

KRISTIANSAND - CITY FULL OF energy



KRISTIANSAND
KOMMUNE





A Sparkling REGION



Kristiansand is the administrative, business and cultural capital of Southern Norway. Nicknamed “the coolest Riviera” by the media, it is a modern city with a cosmopolitan history. A leading light in the technology sector and number one in exports, the Kristiansand region is the fastest growing region in Norway.

With a population of 120.000, the region comprises the municipalities of Søgne, Songdalen, Iveland, Vennesla, Birkenes, Lillesand and Kristiansand. Surrounded by picturesque scenery - from tiny rocky islands in the fjords to snow-covered mountains inland – Kristiansand offers a rich variety of recreational activities.

Flourishing businesses around Kristiansand attract engineers and professionals from the new University of Agder and other educational institutions. Some of the largest companies are energy-based, either as suppliers to the oil industry or as producers of or suppliers to the emerging renewable energy market.

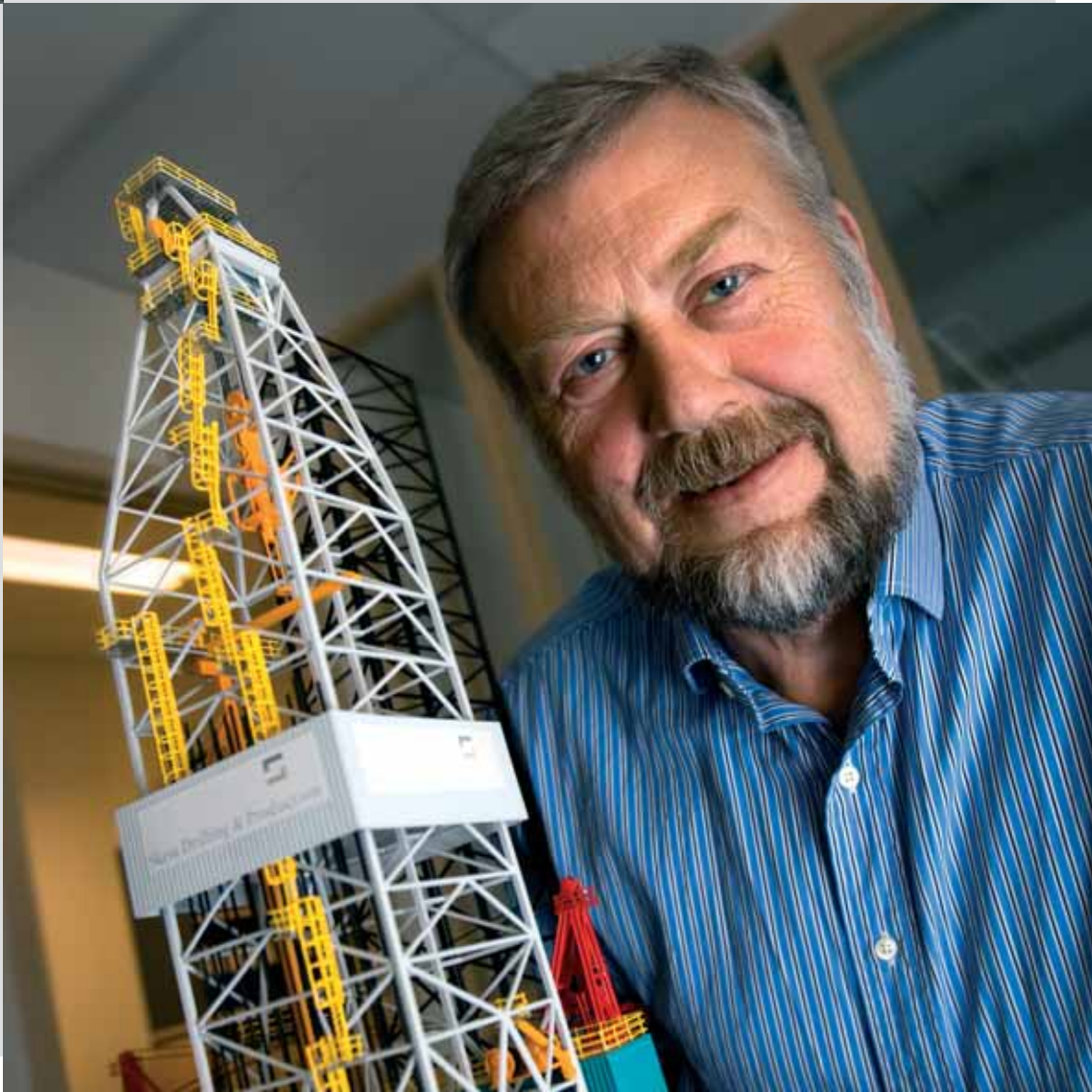
Given its significant investments in culture, infrastructure and research, Kristiansand looks like an exciting place to be for years to come.

