



# WALKING INTO HISTORY

ARCTIC EXPERIENCE



Photo: Narvik County Council photo archives.

# The navy road and Rombaksbotn - walking into history

## Ofoten Railway

Narvik was originally called Victoriahavn, although it was named after the Queen of England, Sweden's Crown Princess Victoria was also honored. Much of Narvik's history is owed to the large iron-ore mines at Kiruna in Swedish Lapland.

The need for access to an ice-free harbour to export the ore led to the construction of the Ofoten Railway and so to the development of the modern town of Narvik.

*Described by the author Ernst Didring as "The Eight Wonder of the World", the Ofoten Railway has a latitude of 68° N.*

When it was built at the turn of the century, it was the northern most, coldest and harshest railway construction project the world had ever seen. Metre by metre, the route was carved out of the mountains.

A few minutes after leaving Narvik, the line reaches the southern shores of Rombaksfjord, where it runs alongside vertical cliffs with a magnificent panoramic view westwards. Ofotbanen was opened in on the 15th of November 1902. In 1923, Ofoten Railway became electric.

The navy trek to Rombaksbotn

**The old access road brings you from Bjørnfjell or Katterat station down to Rombaksbotn. In 1997 this area received the annual prize as the Norway's finest outdoor area.**

Today the access road has been re-opened as a historic walk and bike path where you can witness evidence from the Navy years and the Second World War.

Walking this pathway during the summer season is incredible - following in the footsteps of the Navvies along the road that was vital for the construction of the Ofoten Railway.

## Walking distances

Katterat train station to Rombaksbotten 6 km.

(Summer season boat to Narvik or for groups out of season, pre-book)

Katterat train station to Rombaksbotn and back to Katterat train station, 12 km and take the train back to Narvik.

Bjørnfjell train station to Rombaksbotten 13 km. Or you can walk back to Katterat train station which is a further 7 km. Take the train back to Narvik.

It is also possible to walk from Abisko in Sweden along the navy trek to Katterat or Rombaksbotn in Norway.



Photo: Per Jakobsen, *Walking into History*  
*View over to Rombaksbotn from train journey*



Photo: Narvik County Council photo archives

## FJORD CRUISE FROM NARVIK TO ROMBAKSBOTN – Summer 2010



Photo: Fjord Cruise Narvik

How about a trip by boat from Narvik and into Rombaksbotn. The trip takes 3 - 4 hours and is a great way to experience Narvik from the sea. Stunning scenery, with maybe a glimpse of the majestic Sea Eagle.

Booking: [www.fcn.no](http://www.fcn.no)

For more information regarding this trip please contact

the tourist office in Narvik,

Telephone: (+47) 76 96 56 00

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



Photo: Robin Jensen

### More information

You can also obtain a booklet in Norwegian, English or German about treks along the Navy access road. The booklet is written by Agge Theander. To order this book or more information about this trip please contact the tourist office in Narvik [www.destinationnarvik.com](http://www.destinationnarvik.com)

July-August 2010

Rombaksbotn Wednesdays and Saturdays,

Prices: (Subject to change)

Adult one way: NOK. 250

Adult return: NOK. 300

Child under 14, one way: NOK. 100

Child under 14, return 130

Family incl.2 adults and 2 children

(u. 14 years) one way NOK. 500

Family incl.2 adults and 2 children

(u. 14 years) return: NOK. 600

Duration both ways 3 hours

Departures: 14:20 from Vassvik pier

Departure 16:00 from Rombaksbotn

Check with tourist office in Narvik for train departures, delays or changes.

### 'ON YOUR OWN'

#### Train journey, trek and fjord cruise

At Destination Narvik we recommend that you take the train to Katterat and then walk down to Rombaksbotn, approx 6km one way. It is not a strenuous walk, but it does take about 2.5 hours to walk with a short stop.

From Rombaksbotn you will be picked up by boat and taken back to Narvik. This is an excursion you can undertake on your own in the summer time. Should you not want to do the trek, a boat trip into Rombaksbotn can be just as exciting. 'Kids Go Free' on the train journey from Narvik to Katterat/ Bjørnfjell.

For more information regarding this and other trips please contact the tourist office in Narvik,



Photo: Nicolai Muliyil



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### EVENTS 2010

The Black Bear Navy Trek Saturday June 26<sup>th</sup> 2010 the annual Svarta Bjørn March takes place. For more information: [www.vinterfestuka.no](http://www.vinterfestuka.no).



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