

Cycling Norway Lengthwise 2021

A Biking Tour Starting in 1989



I have always enjoyed cycling, and the passion (luckily) does not seem to pass with age. The first longer trip I made was early summer 1989, when I after having finished exams in Trondheim decided to cycle down to the home town Mandal, where I grew up and was going to spend the summer. I don't come from the town itself, but from the island Skjernøy south of the city. The south-most settlement in Norway is found on this island with the south-most point being further south than the more known light-house at Lindesnes. I think it is quite possible that growing up in the southmost end of the country to some extent has triggered my motivation to cycle Norway lengthwise.

After having finished Trondheim – Mandal a long time ago, I have now in 2021 – 32 years later – decided to cover some of the other parts of Norway. I'll start Monday 5 July by flying to Honningsvåg, and continue by bus to 12 km from the North Cape centre. However, it is a pity missing 12 km of Norway lengthwise, so I'll head for starting the trip by cycling back and forth to the North Cape centre. Below you will be able to find daily reports from the tour experience.





A number of important and nice to have things are needed when heading off for 12 days on a bike, see [the list of items here](#) (in Norwegian). Further, packing the bike in a box takes some time and creativity.



Day 1: Monday 5 July 2021 - Bus to Oslo - Train to Oslo Gardermoen airport - 08:00 Flight to Tromsø and new flight 10:45 to Honningsvåg. The plan for the day is to reach Repvåg.

On the way....



Great to get started cycling. After getting my luggage in Honningsvåg airport, about an hour of mounting the bike followed. Then I cycled to the bus stop a few km away where a bus at 14:15 picked me up and took me closer to the target. That is, 12,5 km from the North Cape centre which required ascending quite a number of slopes. Arrived 15:40 and got the important pictures taken in front of the black globe.



Around 16:00 I set off southward in warm weather with almost no wind :-). I was glad to see that the bike seemed to function well.

Arrived happily to the target 22:20 Repvåg Family Camping after cycling 87 km from the North Cape Centre using 5:05 hours.

More details and pictures here: <https://ridewithgps.com/routes/36656994>

Day 2: Tuesday 6 July 2021: Repvåg – Alta, 160 km

Another day with great summer weather. A longer day on the bike than yesterday. Today's highlight was meeting my friend Audun and his two travel companions. A somewhat tough end of the day with the 400 m climb over the Kvænanng mountain pass.

More details and images:

<https://ridewithgps.com/trips/70689591>

Day 3: Wednesday 7 July 2021: Alta - Oksfjord, 144 km

Yet another day with nice weather, although some light local rain showers in the afternoon. Met two different groups (one and two cyclists) of cyclists on their way to Nordkapp. Both very experienced and far riding. Karsten has a thorough blog about his many long trips:

<https://fundraising-for-zis.blog/around-the-world-by-bike-in-10-tours/about-me/>

Details about today's ride: <https://ridewithgps.com/trips/70752220>

Day 4: Thursday 8 July: Oksfjord to Skibotn, 143 km

Less steep slopes and less sun today, and rain for a couple of hours mid-day.

More details and images:

<https://ridewithgps.com/trips/70813551>

Day 5: Friday 9 July: Skibotn to Setermoen, 139 km

The route started quite flat but the 3-6 m/s headwind made the morning hour feel like a long uphill slope. It got somewhat less in the afternoon where I also got tailwind from the increasing number of vehicles overtaking me. I saw the "Ride with GPS" app recommended a road that I choose to follow. It was a nice alternative route but several km of it was gravel road resulting in slower speed.

More details and images:

<https://ridewithgps.com/trips/70862897>

Day 6: Saturday 10 July Setermoen to Tysfjord, 165 km

A long day on the bike to reach the planned Tysfjord Turistsenter: 165 km and almost 1900 m upward elevation + the only ferry ride on the trip from Skarsvåg to Bognes (25 min, free for cyclists since now autopass is used :-)

With several road barriers to close the road in winter time and road signs warning about 7-9% steep slopes ahead, made it no secret what a cyclist should be prepared for (or maybe more true, be demotivated by). The sand boxes halfway up the slopes were not of much help either ;-)

On the positive side was the great weather with sun most of the day and limited wind, even tailwind at times :-)

It was also a pleasure to pass a number of long bridges with tall towers.