Kristiansand is sparkling!





Powered BY INTERNATIONAL CAPITAL



Historically, Kristiansand has been a busy international shipping port, a role that is still emphasised by the growing number of companies supplying personnel, equipment and services to the North Sea oil industry and the rest of the world. Kristiansand is well connected internationally.

- The Kristiansand region boasts a wide range of technological expertise with an international approach. When we are looking for new businesses and projects to fund, it is just as natural to explore the financial markets in London or Paris, as it is to search locally or nationally, says investor Bjarne Skeie.

Engineer, Bjarne Skeie, started his career building cranes for the oil and gas industry, where he gained knowledge that he has later put to use developing several world-leading construction companies. Today he is one of the most successful men in Norway and the single most important asset in the Kristiansand region.

Skeie Energy was recently awarded an oil production licence, but Skeie is not afraid that the many oil and gas contractors around Kristiansand will suffer when the oil wells are empty.

- Highly-skilled engineers are an invaluable asset to this area, says Bjarne Skeie. Since it is easier to get capital than it is to get qualified personnel, the inevitable fall in production will force the industry to develop innovative methods and services for new areas. But we are going to pump up oil for many, many years to come.



Green POWER



Photo: Anders Martinsen
In the background: "Fontene" by Kjell Nupen



Kristiansand has been a green city for decades. The municipality is at the forefront when it comes to waste recycling, public transport and action on climate change. But the private sector is also stepping up to the immense challenges of creating sustainable development.

The City Council and the city's industries have spent a significant amount of money cleaning the bay and the river. The seaside is going from strength to strength year by year, making Kristiansand's city bay the cleanest when compared to other major cities. Today the river Otra is one of the most important salmon rivers in Norway.

Agder Energi (AE), Norway's third largest energy group, is based in Kristiansand. Its activities include the production, distribution and sale of hydroelectric power, bio-energy and district heating. AE plans to become one of the largest producers of wind power in the increasing market for bio-friendly energy.

Elkem Solar is spending EUR 340 million on developing a process for the production of silicon metal to the solar cell industry. Shortages of high quality silicon metal currently represent the major obstacle in expanding this sector. This fresh effort will bring about an entirely new research environment.

The "Eco-Lighthouse" concept was born in 1996, when Kristiansand was chosen to participate in the programme. The goal is to help companies in Norway step up to environmental challenges. Companies are certified when they fulfil the environmental requirements set out by the Eco-Lighthouse Programme.

Currently consumers and businesses recycle more than 60% of the waste they produce. Agder Energi-sentral, the new refuse disposal plant, will deal with the remaining 40%, while producing enough power to supply 20,000 households annually.





