

**FRI FLYT**





Nothern lights above Store  
Vaggastinden [left] and  
Nordausttinden [right] on the  
east side of North Lyngen.  
Photo: Klaus Kranebitter

## THE LYNGEN ALPS

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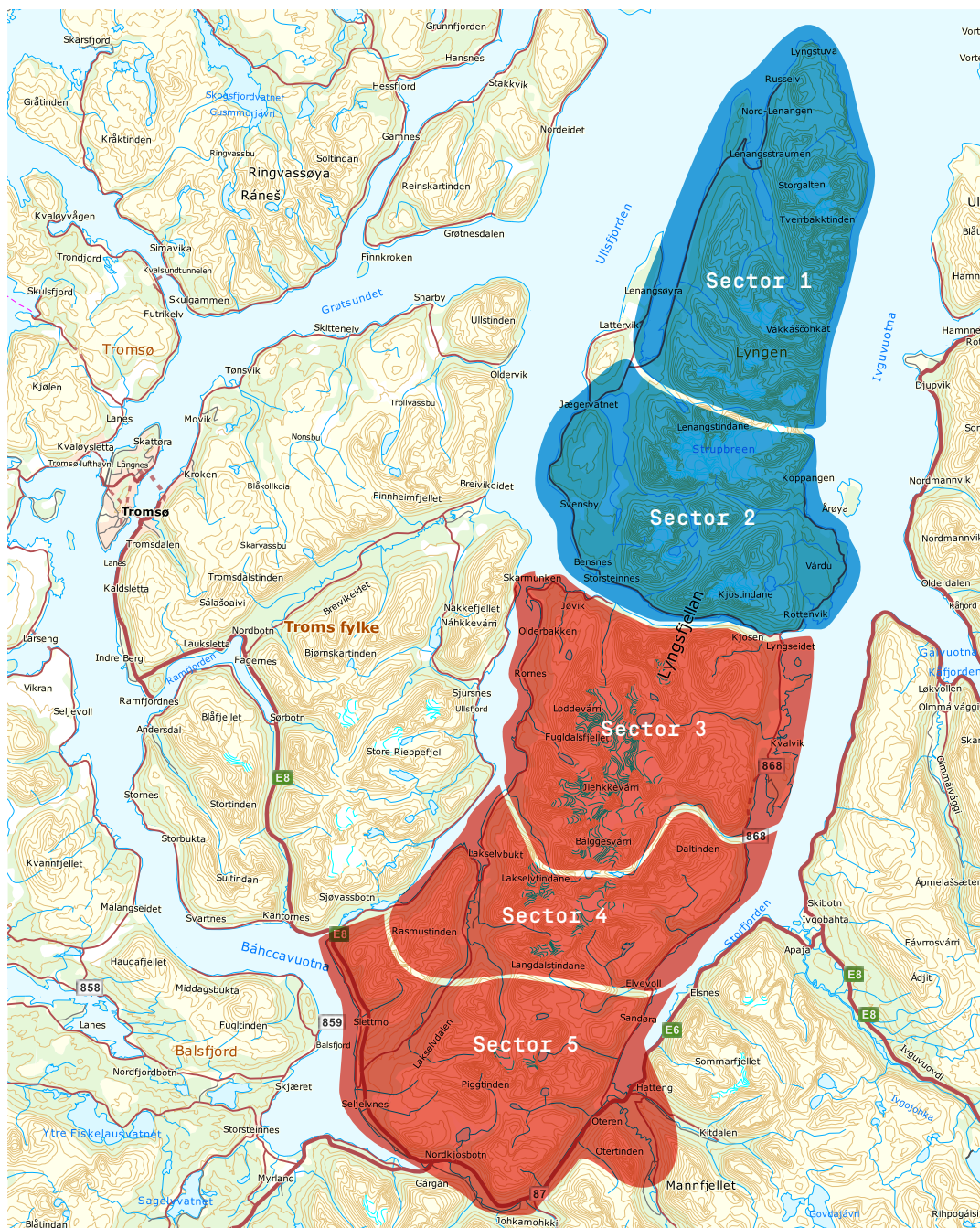
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The first winter ascent of Støvelen.

Photo: Philippe Batoux







Foreword**LYNGEN – INGO**

**W**elcome to this landscape. Some seek summits, other come for fjord adventures. Living, working and walking in this remote and, for some, wild part of Europe for most of my life has been deeply rewarding. Scaling summits, walking valleys, growing herbs, catching fish, and mastering the craft of being self-sufficient has indeed brought me a lot of pleasure. Slowly I have come to learn the ancient Sámi culture, so rich in beliefs and knowledge about natural phenomena. You do not have to go to Himalaya to find sacred summits – or lakes or rocks. You find true adventure where the borders between fantasy and reality are blurred.

A small dose of risk and danger belongs to true adventure. But remember the ethics of the philosopher and climber Arne Næss who lived here nearly a century ago – the mountains are not worth a finger.

Adventure is about coming home – a little changed due to a fugitive state of mind – and telling your story to other people.

And who am I? My Sámi name is Ingo-Beaza.

*October 2012, Håvard Nesheim*

From Holmbuktinden towards Bålgesvárri.

Photo: Asbjørn Fløden

## PREFACE

**T**he Lyngen Alps is the name of the mountainous region situated on the 1500 square kilometre large Lyngen peninsula, located at 69° North in Norway. The peninsula itself is relatively narrow, 10 to 30 km in width and stretching close to 90 km out to the northern tip, neighbouring the great North Atlantic Sea. The peninsula is mostly filled with sharp peaks and glaciated massifs of outstanding character, divided by valley systems with rivers and alpine meadows.

The region has 124 summits that rise above the 1000 metre limit, and is Northern Europe's most pronounced big mountain area.

The roads and the populated areas in Lyngen are situated close to the big fjords on West(W) and partly on the East(E) side. The inner part of the peninsula is a virtually untouched wilderness. There are a few small bridges, no big track systems and no painted cairns, stones or trees showing the way. The contrast of the deep fjords, the green coastline and the alpine meadows with huge blocks, the cold rivers, the Arctic fauna and birdlife, and the wild mountains gives a rich and rewarding experience.

One reason for the popularity of the Lyngen Alps is the ease of access. The peninsula is nearly cut in half, North(N) and South(S) Lyngen, by a fjord called Kjosen. The W side of N Lyngen has a road, the E side can be reached partly by road but mostly by boat. S Lyngen has roads on both sides.

Many valley systems cross the peninsula from W to E and from fjord to fjord. These give access to most mountain massifs, and there is no point that is more than a day's travel from a road. On the other hand, to travel in the N - S direction or vice versa is a more demanding project depending on the chosen route.

### ITTUGÁISSÁID SUODJEMEAHCCI

On February 20th 2004, the government established the Lyngsalpane as a protected landscape area [Ittugáissáid suodjemeahcci]. The protected

landscape area is 961.2 km<sup>2</sup> and includes the municipalities of Lyngen, Storfjord, Tromsø and Balsfjord. Observe all regulations, including:

- All plant and animal life is protected. You may however pick berries and mushrooms. Hunting and fishing is also permitted with reference to regulations.
- Motor vehicles are not allowed in the protected area. This also applies to transportation and landing by helicopters.
- Behave carefully so that you neither do any harm to nature or cultural values, nor disturb (animal) wildlife.

Close all gates in the grazing season and bring all litter back home. The Leave No Trace behaviour applies to the Lyngen Alps.

### WHAT YOU WILL NOT LEARN BY READING THIS BOOK

**This is a manual to where** in the Lyngen Alps steep skiing and alpine climbing can be done in winter. It is also a guide that describes a long, moderately difficult mountain trek done in summer or early autumn and 25 day walks.

This is not a book about how to climb demanding alpine peaks or steep ice and cold rock. It is not about how to ski steep couloirs or big snow flanks, travel as safe as possible in avalanche-prone areas and on glaciers. Neither is this guide about wilderness navigation, reading and understanding weather and the influence and consequences regarding snow conditions, crossing cold rivers or rescue techniques in any situation where it could be needed. Climbing and skiing in the Arctic environment requires knowledge and experience within all these disciplines.

The combination of an ever-changing and unpredictable Arctic maritime climate, the short days in early season and the avalanche-prone, snow-clad peaks makes Lyngen a real learning experience.



Marko Prezelj on the North face of  
Guhkesgáissá, The big Chasm.  
Photo: Trym Sæland



Preface

Arne Lillere enjoys the descent from Store  
Lakselvtinden. Photo: Kristian Sørensen





## SOME THINGS TO LEARN

### Safety considerations

In our time, glaciers are shrinking in Lyngen. This does not mean that they are getting safer. On the contrary, there are new crevasses opening up and an unstable process of glacier formations retreating. The snow cover on high laying glaciers, like the top plateau of Jiehkkevarri [1834], is normally accepted to be so thick that glaciers in the Lyngen Alps in winter can be crossed safely without ropes. This practice has spread to the lower laying glaciers, which can be more dangerous because of the thinner and weaker snow cover. The practice of not using ropes on glaciers, or even carrying them for emergency, has been proven fatal by numerous accidents.

The number of recorded avalanche victims in the Lyngen Alps is high. People have been killed in their homes, in vehicles on the road and on the mountains. The circumstances behind these grim statistics relate to variations in snowfall, temperature and wind direction. These three most important factors differ from one winter to another, and also differ very much in the same season.

These facts can be utilized to plan a trip accordingly. The long alpine climbing and skiing season (from beginning October to end of May) means that there are often great opportunities depending on when, what and where.

- Mobile phone coverage is at time of print steadily getting better, but still there will be areas without coverage.
- Police emergency: 112
- Medical emergency: 113
- The police will eventually involve the Alpine Rescue Group in Tromsø [ART]; rescue service related to accidents high up on faces or ridges.
- You might not get help the same day as the accident happens. If you have to stay where the situation occurs, be prepared to make it through the first night. In case of high winds combined with heavy snowfall, the helicopters will not be used, and the time for a possible rescue will expand.

### Staying alive

There has been a growing number of accidents and deaths related to steep skiing. As the development of skiing equipment and the difficulty of the runs have advanced, the numbers of deaths have grown. Now there are accidents every year, some in avalanches, some in falls with fatal consequences. Steep skiing and climbing can be highly addictive,

and those who are into it can be obsessed with where others go and what they do. This can lead to great dreams, but also into acute blindness for the reality in the actual situation. You will usually be skiing together with other people, which raises the issue of groupthink. Strong individuals can lead a group into dangerous terrain. Other members might be uncomfortable with this, but dare not speak their minds.

The ever-changing weather in the Arctic can give rise to days with perfect conditions. It is easy to forget that these same circumstances also create some highly dangerous conditions.

If you are travelling from abroad or elsewhere in Norway to ski in Lyngen, investigate the weather pattern in the period before you arrive. Ask locals, look for information on the web or hire a local guide for maximum security and knowledge.

### Seasons and Weather

In general, the weather in N Norway is rather unpredictable. The Lyngen Alps function as a barrier for the low-pressure systems that come in from the west. Most of the precipitation, either it is snow, rain or something in-between, falls down on the western flanks of the mountains. This leaves the eastern side of the Lyngen Alps as one of the most arid areas in Norway. The Lyngen Alps are located at the same latitude as the northern tip of Alaska. As the location is at the coastline, the climate is overall quite mild. Still, it is important not to underestimate the weather. The changes in weather can be sudden, and it can get seriously cold (especially when windy and wet), even in summer.

Meteorologically speaking, summer lasts from about mid-May to the end of August. In this period there are around 60 days with average temperature between 10 and 20 ° Celsius, measured at sea level. The sun never sets between 20th of May and 22th of July, enabling activities like bathing in the glorious light of the midnight sun in the middle of the night. Winter in the high mountains lasts from the middle/end of October to the end of April/beginning of May. Spring and autumn seem to have just arrived when the season changes once again. In winter there is an average of 20 days with temperatures below -10 ° Celsius, again measured at sea level. So, an average winter day is not very cold – taking the latitude into consideration. Very often the wind chill factor will be quite high, especially early in the sea-

son. The sun is hiding below the horizon between 24th of November and 22th of January. Climbing in the Polar night, as the period is named, can be a stark experience. Skiing in the same period is more unpredictable.

The prevailing wind direction in the last few weeks before the trip will say something about the potential avalanche danger.. Long lasting weather with quite warm temperatures and wind from SW/W is a quite normal Arctic maritime climatic condition. These conditions often lead to quite heavy snowfall in the Lyngen Alps. The geographical layout and the height of the Lyngen Alps combined, makes the peninsula function as a barrier for the prevailing SW/W low-pressures. This is the main reason for build-up of thick, unstable snowpacks on E slopes and in other wind prone localizations.

