

Svolvær is the “capital” of Lofoten and the starting point for travels beyond, to other places on the island. There are ferries and flights from Bodø, the nearest large town on the mainland.

The ferry is the most environmentally friendly option; it takes a few hours longer than the plane and offers a superb journey through the northern Norwegian archipelago.



# The Arctic Hideaway – Simplicity at its Best

Text: Annelie Karlsson

Flying in to the Norwegian city of Bodø is surely one of the most beautiful approaches to an airport anywhere in the world. The scenery is spectacular, with the contrast of the fjords and mountains under the clear sky, bathing in the bright light.

Going from the air and now to the sea upon the “Lofoten”, a small ferry which makes two journeys a day from Bodø to the Fleinvaer Archipelago. After one hour of travel, including four stops, we arrive at the small island of Soervaer. It is truly a hidden gem, comprising eleven wooden buildings perched on the edge of a cliff, looking out and being confronted by a glorious view in all directions.

I check-in at Fordypningsrommet, which means “room for deeper studies”. Already my body and mind is starting to relax in this special location.

The Norwegian composer and musician Håvard Lund came back to these cliffs in 1998. He had warm memories from his boyhood of the sunsets he used to watch from this very spot. His roots are here and thus he has a special relationship with the island. He bought this plot of land in 2004 with the intention of building a cabin for himself, at this magical place where he had an affinity, where he could write and feel creative. However, as time went by he increasingly wanted to also introduce a way of healthy living into his daily routine, to engage in a form of therapy alongside working on his art.



Photo: Martin Losvik

– I wanted to create a special room dedicated to two senses: hearing and looking. Both within and without.

Thus Fordypningsrommet evolved and has become an escape from the rough and tumble rhythms of everyday life. A rendez-vous where artists, architects, musicians, yoga groups and writers can find their peace. And also for those of us who just want to go away for a while and do as little as possible.

I never tire of the views, the birdlife and the sea that changes so dramatically from one hour to the next. Up here in my spectacular room five metres above the ground, I have a fabulous panorama that encompasses a vast seascape. My view is of many islands dotting the waters near and far towards the horizon and there, in the distance, is Lofoten, the largest and most famous of them.

Every house in Fordypningsrommet has been built with a great respect for nature, taking into account the climate and its winds and rains.

**Håvard was thrilled to work with the architects TYIN Arkitekter.**

– They were the third firm I had contact with. I had seen an interview with them on Norwegian TV and I really liked their way of thinking – it reminded me of my own philosophy as a composer. I contacted them and pang – we had a contract. I was even happier when they suggested their former professor and mentor, Sami Rintala, be enrolled in the project. Sami is a rare genius in the world of architecture and he has now become a good friend.

– The architects said time after time: trust us, we are working against nature, but we know what we are doing. You can see this in our houses which open towards the South West, when no other houses on the island open to the South West. This is because all the rainfall comes from that direction! Water collection was our motivation as we wanted to utilise the roof area for water

In recent decades Norway has become a hub for young architects, thanks to Norway's generous investment in architecture and architects.  
*Bottom left: Håvard Lund*



Photos: Paasi Ailo



Photos: Martin Losvik



collection. We have not been totally successful, but we are getting there.

The buildings are constructed of Kebony, a sustainable alternative to tropical hardwood which has as minimal an impact on the surrounding landscape as possible. Accommodation is a cluster of the houses providing separate spaces for eating, for relaxing, for sleeping and for a sauna.

Tiles clad the exterior walls, and a 10,000 litre water tank provides the water for all purposes and the septic tank is below the toilet. The houses are built on metal stilts so as to minimise the footprint on Nature.

My days start with yoga in the relaxing room, then, with my morning cup of coffee, I watch the early ferry arrive, drop a few passengers and then

depart. Every day, one or two ferries are scheduled to come to Soervaer, but you have to signal to the captain from the quayside otherwise he will not stop. I then enjoy a 20-minute stroll around the entire island, enjoying the wild landscape and the incredibly fresh air. In June it is light 24 hours a day and the midnight sun has a fantastic blueish hue sky.

Soervaer is one of 300 islands in the Fleinvaer Archipelago. It has 11 inhabitants, but only one of these – Odd, the fisherman – lives here permanently. There is a particular friendliness on the island that I have seldom experienced elsewhere. I stop by at Odd's place to buy some "fish of the day" and he invites me in for a coffee. I meet his neighbours who show me the small flock of sheep in their garden. Every Saturday they share the work in the

UL Skjergården Krog, a cosy restaurant where they serve waffles with jam. Simple, yet delicious.

Most guests bring their own supplies to For-dypningsrommet, but food can also be provided by the management at an extra cost; and you have a "host" who you can call upon to help with practical matters.

– We like to get the locals involved. For health we offer yoga and other activities. And as a social get together we put on supper and sauna evenings. We also arrange excursions on Wednesdays to Bodø departing at 4pm and returning home by 10pm, Håvard explains.