RESTING Pulse



AVERAGE MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE

JANUARY	4,0 °C
FEBRUARY	4,0 °C
MARCH	6,0 °C
APRIL	10,0 °C
MAY	15,0 °C
JUNE	19,0 °C
JULY	21,0 °C
AUGUST	21,0 °C
SEPTEMBER	17,0 °C
OCTOBER	11,0 °C
NOVEMBER	7,0 °C
DECEMBER	4,0 °C

1998 - 2008 © MET.NO



Kristiansand is idyllically located on Norway's southern coast and has long been a well-kept secret amongst Norwegians. The sea and surrounding fjords is perfect for recreational activities like fishing and sailing, and the nearby mountains are ideal for skiing and hiking. In the more urban areas, you will find a rich variety of cafés, restaurants, art galleries and museums.

Most Norwegians associate Kristiansand and the southern coast of Norway with mile upon mile of tiny rocky islands and picturesque white-painted houses in sheltered inlets — all set against a backdrop of lush green forests and lakes, and a mountainous, majestic inland.

Towns and villages in the region are relatively small and have easy access to nature. The region is known to be child-friendly, clean and safe. Scenic landscape and fresh air abounds.

The summer paradise of Lillesand, one of the best-preserved small towns of wooden buildings, is the picturesque backdrop for the town's clusters of white houses, many of them on the quayside. From Kristiansand you can get there by ferry or a short bus ride.

Hovden is the nearest major ski resort, situated in upper Setesdal. The scenery here is beautiful with mountains, open country, water and birch woodland. Nature has provided the perfect conditions for recreation, relaxation and adventure. Hovden has a long winter and a stable winter climate with snow until May.

Kristiansand boasts a rich variety of cafés, restaurants and cultural activities. Around the famous fish market, there are a number of restaurants offering fresh fish and other regional specialities. The old city of Kristiansand is home to Northern Europe's largest collection of low, terraced, white, wooden houses dating back to the 18th and 19th centuries.

The river Otra, which runs practically through the city centre, is well known for its salmon fishing. Its water is very clean, as is the sea in and around Kristiansand. Thus the new beach, located in the heart of the city, is very popular.

You will also discover a whole range of inland activities like elk safari, salmon fishing, rafting and hunting. The beautiful countryside is also perfect for a long walk or a bike ride, or what about a swim in one of the many lakes?



Strong MARKET, Strong RIGHTS



Norway provides universal welfare services. All children are offered day care, child allowance and free dental care, while parents are offered an entire year of maternity or paternity leave and pensioners are given a minimum pension – to mention but a few of the broad range of services.

Bjørge Hansen is the Human Relations Manager at Aker Kværner MH, a leading provider of engineering and construction services to the oil and gas industry. Aker Kværner MH has more than 30 nationalities represented among their staff. Whilst turnover is low compared to other parts of the country, there are other aspects that make Kristiansand a prosperous place to set up businesses and new projects.

- Kristiansand's biggest assets are its general environment: the geographical proximity to the hub of the European continent, nature and the wide range of cultural activities, Bjørge Hansen explains. It is an attractive place to live and is brimming with exciting opportunities, both professional and recreational.