More details: <https://ridewithgps.com/trips/70951660>

Day 7: Sunday 11 July Tysfjord to Kobbelv, 112 km

Today's route can be recommended for anyone looking for something different from flatland cycling in Denmark ;-)

Almost no flat parts and with more or less steep upward slopes and followed by downward slopes. You almost needed only two gears, a very light and a very heavy gear. The lack of flat parts resulted in the lowest average speed so far on the trip.

Weather is at the same time very collaborative with light clouded and little wind, and no need for raincoat :-)

More details: <https://ridewithgps.com/trips/71029776>

Day 8: Monday 12 July 2021: Kobbelv to Saltdal (Storjord), 125 km

A more mix of everything today with slopes in the morning and very flat road for the afternoon. However, it is most probably a record day what regard cycling tunnels (feel free to zoom in on google maps and help me count them). In contrast to yesterday with many nice tunnels closed for cyclist, all tunnels today welcomed cyclist :-)

That probably helped a lot on the ascent/descent measure.

I feel very fortunate having yet another day with no rain :-)

I made a visit to the train station in Fauske, but did not buy any ticket but rather a sausage in bread with fries to fuel up again for the afternoon ride :-)

More details: <https://ridewithgps.com/trips/71077263>

Day 9: Tuesday 13 July 2021: Saltdal (Storjord) to Korgen, 159 km

The highest mountain pass on the trip was Saltfjellet today. Great to cycle across (similar to the Dovre plateau) but it took quite some time to reach today's target (partly due to headwind most of the day).

<https://ridewithgps.com/trips/71144247>

Day 10: Wednesday 14 July 2021: Korgen to Namsskogan, 173 km

The day of the longest distance. I was demotivated on reaching today's goal after the long and quite exhausting day yesterday. The first and main mountain today was the Korgen mountain. More text on this below. Overall, a much better / less hard day than yesterday.

A highlight each day is to meet other people on long trips. In the morning, I met two Swizz guys that had cycled from Copenhagen and headed for the North Cape to then continue cycle back home through Finland. They planned to be on the trip for four months. Fully equipped for tenting, and cycled 10-13 km/ day. In the evening, I met Simen, see

<https://www.simenpaalangs.no/>

Unfortunately, the app stopped recording in the morning so the numbers are a bit below the real ones. My trip counter showed 173 km when arriving Namsskogan.

<https://ridewithgps.com/trips/71213304>

I realised that to save time and effort in the first part of the day would be to "overlook" the cyclist forbidden sign for the about 9 km Korgen tunnel (and skip about 500 altitude meters), going through rather than over the mountain. The traffic was limited, and I saw there was a nice wide pavement to cycle on. There were also a limited number of cars and less it should be...since gradually, it got completely quiet, and I had the tunnel for myself... This was not only good news since I was waiting for a single car coming to "help me getting out" thus, it pushed me to cycle on. When I reached the outside in the tunnel, the bar was closed with a long line of cars behind. I was waved in but by a nice and friendly person that luckily had no problem with forgiveness. I feel sorry about having blocked the tunnel and would most probably not have done it had I known that will happen. However, I was glad to arrive Namsskogan 22.00 rather than 23.00...

Day 11: Thursday 15 July 2021: Namsskogan to Steinkjer, 155 km

Summary: Good morning although wet and more struggle in the afternoon/evening with headwinds.

Headwind is definitely what I find most demotivating by tour cycling because it adds time and effort needed to reach your goal of the day and if it had been tailwind, it would similarly have helped you... I tried to think positively of added training but when you cycle the whole day anyway, that motivation factor has limited effect. However, I was happy to reach the hotel in Steinkjer around 22:30. This was in many ways the most challenging day with being the third long day over 150 km in a row.

More details and images:

<https://ridewithgps.com/trips/71277913>

Day 12: Friday 15 July 2021: Steinkjer to Trondheim, 130 km :-)

Today, I was very pleased to reach the starting point of the Norway lengthwise trip from 32 years ago. It was especially great to be joined by Kirsten og Ingebjørg the last 40 km from before Trondheim (met outside Stjørdal).

By cycling from the North Cape to Trondheim this summer, I'm happy that together with the Trondheim to Mandal/Skjernøya ride in 1989, I've seen and been biking Norway lengthwise :-)

I cycled about 1000 km in 1989, and this year the trip was 1700 km, totalling 2700 km Norway lengthwise. I take it as an indication that a double age has not led to less ambition or physical endurance :-) I feel very happy that both the bike and the body were working fine to fulfill the somewhat ambitious plan.

More details and images:

<https://ridewithgps.com/trips/71339953>