After only one day I feel my life has effortlessly eased to a slower pace. "You are not our guests, but rather passengers"



- In cooperation with Rintala Eggertsons Architects, TYIN Tegnestue Architects was established in 2008. The office has completed several projects in poor and underdeveloped areas of Thailand, Burma, Haiti and Uganda. Solutions to real and fundamental challenges call for architecture where everything serves a purpose – pragmatic architecture shaped by the necessity. By actively involving the local population in both the design and building of its projects, TYIN is able to establish a framework for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and skills. All materials used in TYIN's projects are acquired close to the sites or bought from local merchants.

Photo: Kaitirne Særgård



Photo: Pasi Aho



Photo: Kaitirne Særgård



Photo: Kaitirne Særgård



Photo: Martin Losvik



Photo: Jesse Beaman



# The recovery of the British Virgin Islands

Text: Annelie Karlsson

Sailing between the different British Virgin Islands must be one of the most wonderful journeys one can make in the Caribbean. This treasure in the northeast of the Caribbean has long been favoured by keen yachtsmen from all over the world because of the constant breeze and fantastic sailing waters.

I first visited BVI in Spring 2017, travelling to many islands of the Archipelago and the trip truly changed my life. I was humbled by the nature and the welcoming by the people touched me deeply.

I had intended this article to be about this Eden of the tropical islands and its spectacular Nature, ... then came Irma.

On 7th September 2017 Hurricane Irma blasted BVI. It was, according to records, the most powerful storm to have ever hit the Caribbean Islands. Homes were flattened, the infrastructure – roads, water supply, electricity – were destroyed and the nature suffered more than most can comprehend. So this story will be about the BVI's recovery.



Photo: Annelie Karlsson

Sailers were the first tourists to return to the islands after they were hit by the hurricanes.

### Virgin Unite

I returned to BVI in the spring of 2018, longing to see the islands again, though also fearing the worst. It will take many years for the islands to recover fully. However, despite the brutality of Irma and



Photo: Annelie Karlsson

Constructors in every corner are rebuilding the British Virgin Islands.

then Hurricane Maria, local tourism and nature, especially that below the sea, have made a rapid recovery and the charter sailing sector is up and running again.

–We had people on the ground in Virgin Gorda



Photo: Heidi Schumann

right after the devastation, says Suzy Gigante, the Community Engagement Manager at Virgin Unite, a non-profit organisation. They already had employees working on the islands prior to the hurricanes who could, thankfully, be easily mobilised to work on the most urgent projects.

Photo: Heidi Schumann



Unite BVI has committed to the rebuild of the High School The Bregado Flax Educational Centre with the ambitious timeline of completion in December 2018.

Virgin Atlantic Company arranged special relief flights, sometimes liaising with the UK Department for International Development, to bring aid to BVI. Furthermore, the Branson family, owner of the Virgin Group, has an extensive network who came forward with resources, including much needed transportation to and from the islands. Friends flew in on their private jets and distributed food, water and other supplies and evacuated women, children and people requiring medical treatment on their return flights to America. Sam Branson's documentary film communicated the immediate aftermath and raised awareness of the disaster around the world.

–It has been truly heart-warming to witness the global outpouring of support for the communities across the Caribbean. We've received hundreds of e-mails from people across the world who share the love of the BVI and its wonderful people and

who are willing to make their resources available to help in whichever way they can. The first thing we organised was immediate relief aid and evacuations. Through empowering a local NGO group, The Virgin Gorda Recovery and Operations Centre (VGROC) funds and resources went to establish critical water and electricity and help begin the recovery efforts, says Gigante.

Grants went out to schools and youth programs to help keep students in a safe and secure environment, and one school in particular had great need. The largest high school in Virgin Gorda, The Bregado Flax Educational Centre, housing nearly 400 students, suffered greatly after the entire roof was blown off. The school is located in the heart of Spanish Town, en route to the most well-known tourist attraction in the BVI, the Baths. Due to the urgent community need for schools to be up and running as a sign of normalcy and recovery, the



Photo: Heidi Schumann

Ministry was able to pull off the unimaginable, they reopened in October 2017, only one month after the destruction. Teachers without roofs and running water at home made the choice to return to schools and begin cleaning up the chaos for the kids. Some were fortunate enough to have temporary structures to start again, while others made do with the remains of a derelict structure that leaks with every rainfall and still shows scars of that terrible day in September.

To this day, the community is still rebuilding roofs and the school is only partially operational.

#### Rebuilding better and stronger

Kim Takeuchi had been on a private Island in the North Sound when Irma hit the BVI. Kim is one of the Operation Managers at Unite BVI, a registered non-profit in the BVI for the benefit of the BVI

and supported by the Branson family. The Virgin organisation was established in 2016 and had already started working with local environmental, entrepreneurial and community projects but was now catapulted into an essential vehicle for action. Unite BVI's team grew exponentially from two to five full time positions and has been supported by a large group of supporters, most notably, the international non-profit entity Virgin Unite. I meet Kim in Leverick Bay in Virgin Gorda, a small harbour with its marina, hotels and restaurants back in business remarkably operating just as usual.