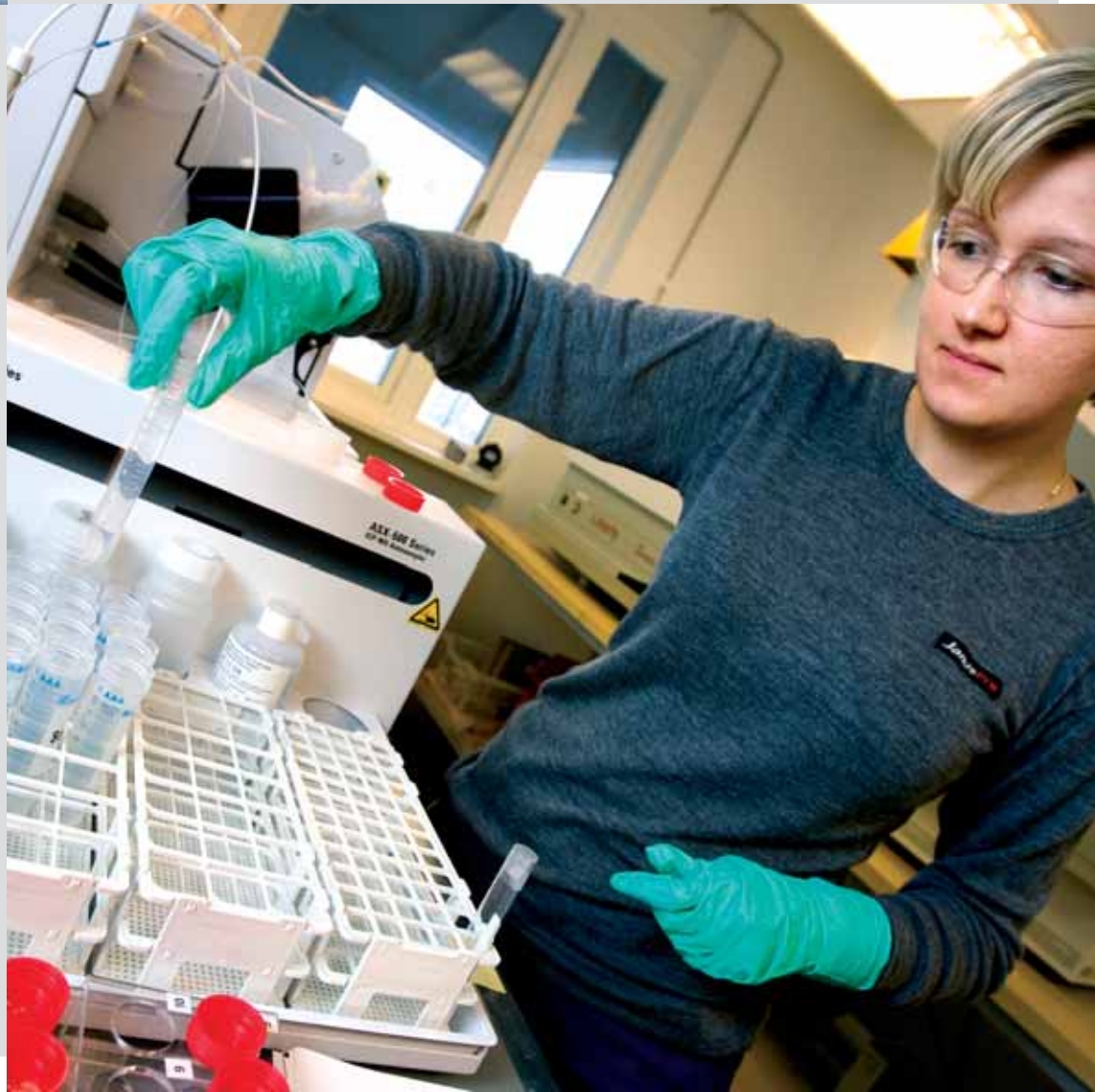
The demand for engineers throughout the region is high. Through the EEA Agreement, Norway is part of an integrated European labour market. The rules cover free movement of workers, mutual recognition of diplomas, social security, health and safety at work, labour law and equal treatment of women and men. Equal opportunities are an important political issue in Norway. Women are just as welcome to sit in the boardroom as to stay at home. Almost 60% of university graduates are women. New businesses, at a record high, are mostly founded by women.

Kristiansand was recently named the Best City for Children and Teenagers in Norway. The crime preventive program, the great diversity in cultural activities and the many youth centres were among the reasons given for the award.





EDUCATION AND RESEARCH FOR THE Future



The Kristiansand region is highly influenced by the broad research community and the educational institutions in the area. The University of Agder and the large processing industry are some of the major contributors to the innovation that characterise the southern part of Norway.

The University of Agder is the largest educational institution in the region with more than 9,500 students and employees. It is funded by the government and offers almost 200 different programmes. The numbers of researchers and research fellows are growing rapidly.

There are several private educational institutions in Kristiansand. The Norwegian School of Management BI offers business studies in the fields of marketing and management, Gimlekollen School of Communication trains the journalists of tomorrow and Ansgar College offers studies in subjects such as religion, music and psychology.