#### ***Early season – October to the end of December***

The snow cover starts building up on the high peaks from the middle/end of September. As the snow cover creeps lower, the snow starts to shift with the often-prevailing W winds, and the snow is often not stable. Still, there are emerging possibilities. In November, daylight fades, but when the sun is below the horizon the light from the moon and the Aurora Borealis, the Northern Light, can create magic trips. For safety considerations, this is a better period for climbing than skiing. Every year there are avalanche accidents in this period, mostly involving skiers, just after the first snowfalls at the high peaks.

#### ***Middle season – January and February***

January can be a cold and dark experience on the high peaks. The snowpack is usually not stable, but there is still alpine ice forming from avalanches and changing wet and cold weather. End of February brings the sun, and depending of the amount of precipitation, the conditions improve. Expect powder skiing on faces in all directions, the sun is not strong enough to have any effect on the snow structure.

#### ***High season – March and April***

As for choosing a time to visit the Lyngen Alps, this is the time to come. But choose your time accordingly to the weather pattern. To ski or climb here in the middle of a prolonged period of SW/W high winds combined with snowfall can involve real danger. Often there are long periods of stable weather

and of stable snow conditions.

Expect a combination of powder and hard surfaces from the middle of April. In this period, there will usually be spring snow on all S facing slopes. After the passage of a weather front, there will often be plenty of powder to ski.

#### ***Late season – May***

This period, when there is 24 hours of daylight, can bring very stable conditions. The snowpack is usually at its thickest and is fairly stable. The sun has impact on the snow structure, but there will still be less slush than further S in Norway or the European Alps. The northerly aspects of the mountain ranges can offer good skiing and climbing the N-faces is not as stark as earlier in the winter. This time of year wet avalanches also create deep ice runnels in the couloirs facing S, W and E.

Prevailing wind directions, weather statistics, snow conditions and avalanche warnings can be studied on following web sites: [www.varsom.no](http://www.varsom.no) and [www.yr.no](http://www.yr.no).

## **DIRECTIONAL INFORMATION**

- The terms «right hand», «left hand», «on the right» and «on the left» are relative to the direction the climber/skier/trekker is moving.
- Distance for approaches are given from the parking place for the given route, and to the start of the climb. Descriptions of approaches, the actual climbing routes and descents, are based on the line that is usually followed. The safest line can vary from year to year, from one season to another and even from one week to the next.
- Compass directions, north, northwest etc. are given with the capital letter as N, NW etc., but this is indicative only; they are not precise bearings. In bad weather conditions, the traveller must be able to judge factors involved in wilderness navigation, like reading maps, take bearings and use a compass, altimeter, GPS - and the very important factors concerning when and where to dig down and wait.

## **ALPINE SKI TOURING**

**Alpine ski touring** is the activity that attracts most people. This has not always been the situation. Al-

Albert Leichtfried and Benny Purner  
climbing in the Iselvossen area.  
Photo: Klaus Kranebitter





Alistair Street speeding down the Milbourne couloir, Store Reindalstinden.  
Photo: Graham Austick





pine climbing and cross-country skiing with light-weight Nordic equipment were once the main outdoor activities in wintertime. There are of course exceptions, but in general the advancement in ski technology has led to steeper skiing. Today, many of the climbing routes from the early days of modern alpine climbing are skied down; especially the big, quite steep couloir lines from a ridge. Many people will find the remaining climbing to the very summit too exposed without ropes and protection equipment. Depending on the season, we highly recommend ski-crampons, crampons and ice axes as basic equipment on most of the ski tours. If the skiing involves glacier crossing, we recommend carrying equipment for crevasse rescue.

## SKI ROUTE DESCRIPTIONS AND DIFFICULTY GRADES

We use an adopted version of the International French Adjectival System (IFAS):

- **F:** facile/easy: Straightforward, snow at an easy angle.
- **PD:** peu difficile/moderate: A little bit steeper with some narrow passages.
- **AD:** assez difficile/quite difficult: Continuous 20-25° flanks, or shorter sections of 25-30°.
- **D:** difficile/difficult: Flanks of 30-35°, or shorter sections of 35-40°.
- **TD:** très difficile/very difficult: Sustained 40-45°, or shorter sections of 45-50°.
- **ED:** extrêmement difficile/extremely difficult: Extreme ski-terrain with longer sections > 45°. Only for specialist skiers.

## ALPINE CLIMBING

**The nature of the vertical landscape:** the ever changing topography with gullies, rock ribs, pillars, walls, snowfields, ridges and continuing mountain ranges, the long and changing season – It all sums up to endless possibilities for alpine climbing. The rock in the Lyngen Alps has a «modern» reputation of being of poor quality. If poor quality means that the rock is often so compact that finding belays can prove challenging, then this can be correct. If poor quality means flakes and loose rock at some point in most of the routes this can also be correct. But mostly on the alpine routes in this guide, poor rock quality will not be felt as a prime concern. It is hard to find big-mountain areas without flakes and loose rock. The Lyngen Alps offer big alpine



Finn Kortner on his way to Store Lenangstinden. Photo: Stein Tronstad

climbs, and accordingly experience of climbing rock of changing quality is part of the alpine game. On some routes there are rope-lengths with little or no rock protection as a result of the compact nature of the rock, often covered with natural water streaks. Usually this translates to a cover of alpine ice in wintertime, interesting to climb but often too thin for ice screws. Summertime rock routes are not represented in this book, but there are routes done in all areas of the Lyngen Alps, most of them with adventurous quality, many of them with continuously compact and climbable rock. In fact, there are more routes done in summer than in winter.

Approaches and descents are serious considerations, they can be both time consuming and dangerous. Except for some climbing routes in The Kjøstindane area, and some of the icefalls on the coastline S of Lyngseidet, skis are always involved in approaches. Both cross-country and randonnée equipment can be used. Many climbers prefer cross-country skis on long approaches as they are lightweight and move fast. Randonnée skis that can be combined with climbing boots are also used. Descents for climbing routes are often the same way as up. If not, make sure you have a good plan as to where to descend in case the weather changes, whiteout conditions can happen in the space of minutes. The length of a route and the vertical gain of the route is never the same in Lyngen. The height where the climbing starts is given higher up because of an initial snowfield or gully. Sometimes maximum height given is the height of the summit. Many routes include a considerable distance along a ridge after a steep wall climb.

The total time includes the approach, the climb, the descent back to the skis and then back to the road. This will vary for each ascent depending on weather, snow conditions and the capability of the group. Climbing time is rarely given, as this depends on the ability and motivations of the climbers, the specific nature of the climb and the present climbing conditions.

## CLIMBING ROUTE DESCRIPTIONS AND DIFFICULTY GRADES

By their nature, snow, ice and mixed climbs are subject to changing weather and snow conditions. The descriptions given in this book are indicative in the sense that the information must be inter-

preted according to the nature of the terrain, the snow cover, changes in weather and the ability of the climber. The guidebook information will never replace experience or common sense, nor should it stifle the imagination of those that come to do a new climb. Routes are described according to the most commonly followed line, or described as the first ascenders did it. Because of the nature of the vertical terrain with changing rock ribs, snow and ice filled gullies, there are always possible variations of the route described. The difficulty of the routes described is expressed using the dual grade rating system: one overall difficulty grade, and then a grade for specific technical difficulty.

This system has now been adapted for alpine and mountaineering routes, and has been used in numerous publications, becoming accepted by most mountaineers. This system allows a reasonably accurate assessment of the dangers and difficulties involved. Despite the fact that we utilize the dual grade system in our descriptions of routes, grades will always be subjective. Keep in mind that climbers have a tendency to focus on the Arab numeral, i.e. the second, technical grade, thereby ignoring all the other factors that sum up the character and difficulty of the route.

### OVERALL DIFFICULTY

The overall difficulty grades run from I to VI. There are no routes described with higher overall grade than VI in this guidebook.

The overall difficulty grade is based on factors as: length, seriousness, remoteness, approach and decent dangers and difficulties, whether the climbing is sustained, the nature and character of the route, the number of hard pitches and overall objective dangers.

**I:** Short route, rapid access and a relatively easy descent. Often limited objective dangers.

**II:** Longer route, often with limited objective dangers, or shorter route with some technical difficulty and a relatively easy descent.

**III:** Longer route with some technical difficulty and may have a relatively difficult descent. There may be some objective dangers.

**IV:** Very long (approx. 800 m. +) route with some technical difficulty. There can be some objective dangers, and in bad conditions considerable objective dangers. It may have a long approach and a long or difficult descent.

**V:** Long or very long route on an alpine face and/

or a sharp ridge crest with towers and cornices. The climbing can be bold and delicate. The climbers must have a high level of ability and confidence in alpine terrain; i.e. route finding, placing protection and climbing of difficult and sustained pitches. Retreat from the route can be difficult. There may be considerable objective dangers and a long and difficult or dangerous descent.

**VI:** Route on a large face that may be climbed in a long day by very good climbers, or they can be multi-day big wall climbs. Many pitches are characterized by factors as: poor protection, difficulty, often bad conditions or complex route finding. Retreat can be uncertain, and the descent may be long and/or difficult. May be exposed to considerable objective dangers, and in bad conditions exposure for considerable objective dangers.

## TECHNICAL DIFFICULTY

**A1 to A7.** Alpine-ice. More «fluffy» and air-filled than waterfall-ice, often formed by continuous avalanches.

**W1 to W7.** Waterfall-ice.

**M1 to M7.** Mixed climbing grades, combination of ice climbing and dry tooling.

Snow; Steepness given in degrees.

## TERMINOLOGY

**Route names have not been translated** unless an accepted English version is known.

The two terms couloir and gully are used to differentiate between corridors of snow, ice or rock in mountain faces. Couloir tends to be easier angled and more open than gully, but neither term is subject to exact limits. For the purpose of this guide couloir is mostly an open channel with slopes that are generally less than 50°, and gully mostly steeper and narrower than couloir. The term runnel is used on some climbing routes, and describes a very steep and narrow passage between rock formations, often ice-filled.

The terms pass, saddle, col, notch and gap define passages between peaks or massifs.

Pass describes a relatively low altitude broad passage between mountains or mountain massifs.

Saddle defines a broad passage, in higher altitude than pass.

Col defines a narrower passage than saddle, in high altitude

Notch defines a narrow passage on a ridge crest or between sharp peaks.

Gap defines a deep cleft between peaks, and is sometime used.

As there is no consensus regarding all these terms, and considering that some route descriptions are based on single reports, there may be a degree of inconsistency in the use of these terms.

Most of the mountains in Lyngen can be both skied and climbed. In this book only some of the possible routes are described. The symbols **S** for skiing and **C** for climbing indicates the routes you will find on the specific mountain. The colour of the route indicates if it is a skiing route or a climbing route, red for skiing, blue for climbing and black for a route that described both.

## THE SÁMI NAMES IN NATURE – MAP AND COMPASS FOR THE TRAVELLER

**Different word combinations** often put the Sámi names for locations together, and these can give a description of the location in many different ways. As an example, Guovdageaidnu [Kautokeino] gives us the information that this is the path or direction to an open field of grass close to a lake. «Geaidnu» means «way to» [in the sense of travelling to], «guovda» means «an opening close to a lake where grass grows». In this fashion, the language can give a lot of characteristics that combined can give a very precise description of both landscape and the changing forms of the landscape. Another dimension is the representation of danger or other features giving information on how to behave in nature. Names that contain the words njira, ráhpis, vieratak, and riddo [riddi] are connected to mountain slopes and avalanche prone areas that need consideration and thought before moving into the landscape. As an example, the name of the mountain Sorbmegáisá means «the mountain where you could die» [or have an accident]. And indeed, tragically fatal avalanches have occurred there. This knowledge found in the Sámi names used in the Lyngen Alps and elsewhere in Arctic Norway was lost by the practice of only accepting Norwegian names on official maps. From 1950, original Sámi names were again allowed on economical and topographical maps. Still, the long time tradition of neglecting this information in new maps continues. It seems important that the Sámi authorities should influence a change in this development. Sámi word list; see the Appendix page 318.