—The first thing I thought when I got to Virgin Gorda was that it looked completely devastated. We were horrified about how the hurricane had damaged everything, sparing nothing as far as the eye could see. But at the same time the resonating emotion was pure gratitude for simply being alive and reuniting with friends and family. There were

four tragic deaths in the hurricane, so we were blessed, says Kim, her tone becoming sombre and sympathetic as she mentions the ones who were lost.

—The major issue right after the hurricane was to re-establish shelters, secure food and clean water and the most challenging, was to find ways to communicate. No one knew how difficult that would be without power, mobile phones and internet capacity. There were a few Satellite radios available but most of our comms were done by marine radios. The radios only stretched across limited distances and mostly needed line of site to work, so once you were over the hillside, you were no longer connected to the North Sound.

We became very scheduled with regular meetings and check ins with various groups. We had to go over the hillside into the Valley, gather information and then bring it back to the North Sound. Each day, at a scheduled time we would call out by satellite phone to our support teams in the US and UK and make requests for medical supplies, food, tools and anything else of immediate need, Kim explains.

Virgin Gorda is a small island with roughly 3000 inhabitants, but it has a massive community spirit. This event brought people together, gave them a sense of purpose and a new perspective and they became resourceful, creative, solution oriented problem solvers.

Many private donors, some residents and some repeat tourists came to help with resources and supplies distributed across the British Virgin Islands. It will likely take many years to recover fully and their generous contributions have helped get a foundational restart on the repair to damage and the rebuilding of critical infrastructure.

—Mr Branson put his notoriety to good use inspiring an International network across the world and with his blogs and social media he has managed to reach out to so many people, who in turn have sent donations. 100% of donations will go to the needs of the community and environment. Virgin

Photo: PUSONER/Shutterstock



The Baths National Park is a must in Virgin Gorda's north shore. The cavernous surroundings are a result of the molten rock seeping up into the existing volcanic rock layers.

Unite recently posted an on-line update regarding how those funds are currently going towards projects that have a long term impact in the islands. Campaigns on our website had a huge international impact and many people who didn't even know the whereabouts of the BVI donated money. We had never received so much support in such a short time, she says.

Everyone pulled together, jumped into action and the immediate relief aid was a success.



However there is a need to implement a strategic plan for the long term resilience in the event of further hurricanes. After Irma the islanders have taken the opportunity to investigate greener, stronger and more resilient infrastructure options, such as adopting alternative energy and developing a decentralized power system. An appointed, BVI lead Recovery and Development Agency (RDA) is working in close association with the government to implement this strategy.

Unite BVI doesn't just do one thing, they focus on projects across a broad scope of topics: Environmental conservation, Supporting Entrepreneurship as a Force of Good and Empowering the Community, in particular with projects in Education. Their basic strategy is to

identify the needs and bridge resources through what they do best: Unite! Partnerships with other grantors have given them the opportunity to procure 650 computers that will give senior students in the public school system resources to continue their studies regardless of the structures that evidently will take a couple of years to rebuild. By supporting small business recovery, entrepreneurs are being empowered by access to micro loans with easy payback terms to help get their businesses back on track and adjust to the new markets and opportunities.

– After Irma I also had to adjust my daily life. I bought a truck, and I always have gloves and recycling bags in the boot. We have a lot of mess to clean up, says Kim with a big smile.



#### In Summary about the Bergado Flax Project:

A guest of Necker Island was the donor of funds to execute an AWOL project at Bergado Flax School. AWOL, Art WithOut Limits is an initiative by Debi Carson in the community to create opportunities for healing, expression and unity using art as the catalyst. The donation enabled the students and community of Virgin Gorda to come together to beautify the exterior perimeter wall and entry hut of the Bergado Flax School.

The high school students participated to plan and execute along with their teacher, Nadia Thomas, Debi Carson, Unite BVI, and mentionable people: Daniel, Lauren, Maggie and many more contributed with their sweat and smiles into the project.

#### Seeds of love

Initiating new growth is a BVI Tourist Board project that sees an opportunity at hand. Seeds of Love aims to replant the island's indigenous tree species and vegetation which had been destroyed by Irma and Maria.

The plan originally began when Gabi Romberg, of the BVI's German agency, saw the damage to fauna caused by the hurricanes and started a fundraising drive to buy coconut palms to plant along the fringes of the islands' beaches

Then, the government of St Vincent and the Grenadines donated 3,000 fruit trees to the BVI, and thus the Seeds of Love campaign was born, spearheaded by BVI Director of Tourism, Sharon Flax-Brutus. The Tourist Board purchased a further 3,000 coconut seedlings and saplings in order to bolster the programme and now Seeds of Love is planting throughout the territory. And, besides planting coconuts along beaches, the Tourist Board is partnering with other local government agencies and ministries to allow for planting in many different public spaces. Reforestation is necessary for establishing resilience.