Besides the University, there are many research activities in a variety of subject areas. In the non-profit sector, Agder Research employs more than 30 specialised researchers, Sørlandet Hospital almost 50 and Elkem approximately 100. Many companies, like Xstrata Nickel, invest heavily in extensive research, development and innovation.

The different research and educational institutions work closely together. In most projects, they look to each other for other research subjects. Private companies fund public research, whereas different governmental funds finance private research. The common goal is sustainable development based on environmentally friendly innovation.

Agder Research is working on projects for Norwegian Ministries, local governments, regional partners, companies and the European Commission in the fields of business development, regional development and the public sector. The Competence Development Fund aims to contribute towards raising the general level of competence in the county of Vest-Agder to secure jobs and good living conditions.



INTERNATIONAL Pulse



The region is becoming increasingly multinational, with more than 135 nationalities represented in the city of Kristiansand alone. Due to an increasing demand for professionals, there is a need for many more people from abroad.

NHO, Norway's largest employer's organisation, and the Municipality of Kristiansand are running the Global Future project.. Its aim is to help people with a non-Norwegian background become eligible for new positions or to be board members in the Kristiansand- region. Many foreigners have low-income jobs, but are highly qualified in their native countries. Global Future is seeking to change this to make the best possible use of these resources.

The Kristiansand Chamber of Commerce offers a comprehensive programme tailored to serve the needs of both the working expatriate and the companies that employ them. Amongst the services provided, you will find social events, monthly newsletters, a 24-hour emergency helpline, access to consultation, public lobbying and relocation services. The spouse career centre offers accompanying spouses advice with regard to working or studying in Kristiansand.

International education is available from 1st to 10th grade through the Kristiansand International School. Pupils with parents from abroad are given priority when they are here for a limited period of time. One of the municipalities in the region, Iveland, is working hard to get Dutch people to live there. So far, this project has resulted in more than 50 new citizens.

- There is so much space here - and no traffic jams! We have moved from a cramped Dutch city to a spacious estate, so the change in our lives has been quite remarkable. The language has been a challenge, but most Norwegians have a very good knowledge of English, says Dirk van Meurs.



INTERNATIONAL Strength



DISTANCE FROM KRISTIANSAND

AMSTERDAM	420 km
BERGEN	290 km
BERLIN	480 km
COPENHAGEN	240 km
LONDON	900 km
OSLO	250 km
PARIS	1400 km
STAVANGER	160 km



For many foreigners, Kristiansand is the city where their stay in Norway starts and ends. The city is well connected due to its proximity to the European continent. The airport and seaport serve more than 2 million people annually.

Historically, the demand for timber to build European fleets of sailing ships has provided an excellent basis for trade. Kristiansand was often the first port of call for sailing ships arriving from the Netherlands, Denmark, England and the Baltic countries. At the beginning of the 19th century, the town of Kristiansand boasted one of the world's largest fleets of sailing ships.

The Airport is connected with the three major Norwegian cities and the international hubs in Copenhagen and Amsterdam. You will also find direct flights to various European destinations. The airport has a growing number of destinations and plans to expand to meet the increasing demand for new travel locations.

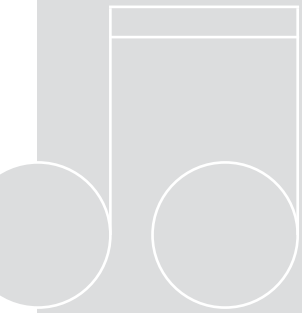
The port of Kristiansand has historically been important to the region's development. It is still one of Norway's busiest, and there are a substantial number of shipping agencies based here. Siem Offshore, with more than 600 employees, has a fleet of almost 50 ships. Ferries offer the fastest way to travel to Denmark by car, and cruise ships take you from Kristiansand to England and other Norwegian destinations.