Bjørn Hofmann on the first ascent of The Nállangáisi traverse. Photo: Eivind Smeland







Simon Sjuisønn Rørtveit Nesheim and Ingrid B. Stenersen in the family paradise of Jægervatn, North Lyngen. Photo: Sjur Nesheim





## LYNGEN HAUTE ROUTE

**This topic has inspired many dreams,** and indeed also many good adventures. This guide describes one long-distance trek, The Lyngen Trek, that could be done as a walking trek in summer without specialised gear. And, of course, in winter as a cross-country ski trek. Traversing the Lyngen Alps from S to N, or vice versa, has been done in several ways in both summer and winter over the years.

The History section touches this theme, and several reports exist – see the Appendix and the literature/ internet resource list.

## WALKING AND FAMILY ACTIVITIES

**All over the peninsula** there are great opportunities for weekend trekking and day walks. Most of the valleys have good paths, often leading up to spectacular scenery close to glaciers and great peaks. There are ample opportunities to wild camping, water is never a problem. There are a lot of bouldering possibilities, the greatest game of play. There are fishing possibilities in the lakes, not nearly as good as inland Northern Norway, but still worth a try. And there are good possibilities for trips with children close to the sea at both coastlines of the peninsula, up to at least the glacier of Steindalsbreen in the southern part of Lyngen, around the great lake of Jægervatnet in the northern part and up many beautiful valleys with good paths and excitement for children in all ages.

# LYNGEN LOGISTICS; TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION

The Lyngen Alps are situated ~2000km north of Oslo, the capital of Norway. The easiest way to get to The Lyngen Alps from Southern Norway is to fly to Tromsø. There are several departures with SAS and Norwegian every day. Flight time from Oslo is ~two hours.

## LYNGEN PORTS OF ENTRANCE

Svensby  
Laksvatnet  
Vollan/Nordkjosbotn  
Oteren  
Lyngseidet

## BY BUS

There is a bus connection from Tromsø to the Lyngen peninsula two to three times a day. However, local bus transportation is limited once on the peninsula. All local bus routes can be found at: [www.tromskortet.no](http://www.tromskortet.no). The ferry timetables can be found at: [www.bjorkliden.no](http://www.bjorkliden.no). For information on timetables and prices on ferries and buses you can also telephone (from Norway), 177; chose no. 6 for Troms. From abroad call +47 71 58 78 00.

## BY CAR

If you are heading for the N part of the peninsula the fastest way is to drive to Breivikeidet. Follow E8 22,7km to Fagernes, then Rv91 23,3km to Breivikeidet and from there catch the ferry across Ullsfjorden to Svensby on the W side of Lyngen. To be sure to get the car on the ferry, calculate at least one hour from Tromsø to Breivikeidet according to the ferry timetable. From Svensby either head N towards Nordlenangen (~45min) or E towards Lyngseidet (~30min).

If you are heading for the southern part of the peninsula (in the guide named South Lyngen), the best option is to follow the E8 to Nordkjosbotn and then follow E6 to Oteren. Reaching Oteren, turn left towards Lyngseidet. The trip takes ~1h and 30min to





The Ullsfjorden ferry

Photo: Eivind Smeland







LYNGEN ACCESS POINTS

-  Airport
-  Ferry
-  Approach
-  Express boat

Oteren, and another 30min to Lyngseidet.

**From Oteren to Lyngseidet** you will pass several entry points for interesting valleys, glaciers and high mountain areas. From Elvevollen, 11km from Oteren, the high pastures of Elvevoldalen can be reached. From here it is also possible to cross the peninsula by following Langdalselva.

From Elvenes, 16 km from Oteren, the great valley of Steindalen with the Steindal glacier can be reached. From Furuflaten, 26 km from Oteren, Lyngsdalen gives access to Jiehkkevárri from the E.

**If the western part of the South Lyngen**, like Lakselvtindane, Guhkesgáisá or Jiehkkevárri from W or N are desired goals then follow the E8 to Laksvatnet, 47.8km from Tromsø. Turn left at Laksvatnet, and follow Fv293 19.3km to Lakselvbukt. From Lakselvbukt there are several options, north to Jøvik, 26.8 km from Lakselvbukt for the northern reaches of Jiehkkevárri. Pass Holmbukta and Fugldalen for the western reaches of Jiehkkevárri. Just before the small community of Lakselvbukt there is an option to cross the river by a small bridge; if Piggtind and the areas around this mountain are the goal, continue down the road straight S and park under desired goals. If Guhkesgáisá or Ellendalen are the goal, cross the bridge as if going to Lakselvbukt but turn right after the bridge and follow a small road for a few km up to Slettmo or to adequate parking.

#### **BY EXPRESS BOAT**

**Torghatten Nord** runs an **express** boat-service between Tromsø and Skjervøy. The boat stops at Nordlenangen four days a week. Nordlenangen is close to the northern tip of the Lyngen Alps. From Nordlenangen you can catch a bus to areas further S on the peninsula. For timetables and more information, send an e-mail to firmapost@torghatten-nord.no or check timetables at www.Lyngenalp.no/see transportation. We would like to remind you that local bus transportation is limited.

#### **Transportation Lyngen**

+47 777 10 059/+47 482 83 277

post@lyngenbuss.no

www.lyngenbuss.no

*LyngenBuss will arrange all kinds of small trips around the Lyngen peninsula, and will transfer to Tromsø or other destinations. Contact for special inquires. The distance from Tromsø to Lyngseidet*

*is 71km + ferry [20min]. Buses can host small and / or larger parties.*

## **ACCOMMODATION AND ADVENTURE**

**You will find various accommodation** options in Svensby, Lyngseidet, Nordlenangen, Koppangen and Furuflaten. Lyngenalp, [www.lyngenalp.no](http://www.lyngenalp.no), provides detailed information of the accommodation available at the time of travel.

For a truly different experience try sail and ski. Skiers sleep on board a boat, getting off every morning to ski. The local tourist information, Tromsø, and internet can provide more information about sail and ski and the operators related to the Lyngen Alps in this marked [See "Companies"; The Lyngen Alps] The Norwegian Trekking Association [Den Norske Turistforening; DNT] maintains one unstaffed mountain cabin at Jægervatnet. You can also stay in the city of Tromsø, which offers a wide range of accommodation options. In Tromsø and Storfjord you will find youth hostels [only open during the summer months]. Most places that offer accommodation also serve food, and many also offer different services from guiding to glaciers tours, trekking, fishing or boat rentals.

#### **Magic Mountain Lodge**

+47 777 11 130

post@lyngsalpeprodukter.no

www.magicmountainlodge.no

*Magic Mountain Lodge in Lyngseidet has 15 ensuite rooms with a view over the Lyngenfjord.*

*Choose between single, double, twin, or triple.*

#### **Lyngen Lodge**

+47 476 27 853/+47 47 627 853

info@lyngenlodge.com

www.lyngenlodge.com

*The lodge is located Djupvik in Kåfjord. Caters for 18 guests in 8 en-suite twin and double bedrooms. Features sauna, outdoor jacuzzi, library and bar.*

#### **Sørheim Brygge**

+47 412 01 480

post@sorheim-brygge.no

www.sorheim-brygge.no

*Located at Lyngseidet, has 3 cabins for hire, 6 persons can be accommodated in each cabin. The cabins have a high standard and a view towards the Lyngen fjord.*

### **Koppangen Brygger**

+47 924 78 555

post@koppangenbrygger.no

www.koppangenbrygger.no

*Located north of Lyngseidet, in Koppangen, where the road ends. Four apartments, two larger units with their own sauna. Fully equipped kitchens and outdoor jacuzzi.*

### **Johnsen gården**

+47 400 56 220

kristina@giaever.no

*The "Johnsen-building" has 6 apartments with 4 beds in each. The apartments are located centrally on Lyngseidet.*

### **Lyngen Havfiske- og Tursenter**

+47 777 13 500

post@lyngenhavfiske.no

www.lyngenhavfiske.no

*Located at Nordlenangen. Five fishing huts with 2 levels, and 2 apartments. Fully equipped kitchens.*

### **Larsvoll gård**

+47 900 75 865

booking@larsvoll.no

www.larsvoll.no

*The cabin is located on a farm in Oksvik, 5 km south of Lyngseidet. It has a fully equipped kitchen, sauna and 3 bedrooms with 6 - 8 beds. Offers meeting facilities.*

### **Lyngsalpene Fiskeferie, Jægervatn**

+47 918 68 473

lasse-ly@frisurf.no

*Two nice houses can be hired for six and four persons, each with two separate bedrooms. Fully equipped kitchen, baths with shower and wc.*

### **Toften Husflid og Ferie**

+47 970 16 240/+47 482 96 415

busehuse@hotmail.com

www.toftenlyngen.no

*Located in Svensby. In the house you will find a well-equipped kitchen, living room, sauna, washing machine, 2 bedrooms with a total of 6 beds.*

### **Svensby tursenter**

+47 777 12 225

post@svenbytursenter.no

www.svensbytursenter.no

*Family friendly cabins located on Svensby. The camping features a service building, sauna, massage, jacuzzi, function room and pub.*

### **Solheim fritidsgård**

+ 47 777 12 192/+47 926 06 293

oa-teig@frisurf.no

*Cabin located on a farm with animals in Svensby. Two rooms with 2-3 beds, and a loft. Well equipped kitchen.*

## **GROCERY SHOPS**

**You will find grocery shops** in Nordlenangen, Lenangsøyra, Lyngseidet, Furufalten, Lakselvbukt, Oteren and Nordkjosbotn.

## **CAMPING**

**If you plan to sleep in a tent**, caravan or mobile home you may do so anywhere, except in cultivated fields and lay-bys. You can stay for as long as you wish on the condition that your tent, caravan or mobile home is no closer than 150m to the nearest house and not inside a fenced area. At Svensby Tursenter there are caravan facilities.

## **MAPS**

**Detailed maps of the area** can be bought at local bookshops in Tromsø, Lyngseidet, or at the tourist information office in Tromsø.

Furthermore, in the city hall at Lyngseidet you can see a miniature model of the Lyngen Alps, created by Jarle Nilsen.

## **THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES**

### **Storfjord**

www.storfjord.kommune.no

The Storfjord municipality is the most southern of the six communities in the northern part of Troms. Storfjord has ~1880 inhabitants who live along the fjord and in the valleys. Storfjord is enriched with a fantastically beautiful nature with fjords, mountains, valleys, and tundra.

### **Lyngen**

www.lyngen.kommune.no

The Lyngen municipality consists of the northern part of the peninsula between the Ullsfjord and the Lyngenfjord, and it is known for its fantastic nature. Lyngen has approximately 3200 inhabitants. Around 800 live in the centre of Lyngseidet. Agriculture is the main source of employment.



**Tromsø**

[www.tromso.kommune.no](http://www.tromso.kommune.no)

Tromsø is the largest city and municipality in the north, with 69 000 inhabitants. Tromsø has the northernmost university in the world. The highest mountain in Troms County, Jiehkkevárri, is found here.

**Balsfjord**

[www.balsfjord.kommune.no](http://www.balsfjord.kommune.no)

The municipality of Balsfjord has 5500 inhabitants. It stretches from flat agricultural landscapes to rugged mountain ranges. Storsteinnes is the administrative centre, and Balsfjord covers the south-western part of the Lyngen peninsula.

**NET RESOURCES****Lyngenalp**

[www.lyngenalp.no](http://www.lyngenalp.no),

The main web portal for orientation on accommodation and activities.

**The Northern Playground.**

[www.lyngen.name](http://www.lyngen.name)

This is the single most important and best source of information about the peaks in the Lyngen Alps. Interactive image map. English language.

**Natur i Nord-Troms**

[www.naturinordtroms.no](http://www.naturinordtroms.no)

Flash panoramas and other information related to the Lyngen Alps. Features a report with good pictures of a long-distance trek similar to the Lyngen Trek. Norwegian language.

**Visit Norway**

[www.visitnorway.com](http://www.visitnorway.com)

The official travel guide to Norway. Good information on The Lyngen Alps and the local communities.

**Mountaineering in the Land of The Midnight Sun**

[www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org)

Mrs Abrey Le Blond's book about her adventures in Lyngen 1908.

**ADVENTURE COMPANIES****Ascent/Descent:**

+ 47 948 58 832

[ascentdescent@gmail.com](mailto:ascentdescent@gmail.com)

[www.ascentdescent.com](http://www.ascentdescent.com)

IFMGA certified guide service.

**Active Tromsø**

+47 481 37 433

[post@activetromso.no](mailto:post@activetromso.no)

[www.activetromso.no](http://www.activetromso.no)

Guided glacier trips.