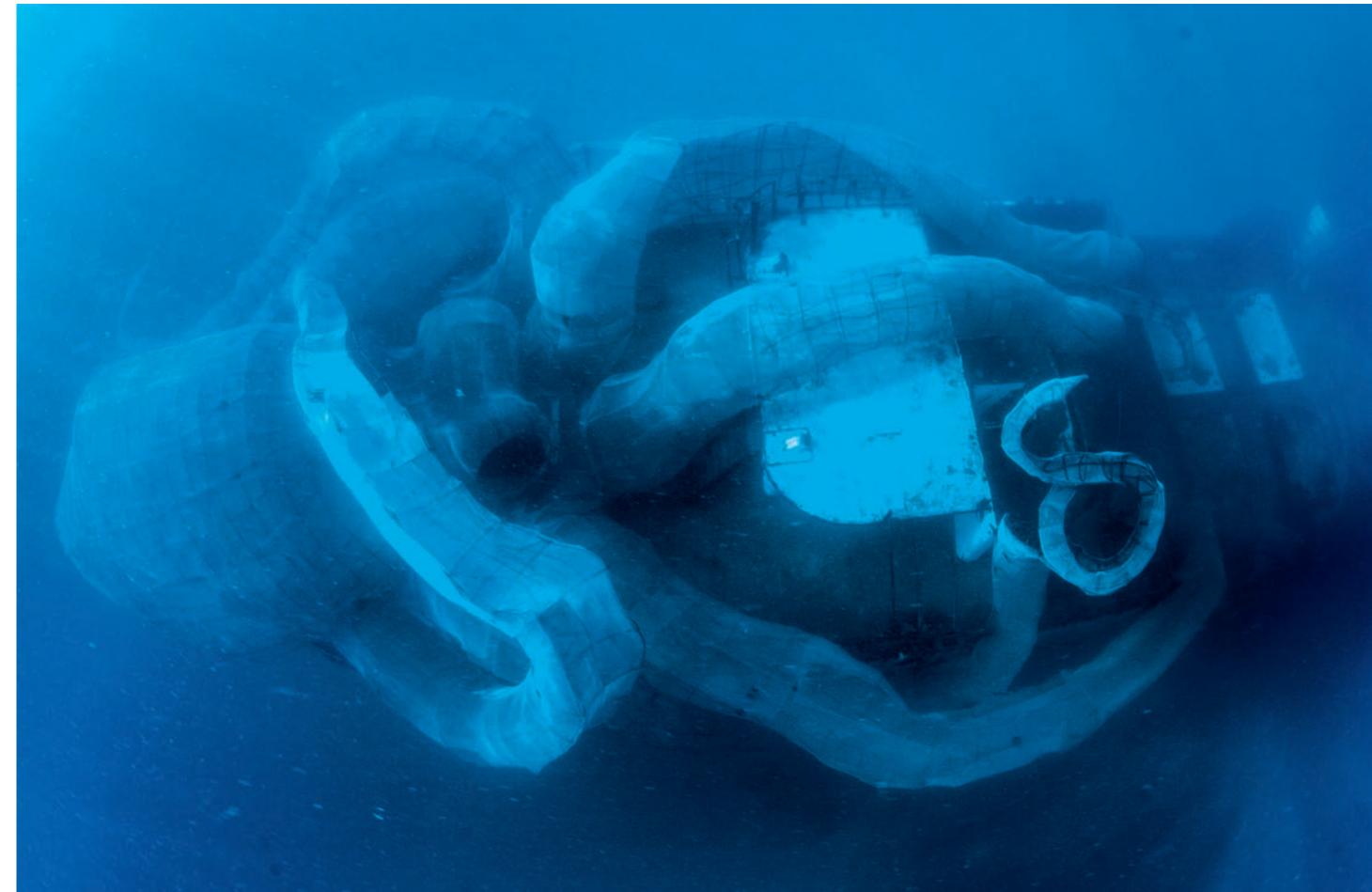




The Kodiak Queen is a sustainable attraction. This former navy fuel barge survived the attack on Pearl Harbor was set underwater by Virgin Unite. Sir Richard Branson was one of the enthusiasts when sinking the barge outside of Nail Bay Virgin Gorda.

### The Kodiak Queen

During a 2016 Virgin Unite gathering, a group of partners committed to building an artificial reef by sinking a World War Two Royal Navy fuel barge called the Yo-44, later renamed as an Arctic fishing vessel, the Kodiak Queen. This Unite BVI project had a purpose to not only clean up the Tortola coastline but also to amplify the message about the importance of ocean conservation. The artificial reef is a project that supports and inspires the next generation of ocean conservationists. Many local Islanders have never been under the sea in their own backyard, proceeds from the Kodiak Queen will go towards providing swim programs for islanders and help connect the youth with the incredible resource just outside their front doors. The artificial reef will also help to restore the local marine ecosystem and support efforts in establishing marine protected areas and sustainable fishing methods over the forthcoming decades. The Kodiak Queen now doubles as a bed for coral growth and safe spawning ground for larger marine species and the newest tourist dive/snorkel site just off the coast of Virgin Gorda.