Unlike other cities, traffic is not a big problem in Kristiansand. The construction of new roads and highways in and around the region is shortening driving times and bus services are also available throughout the city and surrounding municipalities. Moreover, you will find an impressive offer of national express buses. By rail you can take the train to Stavanger or Oslo.





Energetic CULTURE



Southern Norway is the region for festivals. The Quart Festival is one of the largest rock and pop festivals in Scandinavia, with previous performers including artists like David Bowie, The Who and Alicia Keys. Other festivals include the Protest Festival, which aims to fight indifference, and the Children's Film Festival.

Kristiansand was recently named the Best Cultural City in Norway, due to its strategic efforts to develop effort a broad range of cultural activities. The Kristiansand City Council established the Cultiva Foundation in 2002. With an investment of EUR 200 million, the Foundation aims to promote a more dynamic city through innovation, development and competence building within the creative environment of the city.

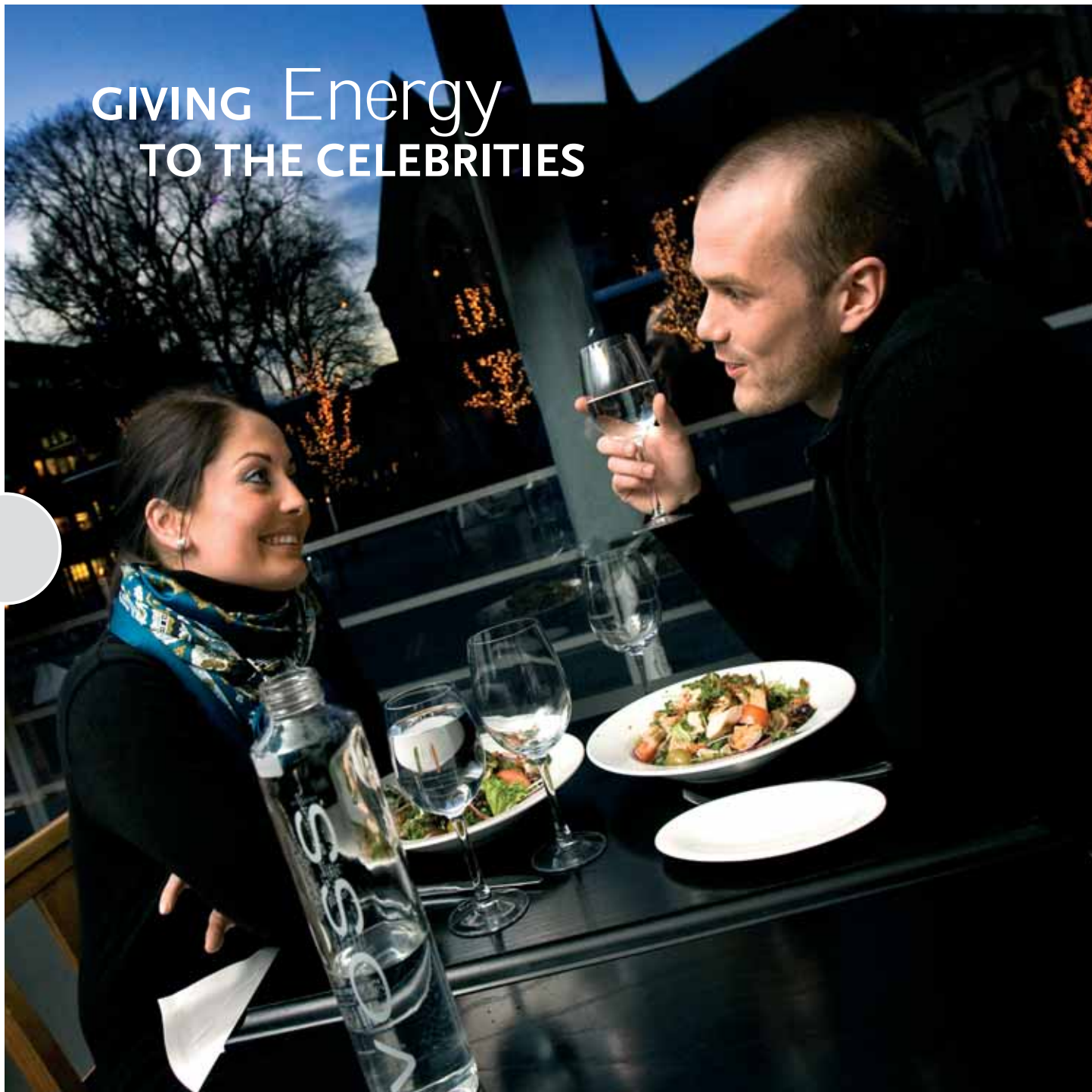
The new concert and theatre house, Kilden, will open its doors in 2011. With 2,200 seats, this is the most significant endeavour for decades in the cultural arena. Kilden will house all types of culture, including pop, rock and stand-up comedy, while housing the Agder Theatre, the Opera South and the Kristiansand Symphony Orchestra.

