



You'd be surprised at how much we talk - once we get started

TO THE POINT

People returning to Norrbotten, or visiting for the first time, are happy to get away from all the small talk. Here, we're not much for beating around the bush. We prefer to get straight to the point, both privately and at work. People are interested in each other, and they appreciate honesty. Our sense of humour may sometimes be a bit direct, even shocking at times. But you'll soon get used to it.

BE YOURSELF!

Norrbotten covers about a quarter of Sweden, but the population is only about 270,000. Many people are of Sami and Finnish descent. Luleå is the largest city, with about 70,000 residents. There are plenty of creative, reflective and more or less solitary individualists. Coffee-break discussions in Norrbotten can sometimes become rather heated. Here, people dare to be and think differently.

"ITALIANS OF THE NORTH"

It's easy to make contact in Norrbotten, even though physical distances are great. Networks form quickly. If you want something done, there is always someone who knows someone who knows someone, etc. It's easy to get to know people in Norrbotten. Contrary to popular misconceptions, we're what you might call the "Italians of the North". We love to meet people, and you'll be surprised at how much we talk, once we get started. You'll make lasting friendships in Norrbotten.

BACKWOODS ONLINE

Most people have Internet access at home. To be exact, more than 70 percent of residents aged 16 to 64 – and the figure is steadily rising. Perhaps the great distances have helped us to realize the advantages of new technology. In the country and the city, in business, in the private sector and at home, people use email and surf the web on a daily basis. Many apartment blocks have broadband connections.





FOR BODY AND SOUL

In Norrbotten, adventure is right at your doorstep. Fabulous nature is the first thing that comes to mind. Yes, even within the city limits, and the real wilderness is just a stone's throw away. We have eight national parks and more than 150 nature reserves. Here, the Swedish, Sami, Finnish and Tornedal Finnish cultures meet and merge. You'll be inspired by our innovative, exciting music and theatre, and by acclaimed poets, authors and artists with a refreshing freedom of expression. Adventure comes in different shapes and sizes. In Norrbotten, you can create your very own brand.

MUSICAL ENGINEERS

With more than 11,000 students, Luleå University of Technology is a going concern for the whole county. The University makes a strong contribution to innovation and development in Norrbotten. It was the first university in Sweden to introduce a modern new form of education whereby students shape their own, highly individual study programmes in so-called arenas. An MSc degree in engineering from Luleå might even include studies in media arts and music. A new approach for a more creative future society.

VARIED LANDSCAPES

- ▶ Archipelagos with sandy beaches, and lowlands around the Bay of Bothnia.
- ▶ Mountainous areas with high fell country and glaciers.
- ▶ Coniferous forests, marshlands and heaths in the interior.
- ▶ 0.5 percent of Norrbotten is classed as developed; the figure for Sweden as a whole is 2 percent.

A NEW DIRECTION

Primary industries are no longer as important for employment as they once were. But resource-based companies like LKAB, SSAB, SCA, Boliden and Vattenfall are now high-tech leaders in their respective fields.

Thanks to the creativity and entrepreneurial spirit of the people of Norrbotten, small and medium-sized enterprises are on the rise, and trade and industry are now more diverse than ever. The proportion of new business start-ups in Norrbotten is somewhat greater than the national average.



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