### Oil Nut Bay supporting through employment

David Johnson is a successful businessman who is developing a large piece of land in the North Sound of Virgin Gorda, where he is building real estate and a resort which will offer luxury for guests and employment for islanders.

– Of course we were shocked that Irma had destroyed so many years of work, not so much for us, because our houses were new and constructed with solid materials, but for the rest of Virgin Gorda, where the older wooden houses were almost all gone. The most important thing was to keep our workers in employment and create new jobs so they

could support their families, says Mr Johnson.

The North Sound Foundation (NSF), founded by David Johnson and his wife Pamela has assisted in various relief and rebuilding projects in the Virgin Gorda community. Thanks to generous donations from Oil Nut Bay’s homeowners, the NSF will restore the Robinson O’Neal Memorial Primary School including designs and features that will ensure the school will withstand future hurricanes. The NSF provides support to a local Caribbean non-profit organisation which assists environmental, cultural, educational, health and social programmes throughout North Sound and Spanish Town.

Photo: Christian Horan



### Future Carbon Neutral Luxury Resort

It is rare to find a place so luxurious which has all its homes built in harmony with nature and is not causing any damage to the environment. Accessible only by boat or helicopter, this is a community that aims to combine an abundance of green space with all the comforts of a sustainable modern life and reach a goal of being carbon neutral. Regarding environmental care, the focus will be on using solar power, investing in efficient water management and planning low density construction. Many properties are built with green roof technology which will help blend the houses into their natural surroundings.

– Building in such beautiful surroundings brings

responsibilities and I am taking my legacy very seriously. Composting and recycling are used throughout the island and residents are encouraged to use electric carts instead of cars. Trophy architecture is strictly forbidden – we don’t want one-upmanship. So far around a third of the buyers are Europeans and we are going to build on that in the future, says David Johnson, whose father migrated to the United States from Sweden at the end of the last century.

–I spent ten years touring the world before I found this stunning beauty and political

stability in the Caribbean. After 30 years of creating a succession of developments, Johnson says this will be his last one and it is here he wants to spend the rest of his life.



The North Sound Foundation and David Johnson work with the Robinson O’Neal Memorial Primary School to ensure the school will withstand future hurricanes.



Photo: Christian Horan

### Some of the islands of BVI – Virgin Gorda

Covering a mere eight square miles, Virgin Gorda is the third largest island among the BVI and has a population of almost 3,000 inhabitants. Almost everyone I speak with has experienced a similar thing; the neighbourly act of opening their home to others in need. That is what Irma left; the generosity between fellow islanders, the uniting of a compassionate community. The devastation left by the hurricane has been positively turned into a new opportunity for rebuilding a stronger and greener future.



### Cooper Island

While many resorts have postponed their dates for reopening to late 2018, the Cooper Island Beach Club was one of the first resorts to return to business, opening its doors for guests on 1st April 2018. The effects of the hurricanes were devastating for them also. On the sea they lost many of their decks, boardwalks and docks. On land they even lost some buildings and sustained heavy damage to the solar equipment attached to twelve of the rooms. But things are on the mend! The team is working hard to get things back on track and the good news is that the solar powered microbrewery survived, so they will have plenty of homemade beer for their guests!

### Cooper Island was one of the first to re-open

There are five privately owned properties on the island, as well as a small beach club resort, a bio-restaurant and also a coffee shop serving an impressive selection of different coffees. Cooper Island is one of the most popular stops for yachtsmen sailing along the Sir Francis Drake Channel, as well as being a hot spot for locals on their days off. Just off the island is an old shipwreck where visitors can dive and it is fun to kayak along the shores. There are two versions about how the island gained its name: One claims that it comes from the first settlers, a Dutch family called Koop, while the other is that coopers – makers of barrels – came here to collect the island's white cedar which they used to make casks for storing rum.

Elliot Steer is having a nice cup of the best coffee in the archipelago at Cooper Island Coffeeshop.



### Anegada Island

Flat Anegada Island was the island least damaged by the hurricanes. It is known for its miles of white sandy beaches. Here you'll also find a 29 kilometre horseshoe Reef, the largest barrier coral reef in the Caribbean and the fourth largest on earth.

Undoubtedly, everyone suffered in some way from the horror of the hurricanes. And then, together, they came together to rebuild their community and homes. This shared experience of devastation and loss created warm bonds and a generous spirit between islanders and residents. The message now is : Doors are open, visitors are welcome.



Photo: BlueOrange Studio/Shutterstock



# Stockholm—Provence

## A green trip through Europe

Text: Annelie Karlsson

**D**riving a Tesla from Stockholm to Aix-en-Provence is a nice experience without any charging anxiety at all. In Sweden there are 25 public supercharger-stations and 220 charging-posts. The network of chargers are constantly growing. In Europe there are soon 400 superchargers and 1229 totally in the world.

Here is a short guidance of how the route can be driving a Tesla from Sweden to France.

