle marks where there is at just one day each year that the sun does not rise above the horizon, Dec. 21, the winter solstice. It also marks where there is at least one day that the sun does not set, June 21, the summer solstice. As you go beyond the Arctic Circle toward the North Pole, the number of days in darkness and total light increase until, at the pole, half the year is in the dark and the other half in sunlight – one sunrise and one sunset per year.

WINTER DARKNESS, SUMMER DAYLIGHT: In San Jose, the time between sunrise and sunset is about 9 hours, 35 minutes on Dec. 21 and 14 hours, 44 minutes on June 21, a difference of 5 hours, 9 minutes (309 minutes). Over the 182-plus days between those dates, each day lengthens about 1.7 minutes. In Svolvær, Norway – above the Arctic Circle and the northernmost point on our trip – the minutes of daylight increase from 0 minutes on Dec. 21 to 1,440 minutes (24 hours) on June 21. Over the two weeks of our trip, daylight will grow nearly two hours longer in Svolvær but just 24 minutes longer in San Jose.

HOW COLD IS IT? The warm Gulf Stream current flows northeastward along the U.S. East Coast and dead ends when it hits the Norwegian coast. Coastal Norway is much warmer than almost anywhere else at the same latitude, including Norway's interior. Shielded from the Gulf Stream's influence by a range of coastal mountains, inland Norway can be 20° to 30° cooler than Norway's west coast in winter.

62° N

Norway stretches for more than 1,000 miles (1,600 kilometers) from north to south, about half of that above the Arctic Circle.

But if you measure its coastline – every indentation of each island's circumference, the ins and outs of every fjord – you end up with 63,000 miles (more than 101,000 km) where salt water touches land. It's one of the longest coastlines of any country on earth, long enough to circle the earth 2½ times.

All that crookedness along the coast, with mountains on top of it all, makes it hard to get from fishing village to oil port.

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Our Hurtigruten ship, *MS Trollfjord*, docked in Ålesund, Norway, from noon until 3 p.m.

