

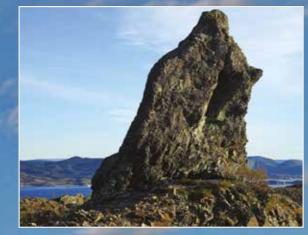
LEKA

Leka is Norway's Geological National Monument and displays a section through the oceanic crust better than anywhere else in the world. You can actually walk or cycle on the interior of the Earth. Leka was formed in a mid-oceanic ridge close to Laurentia (America) 500 million years ago. A fragment of the oceanic crust was then forced up on land when America and Europe collided 400 million years ago.

The reddish-yellow bedrock that is so characteristic for Leka is ultramafic rock formed in the deepest part of the oceanic crust and the underlying mantle. Here you can see the MOHO, the boundary between the mantle and the crust.

Leka also has a fine cultural landscape with actively utilised coastal heathland, cave paintings in Solsem cave and Herlaugshaugen, the largest Viking Age burial mound in Norway, which may contain a ship.

Leka is, nevertheless, perhaps best known for the "eagle kidnap", the story of three-year-old Svanhild who was taken by an eagle and survived. It took place as a fairy tale from reality in 1932, a long time after the myth about the Troll Mountains that ended near the southern point of Leka when Lekamøya, a beautiful maiden, avoided being struck by the Horseman's arrow and the sun transformed everyone into rock.



L30 LEKAMØYA

UTM 32W 0620892 7216453 65°2'58.9"N 11°34'8.2"E



L46 STEINSTIND

UTM 32W 0622297 7222163 65°6'1.3"N 11°36'13.6"E

Horta



Skeinesset cultural heritage trail

Skeinesset is a peninsula in the northeastern part of Leka where you can enjoy a variety of biological and cultural heritage pearls. Coastal heathland evolved through 4000 years of livestock grazing and heather burning dominates the landscape. The trail goes through this heathland, passing pagan burial graves and several viewing points. Information boards and signs describe the environmental assets and the geology. Ivarshallaren offers a fine view of the wetland areas that are protected for their birdlife. www.ut.no

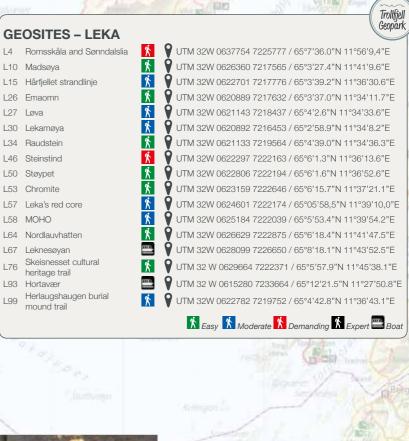
Solsem cave

The paintings in Solsem cave were the first to be discovered in northern Europe, in 1912. There are more than 20 figures, including some depicting human beings and a cross-shaped painting that is more than three metres tall. In summer, you can enjoy a guided tour of the cave and see the paintings, which were probably made in the Stone Age or the Early Bronze Age. www.lekaopplevelser.no

USEFUL ADDRESSES

Overnight accommodation: Motel – campsites – flats

www.visitleka.no www.visitnamdalen.no www.kvstriksveien.no











BRØNNØY

The coastal town of Brønnøysund, with its vibrant, varied, commercial life, is the regional centre in southern Helgeland and offers all sorts of services. To the south, Torghatten dominates the view – a troll mountain with a hole all the way through it. The fabulous Vega Archipelago World Heritage Area in the west is part of a shallow-water, islet-dotted strandflat.

The myth about the Troll Mountains explains the hole in Torghatten, made by the Horseman who shot an arrow to try to kidnap the beautiful maiden, Lekamøya. To save her, the king of the Sømna Mountains tossed his hat in the path of the arrow, and the arrow pierced the hat and was diverted. At the same moment, the sun shone and everyone was turned to stone. Just as imaginative as and much closer to the truth than that the hole was excavated by ice-cold natural processes during and after the last Ice Age.

Engavatnet, a lake near Velfjord, also has a troll-like atmosphere, especially when it disappears for weeks at a time to flow through caverns and tunnels deep in the Velfjord marble. Brønnøy once had large-scale production and trade in millstones.

Brønnøy has many attractive hiking trails, both close to the sea and in the mountains. The view of the archipelago is marvellous whichever peak you choose to climb.