We start in Stockholm at 7 am and the first supercharger for us is Ödeshög. Though, if you were not fully loaded when started, there is a charger also in Nyköping. For us Ödeshög is a perfect coffee break and some good snacks at Diners restaurant.

The next stop was lunch in the swedish "värds-hus": Toftaholm. in a countryside landscape just by the Lagan river. Peaceful in a fantastic nature.

If you want to charge before leaving Sweden there is the Hotel Malmö Live.

(Also a wonderful place to spend the night and

have a dinner in the price winning restaurant on the top floor.)

Driving through Denmark we stop at Norre Alslev, 7 miles before the boat in Rödby. This place you should avoid if you can.

On the boat to Puttgarten be aware that the alarm will probably go off because of the movements at sea. The Tesla is sensitive even if it is not too high waves. Here, it would have been super if we could have charged at the same time eating the salmon for dinner before entering Germany in Puttgarten.



In Braak between Lübeck and Hamburg we charge at Braakersmühle, where we have a great pumpkin soup with ginger and their croissants baked with cheese and lardon are something else.

Not such a high score for our next stop in Ruden, that is a mediocre restaurant with just german-speaking personnel. Pass if you have enough craft. If you follow the navigation Germany is in the forefront of the future. There is a lot of renewable energy and plenty of charging stations of different kind.

In Mansfield though, the next stop on our journey, a little south of Kassel, we eat Vegoschnitzel for the first time. Superbe!

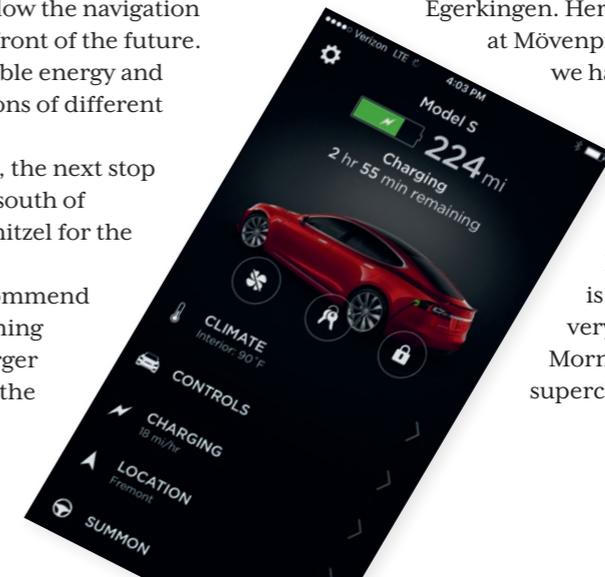
In Frankfurt we recommend to stay the night at Fleming Deluxe. Free supercharger for hotel clients just by the

entrance. It is located in the middle of the center, has a small gym, a hammam and a sauna. A very nice stroll after dinner is to recommend. A big plus: very quiet rooms.

Next stop Aschen, we had the best buffee and very delicate espressos.

Entering in Switzerland, the first charger is Egerkingen. Here you can eat ice cream cakes at Mövenpick and already in February we had the "fika" outside with views of the mountains.

In Luzern we found a very nice hotel by one of the most famous bridges made of wood in Europe. Hotel des Balance is a must in the heart of the very picturesque city of Luzern. Morning sun on the terrace and a supercharger of course.



A photograph of the Chetzeron Hotel in Crans Montana, an eco-responsible hotel in a former gondola station, perched at 2112 meters. The hotel is a modern building with a stone facade and large glass windows, situated on a snowy mountain slope. The sun is setting in the background, creating a warm glow and lens flare. The foreground is a vast, snow-covered slope with footprints.

*Chetzeron Hotel*  
in Crans Montana,  
an eco-responsible hotel  
in a former gondola station,  
perched at 2112 meters.

Cruising through Switzerland in a quiet Tesla with the windows down is top of the line. All the extra energy that are used going up the hills regains going down. And there is no "heat" on the breaks going downhill either.

We choosed to take the autorailway in Kandersteg to Goppenstein. There are chargers in every swiss corner. The train just takes 15 minutes, a mico nap and you are all set for entering the Valais region. We bought some good white wine and found a supercharger in Goppenstein that is located in the Sunwin solarpanelfactory. An interesting spot.

We headed to Chetzeron Hotel up at the top of Crans Montana Skiresort. An eco-responsible hotel in a former gondola station perched at 2112 meters. Very far from the crowd, 16 rooms with breathtaking views of the highest peaks of the Alps, from Matterhorn to Mont-Blanc. In 2004, the founder Sami Lamaa started this ambitious project; to create an eco-responsible hotel in the Alps. An alternative to the traditional hotels in the Crans Montana Resort. It required 10 years to obtain permits and the construction of the buildings. At the hotel Chetzeron is the preservation of the ecological system and the work for the environment one of the ground rules.

We have built the whole hotel out of technologies and normes and we have left no exceptions for the comfort to risk our responsibility to nature, says Sami Lamaa.