**Midnight Sun Mountain Guides**

[espen@msgm.org](mailto:espen@msgm.org)

IFMGA certified guide service.

**Lyngen Guide**

+47 922 39 880

[post@lyngenguide.no](mailto:post@lyngenguide.no)

[www.lyngenguide.no](http://www.lyngenguide.no)

IFMGA certified guide service.

**Lyngen Lodge:**

+47 476 27 853

[info@lyngenlodge.com](mailto:info@lyngenlodge.com)

[www.lyngenlodge.com](http://www.lyngenlodge.com)

Summit to Sea, off piste ski, fishing.

**Tour In Lyngenalps:**

+47 917 34 595

[post@tourinlyngenalps.no](mailto:post@tourinlyngenalps.no)

[www.tourinlyngenalps.no](http://www.tourinlyngenalps.no)

Glacier trips, fishing and dog sledding.

**Mountain Spirit Guides:**

[office@mountainspirit.info](mailto:office@mountainspirit.info)

[www.mountain-spirit-guides.com](http://www.mountain-spirit-guides.com)

IFMGA certified guide service. Ski and sail.

**Lyngen Havfiske- og Tursenter**

+47 777 13 500

[post@lyngenhavfiske.no](mailto:post@lyngenhavfiske.no)

[www.lyngenhavfiske.no](http://www.lyngenhavfiske.no)

Fishing and dog sledding.

**Farout Event and Adventure:**

+47 905 61 990

[info@farout.no](mailto:info@farout.no)

[www.farout.no](http://www.farout.no)

Tailored made trips.

**Boreal Yachting:**

+47 993 81 360

[post@boreal-yachting.no](mailto:post@boreal-yachting.no)

[www.boreal-yachting.no](http://www.boreal-yachting.no)

Sail and ski, climbing.





Yngvar Johan Valen heading into the  
Lyngen Alps, stage 2, The Lyngen Trek.  
Photo: Sjur Nesheim



The Mother of First Ascents: Miss Elizabeth Hawkins-Whitshed; Mrs Elizabeth Main; Mrs Aubrey Le Blond. Photo from: Mountaineering in the Land of The Midnight Sun [1908]





## SOME ANECDOTAL FRAGMENTS FROM THE HISTORY OF MOUNTAINEERING IN THE LYNGEN ALPS.

*"Now away we go towards the top. Many still, small voices are calling 'Come Higher'"*  
-John Muir, 1911.

**A**s we have gazed at the mountains throughout the millennia, the human imagination has stood in continuous awe. With this continuity in mind we can ask where does the history of any mountain really start?

Many may acknowledge the fact that mountains can come to 'possess' individuals with an extraordinary force of attachment. To accept this fact is to accept that there was a history of scaling the mountains long before the written word.

There is a story of a young man, living in one of the farms close to the fjord Kjosén, who one day climbed to the top of Urdkjerringa. This is the sharp, pointed needle first climbed in 1911 by the Germans Kurt Endell and Wilhelm Martin. The local youngster did his climb in the early 1930's. Why did he do it? "Wonder is the first of all passions", philosopher René Descartes declared in 1645. The story of this young man tells that when he arrived at the sharp summit, he found some old papers in a tin can. He brought this with him down to the farm, where he proudly presented it for his father. His father said that what was up there, belonged there. So he climbed up again and put the tin can back, and buried it under some stones. There must be many stories like the boy's that remain untold - stories from before written history, stories of those living below the peaks with awe and wonder.

### THE ERA OF EXPLORING

**"I did it boys!"** The American woman Lynn Hill proclaimed, after having climbed the up to then hardest free route in the world, "The Nose" on El Capitan, Yosemite Valley, California.

There is one person standing out in the history of climbing peaks in the Lyngen Alps; namely "The Mother of First Ascents"; Miss Elizabeth Hawkins-Whitshead. She was dubbed many a nickname - Mrs. Elizabeth Main, Mrs. Aubray Le Blond, or as the Norwegian philosopher P. W. Zappfe put it: "På Bræen den Blonde" - literally: "On the glacier so Blond".

So Elizabeth had many different names - the reason for which is revealed by a reflection on her frequent change of husbands. On her birthday, the 26th of June 1898, Elizabeth left England, her goal was the Lyngen Alps. She had two great summers, in 1898 and in 1899, where she and her Swiss guides, father and son, Josef and Emil Imboden built cairns on more than twenty peaks concentrated in the areas around Jægervatnet, Kjosén, Lakselvtindane, Jiehkkevárri and Steindalsbreen. After two summers scaling peaks Elizabeth came back for three more summers, then living in the landscape with her husband Aubrey Le Blonde and a cook. The book she wrote about her adventures; "Mountaineering in The Land of The Midnight Sun" is maybe the best

classic book written on the theme of mountaineering in Norway. Elizabeth was one of the true pioneers of the Lyngen Alps.

It is commonly believed that Englishmen were the first to start scaling the great summits of the Lyngen Alps in 1897. However, the German Vorwerg ascended peaks nearby Lyngseidet in 1888. He was the first ascender of Store Kjøstinden (1488), and probably Rørnestinden (1041). At Goalsevårri (1289) however, he found a cairn from an unknown ascent. Geoffrey Hastings was an impetus during 3 years of exploration from 1897. With him, William C. Slingsby, Walter P. Haskett-Smith, Elias Monsen Hogrenning and the local Tromsø-schoolmaster Josef Caspari scaled central peaks; changing crew amongst this group of climbers. These two groups, with a mixture of English, Swiss and Norwegian climbers and guides, climbed the most central peaks during a few years from late 1800 to early 1900.

## JIEHKKEVÁRRI UNDER SIEGE

Even if the exploration of Mrs. Le Blond, G. Hastings, and W. C. Slingsby have received the most attention, the local schoolmaster Josef Caspari was the one that started the quest for the highest peak in Lyngen - Jiehkkevárri. From 1895 he investigated the possibilities of finding a way through the barriers of the huge glaciers surrounding the giant of a mountain. But alas, after years of seeking a path through the icefalls he never succeeded.

Geoffrey Hastings, together with his friend William C Slingsby, fit the standard for the British definition of a mountaineer. Hastings had experience from climbing in Himalaya and the European Alps before he had his great seasons in the Lyngen Alps. He was characterised as: "One of the leading mountaineers of his time" (W. Unsworth). In 1897 he reached the N summit of Jiehkkevárri, believing that this was the highest point. As usual he took barometric heights and photographs of the environment. In 1898 he is back again, this time with the guide Elis M. Hogrenning. From a camp in Holmbukta, on the south side of Jiehkkevárri, they climbed Hombuktinden (which Hastings calls Skarvkausen). They had to abandon the plan of continuing from there to the main summit as clouds drifted in. The pair passed the S summit and went down the S ridge to Syds kardet.

Finally, in the summer of 1899, Hastings and Hogrenning reached the main summit (1834) after a strenuous round trip of 26 hours. From the start in

Holmbukta, they climbed Durmålstinden and next ascended Fornesbreen and Fugldalsbreen, entering the Jiehkkevárri plateau from the N. On the glaciated top plateau they went over Kveita, then down to Salen (The Saddle) and from Salen up to the main summit. At the summit they were overtaken by bad weather, and precise orientation using a compass brought them to the Southern summit. From here the pair knew the return route from their attempt the previous year; down the S ridge to Syds kardet, then down Sløkedalen and Goverdalen to Holmbukta; at last completing the first ascent. This trip was the worthy end to four years of exploration by different climbers involved to reach «The Mt. Blanc of the North» (W C Slingsby); the main top of Jiehkkevárri.

## 1920 TO 1940; P W ZAPFFE AND "THE SOUTHERNERS"

Peter Wessel Zapffe, the man who called himself "the master of nothing"; the philosopher, the painter, the photographer, the builder, the writer, the climber. He made an impact on peoples thinking and imagination that has never stopped. Zapffe and friends did four famous "crusades" to Piggtinden (1505); resulting in some of the most hilarious writing ever done in the history of mountain literature. Still, Zapffe had to wait until the summer of 1924 before he could scale the beautiful mountain of Piggtinden. But by then it was cairned in 1920 by the members of "The Norwegian Alpine Club"; Henning Tønsberg, C. W. Rubenson and Eskild Jensen; "those from the South". P. W. Zapffe was very active in the following years, among many ascents he did was the West ridge of Trolltinden by Jægervatnet with the philosophy professor Arne Ness, another legend of Norwegian climbing history.

This is also the period when locals living under the mountains seriously started to scale the peaks. Petter Giæver from Jøvik in Ullsfjorden was one of them. Usually he went with ordinary shoes; the ones he used daily, light cloths, with no food, and drinking water where he found it. On one of these trips he was away for two days climbing Store Fornestinden, close to the Kjosens fjord.

## THE SWEDISH PIONEERS

8th of June, 1938, the sailboat "Thalatta" left the town of Göteborg, Sweden. On board were Gillis Bill-

Ove Skjerven belaying Håvard Nesheim on the first winter ascent of Saggesøhokka, the Lakselvtindane area, January 1975. Photo: Sjur Nesheim



ing, Gunnar Santesson, Harald Hammarsten and Håkon Tjerneld. Their goal was to climb the best peaks along the coastline of Norway. In 45 days they sailed 4165 sea miles and ascended a total of 24000 m. From Store Kjøstinden they studied the surrounding peaks of the Lyngen Alps. The report said; "Here is so much to do, we have to pack it into the future". For Gillis Billing the future came next year. In 1939 he and Gunnar Santesson sat camp in Signaldalen, under the perfect pyramid of Otertinden. Their goal was the first winter ascent. On the third try they found a "hidden" couloir on the W side; after reaching the N ridge which they had aimed for, they traversed a smaller peak, did one rappel down, and then from "the Cleft" climbed steeply to the summit. The war came to Norway in April 1940 and little is known about climbing history in Lyngen from 1940 to 1945. Billing managed one trip in March 1940 together with Hammarsten. They tried the then unclimbed Rødberggtinden by the Kjosen fjord, but had to turn back short of the summit. They moved across the fjord and traversed

all of Isskardtindane, and, moving into Stortindalen for the next camp, they did the first winter ascent of Stortinden. In 1946 Gillis Billing was back in Lyngen, then in summertime with his friend Harald Hammarsten. The team was backed up with one of the strongest climbers in Sweden - Olle Bjørn. They established camp in Lakselvbukt, just under Lakselvtindane. This area holds some of the most challenging climbing in the Lyngen Alps. In two weeks they ascended Titinden, Anderstinden, Platåtoppen, Taggtoppen, Store Lakselvtinden, some pinnacles on the ridge south of Tomastinden and the great pinnacle of Tommelen, the Thumb, "Lyngskuken", between Titinden and Anderstinden. All ascents, except Titinden and Store Lakselvtinden, were first ascents of the peaks. Among the last ascents they did that summer was Rødberggtinden. The ridge they climbed looks impressive, the exact route is not known, but technically it was ranked as the hardest climb in the Lyngen Alps by that time. When Billing visited Lyngen again in 1960 he climbed the first winter ascent of the S ridge on



Jiehkkevárri. The Swedish pioneers left only some traces of history that are hard to follow.

## THE ENGLISH EXPEDITIONS TO THE LYNGEN ALPS

On March 14th 1979 two small Gazelle helicopters from the 45 Commando Mountain and Arctic Warfare Cadre of the British Army, lifted two climbers and their gear from Evenes Airport. The two helicopters flew up the glacier below the imposing 1000m high S face of Jiehkkevárri (1834), with the first agenda to reconnoitre a proposed route up this face. This trip resulted in a new route up the S face of Jiehkkevárri and was a culmination of a decade of training in arctic winter climbing for the aspirant mountaineering instructors of the 45 Commando. Of the routes they did in this period, the 1979 route on the S face of Jiehkkevárri stands out. In 1974 they reported 11 assumedly new routes, among them the SW face of Gaskajiehkicohkka (1387), a smaller peak east of Jiehkkevárri. They graded the route TD sup (Alpine grade; AI V+), and with a length of reported 3000 ft., it ranks among the harder winter routes done in Lyngen.

The Lyngen Alps were particularly popular in the

1950' for British climbers; it remained so in the 1960', but then only in summertime. For the British climbers, with a long and worldwide history of exploration into unknown territory, the Lyngen Alps represented arctic adventure in a great scale. In this prolonged period they returned annually, climbing all over Lyngen with many first ascents of peaks and indeed lots of new summer rock routes.