62° N

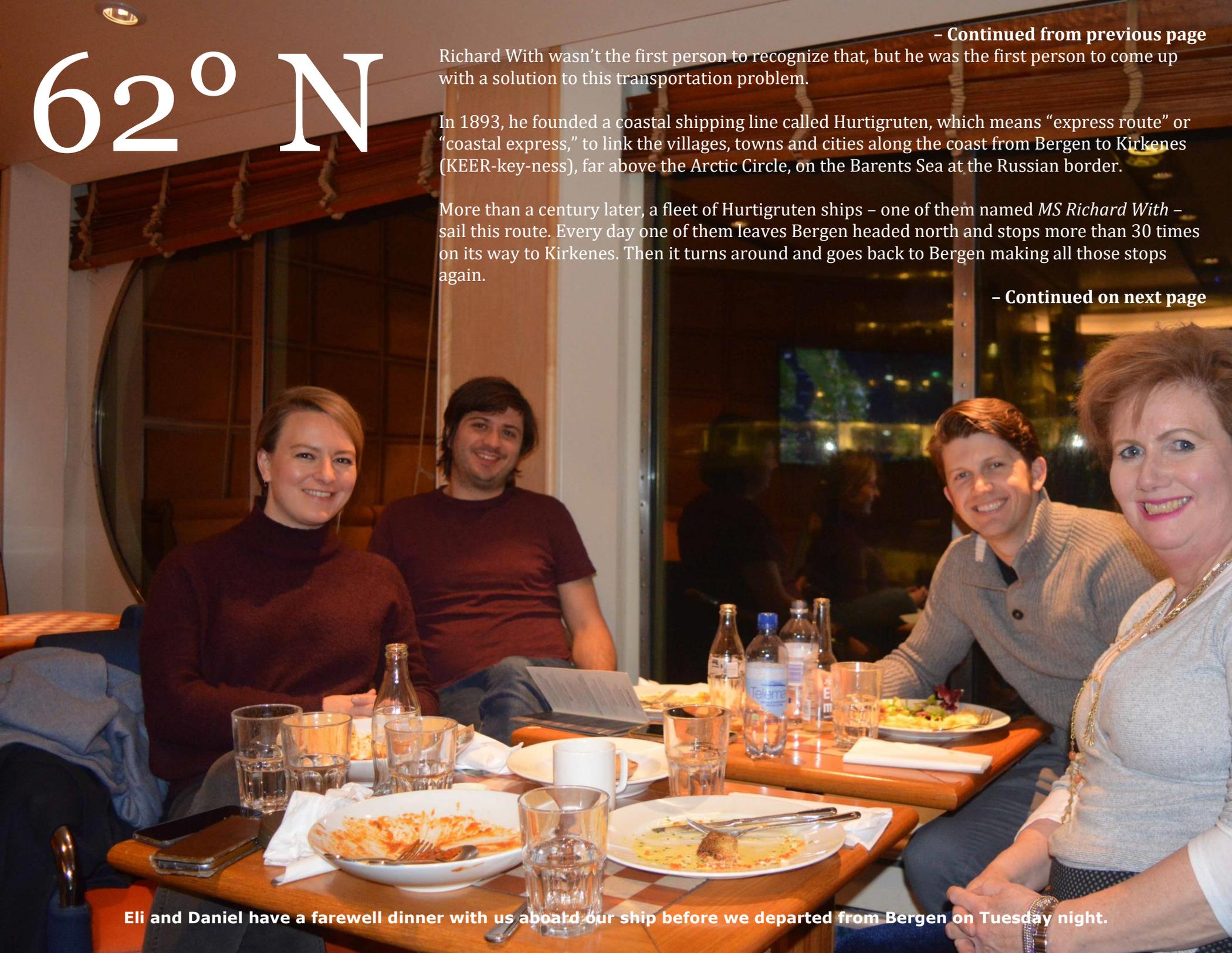
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Richard With wasn't the first person to recognize that, but he was the first person to come up with a solution to this transportation problem.

In 1893, he founded a coastal shipping line called Hurtigruten, which means "express route" or "coastal express," to link the villages, towns and cities along the coast from Bergen to Kirkenes (KEER-key-ness), far above the Arctic Circle, on the Barents Sea at the Russian border.

More than a century later, a fleet of Hurtigruten ships – one of them named *MS Richard With* – sail this route. Every day one of them leaves Bergen headed north and stops more than 30 times on its way to Kirkenes. Then it turns around and goes back to Bergen making all those stops again.

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Eli and Daniel have a farewell dinner with us aboard our ship before we departed from Bergen on Tuesday night.