EXCITING THINGS TO DO

Torghatten mountain

Torghatten is one of the greatest attractions in the region. The hole is 160 m long, 35 m high and 20 m wide, and gives the feeling of being in a majestic cathedral. The view through the hole out over the archipelago is spectacular. Follow the signs from the centre of Brønnøysund, over the bridge and southwards along the island of Torget. From the car park at Indre Hatten, it will take you about 20 minutes to reach the hole, partly on a well-made path. Afterwards, you may be tempted to eat at the restaurant by the shore at the foot of Torghatten.

Bicycle island hopping

How about exploring the islands by bicycle? From Brønnøysund, you can take a bicycle from island to island using ferries and express boats. This will give you close contact with wildlife, virgin nature, cultural land-scapes and the forces of nature. Bicycles can be hired at the Tourist Information Office in Brønnøysund and on Vega. www.visithelgeland.com

Kayaking in the archipelago

The Trollfjell Geopark archipelago is made for kayaking. Whatever the wind direction, you can find an idyllic route for a kayak. The 12 000 islands, islets and skerries bring you into close contact with the natural elements and the teeming birdlife. With your base in Brønnøysund, you can take short trips near the town or longer ones to Torghatten and the neighbouring islands.

Kayak hire:

Nordnorsk Opplevelse, 1 +47 995 32 149

USEFUL ADDRESSES

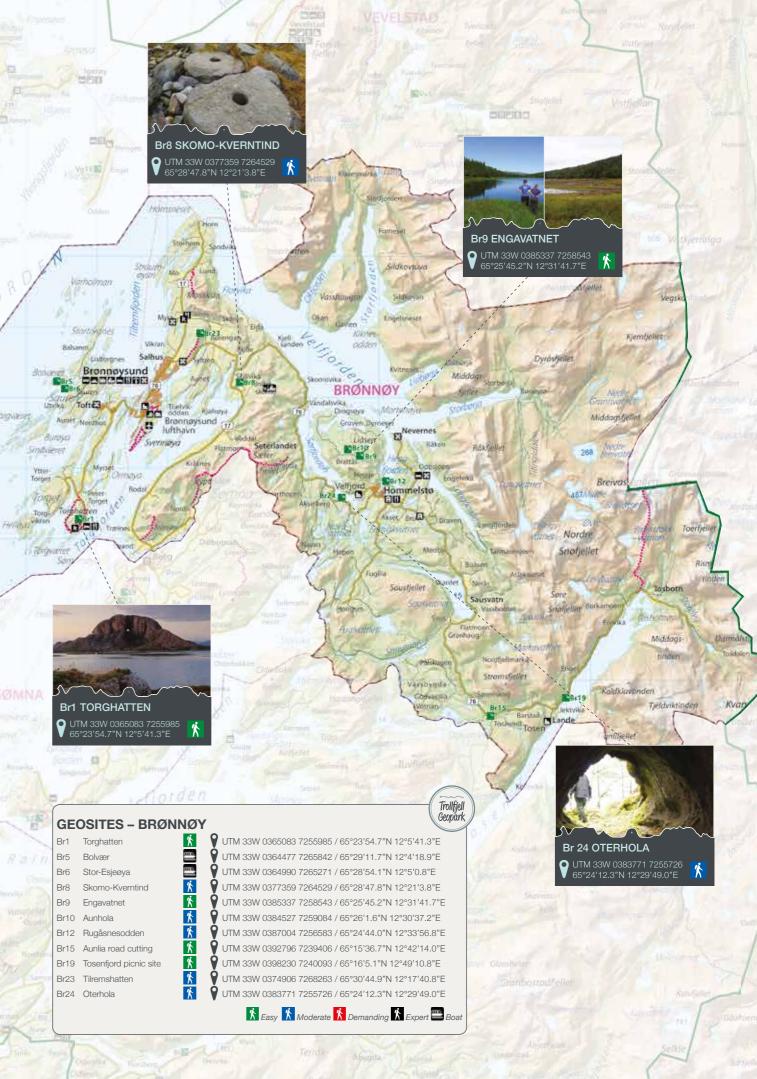
Overnight accommodation:

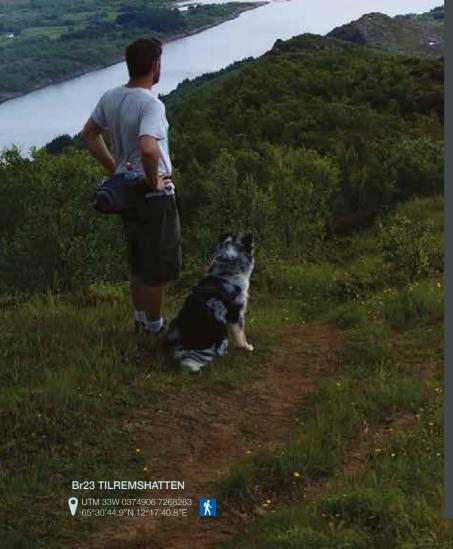
Motel – camp sites – flats

Tourist Information Office in Brønnøysund, 1 +47 75 01 80 00

www.visithelgeland.com www.kystriksveien.no





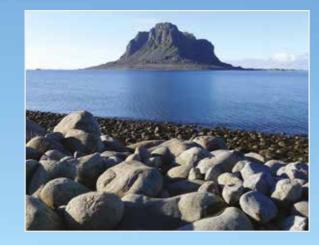


VEGA

There were scarcely any islands around Vega when the ice melted and Stone Age people settled by the shores, 90 metres above the present sea level. Today, Vega is surrounded by 6500 ialands, islets and skerries; new ones appear all the time, and the former seabed is farmed.

Land uplift and early settlement have been a gift for archaeologists. The archipelago is part of a strandflat that continues all the way out to Bremstein before the seabed dives to a great depth. Orchids that need limy soil are found on the former seabed beside Guristraumen. At Sundsvoll, the Vega granite stands out among the boulders. If it could speak, you would learn about the collision with America 400 million years ago.

The Vega Archipelago was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2004. Fishermen and farmers have lived here in sustainable harmony with nature for more than 1500 years. The best example is the age-old tradition of collecting down and eggs from the wild eiders. Each spring, bird tenders journey out to islets where the tradition has been maintained to make nesting houses and shape nests for the eiders. In return, they can collect the costly down from the nests when the birds have left them. The tenders hand-clean the down and use it for exclusive quilts.



Vg16 SUNDSVOLL AND SØLA

UTM 32W 0628534 7285642 65°40'0.7"N 11°47'46.7"E





Gateway to the World Heritage Area

In the former fishing harbour at Nes on Vega, the E-house Museum and the World Heritage Exhibition tell you the history of the traditional tending of eiders and World Heritage. You can handle genuine eider down and get to know the islanders through exhibitions and films. Most of the World Heritage Area is in the archipelago off Vega and scheduled boat trips go to the down islets of Lånan and the cotter's houses on www.verdensarvvega.no

Kayaking in the World Heritage Area

www.helgelandmuseum.no

the wealth of islands, islets and skerries, but also for the unique birdlife. Close on 250 bird species have been found nesting in the area. You can take day trips kayaking in narrow straits and picnicking in sheltered bays. The islets off Vega give you a glimpse of cultural history through 50-100 years. More open water is not far away, where kayaking is more challenging. To cap a perfect day, we recommend that you kayak to Vega Havhotell to enjoy a gourmet meal with Anna and Jon

Kayak hire:

1 +47 415 69 859

USEFUL ADDRESSES

Overnight accommodation:

Hotels – fishermen's shacks – holiday houses – camp sites Tourist Information Office on Vega, **1** +47 75 03 53 88

www.visithelgeland.com www.kystriksveien.no



VEVELSTAD

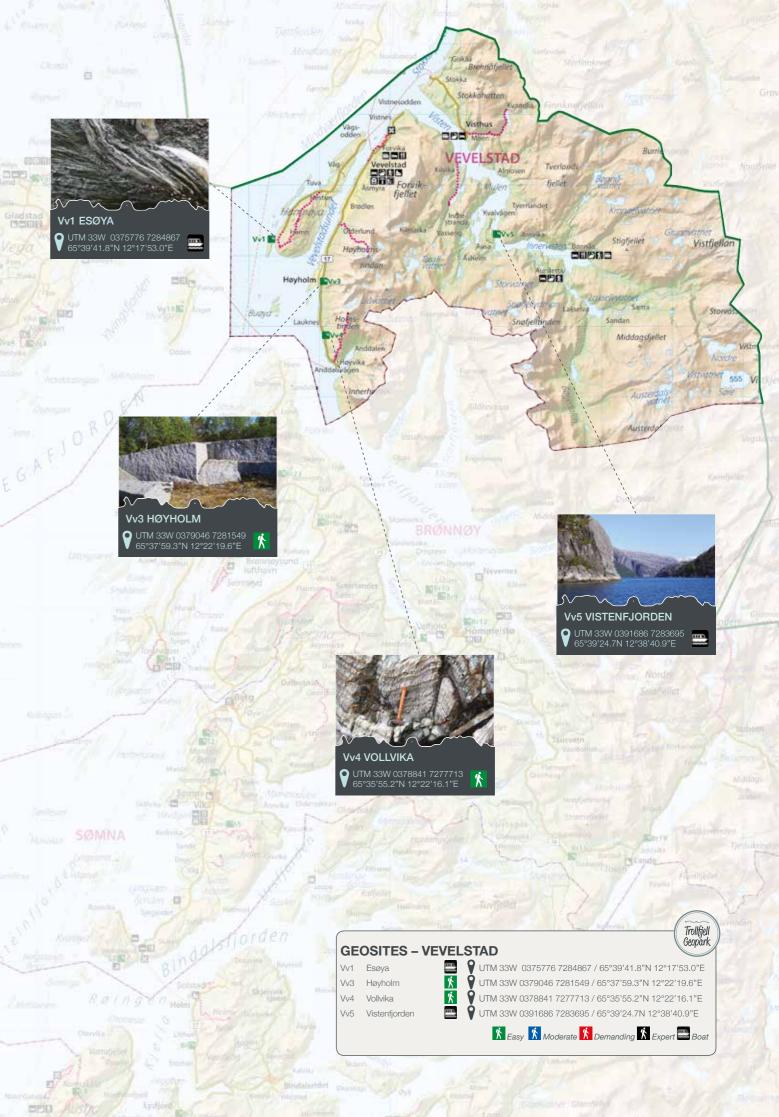
Vevelstad has been a meeting place for thousands of years. The rock carvings in Vistnesdalen date from the Late Stone Age and include stylised images of elk, reindeer and halibut. Steep mountains rise above the strandflat, including the 1239 m high Vistkjerringa, the tallest peak in the region, proudly reigning over some 900 other summits. Vistenfjorden is one of the cleanest fjords in the country and takes you into the Lomsdal-Visten National Park where you will find a special virgin landscape of rivers, lakes, woodlands and peaks.