This sustainable hotel has the Label Minergie built in the isolation of the building. Up to 50 square metres of 200 thermique solarpanels produces warm water and electricity. A pause for hiking, biking, trekking or just enjoy the spectacular views.



Sami Lamaa enthusiastically explains how they support water for the whole valley and ALL the cows in the mountain. Just one of the hotels environmental efforts.



Leaving Crans Montana the car really reiterates on the long road downhill. We drive to Sion, make a left and start the climbing up to Nax, where there is a supercharger waiting. This is one of the places I never would have found if it wasn't for the Supercharger guide. One of the most sustainable hotels in Europe.

High above the Sion city in the Valais region in Switzerland, Louis and Lisa Papadopoulos chose to make their dream come true. An ecological hotel from A to Z. Inspired by a construction technic that the farmers used in USA around the turn of the century.



The most sustainable and low energy hotel in Europe

We are the most Sustainable and low energy hotel in Europe, says Louis, born in Greece but since many years a German citizen. The couple lived in Maastricht and visited Switzerland nine years ago and fell in love in the nature.

We had the plan ready for how we wanted to build but the place was more of a destiny, says Lisa who takes care of all the administration. Louis does whatever needs to be done.

Since the hotel has been such a success Louis has several lectures all over the world every month. Up to ten journalists visit them every month to write about the sustainable accommodation. This hotel

has 0 energy costs. The eight rooms don't need any ventilation thanks to the 80 centimeters thick walls of hay, that also releases the humidity.

—We produce our own energy. In Nax lots of the water sources come from the mountains. A wood-fired oven takes care of the heated water and brings it in a copper line into the rooms, Louis explains.

His aim is to develop this prototype of hotel to other companies that would like to implement the same energy system.

In Valais there is a huge interest for environmental project cooperating in the infrastructure. And if Sion will be part of the Winter Olympics 2026, it will definitely be a catapult for new innovations in a sustainable future, Louis says.

Driving further into the valleys we stop at The Relais de Saint Bernard in Martigny; one of the best places to eat very healthy, a buffet that has about everything. A nice terrace by a small lake where you can watch surfers while charging the car.

Heading towards Italy we take the Autozug in Brig going through the Alps ending up in Iselle. Now you have to be a little concerned and plan the trip because Italy does not have a bunch of chargers. It is enough but not too many extra sightseeing turns...

As we are golfers we always stop at Cavaglia that has a restaurant serving very good food, a bistro with a good cup of coffee and also if you want to stretch out your back; hit some balls at the range or even book a tee time.

Our last stop before entering in France is the port of Varessa at the Italian Riviera. A fantastic stroll along the shore with hundreds of boats and yachts. Several restaurants and small shops.

Finally we reach our destination in Aix-en-Provence, where there in fact are two superchargers, within one kilometre in the center of the city. The city is called the little Paris of the south. **Bienvenu en Provence.**



My E-car journey ends in Aix-en-Provence, where the mayor has decided to outsource the cars from the city. In Aix the bikers have increased with 500 % in the last 5 years. Not bad for a cultural city in France.



Photo: Camille Moreno

# It is time for Up with People to build bridges again

Through music and action Up with People empower youth to be positive agents of change to build a more hopeful, trusting and peaceful world. Through the unique blend of music, social action, and international travel, they impact communities for the better while providing youth the knowledge and experience they need for today's complex global environment. Each year hundreds of young people between

the ages of 17-29 apply to join the global education program for an unforgettable experience that visits diverse communities on a multi-national tour. 100 students representing dozens of countries, provide community service, perform and gain a better understanding of the world. During the past five decades, over 22,000 Up with People alumni have gone on to become enthusiastic leaders in their communities and the world.

Photo: Avery Phillips



Photo: Christian Karlsson



Up with People is best known for its high energy, upbeat, family-friendly musical show. Although musical talent and performance ability are welcomed, individual selection is based on a personal interview rather than an audition. Important consideration is given to a candidate's character and maturity. To apply, candidates must be between the ages of 17 and 29, a high school graduate or equivalent and able to fully participate in all aspects of the program. For more than 50 years Up with People has been breaking down cultural barriers and enhancing understanding to help create a more hopeful, trusting and

peaceful world. Host families keep one or more students from the 100-member Up with People cast, which represents 20 countries. "It is a great opportunity

to experience other cultures while sharing your own," explained Christian Karlsson, Promotion Representative for Up with People. Local host families are asked to provide a bed, local transportation at the beginning and end of each day, as well as breakfast and most dinners. While gone during the day, most evenings cast members will be home with the family to participate in their activities and interests. "I can honestly say that the dozens of families who have opened their homes to me during my time in Up with People, both as a student and staff, are some of the most meaningful and memorable experiences from Up with People", says Christian Karlsson, responsible for the PR and Film production.

Top: The cast of Up With People always perform a great musical in every destination

Bottom left: During one week all the students of Up with People do voluntary work in the society.