## THE GROWING LOCAL CLIMBING COMMUNITY

One early morning in April 1981 Frode Guldal left Tromsø in his "Silver Arrow". The name of the car was the only shining quality about it. His destination was Jiehkkevárri, at least his first goal of the day. Guldal had the power of a racehorse and it was hard work for anyone to keep up to his pace in the competition to climb new snow and ice routes. Not too many hours after leaving Tromsø, the Silver Arrow was speeding back again. Unfortunately, it broke down quite far away from the nearest house. Guldal had just ascended and descended Jiehkkevárri 1834 and Store Lakselvtinden 1616. His next goal this day was Tromsdalstinden 1238 close to Tromsø town. After the death of The Silver Arrow,





Sjur Nesheim on an early attempt on the W face direct, Guhkesgáisá. Photo: Arild Meyer

Guldal ran to the nearest house, made a call to friends that had to tow him and the car to Tromsø. He then ascended Tromsdalstinden. In all it took Guldal 18 hours, 120km driving/towing, some running after phone and help, and a total of 4688m ascent/descent to complete the day's objectives. In April 1973 the first "High Camp", a gathering of local climbers/skiers, took place, at that time in Goverdalen, close to Lakselvtindane. This soon became a tradition - the location have varied depending on preferences and conditions. The history of this time lies within the people and interactions. There were in fact so many people involved in the development of winter climbing that just a few fragmented climbs can be mentioned.

Ove Skjerven, Ulf Prytz, Jostein Bønes, Nils Engelstad, Bjarne Smith, Ben Johnsen, Svein Smelvær, Frode Guldal, Anne G Weiberg-Aurdal, Magnar Osnes among others represented the "southerners" who made the town of Tromsø their home place for short, long, or lifetime. Ove Skjerven came in early 70 and made his impact at once with two big rock routes. One of them, the 1974 Northwest ridge of Guhkesgáisá, done in 26 ropelengths, became a super-classic alpine winter climb.

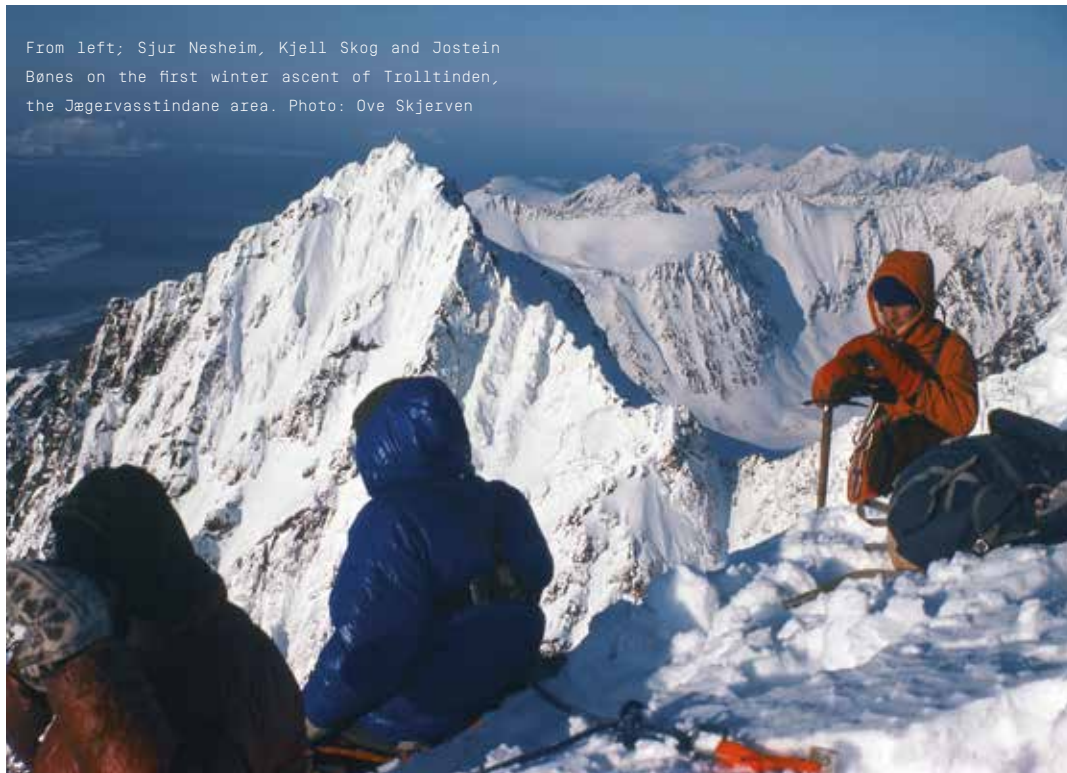
Ove went on to do the traverse of the Lakselvtin-

dane over two days in the winter of 1975 with Sjur Nesheim. They met Nils Engelstad and Bjarne Smith traversing from the opposite direction. Ove Skjerven also climbed the big north faces of Guhkesgáisá (1978, with Jostein Bønes and Håvard Nesheim) and Piggtinden (1980, with Frode Guldal and H Nesheim). "The southerners" met an existing local group comprised of Johnny Lauritzen, Arild Meyer, Kjell Skog, Anne Fyhn, Håvard Nesheim, and Sjur Nesheim among others. The local climbing club was founded in 1978. More people like Christian Korvald, Jørgen Sundby, Marit Finnsseth, Borghild Hanssen, Espen Prestbakmo, Aslak Prestbakmo, Øystein Cruikshank, Stein Tronstad, Geir Jenssen [www.lyngen.name], Eivind Smeland and later hard guys Mårten Blixt, Torggrim Dahl and Ørjan Thomassen, among others appeared on the scene. Tromsø Climbing Club was in a period of time maybe the most active alpine climbing club in Norway; the Lyngen Alps was their main winter playground.

## A BRIEF SKI HISTORY

**Regarding skiing**, it is also difficult to know definitely who was the first to do the specific routes. Many skiers have come to Lyngen, thinking what they did were new routes - not knowing that some-

From left; Sjur Nesheim, Kjell Skog and Jostein Bones on the first winter ascent of Trolltinden, the Jægervasstindane area. Photo: Ove Skjerven



one had been there before. During the years a lot of spectacular ski-films have been made in the Lyngen Alps. The producers often use technical assistance as helicopters or snowmobiles, and not everybody know where they actually shot their lines. This activity is therefore not included in this guide. Although, we need to mention Seth Morrison's legendary backflip in Lyngen in 2003, eternalized in the film «Focused».

But the great skiing pioneer of the Lyngen Alps is the Swede Åke Hedlund. From 1970 he went back every summer for mountaineering and steep skiing. During ~15 years he brought groups of students from Folk High Schools. Åke has visited the whole of the Lyngen peninsula, and was the first known skier to descend Tomasrenna in Lakselvtindane in 1979. Another keen guy, Øystein Stangeland, was also ahead of his time. He descended lots of spectacular couloirs, wearing low leather boots and telemarking-skis from early 90s. The eager Finnish guys, with Ode Siivonen, Arto (Ape) Majava, and Jarkko Henttonen in front, carried out a lot of nice runs from late 90, especially in the Lakselvtindane area. One of the best extreme skiers in the world,

Remy Lecluse, also visited Lyngen, and did some new routes - although he probably thought he was first on some of the routes that actually had been done by others before. However, Remy died tragically in a huge avalanche at Manaslu, and there is sparse information about his descents. The Swedes have probably done most of the new, exploring activities during the last decade. Linus Johansson, often all by himself, has performed lots of outstanding descents. Finally, in 2012, Andreas Fransson, the Sahlén brothers and Randolph Rhea took another step forward by descending several routes requiring climbing equipment to rappel over steeper sections.

## TRAVERSING THE LYNGEN ALPS

The idea of traversing Lyngen is an old one. The landscape as it is formed, the peninsula framed by deep blue fjords, and the glistening alpine ridges have all touched the imagination; yearning to find a way from where the peninsula starts in the south to where it ends out in the sea. And of course imaging doing it from the north and southwards.

Getting the idea of Gillis Billing, Åke Hedlund with



Bo Nyborg Andersen on the first ascent  
of the N Pillar of Guhkesgáisá.  
Photo: Sjur Nesheim

friends tried to cross the peninsula from north to south in the Easter of 1973, stopping halfway at Lyngseidet. The year after the Swedish group came back and during 12 days they went from north to south with a total of 150 km and 9000m in height difference. In the 80'the trip was done more times with many variations. On one of these Øystein Cruikshank, Håvard and Sjur Nesheim tried to keep as high as possible. They used 5 days from Nordlenangen to Koppangen traversing the peaks with climbing equipment. And three days more to cross Jiehkkevárri and continue to Vollen with skies. In later years there has been more focus on doing the "Lyngen Haute Route" in summertime, the possibilities are virtually endless for variations of where to walk or climb. In distance it varies from 150 km to 175 km.

## TREKKING IN LYNGEN

The locals have always made forays into the valleys for fishing fresh water trout, picking berries and hunting. The pastures have been there for animal grazing through historical times. Most of the valleys have good paths, there are more and more

paths emerging for use, mostly put and maintained by local interests. But usually the trekkers have to trust the equipment they carry on multiday trips, still there are ample opportunity for day trips to waterfalls, to glaciers, to lakes, to bouldering areas, for fishing, or just for a day walk in alpine meadows close to big mountains.

Exploring as a form of mental status can never be deduced from humankind.

### References:

*Mountaineering in the land of the Midnight Sun; Mrs. Elizabeth Aubrey Le Blond, 1905.*  
*Mountain holidays in Norway; Per Prag, 1963.*  
*Lyngsalpene; Ben Johnsen and Ove Skjerven, 1984.*  
*Breposten No3/1993; Den Norske Turistforening.*



## NORTH LYNGEN, SECTOR 1

Sector 1 is the northern tip of the Lyngen peninsula. The valley Strupskardet crossing the peninsula defines the southern border of this sector.

This is in many ways the most adventurous area in the Lyngen Alps. Bounded by the fjords, there is often this wild feeling of being very north, scaling high peaks just out of the sea.

### Main access points:

The west coast and the interior are assessable from the road; the east coast needs to be approached by boat (from Nordlenangen or Koppangen).

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Photo: Lorentz Mandal

## THE STORGALTEN AND STORTINDEN RANGE

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**The range stretching from Russelvjellet 818 in the N and Nordausttinden 1156 in the S.**

**Access:**

**From W:** From Nordlenangen, park below chosen objective, or on the E or W side of Straumen, according to season, to reach the summits in the southern part.

