

Rørosrein: a taste of tradition and diversification

Around 30.000 wild reindeers can be counted in Norway. The natural surroundings of Røros are the historical area for reindeer breeding. In the middle North part of Norway, between Trondheim and Elga, 26 families are breeding more than 13.000 domestic reindeers. In the area of Røros, a small town of 5.600 inhabitants located in the Trøndelag County, in the middle of Norway, Rørosrein producers belong to the Sami population and intend to preserve their customs while also diversifying their activities to secure their income.

Breeding techniques between tradition and innovation

MORE INFO

The indigenous Sami population settled in Scandinavia 11.000 years ago. Sami people were nomads living from hunting. Progressively, they started taming reindeers to eat their meat and milk but also to use their furs and horns to make handcraft items.

[Rørosrein](#) producers preserve the tradition. Reindeers continuously move in this mountainous area and mix with other herds. To identify their animals, producers use traditional methods of the Sami population: instead of tagging them with mainstream ear tags, they mark them with a cut in the ear of a specific shape. Each family owns its proper mark, which can be inherited from ascendants, and more than 200 different cuts exist in the region.

Yet, Rørosrein producers are also using GPS tracking devices to monitor part of their animals to prevent attacks on livestock since they lost 70 calves in 2016. In this vast area, reindeers live together with lynx, wolves, wolverines, royal eagles, and bears.

Direct sales and short circuits

Rørosrein producers works with a local slaughterhouse of the region and is engaged in direct selling. They own a small shop in Røros, where customers can buy a wide range of fresh and cured reindeer meats every Saturday.

Their products can also be found at [Rørosmat](#), a local cooperative located in the centre of Røros. The shop proposes high quality products from 26 producers of the area. Rørosrein directly fixes a price with the cooperative for its reindeer products.

Moreover, Rørosrein producers run a small traditional restaurant in Røros, next to the shop where they sell products. In this traditional gâetie (Sami dwelling), customers are invited to taste products from Rørosrein and Rørosmat. With plates from 14 to 35 euros, producers guide you discovering reindeer cured meat, smoked tongue, sausage, mushrooms, soups, and local berries.

Lastly, producers intend to preserve Sami traditions by making handcraft. Each year, the family slaughters about 10 reindeers on the farm to be able to keep furs and horns. Sales of reindeer meat indeed does not produce enough revenues for the breeders to live on. Selling these traditional products therefore helps them to diversify their income.



Unusual tourist experiences

Credits: Rørosrein



The family also took advantage of the tourism opportunities in the region. From mid-February, they propose 2 hours long sleigh tours with 13 domesticated male reindeers, trained for 2 years and sent them back into the mountains at the end of wintertime.

If you want to know more on reindeer breeding, producers can also take you on a tour, explain you Sami techniques and even teach you how to throw a lasso on antlers.

In their dwelling in Røros, they can also make you discover the Sami traditions in pictures during a cosy lecture while you taste their products.

For more information

To learn more on Rørosrein's story, please visit their [website](#) and discover more producers of the region on [Rørosmat](#).



Innovative aspect

Rørosrein producers preserve long standing traditions and Sami techniques with their reindeers' herd. They built a local value chain enabling local populations and tourists to buy their food products. Yet, they developed a sustainable diversification strategy based at the same time of food products, handicraft, and traditional experiences and took advantage of tourism opportunities while preserving their ancient knowledge

For more information, please contact:

Blandine Camus, Communication & Policy Officer
communication@euromontana.org
+32 2 280 42 83
www.euromontana.org