Kristiansand Zoo is one of the most popular tourist attractions in Norway. The Zoo attracts more than half a million visitors each year. In addition to lions, tigers and other spectacular animals, you will find a water theme park, a theatre and other attractions.

Sør Arena is the region's football stadium, the home arena of Start FC and a site for large concerts with top international artists. Sports in general are quite popular, as a third of the population is member of a sports club. Millions of euro are put into new facilities around Kristiansand each year!



GIVING Energy TO THE CELEBRITIES



Norwegian tap water is safe, clean and it tastes good as well. It is even served at restaurants, but bottles of artesian water in various flavours are available when desired.

The world-famous Voss water is bottled from a well in the village of Vatnestrøm, situated in Iveland, about a 30-minute drive from Kristiansand.

The first bottles were shipped to the USA in 2000 and instantly became a success. Voss exported approximately NOK 5 million's worth of water in the first year, but are now trading for more than NOK 300 million a year.

According to a New York Times article, Madonna once refused to check in at a NYC hotel because they did not offer water from this inland lake.



FACTS AND FIGURES

EXPORTS - TRADITIONAL COMMODITIES PER CAPITA

	1999	2001	2003	2005	2007	
COUNTY OF VEST-AGDER	11 500	12 600	13 300	17 900	28 900	EURO
NORWAY	5 200	6 000	5 500	6 900	9 000	EURO

Kristiansand is the capital of the County of Vest-Agder, which is ranked first in Norwegian exports.

SHORT FACTS

Most important business sectors:

- Oil/gas engineering
 - Energy
 - Process industry
 - Shipping
 - Construction and materials
 - Travel and tourism
- 1 of 3 top regions in Norway in terms of business friendliness (DnB NOR, 2007)
 - The region with the biggest growth potential (Østlandsforskning, 2004)
 - One of the regions in the Nordic countries with the biggest increase in future population (Nordregio, 2007)

NUMBER OF NEW COMPANIES (% OF TOTAL)

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
SOUTHERN NORWAY (THE COUNTIES OF AUST- AND VEST-AGDER)	9,0	9,3	10,3	10,7	9,8
NORWAY	8,0	8,2	8,8	9,1	8,2
SOUTHERN NORWAY'S RANKING (OF 83 REGIONS)	6	6	6	4	4

FACTS ABOUT THE KRISTIANSAND-REGION

	AREA, KM2	POPULATION
REGION	2136	120513
KRISTIANSAND	261	77840
VENNESLA	384	12555
SØGNE	150	9743
LILLESAND	190	9109
SONGDALEN	216	5664
BIRKENES	674	4411
IVELAND	261	1191

FLIGHT TIME

	HOURS
OSLO	0:45
STAVANGER	0:40
BERGEN	1:00
COPENHAGEN	0:55
GOTHENBURG	0:40
AMSTERDAM	1:35
ALICANTE	3:30



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Info

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Studies

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