**From E:** by boat to chosen objective.





# 1 RUSSELVFJELLET 818 S

Difficult

30-35°

2-4 h

800m

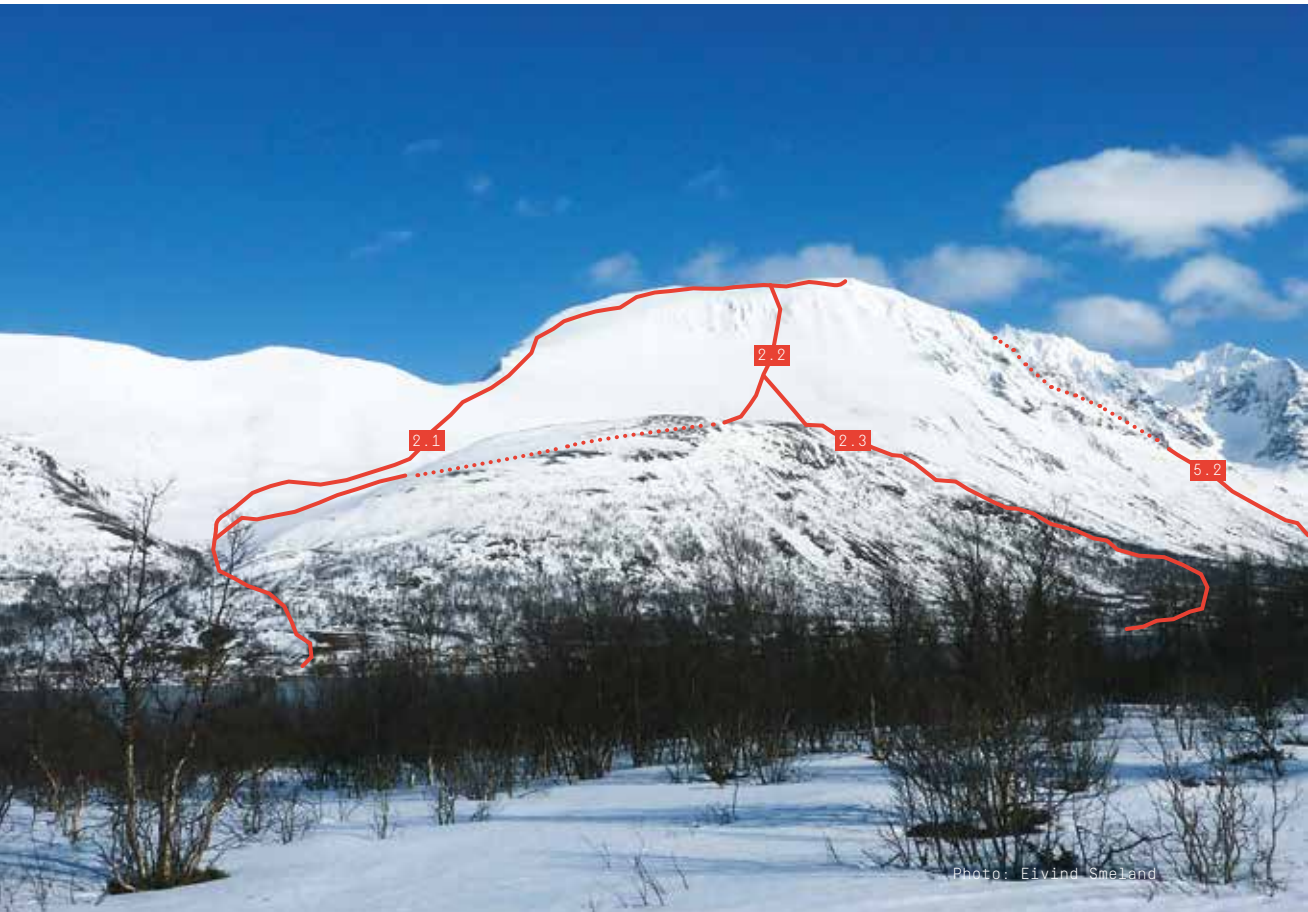
W

*Nice little trip directly up from the shore.*

Follow the track along Russelva ~ 3 km, before heading N. Then NW to the S summit. To reach the main summit continue along the ridge, mostly on foot. There are possible descents from the ridge for the very experienced skier.

1.1 Descend route

1.2 Directly down the beautiful W face.



## 2 STORGALTEN 1219 S

Difficult

30-35°

3-4h

1200m

NW

***A classic and popular favourite with magnificent surroundings and a breathtakingly view of the sea. On a sunny day, you will not be alone!***

Follow Galtdalen, on the S side of the river. There are usually good tracks. Possible family outing if some would like to stay around Lasso fjellet 414 (also feasible with kids in a child-carrier), and others want go on to Storgalten.

Pass below the saddle between Storgalten and Lille Galten, and follow the NW ridge to the summit. The first part of the ridge can be icy. A beautiful view of Store Peppartind and Gamvikblåisen, which both can be combined with this tour.

- 2.1 Descend route, or:
- 2.2 One of several terrific lines down the NW face.
- 2.3 Further down a couloir on the S side of Lasso fjellet.



Top: Vidar Eggimann descending Storgalten.  
Below: A tent below Stourdtinden, Storgalten behind.  
Photos: Leif Holen







Kalddalstinden from E,  
Storgalten behind.  
Photo: Eivind Smeland

## 3 KALDDALSTINDEN 1000 <sup>S</sup>

Difficult *Nice, less visited mountain with many possible descents.*

30-40°

4-6 h

1000m

W/NW

Follow Galtdalen, turn left to the saddle between Storgalten and Lillegalten (833m) at ~730m. Cornice along most of the pass, but narrow passage to the N. Enjoy a gorgeous descent to lake 477. Straight up the big snowfield to the central couloir leading to the top ridge. Ski crampons can be useful early in the day. Follow the ridge to the summit. Kalddalstinden can be combined with Store Peppartinden and/or Storurdtinden, Storgalten. From here, straight up the big snow-field to the central couloir leading to the top ridge. Ski crampons can be useful early in the day. Follow the ridge to the summit.

- 3.1** Descend route, or:
- 3.2** If you want to visit more summits around Gamvikblåisen, take the S ridge and then down on the glacier.
- 3.3** One of several couloirs directly from the summit down to the glacier. Beware of wet slides late in the season. Ascend again from the glacier to the saddle between 1185 and Storgalten 1219. Usually good tracks, leading through the cornice on the ridgecrest near the summit.
- 3.4** There is also a very nice line NE from the summit and down the ridge, then crossing a bowl and entering a couloir down towards Ytre Gamvikdalen. The cost is a longer way home. Either turn S, joining the return as in 3.2/3.3 above, or go around the N part of Kalddalstinden and then head SW to the lake 477. Then as ascent/descent 3.1.



Store Peppartinden seen from Storgalten.  
Photo: Martin Maisenhölder

## 4 STORE PEPPARTINDEN 1254 <sup>S</sup>

Difficult FA: 1899 G Hastings, E Hogrenning [SW ridge]

35-40°

8-10 h

2000m

NW/W/SW

***A real beauty, towering above the Gamvikblåisen glacier. The common approach includes climbing Storgalten, so prepare for a long and rewarding whole day trip.***

Ascend Storgalten, and continue down to the glacier from the saddle SW of the summit. Depending on the amount of snow, and your skills, you may have a nice drop from the cornice. Follow the glacier around towards the summit. Descend routes, or a combination depending on snow conditions.

### 4.1 NORMAL ROUTE

To ski the entire trip, ascend to the col between the summit and 1056. Follow the ridge to the peak.

### 4.2 Climb one of the couloirs to the crest.

### 4.3 The huge, W couloir looks very inviting, however it is more difficult to reach the summit from here. Enthusiasts climb this couloir after having reached the summit by one of the other routes, to enjoy even more outstanding skiing.

*"The NE ridge, which is a grand arete of steep rock, was climbed in 1953 by D H Jones, S Styles and J H Welbourn"  
-P Prag, 1964.*

Right: Tverrbakktinden

Left: Storurdtinden

Photos: Eivind Smeland



## 5 STORURDTINDEN 1221 S

Difficult FA: 1954 J Allen, R G Pettigrew [N ridge]

30-35°

5-6h Ascend Storgalten, and continue down to the glacier and head SE towards the peak. Pass the peak, and then climb a narrow couloir SW reaching the ridge to be continued to the summit.  
1600m  
NE

**5.1** Descend route

**5.2** Descend down Storurddalen from the pass between Storgalten and Storurdtinden. Carefully consider the snow conditions.





## 6 TVERRBAKKTINDEN 1392 <sup>S</sup>

Difficult FA: 1954 J Allen, K Griffiths, J Hutchinson, R G Pettigrew [S ridge]

35° [40°]

5-7

1380m

SW

***A majestic and beautiful white pyramid visible from the summits of the Tromsø mainland.***

Wonderful camping spot in Nordlenangsbøtn next to the open river, enabling another day of skiing either Kvasstinden or Hattetinden and/or Stortinden.

Ski into Nordlanangsbøtn to the head of the fjord. Continue another kilometer, and start ascending E to Tverrbakkkelva. Follow the river towards pass 928 between Tverrbakktinden and Synbakktinden.

**6.1** From the pass, follow the ridge to the summit. Descend route.

**6.2** Climb one of the couloirs through the SW face, be careful; only in good snow conditions. Descend route.



## 7 HATTETINDEN 1316 <sup>S</sup>

Very difficult  
40° [45]°  
6-8 h  
1300m W/S

FA: 1955 G B Phillips, G M Treacher [N ridge]

***Amazing, rarely visited skiers secret. Genuine view!***

Approach Nordlanangsbøtn and ascend towards Sleelva, through sparse forest. Follow the river bed until you reach the valley (at ~500m) between Hattetinden and Mittalegginden. Can be combined with Stortinden on a good day. Traverse up to the attractive flank, with cautious regard of the snow conditions. Follow the brink of the flank to the summit. If you'd like to descend one of the several nice couloirs in the W face, it is wise to take a few excursions to the ridge whilst ascending, spotting your descent line.

**7.1** Descend route.

**7.2** On stable snow, the experienced skier may take the narrow NW couloir, leading into an incredible snow basin, offering first class skiing down to Nordlenangsbøtn 1300m below.



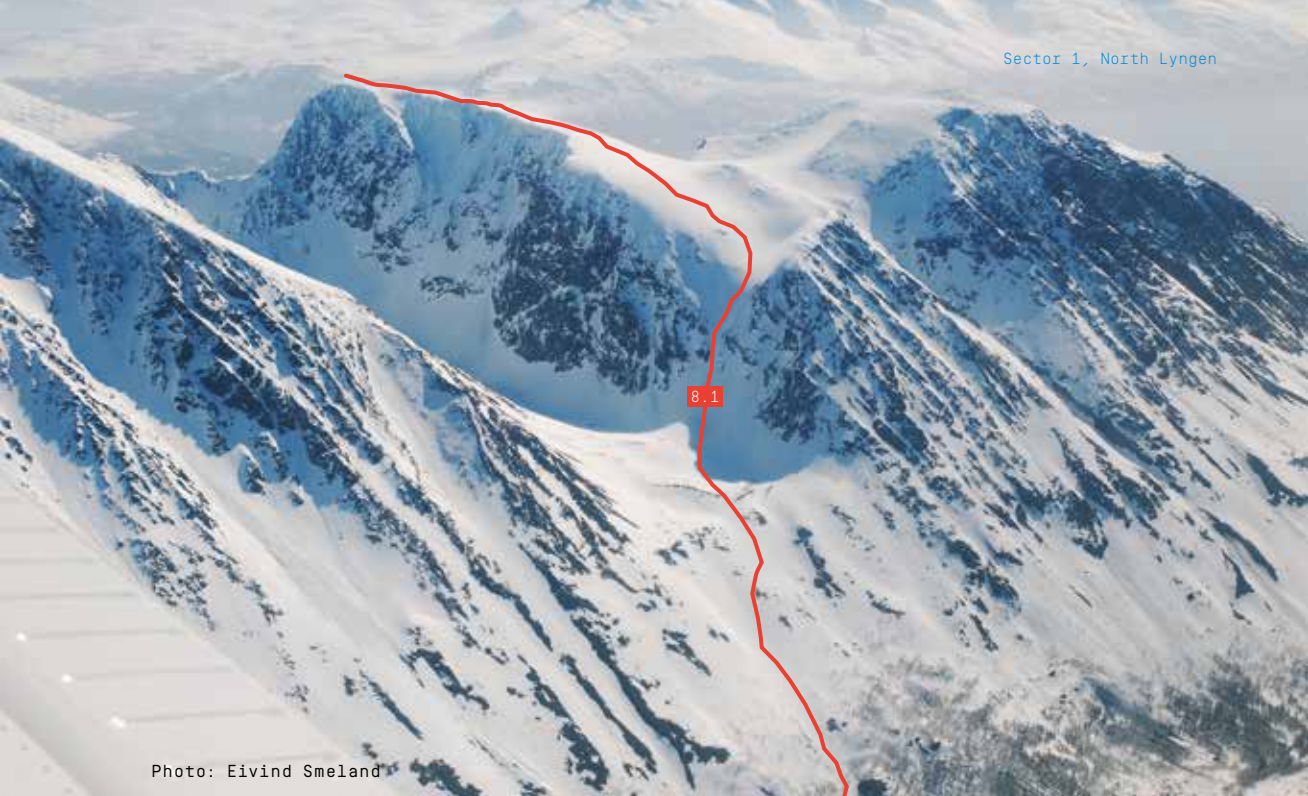


Photo: Eivind Smeland

## 8 STORTINDEN 1240 <sup>S</sup> (NORDAUSTTINDEN 1156)

Very  
difficult

40-45°

FA: 1952 J N Hutchinson, S Styles, J H Welbourn

6-8 h

1240m

W/NW

***A rarely visited beauty with an absolutely outstanding appearance from the Eastern side of the Lyngen fjord (Kåfjord and Uløya). To ascend from that side you need a boat.***

Approach Nordlenangsbotn as for Hattetinden, which it may be combined with. From the valley between Hattetinden and Mittalegggtinden, take the steep (~45°) prominent couloir SE to the summit of Mittalegggtinden. Carefully consider the snow.

From the nice plateau, it is possible to take a little detour S to Nordausttinden. Then head E/NE to the summit ridge. The last part is quite narrow, and you might prefer to leave your skis. The summit is close to the Lyngen fjord, 1240m below. The view is breathtaking!