Vevelstad has many marked hiking paths of varied difficulty and length. On the island of Esøya you can see the first visitor's book on the coast, where seafarers carved their names in soapstone between AD 1000 and 1800. Nidaros Cathedral in Trondheim was built early in this period; it is said using soapstone from Vevelstad.



Biotitt fra steinsamling ved Vevelstad Museum.





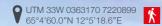
BINDAL

Bindal has always both concealed and created great assets. Even today, the quartz in the Bindal mountains conceals gold worth millions, and the rural museums at Terråk and Vassås show how Bindal people have exploited their timber in the best way. Ever since the Viking Age, spruce and pine have been transformed into safe and always sought after boats in Bindal. Bindal boats are still being built in the traditional manner and every summer they are prominent in Bindalsfjord during the Nordland boat regatta.

Seafarers often used to navigate with the help of "the Norwegian buck", the name they gave to the proud mountain, Heilhornet (1058 m a.s.l.). Kvannlitind (1095 m a.s.l.) is still higher, and Otto Sverdrup, the polar explorer, Arvid Sveli, the author, and all other Bindal people have seen the light of day at the foot of these mountains. Vitality and faith in the future prevail here, from the mountaintops to the floor of the fish cages.



Bi1 HEILHORNET





EXCITING THINGS TO DO

Hike up Heilhornet mountain

Heilhornet (1058 m a.s.l.) has three characteristic peaks and dominates the surrounding landscape. The mountain offers marvellous views all the way to the Swedish border in the east and to Torghatten and the archipelago in the west. A marked path takes you right to the summit, 5.5 km of moderately difficult terrain. You can park beside Fv 17, just over a kilometre north of Heilhornet Gjestegård. www.turkarthelgeland.no

Bindal rural museums (Helgeland Museum)

Vassås Rural Museum is an authentic cotter's farm, Solheim, whose buildings and their furnishing are from the time when Hilda Busch lived alone here. The rural museum in the centre of the village of Terråk tells you about the local tradition of building small wooden boats, the timber industry and the boreal rainforest. www.helgelandmuseum.no

USEFUL ADDRESSES

Overnight accommodation:

Guesthouse – holiday houses – cabins – camp sites

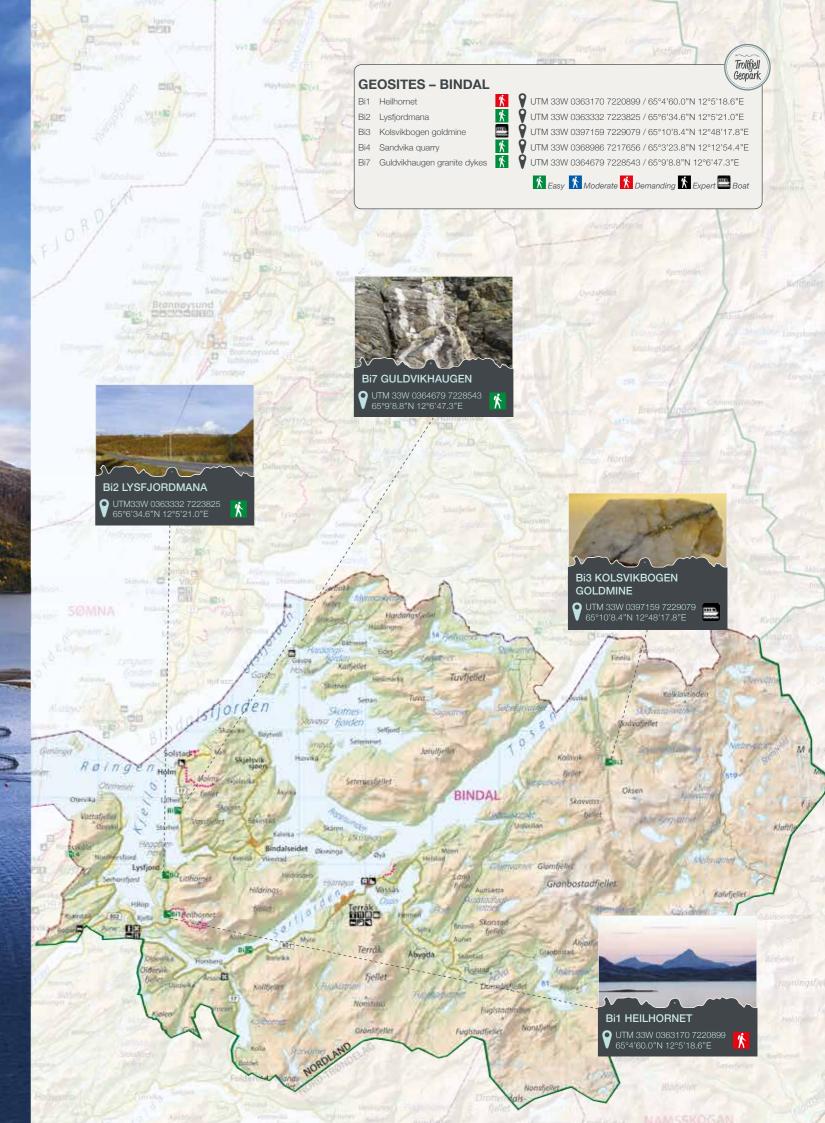
Tourist Information Office in Bindal (Bindal Council Offices), 3 +47 75 03 25 00

Tourist Information Office in Brønnøysund,

3 75 01 80 00

www.visithelgeland.com

www.kvstriksveien.no



SØMNA

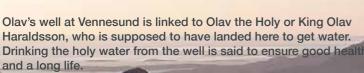
S9 SØMNESFJELLET

The strandflat and the mild climate since the Iron Age have resulted in the fertile farming conditions that have made Sømna the principal agricultural district in Nordland, with the northernmost wheat production in the world. The strandflat is cultivated right up to the hillsides where you can take improved paths up to wonderful viewing points. The 648 m high Lysingen is the most outstanding of these peaks.

Many cultural heritage monuments have been recorded, showing that there has been human activity here for a long time. The oldest shoe found in Norway, a leather shoe dated to 300 BC, was found in a bog in Sømna. Traces are left of where our ancestors chiselled out soapstone cooking vessels at Rødbergene, and at Heståsen a monumental stone stands proudly on the top of a huge boatshaped grave.

Near the foot of Mardalsfjellet is Triborgen, a large cobble-stone shore ridge 40-50 m a.s.l. It is proof of a higher sea level after the last Ice Age. A myth tells that a huge treasure is buried here, sufficient to provide food for all the inhabitants of Norway for 30 years.

Haraldsson, who is supposed to have landed here to get water. Drinking the holy water from the well is said to ensure good health



EXCITING THINGS TO DO

Sømna Rural Museum (Helgeland Museum)

Sømna Rural Museum is beautifully situated close to the church and provides information on the local cultural history with emphasis on the everyday life of farmers and fishermen-farmers and their families from buildings, including an old shop and a reconstructed stone-oven bakery where courses in baking and traditional food are held. Freshly baked bread straight from the oven is sold at these events.

Sømna has numerous marked paths, many leading views of farmland and the archipelago. Summits close to the main road (Fv 17) include Trælneshatten, Kjørsvikfjellet, Sør-fjellet on Sør-Kvaløya and Bjørufjellet. www.turkarthelgeland.no

USEFUL ADDRESSES

Overnight accommodation: Guesthouse – cabins – camp sites – holiday houses

Tourist Information Office in Brønnøysund,

) +47 75 01 80 00 www.kystriksveien.no