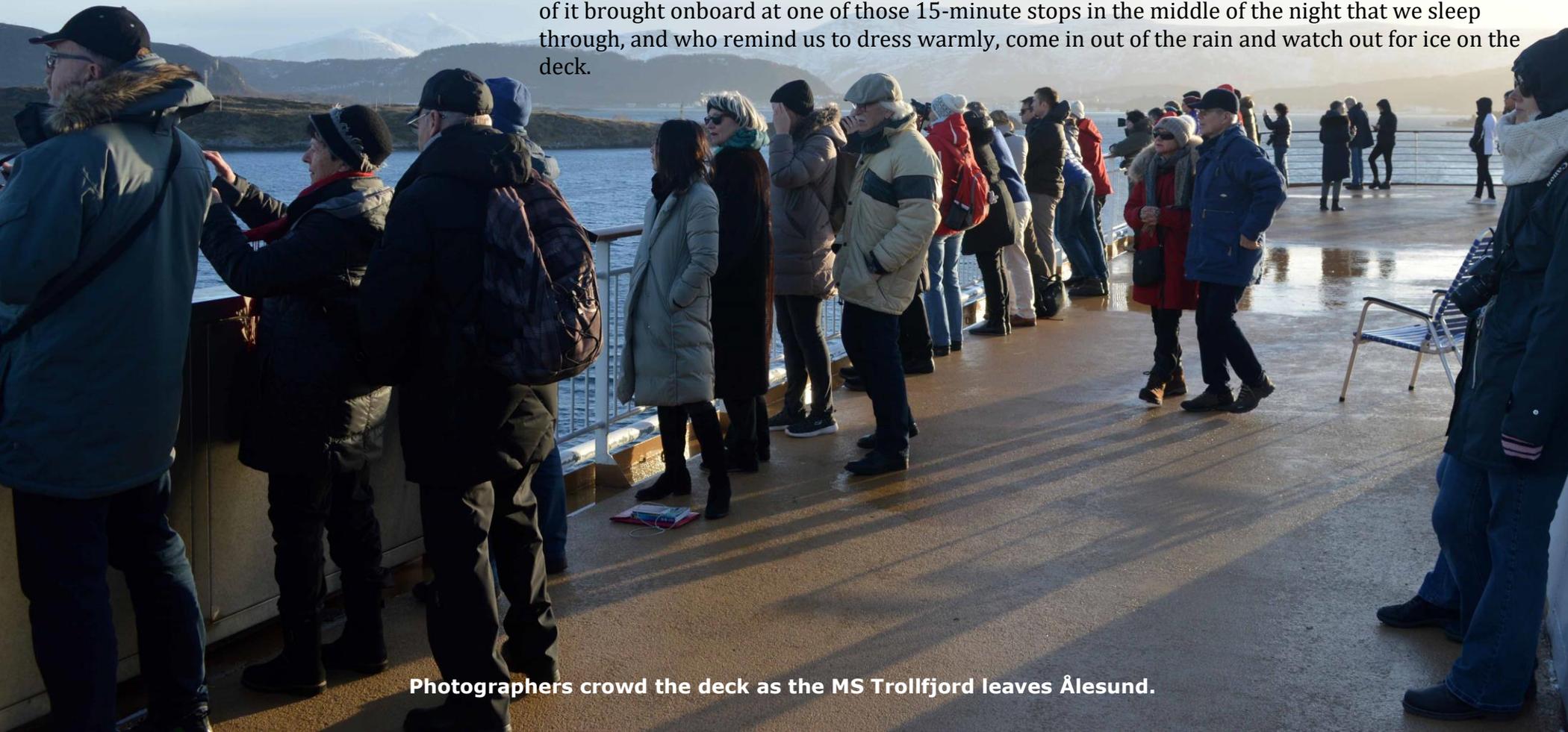
62° N

At 15 knots (a little more than 17 mph or about 28 km/h), with stops as short as 15 minutes some places to several hours in major cities, this “express” makes the round trip in 12 days. Every stop along the way gets a daily visit from a north- and southbound ship delivering or picking up everything from cars and the daily catch to Ingrid in Brønnøysund going to Bestemor’s (Grandma’s) house in Sandnessjøen, one stop up the line.

However, Hurtigruten graciously accepts kroner from an increasing number of foreign visitors, most of whom book the full one-way or roundtrip to see the Midnight Sun (one ship is named *MS Midnatsol*) the Northern Lights, (*MS Polarlys* and *MS Nordlys*) or some fjords (we’re on the *MS Trollfjord*). The line also operates another fleet purely for tourists taking cruises to Iceland, Greenland, the U.S. and Canada and Antarctica.

The coastal Norway trips aren’t Caribbean-style cruises with 24-hour buffets, Jimmy Buffet music in the casino and balcony staterooms.

The crew are real, live Norwegians earning high Norwegian wages who serve us local food, some of it brought onboard at one of those 15-minute stops in the middle of the night that we sleep through, and who remind us to dress warmly, come in out of the rain and watch out for ice on the deck.



Photographers crowd the deck as the MS Trollfjord leaves Ålesund.