**8.1** Descend route, happy skiing!



«The Dutchman - named after two lone fishermen in a aluminum fishing boat were floating past when high tide arrived after we finished the descent prevented us from reaching our boat. We waved to the two dutchmen who picked us up and took us across the 40m water gap to reach our boat again. They couldn't believe we had skied down and gave us their lunch! So it's called the Dutchman....»

G Austick

8.2

The eastern couloirs; From left: The Dutchman, Mittale-agiskoarru and Goddeskoarru couloirs. Photo: Tom Grydeland

## EASTERN COULOIRS

The E side of the Stortinden/Hattetinden massif holds several spectacular couloirs taking you straight from the sea to the summits. But you need a boat.

### 8.2 THE DUTCHMAN S (STORSKORA COULOIR)

Very  
difficult/  
Extremely  
difficult

FD?: 6. 2009 G Austick, A Street

45-50°  
970m

Ascent by route up to the col between Stortinden and Nordausttinden. Crampons and ice axe necessary, and a helmet protecting against falling rock. Descent max 50°, average 45°. Interesting ski in impressive surroundings.



## 8.3 MITTALEAGISKOARRU COULOIR S

Very  
difficult/  
Extremely  
difficult  
40-48°  
980m

Ascent by route up to a col on the NE ridge on Stortinden. It's steep at the top; the last 200m is 48°! Furthermore, the fall line is not direct; it slopes into the left side in the rocks making a fall a very dangerous proposition for the first 400m. More serious than it looks.

## 8.4 GODDESKOARRU S

Very  
difficult  
40-45°  
950m

Goddskoarru is a spectacular slice of the northern Lyngen Alps, ending in the col between Stortinden and Hattetinden. It presents a challenge to access and once inside the valley you are flanked by steep slopes and vertical rock walls in all directions. The skiing is challenging and a high knowledge of avalanche understanding is required to navigate safely in this region.

# THE KVASSTINDFJELLET AND VAGGASTINDANE MASSIF

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## Access:

**From N:** From Molund (Straumen), Nordlenangen, approach Nordlenangsbotn.

**From W:** From Solstad, approach Bjørndalen.

**From E:** by boat to Sarvvesvággi (Reindalen).

## 9 KVASSTINDEN 1011 S

Difficult FWA: 1.1951 D Aldridge, N C Negri [N face]

30-35°

4-6 h

1000m

NW

*A prominent peak seen from Nord-Lenangen. Although it offers outstanding skiing, it is surprisingly rarely visited. But if you take the trip, you will be rewarded with a great experience.*

From Molund, on the W side of the bridge, there are usually snowmobile-tracks to the head of the fjord. Continue towards Raudtinddalen on the W side of the mountain. At ~300m, turn left to one of the two possible snow slopes/couloirs entering the N ridge. Cautiously consider the snow conditions. Then follow the ridge line to the peak. The ridge can be windswept, so ski crampons can be useful. Remarkable view N to the sea, and to seldom visited but beautiful mountains around.

Kvasstinden can be combined with Kvasstindfjellet. There is a wonderful camping spot in Nordlenangsbotn next to the open river, enabling another day of skiing either Tverrbakktinden or Hattetinden and/or Stortinden. Descend route.

## 10 KVASSTINDFJELLET 1094 S

Difficult

35-40°

5-7 h

1090m

N/NW

### [RUTHTINDEN]

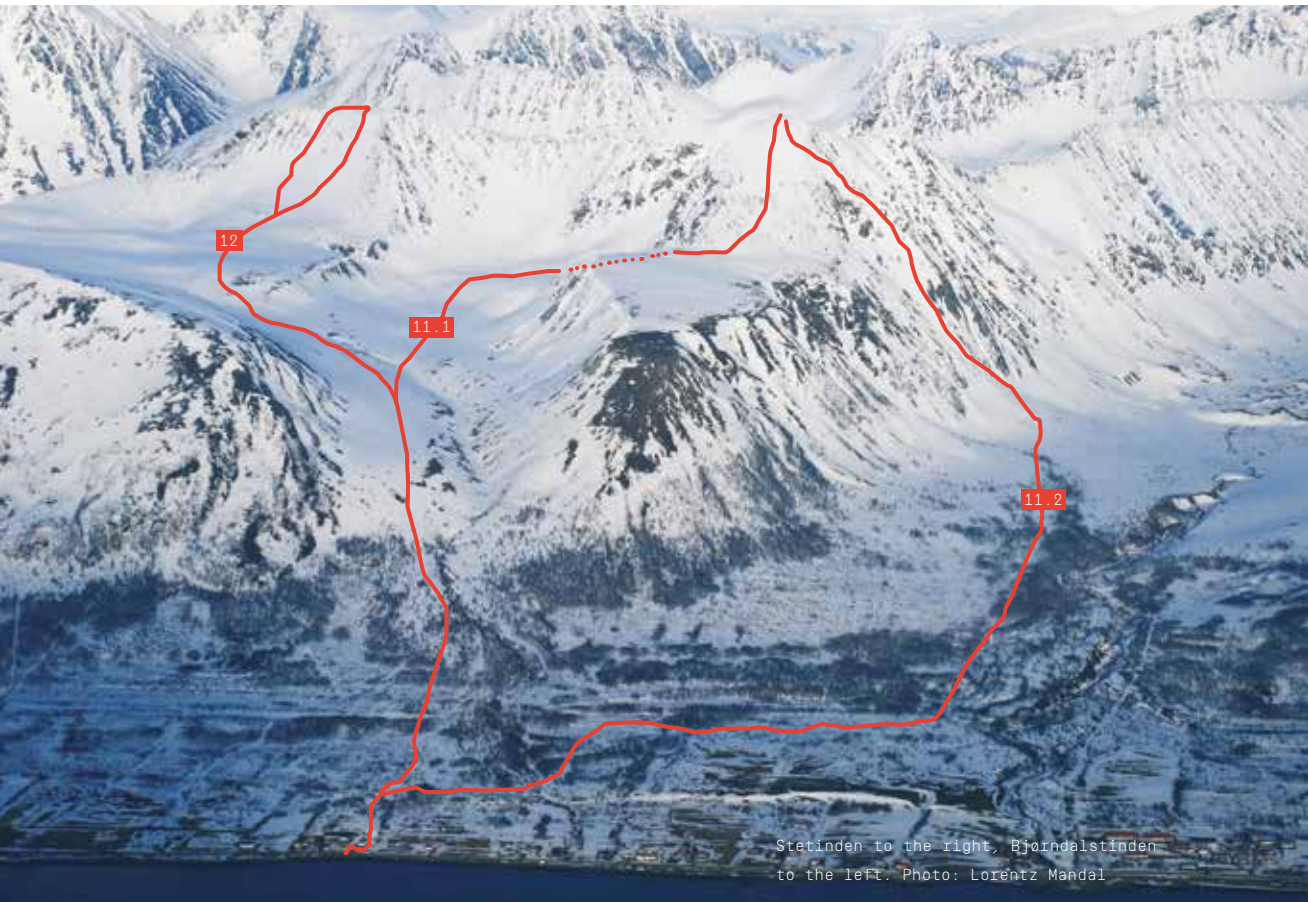
FA: 1953 S Styles, J H Welbourn, D H Jones [N face]

Approach as for Kvasstinden, and can be combined with this. Continue into Raudtinddalen. Between the two small lakes, start climbing SE of the bowl below the summit. From here, several possible couloirs lead to the summit ridge. Descend route, brilliant skiing.





Kvasstindfjellet to the right, Kvasstinden to the left. Photo: Lorentz Mandal



## 11 STETINDEN 920 S

Quite difficult *Popular and easily accessible summit also in early season with impressive views of magical mountains and the sea.*

25-30°

3-4 h

900m

W/NE

From Solstad, near a farm, go through the forest on the N side of the river. Usually good tracks. Continue up Bjørndalen, and into the bowl. Above 500m, turn SW towards Flatfjellet. Consider the snow conditions. Easy SE to the summit. Incredible views. The ridge can be windswept, with stones more or less visible. An unlucky skier had his leg broken here, so take care!

**11.1** Descend route.

**11.2** SW face; offering several couloirs.

Difficult The most obvious is the marked SW couloir down into Reindalen. Pay attention to both snow conditions and steep cliffs below the summit, making a fall before entering the couloir dangerous.

35°

3-4 h

90m

SW





Frode Bjerkvoll in Bjørndalen

Photo: Knut Magne Augestad

## 12 BJØRNDALSTINDEN 913 S

Difficult FA: 1957 T J C Christie, P M Gerrard, M C Prestige [N ridge]

35-40°

3-4 h

900m

W/NW

Partly in the shadow of Stetinden, but offers a steeper run with almost the same approach. Approach as for Stetinden, but turn N from the bowl. At ~ 550m head E/SE to the small couloirs leading to the top ridge. Descend route.

## 13 THE VAGGAS TRAVERSE C

Length: 10km FA: 4.2004 Ø Cruikshank, J Jerkø, E Smeland

Grade: IV

AI2 Snow 50°

From east to west, 2-3 days. Boat from Koppangen until Sarvvesvággi (Reindalen). Up the wide snow flank towards the ridge at ~1000m. Follow the ridge to the summit of Store Vaggastinden 1400 (FA: 1951 P R Falkner, S G Moore, P Parks, R G Pettigrew [W ridge]). Continue along the ridge. Take care of the cornices. Up to point 1071, you may want to protect the last part passing a cliff. Further towards 1233 (Spishorn, FA: 1952 S Styles, J H Welbourn [W ridge]). Down the ridge from 1233 you may want to abseil, passing 2 small, steeper sections. Follow the ridge further, passing point 1155 and 1114, the entire Stefjellet until Stetinden 920. From Flatfjellet, take the SW couloir down to Reindalen.





## THE VEIDALSTINDANE AND STØVELFJELLET RANGES

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### Access:

**From W:** From the school at Sør-Lenangen, approach Sarvvesvággi (Reindalen).

From Veidal, approach Bálggesvággi (Veidalen).

From Botn, approach Steinfjellet.

From Sørlenangbotn, approach Strupskardet.

**From E:** Boat from Koppangen to Strupen or Sarvvesvággi (Reindalen).

## 14 ISVASSTINDEN 1132 S

Difficult/

Very

difficult

40[45]°

5-6 h

1100m

NW

### (N OF REINDALSBLÅISEN)

FA: 1957 T J C Christie, P M Gerrard [N ridge]

*Nice and rather long trip to a not too frequently visited summit with excellent views of rarely visited areas of the Lyngen Alps.*

From the school in Sør-Lenangen, follow the track on the S side of the river. Continue into the beautiful Reindalen to lake 449. Traverse directly towards the summit, aiming at the huge dihedral formation, continuing into a couloir which takes you to the summit. Enjoy the views – then the skiing. A total distance of 15 km.  
Descend route.



Photo: Lorentz Mandal

## 15 BRYLLUPSTINDEN 1325 S

Difficult

30-35°

6-8h

1300m

S/SE

### [THE WEDDING PEAK]

FA: 1914 Oda and O D Tauern during their honeymoon

***A characteristic and prominent white pyramid to the north.***

From Veidalen head towards Veidalsvatnet 338, a nice place for camping. Continue E, then S till you reach the pass between heights 1010 and 1325. Follow the S/SW ridge to the summit. The steepest section is from the pass to point 1115. Stunning views of desolate parts of the Lyngen Alps.

If you're feeling strong and the day is smiling, you could cross the glacier from the pass towards Støveltinden 1306. Follow the narrow and challenging ridge.

Descend route.

"My roughest ride." -G Austick 2009



From left the Strupenbreen glacier with the routes to Tafeltinden, Støvelen and Store Reindalstinden.

Photo: Eivind Smeland

## 16 STORE REINDALSTINDEN 1334 <sup>S</sup>

Difficult/ FA: 1899 G Hastings, E Hogrenning [from Strupen, SE gully]

very

difficult

30-40°

5-7 h

1334m

*The characteristic molar as seen from the E towering over the Støvelbreen glacier. Reachable by boat only.*

**16.1** From Sarvvesvåggi [Reindalen] follow the NE ridge to Støvelbreen if the snow conditions are varying. Take care when gaining the glacier due to some avalanche prone slopes.