Bottom right: Christian Karlsson from Sweden, responsible for the PR during a year, after a year as a student.





Photo: Christian Karlsson

Throughout its fifty-two-year history Up with People has performed for millions, including a record four Super Bowl halftime performances. Which is the record for most Super Bowl halftime performances!

We met Anna C Belfrage, who travelled with Up with People for 14 years when she was younger. She began as a student and then as a member of staff. Anna has had a long career as CEO in Communications, she has been a Senior Advisor



Anna C Belfrage, today New Zealand's Honorary Consul in Stockholm, started her career in Up with People.

at Kream and today she is New Zealand's Honorary Consul in Stockholm. Anna is also involved in many worthwhile projects and feels passionate about people and culture.

> Why do we need organisations like Up with People more

Today than ever? Today's society is more multicultural than before and we need concrete examples showing how people from different countries and backgrounds can

accomplish projects together. Up with People can achieve this, by engaging with schools with many challenges in the tough suburbs and working alongside the students and local groups. The students and groups then become role models and inspire others by showing how to build bridges between people despite their cultural differences.

> How has Up with People changed since its founding in 1967?

The organisation has the same ideology and objectives as it had when it was established in the Post War era, however the working methods have changed. When I was with them in the 1970s we travelled to 80 destinations around the world every year. Today it is half that number and now the group stays a whole week in each city and participates closely with the local organisations we are involved with.



Anna on stage as a young student.

> What does a company gain from sponsoring an event?

Companies value joining us and being sponsors because they can invite their employees and clients along with their families to a great show which inspires peace and understanding between nations. Which is important in today's political and social climate. People want to contribute and be part of that.



On 14th November, Up with People will perform at "Göta Lejon" in Stockholm and on the 15th there is "A leadership and diversity day", to be moderated by Claes Elfsberg.

A high-angle photograph of a person ice climbing a massive, blue-tinted glacier wall. The climber is wearing a bright orange jacket and a helmet, and is secured by a green rope. The glacier surface is textured with dark rock and snow, and a small stream of meltwater is visible at the bottom. The overall scene is dramatic and emphasizes the scale of the natural environment.

Camille Moirenc has for a number of years worked with the Compagnie Nationale du Rhône, CNR. The association is gathering people active in several disciplines who all advocate the river's future. CNR is France's leading producer of 100% renewable electricity (hydroelectricity, wind power and solar power) and multi-purpose concessionnaire of the Rhône river from the Switzerland border to the Mediterranean Sea.

# The Rhône River connects people and countries. Nature's way of building bridges.

Photosuite by Photographer Camille Moirenc



The Sources of the Rhône in Col de la Furka, Switzerland.



The Rhône river descends in Valais region, Switzerland



Gletch, in the Valais region, Switzerland.



Ston vineyard in the Valais., Switzerland



Monthey Community by the Lake of Geneva, Switzerland.





Gorges de Yenne in Ain Virignin, France.



By the Champagneux in the Savoie, France.

**R**hône is one of the major rivers of Europe. Rising in the Rhône Glacier in the Swiss Alps at the far eastern end of the Swiss canton of Valais, passing through Lake Geneva and running through south eastern France. The resulting delta constitutes the Camargue region.

The Rhône basin constitutes one of the great economic regions of Switzerland and of France, draining rich plains as well as an important part of the Alps. The utilization of the region by people has required a long historical struggle and the economy consists of five major elements: agriculture, industry, energy, tourism, and transportation.

Agriculture in the Rhône valleys largely covers the low areas, plains, and islands. In the Swiss canton of Valais, the Rhône has been diked and narrowed and the surrounding plain has been drained. River waters are used extensively for irrigation. Forage crops and livestock raising coexist with vineyards, fruit orchards, and vegetable farming and the Camargue region is noted for its rice fields.

Industries have been established throughout the region. The production of hydroelectricity is evident and particularly so in its lower reaches, where a series of dam projects have harnessed more than half of the entire potential hydroelectric power of the river.

Tourism has played an increasingly key role in the regional economy since the mid-20th century. Skiing and climbing in the Alps, visiting the historic cities of Provence and horsebackriding in the Camargue has been some of the keys to the river's popularity.

Transportation and navigation has always been carried on, particularly between Lyon and the sea, and the Rhône traditionally has been the transportation funnel between northern and southern France.

The Rhône valley in Valais served a similar function in Switzerland, particularly with the construction of a number of rail and road tunnels under some of the mountain barriers.



The lake of Lit in Massignieu de Rives, France.



La Roche de Glun, Optimist dinghys at the bassin des Musards, France.



The river between Challonges and Chanay, France.



The cathedral of Doms and the Popes Palace in Avignon in Vaucluse., France.



Port Saint Louis and the beach of Arles in Camargue by the mouth of the Rhône River, France.



Photo: Matisse Moirenc

CAMILLE MOIRENC is a french illustrator and photographer from Aix-en-Provence in France. For more than 20 years he has revealed the region of Provence with a magnificent photo. The photographer works with themes, such as the environment and water.