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The last six months in Norway were the most wonderful! I made friends with not only Norwegians, but people from all over Europe. I was able to just duck over to Berlin, Copenhagen or Paris for the weekend, as travel is cheap and the distances short. None the less, my favourite time was spent with friends in Oslo, whether it be swimming in the fjord in summer (watch out for jellyfish), hiking in autumn or skiing or ice skating in winter, there was always something, and Norway is a beautiful country with its fjords, forests and mountains.

The University of Oslo was good, with helpful teachers and small classes, for my department, which made it easy to make friends and made for a different teaching style. They have a good international student program with events on usually at least once a week and a buddy program to make sure it's next to impossible to go your first week in Oslo without making friends.

Now, Oslo is darn cold (granted it was one of their coldest winters), though as was repeated to me both by my flatmates and other friends, there is no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing, so keep this in mind, especially if you are arriving in their winter, however you do get used to it. Something else to keep in mind is the expense, if you are eating out, it can cost a lot, however, the university cafeteria and supermarkets are not too bad.

It took us a little while to discover this but:

- most university faculties have their own bar, the alcohol is much cheaper and usually they have a good vibe
- the Underwater Pub near Majorstuen invites opera singers to perform every Tuesday and Thursday evening
- Blå in Grunneløkka has a great jazz band on Sunday night and cheap (by Norwegian standards)
- Loppemarked are good if you are looking for some winter coats etc. and don't mind them being second hand
- DNT is the Norwegian Trekking Association which have marked hiking and skiing trails in the forests, it is also possible to join enabling you to stay in their cabins they have scattered across Norway



My flatmates, celebrating a birthday two weeks after arriving in Oslo



In the process of building a snowman



Overlooking the Oslo fjord at the start of a hiking trip