**16.2** On stable snow, ascend the first obvious couloir to the glacier. Continue over the glacier towards the summit. You usually don't need a rope.  
NE Descend routes

### 16.3 THE MILBOURNE COULOIR

Extremely FD: 3.2009 G Austick, A Street

difficult

45° [50°]

SE

For the very experienced skier only, and on stable snow. Descend from the col W/SW of 1041 via traversing the exposed convex slopes until a small entry is found between two small rock pillars. The entrance slopes in the couloir are 50° for the first 250 vertical meters and easing to 45° lower down. After the open middle section is reached, take the left hand couloir under hanging ice falls to gain the fjord at Skredholet ["Avalanche hole", so take care].





Photo: Eivind Smeland

## 17 STEINFJELLET 1121 S

Difficult

30°

4-6 h

1100m

W/SW

*Looking north from the ferry between Breivikeidet and Svensby, you will see a long, wide ridge. Steinfjellet is becoming more and more popular due to its short approach, moderate steepness and lovely views.*

### 17.1 Start from Botn.

Ascend ~200m S of the marked rocks (ski crampons may be useful) and continue up towards Ololsatinden. Carefully consider the snow conditions. If not visiting this peak, follow the gentle ridge just right of the cornice to the summit.

### 17.2 A less avalanche prone route, is to ascend the SW ridge on Botnfjellet and then follow the ridge to the summit[s].

### 17.3 THE NORTH BOWL

Difficult

35°

N/NE

Ski around to the col between Ololsatinden and Steinfjellet at 900m. Go down the short funnel and ski the big bowl keeping to your right and then left for the traverse back, normally without too much poling. Skin back on the ridge and then back to your car.

### 17.4 Can be skied from the summit but very exposed! Use a rope around the frozen cairn for 20 metres and ski the nice, obvious couloir to the left. 150m/40°.

Very/

Extremely

difficult

40°

N/NE

Descend routes. Very nice with the sea in the background, and very enjoyable also in late season afternoons.



Photo: Eivind Smeland

## 18 STORE VEIDALSTINDEN 1288 <sup>S</sup>

Difficult FWA: 4.2012 T Næsheim, M Maisenhølder, E Smeland

35-40°

8-10 h

1300m

S[SE]

protection

equipment

needed

***A recumbent appearance from the south – a dramatic wall as seen from the north.***

***A real challenge, with only one known winter ascent.***

Approach Strupskardet. Head E before reaching Blåvatnet, and then head N into the huge bowl. Carefully consider the snow conditions. It is usually less exposed if keeping to the left.

Å Hedlund and I Lestadius descended the E face/couloir of the S summit in 1981.

**18.1** A small ridge can be followed straight up to the ridge between Steinfjellet and Veidalstinden massif at ~1080m. Take your skis at least to the first summit (~1150). Down to a plateau to be crossed to reach the start of the spectacular ridge. The ridge is rather long and very exposed, offering a delicate challenge in extraordinary surroundings.

**18.2** On stable snow, ascend the bowl, and then head E up to a narrow couloir that will take you to the crest just N of the S summit of Veidalstinden. Scramble to the S summit. To reach the main summit, protection gear is required.  
Descend routes



Støvelfjellet, and Støveltinden to the left.

Photo: Eivind Smeland

## 19 STØVELFJELLET 1464 S C

Difficult/ FWA: 5.2003 Ø Cruikshank, K Kaspersen, E Smeland [W ridge, 2]

very

difficult

40-45°

8-10 h

1500m

S/SW

***A dramatic, huge mountain in extraordinary surroundings and with a long approach. Only the experienced skier will take her or his skis anywhere close to the summit.***

Equipment:

Climbing

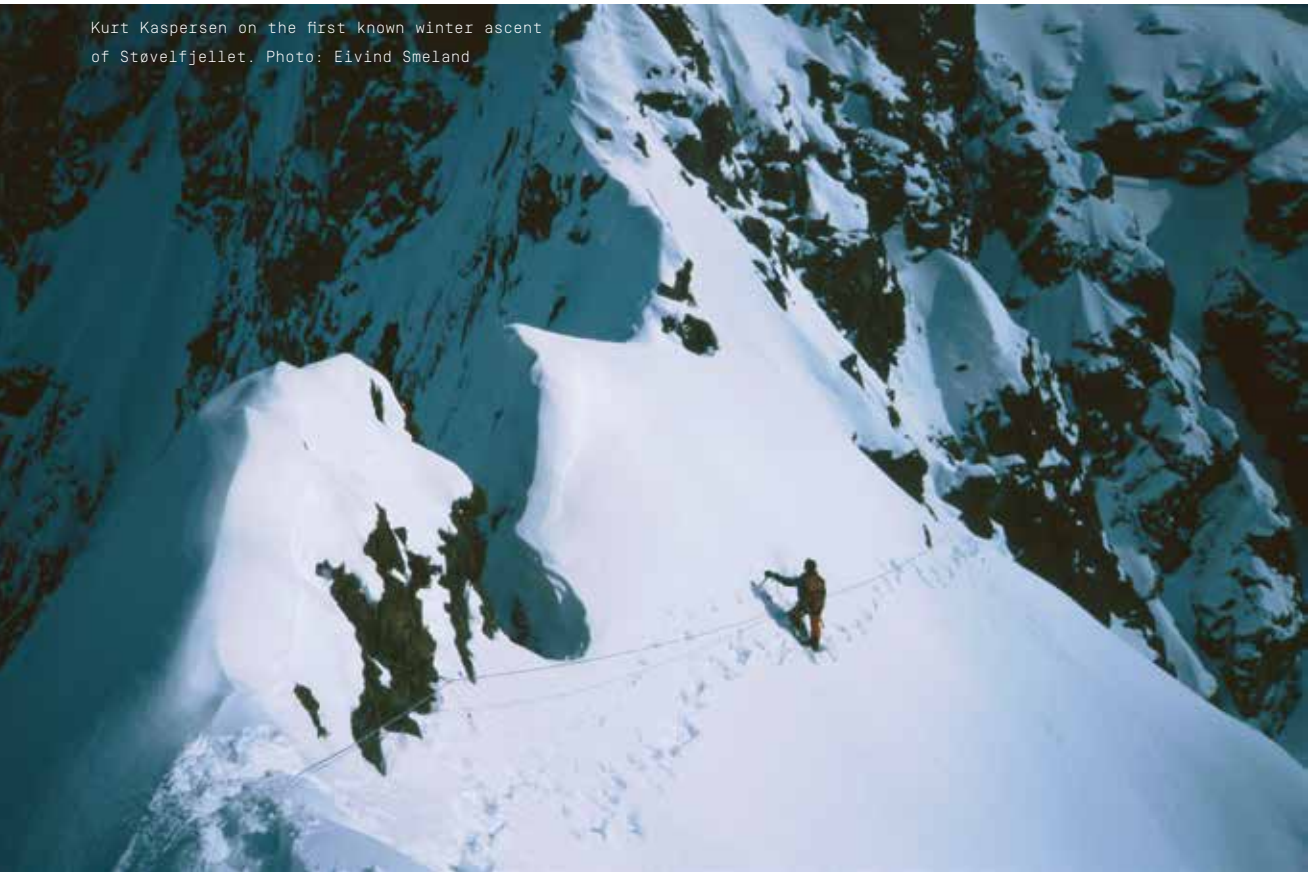
equipment

Ski through Strupskardet to lake 528. Consider taking a tent, so you can start climbing the mountain in the morning. It is not easy to find the right couloir, so take your time. The most obvious couloir takes you to a point on the ridge far from the summit. Instead take to the right at the start of the couloir and into the formation that will take you close to the summit. Some will appreciate a rope up the last section. Spectacular views of Strupbreen and Lenangstindane to the S, and the Vaggas massif and Reindalstindane to the N. Descend route.

The first known winter ascent on 01.05.2003 [2], ended with a traverse of a greater part of the mountain, and a descent to the E, including an abseil over the lower cliffs.



Kurt Kaspersen on the first known winter ascent of Støvefjellet. Photo: Eivind Smeland



## 20 STØVELEN 858 C

Starting  
level: At  
sea level  
Length: 900m  
Grade: V+  
AI4 M5+ Snow  
60°

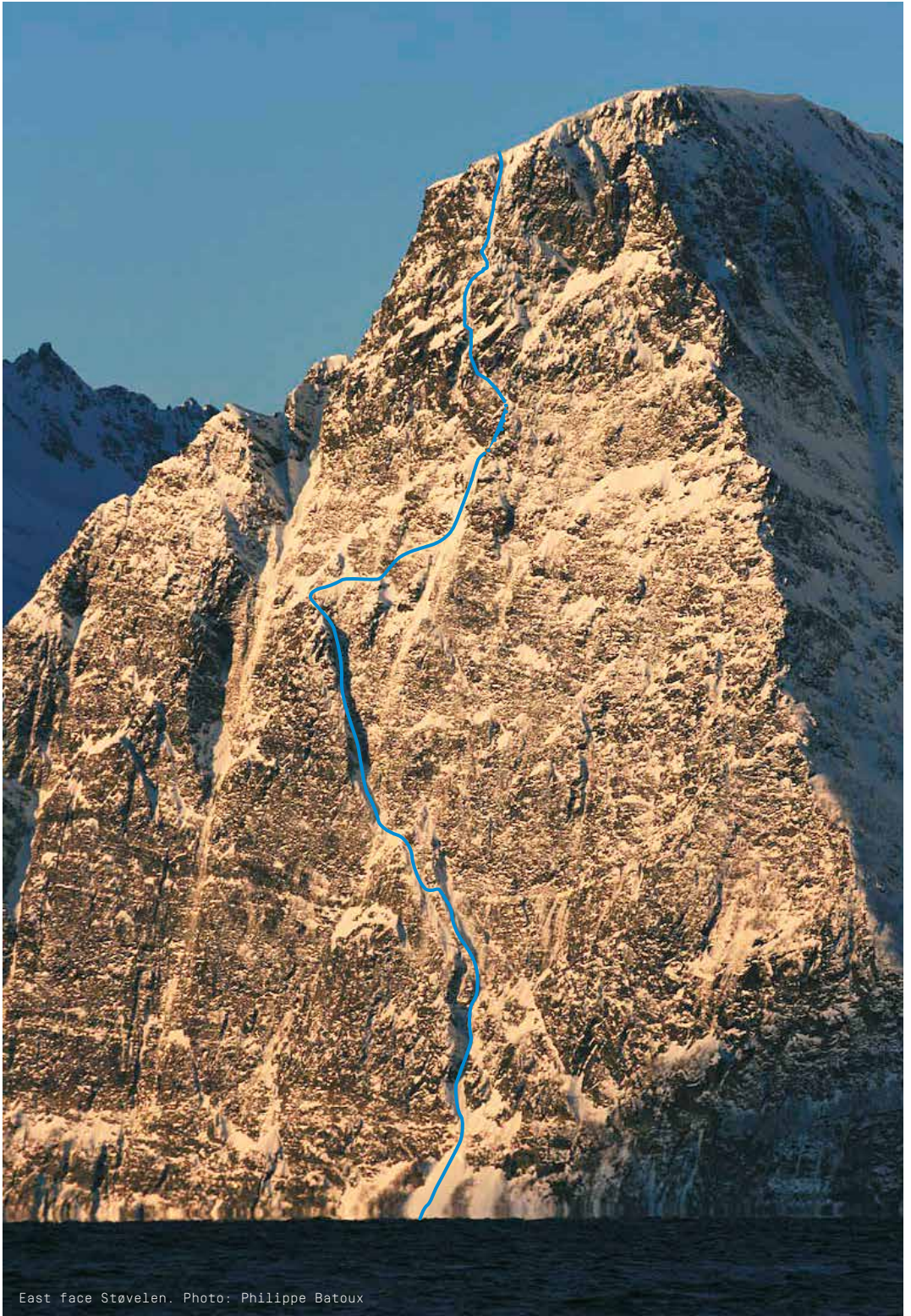
*A very impressive face straight out of the Lyngen fjord, loose and dangerous in summer, spectacular and fascinating wintertime.*

### E FACE, NORTHERN LIGHTS

FA: 9.1972 N Engelstad, S Nesheim

FWA: 3.2010 B Roberty, D Labaeye, L Seiffert, G Durant, T Franc

Access by boat. The route follows the only obvious weakness in the wall. A short snowfield and a couloir leads into a system of narrow ice gullies and snowramps that ascends leftwards to mid high of the face. At the end of this system, climb rightwards on exposed, narrow snowfields and ramps. This ends in another system of gullies and rock steps, follow this slightly leftwards and then straight to the summit rim. Descend couloir on right side of E face.



East face Støvelen. Photo: Philippe Batoux